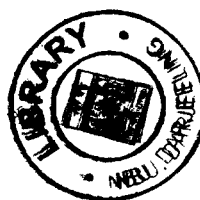


**NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND  
EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN: A STUDY ON  
SOME SELECTED NGOs OF DARJEELING  
DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL**

**THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN  
ARTS (POLITICAL SCIENCE) OF UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL**

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WEST BENGAL 734013**

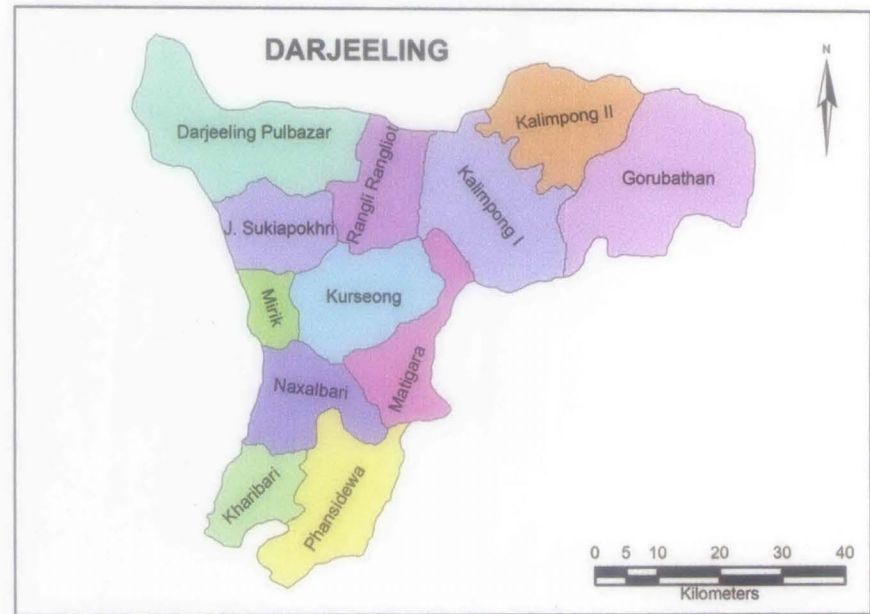
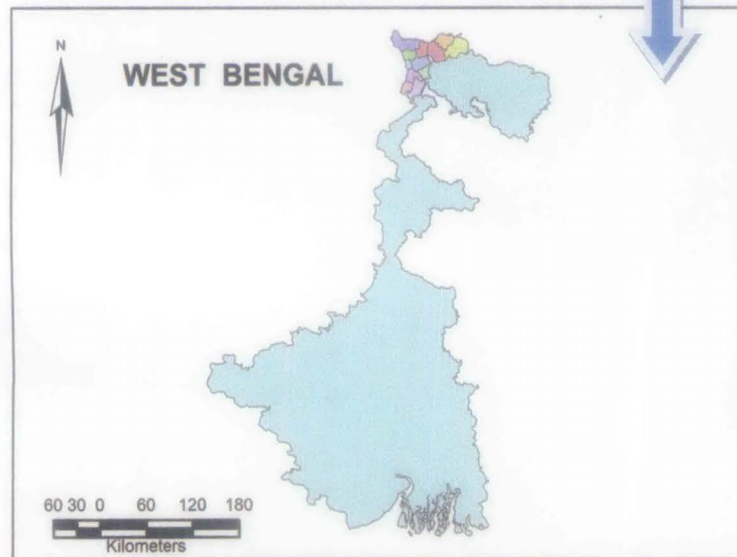
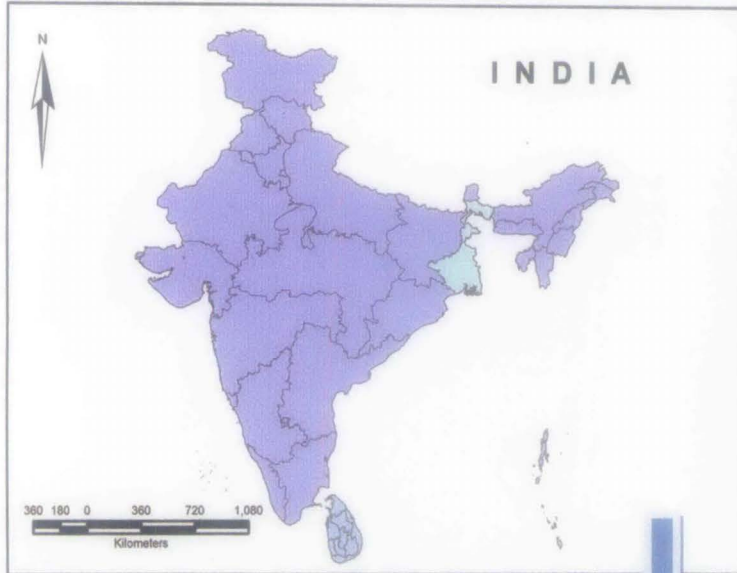
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# AREA UNDER STUDY



# Preface

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. But, throughout history and in many societies including India, gender inequality was a part and parcel of an accepted male-dominated culture. The traditional mentalities of India assumed that the place of women is mainly concentrated to the household activities like kitchen work and upbringing of the children. They have been considered as the sex object and inferior to the men in different spheres of knowledge and life. The 'Sati Pratha', 'Pardah System', 'Child Marriage', 'Dowry System', etc. have been some form of atrocities and discriminatory attitudes against women. It is facts that even after more than sixty years of Indian independence women are still one of the most powerless, weaker and marginalised section of the Indian society. Women form nearly half of the human capital in the country, but they remain the most deprived and long neglected segment of the society, despite the constitutional guarantee for equal rights and privileges for men and women. As result of colonial domination and prevailing conditions of the society, the socio-economic condition of women is miserable.

In recent years there has been increasing awareness and recognition of the fact that women who formed half of the population of the society cannot be ignored at all. Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, developmental policies, Plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres of life. From the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78) onwards it has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognised as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments (1993) to the Constitution of India have provided for reservation

of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels.

India has also ratified various international conventions and human rights instruments committing to secure equal rights of women. Key among them is the ratification of the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1993, The Mexico Plan of Action (1975), the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies (1985), the Beijing Declaration as well as the Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcome Document adopted by the UNGA Session on Gender Equality and Development & Peace for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, titled "Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action" have been unreservedly endorsed by India for appropriate follow up. This attracted a large number of researchers and social scientists to study and on the issue of women. Large numbers of researches have been developed in the field of NGOs and women's empowerment in the international as well as national level. But there are a few researchers who have turned the focus of the enquiry on the NGOs and women's empowerment in Darjeeling District and hence, there is no serious study on the District of Darjeeling, West Bengal.

The present study has covered the entire district of Darjeeling in the state of West Bengal. It is a frontier district, running up between Nepal and Bhutan and stretching from the plains of Bengal on the south to the state of Sikkim on the north. The Darjeeling district lies between 26° 31' and 27° 13' north latitude and between 87° 59' and 88° 53' east longitude. Geographically the district can be divided into two particular divisions, the hills and the plains. The hill areas cover the three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling, Kurseong and Kalimpong. The foothills of Darjeeling Himalayas come under the Siliguri subdivision and are also known as Terai.

The basic objective of the study is to examine the position of women in society and to develop an understanding the socio-political factors influencing the rise of NGOs in Darjeeling District of West Bengal. To examine the roles and activities of NGOs in the society and to find out whether they are able to

empower the womenfolk as an alternative mechanism of empowerment. To do an in-depth study of a selected NGOs starting from its history, organizational set-up, staff pattern, different activities, staff's job satisfaction, beneficiaries observation, local parties perception, and to explore how far NGOs are able to empower women.

Keeping in mind the above noted objectives, the present study seeks to find out the level of women empowerment in the district of Darjeeling. The study further aims to explore the obstacles of women's empowerment with an expectation that findings of this research work along with its recommended suggestions would be able to offer a fresh outlook and valuable inputs to the government policy formulators in their future course of action on women's empowerment.

The entire study has been divided into six broad chapters which include several sections and sub-sections covering the specific dimensions of the study. **CHAPTER-1** has provided for introductory information of the present study, discussed the Problems of the study, Objectives of the Study, Research Questions, Theoretical Framework, Significance of the study, methodology, Types of Data Collected, Sources of Data, Field of Study, Process of Data Collection, Sampling, Rationale for the selecting Darjeeling District, Limitations of the Study, Analysis of Data and Plan of the Study. **CHAPTER-2** mainly deals with NGOs in India: Historical Roots, Meaning, Characteristics and Types - A Narrative and Conceptual Account. Here, the concept of Voluntary organisations and NGOs, Meaning of NGOs, Characteristics of NGOs, Types of NGOs, Typology of NGOs in India, Brief history of NGOs in India, Voluntarism in the Pre-Independence era, Voluntarism during the post-Independence era, Contemporary voluntary action since the early 1990s, Evolution of NGOs in India, Basic Facts on NGOs, Size, Sources of Funding in India, Types of Funding, Dominant activities in India have been discussed. **CHAPTER-3** focussed on the Idea of Empowerment: Conceptual and Operational Dimensions of Women Empowerment: A pan-Indian Perspective and here the concept of empowerment, Women Empowerment, Review of Literature, Women's

Empowerment in Contemporary India, Darjeeling District of West Bengal and its milieu have been discussed. **CHAPTER-4** mainly dealing with NGOs in Darjeeling- Their Emergence, Growth, Types and Development: An Overview. Here History, Society, Economy and Polity of Darjeeling District have been discussed in details. **CHAPTER-5** has provided for NGOs and the Empowerment of Women: A Study in the Context of Darjeeling District of West Bengal in details. **CHAPTER-6** is the concluding portion of this thesis and here the Major Findings of the study, Suggestions and Concluding remarks have been highlighted.

# Acknowledgement

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This research work was done at the Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal, Raja Rammohanpur, Darjeeling, under the FDP Scheme granted by the University Grants Commission. In completing this research work, I have been benefited from many sources. The present study would not have completed without the assistance received from many persons and institutions. So, this work owes a great deal of the thoughts and efforts of many people. I would like to thank all of them heartily.

I feel a deep sense of gratitude and have been fortunate enough to get a committed Supervisor Professor Pradip Kumar Sengupta, Professor, Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal, Darjeeling, who despite his busy academic and administrative assignments and responsibilities, has inspired me and offered me valuable guidance, supervision and suggestion to complete this work. Without his hearty and valuable cooperation and guidance the work would not have completed.

I take this opportunity to express my gratefulness to Professor Md. Yasin (Co-supervisor), Professor, Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal, Darjeeling, for his constant inspiration and encouragement for the completion of my work. The present work also benefitted from the comments, insights, and cooperation and support of my all teachers of the Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal.

For the purpose of this study I visited many libraries, like National Library, Kolkata, District Library, Darjeeling, Documentation Cell, Centre for Himalayan Studies, NBU, and Central Library of North Bengal University and so on. I acknowledge the help received from the librarian and staff members of those libraries and thank them all.

I am also greatly thankful to the NGOs, staff members, respondents and the local people who had co-operated me a lot during my field work and contributed greatly for the fruitful completion of my work.



I am grateful to Dr. Afzal Hossain, principal, Sitalkuchi College, Cooch Behar, my colleagues and friends for helping me in the process of availing leave on FDP Scheme from the University Grants Commission.

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*Gopal Sharma*

GOPAL SHARMA (GHIMIREY)

*Const. Secy  
P. Gupta  
28/11/11*

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# Abbreviations

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AISA	All India Spinner's Association
AVARD	Association of Voluntary Agencies in Rural Development
AWP	ASEAN Women's Programme
BDO	Block Development Officer
BPL	Below Poverty Line
BSIEN	Balason Society for Improved Environment
CAPART	Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology
CART	Council for Advancement of Rural Technology
CBR	Community Based Rehabilitations
CDP	Community Development Programme
CDPO	Child Development Project Officer
CHP	Community Health Programme
CINI	Child In Need Institute
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	Child Sponsorship Programme
CSWB	Central Social Welfare Board
DGHC	Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council
DPP	Disaster Preparedness Programme
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
FCRA	Foreign Contribution Regulation Act
GJMM	Gorkha Jana Mukhati Morcha
GOI	Government of India
GP	Gram Panchayat
HH	Hayden Hall
HSWS	Hill Social Welfare Society
IAAP	Intensive Agricultural Area Programme
IADP	Intensive Agricultural Development Programme
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IFLA	Indian Forces Ladies' Association

INHP	Integrated Nutrition and Health Programme
MC	Microscopic Centre
MCC	Mother and Child Care
MCH	Mother and Child Health
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
NBA	Narmada Bachao Andolan
NES	National Extension Service
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NIPCCD	National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development
NYK	Nehru Yuva Kendras
PADI	People's Action for Development of India
PRIA	Participatory Research In Asia
PRIs	Panchayati Raj Institutions
RCH	Reproductive and Child Health
RHDC	Rural Health Development Center
RRC	Rural Reconstruction Centres
RSP	Rural Sanitation Programme
SCL	Sealed Community latrines
SHGs	Self Help Groups
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
SSA	Sarva Siksha Abhiyan
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
TRYSEM	Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment
UNDAW	United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
UNO	United Nations Organisation
VANI	Voluntary Action Network India
VLV	Village Level Volunteers
VOs	Voluntary Organisations
WEP	Women Empowerment Programme
WWHR	Women for Women's Human Right

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## **Chapter-1**

### **INTRODUCTION – THE PROBLEM – THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK – AN OVERVIEW IN THE CONTEXT OF NGOs OF DARJEELING IN WEST BENGAL**

# Chapter – 1

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## **INTRODUCTION – THE PROBLEM – THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK – AN OVERVIEW IN THE CONTEXT OF NGOs OF DARJEELING IN WEST BENGAL**

### **1.1 Introduction – The Problem**

Since the Constitution of India has emphasised on welfare state, its primary responsibility is to improve the quality of the life of the citizens. Hence, the Government of India has implemented different types of economic strategies, schemes and programmes for the betterment of the people. Starting with the Community Development Programme (CDP), the Government of India later shifted to several other programmes under Five Year Plans. Despite all these, several significant outcomes were visible in 1970s. Among these, the most important were women, the highly neglected section of the society. Then, the policy-makers have focused their attentions on shaping the socio-economic development of the women. But history reveals that in many societies in India and the world, gender inequality was a part and parcel of an accepted male-dominated culture. The traditional mentality of India assumed that the place of women is mainly concentrated to the household activities like kitchen work and upbringing of the children. They had been considered nothing but a sex object and obviously inferior to men in different spheres of life and knowledge. The 'Sati Pratha', 'Pardah System', 'Child Marriage', 'Dowry System', etc. are some forms of atrocities and discriminatory attitudes against the women. Even after 65 years of India's independence, women are still considered to be powerless and marginalised sections of the Indian society. The 2001 Census shows that the sex ratio in India is 933, which is lowest in the world. Percentage of female literacy is 54.16 per cent against male literacy of 75.85 per cent (2001 Census). Moreover, women's representation in the Parliament and in the State Assemblies has never been more than 8 and 10 per cent respectively.

In order to bring the women in the same platform where the men are

standing, the Government of India is adopting many measures and formulating different types of plans and programmes. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the states to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Constitution of India have provided reservation of seats (at least one-third) for women in the local bodies such as Panchayats and Municipalities. The Indian Government has passed various legislations to safeguard Constitutional rights of women. These legislative measures include the Hindu Marriage Act (1955), The Hindu Succession Act (1956), Dowry Prohibition Act (1961), Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act (1971), Equal Remuneration Act (1976), Child Marriage Restraint Act (1976), Immoral Trafficking (Prevention) Act (1986), Pre-natal Diagnostic Technique (Regulation and Prevention of Measure) Act (1994), etc. The Government of India has adopted different programmes and policies like the Swa-Shakti Project, Women's Economic Programme (1982), Support to Training and Employment Programme to Women (1987), Hostel for working women, Rehabilitation of Marginalized Women, Education of Women like Social Education, Farmer's functional literacy Programme (1967), Non-formal Education (1978), National Literacy Mission (1988), Total Literacy Campaign (1991), Sarva Siksha Abhiyan (2000), and organisation of Self Help Groups, formation of cooperatives of women, etc. to empower the women. Apart from these, various welfare measures like the Support to Training for Employment Programme (1987), Mahila Samridhi Yojana (1993), the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (1992-93), Indira Mahila Yojana (1995), DWCRA Plan (1982), Balika Samridhi Yojana (1997), etc. were introduced for the empowerment of women. The Government of India in 1953 established a Central Social Welfare Board with a nation-wide programme for grants-in-aid for women, children and under-privileged groups followed by the State Social Welfare Board in 1954. A separate Department of Women and Child Development was set up at the Centre in 1985 to give a distinct identity and provide a nodal point on the matters relating to women's development.

National Commission for Women was created by an Act of Parliament in 1992. Since 1980, the Government of India has shown an increasing concern for women related issues through a variety of legislation promoting the education and political participation of women (Collier, 1998). In 2001 National Policy for the Empowerment of Women was introduced.

But, the fact is that poverty, hunger and disease remain widespread among the women and women and girls continue to comprise the majority of the world's poorest people. The real conditions of women in international scenario are as follows:

- Of the 192 countries in the world, only 12 have a female head of state.
- Seventy per cent of the world's 1.3 billion poor-those who are living on the equivalent of less than US\$ 1 per day-are woman.
- Women spend twice as much time as men (or more time) on unpaid work.
- Worldwide, women on average earn two-thirds of what men earn.
- Women make up the majority of the world's part-time workers-between 60 per cent and 90 per cent. In the European Union, 83 per cent of part-time workers are women.
- In countries such as Australia, Canada, Thailand, and the United States, over 30 per cent of all businesses are now owned or operated by women, with Thailand topping the list at almost 40 per cent.
- In some countries of sub-Saharan Africa, most of the female labour force is in the informal economy; for example, 97 per cent in Benin, 95 per cent in Chad, 85 per cent in Guinea, and 83 per cent in Kenya.
- In Europe, women are the heads of household in nine out of ten single parent families.
- Women possess roughly one per cent of the land in the world.
- Today only six countries can boast the following: close to complete sexual equality in the area of secondary education, 30 per cent representation of women in elected government positions, roughly 50 per cent of non-agricultural jobs occupied by women.



- In nearly 100 years, only 24 women have been elected as head of state.
- Around 80 per cent of the 27 million refugees around the planet are women.
- Two-thirds of the 300 million children who have no access to education are girls.
- Out of almost a billion, people who are unable to read and write two-thirds of them are women.
- Over 200,000 women die every year as a result of back street abortions.
- Women produce 80 per cent of the food in the poorest areas in the world; in some places, this figure is as high as 95 per cent.
- Officially, 110 million girls worldwide between the ages of 5 and 14 work, and this do not include domestic tasks (Baylis, J. & Smith, S. 2005).

It is estimated that nearly 1300 million persons in the world are poor and nearly 70% of them are women. In the Developing Countries, women are getting an unequal share of the property, which has become a major hurdle for their empowerment. Today, 30 per cent to 35 per cent rural house-holds are women-headed and their meager income makes them more vulnerable to the extremes of poverty (Kant, S. Krishan, 2001).

Women in India have improved their well-being in the last 30 years in terms of increased expectation of life at birth, increased age at marriage, gross enrolment ratio at all levels of education, work participation rate in organised employment, reduced infant mortality rate and less gap between infant mortality rate for girls and boys. Yet, poverty in India is a deep-rooted problem. The number of women in politics at the local level had been very small, and their influence is negligible. As stated by Kumari and Kidwai (1996), "Prior to 1990, the women in local politics were generally either politicians who had lost membership of higher institutions, and those who were given such an opportunity to serve the purpose of publicity". The reason for low participation, as stated by Nath, Kamle (1997), is 'down the ages women have always been treated as subordinate to men in every aspect of life. Their place

of work was confined to the domain of the household and rearing of children. Her identity was attached to that of her father, husband or son, i.e. she was given a status in accordance with that of her male partner. It is not that the women in the past have not contributed substantially in politics, but because of their secondary status and low esteem, most of them were denied entry in political decision-making.'

## **1.2 Objectives of the Study**

Darjeeling District is very peculiar in its character because it has a higher work participation rate of female than men as compared to both the central and the state levels. The District is divided into two parts i.e. Hills and Plains according to its physiographical condition. The District is politically disturbed since long time because of the agitation for the separate state of Gorkhaland. There have been a number of empirical studies about the NGOs and empowerment of women in different parts of the globe. Here, the NGOs are seen to play a crucial role in the field of empowerment of women. It is to be mentioned here that the researchers make some works on 'NGOs and empowerment of women' in the national level but there is no any serious study on the NGOs and their roles in the society in Darjeeling District of West Bengal. So, the proposed study seeks to analyse the NGOs in India in general and their roles in the field of empowerment of women in Darjeeling District of West Bengal in particular. The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To examine the position of women in the society and to develop an understanding of the socio-economic and political factors influencing the rise of NGOs in Darjeeling District of West Bengal.
2. To examine the roles and activities of NGOs in the society and whether they are able to empower the womenfolk as an alternative mechanism of empowerment.
3. To do an in-depth study of a selected NGOs starting from its history, organisational set-up, staff pattern, different activities, jobs satisfactions of the staffs, beneficiaries observation, perception of the

local parties, and to explore how far NGOs are able to empower women in the District.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

Given the aforesaid objectives, the present study has sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the position of women in the society?
2. What are the main factors for the rise of the number of NGOs in Darjeeling District of West Bengal?
3. What are the main roles and activities of NGOs in the society?
4. Whether they are able to empower the womenfolk or not in the said District?
5. What is the history, organizational set-up, staff pattern, different activities of NGOs in the District?
6. How is the staff's job satisfaction, beneficiaries' and non-beneficiaries' observation, local parties' perception towards NGOs?
7. Does the participation of NGOs increase the women's influence over economic resources and participation in economic decision making?
8. Does the participation of NGOs influence the individual development and growth of women?
9. Is there an increase in women's decision making in the domestic matters?
10. Has participation of NGOs increased a woman's mobility, development of networks and interactions with other members of her group and community?
11. Does the participation of NGOs increase women's awareness and knowledge?
12. Does participation of NGOs increase women's participation and influence in social, community and political activities?

## **1.4 Theoretical Framework**

Empowerment of women is one of the key issues in any socio-economic development programme. Women's empowerment can be viewed as a continued process which includes various interrelated and mutual reinforcing components. "Empowerment is an active, multi-dimensional process which enables women to realize their full identify and empowers in all spheres of life" (Pallai, 1995). Therefore, it was hoped through Constitutional and legal measures the process of development and also empowerment would be achieved. But despite various movements and legal supports and despite sanctioning of various development projects, the picture of women's empowerment is not satisfactory. Thus, it can be suggested in the theoretical framework that for the overall empowerment of women both governmental as well as non-governmental initiatives are necessary because NGOs have emerged as a new force contributing to social upliftment and economic development. They play a vital role in the shaping and implementing of participatory democracy and work at grassroots levels in the remotest of areas and their reach is much wider. Government too has accepted the role of NGOs in the development process.

## **1.5 Overview of the Existing literatures**

The existing literatures, dealing with NGOs and empowerment of women in India is new, and is less attractive if we compare the same type of literature with the western one. Existing literatures on NGOs and their roles, especially in women's empowerment, are reviewed here.

Alsop, R. and Heinsohn, N. (2005) said that empowerment can be defined as a person's capacity to make effective choices and to transform choices into desired actions and outcomes. The extent to which a person is empowered is influenced by personal agency (the capacity to make a purposive choice) and opportunity structure (the institutional context in which choice is made). To determine the degrees of empowerment various indicators are suggested: for

personal agency - psychological, informational, organisational, material, social, financial or human; for opportunity structure- the presence and operation of formal and informal institutions, including the laws, regulatory frameworks, and norms governing behaviour. To illustrate how this analytical framework can be used, the paper describes the framework guided analysis in development interventions in Ethiopia, Nepal, Honduras and Mexico. The paper also presents a draft module for measuring empowerment at the country level. The module can be used alone or be integrated into country-level poverty or governance monitoring systems that seek to add an empowerment dimension to their analysis.

Altekar, A.S. (1959), a book analyses position of women in Hindu civilization from prehistoric times to the present day. The book highlights the main problems that confront the Hindu women and also suggests some solutions. There are twelve chapters in the book. Chapter one deals with the problems relating to the childhood and education of women. Chapters two and three deal with the problems connected with marriage and married life. In chapters four and five deal with position of widow in the society. Chapters six and seven deal with the place of women in public and religion life. In chapters eighth and nine right of property have been discussed. The Chapters ten and eleventh deal with fashions of dress, ornaments and general attitude of society towards women respectively.

Bagchi, Jasodhara, (1995) (ed.) - This edited volume analyses the current myths of Indian womanhood and explain how these influence the lives of the Indian women. The contributors of the book address the problems of all women, who strive to enrich their lives and surroundings and focus on the fact that whether urban middle class or rural poor, society always seeks to marginalise them through laws, media representations, social customs and economic deprivation. The contributors put forward some suggestions that no genuine social upliftment can be effected unless the material and ideological constraints on their lives are properly confronted.

Bagchi, Jasodhara, (2005) (ed.) - This is important and comprehensive volume vividly depicts the current status of women and girls in West Bengal. There are total eight essays in this volume and covers the following areas: demography, health and nutrition, education, economic development, political participation law, violence, and culture. The analysis has been conducted in the framework of the socio-economic and politico-cultural ambience. All the contributors of the volume have tried to show how women and girls of West Bengal have fared in the last three decades of the twentieth century and at the end of the volume some policy recommendation have been highlighted.

Batiwala, S. (1994) argues since the mid-1980s, the term empowerment has become popular in the development field, especially with reference to women. However, there is confusion as to what the term means among development actors. She analyses the concept of women's empowerment and outlines empowerment strategies based on the insights gained through a study of grassroots programmes in South Asia. The concept of women's empowerment is the outcome of important critiques generated by the women's movement, particularly by 'third world' feminists. They clearly state that women's empowerment requires the challenging of patriarchal power relations that results in women having less control over material assets and intellectual resources. Women participate in their own oppression so they must first become aware of the ideology that legitimises male domination. The empowerment process starts from within but access to new ideas and information comes from external agents. With new consciousness and the strength of solidarity, women can assert their right to control resources and to participate equally in decision making processes.

Charyulu and Natarajan (1980) had conducted a case study in Cuddapah district of Andhra Pradesh. They reported that flexibility, personal touch, easy accessibility of services for the client groups, capacity to initiate the experiment with new programmes, stimulation and mobilization of resources

of the community, sensitivity to field problem, self-help and self-reliance are the main points of concern of voluntary organisations. They had emphasised that the NGOs possess the terms of reference and enough resources to meet the needs of the human beings.

Deshmukh Ranadiv, J. (2008), (ed.) makes a compilation of diverse research methods on addressing justice in the family. It is based on the theme of the relevance of the ethos of democracy to a family. He makes a clear discussion on the implications of oppressive families on gender differences, and the ways in which these are being negotiated or transformed.

Deshmukh Ranadive, J. (2003) said that women's empowerment does not necessarily take place when incomes are generated, when livelihoods are enhanced or when groups are formed. This is because within families and households, hierarchies and structures do not alter. In fact, public interventions which result in new social activity or new avenues of income generation can actually accentuate tensions within households. It is at such times that supplementary interventions are required. 'Gender equity in the family' is an experimental intervention from Andhra Pradesh, which uses folk theatre to highlight traditional socio-cultural norms within the family. The performances do not blame the men or the women for gender inequality but show how both those who suffer from and those that perpetrate inequality are victims of social structure. The intervention shows that in order to change the socio-cultural space of women in the home, other members of the household need to be involved in empowerment processes.

Dolly Arora (1993), (ed.) argues that a discourse has underwent three major shifts in accent in the decade of 1980s, firstly, an increased concern for the protection of environment; secondly, an emphasis on people's participation, especially in the protection, management and regeneration of natural resources; and thirdly, the incorporation of gender as an important element of development concerns. There is a growing interest of international agencies,

non- governmental organisations and donor agencies as well as the state in the programmes of wasteland development on the one hand and increasing involvement of women in these programmes on the other hand. Both manifests the discursive transformation and creates further discursive space for subsequent policy actions and expectations. All the contributors to this book admit that there is a need of involving of women in wasteland development not because of women are instinctively closer to nature, but because of they suffer ecological degradation most and afforestation projects which are not planned around women's schedules and needs often deny them rights which they enjoyed before the project started. NGOs, it is suggested that, can motivate women to organise and take part in wasteland development or forest protection and in the process strengthen themselves. The NGOs can liaise with the governmental authorities and pick up the legal actions on behalf of the women of the village. The NGOs can educate, motivate and organise the people towards protection of the forest. For various reasons, thus, NGOs are assigned an important role in respect of women's participation in wasteland development.

Dr. Mathu, A., Dr. Pandya, R. (2006), (eds.) – This book is comprehensive synthesis of major problems and issues related to women and development. There are eleven chapters in this books and covers the programmes and policies for women in India, women and health, women and media, women and law, women and education, women and adult education, gender and socialization, women and environment, women studies cells and centers, women and widowhood and lastly women development and efforts of NGOs.

