

Environmental Protection In India: The Crucial Role Of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's)

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Abstract

One of the most pressing issues confronting India, a nation that is rapidly industrialising, urbanising, deforestation, and feeling the effects of climate change, is environmental preservation. Government laws and regulations are important, but non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have also had a significant impact on India's environmental initiatives. With a focus on their varied contributions at the grassroots and policy levels, this article explores the important role NGOs play in environmental conservation.

In India, NGOs have played a critical role in influencing legislative changes, encouraging sustainable practices, increasing public knowledge of environmental issues, and encouraging public involvement in conservation efforts. Climate change mitigation, pollution control, water resource protection, waste management, and biodiversity conservation are all areas of their work. NGOs also serve as watchdogs, using legal action, such as public interest lawsuits, and campaigning to hold governments and businesses responsible.

Keywords: Non-Governmental organization, Legislation, Environmental protection, Waste management.

Introduction

"World today is economically richer & environmentally poorer the ever"

By R Brown, President of World Watch Institute, Washington

There is no difficulty in understanding the effects of environmental pollution, but finding a way to put a stop to it is a never-ending, complicated, and intricate debate. There may be no silver bullet, but there is always hope for finding solutions to individual problems. keeping in view the technological solutions The involvement of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in providing social services and adhering to legal restrictions is crucial in protecting the environment. For the last half-century, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have been on

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the front lines of fighting for issues like universal access to healthcare for the poor, protecting endangered species, forests, human rights, women, and children, and more.

Human beings are the ecologically dominant species in the whole ecosystem³. They share basic needs with all living things—a desire for warmth, light, water, and food—but they have unique characteristics that set them apart from all other species. Consequently, no other species can compete with humans on a level playing field. Additionally, no other species has been able to match the degree to which humans have manipulated the natural forces inside the eco-system. As a result of human interference, nature's built-in self-protective and self-perpetuating mechanisms have broken down. The problem is exacerbated by the idea that people should be free to use the environment however they like, without regard for the impact their actions will have on the system as a whole. This inclination towards nature becomes more pronounced when the industrial revolution gains steam. The modern world was reborn with the use of technology and machinery to control nature.⁴

Meaning of Social Work

"Never think, I will give when I am rich; Just give what you can, while you can..."⁵ In order to help people who are suffering from poverty or other forms of social injustice, as well as any breaches of their human rights, social workers conduct research, develop policies, organise communities, provide direct service, and teach others about these issues. Areas including international and community development, program assessment, social policy, public administration, and human development are common research topics. There are social work organisations on a regional, state, federal, continental, and global scale. Economics, education, sociology, medicine, philosophy, politics, psychology, the environment, and other fields are all included into social work theory.

Social workers may find support and ethical direction from a variety of organisations that aim to promote the field as a whole. You may classify these groups as either national or regional, or as continental or semi-continental. International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) are the two most prominent international organisations in this field. The National Association of Social Workers is the leading one in the US. Unite and the GMB, two unions, have a smaller membership (trade union). Among the Community's trade union branches since 2008 is the British Union of Social Work Employees, more often known as BUSWE. Both employers and numerous national and international non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have refused to recognise the Social Workers' Union, a

³ An ecosystem is the ecological consisting of biotic & abiotic factors in a specific area.

⁴ "Role of NGOs and community participation in the management of municipal solid waste in India" Dr. Deshpande Shweta, The national seminar on solid waste management; legal faices February 5 & 6 2011.

⁵By -Mother Theresa.

trade union arm of the British Association of Social Workers that was reintroduced in 2011 after an earlier attempt in 1976.⁶

An NGO is a nonprofit that provides social services with the goal of improving society. It stays true to its name by bringing together like-minded individuals who want to see India grow and giving back to the community that supported them. This endeavour, like many great undertakings, had modest origins. Poverty and ignorance are obstacles to our nation's development, and we must fight them.