Edna Acosta-Belen and Christine E. Bose, (1990) argues that the condition of women in Third World Countries cannot be separated from the colonial experience since the power relationships that were established during the colonial era are still recreated through contemporary mechanisms. As a result and contrary to expectations, growth and prosperity still elude in the Third World. They also show that during the current international economic crisis,



women's unpaid or underpaid labour has become the basis of new development programmes and policies and is crucial to the recent phase of capitalist development. They discuss how the structural position and status of women and colonies closely resemble each other and have served as the foundations of the capital accumulation process and the development of industrial nations. The concept of women as a last colony thus becomes a compelling metaphor of liberation and leads us to stress the need for a worldwide process of gender decolonization, entailing the reformulation of power relations between women and men.

Femida Handy, Meenaz Kassam, Suzanne Feeney, Bhagyashree Ranade, (2006), (eds.) This book is a result of a five-year study of small NGOs that were started by women at the grass-roots level in and around the city of Pune in Maharashtra, India. This book provides an in-depth understanding of why grass-roots Indian NGOs run by women for women tend to be successful. The authors have discussed the social impact of the NGOs in promoting both development and women's empowerment. They showed the importance of small NGOs in the local communities and emphasised that these small NGOs can change the rural India and abolished the rural poverty effectively.

Fiona Leach and Shashikala Sitaram (2002) describe an NGO project intended to empower scheduled caste women working in the silk-reeling industry in India through the provision of microfinance. They documented the impact of the project and highlighted the negative consequences of excluding male relatives from playing any meaningful role. They have suggested the ways in which the project might have been made more male inclusive while still empowering women. At the same time, they acknowledge that even if the men's hostility to the project had been overcome, the women's micro enterprises were unlikely to have been viable commercially. This is because the project insisted that the women operate as a group in what was a high-risk area of economic activity, with no clear strategy as to how their work could be sustained.

G. Sreeramulu, (2006)- This book provides an in-depth study of empowerment of women through self-help groups. The study mainly focused its attention on empowerment of women, topography socio-economic background of the rural women in some selected district. The study covers the problems and perspectives of SHGs and suggested several measures. The book has evaluated the implementation of several schemes in Andhra Pradesh in general and Anantpur District in particular. The book covers each and every side of SHGs in the District.

Grown, C., Rao Gupta, G. and Kes, A. (2005) puts question that how can the global community achieve the Third Millennium Development Goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women. To be empowered women must have equal capabilities in the fields of education and health, and equal access to resources and opportunities such as land and employment. They said that the women must also have the agency to use these capabilities and resources to make strategic choices. This report, prepared by the UN Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, identifies strategic priorities and practical actions for achieving women's empowerment by 2015. They emphasised on the following concepts: strengthening opportunities for post-primary education for girls; investing in infrastructure to reduce women's and girls' time burdens; guaranteeing women's and girls' property and inheritance rights; increasing women's share of seats in national parliaments and local governmental bodies; and combating violence against women and girls.

Gurumurthy, A. (2003) emphasised that the progress in technology has encouraged the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in India, Bangladesh and Pakistan for social transformation and economic growth. He said that governments have to bridge the digital divide, and have set up information technology taskforces and e-governance initiatives to deliver public services, and have to shift state policy from a monopolistic regime towards a competitive framework. New business models

are emerging to alter the economics of hardware and connectivity and are targeting the rural markets. Some NGOs are using ICTs for development. However, many activities around ICTs for development in the region lack a clear vision and mission and on how to enable women to benefit from ICTs. This document looks at specific projects and programmes in the region which focuses on women's economic empowerment with the help of ICTs.

Ilkkaracan, I. and Seral, G. (2000) Women's sexuality remains a strong taboo in Turkey. Most women have little or no access to information on sexuality as because the issue is not addressed in either in the formal or in the informal education systems. This silence around women's sexuality can leave women ill-equipped to deal with sexual relations and develop happy sexual lives. Women for Women's Human Rights (WWHR) a Turkey based NGO runs a human rights training programme for women which seeks to facilitate an empowering perception of sexuality by emphasising the right to sexual expression, pleasure and enjoyment. The programme covers a wide range of issues encompassing reproductive rights and sexual violence against women as well as sexual expression and sexual fulfillment. Sexual violence and reproductive sexuality are purposely addressed in separate modules, thus allowing a separate space for the participants to focus solely on a positive understanding of sexual rights, including the basic right to know and like one's sexual organs, the right to seek sexual experiences independent of marital status, the right to orgasm, the right to expression and pursuit of sexual needs and desires, and so on.

Jaya Kothai Pillai, (1995) The book is in two sections, the first dealing with empowerment of women in general and the second section, empowerment of women professionals. The author of this book said that women have to empower themselves and have to take the initiative to change their status. The author has collected the information on women professionals of the world and makes a comparison with that of Indian findings.

Joel S.G.R, Bose, (2003) There are ten chapters in this book and attempts to examine the role of NGOs in the rural development. This book covers the all sides of NGOs starting from its genesis and evolution, theory, types and so on. This book thoroughly discusses the concept of rural development and the role of NGOs in it.

Kabeer, N. (1999) said that empowerment is a process by which those who have been denied power gain power, in particular the ability to make strategic life choices. For women, these could be the capacity to choose a marriage partner, a livelihood, whether or not to have children, etc. To attain these, three interrelated dimensions are needed: access to and control of resources; agency (the ability to use these resources to bring about new opportunities) and achievements (the attainment of new social outcomes). Empowerment, therefore, is both a process and an end result.

Kabeer, N. (2005) discusses the Third Millennium Development Goal (MDG), on gender equality and women's empowerment. He explores the concept of women's empowerment and highlights the ways in which the indicators has associated with this Goal can contribute on education, employment, and political participation.

Kabeer, N. (2005) has emphasised the impact of microfinance. The paper examines the empirical evidence on the impact of microfinance with respect to poverty reduction and the empowerment of poor women in South Asia. It becomes apparent that while access to financial services it can and does make vital contributions to the economic productivity and social well-being of poor women and their household and it does not 'automatically' empower women. Like other development interventions such as education, political quotas, etc. that seeks to bring about the radical structural transformation that true economic empowerment is possible with the help of microfinance.

Kapoor (1994) carried out a research project on 'Women and Welfare- A Study of Voluntary Agencies in Punjab.' The study is based on a historical survey of the status of women as determined or influenced, from time to time, by scriptural codes, social conventions, cultural traditions, political changes, economic and industrial development, constitutional provisions and humanistic ideas. He explored that the changing nature and dimensions of voluntary action towards women welfare by understanding the working of four voluntary agencies- Association of Social Health in India, Bharatiya Grameen Mahila Samiti, Nari Niketan and Sewa Sadan.

Kapoor and Singh (1977) initiated a study on 'Rural Development through NGOs'. They made this study in Himachal Pradesh and gave a clear representation that NGOs could do very little in areas of massive action and recommended for large developmental works.

Klugman, B. (2000) suggested the ways by which women can become empowered and can play a model role in the policy-making process in the society. The book presents two case studies which illuminate the issue of women's empowerment from different perspectives: the way in which processes of advocacy can empower women, and the way in which policies that empower women can be won through women's participation and advocacy. It first analyses the 1994 Women's Health Conference which, for most participants, was their first ever experience of a truly consultative process, and one which would later make a direct policy influence. This knowledge strengthened women's self-esteem and enhanced their belief in their own capacity to contribute to policy processes. The second case study focuses on the strategies used to change South Africa's abortion legislation and reveals the diverse tactics required to ensure that women's empowerment remains at the centre of policy content. Empowerment can be achieved through the implementation of the policy itself, for example the fact that access to safe abortion increases women's ability to control their lives in a context where it

may be difficult to access appropriate contraception, or to negotiate contraception use.

Lalitha (1975) conducted a study on 'voluntary works in India.' The study covered 390 voluntary organisations and 365 operational volunteers in nine cities of India, namely, Delhi, Bombay, Madras, Bangalore, Ahmedabad, Hyderabad, Lucknow, Patna, and Amritsar. The study had thoroughly examined the socio-economic profile of voluntary workers, nature of works in which they were engaged in and so on. After examining the problems of the voluntary organisations and workers some sort of suggestions for improvement has been highlighted.

Leelamma Devasia, V.V. Devasia, (2004)- This book elucidates the struggle of women in some slum areas in Nagpur city to achieve social justice, economic independence and freedom through meeting their needs without compromising the ability of others to meet their own needs. The book emphasised the importance Community Action for Development (CAD) a NGO and the participation of women.

Longwe, S. (2000) said that the current NGO and development agency strategies to support women's political empowerment are based on two assumptions: firstly, that women's increased access to resources, especially education, will lead to their increased representation in political positions; and secondly, that governments are genuinely committed to leading national programmes of action for women's advancement. This article argues that both of these assumptions are seriously mistaken. All development organisations supporting women's empowerment must recognised the true obstacles that women are facing in gaining political power, and develop programme strategies to overcome them. The key problem is the covert and discriminatory systems of male resistance to women who dare to challenge male domination of the present political system. In addition to focusing on the need to get women into government, NGOs could also usefully support of

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organisations that are engaging in direct action is a key strategy which enables women to push for policy changes from outside government.

M L Dantwala, Harsh Sethi, Pravin Visaria, (1998), (eds.) The book constitute the six case studies of voluntary efforts which are taken from both urban and rural areas. The book highlights the viability of voluntarism as a social impulse suffused with the values of service and sacrifice, the significant change in the attitude of the people from apathy to active involvement when presented either unselfish leadership, and the evolution in the priorities of voluntary organisations from welfare and development to advocacy and the struggle for rights and entitlements and so on. The contributors argued that NGOs tend to view themselves as a separate sector and therefore note a caution.

M.P. Kishore, (2008) very beautifully discussed the contemporary women's righteous movement in India. With first-hand knowledge of the working of legislation and the law enforcement machinery in India, the author attempts to explain why laws enacted for the ostensible purpose of strengthening rights of the women ends with such dismal results. The book exemplifies a tenacious, logical and sincere effort to understand the measures of reform work and that which don't work in the real world. The author is very much in favour of revision of laws, legislations, and law enforcement machineries for the well-being of India's diverse women.

Malhotra, Anju's (2002) paper presents a review of current theories and strategies to foster women's empowerment in the development context. The paper defines empowerment as the ability of people to make strategic choices in areas that affect their lives. Two key factors in the process of empowerment are identified: control over resources (the conditions for empowerment) and agency (the ability to formulate choices). Section one outlines the conceptual framework. Section two discusses how empowerment can be measured in practice, with an overview of various frameworks which cover economic, socio-cultural, familial, legal, political and psychological dimensions.

Marcelle, G. (2002) has emphasised the importance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and has treated it a powerful tool for women's empowerment. It can create better opportunities for women to exchange information, gain access to on-line education and to engage in e-commerce activities. But, they are not given the same. This is often due to lack of connectivity, inadequate access, illiteracy, and to language and behavioural barriers. The paper highlights successful case studies from many countries on the use of ICTs as a tool for economic empowerment, participation in public life, and for enhancing women's skills and capabilities. It also explores strategies to integrate a gender perspective into national ICT policies. The report ends with a call to all stakeholders to work on improving connectivity, access to ICT skills training and eliminating negative behavioural attitudes to women's full engagement with ICTs.

Martinez, E. and Glenzer, K. (2005) have made a comprehensive studies of CARE programmes made to the empowerment of women. CARE defines an 'empowered woman' as women who enjoys bodily integrity, has positive images of her own worth and dignity, has equitable control and influences over strategic household and public resources, and lives in an enabling environment in which women can and do engage in collective effort. Some recommendations are also made to achieve the women's empowerment.

Mayoux, L. (2006) has emphasised the importance of microfinance programme and said that these programmes have the potential to initiate a series of 'virtuous spirals' of economic empowerment and increased well-being for women and their families. This paper challenges the assumptions of automatic benefits of micro-finance for women. For example, high repayment levels by women do not necessarily indicate that they have used the loans themselves. Men may take loans from women, or women may choose to invest loans according to men's priorities. Likewise, high demand for loans by women may be a sign of social pressure to access resources for in-laws or husbands rather



than an indicator of empowerment. Where women are unable to negotiate changes in intra-household and community gender inequalities they may become dependent on loans to continue in low paid occupations with heavier workloads. However, these shortcomings should not discourage microfinance programmes being undertaken. The experience of current innovations in many programmes indicates a range of ways in which contribution to women's empowerment can be increased. Suggestions include the need to provide services to reduce the burden of unpaid domestic work on women, including childcare, and to ensure that repayment schedules and interest rates reflect the reality of women's economic activities and life cycles.

Michael Edwards and Alan Fowler, (2002), (eds.) said that during the last decade, along with the rise of the voluntary sector as a formidable force of transformation in global politics and economics, there has been a tremendous increase in the number of courses and training programmes on NGO management. In the introductory chapter, the editors have clarified that the book focuses mainly on a subset of NGOs called non-governmental development organizations (NGDOs) which are “intermediaries working primarily on issues of poverty and injustice within ‘developing’ countries and at global level”. The book provides a cluster of challenges for NGO management in the changing global context and refreshingly reminds the NGO managers inter alia that (i) NGOs must continuously justify their presence in and value to society, as their fight against poverty, injustice, exclusion, or degradation of natural resources is voluntary and self-chosen, without any statutory authority; (ii) engagement with citizens and social mobilization should be of high quality, as it is a key determinant of voluntary sector legitimacy, effectiveness, power, and influence; (iii) the route to compliance of staff toward achieving goals and missions of NGOs lies in satisfying the self-motivation of staff and volunteers, as NGOs cannot rely on coercion or financial rewards as a means to coax staff to achieve targets; and (iv) establishing and sustaining the right connections lies in the heart of effective NGO management, as NGOs “constitute a crucial part of the ‘connective tissue’ of a vigorous civil

society". The first part of the book reflects the future roles of NGOs in an era of declining international aid, moving NGOs from agents of foreign aid to vehicles for international cooperation, emergence of newer, flexible forms of organization, and revising NGO strategy around value-based action. The next section deals with concepts and experiences of scaling up the developmental impact of NGOs and responsibilities in transnational NGO advocacy. The third and fourth sections of the book have highlighted the different strategies for 'managing growth, change and structure' and for 'strengthening governance and accountability,' respectively. Next chapter attempts to provide conceptual clarity on issues like 'participation, empowerment, partnering and capacity-building." The next section provides useful insights on a very relevant subject 'measuring achievements: approaches and methods.' Sections seven and eight contain papers on topics relating to the advantages of NGOs as learning organizations and mobilizing resources for sustaining organizations respectively. Section nine emphasizes the roles and requirements of gender sensitivities in the works of NGOs. The final section deals with the paper on the techniques for the management of human resources and the development of leadership.

Mosedale, S. (2005) briefly reviews how women's empowerment has been discussed within development studies, how the concept of power was debated and refined during the second half of the twentieth century and how power relations might be described and evaluated in a particular context. A conceptual framework of empowerment is then proposed which is based on women identifying their contextualised gender constraints, and the process by which women redefine and extend what is possible for them.

N. Jayaram's (2005) edited volume contextualizes the discourse on civil society, state and democracy; explore the relationship between civil society, and specific institutions and processes; outline the cultural and power perspective on civil society; analyse the relationship between civil society and good society.

Neera Burra, (2005) (ed.) makes a full understanding on the various pulls and push factors under which micro-credit operates in the country. He said that in this particular sector most of the work that happens in spiral bound reports. He emphasised the micro-credit programmes and also give more importance on methodological issues and overall impacts.

Oxaal, Z. and Baden, S. (1997) point out that what does women's empowerment mean? If women are empowered, does that mean men have less power? They said that empowerment has become a new 'buzzword' in international development language but is often poorly understood. The need to 'empower' women responds to the growing recognition that women in developing countries lack control over resources and the self- confidence and/or opportunity to participate in decision making processes. At the same time, the realisation that women have an increasingly important role to play in social and economic development has become widely accepted. Unless women are 'empowered' to participate alongside men in the development process, development efforts will only have partial effect. Empowerment strategies must carefully define their meaning of 'empowerment' and be integrated into mainstream programmes rather than attempted separately.

Parpart, J. L., Rai, S. and Staudt, K. (2002) call for a new approach to empowerment, which recognises that empowerment approaches are always embedded in institutional structures and must be understood at that level. It argues for a clearer understanding of power, and rejects the simple opposition between those who have power and those who do not. Instead, it is important to think about language, meanings, identities and cultural practices when considering women's empowerment. Furthermore, empowerment should be understood as a process as well as an outcome. While attempts to evaluate outcomes in quantifiable terms are important, the achievement of stated goals cannot be taken as proof of individual or group empowerment. Instead, both

the process and outcomes of empowerment should be seen as unpredictable – rather than as linear, inevitable and easily understood.

Peter Frumkin, (2002) made an outstanding survey and synthesis of scholarly work on non-profit and voluntary organizations. The nonprofit sector is, in Frumkin's words, an "elusive mass of contradictions". Its inhabitants range from giant, fee-for-service health-care organizations to small arts organizations funded by donations. There is much uncertainty as the sector's defining features and boundaries. Scholarly exploration of the nonprofit universe has become a growth industry-albeit one without a fixed home in any one historic discipline. In an attempt to unify nonprofit research into a single framework, he focuses on four core functions and activities that he believes nonprofits perform: delivering needed services, fostering civic and political engagement, expressing values and faith, and facilitating social entrepreneurship. His selection of certain functions as core is both descriptive and normative: nonprofits serve many functions, but these four above all justify their elevated status in law and public esteem. These are, one might say, the virtues that nonprofits ought to cultivate—albeit within limits. He concludes by positing that "virtue in the nonprofit sector lies in moderation and balance among the four functions". The ideal nonprofit would "simultaneously deliver services, advocate for policies that are important to the community, express values through a unique and individualistic mission, and generate funding streams through the creative use of commercial ventures".

Pradhan, B. (2003) put some questions that includes -how do we decide empowered a woman or a group of women are? Do frequently used socio-economic indicators such as education, income, and labour force participation adequately capture the concept of empowerment? This paper argues that while these quantitative socio-economic measures of empowerment are useful indicators as a first approximation, they are not sensitive enough to capture the nuances of gender power relations. This is because quantitative methods alone are unable to capture the interactive processes through which those in a

weaker position strategies ways of gaining from the unequal relationship. Therefore in order to understand the socio-cultural context within which women's behaviour in social interaction and gender relationships takes place, an in-depth anthropological method is essential.

Prasad, K. (2001), (ed.) highlights the importance of NGOs in the field of socio-economic development processes in the society. The contributors of this volume throw considerable light on the nature, role and responsibilities of NGOs as a promoter of development, their comparative advantages and limitations vis-à-vis the role of the government, evolution of government policies towards NGOs, and contributions made by specific NGOs in promoting micro finance for the poor, providing health and other social services to the weaker sections, and helping in the overall multi-faced development of rural areas in backward region of the country.

Prasad, Narendra (2007) This book consists of twenty two chapters and has covered a wide field of socio-economic and political issues of Indian women. He beautifully discussed the status of women in ancient India. The book covers the demographic profile of Indian women, political participation, implication of Women's Reservation Bill, women's empowerment through Panchayati Raj, women's entrepreneurship, female agricultural labourers in India, Women's labour force, education of women, socio-economic condition of Dalit and Tribal women, women and environment, violence against women, social security for women workers, women's health, impact of economic reforms on Indian women and finally Indian women's rights and laws.

(PRIA), (1999) shows that in 1993, India passed the 73rd Constitutional Amendment which reserved 33% of Panchayati raj(village councils) seats for women. The Amendment enabled thousands of women to enter the political arena. While some women have created political spaces to voice their needs, concerns and priorities, others are still trying to grapple with the power and authority thrust upon them. If empowerment is seen as a process by which

women overcome the challenges of a patriarchal society then it is difficult to maintain that the 73rd Amendment has achieved it for women. What has emerged, however, is that women have felt empowered at different points through their experiences and at various levels. A number of women have challenged their roles as care-givers by entering the public domain, have gained new prestige, and have become role models for other women. Although it is difficult to measure how these experiences have impacted on the women in their personal lives, it is known that through participation in Panchayati Raj, women have acquired a critical gender consciousness on how they have been denied their rights.

Malhotra, M. (2004), (ed.) (In 3 Volumes) deals with the issues leading to empowerment of women with particular reference to rural Indian women. The volume one deals with issues like gender inequalities in labour market and in entrepreneurship and is mainly deals with empowerment of women labour in India. The volume two focuses on microfinance options for women empowerment. There are seven chapters in volume two and covers the role of microfinance, gendering microfinance, and microfinance in India, micro crediting, microfinance and social exclusion and the challenges and opportunities of microfinance in India. The volume three describes the various programmes and policies to empower women and bring them into the orbit of development network in details.

Rai, S. (2002) argued that the issue of power must be taken into account: empowerment of whom, by whom, through what and for what? There is also the issue of priorities – the question of whether this engagement with the state is appropriate at a time when the pressures of globalisation and liberalisation are increasing social inequalities within the country. Surely any debate on women's empowerment should focus on questions about improving women's life chances rather than increasing their political representation? Most significantly, the Indian case shows that there is no simple correlation between an enhanced visibility of women in political institutions and a sense of

empowerment of women in the country in general. The question of empowerment cannot be disassociated from the question of relations of power within different socio-political systems. The debates on empowerment, and attempts to put them into practice, need to be opened up to these questions.

Rajasekhar, D. (2004) observes that one of the greatest problems of modern world facing is the problem of poverty. This book closely observes the efforts made by the NGOs in alleviating poverty. The study was conducted in Vellore District, Tamil Nadu, and in Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh, India and had covered six villages. The study evaluates the strategies adopted by the poor in coming out of poverty.

Rajasekhar, D., Biradar, R.R. (2004), (eds.) describes the details of some NGOs starting from their organisation, objectives, developmental activities, number of villages covered and number of groups formed. The contributors of this book also discuss the strategies adopted in establishing interface and problems that NGOs as well as the people encountered in the process. There are 14 chapters in this book and the contributors suggest that the governments and NGOs are no longer reluctant partners. Each of the actors has realized the advantages of the other and weakness of its own.

Sarkar (2005) makes a clear distinction between voluntary organizations and NGOs. He clearly described the typology of NGOs and classified them according to the types and level of operations. He grouped the NGOs of West Bengal into five categories, such as religious organisations, service organisations, development organisations, research organisations and consultancy agencies. He discussed the district wise distribution of NGOs of West Bengal, distribution of NGOs as per the area of operation, organizational set-up, present activities of NGOs, and nature of programmes sustainability, staffs and their satisfaction, sources of funding, extent of people's participation, perception of beneficiaries towards the working of NGOs and so on.

Schwartz and Pharr's (2003) (eds.) provides a rich empirical detail on Japan's civil society and offers some provocative comparisons with other societies. The 15 essays selected for this volume were originally presented at a 2000 conference, "Civil Society in the Asia-Pacific," organized under the auspices of the Program of U.S.-Japan Relations at Harvard's Weather-head Center for International Affairs. Substantive essays address important aspects of Japan's civil society, drawing upon rigorous research, including many Japanese sources discussed here. In particular, it is enlightening to realize how dynamic Japan's civil society is, how it interacts with the modern state and the capitalist economy in ambivalent, and often contradictory, terms, and how inclusive it is of a variety of actors. Despite the notable omission of groups organized around such issues as gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and nationalism, and despite the need for more primary data, the editors' methodological decision to apply the concept of civil society through a culturally and historically sensitive lens that has yielded a valuable, though not comprehensive, introduction to Japan's civil society. It is actually an effort to execute a theoretical inquiry based primarily upon Japan's case.

Sen, G. and Grown, C. (1985) said that Third World Countries are increasingly forced to rely on internal resource mobilisation to make up for sharp reductions in external aids and resources. Alongside this, development processes are often indifferent to the interests and the needs of the poor. In this scenario, women's contributions as workers and as managers of human welfare are central to the ability of households, communities and nations to tackle the resulting crisis. However, women suffer from decreased access to resources and increased demands on their labour and time. If human survival is the world's most pressing problem, and if women are crucial to that survival, then the empowerment of women is essential for the emergence of new, creative and cooperative solutions. As a part of the empowerment process, feminism and collective action are fundamental but feminism must not be monolithic in its issues, goals and strategies, since it should constitute the political expression of the concerns and interests of women from different



regions, classes, nationalities and ethnic backgrounds. There is and must be a diversity of feminisms, responsive to the different needs and concerns of different women and defined by women for themselves. The underlying foundation to this diversity is the common opposition to gender oppression and other forms of domination.

SIDA (2001) In October 2000, a conference was held in Sweden to create a forum for development practitioners and researchers to discuss the latest debates on gender and power. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) noted that in implementing gender policies in development, it was time to move from treating the symptoms of gender inequality to addressing the structural factors that cause it. This document comprises papers presented by Naila Kabeer, Patricia McFadden, Signe Arnfred, Edme Dominguez and Sherin Saadallah. The key issues covered include: the need to recognise how prescribed processes of empowerment may violate the essence of the concept; how culture excludes women from sites and statuses of power; the need to incorporate the language of political struggle into gender and development; how women in Mexico are changing political culture and gendered relationships, and the strategies Muslim societies can use to alleviate gender inequality and power imbalances.

Sinha, N. (2007) highlights the importance and the role of women in Indian democracy. She conducted this study in Bihar, India. She has emphasised the decision making capabilities of the women and for that she said social, economic, educational and political empowerment is necessary. The study examines and analyses importance of education, poverty, poor health, socio-economic status which have direct effect in the politics of Bihar.

Sullivan, O. (2004) said that the idea of 'doing gender' understood as the interactions between men and women in the domestic sphere, which bring about transformations in gender relations. Women and men's day-to-day negotiations and struggles around the domestic division of labour should be

understood within such a framework, as part of a wider social process that involves slow transformative changes in consciousness and practice.

Sumi Krishna (2004) (ed.) brings together different dimensions of women's livelihood, citizenship and development. Their study made a historical survey of the patriarchal structure of the natural resource policy in India and argues that the recognition of the ways of life and livelihood, so that women take their legitimate space as productive human beings, is entitled to dignity as a political right and not merely to protection and welfare.

Sunita Kishor and Kamla Gupta (2004) argue that there are several cogent and pressing reasons for evaluating, promoting and monitoring the level of women's empowerment in India. It is true that women empowerment is necessary not only for ensuring their self-welfare, but the well-being of the entire household. Empowerment of women is also critical for the very development of India, since it will enhance both the quality and the quantity of human resources available for development. Further, the success of development efforts are depends on the fruits of development reaching to both men and women. The extent, to which this happens, however, depends critically on gender relations within the society that set the worth of one sex relative to the other. A final, but one of the most fundamental reasons for promoting the empowerment of women is that failing to empower women as well as men to reach their full potential is a violation of their basic human rights.

T. Saliba, Allen, Carolyn and Howard, Judith A. (2005) (eds.) make a clear assumption on Muslim women and has said that they are the victims of Islam and Islamic fundamentalism. Their essay focuses on the complex relations of power that shapes women's negotiations for identity, power, and agency as participants in religious, cultural and nationalist movements. There essays exposes the short comes of the secularist assumptions of many recent feminist analyses, which continue to treat religion in general and fundamentalism in

particular as a problematic tool of oppression used against women, rather than as a viable form of feminist agency, that produces contradictory effects for women in particulars.

T.K. Oommen (2004) examines and presents a comparative analysis of social movements with special reference to France, India and Poland and in the process, recognizes the 'new wave of social movements'.

Townsend, J., Porter, G., & Mawdsley, E. (2004) said that Development NGOs have been accused by some of being instruments of control and domesticated by the neo-liberal project. This paper argues, however, that although the majority of women's NGOs have been co-opted to serve mainstream development agendas, such groups nevertheless bring women together away from men and create social spaces for women to set their own priorities. This space has been used for self-empowerment by millions of women around the world. This can happen even where the groups are planned to be purely instrumental, in terms of income generation, most often through microfinance initiatives. Drawing on work with NGOs in Ghana, India, Mexico and Europe, the paper explores various strategies deployed by 'independent thinking NGOs.

V. Kanesalingam, (1989), (ed.) examines the status of women and their role in development, their socio-economic conditions, education, role in history and services sectors etc. This book has tried to draw the scholars' attention on women's problems in South Asian Countries. Above all, it has given more emphasis on legislation for the improvement of womenfolk.

Vandana Desai (2005) focuses on gender mainstreaming in small grassroots NGOs in the Indian city of Mumbai. She identifies some of the gaps in activities and challenges that these organisations face, and explores the links between gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. NGOs working at community level can play an important role in supporting women to challenge customs, ideas, and beliefs which perpetuate unequal gender relations. This

role of NGOs becomes particularly challenging in the context of rapid social and cultural change. She further argues that despite commitments to gender mainstreaming, NGOs have insufficient understanding that they can facilitate the process of empowerment of women in such a context.

Waterhouse, R. and Neville, S. (2005) said that the concepts of voice and accountability form the core values of good governance. This evaluation makes a preliminary assessment of DFID's work since 1995 on issues of gender, voice and accountability and concludes that DFID has made a significant contribution through research and support to practical interventions. Achievements include: contribution to the opportunities for women to make their voices heard in government policy forums including locally and nationally elected bodies; increased capacity for gendered poverty analysis (e.g. through institutional support to Ministries of Gender, as well as Planning and Finance); increased capacity for gendered cost and budget analysis and formulation (e.g. through gender budgeting initiatives in Rwanda, India, Uganda); increased capacity for gender-sensitive monitoring systems (both at project level and in national processes such as poverty monitoring systems); and establishing mechanisms to ensure that women's voices are heard and that governments in particular may be held accountable to gender equality goals. The report makes recommendations for how to undertake a more systematic evaluation of this aspect of DFID's work on gender equality and women's empowerment.

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

From the overview of the existing literatures it appears that most of the studies mainly deal with women empowerment through the different initiatives of governments (both Union and states) and less emphasis has been given on empowerment of women through NGOs. More than this there are large number of researches on the NGOs and the empowerment of women in both international and national level, but the research work on the NGOs and the empowerment of women at the District level in its micro-coverage has been ignored. Here in lies the research gap. Thus, the present research work seeks to

make an in depth study of the empowerment of women through NGOs in the District of Darjeeling, West Bengal, India. The present research work will enhance the existing knowledge on NGOs and empowerment of women in India in general and empowerment of women through NGOs in Darjeeling District in particular. It will help to answers the research questions, evaluate the theoretical framework, identify the factors and sources of women empowerment, and finally suggest some measures for the future course of actions in the form of policy-inputs.

### **1.7 Methodology**

The study is, as the objective of the study suggests, descriptive and diagnostic in nature. The present work being an empirical study, the materials were collected from different places through fieldworks in the district. For the collection of empirical and secondary data the University of North Bengal Library, National Library (Kolkata), District library, subdivision libraries of the District, etc. could be used. Apart from this, structured and unstructured interviews with government officials, NGO workers, beneficiaries, intellectuals, political leaders, common citizens were conducted. Literature and scanning survey were conducted to understand the socio-economic factors that influence the rise of NGOs in the District. Case study was also initiated on selected NGOs to observe and reveal various aspects pertinent to history, programmes, staffs and their job satisfaction and beneficiaries' perceptions, etc. Thus, the present study used both the explanatory and analytical design.

### **1.8 Types of Data Collected**

In order to carry out this research work, the following types of data are required:

- (i) For the first objective, data related to the position of women in the society and the factors led to form numbers of NGOs in Darjeeling District are essential.

- (ii) To carry out the second objective, researchers are required to examine the roles and activities of NGOs in the society and to find out whether they are able to empower the womenfolk as an alternative mechanism of empowerment and for that we have to examine the factors that led the growth of numbers of NGOs periodically, their operational area, type of organisation, type of service, nature of starting programme, promoter's background, staff and their job satisfaction, etc.
- (iii) In order to fulfill the third objective, four NGOs are selected for case study from the four subdivisions of Darjeeling District (Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Kurseong and Siliguri), one from each subdivision. The historical background, organisational set-up and present activities, programme sustainability of the NGOs, programme's name, objectives, target group, various component, programme execution process, duration, area of operation, service cost, nature of infrastructure and resources required, staff, beneficiary's perception towards the working of NGOs, etc. are all very important data for the third objectives.

## **1.9 Sources of Data**

Both primary and secondary data are necessary for carrying out this research. The data (both primary and secondary) can be collected by using the following methods: (i) through literature, that is Government report, NGOs report, Books, newspapers, reports of the State Level Society Registration Office, internet, etc. (ii) For primary source, informal interviews , mailed questionnaires, field survey, etc. shall be used.

## **1.10 Field of Study**

The present study has covered the entire District of Darjeeling in the state of West Bengal. The name Darjeeling is believed to be a derivation of 'Dorje,' the precious stone or ecclesiastical scepter, which is emblematic of the

thunderbolt of Sakhra (Indra) and of 'ling', a place. It means, therefore, the place of the Dorje, the mystic thunderbolt of the Lamaist religion, this being the name by which the Buddhist monastery which once stood on Observatory Hill was formerly known (O'malley, 1907). It is a frontier district, running up between Nepal and Bhutan and stretching from the plains of Bengal in the south to the state of Sikkim in the north. The Darjeeling district lies between 26° 31' and 27° 13' north latitude and between 87° 59' and 88° 53' east longitude. Geographically, the District can be divided into two particular divisions, the hills and the plains. The hill covers the three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling District i.e. Darjeeling Sadar, Kurseong and Kalimpong. The foothills of Darjeeling Himalayas come under the Siliguri subdivision and are also known as Terai.

### **1.11 Process of Data Collection**

In the present study, data were collected in five phases. In the first phase, data (both primary and secondary) have been collected by using the following methods: (i) through literature, i.e. the Government report, NGOs report, books, newspapers, reports of the State Level Society Registration Office, internet, etc. (ii) For primary source, informal interviews, mailed questionnaires, field survey, etc. have been used and the researcher has visited different places from where the relevant data can be collected.

In the second phase, addresses of NGOs (registered) in the field of women empowerment processes were collected from various umbrella organisations. Having collected all the addresses, a comprehensive list of NGOs that are carrying their activities in the concerned District, was prepared.

In the third phase, prepared questionnaires were mailed to all the registered NGOs in the District. This was done to know various socio-economic, political and others factors that influenced the rise of NGOs and to get the required information.

In the fourth phase, forty (40) key informants were interviewed informally. This forty were categorized into two groups- (i) **Group I** - The twenty informants (both men and women) were bureaucrats, social activists,

beneficiaries, non-beneficiaries, staff, politicians, common man, etc. (ii) **Group II** – The rest twenty informants- these were women directly associated with the organisation as beneficiaries and the staff members. They were interviewed separately to know the different roles, importance and activities of NGOs for the empowerment women in the District. But, to derive the following information all forty were interviewed informally: (i) socio-economic factors that influenced the growth of a large number of NGOs, (ii) the degree of satisfaction of the beneficiaries, (iii) the government's reaction and response towards the NGOs, (iv) the degree of job satisfaction of the staff members, (v) the degree of response from the non-beneficiaries, (vi) the problem of NGOs and (vii) the role of the NGOs for the empowerment of women in the District. In the final phase, case studies were made only in four NGOs, one from each subdivision of the District i.e. Darjeeling (Sadar), Kurseong, Kalimpong and Siliguri.

### **1.12 Sampling**

A purposive random sampling technique was used to select the NGOs. For this purpose, a list of NGOs was collected from the districts. Out of the lists, the NGOs which are functioning in the field of women empowerment are separated out and selected for this study. For the present study, the sampling was not required in the first phase of data collection. In the second phase, addresses of NGOs (registered) in the field of women empowerment processes were collected from various umbrella organisations. Having put all the addresses together, a comprehensive list of NGOs that are carrying out their activities in the concerned district was prepared. During the third phase of data collection, questionnaires were mailed to all the NGOs in the district so that no specific sampling technique was required. But in the fourth phase forty (40) key informants were selected for the said purpose. So, purposive sampling technique was used here. Here minimum qualification, profession, experience, etc. of the respondents or informants was taken into account. In the last phase also purposive sampling was used for case study in selecting one NGO from each subdivision of the District. With a view to removing bias, the four NGOs



from the District are randomly selected. The sample pattern is representative of the universe. The names of the NGOs selected are:

1. Darjeeling (Sadar): **Hayden Hall Institute (HHI)**
2. Kalimpong Subdivision: **Hill Social Welfare Society (HSWS)**
3. Kurseong Subdivision: **Indian Forces Ladies' Association (IFLA)**
4. Siliguri Subdivision: **Balason Society for Improved Environment (BSIEN)**

### **1.13 Rationale for selecting Darjeeling District**

Darjeeling District is very peculiar in its character because it has a higher work participation rate of female than men as compared to both central and state levels. Darjeeling District is economically backward in comparison to the other parts of West Bengal. The District is providing a different setting in terms of geographical, social, cultural, ethnic, environment and political. The different activities and the contributions of the Christians missionaries in the field of socio economic fields in the society should be taken into account. As such, the area under study has provided enough curiosity and interest. Therefore, serious study is necessary.

### **1.14 Limitations of the Study**

It is necessary to point out the caveats to this study due to the small (and unequal) sample sizes of the organisation and respondents. Foremost, the use of some organisations, which has unique social, cultural, and geographical context, may make the findings less general. Furthermore, the samples, beneficiaries, respondents are not a systematic sample. The work has been prepared on the basis of data collected from the field and published secondary data. The study findings are based on the limited coverage of one District of West Bengal only and there is poor availability of secondary sources of data. More than this, it is very difficult to collect all the necessary information because of the limitation of time.

### **1.15 Analysis of Data**

Once the data had been collected, the codebooks were developed, based on the responses in the interview schedules. Thereupon, the data in all the schedules, which had been duly filled in, were coded. The task included feeding in the data, verification, computation, validation and presentation of tables to facilitate data analysis and interpretation. The interpretation of the primary data was carried out keeping in view the overall perspective of the study and by comparing, correlating or regressing data, wherever possible. This quantitative data was now ready for interpretation and chapter writing. Efforts were made to integrate the data received from the different categories of schedules and also to achieve a harmonious blend of quantitative and qualitative data. For first objective, data were discussed qualitatively. For second objective, quantitative analysis was made. In the third objective, data related to NGO's history and existing activities were presented having followed qualitative method. To understand the nature of programme sustainability, data were also discussed qualitatively. In the third objective, qualitative analysis was also made to understand the perception of the beneficiaries. The collected data are processed by statistical tools like averages, percentages, ratios, tables and charts, will be used whenever possible and necessary.

### **1.16 Plan of the Study**

The entire study has been divided into six broad chapters which include several sections and sub-sections covering the specific dimensions of the study. **CHAPTER-1** has provided for introductory information of the present study, discusses the Objectives of the Study, Research Questions, Theoretical Framework, existing literatures, Significant of the study, methodology, Types of Data Collected, Sources of Data, Field of Study, Process of Data Collection, Sampling, Rationale for the selecting Darjeeling District, Limitations of the Study, Analysis of Data and Plan of the Study. **CHAPTER-2** is mainly dealing with NGOs in India: Historical Roots, Meaning, Characteristics and Types – A Narrative and Conceptual Account. Here, the concept of Voluntary

organisations and NGOs, Meaning of NGOs, Characteristics of NGOs, Types of NGOs, Typology of NGOs in India, Brief history of NGOs in India, Voluntarism in the Pre-Independence era, Voluntarism during the post-Independence era, voluntary action since the early 1990s, Evolution of NGOs in India, Basic Facts on NGOs, Size, Sources of Funding in India, Types of Funding, Dominant activities in India have been discussed. **CHAPTER-3** focuses on the Idea of Empowerment: Conceptual and Operational Dimensions of Women Empowerment: A pan-Indian Perspective and here the concept of empowerment, Women Empowerment, Review of Literature, Women's Empowerment in Contemporary India, Darjeeling District of West Bengal and its milieu have been discussed. **CHAPTER-4** mainly dealing with NGOs in Darjeeling- Their Emergence, Growth, Types and Development: An Overview. Here History, Society, Economy and Polity of Darjeeling District and the history, growth and development, features, size, sources of funding of the NGOs of Darjeeling District of West Bengal have been discussed in details. In **CHAPTER-5** NGOs and the Empowerment of Women in the context of Darjeeling District of West Bengal have been discussed in details. **CHAPTER-6** is the concluding portion of this thesis and here the Major Findings of the study, Suggestions and Concluding remarks have been highlighted.

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## **Chapter - 2**

### **NGOs IN INDIA: HISTORICAL ROOTS, MEANING, CHARACTERISTICS AND TYPES- A NARRATIVE AND CONCEPTUAL ACCOUNT**

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#### **2.1 Introduction**

The real condition of women in India is not good even after 65 years of her independence. The different initiatives of the Central and the State Governments in this field have not yielded much satisfaction. Here, the NGOs may play a vital role and provide many opportunities for the women. The Non-governmental organisations, with their participatory approach, people's mobilising capacity, closeness to grass-roots and better insights into the needs of the people have emerged as alternative development agents. The voluntary sector has evolved as a viable 'third sector' which is next to the government sector and the private enterprises. They have emerged as a viable institutional framework to serve as catalyst for development and change. Most of them aim at building self-reliant development. They recognised that when people set their own goals, develop their own approaches and take their own decisions, human creativity and local problem solving skills are released and the resulting development is likely to be self-sustaining. Women are assisted for income generation in a number of ways by the NGOs. Considering the real condition of women in the country and their importance after the establishment of grassroots democracy, NGOs are rendering their services with a voluntary spirit. Here, NGOs may emerge as the favourable institutions, as they are considered to be capable of overcoming the limitations of the state and the private enterprises in responding to the needs of the women. NGOs typically operate on a small scale with flexible approaches, and they have proved that they can successfully overcome the problems faced by women in the process of development and empowerment.

If it is so, it is very necessary to understand every side of the NGOs starting from its meaning, history, types, and characteristics and so on.

## 2.2 Voluntary organisations and NGOs

The Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (hereafter NGOs) are relatively new phenomenon. But, individuals are surrounded by organisations all through their lives, whether they like them or not. The term organisation includes a galaxy of institutions such as hospitals, schools, factories, offices, armed forces and so on. The NGOs are groups of persons organized on the basis of voluntary membership without state control, for the furtherance of some common interests of citizens. Generally, Voluntary Organisations and Non-Governmental Organisation are treated as one, and the same. This is not true. All NGOs are not necessarily voluntary. There exists a large number of caste & communal organisations, educational and philanthropic organisations with a wide spectrum of activities. The broad definition holds that every organisation which is not part of a government and which operates in civil society is an NGO. They are also sometimes influenced, controlled or sponsored by the government and private business houses. NGOs include people's organisations such as professional associations, community groups, labour and trade organisations, peasant and women organisations, youth clubs etc. and include all educational, cultural and religious institutions and cooperatives. Although a vast majority of NGOs is formally independent and have nonprofit ethos, however, there are many NGOs working in the voluntary sector initiated by consultancy firms for profit and they are commercially oriented. Therefore, the term NGO in India has been used to denote a wide spectrum of organisations, which may be non-governmental, quasi or semi -governmental, voluntary or non-voluntary, partisan or non-partisan, formal or informal, non-profit or profit oriented bodies, with a legal status and registered under any of the Acts. The NGOs have a legal status, they are registered under an appropriate Act, and the specific Act under which they have to be registered, depends upon the nature and scope of their activities and objectives. On the contrary, VOs, the term widely used in India, usually referring to those organisations which are voluntary in spirit and with non-profit making objectives and exist as a legal entity, registered under the Indian Societies Registration Act, or Charitable and Endowment Trust Act or corresponding

State Acts, covering only a limited areas of action. There exists however, a large number of VOs working at the grass-root level which remain formally unregistered. Registered VOs are, thus, limited and constitute a small proportion of NGOs. An NGO is a much broader concept than a VO. In other words, all VOs are NGOs but not vice versa. The involvement of various agencies in the nongovernmental sector, such as trade unions, cooperatives and Panchayati Raj bodies, has tended to blur the identity of those, which can be strictly defined as voluntary organisations. There has been inadequate recognition of their role in accelerating the process of social and economic development.

The term 'Voluntarism' is derived from the Latin word 'Voluntas' meaning 'Will'. Thus, voluntary organisation may be regarded as associations, which are formed to fulfill the wishes and aspirations of its members. There are many scholars who put forward a number of definitions of Voluntary Organisation and are as follows:

Bourdillon (1945) argues that voluntary organisation is the product of the blood, sweat and toil of a few individuals, which are known for their persistent efforts for achievement of their sincere aspirations.

D. L. Sills (1968) defined voluntary organisation as a group of persons, organized on the basis of voluntary membership without state control, for the furtherance of some common interest of its members.

Johnson (1981) examined the definition of voluntary organisation based on the following factors: (i) Method of formation (ii) Method of government (iii) Method of financing and (iv) Motives with the pursuit of profit excluded.

Lord Beveridge (1979) 'a voluntary organisation is an organisation where its workers are paid or unpaid, governed by its own members without external control.'

Michael Banton (1968) defines it as a group of organized for the pursuit of one interest or of several interests in common.

Professor Inamdar (1987) defines a voluntary organisation and says 'development to be of durable use to the community has to nurture a strong desire and impulse for community development among its members, to be

economically viable, to possess dedicated and hard-working leadership and to command resources of expertise in the functions undertaken’.

Sarkar (2005) defined voluntary organisation, as ‘an organized group in order to promote some common interest of its members and it is voluntary, self-governing, self-financing, and non-profit in its orientation’. He further argued that ‘voluntary’ refers to spontaneous initiative of the organisation for addressing the social and economic inequalities. This does not refer to whether workers will be paid or unpaid. On the principle, the salary of the staffs in a voluntary organisation is lower than the others as the concept “voluntarism” is attached with it. ‘Self-governing’ indicates that the decision for the organizational constitution, policy and service is not within the domain of state control. ‘Self-financing’ refers to at least some of its revenues drawn from voluntary sources. ‘Non-profit’ means the motive of the members will be the welfare of the public and profits will be used to strengthen as well as to fulfill the objectives of the organisation.

Smith and Freedom (1972) argued ‘voluntary association’ as a structure that is formally organized, relatively permanent, secondary grouping as opposed to less structured, informal ephemeral or primary grouping.

In a nutshell we can conclude that Voluntary Organisations are spontaneous in their origin whereas NGOs may also be government sponsored. After observing the definition of voluntary organisation it is necessary to understand the meaning of NGOs and is as follows:

### **2.3 Meaning of NGOs**

Many authors use the term Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in a loose sense as collective noun to cover enormous variety of widely different activities and preaching widely divergent objectives. A non-governmental organization is any non-profit, voluntary citizens’ group, which is organized on a local, national and international level. NGOs represent a variety of different interest, and multitude of Non-Governmental Organisation activities makes defining the concept of NGO difficult. Since the beginning of nineteen eighties,

the activities of NGOs have been growing worldwide in terms of their size and scope, their number and volume of aid. It has been argued that this new popularity of NGOs is due to their specific characteristics such as: flexible and experimental interventions due to their small size and learning process approaches; their low costs and effective work at the grass roots level especially in remote areas; their relationship with the beneficiaries is based on voluntarism which is the main factor allowing NGOs to achieve meaningful participation; furthermore, NGOs recruit highly qualified and motivated staff on the basis of shared values and a belief in the social mission of the NGOs (Vahlhans, 1994; Baru, 1998; Rajasekhar, 2000).

Baylis and Smith (2005) (eds.) argues that as a result of pressure, primarily from American groups, the United Nations Charter contains an article providing for the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) the consult with NGOs (Article 71). The ECOSOC statute and the way it has been applied embodies six principles: (i) An NGO should support the aims and the works of UN. This has been interpreted very broadly and it is very rare that objections are made to the political purpose of NGOs. (II) Officially, an NGO should be a representative body, with identifiable headquarters, and offices, responsible to a democratic policy-making conference. In practice, many highly prestigious NGOs, particularly development and environment NGOs, are not membership organisation. (iii) An NGO cannot be profit-making body. Individual companies cannot gain consultative status, but trade federations of commercial interests are recognised as NGOs. (IV) An NGO cannot use or advocate violence. A few guerrilla groups have been accepted as national liberation movements, but this is distinct from and of higher status than being an NGO. (v) An NGO must respect the norm of 'non-interference in the internal affairs of states'. This means an NGO cannot be political party, but parties can, like companies, from international federations. In addition, NGOs concerned with human rights should not restrict their activities to a particular group, nationality, or country. (Exception was made with respect to anti-apartheid groups) (vi) An International NGO is one that is not established by intergovernmental

agreement. This is a technical legal expression of the property of being non-governmental.

Duggal (1988) defines NGOs in the following manner: (i) they are registered as public trusts or societies; (ii) the different programmes adopted by the NGOs are welfare ones and sometimes government funded too; (iii) NGOs as a rule do not generate their own funds completely but rely on external financial assistances from government agencies-both national and international; (iv) they are private organisations, but their nature makes them somewhat different from what one generally expects from a private sector. Thus, they are not supposed to make any profit.

Maxine (1997) opines that NGO is a term used rather loosely to refer to any organisation that is not a direct division of a national government.

Rajasekhar (2000) defines the term NGO that undertakes voluntary action, social action and social movements. He further argues that the following characteristics of NGOs make them distinct organisations: (i) Voluntary formation, (ii) Working towards development and amelioration of suffering, (iii) Working with non-self-serving aims, (iv) Relative independence.

According to the World Bank, "a Non-governmental Organisation (NGO) is a private organisation that pursues activities to relieve suffering, promote the interest of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development". In other words, NGOs are legally constituted organisations, operate independently from the government and are generally considered to be "non-state, non-profit oriented groups who pursue purposes of public interest" (J. Mathew and J. Verghese, 2011).

## **2.4 Characteristics of NGOs**

The NGO-sector has often been described as extremely diverse, heterogeneous and populated by organisations with hugely varied goals, structures and motivations. It is, therefore, not an easy task to find a common definition of the term "non-governmental organisation". It cannot be based on a legal definition given the wide variations in laws relating to NGO activities, according to which



an NGO may have, for instance, the legal status of a charity, non-profit association or a foundation.

The term "NGO" can nevertheless be used as shorthand to refer to a range of organisations that normally share the following characteristics:

- NGOs are not created to generate personal profit. Although they may have paid employees and engage in revenue-generating activities they do not distribute profits or surpluses to members or management;
- NGOs are voluntary. This means that they are formed voluntarily and that there is usually an element of voluntary participation in the organisation;
- NGOs are distinguished from informal or adhoc groups by having some degree of formal or institutional existence. Usually, NGOs have formal statutes or other governing document setting out their mission, objectives and scope. They are accountable to their members and donors;
- NGOs are independent, in particular of government and other public authorities and of political parties or commercial organisations.

Bhose (2003) put forward the following characteristics of NGOs:

1. Voluntary: They are formed voluntarily. There is an element of voluntary involvement in the organisation. NGOs are built upon commitment of a few persons.
2. Legal status: NGOs are registered with the Government under the Societies Act, Trust Act, and a few under Trade Union Act etc. NGOs are also registered under Foreign Contribution Regulation Act (FCRA) with the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. This is to get entitled for obtaining funds from abroad.
3. Independence: NGOs are independent in planning and implementation of their programmes. They are not bound by the hard and fast rules as Government institution.
4. Flexibility: NGOs are flexible in intervention. They are not bound by red tapism and bureaucratic obstacles. In the name of audit objections, they won't cease people's initiatives.

5. Prompt decision-making: NGOs take quick decisions in response to the needs of the community. As decisions are taken quickly, their services are delivered timely to the people. NGOs could overcome the constraints of cumbersome procedures and act readily to the community demands.
6. Non-profit oriented: NGOs are not run on profit motives. The surplus and gains from economic projects, if any, are distributed to the members or stakeholders. They are re-used for development purposes.
7. Not self-serving: NGOs are constituted not for the benefit of the promoters. NGOs serve the poor and impoverished for their nurtured by the response and co-operation of the people. This offers a great deal of mental satisfaction to the NGO members which inspires them to do better and more.
8. High motivation: the members and the staff are endowed with high motivation and inspiration to work for the cause of poor. Their hours of work are not clock bound. They strive tirelessly to achieve their purpose for the benefit of the target groups.
9. Freedom in work: NGO workers enjoy their maximum freedom in their fieldwork, in organising the community and carrying out the development schemes. Such freedom becomes a source of motivation to accomplish the task in spite of their less remuneration. They are not pinched by their bosses for petty mistake.
10. Value driven: NGOs are driven by social values and humanitarian principles and hence they try to promote a value-based society.
11. Catalytic: NGOs facilitate the communities towards social actions but they do not dilute and distort themselves in the process of intervention.
12. People-oriented: People are the heart of NGOs. They plan things with the people and implement the same through the people. Thus, they learn the best from the people and replicate the same with other groups.

NGOs are not self-serving in aims and related values. Their aim is to act in the public arena at large, on concerns and issues related to the well-being of people, specific groups of people or society as a whole. They are not pursuing the commercial or professional interests of their members.

Though these common characteristics can help describe the notion of the term "NGO", it must be borne in mind that their size as well as their scope of activities can vary considerably. Some NGOs consist of a rather limited number of persons; others may have thousands of members and hundreds of professional staff. In functional terms, NGOs can focus on operational and/or advocacy activities. Operational NGOs contribute to the delivery of services (such as in the field of welfare), whereas the primary aim of advocacy of the NGOs is to influence the policies of public authorities and public opinion in general. Generally, NGOs follow four clear-cut strategies and these are Charity, supplementing welfares of the state, encouraging people's participation and implementing programmes launched by the government for the larger benefit of the communities.

## **2.5 Types of NGOs**

The term NGO is used to denote those organisations, which undergo voluntary and social actions and social movements. However, the NGOs have to work within the parameter of government legislations and policies formulated for them (Murthy and Rao, 1997).

Bhose (2003) classifies the NGOs under the following heads:

1. **Charity NGOs:** Their activities are transitory in nature and believe that giving something to the poor is like giving the same to God.
2. **Relief and Rehabilitation NGOs:** Being affected by natural calamities like flood, fire, or epidemic diseases or by man-made catastrophe like war, genocide etc., some NGOs are involved in providing relief and rehabilitation programmes fall under this type.
3. **Service Providing NGOs:** Service providing NGOs are inspired by welfare concerns and they largely provides service for the poor and marginalized.
4. **Economic Development NGOs:** According to them economic gain is the social gain. These types of NGOs believe that rise in income of the poor and the marginalized will bring about their economic development.

5. Social Development NGOs: These NGOs believe that social awareness and people's involvement will bring about development and, hence, focuses more on the social facets of the community.
6. Empowerment NGOs: These NGOs enable people to gain power and authority so that they can access and control over resources easily. They try to enhance the number of powerless becoming powerful.
7. Network NGOs: These NGOs try to unite association of NGOs into a single platform and perform their function collectively.
8. Supporting NGOs: These are newly emerging NGOs which provide a varied of support functions to different grass-root NGOs.

Rajasekhar (2000) classified the NGOs under four broad categories. They are as follows:

- (i) Operational or Grassroots NGOs: Grassroots NGOs directly work with the oppressed section of the society. The grassroots NGOs could be either local based, working in a single and small project location, or in multiple project areas in different districts, states and regions covering a larger population. The Operational or Grassroots NGOs can again, be divided into:
  - (a) Charity and welfare NGOs,
  - (b) Development NGOs, and
  - (c) Social action groups.
- (ii) Supporting NGOs: The support based NGOs provide services that would strengthen the capacities of grassroots NGOs, Panchayati Raj Institution, cooperatives and others to function more effectively.
- (iii) Umbrella or Network NGOs: Network NGOs are formal associations or informal groups of grassroots and or support NGOs, which meet periodically on particular concerns.
- (iv) Funding NGOs: The primary activity of these NGOs is funding grassroots NGOs, support NGOs or people's organisations.

Nandedkar (1987) classifies NGOs into ten categories. (i) Individual Practice of Dharma (ii) Religious institution (iii) Individual based philanthropic activities (iv) Social service and cultural associations (v) Professional and consultancy

associations (vi) Functional association (vii) Front-line associations (viii) Action groups (ix) Citizen groups (x) Protest groups.

Green and Matthias (1997) classify NGOs in the context of 'activities' and 'operational areas.' As per activities they identified six types of NGOs and are as follows: service oriented NGOs, research NGOs, supportive NGOs, NGO for policy advocacy, funding NGOs and co-coordinating NGOs. On the basis of operational areas, they are identified as community-based NGOs, National NGOs and international NGOs.

Korten (1990) classified four types of NGOs on the basis of strategies of development. They are Relief and Welfare Organisation, Community Development Organisation, Sustainable Systems Development Organization and People's Organisation. Three stages or generations of NGO evolution have been identified by Korten's (1990). Three Generations of Voluntary Development Action. First, the typical development NGO focuses on relief and welfare, and delivers relief services directly to beneficiaries. Examples are the distribution of food, shelter or health services. The NGOs notice immediate needs and responds to them. NGOs in the second generation are oriented towards small-scale, self-reliant local development. At this evolutionary stage, NGOs build the capacities of local communities to meet their needs through 'self-reliant local action'. Korten calls the third generation 'sustainable systems development'. At this stage, NGOs try to advance changes in policies and institutions at a local, national and international level; they move away from their operational service-providing role towards a catalytic role.

Shah and Chaturvedi (1983) divide NGOs in three main categories: techno-managerial, reformist, and radical. Hirway (1995) classified NGOs in Gujarat into welfare-oriented, development organisations, and empowering NGOs. Iyengar (1998) classified NGOs in Gujarat into four categories: Gandhian, service delivery organisations, professional organisations, and mobilizational organisations.

The term 'voluntary' was used mainly to denote the work done by those volunteers who were not paid for their works. In the context of welfare activities, voluntary means "without the spur or compulsion of economic

motives". In other words it is a "self-propelled action", self without a claim for compensation.

Voluntary action may include a wide range of activities: (1) Charity, (2) Relief, (3) Services, (4) Welfare, (5) Rehabilitation, (6) Development of socio-economic environment around human beings, (7) Development of human beings. The father of community development movement, Thiru S.K. Dey made the following observation about voluntary action: "There are four estates today as guardians of whatever democracy we still claim in India - the executives, legislatures, judiciary and the press. A fifth estate is an imperative. It is "people". People are amorphous in character and, therefore, they cannot be mobilized except through voluntary organs and of their own. The fifth estate, therefore, can be rightfully called "voluntary organs of the people".

The World Bank has identified two main categorizes of NGOs namely Operational NGOs and Advocacy NGOs. The main purpose of the former is the design and implementation of development oriented projects. Operational NGOs can also be classified as national organisation, international organisation, community based organisation, etc. On the other hand the very purpose of advocacy NGOs is to influence the policies and practices of international organisations (J. Mathew and J. Verghese, 2011).