Our goals include increasing literacy rates, decreasing poverty, ending child labour, and strengthening the most vulnerable members of society via empowerment and self-assurance. Among the many non-profit services we provide is the ability to take stock of one's own resources, identify areas for improvement, and work towards concrete objectives in a supportive context that fosters personal development.⁷

Historical Evolution of NGO's in India

The expression, "Non-Governmental Organization" can be defined in the following terms:

Any group of individuals that get together on a local, national, or global scale to form an organisation that does not receive funding from the government is considered an NGO. Nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) are groups of individuals who work together to accomplish a shared goal. They provide a wide range of services, including humanitarian aid, lobbying for and monitoring government policies, and informing the public about political opportunities. Some are structured according to predetermined themes, such health, the environment, or human rights. They aid in the monitoring and implementation of international arguments, give analysis and knowledge, and function as early warning systems. It is difficult to overstate the importance of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) as a concept and a practical tool for protecting the rights of Indian citizens within the framework of the rule of law in a nation like India, which boasts the highest population density, the largest democracy on Earth, and the seventh-largest landmass in the world. For the purpose of safeguarding individual rights, the Indian Constitution provides an exceptional source of basic rights. To play a crucial role in assisting citizens in enforcing their rights in India, NGOs rely on these rights in conjunction with the prescriptive principles of state policy.

Voluntary organisations in India thrived throughout the British Empire period, working to enhance social welfare, literacy, and relief initiatives. The origins of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) can be traced back to Mahatma Gandhi's call for rural communities to become economically independent. This call resulted

⁶http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_work

⁷<http://www.yatna.org/>

in the 1953 establishment of the Central Social Welfare Board, the 1958 launch of the National Extension Services, the National Community Development Program, and the three-tier Panchayati Raj System. Following this, a coalition of prominent nonprofits came together to form what is now known as the Association of Volunteer Agencies for Rural Development, or AVARD.

On January 26, 2012, India marked sixty-third years as a republic. In the last 63 years, notably in the 1970s and 1980s, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have grown at an unprecedented rate. Additionally, civic society has taken an active interest in the formation and expansion of volunteer organisations, which has led to a tremendous boom in these groups throughout the 1990s. Over the last several decades, there has been significant international financing and assistance from many donors. Approximately 1.5 million non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in India are dedicated to various causes. To promote, enable, and empower a diverse, autonomous, and effective voluntary sector that can contribute to the social, cultural, and economic advancement of the people of India is the primary objective of the National Policy on Voluntary Sector that was issued by the Government of India in May 20, 067.⁸

Role of NGO'S in Protection for the Environment in India

The NGO's constitute a worldwide network interacting with Governments and Internal intergovernmental organization in shaping international environmental policies;-

- ❖ Making people more knowledgeable about the present environmental problems and their remedies.
- ❖ Supporting the involvement of different types of stakeholders in the debate around environmental concerns.
- ❖ Participatory rural assessment is being conducted.
- ❖ Participating in the defence of people's right to live in an unpolluted environment.
- ❖ Protecting the earth's natural resources and entrusting their fair utilisation.
- ❖ Collecting information on natural resources and local histories. - Examining and keeping tabs on environmental quality.
- ❖ Content such as newsletters, brochures, essays, audiovisuals, etc. are used to convey information.
- ❖ To promote environmental awareness, arrange seminars, lectures, and group discussions.
- ❖ providing assistance to the administrative officers of the villages in the areas of environmental protection project planning, implementation, and evaluation.⁹

⁸ "Role of NGOs and community participation in the management of municipal solid waste in India" Dr. Deshpande Shweta, The national seminar on solid waste management; legal faices February 5 & 6 2011. Page no 62 to 64

⁹ P. Meenakshi "Elements of Environmental Science and Engineering" 2010 ,PHI Learning Private Limited New Delhi-110001

India has a number of NGOs that work in the field of environmental conservation and ecology. Here is a comprehensive list:

1. Assam Science Society

They impart environmental education and training through camps for teachers and students and conduct surveys on environment. Publications: Science books and journals

2. Bombay Natural History Society

The mission is to educate the public about plants and animals via various mediums such as lectures, field visits, literature, and expeditions; investigate issues pertaining to wildlife; and propose strategies for managing wildlife populations and protecting their natural habitats. It investigates the migratory patterns and demographic makeup of avifauna in India via field research programs. Articles published in Hornbill (four issues per year) and other periodicals.

3. Centre for Environmental Education (CEE)

Their primary objective is to raise community environmental consciousness via extensive environmental education and training programs delivered through an extensive network. Books, posters, instructional packages, bibliographies, and directories are just a few of the many publications included in their database.

In addition, there is a massive database called the Environment Education bank. It contains hundreds of case studies, over 2500 activities pertaining to the environment, and 800 ideas.