## **2.6 Typology of NGOs in India**

The types of NGOs that exist in the length and breadth of the country based on various parameters can be outlined as follows:-

Manoranjan Mohanty, Anil K. Singh (2001) has classified the NGOs/VOs of India in nine broad groups on the basis of the following parameter/basis:

(i) Organisational forms/Legal status (Types of VOs and NGOs – Societies (Society for the Improvement of Weaker Sections, Tamil Nadu), Foundations (Family Planning Foundation, New Delhi), Trust (Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Madhya Pradesh), Cooperatives (Chhotnagpur Catholic Mission Cooperative Society, Bihar), Business & commercial organisations or enterprises (Rajasthan Consultancy Organisation Ltd.), Panchayati Raj

Institutions (All India Panchayat Parishad, New Delhi), Trade Unions (Textile Labour Association, Gujarat), Citizen's Groups Citizen Uplift Society, Maharashtra)

(ii) Sources of Inspiration-Ideological/Political Economic/ Religious affinities/ Philosophical base/ Social Reforms (Types of VOs and NGOs - Gandhian VOs (Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi), Jaya Prakash Narayan Inspired VOs Marxist/left/Radical Groups/ Naxalite groups (J.P. Seva Samiti, UP Chandra Sekhar Azad's Hindustan Socialist Republic Association), Acharya Vinoba Bhave's rural transformation groups Christian Missionaries and church based group Islamic/Buddhist/ Sikh/organisations/ temple based developmental VOs (Antyodaya Lok Karyakram, Bihar Holy Child Society/Holy Cross Social Science Centre, New Delhi Anjuman Himayat Islam or Calicut Islamic Cultural Society, Kerala/Tirumal Tirupati Devasthanam, Andhra Pradesh), Vivekananda/Ram Krishna Missions (Ram Krishna Mission, Calcutta), Sri Aurobindo Societies (Sri Aurobindo Education Society, New Delhi), Rabindra Nath Tagore Societies (Tagore Society for Rural Development, Calcutta, West Bengal), Social Reformist groups inspired by Raja Ram Mohan Roy/Jyotiba Phule/Ranade/Gokhale/D.K. Karve/ Dr. B.R. Ambedkar etc. (Brahmo Samaj/Satya Shodhan Samaj/ Prathana Samaj/Servants of India Society/All India Seva Samiti Ramabai Ambedkar Shikshan Prasarak Mandal, Maharashtra);

(iii) Period of Establishment/Origin (Types of VOs and NGOs - Pre-Independence/Old generation VOs (All India Spinner's Association), Post-Independence/New Generation VOs (Most of the Contemporary development VOs);

(iv) Area of Operation (Types of VOs and NGOs - Rural-Based VOs (Gram Vikas Sanstha, Rajasthan), Urban-Based VOs (Ahmadabad City Social Education Committee);

(v) Form of Control/Governance (Types of VOs and NGOs - Self-controlled/Managed VOs Private VOs (those controlled privately &

Independently by their founders or nominees (Large number of VOs), Government sponsored (Gongos) Quasi autonomous NGOs (Quangos) Business sponsored VOs (Bongos) (Khadi & Village industries and National Children's Fund/National Institution of Public Cooperation and Child Development (NIPCCD), Political Party Sponsored organisations (Phngos) or based on the ideologies of Political parties (Tata Agricultural Institute and Gandhian Inspired Deen Dayal VOs/ Research Centre, New Delhi), Donors-sponsored organisations (Fungos) (Catholic Relief Services/CARE-India), NGO-sponsored/subsidiary NGOs (Action Aid/Terre des Homes);

(vi) Functional diversity (Types of VOs and NGOs - Single function VOs (National Institute of Rural Development, A.P.), Multi Function VOs (Social Welfare and Human Development Society, Delhi) ;

(vii) Size (Types of VOs and NGOs – Small (Village Committees/Rural Youth Clubs), Medium (Block/Dist. level organisations), and Large sized Organisation (Umbrella Support organisations) ;

(viii) Specialised Foundation/Sector Specific Dominant Functional role (Types of VOs and NGOs - Needs based Clientele groups/ professional and consultancy VOs (Population, Health) Medical, legal etc.( Family Planning Association of India/ Medical Council/Voluntary Health Association of India (VHAI) Bar Council), Advocacy and Information Dissemination Organisations (Voluntary Action Network India (VANI)), Research and Evaluation VOs Service Delivery organisations (Legal Aid/ consumer protection services/Micro credit groups etc.) Networking and alliance building / support organisations/Fund raising VOs (Ashoka Foundation/Family Planning Foundation of India), Training and Capacity building VOs (Centre for Agrarian Research training and education, Ghaziabad, U.P.);

(ix) Target Group (Types of VOs and NGOs - Youth Clubs (Nehru Yuva Kendra/Youth for Unity and voluntary action, Bombay), Women's Organisations (Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), Gujarat, All India Women's Conference, New Delhi), Farmer/Peasant Organisation Artisan



Groups (Bharat Krishak Samaj), Scheduled Caste Welfare organisations (Harijan Sevak Sangh, New Delhi), Scheduled Tribe Welfare organisations (Bharatiya Adaiamajati Sevak Sangh, New Delhi), Child Welfare and Development VOs (Indian Council of Child Welfare), Aged Welfare Organisation (Age Care India, New Delhi, Helpage-India), Physically Handicapped/ Less Abled Persons Welfare VOs (Association for Physically Handicapped, Bangalore, All India Federation of Deaf/Blind Relief Association, New Delhi), Drug/Alcoholics addiction centers (Association for Social health in India, New Delhi);

(x) Sources of Funding/Degree of Autonomy & Independence (Types of VOs and NGOs - Community voluntary source funded VOs (Most of the grass-roots VOs.), Government funded VOs (National Children's Fund (NCF), NGO-funded VOs (Caritas-India, Oxfam-India) ;

(xi) Levels of Operation (Types of VOs and NGOs - Grassroots/local/ peripheral VOs (Village committees Mahila Mandals/Local Literacy Clubs), National/Intermediary Groups (Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD) New Delhi, International NGOs (Lion's Club/Red Cross Society/Amnesty International) (Manoranjan Mohanty, Anil K. Singh, 2001).

## **2.7 Brief history of NGOs in India**

Voluntarism is a phenomenon of long cherished tradition established in ancient India and proclaimed by the people to share skills, ideas, philosophy, expertise, services, resources, assets and knowledge among the members of different communities living together across the country. Voluntarism is the central core of social action in a democratic society. Voluntarism manifests through organizations, associations, individuals and organized civil structures such as Voluntary Organisations (VOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), cooperatives of different types and micro-credit organisations outside the governmental bureaucratic machinery.

Voluntarism had always been a part of Indian traditions. Even during the Rig Vedic period, they were the main source of welfare and development.

India has a long history and tradition of voluntary action, providing services to the sick, needy and destitute. Rather, it is a part of our cultural heritage and is a way of life. Voluntarism in India is as old as the emergence of organized society itself. It originated as a pure philanthropy of charity and this motivation sustained the voluntary efforts all through history in the ancient and medieval period. The voluntary efforts in the process of welfare and development have undergone evolutionary changes with changing emphasis on various experimental development programmes in India. The history of voluntary action is an integral part of the study of evolution and changes in the Indian society.

Though the term NGO became popular in India only in the 1980s, the voluntary sector has an older tradition even at the time of independence. During the 1980s NGOs became more specialized and the voluntary movement was fragmented into three major groups. The first group includes those traditional development NGOs, who went into a village or a group of villages and ran literacy programmes, encouraged farmers to experiment with new crops and livestock breeds that would bring more money, helped the weavers and other village artisans market their products and so on (e.g. the organisation run by Baba Amte leprosy patients in central India). The second group of NGOs was those who researched a particular subject in depth and then lobbied with government or petitioned the courts for the improvements in the lives of the citizens (e.g. Centre for Science and Environment). The third groups were those volunteers who saw themselves more as activists than other NGOs did (e.g. Narmada Bachao Andolan) (J. Mathew and J. Verghese, 2011).

The efforts and initiatives towards the welfare and developmental activities, which originated outside the state structure and within society, came into prominence during the colonial period. The agents of these activities would call themselves 'Voluntary Organisations' whom we treat as 'Non-Governmental Organizations' nowadays. The history of voluntarism in India may be broadly divided into the following phases:

1. Voluntarism in the Pre-Independence era.

2. Voluntarism during the post-Independence era.
3. Voluntary organisations since the early 1990s to till date

### **2.7.1 Voluntarism in the Pre-Independence era**

Voluntarism in India has a long history. Voluntarism in early days had its genesis in charity, philanthropy and relief activities. In ancient and medieval India, charity on a voluntary basis outside the activities of state and on the basis of religious channels were being operated freely and extensively in the fields of education, health, cultural promotion and scour in crisis during floods, famine, droughts, other natural calamities and epidemics. The history of India reveals that in the early days the responsibility of assisting the individual-in-need was generously shared by the communities and the rulers. The kings, the chiefs and kind-hearted rich persons used to provide free kitchens and necessary materials during floods, famine, droughts, natural calamities and epidemics. They used to be happy to provide shelter to the homeless. The rules of Dharma Shastras were restricted to the directives of the emperor. Religion emphasised on the value of charity, philanthropy and mutual help. The developed welfare-statism was evidenced during the Maurya and Gupta empires. The state would come to the rescue of the community in extreme contingencies of helplessness and destituteness. During the colonial period, voluntary efforts received a boost with new religious, cultural, political and social surroundings. The Laissez Faire policy of the British Government in economic, religious and social matters left no other avenue of development open to the 'natives' than resort to the 'self-help' form of voluntarism. This policy proved to be a positive catalysis to make voluntarism stronger. Schools, colleges and institutes were established by educational societies set up by English-educated natives and affluent businesspersons, traders and zamindars.

Prior to the nineteenth century, family, kinship, caste and the village community were the main institutions to meet the needs of the poor, destitute and downtrodden. The fact that in the nineteenth century, voluntarism gained new stimulus because some Europeans and educated Indians started some welfare measures in different fields. During the British rule, voluntary

organisations proliferated by leaps and bounds and people from different walks of life actively participated in various fields of social action. They, with a great enthusiasm, were engaged in various welfare activities of society, literary and relief works. During the early British rule, the Christian Churches initiated welfare activities by establishing hospitals, dispensaries, educational institutions in different parts of the country. English educated natives, affluent businessmen, traders and members of aristocracy extended their support in this respect (Inamdar, 1987).

The very idea of voluntarism in India totally changed with the reform movements. The introduction of western ideas and Christian faith by the end of the eighteenth century precipitated the widespread emergence of religious and social reform movements in India. Social reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Rabindranath Tagore, Dayananda Saraswathy, Iswara Chandra Vidyasagar, Kesava Chandra Sen, Ram Krishna Paramhansa, Sayyed Ahmed Khan, and Swami Vivekananda had focused their social actions against the rigid social evils and practices like Sati, Child Marriage, prohibition of widow remarriage and other caste-directed practices etc. Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1815 started Atmiya Sabha in Calcutta, which was one of the earliest voluntary associations in India. The other prominent associations originated during this period were: the Unitarian Committee (1822), Brahmo Samaj (1828), Dharma Samaj (1830), Widows Remarriage Association (1850) and so on. Many literary and educational institutions e.g. Royal Asiatic Society (1834), Dhyan Prakash Sabha (1840), took shape at this time.

The second half of the nineteenth century had witnessed a gradual evolution and growth of voluntarism in India. A mushrooming consciousness of middle class in the forefront of a socio-political and economic awakening was aroused during this time. The establishment of the Friend-in-Need Society (1858), Prathana Samaj (1864), Satya Shodhan Samaj (1873), Arya Samaj (1875), National Council for Women in India (1875), Indian National Social Conference (1887), The Rama Krishna Mission (1898), further strengthened the voluntary movement in India. The enactment of Societies Registration Act, 1860 was another major boost to voluntarism during this phase of history.

Roman Catholic missionaries appeared in India during this time and their organized, systematic and philanthropic efforts began in 1885 and participated in various charity and reform activities and promoted the establishment of voluntary institutions in the length and breadth of the country. The wave of Swadeshi Movement marked the beginning of mass involvement inculcating the spirit of consolidating voluntary actions through self-help and autonomy, institution building in education, agriculture, industry, business and fostered economic production, particularly of industrial goods through swadeshi and boycott of imported goods from Britain. A cooperative movement, which started during this period, includes Gokhale Education Society, Servants of India Society (1905) and Servants of People Society (1921). The introduction of Mahatma Gandhi into the Indian political scene changed the heart and face of the national movement and of voluntarism as well. This period marked the beginning of a more principled and value-based voluntary action in India (Manoranjan Mohanty, Anil K. Singh, 2001).

Gandhiji propagated remaking of the nation on the basis of swadeshi, self-government and self-sufficiency. It is believed that Gandhiji gave a new impetus to voluntarism in India. He started Charkha (spinning wheel), Khadi (hand-woven cloth), Gramodyog (village industries), basic education, etc. The voluntariness and sharing, cooperation, mutual aid, decentralisation, non-violence, self-reliance, self-help and moral action were the fundamental principles of his programme. He also founded Harijan Sevak Sangh, Gramodyog Sangh, Hindustan Talim Sangh, Adivasi Seva Mandals, etc. Influenced by Gandhiji's principles Rabindra Nath Tagore started Sriniketan, (West Bengal) in 1921, The Marthandam Project (1921) in Kanya Kumari district in Tamil Nadu by Dr. Spencer Hatch, Gurgaon Project (1927) by F.L Brayne, Baroda Rural Development Project (1927) by Raja Sir T. Madhav Rao, and the Dewan of Baroda started Rural Reconstruction Centres (RRCs) in 1932 (Manoranjan Mohanty, Anil K. Singh, 2001).

### **2.7.2 Voluntarism during the post-Independence era**

In the first phase after independence, the legacy of the Gandhian era

influenced voluntary action to complete the unfinished and unfulfilled tasks that were undertaken before independence. Many prominent followers of Gandhi inculcated Gandhiji's spirit of voluntary efforts in the post-independence era. The most notable among these prominent followers were Acharya Vinoba Bhave, Jaya Prakash Narayan, Thakkar Bapa & others. Vinoba Bhave in his enthused attempt to transform rural India came forward with the idea of Bhoodan and Gramdan Movements in 1951 and 1952 respectively. These were responsible for expedite voluntary efforts in India.

The first two decades of independence till the mid- 1960s are believed to be the phases of an intense process of nation-building. The various works of the missionaries gained further diversification in their activities after independence. With the introduction of the planning in the year 1951 and with the launching of the community development programmes, the voluntary organisations redefined their role in the process of nation-building, particularly in the process of rural transformation and development. The National Extension Service (NES) was launched in our country in October 1953 for development with the self-help strategy. The year 1953 was a turning point in the history of voluntary efforts with the formation of Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) with the primary objective of the promotion of voluntary organisations in social welfare and development. The establishment of CSWB also marked the beginning of government funding to the voluntary organisations through the Grant-in-aid. The creation of CSWB brought revolutionary changes in various faces of voluntarism in the country. This period witnessed the fast growing phenomenon of 'networking' of voluntary organisations and the formation of national federations, providing a common platform for voluntary action in India. For instance, Association for Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development (AVARD) began in 1958 as a consortium of major voluntary agencies, coordinating voluntary efforts in rural development in the country.

During the late 1960s, the country was trapped by the crisis of economic stagnation and political instability. This period was marked by devil droughts, floods and famine (1963-67) and increased deterioration of misery in the rural

areas. The economic and political circumstances during this period inspired the new generation to enter into the voluntary sector. An alternate and integrated rural development began to be experimented during the late 1960s. The Nehru Yuva Kendras, which were established at the grass-roots level, offered opportunity to rural youths to participate in community services. Youth Clubs and Mahila Mandals operated in rural areas were involving themselves in extensional services and developmental programmes.

During the Third Five Year Plan, the government recognised voluntary efforts as a tool of public cooperation and sought more cooperation from voluntary organisations, particularly in the rural development programmes. During the mid-1960s, many foreign NGOs entered the Indian scene to work in the voluntary sector for organising relief and rehabilitation work necessitated by severe drought (1965-66 & 1966-67) and famine. Foreign funds started flowing in during this period and thus, changed radically the character of the voluntary sector in the country.

During the early 1970s, the government launched the minimum needs programme covering aspects such as rural education, health, water supply and sanitation, roads, rural electrification, housing, nutrition, rural energy etc. Various new programmes were launched covering these aspects of Minimum Needs Programmes.

It was in this period that more people focused work with target groups e.g. women, children, landless labourers, artisans, small and marginal farmers, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes etc. This became the basis of voluntary efforts. Different area and target group programmes such as Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) and Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Development Agency (MFALDA) were integrated into a new programme called Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) which was launched on 2 October 1980. With the changing programmes and emphasis on development, the voluntary sector in the country was marked with increasing numbers, scope, sectoral specialization and professionalism throughout the 1970s and 1980s. As a result of national movement, patriotism, nationalism, Swadeshi spirit, a deep faith in the power and wisdom of the

common people came into existence and the same led to form a few organisations (Lalitha, 1975).

### **2.7.3 Voluntary organisations since the early 1990s to till date**

There has been a steady growth of voluntary organisations in India since the post- independence era and continuing even today. The Seventh Plan Document (1985-90) pronounced a greater involvement of the voluntary sector particularly in the process of rural development. The government helped voluntary organisations in successive plan periods in the rural development programmes. The government provided funds to voluntary organisation for rural development through People's Action for Development of India (PADI). The foundation of CAPART (1886) was another milestone in the history of voluntarism in India and it became the supreme developmental agency for voluntary action in rural development. Since then, there has been an unprecedented growth of voluntary organisations in the country working in rural development programmes. During the 1990s, with the growing recognition and support of the government and the international donor agencies, the increasing volume of funding by them and the changing paradigm of the concept of development with more emphasis towards people's involvement in various development projects have contributed to a more rapidly growing voluntary sector. In fact, voluntarism in India has undergone rapid revolutionary changes and the voluntary sector has become a distinct third sector in the civil society. The GO-NGO partnerships got an upward thrust in this period; NGOs' focus is more on Self Help Groups, Micro Credit and Livelihood. NGO participation is ensured in policy formation and programme implementation.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, on the eve of the country's independence, said that the state would strive to eliminate poverty, ignorance, disease and inequality of opportunity (Rao, D.N. 1999), hence started Five Year Plans. During the First Five Year Plan, Central Welfare Board was established by the Central Government under the Ministry of Social Welfare with the objective of providing financial help, coordination, training, technical guidance and



consultancy to the NGOs involved in activities for the upliftment of women and children. The Central Social Welfare Board established state level Social Welfare Advisory Boards in order to reach out to the local NGOs (Lalitha, 1975). The National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development (NIPCCD) were established to promote NGOs and their main aim was to provide training, support NGOs activities and promote liaison between government and NGOs (Garain, 1994). First Five Year Plan allocated four crores of rupees of the voluntary sector (Sarkar, 2005). During the Third Five Year Plan the National Advisory Committee for Public Cooperation (NACPC) was formed and as the public cooperation got institutionalized, NACPC steadily lost its credibility in the eyes of small and comparatively new NGOs (Roy, S. 1987)

In the Sixth Five Year Plan, NIPCCD changed its focus and became the apex body for train the functionaries and to coordinate, monitor, evaluate the Integrated Child Development Services Scheme of Government of India. From the middle of the Sixth Plan, numbers of initiatives were taken and consultative group of voluntary agencies in each state under the chairmanship of either the Chief Secretary or the Development Commissioner were established (Garain, 1994). In the Seventh Plan, for the first time, NGOs were given the freedom to plan their own schemes and follow the methodology they thought best (Roy, S. 1987). In the Eight Five Year Plan, it was proposed that the grants-in-aid would be given to the voluntary sectors for innovative experimental schemes. In the field of health and family welfare, NGOs were expected to help in raising and promoting the small family norm by means of motivation and education of women, provision of prenatal and postnatal care, etc. (Sarkar, 2005). During the Ninth Five Year Plan, it has been realized that NGOs are actually complementary in nature. Both the sectors have their own strategies and strong points. Both the sectors are to work on a reciprocal basis (Sarkar, 2005).

Not only the history, but it is very difficult to draw exact number of NGOs which are operating in Indian soil. PRIA (Participatory Research in Asia) estimated that there are around 1.2 million NGOs working in India. These groups involve as many as 19.4 million people, many of whom work on a

voluntary basis. This is equivalent to 2.7 million paid employees and 3.4 million full-time volunteers. The PRIA surveys shows that there were more voluntary sector institutions in rural areas than in urban areas. According to the source, in India, 16.6% NGOs are private funding organisations, 32.4% are government aided ones and 51% are self-generated ones (S S Srivastava, Rajesh Tandon, 2005).

In May 2007, the Government of India has approved the National Policy on the Voluntary Sector as the first step in a process of evolve a new working relationship between the Government and the voluntary organisations and the main objectives of the policy is to-

1. Create an enabling environment for voluntary organisations that stimulates their enterprise and effectiveness and safeguards their autonomy.
2. Enable voluntary organisations to legitimately mobilise necessary local and foreign financial services.
3. Identify systems by which the government may work together with the voluntary organisations, based on the principles of mutual trust and respect, and with shared responsibility.
4. Encouraged voluntary organisations to adopt transparent, accountable systems of governance and management.

Through the Policy, the government commits to encouraging, enabling, and empowering and independent, creative and effective voluntary sector with diverse form and functions, so that it can contribute to the social, cultural, and economic advancement of the people of India. It recognises that voluntary sectors has contributed significantly to finding innovative solutions to poverty, deprivation, discrimination, and exclusion, through awareness raising, social mobilisation service delivery, training, research, and advocacy.

## 2.8 Table No. 2.1 : Evolution of NGOs in India

Period	Activities
Pre Independence	Social welfare, Constructive work (inspired by Gandhian philosophy) very much in line with independence movement.
1950-1970	Social welfare, Govt. funded and managed NGO like Khadi Industries. India's five year's development plans came into existence, Most of the development works were rested with NGO's.
1970-1990	Civil Society space started increasing from 70s, NGO's started highlighting that why govt. programme not yielding positive results for poor and marginalized, presented new model for development with people's participation. With this new model NGO's covered vast program areas like education, primary health care, drinking water, sanitation, small irrigation, forest regeneration, tribal development, women's development, child labour, pollution safety etc. later on many of these models were included in govt programme and policies.
1990-till date	GO-NGO partnership got a boost in this period; NGO focus is more on Self Help Groups, Micro Credit and Livelihood. NGO participation is ensured in policy formation and programme implementation.

(Source: (Source: PRIA, 2002)

## 2.9 Table No.2.2: Basic Facts on NGOs in India

Total Number of NGO	1.2 million
Rural Based	53%
Urban Based	47%
Unregistered	49.6%

(Source: (Source: PRIA, 2002)

The above table shows that 53% NGOs in India are rural based. The most surprising fact is that 49.6% NGOs in India are unregistered.

**2.10 Table No. 2.3: Estimated Number of Non-Profit Organisations**

States	Rural	Urban	Total	% of Rural
Maharashtra	49399	46602	96002	51.5
Meghalaya	8407	350	8757	96.00
Tamil Nadu	46070	42619	88689	51.95
West Bengal	54970	32116	87086	63.12
India	627850	554541	1182391	53.1

(Source: PRIA, 2003)

India has possibly the largest number of active non-government, non-profit organisations in the world. There has been a sharp increase in the number of new NGOs in the past decade in India. According to a government study, there were only 1.44 lakh registered societies till 1970. The maximum increase in the number of registrations happened after 2000. A recent study commissioned by the government showed that there are about 3.3 million NGOs in India by the end of 2009 i.e., one NGO for less than an average of 400 Indians (J. Mathew & J. Verghese, 2011).

**2.11 Table No. 2.4: Non-Profit Organisations in Different states**

Sl. No.	States	Total (in Lakhs)
1	Maharashtra	4.8
2	Andhra Pradesh	4.6
3	Uttar Pradesh	4.3
4	Kerala	3.3
5	Karnataka	1.9
6	Gujarat	1.7
7	West Bengal	1.7
8	Tamil Nadu	1.4
9	Orissa	1.3
10	Rajasthan	1

Source: Yojana, November, 2011

### 2.12 Table No. 2.5: Size of NGOs in India

Category of staff	Percentage of NGOs
One or less paid staff	73.4
Between 2-5	13.3
Between 6-10	4.8
Above ten paid staff	8.5

(Source: PRIA, 2002)

It is clear from the above table that 73.4% NGOs in India have only one or less paid staff. Only 8.5% NGOs in India they are carrying out their activities with more than ten staff.

### 2.13 Table No. 2.6: Sources of Funding in India

Sources	Percentage of Total Fund (app.)
Local (peoples and Corporate Contribution)	80%
Government	13%
International	7%

(Source: (Source: PRIA, 2002)

It is very clear from the above table 80% funding in India are coming from the contribution of the local people and corporate sector. The contributions of governmental and international bodies are 13% and 7% respectively.

### 2.14 Table No. 2.7: Types of Funding in India

Types	Percentage of Total Fund (app.)
Self-Generated	51%
Loans	7.1%
Grants	29%
Donations	12.9%

(Source: PRIA, 2002)

In India 51% fund are self-generated. Loans and grants contribute 7.1% and

29% respectively. In India 12.9% funds are generated from the different sources of donations

**2.15 Table No. 2.8: Dominant activities in India**

Type of Activities	Percentage of NGOs
Religious	26.5%
Community/Social Service	21.3%
Education	20.4%
Sports/Culture	17.9%
Health	6.6%
Others	7.5%

(Source: PRIA, 2002)

The different activities of NGOs include religious, social service, education, culture, health and so on. In In 26.5% NGOs are doing different activities in the field of religion. Social service and educational activities include 21.3% and 20.4% respectively. In India 6.6% NGOs are carrying out their activities in the health field.

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## **Chapter - 3**

# **THE IDEA OF EMPOWERMENT: CONCEPTUAL AND OPERATIONAL DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A PAN-INDIAN PERSPECTIVE**

## Chapter – 3

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### **THE IDEA OF EMPOWERMENT: CONCEPTUAL AND OPERATIONAL DIMENSIONS OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT: A PAN-INDIAN PERSPECTIVE**

#### **3.1 Introduction (Meaning of Empowerment)**

Before discussing about the empowerment of women, one does need to understand the exact meaning of the word 'empowerment'. According to Cambridge English Dictionary, empowerment means "to authorize". So, in the context of the people they have to be authorized to have control over their lives. When applied in the context of development the particular segment of population "empowered" means to have control over their lives to better their socio-economic and political conditions.

The concept of empowerment, in predominant theory of democracy, means equal influence and individual autonomy. In a predominantly integrative theory of democracy, empowerment means transforming individuals into citizens. According to Herschman (1970), empowerment may be viewed from existence and voice of options. The existence option in a real sense is logically linked to economic life. The voice option is introduced as a supplementary means of empowerment linked to family life and political life, choosing between the two. Hirst Paul (1994), was in favour of exist option.

So, there is a great debate on the meanings and issues of empowerment. One of the major issues in the debate on empowerment is to do with its definition. The term "empowerment" is used across a wide range of disciplines and each brings differing interpretations. The Oxford English Dictionary defines "empowerment" as "the action of empowering; the state of being empowered." It was first used in this form in 1849. However, the verb "empower" from which this noun is derived was first apparent in the English Language somewhere in two hundred years before. The word "empower" is of French and Latin derivation consisting of the preposition "em" and the noun "power". "Em" probably comes from the Old French for "en" - they were, at one time, interchangeable words meaning "in". The Latin source of "em" is,

"power". "Em" probably comes from the Old French for "en" - they were, at one time, interchangeable words meaning "in". The Latin source of "em" is, however, more complicated. "Em" and "en" also held the same definition - to "look" or to "come". This provokes interesting thought as to modern interpretations of the word "empowerment" but it is more likely that its origin lies with the preposition "in" which denoted space and was defined as "into; onto; towards or against". This form of the Latin would explain the emergence of another spelling of the word - "impower". The first recorded use of the word "empower" and its derivations was in the Seventeenth Century by Hamon L'Estrange in his book 'The Reign of King Charles'.

Empowerment is the process through which an individual perceives that s/he controls his or her situation (Bandura, 1977, 1986, 1997; Bormann, 1988; Bullis, 1993; Buzzanell, 1995; Chiles & Zorn, 1995, 1991; Mumby, 1993; Pacanowsky, 1988; Papa, Ghanekar, & Singhal, 1997; Papa, Auwal, & Singhal, 1995, 1997; Scheibel, 1994). Fawcett and colleagues (1996) extend the concept of empowerment to the group and/or community level by defining empowerment as "the process of gaining influence over the events and outcomes of importance to an individual, group, or community". Albrecht (1988) discussed empowerment as a belief (i) that one can influence others to achieve specific outcomes, and (ii) that the process for achieving these outcomes is based on interactional communication behaviour, a perspective that we seek to extend in the present investigation. The concept of empowerment is similar to self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986, 1997), and is the opposite of fatalism. Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as an individual's belief that he/she is able to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments. An empowered person actively engages in his/her environment, rather than passively reacting to events over which the individual feels s/he has no control. A collective of empowered individuals practices participatory decision-making (Cheney, 1995), through which the collectivity encourages individuals to become more empowered. Bandura (1997) has recently conceptualized collective efficacy, which is expressed in collectivistic-oriented systems in which people work together to achieve the

benefits that they seek. Such collective efficacy rests on the individual self-efficacy of the members of the collectivity who collaborates in order to organize and execute the courses of group actions that produces desired ends. Collective self-efficacy, thus, rests on individual self-efficacy of the members. The successful expression of collective efficacy can build individual self-efficacy. He stated: " 'Empowerment' is not something bestowed through edict. It is gained through development of personal efficacy that enables people to take advantage of opportunities and to remove environmental constraints guarded by those whose interests are served by them. Those who exercise authority and control do not go around voluntarily granting to others power over resources and entitlements in acts of beneficence. A share of benefits and control must be negotiated through concerted effort and, oftentimes, through prolonged struggle. Equipping people with a firm belief that they can produce valued effect by their collective action and providing them with the means to do so are the key ingredients in an enablement process".

The World Bank's Empowerment and Poverty Reduction: A Sourcebook defines empowerment in its broadest sense as the "expansion of freedom of choice and action" (Narayan, 2002). United Nations (2001) defines empowerment as the processes by which women take control and ownership of their lives through expansion of their choices. Kabeer's (1998) view of empowerment refers to the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such ability. The fundamentals of empowerment have been defined as agency (the ability to define one's goals and act upon them), awareness of gendered power structures, self-esteem and self-confidence (Kabeer, 2001). Kabeer points out that a distinction has to be made about the type of choice, and the focus necessarily has to be on strategic life choices, that is choices that shape livelihoods or are 'critical for people to live the lives they want'. The expansion in the range of potential choices available to women includes three inter-related dimensions that are inseparable in determining the meaning of an indicator and hence its validity as a measure of empowerment. These dimensions are (i) Resources: The precondition necessary for women to be able to exercise choice; women must

have access and future claims to material, human and social resources; (ii) Agency: The process of decision-making, including negotiation, deception and manipulation that permit women to define their goals and act upon them; (iii) Achievements: The well-being outcomes that women experience as a result of their access to resources and agency. Mayoux's (2000) definition of empowerment relates more directly with power, as "a multidimensional and interlinked process of change in power relations". It consists of: (i) 'Power within', enabling women to articulate their own aspirations and strategies for change; (ii) 'Power to', enabling women to develop the necessary skills and access the necessary resources to achieve their aspirations; (iii) 'Power with', enabling women to examine and articulate their collective interests, to organize, to achieve them and to link with other women and men's organizations for change; and (iv) 'Power over', changing the underlying inequalities in power and resources that constrain women's aspirations and their ability to achieve them. These power relations operate in different spheres of life (e.g., economic, social, political) and at different levels (e.g., individual, household, community, market, institutional).

Wilkinson (1990) argues empowerment is the process in which people assume an increased involvement in defining and promoting their own agenda for political and social projects designed to intact change.

Hape (1994) said that the empowerment is autonomy both in collective and individual levels. It encompasses several mutually reinforcing components but begins with and is supported by economic independence. According to this definition, access to and control over productive resources, knowledge and awareness of self and society, and of personal needs, of socio-economic resources, realization of one's capabilities and potential and confidence to take decision are components of empowerment. To women, empowerment is the restructuring of gender relation within family and society.

Batliwala (1994) said that the empowerment is the process of challenging existing power relations, and of gaining greater control over the sources of power.

Oakley (1991) argues empowerment is the development of skills and abilities to enable rural people and to manage better, and have a say in development process.

Institute of Socio-economic Development (1991) Empowerment is a process to participate affectively in decisions that affect women's lives at the family, community and higher level of political process

Sharma (1992) defines empowerment as a process aimed at changing the nature and direction of systemic forces which marginalize women and other disadvantaged sections.

Pandey (1993) said empowerment is a process of building capacity and confidence for taking decisions about one's own life at an individual and collective level, gaining control over productive resources. The empowerment process is facilitated by creating awareness about one's life and responsibilities in socio-economic and political fields.

Sorensen (1997) said empowerment means giving autonomy and control over one's life. The empowered person becomes agents of their own development, and able in decision making and are able to challenge and change their subordinated position in society in respect of socio-economic and political matters.

Leiten (1992) argued that a true emancipatory movement not only in economic resources but in political and social process has been variously labeled as empowerment.

Banerjee (1995) said empowerment implies a fundamental redistribution of power between different groups. It is a process of equality enhancement and can be achieved through disempowering some structure, system, process and institutions. Empowerment as an enabling process for equality demonstrates selectivity, unevenness, self-generated momentum and compulsions. Empowerment is the vehicle which enables women to renegotiate their existence.

Conger and Kanungo (1988) opined that empowerment means different things to different people. They have defined empowerment as a process of enhancing feelings of self-efficacy among organizational members through the

identification of conditions that foster powerlessness and through their removal by both formal organisational practices and informal techniques of providing efficacy information. "The term empowerment refers to a range of activities from individual self-assertion to collective resistance, protest and mobilization that challenge basic power relations. For individuals and groups where class, caste, ethnicity and gender determine their access to resources and power, their empowerment begins when they not only recognize the systemic forces that oppress them, but act to change existing power relationship."

According to Bhowmik (2003) the empowerment is the process of enabling or authorizing an individual to think, behave and take action and central work in an autonomous way. It is the process, by which can gain control over one's destiny and the circumstances of their lives. Empowerment can be viewed as means of creating a social environment in which one can make decisions and make choices either individually or collectively for social transformation.

The World Bank (2001) defines empowerment as "the process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Central to this process is the actions which both build individual and collective assets, and improves the efficiency and fairness of the organizational and institutional context which govern the use of these assets." Thus, as the World Bank (2001) report confirm, societies that discriminate on the basis of gender pays the cost of greater poverty, slower economic growth, weaker governance and a lower living standard of their people. The World Bank also identifies four key elements of empowerment to draft institutional reforms: access to information; inclusion and participation; accountability; and local organisational capacity.

According to Krishna (2003) empowerment means increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make effective development and life choices and to transform these choices into desired actions and outcomes. It is by nature a process and/or outcome. Social capital, on the other hand, features social organisation such as networks, norms and inter-personal trust that

facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit. It is by nature a stock. And Community Driven Development (CDD) is a methodology of undertaking development enterprises that gives control of decisions and resources to community groups. It is by nature an activity.

Malhotra (2004) said that empowerment as conceptualised by Moser, Kabeer, Batliwala and Rowlands can broadly be categorized as coming from the individual end of the continuum. Here empowerment is located within the notions of 'power-within', 'power-with', and 'power-to', which conceptualise power in variable sum terms. From this perspective, the total amount of power in society is seen as variable and residing with members of society as a whole. In fact, it is seen as involving the capacity and the right to act, termed as 'legitimate capacity, by Parson. Based on the concept, empowerment can be achieved within the existing social order without any significant negative effects upon the power of the powerful. Once empowered, they can share in the fruits of development become agents of their own development and in process achieving self-reliance.

Empowerment is defined by Moser as 'the capacity of women to increase their own self-reliance and internal strength. This is identified as the right to determine choices in life and to influence the direction of change, through the ability to gain control over material and non-material resources.'

Empowerment is defined by Oakley as 'power as a result of increasing access to economic resources, such as credit input'.

For Kabeer empowerment is 'the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such ability'.

Personal empowerment for Rowlands is key to the entire empowerment process, and involves fundamental psychological and psychosocial processes and changes. She views empowerment process as dynamic, aimed at finding 'more spaces for control' and encompassing changes at the personal, relational and collective levels.

In their respective conceptualizations of empowerment, Price, Friedmann, Johnson and Young can be categorised as leaning towards the political end of the continuum. Here the notion of empowerment signifies



'power-over', which conceptualizes power in zero-sum terms. It is seen as a 'capacity to act' and is conceived as a quantitative phenomenon that is used as an instrument for domination.

Wallerstein N., Bernstein E., (1994) describe empowerment as "a process by which people, organizations and communities gain mastery over their affairs" with community empowerment as a "a social action process by which individuals, communities, and organizations gain mastery over their lives in the context of changing their social and political environment to improve equity and quality of life."

Narayan D. (2002) defines empowerment as "expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives."

Freire P. (1970) said empowerment is an action-oriented concept with a focus on removal of formal or informal barriers, and on transforming power relations between communities, institutions and governments. It is based on an assumption of community cultural assets that can be strengthened through dialogue and action. It is exercised in various domains, from personal through political and collective action. (Laverack G. 2004) argued that the empowerment has sometimes been used interchangeably with community capacity (Goodman RM, 1998), or social capital (Putman R., 1995), though, unlike social capital, empowerment focuses on power relations and intervention strategies. Empowerment includes both processes and outcomes. After much discussion, we can define empowerment as having a number of qualities, and are as follows:

1. A feeling that the individual can make a difference.
2. Seeing things differently and logically.
3. Learning to think critically.
4. Increasing one's positive self-image and overcoming stigma.
5. Having access to information and resources.
6. Growth and change that is never ending and self-initiated.
7. Development of learning skills.

8. Effecting change in one's life and one's community.
9. Having a range of options from which to make choices.
10. Learning the conditioning.
11. Having decision-making power.
12. Understanding that people have rights.
13. Not feeling alone; feeling part of a group.

In a nutshell we can conclude that the empowerment has been conceptualized differently by different writers. The concept of empowerment is used in many ways and in a wide range of context, and is applied by organisations of differing world views and political persuasions. The term 'empower' is referred to 'to give power or authority to'. Much has been said and discussed about the empowerment concept. Yet, despite the volumes of material generated, a unanimous decision on the meaning of empowerment has not been reached.

### **3.2 Women Empowerment**

Since the 1990s women have been identified as key agents of sustainable development and women's equality and empowerment are seen as central to a more holistic approach towards establishing new patterns and processes of development that are sustainable. The World Bank has suggested that empowerment of women should be a key aspect of all social development programs (World Bank, 2001). If we follow the definition of empowerment given by Kabeer which reads "the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them" then the meaning of women empowerment will be effective one. For women in India, this suggests empowerment in several realms: personal, familial, economic and political. Increasing personal efficacy lies at the heart of empowerment. Female empowerment is the process of building a woman's capacity to be self-reliant and to develop her sense of inner strength (Bandura, 1997).

Since the 1980s the Government of India has shown increasing concern for women's issues through a variety of legislation promoting the education and political participation of women (Collier, 1998). International organizations like the World Bank and United Nations have focused on women's issues especially the empowerment of poor women in rural areas. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also taken on an increased role in the area of women's empowerment (Sadik, 1988). NGO's, previously catering to women's health and educational need, have moved beyond this traditional focus to addressing the underlying causes of deprivations through promoting the economic and social empowerment of women (McNamara, 2003).

Although the notion of women's empowerment has long been legitimized by international development agencies, but what actually comprises empowerment, and how it is measured, is debated in the development literature. Malhotra, Schuler and Boender (2002) provide an excellent review of this debate. They review the many ways that empowerment can be measured and suggest that researchers pay attention to the process in which empowerment occurs. The frequently used Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM) is a composite measure of gender inequality in three key areas: Political participation and decision-making, economic participation and decision-making and power over economic resources (HDR, 2003).

Malhotra (2002) constructed a list of the most commonly used dimensions of women's empowerment, drawing from the frameworks developed by various authors in different fields of social sciences. Allowing for overlap, these frameworks suggest that women's empowerment needs to occur along multiple dimension, including: economic, socio-cultural, familial/interpersonal, legal, political, and psychological. Since these dimensions cover a broad range of factors, women may be empowered within one of these sub-domains. They give the example of "socio-cultural" dimension which covers a range of empowerment sub-domains, from marriage systems to norms regarding women's physical mobility, to non-familial social support systems and networks available to women.

Several efforts have been made in recent years to develop comprehensive frameworks delineating the various dimensions along which women can be empowered (Malhotra, Schuler and Boender, 2002). In this context the work of Hashemi (1996) and Amin Becker and Bayes, (1998), seems most relevant for the study.

Kabeer (1999), stresses that women's empowerment is about the process by which those who have been denied the ability to make strategic life choices acquire such ability. According to her, it is important to understand empowerment as a process and not an instrumentalist form of advocacy, which requires measurement and quantification of empowerment. Kabeer emphasizes that the ability to exercise choice incorporates three interrelated dimensions: resources (defined broadly to include not only access, but also future claims, to both material and human and social resources); agency (including processes of decision-making, as well as less measurable manifestations of agency such as negotiation, deception and manipulation) and achievements (well-being outcomes). Kabeer further stresses that it is resources and agency together that constitute what Sen (1985) refers to as capabilities: the potential that people have for living the lives they want, of achieving valued ways of 'being and doing' which are valued by people in a given context. 'Functioning' refers to all possible ways of 'being and doing', which are valued by people in a given context and of 'functioning achievements' to refer to the particular ways of being and doing which are realized by different individuals. If the failure to achieve valued ways of 'being and doing' can be traced to laziness, incompetence or individual preferences and priorities, then the issue of power is not relevant. It is only when the failure to achieve one's goals reflects some deep-seated constraint on the ability to choose that it can be taken as a manifestation of disempowerment.

Women's empowerment is model of gender analysis/development that traces women's increasing equality by empowerment through five phases, viz. welfare, access, conscientation, participation and control. Empowerment is a process whereby women can establish their control over various assets and which helps them to develop their self confidence. Empowerment is the way by

which women learn about their rights, duties and laws (Mondal, Sekh Rahim, 2005).

### **3.3 Review of Literature**

A number of studies have been undertaken on women empowerment at the global level and in India. Some studies dealt on methodological issues and some on empirical analysis. Moser (1993) focused on the interrelationship between gender and development, the formulation of gender policy and the implementation of gender planning and practices. The work of Shields (1995) provided an exploratory framework to understand and develop the concept of empowerment both from a theoretical and practical perspective with a particular focus on women's perception of the meaning of empowerment in their lives. Anand and Sen (1995) tried to develop a measure of gender inequality. Pillarisetti and Gillivray (1998) mainly emphasized on the methodology of construction, composition and determinant of GEM. Bardhan and Klasen (1999) criticized GEM as an inadequate index of measuring women empowerment at the aggregate level. Malhotra (2002) in their paper prepared for the World Bank highlighted methodological issues of measurement and analysis of women empowerment.

Chattopadhyay and Duflo (2001) in their paper used a policy of political reservation for women adopted in India to study the impact of women's leadership on policy decision. They found that women were more likely to participate in policy making process if the leader of the village community was happened to be women.

Mahanta (2002) sought to explain the question of women's access to or deprivation of basic human rights as the right to health, education and work, legal rights, rights of working women's, besides issues like domestic violence, all the while keeping the peculiar socio-cultural situation of the North East in mind. A workshop organized in 2003 by the Institute of Social Sciences and South Asia Partnership, Canada addressed the issues like "Proxy Women" who after being elected to Panchayat bodies were merely puppets in the hands of their husbands, relatives and other male Panchayat members; and emphasized

on training programme for their capacity building. Assam Human Development Report (Govt. of Assam, 2003) threw some light on inequality in the achievement between men and women of Assam in different spheres of life. The report viewed that poverty, violence and lack of political participation were the main issues of concern for South Asian Women, and Assam was no exception.

The study of Kishor and Gupta (2004) revealed that average women in India were disempowered relative to men, and there had been little change in her empowerment over time. Parashar (2004) examined how mother's empowerment in India is linked with child nutrition and immunization and suggested women to be empowered simultaneously along several different dimensions if they and their children were to benefit across the whole spectrum of their health and survival needs.

Sridevi (2005) in her paper provided a scientific method to measure empowerment. Study of Cote de Ivoire revealed that increased female share in household income leads to increased spending on human development enhancing items (as quoted by Ranis and Stewart, 2005). Blumberg (2005) viewed that economic empowerment of women was the key to gender equality and well-being of a nation. This would not only enhance women's capacity of decision making but also lead to reduction in corruption, armed conflict and violence against females in the long run.

Karat (2005) in her works discussed the issues of violence against women, their survival, political participation and emancipation. Panda and Agarwal (2005) focused on the factor like women's property status in the context of her risk of marital violence and opined that if development means expansion of human capabilities, then freedom from domestic violence should be an integral part of any exercise for evaluating developmental progress.

Desai and Thakkar (2007) in their work discussed women's political participation, legal rights and education as tools for their empowerment. Deepa Narayan (2007) made an attempt to measure women empowerment for different countries and regions by using self-assessed points on a ten steps ladder of power and rights, where at the bottom of the ladder stood people

who were completely powerless and without rights and on the top stood those who had a lot of power and rights.

Figueras (2008) in her work studied the effect of female political representation in State legislature on public goods, policy and expenditure in the context of India and opined that politicians' gender and social position matters for policy. Barkat while discussing the present status of women in Bangladesh opined that although women as mothers are held in high respect at the individual level, there was an unclear understanding of empowerment of women as a process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation in decision making and control over her own life. ([www.goodgovernance.org](http://www.goodgovernance.org))

Thus, from the above review of literature it is evident that quite a number of studies have already been undertaken on women empowerment and related issues. Entire gamut of literature has centered mainly around conceptual and measurement issues and the constraints to women empowerment.

### **3.4 Women's Empowerment in Contemporary India**

Over the three decades of the women's movement across India, we have seen an increasing emphasis on the promotion of grassroots-level organisations for women's development and discussions on women's status and empowerment. The phrase 'status of women', though a cliché, has its uses despite countrywide variations. But women empowerment in India is a challenging task as we need to acknowledge the fact that gender based discrimination is a deep rooted social malice practiced in India in many forms, since thousands of years. The malice is not going to go away in a few years or for that matter by attempting to work at it through half-hearted attempts. Formulating laws and policies are not enough as it is seen that most of the times these laws and policies just remain on paper. The ground situation on the other hand just remains the same and in many instances worsens further. Addressing the malice of gender discrimination and women empowerment in

India is long drawn battle against powerful structural forces of the society which are against women's growth and development.

Contemporary Indian society has been exposed to the broad processes of social transformation, agricultural modernization and economic development, urbanization and globalization. However, these processes have generated regional imbalances, sharpened class inequalities and augmented the gender disparities. Hence, women have become critical symbols of these growing imbalances. All these have affected adversely the various aspects of women's empowerment in the contemporary Indian society. The family and women's work is not enough to say that any society consists of men and women. It is equally important to look at how the two groups of people interact, as well as at the role and exceptions each group has of the other. Such roles and exceptions are a product of the stereotypes of each gender. By gender stereotype we mean attributes and qualities commonly associated with a gender. Thus, the first idea on gender role differences, which a child acquires, is that of women of one's family marrying and leaving their homes to live with different groups of people. Secondly, men appear to exercise far greater influence in decision making and are far more visible and audible than their wives. Thirdly, most of the tasks within the home are done by the mother, grand-mother, and sisters and so on. At meal times they carry food to the fields for the men. All these tasks, which consume time and energy, are not counted as work and there is no payment involved. In western countries, women's groups, politicians and other concerned individuals have been arguing for payment for house work and childcare. In India, the question of payment for household jobs has not really been an important issue or demand. As we shall see, there are many other issues, which require urgent attention. At the same time, it is important for us to remember that non-payment should not also mean non-recognition. The fact that women are expected to perform all these tasks as a part of their conventional roles and on special merit is awarded to them for these tiring and tiresome jobs.

But, empowerment is seen as a process where outcome would lead to renegotiation to gender relation, enhance women's access and control over



human, material, financial and intellectual resources. Empowerment of women section can be understood as a process which enables women to question and analyze the basis of their subordination, to articulate this problem, ways of addressing their problems and to take decisions, to make forward and act upon. Empowerment does not end with election but to decision making, planning, implementation of development programme, monitoring and evaluation of the programme and sharing the benefits of development. Women participation into politics at local level through reservation is certainly a positive development but to make it work needs sincere efforts from different quarters. Something more than participation is required to which the term empowerment focuses. It is concerned with women empowerment through ideas, education and consciousness. The empowerment is frequently stimulated theory participatory rural appraisal exercise giving women a clear sense of how they can improve upon their lives in particular way. Now, with the Constitutional and legislative support, it was hoped that the process of women empowerment would gather momentum, but despite various movements and legislative guarantee and despite the increase in out lay for development projects, women's empowerment remain to be achieved. Here, NGOs playing more effective roles and acting as a third sector of development and empowerment of women. Here are some important points where women need for empowerment.

The extent of empowerment of women in the national hierarchy is determined largely by the three factors - her economic, social and political identity and their weightage. These factors are deeply intertwined and interlinked with many cross cutting linkages which imply that if efforts in even one dimension remain absent or weak, outcomes and momentum generated by the other components cannot be sustained as they will not be able to weather any changes or upheavals. It is only when all the three factors are simultaneously addressed and made compatible with each other can the woman being truly empowered. Therefore for holistic empowerment of the woman to happen - social, economic and political aspects impacting a woman's life must converge effectively.

### **3.5 Status of women in India**

The issue of the status of women in society has been a matter of intense scrutiny and debate all over the world. This is equally true of India, an essentially patriarchal society, where the goal of equality between men and women is actually guaranteed by the Country's Constitution. Despite this, there remains a great deal to be done to secure women's equal status in Indian society, especially when it comes to deprived or neglected groups. The concept that "women is as much as man and thus entitled to the same freedoms, rights and responsibilities" is yet to find universal acceptance inspite of the unequivocal assertion that women have complete and equal rights with men in every respect by the International Bill of Human Rights. The Constitution of India has guaranteed equality, liberty and dignity to the women of India. The preamble promises to secure to all its citizens justice- social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and opportunity; and to promote among them all, fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the integrity of the nation. But the real condition is that the majority of women are still not enjoying the rights and opportunities guaranteed to them by the Constitution.

### **3.6 Political Condition**

Indian society may be regarded as a patriarchal society. But equality between men and women is guaranteed by the country's constitution. The National Perspective Plan for Women created a number of administrative agencies for implementing programmes for women's development. Despite this, there remains a great deal to be done to secure women's equal status in Indian society. After independence till date women in India have never held more than 9 per cent of the seats in the Lok Sabha. This 9 per cent comes out of nearly 50 per cent of the population. The percentage of women M.Ps. has remained in single figure mark almost in every Lok Sabha Election. In case of state legislatures, the situation is even more dismal as is clear from the fact that the average women's representation in them is just four per

cent (Subhas C. Arora, 2002). This is the figure of representation of women parliamentarians from first to fourteenth Lok Sabha Election:

**Table No. 3.1 Representation of women Parliamentarians**

Lok Sabha Elections	Total Seats	Women Candidates	Elected	Percentage
1952 (First)	499	51	22	4.4
1957 (Second)	500	45	27	5.4
1962 (Third)	503	70	34	6.7
1967 (Fourth)	523	67	31	5.9
1971 (Fifth)	521	86	22	4.2
1977 (Sixth)	544	70	19	3.4
1980 (Seventh)	544	142	28	5.1
1984 (Eighth)	544	164	44	8.1
1989 (Ninth)	517	198	27	5.2
1991 (Tenth)	544	325	39	7.8
1996 (Eleventh)	544	599	39*	7.8
1998 (Twelfth)	544	271	43*	8.8
1999 (Thirteenth)	542	250	57*	8.86
2004 (Fourteenth)	543	350	44	8.1

Source: Press Information Bureau, Government of India.

Note: \* One member nominated by the President.

The table shows that women representation in the country's highest decision-making body is so poor. It is clear from the table that women contesting elections is going up steadily over the years but this increase is not sufficient keeping in view the fact that there has been overall increase in the number of candidates both men and women. It is very clear that the success ratio of women contestants has steadily fallen over the years.

### 3.7 Literacy rate of women

Women are fighting for atrocities such as dowry, female infanticide, sex selective abortions, health, poverty, education, gender disparity, trafficking,

sexual harassment, domestic violence, etc. Women today are educated but illiterate in terms of knowing their rights properly. Literacy rate is considered as one of the parameters for measuring the development of a country. The disparity between women and men in education is that men are considered to be the bread earner of the family, while the role of care taking is ascribed to that of women. As it is considered to be the responsibility of men to earn money, education is taken as the means to attend the end. And, at the same time care for the family is assumed to be the sole responsibility of women. The following represents the literacy rates of men and women in India.

**Table No. 3.2 Literacy Rates in India**

Year	Persons	Males	Females	Male-female gap in literacy rate
1951	18.33	27.16	7.90	19.26
1961	28.31	40.40	12.90	24.50
1971	34.45	45.95	18.44	27.51
1981	43.67	56.50	24.88	32.38
1991	52.21	64.13	39.43	25.30
2001	65.38	75.86	54.16	21.70

(Source: Census of India)

From the above table, it can be said that even after 50 years since 1951, the male- female gap in the literacy rate hasn't shown much marked changes. In such a situation, wherein about 46% of Indian women still illiterate, aspiring a developed country status for India and assuming that women in India are feeling good is nothing but a pipedream.

### **3.8 Employment Opportunity**

A news item in a National daily follows "Double Postgraduates and Ph.D. holders for the constables' post"! Not surprising. Of the 205 women constables who passed out of the Kerala Policy Academy in Trissur, two are Ph. Ds, eight double post-graduates, 29 post-graduates and 122 are graduates (Babu,

Ramesh, 2003). It is fact that women are more unemployed and underemployed compared to their male counterparts.

### 3.9 Sex Ratio

Gender discrimination starts from the beginning of birth or even before birth of the child itself. Females of all ages face a gross neglect by the society throughout their lives. The birth of a girl child is considered to be a debt to be paid in the future whereas boys are considered as support at the old age. Therefore, to exempt from the burden of debt along with the interest of rearing the girl child, people prefer to abort the foetus in the very beginning.

**Table No. 3.3 Sex Ratio in India: 1901-2001**

Sl. No	Census Year	Sex Ratio
1	1901	972
2	1911	964
3	1921	955
4	1931	950
5	1941	945
6	1951	946
7	1961	941
8	1971	930
9	1981	934
10	1991	927
11	2001	933

(Source: Compiled from Census figures.)

Table shows that the number of women population in India is decreasing. It was 972 against 1000 men in 1901 and after one hundred year it is 933.

### 3.10 Health of women in India

Health is not mainly an issue of doctors, social services and hospitals. It is an issue of social justice. The National Health Policy, approved by Parliament in 1983 clearly indicates India's commitment to the good health for all by the year 2000 AD. The present state of health care is quite unsatisfactory and the goal to achieve 'health for all' is getting postponed. Considering the provision of health care services for women, previously all the measures were restricted

to child survival and safe motherhood programme. While assessing the health policy of the country, the Committee on Empowerment of Women recently observed: Anaemia, urinary tract infections, malnutrition, repeated child births, adolescent marriage and overwork take a heavy toll on women's lives. But their health and nutritional needs receive little focus. All healthcare programmes for women are tailored for pregnant and nursing mothers for achieving population stabilization (Committee on Empowerment of Women, 2000-01),

**Table No. 3.4 Expectation of life at Birth by Sex**

Sl No.	Year	Male	Female
1	1901	22.6	23.3
2	1911	19.4	20.9
3	1921	26.9	26.6
4	1931	32.1	31.4
5	1941	32.4	31.7
6	1951	41.9	40.6
7	1961	46.4	44.7
8	1971	50.9	50.7
9	1981	55.6	56.4
10	1991	60.6	61.7
11	2001	63.87	56.81

Source: Compile from Census Figure

The table shows that there has been considerable improvement in expectation of life at birth in India since independence. Yet, for the country as a whole, it was only in the beginning of the eighties that the expectation of life for women, which has been lagging behind that of men, improved substantially and the gap between men and women was not only gone, but women's expectation of life began to exceed that of men.

### **3.11 Darjeeling District of West Bengal and its Milieu**

West Bengal was created as a constituent state of the Indian union on 15<sup>th</sup> August 1947. West Bengal has international borders with Nepal, Bangladesh and Bhutan, and has state borders with Sikkim, Bihar, Orissa, Jharkhand and Assam. It has, therefore, three international frontiers to the

north, east and west. Kolkata, the capital city of West Bengal, is the cultural hub of not only of eastern India but also of the northeastern part of the country. The total area of West Bengal is 88,752 sq. kms. Though it is small in size in comparison to some other states in the country, but it has a dense concentration of population. According to Census 2001, the total population of the state is 80,221,171, which is fourth in rank after Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra and Bihar, but the population density is the highest in West Bengal, with 90.4 persons per sq. km. The population pressure in the state is the outcome of its socio-economic and political history. The sex ratio is 934, which is slightly higher than the all-India sex ratio. According to Census 2001, among the top ten populous districts of the country, five districts belong to West Bengal and out of the five, three districts North 24 Parganas, South 24 Parganas and Murshidabad which share the international border with Bangladesh. In West Bengal, during the last decade, female literacy has increased from 46.6 per cent in 1991 to 60.22 per cent in 2001. There are 19 districts in West Bengal and Darjeeling is one among them.