4. Centre for Science and Environment (CSE)

Participates in studies, investigations, and educational initiatives pertaining to water, land, animals, forests, and pollution. The Gobar Times, a children's magazine; Down to Earth, a twice-monthly journal on the environment; books, reports, a computer database, audiovisuals, etc.

5. CPR Environmental Education Centre (C.P.RamaswamiAiyar Foundation)

Raises public consciousness about environmental issues, develops and disseminates introductory environmental education and reference materials, and launches environmental initiatives. When it comes to environmental education, it's effective. Works published include books, posters, audio cassettes, and an educational website focused on environmental protection.

6. Kerala Sastra Sahitya Parishad

In order to promote science to the general public, protect the environment, and provide other models for development. They have done work in eco-development, raising awareness about the need to save water and energy and promoting the use of alternative energy sources such smokeless chulhas and others. Publications: Quarterly publications and books.

7. Kalpavriksh

The mission of this citizen-led organisation is to raise awareness and foster action on environmental concerns, particularly among the younger generation. Additionally, it seeks to develop a comprehensive environmental viewpoint, advocate for environmental causes, and do study on environmental challenges. via the establishment of nature clubs, the organisation facilitates environmental education at K-12 and higher education institutions, as well as via the creation of school-level workbooks, bird watching excursions, and nature trails.

Publications:

- The Little Green Book.
- Narmada – a campaign newsletter.
- What is that bird (An illustrated guide)

8. Narmada Bachao Andolon

Set up in 1986 under the leadership of Medha Patkar. The program's primary objective is to raise awareness among tribal communities and other groups negatively impacted by massive development projects about the negative effects on society and the environment. In an effort to get more knowledge and establish a more ecologically responsible water policy, as well as to voice opposition to dam building in the Narmada Valley as a whole. To ensure that indigenous communities benefit greatly from government development programs and services and to empower them to take the lead in their own development. Primarily, they work to educate, rally, and organise the Narmada Valley population on matters of environmental justice, human rights, and alternative development strategies as they pertain to the Narmada project and other large dams. In order to resist government meddling with land and forest concerns, they survey the impacted communities. The people's rights are being disregarded and displacement is something they are fighting against. The Narmada Samachar is their published work that is released every other month.

9. World Wide Fund for Nature

The fundamental objective is to advocate for environmental preservation and conservation as a means to achieve sustainable and fair development. Written works: At their urban locations, you may get their many books, cassettes, and data sets on a wide range of topics. Some of them are as follows –

- ❖ WWW Indian Network Newsletter (Quarterly).
- ❖ Nature News.
- ❖ The Web of Life – a resource pack for children.
- ❖ The Law Digest, etc.¹⁰

10. Foundation for Revitalisation of Local Health Traditions (FRLHT)

An innovative institution of knowledge, FRLHT aspires to restore India's rich medical history. Through the development and execution of large-scale, creative programs, it aspires to prove the continued relevance of India's medical heritage in the modern world. The three thrust areas of FRLHT's work are:

- ❖ Conservation of natural resources used by Indian Systems of Medicine
- ❖ Demonstrate the contemporary relevance of traditional knowledge
- ❖ Revitalizations of social processes for transmission of heritage

There has been groundbreaking work in the field of traditional health sciences by FRLHT in the areas of endogenous research, training, and development. It is well-known for its work in this area and has recently begun collaborating with other national R&D institutions, including the government. In order to revitalise indigenous peoples' knowledge and wisdom through dialogue with western scientific knowledge, the CAPTURED program aims to build capacities for the transformation of southern universities and research centres through the integration of formation, transdisciplinary research, and social interaction with local healers and indigenous communities. Creating a curriculum on intercultural science and using research to help endogenous development in rural communities are also part of the plans, as are the methodical elaboration of ideas, theories, methods, and strategies for transdisciplinary doctorate research.¹¹

¹⁰<http://www.mumbaisuburbs.com/articles/ngo-environmental-conservation.html>

¹¹<http://www.frlht-captured.org/index.php>

Conclusion

The NGO's explained and discussed the common features of the health system operating in the specified socio-economic, socio-cultural, political, environmental protection, and social services to protect the global environment. In addition to the list above, NGO's provide a wide range of social services.

The overarching goal is to inspire people on a local, national, and worldwide level to take action and become involved in bettering people's lives. Encouraging and facilitating the execution of significant environmental projects may be made easier with the essential information that the government could gather.