The present study has covered the entire District of Darjeeling in the state of West Bengal. The name Darjeeling is believed to be a derivation of 'Dorje,' the precious stone or ecclesiastical scepter, which is emblematic of the thunderbolt of Sakhra (Indra) and of 'ling', a place. It means, therefore, the place of the Dorje, the mystic thunderbolt of the Lamaist religion, this being the name by which the Buddhist monastery which once stood on Observatory Hill was formerly known (O'malley, 1907). It is a frontier district, running up between Nepal and Bhutan and stretching from the plains of Bengal on the south to the state of Sikkim on the north. The Darjeeling district lies between 26° 31' and 27° 13' north latitude and between 87° 59' and 88° 53' east longitude. Geographically the district can be divided into two particular divisions, the hills and the plains. The hill area covers the entire hill subdivisions of Darjeeling Sadar, Kurseong and Kalimpong. The foothills of Darjeeling Himalayas come under the Siliguri subdivision and are also known as Terrain. The district comprises four subdivisions: Darjeeling Sadar, Kalimpong, Kurseong and Siliguri. Darjeeling Sadar consists of Darjeeling city

and three community development blocs: Darjeeling Pulbazar, Rangli Rangliot and Jorebunglow Sukiapokhri. Kalimpong subdivision consists of Kalimpong city and three community development blocs: Kalimpong -I, Kalimpong -II and Gorubathan. Kurseong subdivision consists of Kurseong city and two community development blocs: Mirik and Kurseong. Siliguri subdivision consists of Siliguri city and four community development blocks: Matigara, Naxalbari, Phansidewa and Kharibari. Darjeeling is the district headquarters. There are 17 police stations, 12 development blocks, 3 municipalities, 1 Municipal Corporation and 134 Gram Panchayats in this district. Each subdivision contains one municipality each (Siliguri has a municipal corporation instead) along with community development blocs which in turn are divided into rural areas with gram Panchayats and census towns. In total there are 9 urban units: 3 municipalities, 1 municipal corporation, 1 notified area and 4 census towns.



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## **Chapter - 4**

### **NGOs IN DARJEELING- THEIR EMERGENCE, GROWTH, TYPES AND DEVELOPMENT: AN OVERVIEW**

# Chapter 4

## **NGOs IN DARJEELING- THEIR EMERGENCE, GROWTH, TYPES AND DEVELOPMENT: AN OVERVIEW**

### **History, Society, Economy and Polity of Darjeeling District**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

A land of immense natural scenic beauty, Darjeeling is imbued with a mystic aura steeped in legend and history. It is a frontier District, running between Nepal and Bhutan and stretching from the plains of Bengal in the south to the state of Sikkim in the north. Darjeeling District lies between 26° 31' and 27° 13' North latitude and between 87° 59' and 88° 53' East longitude. The hill areas cover the three hill subdivisions of the District i.e. Darjeeling (Sadar), Kurseong and Kalimpong. The foothills of Darjeeling Himalayas come under Siliguri subdivision and are also known as Terrain. The District is divided into two parts- the hills and the plains. Darjeeling Himalayan region is popularly known for the place of its biological and cultural diversity. There are four subdivisions in the District. The subdivision of Darjeeling (Sadar) consists of Darjeeling city and three Community Development Blocks: Darjeeling Pulbazar, Rangli Rangliot and Jorebunglow Sukiapokhri. Kalimpong subdivision consists of Kalimpong city and three community development blocks: Kalimpong -I, Kalimpong -II and Gorubathan. Kurseong subdivision consists of Kurseong town and two community development blocks: Mirik and Kurseong. Siliguri subdivision consists of Siliguri city and four community development blocks: Matigara, Naxalbari, Phansidewa and Kharibari. Darjeeling is the district headquarters of the District. There are 17 police stations, 12 development blocks, 3 municipalities, 1 Municipal Corporation and 134 Gram Panchayats, 1390 Gram Sansad, 640 inhabited villages, 708 Mouzas, 12 Panchayat Samiti in the District. Each subdivision contains one municipality (Siliguri has a municipal corporation instead) along with community development blocks which in turn are divided into rural areas with gram



Panchayats and census towns. In total there are 9 urban units: 3 municipalities, 1 municipal corporation, 1 notified area and 4 census towns in the District.

## **4.2 Main Features**

There are many unique features of Darjeeling District and because of its uniqueness the area is very popular within the state. A special feature of this area is the cultivation of tea on varying slopes covering about 18000 hectares of land (O'malley, 1907; Chaudhuri, 1978; Starkel & Basu, 2000). The unique features of Darjeeling district are as follows:

### **Geography**

The Darjeeling district lies between 26° 31' and 27° 13' north latitude and between 87° 59' and 88° 53' east longitude. It contains a total area of 1,164 square miles. Geographically, the district can be divided into two particular divisions, the hills and the plains. It is in irregular triangle shape. It is bordered by Sikkim and Bhutan in the North, Uttar Dinajpur and Purnea Districts in the south, Nepal in the West and Bhutan, Bangladesh and Jalpaiguri in the East. Darjeeling District has four subdivisions namely Darjeeling (Sadar), Kalimpong, Kurseong and Siliguri with District headquarter located at Darjeeling town. Except Siliguri, rest of the district is situated on hilly terrain of mountain Himalaya. Siliguri, the only subdivision located on plain, serves as the gateway to Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh as well as all north-eastern states including Sikkim.

### **Weather**

The climate of Darjeeling is a temperate one and has spring, summer, autumn, winter, and the monsoon seasons. Summer starts in May and continues till June. Summers are mild, with maximum temperatures rarely crossing 25 °C (77 °F). The monsoon season is from June to September is characterised by intense torrential rains often causing landslides that block Darjeeling's territorial access to the rest of the country. In winter temperature averages 5-7 °C (41-44.6 °F). Occasionally, the temperatures drop below freezing; snowfalls are fairly common. During the monsoon and winter seasons, Darjeeling is often

enveloped in mist and fog. The weather of hills and plains areas are different in different seasons.

### **Natural Vegetation**

The vegetation of the Darjeeling District is peculiarly rich in the number of species and peculiarly varied in its character, as might be expected from a consideration of its climate and physiography. Broadly speaking, the vegetation of the District shows two well-marked zones- a tropical zone from the plains up to about 6,000 feet, and a temperate zone from about 6,000 to 12,000 feet (O'malley, 1907).

### **Important Rivers**

The Teesta is the largest river of the District. The other important rivers of the District include the Great Rangit, the Ramman, the Little Rangit, the Rangnu, the Mahanadi, the Balason, the Mechi, the Relli, the Jaldhaka, etc.,

### **Architecture**

Colonial architecture is witnessed in many buildings in Darjeeling; many Tudor residences, Gothic churches, the Raj Bhawan (Governor House), Planters' Club and various educational institutions are the examples. Buddhist monasteries display the pagoda style of architecture.

### **Tourist place**

Some places in Darjeeling that are worth visiting include the Tiger Hill, the zoo, monasteries and the tea gardens. The panoramic beauty attracts many tourist and trekkers seeking to explore the Himalayas. Tibetan crafts like carpets, wood and leather work are displayed in the Tibetan Refugee Self Help Center. Several monasteries like Ghum Monastery (8 km from the town), Bhutia Busty monastery, and Mag-Dhog Yolmowa preserve ancient Buddhist scripts. Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park is home to the Siberian tiger, Himalayan black bear, red panda, snow leopard and many other animal and bird species.

### **Economy**

The most significant contributors of Darjeeling economy are tourism, tea and timber industry. Darjeeling tea is regarded as one of the best teas and is widely popular all across the globe. The remuneration of workers is often benefited

with cash and other necessities like accommodation, subsidized rations, free medical benefits and so on. An ever-growing population of the region has harmfully affected the District's forests and other natural resources. Tourism has contributed greatly to the economy of Darjeeling. Darjeeling is a popular film shooting destination. One of the striking features of the district is more than 60% of workers in the tea gardens are women. The District is famous for its tea, timber and tourism.

### **Transport**

There are two ways of transport facilities in the district. Darjeeling town can be reached by covering the 50 miles (80 km) long Darjeeling Himalayan Railway. This railway has heritage train called the "Toy Train" that commences its journey at Siliguri (NJP) and chugs along the Hill Cart Road (National Highway 55) that follows the railway line. The Darjeeling Himalayan Railway is a narrow-gauge railway and was declared as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1999. Regular bus services and other vehicles connect Darjeeling with Siliguri, Kurseong, Kalimpong and Gangtok. The nearest airport is at Bagdogra near Siliguri, located about 93 km (58 miles) from Darjeeling. The closest major railway station is New Jalpaiguri, which is connected with almost all the important Indian cities. Within the town, people usually travel from one place to another on foot. Residents also use two-wheelers and hire taxis for short distances.

### **Agriculture**

Agriculture of the region is varied because of its physical configuration. The foot hill contains alluvial soil and is suited for rice cultivation. Agriculture in this region is grossly rain dependent. Almost all the region is forest areas; tea plantations and native agriculture. Maize, rice, millet, and wheat are the most important grain crops grown in the Darjeeling District. Potatoes, barley, and other cold-tolerant grains, sweet potatoes, and amaranths are important bulk crops grown in selected areas. It should be noted, however, that specific areas within the hills and plains region depend on different crop mixes. Dozens of varieties of lentils, soybeans and beans, mustard, sesame and other oilseeds, as well as numerous vegetables, fruits, and spices contribute to nutritional

balance and are grown as complementary food crops. Medicinal plants, both cultivated and gathered, citrus fruits, ginger, turmeric, and hashish contribute minor cash income when transported to market and sold. Ploughing, levelling, harrowing, and other field preparation is done primarily with yoked oxen and with human labour with simple hand-made tools. Buffalo, Bulls, and occasionally humans pull ploughs, harrows, and field levelers. Agricultural implements are made locally from iron blanks shaped and tempered into the metal parts of tools by indigenous craftsmen. Ploughs have a single iron reinforced cutting tooth and are shallow drawing. This total dependence on human labour matches the high level of agricultural intensity that occurs in the District. Throughout hills human power is used to carry compost to fields, fodder and fuel from remaining forest areas, and agricultural production to home storage areas. Although the hills and plains of the District are characterized by ethnic and cultural diversity, many striking agricultural characteristics are strongly influenced by local agronomic and ecological factors. Frequently members of different ethnic groups are found following cropping systems and rotations and using agricultural technologies that are essentially identical. In addition to this lack of sharply defined ethnic agricultural specialization, sometimes members of single ethnic groups live in villages in a range of agronomic and ecological situations growing different crops, following different farming systems, and using different agricultural tools.

### **Subdivisions**

Geographically, the district can be divided into two particular divisions, the hills and the plains. The entire hilly region of the district covers the three hill subdivisions of Darjeeling (Sadar), Kurseong and Kalimpong. The foothills of Darjeeling Himalayas come under the Siliguri subdivision and are also known as Tarai. Siliguri lies at the foot of the hills, which is bounded on the north by the mountains, on the south by the Purnia district of Bihar state, on the east by Jalpaiguri district and on the west by Nepal. Darjeeling district has a length from north to south of 18 miles (29 km), and a breadth from east to west of 16 miles (26 km).

## **People**

Darjeeling contains a polyglot population. The region is the mosaic of diverse ethnic groups. The original inhabitants of Darjeeling were Lepcha but they constitute a minority of the population in present Darjeeling. In contemporary Darjeeling, Nepali (Gorkhas) constitutes the majority of the population. They hail from different castes and dialect groups like the Gurung, Mangar, Limbu, Tamang, Newar, Rai, Sherpa and Thami, Brahmin, Chettri and so on. The ethnic and social plurality is perhaps the most powerful demonstration of Darjeeling District. The social groups of diverse ethnic and linguistic background create a cultural mosaic with ethnic distinctiveness. Various racial groups mostly of Mongolians constitute the social contour of the region. Majority of them are of Nepali speaking caste and tribe groups along with some Lepchas, Bhutias, Bihari, Bengali and some Marwari families are also accommodated within the social contour of the hills.

## **Religion**

Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam are the main religions practiced by the people of Darjeeling. In Darjeeling, one can find inter-faith places of worship like the Mahakal Temple, the Hindu temple at Dhirdham or the various Tibetan Buddhist monasteries like Yolmowa Buddhist Monastery, Bhutia Busty Monastery, Yiga Choling Monastery.

## **Education**

Christians Missionaries heralded the education system in the district. Education in Darjeeling has a strong foundation since ages. The schools in the district are either run by the state government or by private and religious organisations. The medium of instructions used in schools are mainly English and Nepali, although the national language Hindi and the official state language Bengali are also given much importance. The schools are either affiliated with the ICSE, or the CBSE, or the West Bengal Board of Secondary Education. Institutions such as St. Joseph's College (School Dept.), Loreto Convent, St. Paul's School and Mount Hermon School attract students from all over India and South Asia. Many schools are more than a hundred years old.

### **4.3 A Brief History of Darjeeling District**

The history of Darjeeling is in the state of obscurity. To the ancient histography of India, Darjeeling as a locality never came to the fore. The Darjeeling District has a colonial history which starts in the late thirties of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The region lies in the range of the Eastern Himalayas, and prior to British annexation belongs to Sikkim and Bhutan historically. But, the history of Darjeeling before the annexation from the kingdom of Sikkim into British Bengal is buried in the past due to lack of records. It is however, believed that indigenious hill tribes (Lepcha) were the first people to set foot in these hills, their livelihoods consisting of fruit gathering and hunting (O'Malley, 1907; Biswas, 1990). On the facts assimilated from the archeological relics found in Badamtam it can be assumed that there was a mixed culture in the undivided Sikkim which dates back to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century where we found the traces of the Magar, the Lepcha and Limbu Kings ruling in this part of the universe. Mr. Hooker believed that the Lepchas, Limbus, Magars and Murmis (Tamangs) were the aboriginal inhabitants of the undivided Sikkim (H.B. Bura Magar, 1994).

The history of Darjeeling dates to the era when, the present area of Darjeeling was a buffer state between Nepal and Bhutan. Upto the beginning of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Darjeeling was a part of the dominions of the Raja of Sikkim. Sikkim at one time extended far the west and included Limbuan (Nepal). The aggressive Gorkhas of Nepal took over the rule to the present day Darjeeling for long time. The Raja of Sikkim later became engaged in unsuccessful war with Gorkhas who had seized power in Nepal and they invaded Sikkim in 1870 and marched as far as east as Teesta River and annexed Terai and the Gorkha Army who did not return Nepal after celebrating victory over Sikkim settled there and became the part of Sikkim (H.B. Bura Magar, 1994).

But, later on, due to a disagreement, the East India Company declared war against Nepalese in which latter were defeated (Anglo-Nepalese War, 1814). In 1815 a treaty was signed at Seagoulie and with that the tract which Nepalese had wrested from Raja of Sikkim, was ceded to the East India Company. And due to the treaty of Titalya between Sikkim and the East India

Company in 1817 the whole area between Mechi and Teesta was restored to the Raja of Sikkim and his sovereignty was accordingly guaranteed by the Company (Chhetry, S. 1999). Under this treaty the Raja was bound to refer to the arbitration of the British Government all disputes between his subjects and those of neighbouring states. The treaty, thus, established a complete British influence in Sikkim. In 1827, a border dispute arose between Sikkim and Nepal, and Sikkim referred the matter in accordance with the treaty of Titaliya to the East India Company. Two Officers - Captain Lloyd and Mr. G.W. Grant were deputed in 1828 to deal with the disputes and they penetrated into the hills as far north as Rinchingpong. Captain Lloyd spent six days in 1829 in the Old Gorkha Station of Darjeeling and was deeply attracted by its advantages as site for a Sanatorium and the area was important from the military viewpoint too because of its location (Dash, 1947). So the East India Company negotiated with the King of Sikkim to lease the area.

Captain Herbert, the Deputy Surveyor General was sent to the area to examine the country. The court of Directors of the British East India Company approved the project. General Lloyd was given the responsibility to negotiate a lease of the area from the Chogyal of Sikkim. The lease was granted on 1 February, 1835.

This deed of grant, which is commendably short, runs as follows:-

*" The Governor-General having expressed his desire for the possession of the hills of Darjeeling on account of its cool climate, for the purpose of enabling the servants of his Government, suffering from sickness, to avail themselves of its advantages, I the Sikkimputtee Rajah out of friendship for the said Governor-General, hereby present Darjeeling to the East India Company, that is, all the land south of the Great Runjeet river, east of the Balasun, Kahail and Little Runjeet rivers, and west of the Rungpo and Mahanadi rivers" (Moktan, R., 2004).*

This was an unconditional cession of what was then a worthless uninhabited mountain. After that, General Lloyd and Dr. Chapman once again

were sent in 1836 to explore and investigate the climate and importance of the place. In 1836 a road had been made from Pankhabari. In 1839, Dr. Campbell, British resident in Nepal, was transferred to Darjeeling as superintendent. He was an able administrator and had established friendly relation with Sikkim. He gave much encouragement to immigrant cultivators and population arose from about 100 in 1839 to about 10,000 in 1849. "Whatever has been done here" wrote N. B. Jackson, an Inspecting Officer in 1852, has been done by Dr. Campbell alone. He found Darjeeling an inaccessible tract of forest, with a very scanty population, by his exertion and excellent Sanatorium has been established for troops and others, a Hill Troop was established for the maintenance of order and improvement of communications, no less than 70 European houses had been built with a bazar, jail and buildings for the accommodations of the sick in the depot, a revenue of Rs. 50,000 had been raised and was collected punctually and without balance, a simple system of administration of justice had been introduced. The system of forced labour formerly in practice has been abolished and labour with all other valuables has been left to find its own price in an open market. Roads had been made, experimental cultivation of tea and coffee had been introduced and various European fruits and grapes planted. At the same time the various tribes of inhabitants had been conciliated and their habits and prejudices treated with a caution and forbearance which will render further progress in the same direction an easy task (K. Pradhan).

The increasing importance of Darjeeling under free institution was a source of loss and frustration to the leading men of Sikkim. Frequent kidnapping and demands for return of slaves took place and the climax was reached when in 1848 Sir Joseph Hooker and Dr. Campbell were made prisoners while travelling in Sikkim with the permission of the Raja of Sikkim and the British Government. So slowly and gradually relation with Sikkim deteriorated (Dash, 1947).

To punish Sikkim a small force entered into Sikkim in 1850 and the



portion of the Sikkim Hills bounded by the Rammam and the Great Rangit on the North, by the Teesta on the East and by the Nepal frontier on the West including Tarai annexed. For some years after the annexation, the relation between Sikkim and British was good but raids on British territory had taken place frequently. The British Government decided to take possession of the portion of Sikkim north of Rammam and west of the Great Rangit until British subjects were released. Dr. Campbell with a small force of 160 rank and files crossed the Rammam in November 1860. He was attacked and forced to fall back on Darjeeling. Later on, Col. Gawler with Sir Ashley Eden as envoy and special commissioner moved with artillery and entered Tumlong, the then capital of Sikkim in 1861. The Raja abdicated in favour of his son and Dewan had to flee. A treaty was signed on the 28<sup>th</sup> march, 1861. It finally put to an end the frontier troubles with Sikkim secured full freedom across Sikkim border (Mitra, 1991). Kalimpong was ruled by the Bhutanese government after wresting from Sikkim since 1706. In 1706 the King of Bhutan annexed what are now Kalimpong and Rhenock (Sen, J. 1989). In 1780 Gorkhas invaded and conquered Kalimpong. After the Anglo-Bhutan War in 1864, the Treaty of Sinchula (1865) was signed, in which Bhutanese held territory east of the Teesta River was ceded to the East India Company.

In other words, the whole territory came under the British occupation in three phases during the thirty years from 1835 to 1865. During the first phase, in 1835, by a deed of grant, the Raja of Sikkim ceded to the British rulers a portion of the Sikkim hills which covered the areas south of the Great Rangit River, east of the Balasan, Kahel and Little Rangit River and west of the Rangnu and Mahananda rivers. The second phase followed a war with Sikkim which resulted in the annexation of Sikkim 'Morang' or 'Terai' at the foot hills as well as a portion of the Sikkim hills which was bounded by the Rammam river on the north, by the Great Rangit and the Teesta River on the east, and by the Nepal frontier on the west. This area had always been under Sikkim, excepting the Morang or Terai in the foot hills which was for a time (1788-1816) conquered by Nepal. However, following the East India Company's victorious

war with Nepal, this tract was ceded through the Treaty of Segauli (1815) to the British rulers who, in turn, temporarily returned it to the Raja of Sikkim by the Treaty of Titaliya (1817) indicated above, the British soon began a war with Sikkim and the ceded territory was annexed by them which was ratified by the Treaty of Tunlong (1861). The third phase was marked by the outbreak of the Anglo-Bhutan war which ended in the Treaty of Sinchulia (1865) and led to the British annexation of the hill tract which was situated to the east of the Teesta river, the west of the Nechu and Dechu rivers, and the south of Sikkim (Dasgupta, 1999).

The Darjeeling Municipality was established in 1850. Tea estates continued to grow. By 1860s peace was restored in the borders. During this time immigrants, mainly from Nepal, were recruited to work in construction sites, tea gardens, and on other agriculture-related projects. Scottish missionaries undertook the construction of schools and welfare centres for the British residents in the district so the Loreto Convent was established in 1847, St. Paul's School in 1864, Planters' Club in 1868, Botanical Garden in 1878, St. Joseph's School in 1888, Railway Station in 1891, Town Hall (present Municipality Building) in 1921. With the opening of the Darjeeling Himalayan Railway in 1881, smooth communication between the town and the plains below further increased the development of the region. Darjeeling Municipality took the responsibility of maintaining the civic administration of the town from as early as 1850.

At that time the District was divided into two subdivisions after Kalimpong had been brought under British Administration, i.e., the Headquarters Subdivision and the Terai Subdivision. The Headquarter Subdivision covered an area of 960 sq. miles including all the hills on both the side of the Teesta and the Terai Subdivision covered an area of 274 sq. miles which included the whole area at the foot of hills. The Headquarter of the Terai Subdivision was at Hanskhawa near Phansidewa and later on it was transferred to Siliguri.

In 1891 Kurseong Subdivision was made which included both the Terai and the lower hills of the west of the Teesta. Later in 1907, Siliguri was made a Subdivision. In 1916, the Kalimpong Subdivision was created. The passing of the Constitution of India 1950 brought to an end the administrative segregation of the District. This established a uniform administrative pattern of administration in the District as in the rest of Bengal

### **After Independence of India**

After the independence of India in 1947, Darjeeling was merged with the state of West Bengal. A separate District of Darjeeling was established consisting of the hilly areas of Darjeeling, Kurseong, Kalimpong and some parts of the Terai region. The population rose by leaps and bounds. The growth rate has touched the sky height of about 45% in the 1990s and thus is far above the national, state, and District average. The colonial town of Darjeeling was designed for a mere population of 10,000. So the population spurt has made the town more prone to the environmental problems in recent decades. The rise in tourism also affected the ecological balance of the area. A diverse ethnic population gave rise to socio-economic tensions, and the demand for the creation of the separate states of Gorkhaland popular in the 1980s. The issues came to a head after a 40-day strike called by the Gorkha National Liberation Front, during which violence gripped the city, causing the state government to call in the Para-military to restore law and order. Political tensions largely declined with the establishment of Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) in 1988 under the chairmanship of Mr. Subash Ghising.

The decade of 1990s saw radical changes on the political, social, economic scenarios of Darjeeling. The DGHC consisted of councilors elected by the people of Darjeeling. This body was granted autonomy to function as an independent body. However, with the passage of time, over-confidence set in among the councilors of Darjeeling. Easy win in Elections ensured the councilors lethargy to work. Moreover, many councilors were illiterate or uneducated. There was frequent funds mismanagement.

Thus, the functioning of DGHC became sloth. Development of the area took a back seat. The economic conditions of the local folk became worse from bad over the period of time. Under the circumstances the movement for Gorkhaland re-emerged with the formation of Gorkha Jana Mukti Morcha by a dissident GNLF leader Bimal Gurung in the month of September 2007. The party was officially announced with a public gathering at chowk bazaar in Darjeeling on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of October 2007. Later on the tripartite agreement of Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) was signed on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, 2011 at Pintail Village, Dist. Darjeeling in presence of the Union Home Minister- Shri P. Chidambaram, West Bengal Chief Minister- Miss Mamta Banerjee and Shri Bimal Gurung, President, GJM.

#### **4.4 Society**

Darjeeling Himalaya is a blend of diverse ethnic and cultural elements and the region is the abode of a large variety of inhabitants. When the British first acquired the hill territory in 1835, it was almost entirely under forest, and what small population it had, had been driven out by the oppression of the petty ruler whom they replaced. It was, in fact, estimated that the whole of this tract, comprising 138square miles, contained only 100 souls (O'Malley, 1907). The then superintendent Dr. Campbell had reported the population of Darjeeling to be 1900 in 1850 and 2200 in 1869. The years that followed saw the rapid growth in the population of the District. Darjeeling District offers the most remarkable example of growth of population stemming mainly from immigration from outside. Since the inception of immigration into the District, people from Nepal belonging to various castes, tribes, religions and speaking various languages have always been in majority. It can be said that Darjeeling is an ethnographic museum and a cultural melting pot.

Darjeeling Himalaya is a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-lingual area. The society in the area is made up of various elements drawn from diverse origin. The social diversity is perhaps the most powerful manifestation of the area. The social groups with diverse ethnic and linguistic origins, representing various racial stocks and social status have found a place for

themselves at different points of time adapting themselves to the different ecological niches offered by the physiographic and climatic setting of the area. The waves of immigration have drawn the ancestors of the majority of the present population of the area from the surrounding territories across the Himalayas. Their dispersal has resulted in a creation of a social mosaic with ethnic distinctiveness. Approximate ethnic group wise composition of the population of Darjeeling District may be mentioned as follows –

- Nepalis (this is a generic term and subsumes more than 20 ethnic groups under it. Various castes and tribes (like Sherpa) that immigrated to the area in the 19th and early 20th century from Nepal are subsumed under this group)
- Lepcha (they are the autochthonous tribes in the area)
- Bhutia (tribal that includes both Bhutanese and Sikkimese Bhutia)
- Tibetan (refugees that came to the area after 1961)
- Bengali (includes both permanent residents and migrants of south Bengal and refugees from Bangladesh)
- Other Indians

The Nepali community is again subdivided into different categories. Notable among them are Khambus or Rai, Murmis, Limbu, Chhetri or Khas, Brahmin, Mangar, Gurung, Newar, Yakas, Gharthi, Kami, Damai, Sarki, Bhujel, etc. The following table represents the group of Nepali people of the District.

**Table No. 4.1: Nepali Groups in the District of Darjeeling**

<b>Nepali Race</b>	<b>1901</b>	<b>1951</b>
Khambus or Rai	33133	63745
Murmis	24465	49890
Limbu	14305	19838
Chettri or Khas	11597	30463
Bahun or Brahmin	6470	11317
Mangar	11912	19413
Gurung	8738	17864
Newar	5770	14827
Yakas	824 (1941 Census)	-
Gharthi	3448	998
Kami	9826	30713 (1991 Census)
Damai	4643	8482 (1991 Census)
Sarki	1823	6611 (1991 Census)
Bhujel	6312 (1931 Census)	5745

(Source: Rajib Chatterjee & Sekh Rahim Mondal, 2011)

Arthur Jules Dash has categorized Nepali communities into the caste and tribe groups while writing the District Gazetteer in 1947. According to him Rai, Sherpa, Chettri, Brahmin, Sanyasi, Bhujel, and Yogi are the caste groups. Manger, Newar, Tamang, Damai, Gurung, Limbu, Kami, Sunwar, Yakha, Sarki, and the Ghati are the tribe groups. Hierarchically Brahmins are called as Bahuns who rank top in the caste hierarchy.

It is very fact that the population of the District is steadily increasing since its inception. The following table gives the details of population growth in the last few decades.

**Table No. 4.2: Population Growth rates in Darjeeling District**

Year	Population	Decadal Growth	Increase	Percent
1872	94712	-	-	-
1881	155179	-	60467	63.84
1891	223314	3.71	68135	43.91
1901	249117	1.75	25803	11.55
1911	265550	0.52	16433	6.6
1921	282748	0.50	17198	6.48
1931	319635	1.22	36887	13.04
1941	376369	1.64	56734	17.75
1951	459617	1.63	83248	22.12
1961	624640	3.11	165023	35.90
1971	781777	2.77	157137	25.16
1981	1006434	2.56	242492	31.2
1991	1335687	-	275650	26.91
2001	1609172	-	309253	

Source: Dash 1947; Census of India of respective years

The population growth is not static. It is fluctuating in nature. The above table shows that the total population of the people of Darjeeling district in 1891 was 223314 which increased to 249117 in 1901 with the decadal growth of 1.75. On the other hand, the decadal growth rate was comparatively much low in 1911 and 1921. Again, from 1931 it started increasing and reached its highest point in 1961. The political independence of Bangladesh has ushered a lot in the increase of population in the District as compared to the other parts of the state.

Majority of the population of the District are the inhabitants of the rural areas and the unique feature of the District is sex ratio is high in the rural areas than the urban areas. The following table represents the population by sex and sex ration in the District.

**Table No. 4.3: Population by Sex and Sex ratio**

Area	Persons	Male	Female	Sex Ratio
Rural	1088740	556633	532107	956
Urban	520432	274011	246421	899
Total	1609172	830644	778528	937

Source: Census of India, 2001

As per the Census of India, 2001 the male and female population of the district was 830644 and 778528 respectively. The male population is comparatively higher than that of the female as the sex ratio stands as 937.

There are multi-lingual people in the society who are residing in the District. The district under discussion displays a prominent Linguistic Breakup among its inhabitants. The variation in the use of daily language by the people of Darjeeling is shown in the following table:

**Table No. 4.4: Linguistic Breakup**

Sl. No.	Area	Bengali	Nepali	Lepcha	Bhutia	Others
1	Sadar	1688	227836	1193	970	13520
2	Kalimpong	1964	118163	8330	2859	3222
3	Kurseong	2130	87284	1135	90	9594
4	Siliguri	56567	23363	415	54	121400
Total		162349	456646	11073	3973	147736

Source: 1971 Census, Government of India.

According to table, the number of people speaking Nepali as their mother language is 227836 in the Sadar subdivision, whereas 1688 people speaks Bengali, 1193 speaks Lepcha, 970 speaks Bhutia and about 13520 speaks languages other than these. Again ,the census in Kalimpong sub-division shows 118163 nepali-speaking people whereas, people speaking Bengali, Lepcha, Bhutia and others numbers in 1964,8330,2859 and 322

respectively. In Kurseong sub-division, 2130 people speak Bengali, 1135 speaks Lepcha, 90 speak Bhutia and 4594 speaks other languages such as Marwari, Bihari and others. Whereas, majority of people i.e. about 8,7824 speak Nepali as their regular speaking language. Siliguri also shows 23363 people speaking Nepali and 56567, 415, 54 and 121200 speaking Bengali, Lepcha, Bhutia, and others respectively. Therefore, according to the 1971 Census report, in total, a majority of 456646 people speaks Nepali, whereas, 162349 people are Bengali speakers, 11073 are Lepcha speakers, 3973 speaks in Bhutia and 147736 people use other languages like Bihari, Marwari and so on. Thus, if we exclude the people of Siliguri sub-division, we will find that major portion of the population of the district contains Nepali speaking people whose number is noticeably high.

The society of Darjeeling District represents multi-religious culture. The main religion of the District includes Hindus, Christians, Muslims, Buddhists and so on. The following table represents the population by religion in the District of Darjeeling.

**Table No. 4.5: Population by religion in the District of Darjeeling**

Sl No.	Religion	1991		2001	
		Population (Number)	%	Population (Number)	%
1	Hindus	1013310	77.95	1237714	76.92
2	Muslims	59140	4.55	85378	5.31
4	Christians	65605	5.05	99232	6.17
5	Sikhs	1251	0.10	2229	0.14
6	Buddhists	155295	11.95	1078	11.02
7	Jains	802	0.06	5507	0.07
8	Others	4516	0.34	707	0.38

Source: Census of India, 1991 & 2001

According to table, majority of the people of the district are Hindus followed by the Buddhists whereas people belonging to other religions are comparatively less.

Apart from the linguistic and religions diversities, Darjeeling District also displays a distinct categorisation among its population namely the



Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. Their proportion to the total population of the district is shown in the following table as:

**Table No. 4.6: Population of SCs and STs and their proportion to the total population**

Area	Total Population	SCs	%	STs	%
Rural	1088740	207422	19.1	178878	16.4
Urban	520432	51459	9.9	25289	4.9
Total	1609172	258881	16.1	204167	12.7

Source: Census of India, 2001

The people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes categories comprise of a noticeable percentage of population- be it in the rural or in the urban areas. Table shows that the rural areas of Darjeeling district have a total population of 1088740 people among which 207422 (19.1%) belongs to the Scheduled Caste category. In the urban areas too, the total population being 520432, the Scheduled Caste categorised people numbers in 51459 (9.9%). Hence 16.1% of the total population comprises the Scheduled Caste people and 12.7% are those belonging to the Scheduled Tribe category.

The number of households in the rural areas is high in comparison to the urban areas in the District. The following table represents number of households, population and the size of the households in the District.

**Table No. 4.7: Number of Households, Population and Households Size**

Area	No. of Households	Population	Households Size
Rural	219401	1088740	5.0
Urban	99336	520432	5.2
Total	318737	1609172	5.0

Source: Census of India, 2001

In the district under study there are 318737 households 219401 in the rural and 99336 in the urban areas. The household size is 5.0 and 5.2 in the rural and urban areas respectively.

The total literacy rate of male and female of the District is 80.1 and 62.9 according to the Census of 2001. The literacy of women is less as compared with men in the District. The following table represents the literacy rate of by sex and gender and gender gap in literacy rate in the District.

**Table No. 4.8: Literacy rate by Sex and Gender and Gender gap in literacy**

Area	Population		Literacy Rate (%)		Gender Gap in Literacy
	Males	Females	Males	Females	
Rural	556633	532107	76.1	55.4	20.7
Urban	274011	246421	87.7	78.5	9.1
Total	830644	77528	80.1	62.9	17.1

Source: Census of India, 2001

Discussing about the literacy rate among the male and female inhabitants, Darjeeling differs from other Districts of the state. The gender gap in literacy between the male and female in the rural area is 20.7 whereas in the urban area, it is 9.1 and in total, it is 17.1. Most strikingly, this is much higher than the other states of the country.

The population of the state-both rural and urban consists of both working and non-working people. The Distribution of Population by Workers and Non-workers by Sex and work participation rate is shown in the following table as:

**Table No. 4.9: Population by Workers and Non-workers by Sex**

Area	Total Workers (Main & Marginal)		Non-Workers		Work Participation Rate (%)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Rural	266736	136503	289897	395604	47.9	25.7
Urban	136234	29969	137777	216452	49.7	12.2
Total	402970	166472	427674	612056	48.5	21.4

Source: Census of India, 2001

Here also, another striking feature that attracts our conscience is that the non-workers numbers in more than the workers, both in the main and

marginal viewpoint. A more attentive study shows that female workers are less in number than that of the males. The work Participation rate of the females is 21.4% whereas that of the males is 48.5%.

These workers consist of cultivators, agricultural labours, workers in household industries and in other fields. The distribution of total workers by category in Percentage is figured in as:

**Table No. 4.10: The distribution of total workers by category in Percentage**

Area	Total Workers		Cultivators (%)		Agricultural Labourers		Worker in Households Industries (%)		Others Workers (%)	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Rural	266736	136503	21.7	22.0	13.3	16.3	2.7	3.5	62.4	58.3
Urban	136234	29969	0.3	1.1	0.3	0.6	1.9	3.9	97.5	94.4
Total	402970	166422	14.4	18.2	8.9	13.4	2.5	3.6	74.3	64.8

Source: Census of India, 2001

Women, though number less in the field of service, lead as labourers. The 2001 census report shows that the number of female is more than the males working as cultivators, agricultural labourers, and workers in households industries and as other workers. They lead the males in 0.3% as cultivators, 3% as agricultural labourers, 0.08% in household labourers in rural areas only. In the urban areas too their percentage is higher by 0.08 %, 0.3%, and 2.9% as cultivators, agricultural labourers, and household labourers respectively. But in the other fields of work, male workers are more than females as the total percentage of the male workers is 74.3% whereas that of female workers is 64.8%.

#### **4.5 Economy**

Environmental conditions play a major role in conditioning the livelihood and economy of any place and Darjeeling Himalaya cannot be an exception. The topography, climatic variations, soil condition have all influenced human occupancies. Subsistence agriculture, livestock, forestry, plantations and allied activities are the major activity of the rural folks of the District. Darjeeling Himalaya has only over 13% cultivable land in proportion to its total geographical area. Physiography in the area has made agricultural conditions extremely diverse. Agriculture is greatly impacted by altitude and slope aspect. Such situation in Darjeeling Himalaya has made cultivation extremely difficult. Large section of people who are living in Khasmal areas are practicing traditional agriculture, more than 35 % of land falling under such category. Bare rocky and steepness restrict agriculture operations to a great extent. Broadly, agricultural crops in the Himalaya can be grouped into two categories- Food crops and Cash crops. Food crops include rice, maize, potato, wheat, barley etc. while the cash crops are tea, cinchona, ginger, cardamom, etc. The methods of agriculture change with the crops. Fruits such as orange, papaya, peaches, guava, plums and even mangoes are grown in the valleys and in areas with low altitudes. Livestock and animal husbandry engages a measurable proportion of rural folks in the area. Grazing of livestock is a regular practice in the valley area of the Darjeeling Himalaya. Livestock supply draught power and serve as the primary and perhaps the most important

source of fertilizer. The villagers use the pairs of oxen to cultivate the terraced fields. Animal manure is indispensable for field fertilization as artificial fertilizers are hardly used. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people of Darjeeling. Some people are engaged with the tea industry and cinchona plantation. Tourism in the District is another source of income of the people. But the majority of the people of Darjeeling District have to depend on the agriculture. The following table represents the area of vested agricultural land in the District.

**Table No. 4.11: Area of vested agricultural land**

Sl. No.	Upto	Area of land distributed (hectare)	Number of Beneficiaries			
			Scheduled Caste	Scheduled Tribe	Others	Total
1	30.09.99	12385.81	18840	13714	17688	50242
2	30.09.00	12388.65	18940	14172	17788	50900
3	30.09.01	12490.58	19840	14222	17888	51950
4	30.09.02	12491.00	19840	14222	17888	51950
5	30.09.03	12575.00	19881	14222	17888	51991

Source: District Statistical Handbook, Darjeeling (2004)

The above table shows that an average of 12466.21 hectares of cultivable land involves about 51406.6 numbers of beneficiaries cultivating various crops.

The distribution of cultivable, uncultivable, etc. lands in different blocks of the District are varies. The following table is showing the use and distribution of land (in Hect) in different blocks of Darjeeling.

**Table No. 4.12: Use and distribution of land (hect) in Blocks of Darjeeling for the year 2003-04**

Sl. No.	Name of Block	Reporting Area	Forest Area	Area under Non-Agri. use	Barren & uncultivable land	Permanent pastures & other grazing land
1	Darjeeling Pulbazar	40887	18392	2066	584	-
2	Sudhipokhri Jorebunglow	39086	22171	945	519	48
3	Rangli- Rangliot	19811	6171	567	-	-
4	Kalimpong-I	33997	16119	6214	2553	221
5	Kalimpong-II	26986	11626	2667	203	608
6	Gorubathan	44372	29169	3703	881	2
7	Kurseong	26952	7292	2335	49	9
8	Mirik	10688	2463	934	-	-
9	Matigara	17413	5723	3595	88	6
10	Naxalbari	19514	4888	2684	24	9
11	Kharibari	14469	-	2456	-	6
12	Phansidewa	31294		5610	24	-

Source: District Statistical Handbook, Darjeeling (2004)

According to the report showing the use of these lands in the year 2003-04, among a total of 325469 hectares of reported lands, 124014 were used as forest areas whereas 33776, 4925, 909 hectares are used as area under non-agricultural use, barren and uncultivable lands and permanent pastures and other gazing lands respectively.

There are different type of farmers in the District which includes Bargadars, Patta holders, small farmers, marginal farmers and agricultural labourers and in each and every blocks their size and numbers are varies. The following table is representing the population features of farmers in the blocks

of Darjeeling for the year 2003-04.

**Table No. 4.13: Population features of Farmers in the Blocks of Darjeeling for the year 2003-04**

Sl. No.	Name of Block	Bargadars	Patta Holders	Small Framers*	Marginal Farmers*	Agricultural laboures (2001)
1	Darjeeling Pulbazar	2331	12730	2560	8005	5201
2	Sudhipokhri Jorebunglow	27	881	5	1285	2696
3	Rangli-Rangliot	132	5479	510	3780	3952
4	Kalimpong-I	1111	7815	2030	8510	4400
5	Kalimpong-II	1221	737	1240	4475	4596
6	Gorubathan	144	3529	1160	2730	3742
7	Kurseong	212	956	510	1580	2323
8	Mirik	23	252	16	479	1240
9	Matigara	1007	8665	455	6860	1888
10	Naxalbari	1617	9522	770	7340	3961
11	Kharibari	803	7147	1435	12495	10591
12	Phansidewa	2221	19258	3185	17180	13229

Note: 1. Marginal farmer possesses agricultural land measuring upto 1 hectare.

2. Small farmer possesses agricultural land measuring more than 1 hectare and upto 2 hectares. 3. \*= According to Agricultural Census (W.B.), 2001

Source: District Statistical Handbook, Darjeeling (2004)

The above table shows that 10849 numbers of bargadars, 76971 patta holders, 13876 small farmers and 74719 marginal farmers constitute the population features of farmers in the Blocks of Darjeeling for the year 2003-04. According to the Census of 2001 there were 57819 farmers in the district. There are some commercial and gramin banks in the District and are as follows:

**Table No. 4.14: Commercial and Gramin Banks in the Blocks of Darjeeling for the year 2003-04**

Sl. No.	Name of Block	Name of Banks offices		Population Served per bank office Commercial & gramin (No. in 000)
		Commerical Bank	Gramin Banks	
1	Darjeeling Pulbazar	2	2	29
2	Sudhipokhri Jorebunglow	3	2	20
3	Rangli-Rangliot	2	2	16
4	Kalimpong-I	4	2	11
5	Kalimpong-II	3	2	12
6	Gorubathan	1	2	18
7	Kurseong	3	3	14
8	Mirik	3	2	8
9	Matigara	2	3	26
10	Naxalbari	6	1	21
11	Kharibari	2	2	20
12	Phansidewa	5	2	25

Source: District Statistical Handbook, Darjeeling (2004)

According to the table, 36 commercial banks and 25 gramin banks served a total number of 220000 people in the different blocks of the district. The intensity of population in different blocks varies. A close analysis of the report shows that the number of people does not depend upon the number of banks of that particular area. There are 4 commercial and gramin banks in Darjeeling-Pulbazar block which serves about 29000 people, whereas 5 banks in Sukhiapokhri-Jorebunglow block serves 20000 only. Similarly, if we compare Mirik and Matigara blocks, we can see that both having the same number of banks vary in their service targets i.e. the former serves about 8000 people whereas the latter serves about 26000, the difference being of 18000.

Apart from banks there are some co-operative societies in the District and the following table represents the same.



**Table No. 4.15: Co-operative Societies in the Blocks of Darjeeling for the year 2003-04**

Sl. No.	Name of Block	No. of Co-operative Societies	No. of Members	Working capital (No. in 000)
1	Darjeeling Pulbazar	107	4015	25797
2	Sudhipokhri Jorebunglow	133	6700	28293
3	Rangli- Rangliot	97	2822	18044
4	Kalimpong-I	80	7453	30604
5	Kalimpong-II	86	5023	50857
6	Gorubathan	41	2648	8193
7	Kurseong	109	5100	30253
8	Mirik	46	1017	10088
9	Matigara			
10	Naxalbari	103	9684	72272
11	Kharibari			
12	Phansidewa	102	5889	10466

Note: Excluding Co-operative Societies of Milk, Sericulture, Weavers & Industries.

(Source: District Statistical Handbook, Darjeeling (2004))

On the other hand, the above table reads that the number of co-operative societies and their members in every block is more or less the same. But the difference lies between their working capitals i.e., it is the amount of funds that varies. The capital in the co-operative societies of Gorubathan block is about 8193000 which are much less than that of its immediate following block, Kurseong which records an amount of 30253000. The reason of this discrimination may be lack of knowledge and difference in the source of income.

The economy of the District is dependent on agriculture. Tea is the backbone of the District and is cultivating since long time. Apart from tea, Cinchona and other medicinal plants have its base here. Sericulture is another section which has been spreading with time. The best of Indian quality mulberry silk is being produced in Darjeeling Hills. Forestry is an important occupation of the people of Darjeeling. Darjeeling has about 38.91 % of its area under forest. Many forest-based industries have come up and there is huge potential for further development. Cultivation of aromatic medicine, and exotic plants and orchids has been a source of income in the regional economy. Tourism is another promising industry in Darjeeling. Darjeeling Himalaya is a familiar place for tourists since historical past. It attracts a large number of tourists from all corners of the country and even from abroad. So, in short, the economy of the District is based on its famous three (3) Ts (Tea, Timber and Tourism).

But over the years, with the increase of population, faulty agricultural practices, overgrazing of the hill slopes in the catchments areas, cutting and lopping of natural forests for fuel, fodder and timber, the continuous and regular practice of grazing, unplanned growth of tourism all has led to deterioration of environment and ecosystem and is yielding many problems. Darjeeling is excluded from the industrial map of the country. The small and cottage industries that have great potentialities in the region have not been brought in as required.

The deep-rooted poverty and ignorance have become chronic over the period of time. Besides, the people are living in a very underdeveloped infrastructure. A house-to-house survey in the rural villages will reveal the real picture as to how people are struggling for their livelihood. Many villages are without proper transport and communication facilities. The rural folks have to walk day long to sell their produce in the nearest town. The situation becomes worse during the rainy season with frequent landslides. Safe drinking water, educational institutions, primary health centre, power supply etc. face similar fate in the rural hills.

As a result, rural Darjeeling in the last few decades has been witnessing a notable out-migration for better jobs and earnings opportunities. The migration is mainly taking place towards the urban areas of the District and to the major cities of the country like Delhi, Kolkata, Madras, Mumbai and so on. Population pressure, degradation of the Common Property Resources, forests, long neglect of the region, backwardness of the economy and society, low agricultural productivity, lack of opportunity etc. have played prominent role in this regard. The drain of the labour force has causing dual impacts-damaging the local economy and discouraging self-reliance in the villages. The unavailability of market, ecological constraints, inadequate manpower, low technology and traditional agriculture does not provide the local folks in the District with adequate income to meet their basic necessities.

The tea industry has absorbed the large number of workers, both males and females and is the principle source of income and employment in the District. But this industry is facing large number of problems nowadays. Thus, it appears very necessary to go deeper into the past and present of the tea industry of the District because there is a close connection between the tea industry and the growth of large numbers of NGOs in the District.

#### **4.6 The Tea Industry- Origin, Growth and Present Condition**

##### **Darjeeling Tea Industry: An Introduction**

Tea played an important role in the British balance of payments. The government of Great Britain and British India rendered all sorts of help for the promotion of tea industry in India. The Court of Directors made all efforts to develop the tea industry in India (Sir P. Griffith). The establishment of the tea industry in Darjeeling is due to the enterprise of Dr. Campbell. In 1834 the Governor-General, Lord William Bentinck, had appointed a committee for the purpose of submitting a plan for the introduction of tea culture in India. In 1840 Dr. Campbell was transferred from Katmandu to Darjeeling, and there started the experimental growth of tea. It was soon found that the plant throve readily at this altitude, and others began to follow Dr. Campbell's example, seed

being distributed by Government of those who desired to cultivate the plant (O'Malley, 1907). But these plantations appear to have been merely experimental plots, but by the year 1856 the industry began to be developed on an extensive scale, especially on the lower slopes, as it was believed that the elevation of Darjeeling was too high for the plant to be productive. The year 1856 may accordingly be taken as the date at which the industry was established as a commercial enterprise. In that year the Alubari tea garden was opened at Kurseong by Darjeeling Tea Company, and another on the Lebong spur by the Darjeeling Land Mortgage Bank. In 1859 the Dhutaria garden was started by Dr. Brougham and between 1860 and 1864 four gardens at Ging, Ambutia, Takdah and Phubsering were established. Darjeeling Tea Company has started a garden at Takvar and in Badamtam by the Lebong Tea Company. Other gardens which were started at this early period were those now known as the Makaibari, Pandam and Steithal tea estates (O'Malley, 1907).

Among the teas cultivated in India, the most celebrated one comes from Darjeeling Himalaya. The best of India's prize Darjeeling Tea is considered the world's finest tea. The region has been cultivating, growing and producing teas for the last 150 years. The complex and unique combination of geo-environmental and agro-climatic conditions characterising the region lends to the tea grown in the area a distinct quality and flavour that has won the patronage and recognition all over the world for the last 1.5 century. The tea produced in the region and having special characteristics has for long been known across the globe as 'Darjeeling Tea' (Kumar, R. and Vasundhara Nair). It is an undisputable fact that the economic development of the region coincided with the development of the tea plantations. The establishment of the first commercial tea plantation, Tukvar Tea Estate, by the British-owned East India Company in 1856 was believed to have heralded the beginning of a new era in the Darjeeling Hills by bringing about much needed economic growth (O'Malley, 1907; Eden, 1965).

#### **4.7 Historical Profile**

According to the Darjeeling Planters Association, the story of Darjeeling Tea started around 1850 when a Dr. Campbell, a civil surgeon, planted tea

seeds in his garden at Beechwood, Darjeeling, situated at 7,000 ft above sea level as an experiment. Dr. Campbell and Major Crommelin are said to have first introduced tea in Darjeeling Himalaya during the period of 1840-50 on experimental basis out of the seeds imported from China. Darjeeling was then a very sparsely populated region and was only used as a hill resort. Tea being a labour intensive industry needed sufficient number of workers to plant, tend, pluck and finally manufacture the produce. Hence, people from the neighbouring regions, mainly Nepal, were encouraged to immigrate and engage as labourers in the tea gardens. The number of gardens and land under cultivation began to increase only after 1854, when the existing restrictions on the leasing out of land to European planters were relaxed by the promulgation of Wasteland Rule 1854. This attracted many big sterling companies, and during the following five years the tea in India a steadily progress (Edward Money, 1974).

#### **4.8 Geographical Distribution**

The Darjeeling Tea Industry is playing a pivotal role in view of its contribution to building state economy. Employing large number of workers it as earned a niche in generating employment opportunities. The Darjeeling tea is famous in the world and among the 45 countries in the world which are producing tea; apart from China no other country in the world has been able to produce the delicately flavoured teas except Darjeeling. This is mainly due to its geographical location, proximately to the Himalayas, China Jat (variety) of plants, elevations, soil, rainfall etc. (O'Malley, 1907). Majority tea gardens are located in Sadar Darjeeling and Kurseong sub-divisions. There are only four tea gardens in Kalimpong Subdivision. Kalimpong is largely agricultural in character and agriculture forms the backbone of the regional economy of Kalimpong. There are in general 87 registered gardens producing Darjeeling Tea in Darjeeling Hills spreading across the geographical area of 20,200 hectares out of the total 114 tea gardens located in the District of Darjeeling. They comprise about 5 percent of the total area under tea plantation in the country.

#### 4.9 Growth of Tea Gardens in the District

The history of Darjeeling Tea started around 1850 when a Dr. Campbell, a civil surgeon, planted tea seeds in his garden at Beechwood, Darjeeling, situated at 7,000 ft above sea level as an experiment. Dr. Campbell and Major Crommelin are said to have first introduced tea in Darjeeling Himalaya during the period of 1840-50 on experimental basis out of the seeds imported from China. According to the available records, the first commercial tea gardens were planted in 1852. Since then the tea gardens in the District are increasing slowly and gradually and the following table depict the same.

**Table No. 4.16: Growth of Tea Gardens in the District**

Year	No. of tea gardens	Tea cultivation land (in hectares)	No. of labourers employed
1852	1	433	N.A.
1866	39	3000	6859
1870	56	4400	8347
1874	113	11000	19424
1896	186	16230	-
1943	142	21075	-
1951	138	16569	69590
1971	97	18258	56990
1982	84	18000	44052
1986	86	18000	-
2000	86	18000	-

(Source: Tea Board Statistics, 2001)

The period between the establishment of first tea estate in 1852 and India's Independence saw an unprecedented expansion of the tea gardens. In 1866 there were 39 tea gardens and 6859 tea labourers in the district. From 1870 to 1951 large numbers of tea gardens established in the district. But since 1971 slowly and gradually number of tea gardens and labourers decreased. As a result large numbers of people become jobless.

It has been noticed that the average daily number of labour employed in the tea Gardens of the District had remained more or less static. During the same period, the employment potentials of the tea gardens of the neighbouring areas (Terai and Duars) have moderately increased.

**Table No. 4.17: Daily numbers of Labourers in Tea Gardens**

Year	Darjeeling	Terai	Duars	All Bengal	All India
1961	42432	17310	129900	189642	816262
1965	42236	18067	130459	191762	806152
1970	45549	19177	135554	200280	759646
1975	44021	20050	136059	200130	774897
1980	45987	23290	149571	218848	846659
1985	46275	24893	161563	232563	892954
1990	48116	37875	162680	248671	986781

Source: Tea Statistics of Different Years, Tea Board of India.

According to the tea statistics of different years conducted by tea board of India, the number of labourers working daily in the tea gardens of Darjeeling was 42432 in 1961 which, by the year 1990, increased to 48116. The increment in this case is only of 5684. The fact is that if we compare with other tea producing areas, the number increased by 20565 in the Terai region; 32780 in the Duars; 59029 in the other tea cultivating areas all over Bengal and 170519 all over India. The point which astonishes us the most is that Darjeeling being the leading tea productive and exporting place (in terms of its quality), requires a vast quantity of labourers and thereby a havoc increment in their number which lacks as per the report says.

The following table represents the productivity of tea per hectare (in Kg):

**Table No. 4.18: Productivity of Tea per Hectare (in kg)**

Year	Darjeeling Hills	Terai	Duars	All Bengal	All India
1961	546	878	1161	990	971
1965	519	921	1191	1015	1072
1970	557	1117	1337	1150	1182
1975	596	1197	1470	1338	1341
1980	659	1383	1666	1424	1494
1985	652	1815	1853	1606	1641
1990	723	1583	1684	1480	1729

Source: Tea Statistics of Different Years, Tea Board of India.

Quantitatively, the productivity of tea in Darjeeling is also less. Tea production per hectare is increased by 159 kgs in the period between 1961-1990 whereas this increment is comparatively high in other regions of our country as it increased by 705 in the Terai region, 523 in the Duars, 490 in the other parts of Bengal and 758 all over India. This reveals that Darjeeling is facing a continuous failure in merging both the qualitative and quantitative aspects of its tea products simultaneously. The following table represents the productivity of tea per labour (in KG) in various tea producing areas.

**Table No. 4.19: Productivity of Tea per Labour (in kg) in various Tea producing areas**

Year	Darjeeling Hills	Terai	Duars	All Bengal	All India
1961	234	529	505	447	425
1965	222	509	522	454	454
1970	221	624	584	505	551
1975	243	656	647	559	629
1980	276	681	699	609	673
1985	279	882	755	677	735
1990	301	558	702	602	730

Source: Tea Statistics of Different Years, Tea Board of India

Same wise, the increment in the production of tea per labour is also low in Darjeeling as compared to the other parts of India. According to the tea statistics conducted by the tea board of India, this increment in the period



between 1961-1990 figures in 197 in the Duars region, 29 in the Terai, 155 all over Bengal and 305 all over the country.

Labour force is necessary in each and every tea garden for its preparation. The following table depicts the estimated average number of permanent workers on Darjeeling tea estates from 1991 to 2008.

**Table NO. 4.20: Estimated average number of permanent workers**

Year	No. of Workers	Share In % 1999	% fewer or more than 1999
1993	46 568	91.41	- 8.59
1994	58 814	115.40	+ 15.40
1995	58 887	115.55	+ 15.55
1996	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1997	49 783	97.67	- 2.33
1998	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1999	50 964	100.00	0.00
2000	51 515	101.08	+ 1.08
2001	51 938	101.91	+ 1.91
2002	52 671	103.35	+ 3.35
2003	52 547	103.11	+ 3.11
2004	53 363	104.71	+ 4.71
2005	53 412	104.80	+ 4.80
2006	53 492	104.96	+ 4.96
2007	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
2008	55 000	107.92	+ 7.92
2009	61 397	120.47	+20.4

(Source: Tea Board of India up to 2008; estimated for 2009 on the basis of the Report of the Committee on the Competitiveness of Indian Tea [Government of India, 2009])

There are 87 estates of sizes ranging from 23.20 to 506 hectares according to a Tea Board of India source, and from 113 to 580 hectares according to the producers. The total area under tea is 19 500 hectares on the 87 estates, so that the average estate size is 224.14 hectares. The average production of each estate is approximately 136 300 kilograms of made tea. Each estate is equipped with a processing unit or factory where green leaves undergo various stages of processing to prepare 'made tea'. There are various categories of worker from leaf-pickers to factory workers. The current

workforce in the industry exceeds 55 000 people employed on the 87 estates on a regular basis, while a further 15 000 are employed on a casual basis for nine months during the tea picking season (from March to November) (<http://darjeelingnews.net/tea facts.html>).

The following table draws the real picture of tea estate, area, production and average yield of Darjeeling tea in 1991 to 2008.

**Table No. 4.21: Tea estates, area, production and average yield**

Year	No. of Tea Estates	Area under production (hec.)	Total production (thousand kg)	Average yield (Kg per hec.)
1991	102	20 085	13 932	694
1992	102	19 309	12 355	640
1993	102	19 324	13 026	674
1994	88	19 280	11 092	575
1995	83	18 932	11 298	597
1996	80	17 551	10 614	605
1997	80	17 760	10 054	566
1998	85	17 830	10 253	575
1999	85	17 604	8 653	492
2000	85	17 228	9 281	539
2001	85	17 453	9 841	564
2002	85	17 463	9 180	526
2003	85	17 580	9 582	545
2004	85	17 522	10 065	574
2005	85	17 539	11 312	645
2006	85	17 542	10 854	619
2007	85	17 818	10 007	562
2008	85	17 818	11 586	650

(Source: Tea Board of India)

It is clear from the above table that the tea estates, area, production and average yield of Darjeeling tea is more or less decreasing day by day.

#### **4.10 Present Condition and its impact**

With the decline of the tea industry, livelihood is challenged because no other large industries, except tourism are established in the region. Day by day the number of tea gardens is decreasing. Some estates have been locked up and

some others are in a very critical condition. The large numbers of threats hurdles to the tea industry that exist today are as follows:

1. The population in these tea gardens has increased by leaps and bounds and it is the major cause for worry. Most plantation workers are migrants from Nepal who were initially encouraged by the British. Salt to the wound, there is no provision of sending back the retired labourers.
2. The production cost of Darjeeling tea is high because of the physical structure of the region. The hilly terrain also increases input costs. Procurement costs for workers' rations, maintenance of supply lines, higher fuel costs, frequent power cuts, high costs for transporting the picked leaves from the plantation to the factory, transportation of the dried leaves from the processing site in the hills to warehouses in Kolkata are some of the reasons behind the high cost of production. The average Darjeeling yield per hectare is as low as 400 to 450 kilograms, compared with the national average of 1 800 kilograms. Taking all these factors into account, production costs at estate level (according to estate sources) amount to Rs 200 to 225 per kilogram. In addition, Rs. 100 to 125 per kilogram is spent on administrative costs, including the payment of various taxes (Khawas, Vimal 2006).
3. In a liberalised world market about 50 million kg is sold as 'Darjeeling Tea' though the total production of genuine Darjeeling Tea is less than nine million kg (Khawas, Vimal 2006). The extra teas that are illegally tagged as Darjeeling Tea come from Sri Lanka, Kenya and even Nepal of late. Further, Japan, a largely orthodox tea-growing country, has already discovered the chemical constituents of the Darjeeling variety. In all, such a situation has led to a degradation of the international reputation of Darjeeling Tea. In an effort to stop this market and sustain its intellectual property rights, the Darjeeling logo was created as early as 1983 and registered in the UK, the US, Canada, Japan, Egypt and Spain. A Certification Trade Mark Scheme for Darjeeling Tea was also launched in 2000 to stop this market and sustain its Intellectual Property Rights.

However, Darjeeling tea is still not recognised by World Trade Organisation (WTO) as a Geographical Indicator.

4. Lack of firm policy prevents the tea companies from undertaking the task of uprooting and replanting. Generally, the tea bush has a long gestation period of eight to ten years in the Darjeeling Hills, thus growth of tea-plant from the nursery to a full mature bush is another problem. On the plains however, this gestation period is only three years.
5. The areas for the expansion of tea gardens in the District are limited which is prohibiting the increase in viability of the tea gardens. There is simply no land available for expansion.
6. The tea gardens are dependent on cheap labourers because the companies have to pay low wages to them. Unlike today, there was a time when these cheap labourers were available from Nepal. More than this the tea grown in the Darjeeling area is quite specialized and the prices for this high-grade good quality tea are high but the market is small and this has caused serious problems.
7. Tea plantation takes a long time for its maturity. It takes at least five years to reach a stage when leaves can be plucked. It is this gap of five years that companies fear most because they have to pay workers and invest huge amount in re-plantation venture, without getting any money in return.
8. The tea bushes in Darjeeling Hills are old because about 66 per cent of the shrubs are over 50 years out of which more than 50 per cent have been there for over 100 years. Further, there are bushes that are over 140 years old. According to a recent study by the Tea Board of India, only eight per cent of the old bushes have been uprooted and new ones planted in their place. This has seriously impacted the productivity of the tea gardens.
9. The political situations are sometimes creating a matter of concern. Interference of the local political parties is producing a bad end.
10. There is unhealthy relation between the management and the union of the tea gardens. We know that there are workers' unions in the tea

garden and their affiliation is with political parties. And there is frequent tussle between the unions and the management and as a result hampering the smooth functioning and working of the tea gardens.

11. The misappropriation of the name is still taking place. In the absence of adequate regular monitoring, tea of Nepal is entering India both in processed and unprocessed form, flooding Indian markets. Tea of Nepal resembles Darjeeling tea and is sold under the name Darjeeling, thereby receiving the benefits of the reputation of genuine Darjeeling tea.
12. The steepness of the slopes has made the area very prone to environmental hazards in the form of regular soil erosion and occasional landslides. Soil fertility is reduced as a result of the erosion of topsoil, while the massive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides in the past has reduced topsoil quality and fertility, further affecting the overall natural and environmental condition of the area. Moreover, the population growth rate is very high, and Darjeeling and the surrounding area face deforestation as a result of the increasing demand for fuel-wood and timber to build houses.
13. The Plantation Labour Act, 1951, was formulated with a view to improve the living and working conditions of the workers and associated persons in the gardens. The Act, however, is featured with several pitfalls. Empirical evidence shows that the management violates most of the provisions. Moreover, there is no room for punishing the culprit. Tea estates have very poor or no provisions for drinking water facilities, housing, latrines, health care, electricity and education even for the permanent workers. Further, the Act needs a through revision in the context of the changing social, economic and political scenario.
15. The erratic rainfall pattern causes frequent landslides in the hilly terrain causing huge damage and heavy losses to the estates. When a landslide occurs in a particular area, workers are afraid of working there during heavy rains for fear of further landslide. As a result, a great deal of valuable picking time is lost in the process.

#### 4.11 Polity

The politics of the District is based on 'popular sentiment and one's man show.' It is very hard to predict the nature of politics of the District because it is the 'agenda' that determines the direction and the way of politics. From 1907 to till date the politics of Darjeeling is shaped by the demand of separate land for Gorkhas. The complexities of the ethnic problems were embedded in the demands and the resultant movements for autonomy which came to the surface from time to time in the district of Darjeeling in West Bengal (Dasgupta, 1999). In 1907, the Hillman's association had demanded special safeguards for the Nepali speaking people of Darjeeling. In the early forties the Gorkha League was formed and from that time they are demanding a separate land for Gorkhas. They then indicated that they were willing to accept any of the three options which were being mooted "(i) that the District be a separate administrative unit directly administered by the centre, (ii) that a separate province be set up comprising the District of Darjeeling and neighbouring areas and (iii) that the District of Darjeeling with a section of Jalpaiguri viz. the Duars be included in Assam" (Akbar, 1986).

However, the autonomy claim was the central theme of Darjeeling politics long before independence. Repeated demands were raised in 1907, 1917, 1920 and 1934 by different local political groups. Demand for a separate statehood of Darjeeling including the adjoining Duars areas of Jalpaiguri (where over 50% were Nepali inhabitants) was raised by GNLF in the true sense during 1980s. The issue was promoted in 1980 by invoking article 3 (a) of the constitution of India for the first time by GNLF.

It is true that according to the Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty (1950), which allows the Nepalese of Nepal to cross over to India, reside and own property and also participate in trade and commerce. The GNLF alleged that the clause of the treaty (clause VII) had jeopardized the position of Indian Nepalis, for they would be confused with the Nepalese of Nepal and face eviction. To stress the distinction between the Indian Nepalis and Nepalese of Nepal the term 'Gorkha' and 'Gorkha Bhasha' were increasingly being used in place of Nepali and Nepali language, respectively. The movement headed by Gorkha National

Liberation Front (GNLF), formed in July 1980, turned into a mass movement of the Nepali Speaking people in the three-hill subdivisions of the District. The primary demand of the agitation were -

- A separate state of Gorkhaland outside the administrative control of West Bengal;
- Abrogation of clause VII of Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950;
- Recognition and inclusion of Nepali language in the eighth schedule of the constitution in India;
- Employment and economic development of the local people and the region respectively.

The period between 1986 and 1988 saw a series of violence and counter violence in the hills of Darjeeling, parts of Terai and Duars of Jalpaiguri District. The agitation was brought down to standstill on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of August 1988 with the formation of DGHC. The GNLF supreme Mr. Subash Ghising signed a peace agreement in the presence of the then Union Home Minister Mr. Buta Singh and the Chief Minister of West Bengal Mr. Jyoti Basu, promising not to proceed with the agitation for Gorkhaland henceforth. In return Darjeeling hill was granted with Darjeeling Gorkha Hill Council (DGHC) consisting of the three hill subdivisions to look after the interest of the hill people with some independent powers. A majority of the local folks were not happy with the decision and put forward their voices against it but their voices were silenced by the iron hands.

The decade of 1990s saw radical changes on the political scenario of Darjeeling District. The DGHC consisted of councilors elected by the people of Darjeeling. This body was granted autonomy to function as an independent body. However, with the passage of time, over-confidence set in among the councilors of Darjeeling. Easy win in Elections ensured the councilors' lethargy to work. Moreover, many councilors were illiterate or uneducated. There was frequent funds mismanagement, corruption and nepotism in this Council.

Thus, the functioning of DGHC became sloth. Development of the area took a back seat. The economic conditions of the local folk became worse from bad over the period of time. Funds earmarked for development projects were

diverted to pay for overheads. Over the years, the situation gained momentum. It is alleged, in spite of the formation of DGHC, Darjeeling is still a neglected region. Development work has failed to yield desired results. In 2001 Subhash Ghising was attacked on the way from Siliguri to Darjeeling. The general mass of the area say it was nothing but the outburst of the long and widespread discontentment of the hill people against the monopoly of GNLFF under Ghising. Bandhs have become a regular feature and its effects have begun to reflect on the economy.

Under the circumstances the movement for Gorkhaland re-emerged with the formation of Gorkha Jana Mukti Morcha by a dissident GNLFF leader Bimal Gurung in the month of September 2007. The party was officially announced with a public gathering at Chowk Bazar in Darjeeling on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of October 2007 and the movement for the separate state of Gorkhaland is still going on.

In short, the politics of Darjeeling can be summarized in the following chronological order:

#### **4.12 Chronology of politics of Darjeeling District**

- 1907** A memorandum is submitted to the government, on behalf of the hill people, demanding a 'separate administrative unit'.
- 1917** Selected elites of Lepcha, Bhutia and Nepali speaking community in Darjeeling, put forward a 'humble memorial from the representatives of the Darjeeling district' to the Chief Secretary to the Government of Bengal.
- 1919** Montague Chelmsford Reforms – nomenclature changed from scheduled district, to backward tract.
- 1928** Simon Commission report put forward two alternatives with regard to the Darjeeling District
- Constitutional amalgamation with the rest of the Province (of Bengal)



- Exclusion from Bengal and the placing of the District under the administrative authority of the Government of India; the government of Bengal acting as its agent.

- 1930** A fresh memorandum titled “the humble memorial of the Gorkhas settled and domiciled in British India” is submitted to Sir Samuel Hoare, Secretary of State of India. The signatories included, H.P. Pradhan, President of the Hillmen’s Association, N. B. Gurung and P.P. Pradhan, respective secretaries of the Kalimpong and Darjeeling.
- 1934** A fresh memorandum submitted by the Hillmen’s Association entitled “the humble memorial of the Hillmen’s association of the District of Darjeeling in the Province of Bengal”.
- 1935** The status of partially excluded area was given to Darjeeling, & emphasis was laid on its being treated as a Backward Frontier Tract by the British; with a future scope for provincial autonomy.
- 1943** The All India Gorkha League (AIGL) spread to Darjeeling under the aegis of D.S. Gurung became the first party intrinsically comprising of Gorkha people. They put forward the demand for recognition of the Gorkhas as a separate minority community.
- 1947** A representation is made to the Constituent Assembly of India which highlighted the issues of regional self-government and Nepali nationality in Darjeeling and adjacent areas.
- 1947** Ganeshlal Subba and Ratanlal Brahmin (members of the yet undivided CPI) submit a memorandum to the Vice President of the Interim Government for the creation of Gorkhastan- an independent nation. August 15th – Darjeeling becomes a part of independent India and the state of West Bengal

- 1949** After the sudden death of D.S. Gurung, AIGL came under the leadership of Randhir Subba who was unhappy with the inadequate demands made earlier by D.S. Gurung. Subba raises the demand for separate state, within the framework of the Indian Constitution, called Uttarakhand, composed of either of the following territorial distribution;
- Darjeeling district and Sikkim only or
  - Darjeeling district only
  - Darjeeling district, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar
  - Darjeeling district, Sikkim, Jalpaiguri, Dooars and Coochbehar
- 1950** Indo-Nepal Friendship Treaty, guaranteeing hospice to all Reciprocal Nepali citizens and allowing them to avail land and labour rights.
- 1961** Recognition of Nepali as an official language by the Government of West Bengal, within the state by West Bengal Official Language Act of 1961.
- 1968** Subhas Ghising forms the Neelo Jhanda Party. He was earlier a member in the AIGL, but had broken away to form his own party, with a reinforced agenda.
- 1976** The Calcutta Gazette publishes the first official Constitution of an institutional framework for the hill areas named, "The Darjeeling Hill Areas Development Council Act, 1976."
- 1977** The West Bengal legislature passed a resolution requesting the Parliament to amend the Constitution and include Nepali as a scheduled language.
- 1980** Gorkha National Liberation Front, (GNLF) formed under Subash Ghising and with this renewed the demands for Gorkhaland with the following demands:

- A separate state of Gorkhaland outside the administrative control of West Bengal;
- Abrogation of clause VII of Indo-Nepal Treaty of 1950;
- Recognition and inclusion of Nepali language in the eighth schedule of the constitution in India;
- Employment and economic development of the local people and the region respectively.

**1981** The West Bengal State Assembly resolved in favour of a statutory autonomous authority.

**1981** The AIGL submits a memorandum to Zail Singh, the Home Minister, demanding the constitution of a separate state outside West Bengal, to which the creation of Sikkim as the 22<sup>nd</sup> state added substantial weight.

**1981** The Prantiya Parishad (or Pranta Parishad) submits a memorandum to PM Indira Gandhi, demanding the creation of a new state for the Nepali speaking population residing in the Northern part of West Bengal.

**1985** CPI (M) comes back to power in Darjeeling; but ineffectual in attaining a constitutional amendment to create the autonomous council for Darjeeling. Anti-outsider Movement triggered in the entire North-east of India. Mizoram, Manipur and Assam force an exodus against the Nepalese residing in these states, as they were deemed as foreigners.

**1986** Darjeeling Congress Committee (DCC) recommended Rajiv Gandhi to push for the creation of a separate state to the people of Darjeeling, with dire predictions of “present maladies now fast developing in a wrong direction, should not be viewed as a passing phase”.

**1987** The 40 day general strike, also blocking the National Highway NH31A, the only road leading to Sikkim.

- 1988** Mr. Ghising accedes to tripartite talks. Which would ensure greater economic development; educational and land rights; preservation of the socio-cultural and ethnic identity and language. The DGHC was formed to appease the Gorkhas with most of their demands that arose from the threat to their identity and also gave them greater confidence by allowing them to implement their own developmental prospects in the hill districts. Short of granting them statehood, the central and the state government of West Bengal, gave them most rights by according autonomy.
- 1992** Subash Ghising sends a telegram to the PMs of India and Nepal to clarify the implications of Article VIII within the 1950 Indo-Nepal Treaty regarding the legal status of Darjeeling and its contiguous territory up to the Bangladeshi border. He emphasizes on a precise agreement failing which he threatens to make Darjeeling a no-man's land, owned by the Gorkhas residing there.
- 1992** Nepali (not Gorkhali) included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, along with Konkani and Manipuri. The Akhil Bharatiya Nepali Bhasa Samiti spearheaded this campaign, and for the first time uniting all Nepali speakers flung throughout the country.
- 1994** Supreme Court ruled that the GNLFF's petition on the status of Darjeeling was a 'political issue' within the province of the Parliament.
- 1994** Ghising refuses to allow elections at the Gram and Zilla Panchayats level, claiming that the rise of such grassroots level leaders shall derogate the functions of the DGHC and create dual authority.
- 1999** West Bengal Government and GNLFF decide to review 1988 Accord, as according to GNLFF there were various discrepancies that needed addressing through State and Constitutional amendments. The repeated pleas and bandhs and the approaching elections, forced both Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee and Subhas Ghising to reconsider the Darjeeling quotient and offer something new to the Gorkha

population. DGHC's title is suggested to be changed to Darjeeling Gorkha Autonomous Hill Council (DGAHC).

- 2005** DGHC (mainly Subhas Ghising) signs an agreement for inclusion in the Sixth Schedule of the Constitution; with the West Bengal Government represented by Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee and Government of India, represented by Union Home Minister Shivraj Patil. But, the majority people were against of this.
- 2007** The emergence of Gorkha Janmukti Morcha (GJM) as a separate party with Bimal Gurung as its chief.
- 2008** Succumbing to the pressure exerted by the political parties and the will of the people of the various Hill communities, the Central government decides to indefinitely postpone matters related to the Sixth Schedule.
- 2009** With the GJM's support, BJP fields Jaswant Singh in the Lok Sabha election from Darjeeling. Jaswant Singh and Sushma Swaraj along with common BJP consensus declared that smaller states like Gorkhaland and Telangana would become a reality if BJP wins the 2009 Lok Sabha elections. BJP loses on the national level, but Jaswant manages to become the MP from Darjeeling.
- 2010** Madan Tamang, the Chief of AIGL hacked to death in broad daylight, allegedly by GJM workers, leading to a spontaneous shutdown in the three Darjeeling hill sub-divisions of Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Kurseong.
- 2010** Bimal Gurung tries to placate the tribal of Duars and Terai with the proposal of naming the new state as Gorkha Adivasi Pradesh. This was his final offer to the Tribal while asking them to join the Gorkha demand for statehood.
- 2010** West Bengal government submits the proposal on the Interim Hill Council to the Central Government.
- 2011** The tripartite agreement of Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) was signed on the 18<sup>th</sup> of July, 2011 at Pintail Village, Dist. Darjeeling in presence of the Union Home Minister- Shri P.

Chidambaram, West Bengal Chief Minister- Miss Mamta Banerjee and Shri Bimal Gurung, President, GJM (Sources: Moktan, R., 2004; Different dailies; Government Gazette; Internet).

After having discussion on history, economy, polity and society now I am discussing the details of NGOs of the District.

#### **4.13 History and the growth of NGOs in the District**

Darjeeling is the northernmost District of the state of West Bengal in India. It is located on the lap of the Himalayas. The District comprises of four subdivisions namely, Darjeeling (Sadar), Kalimpong, Kurseong and Siliguri. Darjeeling Himalaya, strictly speaking, consists only of the first three subdivisions of the district and forms a significant part of Eastern Himalayan System. The fourth subdivision Siliguri is mainly characterised by the Tarai portion and foothills of the District.

The deep-rooted poverty, illiteracy, political disturbances, natural calamities and ignorance in the District have become chronic over the period of time. Besides, the people are living in a very underdeveloped infrastructure. As one may do in many parts of the country, the economic structure cannot be analyzed in the Queen of the Hills merely by observing the towns and roadside developments. A house-to-house survey in the rural villages will reveal the real picture as to how people are struggling for their livelihood. Many villages are without proper transport and communication facilities. There is no proper and easily accessible market facilities in the District for that rural folks have to walk day long to sell their produce and to purchase the necessary items in the nearest market. The situation becomes worse during the rainy season when frequent large-scale landslides which result road blocks, loss of life, property and many more. There are no proper facilities of safe drinking water, educational institutions, primary health centre, power supply etc. With these, since long time there is political turmoil in the District and creating many problems without any solutions.

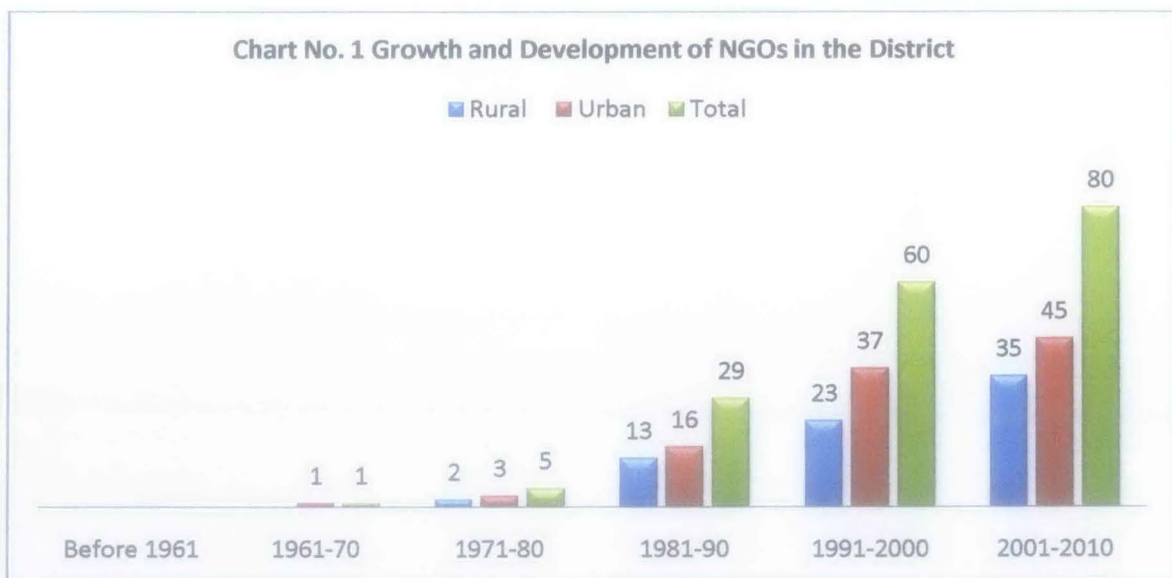
Under the circumstances, Non-Governmental Organisations in Darjeeling District has gained momentum. They have emerged as a viable institutional framework and a well-defined 'third sector' next to government sectors and market enterprises, to serve as a catalyst for development and change. The NGOs in Darjeeling vary widely in terms of size, form, objective, methodology, vision and characteristic.

So, as far as the history of NGOs is concerned there is no perfect and written document about the history of NGOs in Darjeeling District. It is believed that the idea of voluntarism was first introduced by the Christian Missionaries in the District. We can treat Hayden Hall Institute as the first NGO in the District in terms of legal status. Now-a-days there are total 80 registered NGOs working in the District. There are many organisations which are doing their activities voluntarily without any valid registration. The following chart represents the growth and development of NGOs in the District.

**Table No. 5.22: Number of NGOs located in the District**

Sl. No.	Year of registration	Rural	Urban	Total	Remarks
1	Before 1960	-	-	-	There was no such organisation. Only religious activities were active in the region. The Christian Missionaries they had their centre in the urban areas but were conducted their activities in the rural areas.
2	1961-70	-	1	1	-
3	1971-80	1	2	3	-
4	1981-90	3	6	9	-
5	1991-2000	7	10	17	-
6	2001-2010	13	17	20	-

Source: Responses received from mailed questionnaire



Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire

Before 1960 there was no such organisation (in terms of legality) in the District. Only religious activities were active in the regions. The Christian Missionaries had their centre in the urban areas but conducted their activities in the rural areas. They used to visit the remote villages for preaching the religious principles and provide some sorts of help to them. It is clear from the above chart that the numbers of NGOs are increasing day by day. In 1960s the number of NGOs in the District was only one. In 1970s there was considerable increase in the number of NGOs and it was 3 are urban and 2 are rural based. But, during 1980s because of the agitation for Gorkhaland and as a result of unemployment problem NGOs in the District increased at large scale. There were 13 and 16 rural and urban based NGOs in the District respectively. There were 60 NGOs in 1990s, 23 rural and 37 urban based. And in 2001s there are 80 NGOs 35 are rural based and rest 45 are urban based ones.

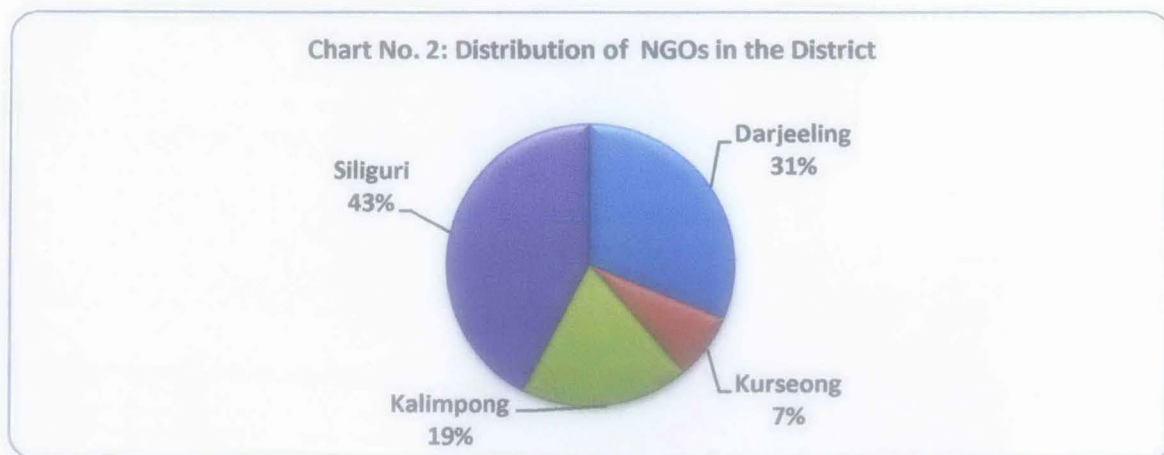
The distribution of NGOs is not same in different subdivisions of the District. The number NGOs are more in Siliguri subdivision of the District followed by Darjeeling (Sadar) subdivision. In Kalimpong and Kurseong subdivisions the number of NGOs are less in comparison to the others two subdivisions of the District. The following table and chart represents the distribution of NGOs in different subdivisions of the District.



**Table No. 23: Distribution NGOs in the District**

Sl. No.	Name of the Subdivision	Total No. of NGOs
1	Darjeeling (Sadar)	25
2	Kurseong	06
3	Kalimpong	15
4	Siliguri	34

Source: Responses received from mailed questionnaire



Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire

The table and chart shows that there are 80 registered NGOs in the District. The concentration of NGOs is large in Siliguri Subdivision (43%) followed by Darjeeling (Sadar) (31%) subdivision. In Kurseong subdivision there are only 6 (7%) NGOs and in Kalimpong Subdivision there are 15 (19%) NGOs as on 31.12.2010.

#### **4.14 Features of NGOs in the District**

The NGOs in Darjeeling depicts some features and are outlined below:-

1. There exist some regional variations in terms of the number of organisations and actions. For example, the concentration of NGOs is not same in different subdivisions. The number of large-sized NGOs is few in the District and they are mainly urban based.
2. The large number of NGOs in the District is found in the field of social welfare so far their function is concerned.

3. The flow of funds from national and international levels to the NGO sectors has been increasing over the years and as a result of which, a growing number of developmental NGOs have appeared in the District and are actively participating in various government programmes particularly in the rural development and social welfare programmes.
4. There are many NGOs which are active in the rural areas but have no legal entity or in other words, they are not formally registered under any Act.
5. Some big NGOs (in Size) are religious affinities and sometimes along with social welfare they are preaching religious and moral values too in the District.
6. There has been a growing professionalism and specialization in the NGOs sector. Earlier, one organisation used to perform multiple activities. Nowadays, NGOs in the District are performing more or less specialized and professionalized functions for which they are formed.
7. There are some urban-based registered NGOs in the District and even though they are working in the rural areas, have their offices located in cities and towns.

#### **4.15 Types of NGOs in the District**

The types of NGOs in Darjeeling are more diversified, exploratory and evolving. It is very difficult to draw a conclusion by using single parameter to understanding the wide range of NGOs that exist today in the District. Because, the NGOs that exist today in the District are distinguished in terms of their form, size, origin, philosophical, ideological or religious affinities or sources of inspiration, economic strength/ funding, target groups, forms of control and governance, functional diversity, activity, legal status, level of operation etc. They may be grouped on the basis of motives ranging from love of humanity, religious faith, political freedom, welfare of the needy, neglected and destitute, poverty alleviation, development and empowerment of the weaker sections of society, social justice, equity, human rights etc. Nowadays, NGOs are covering a

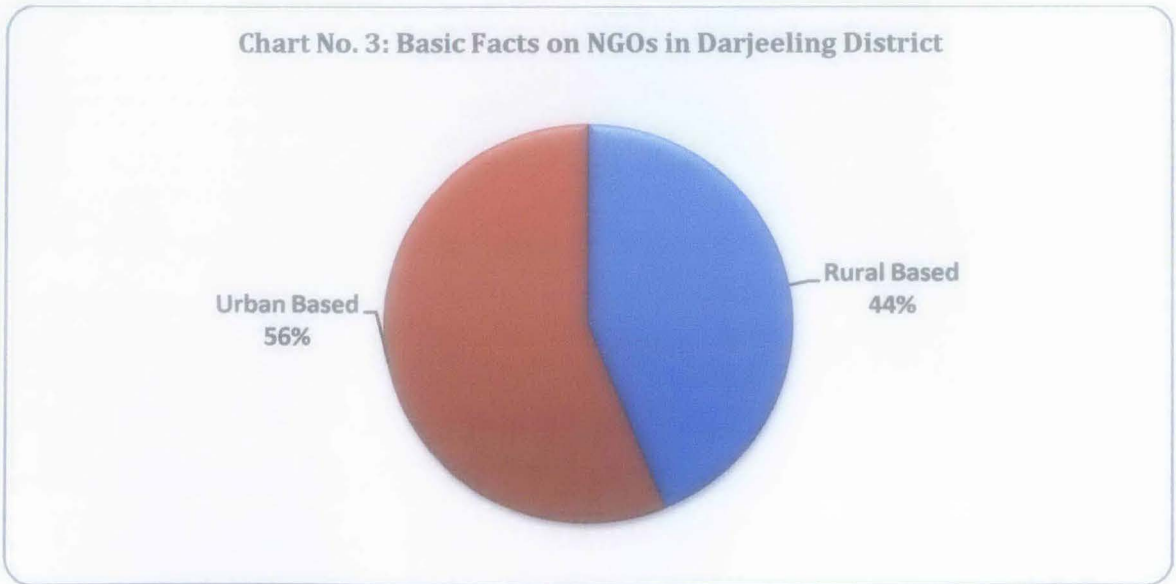
wide spectrum that ranges from small to large organisations, from durable to short lived organisations, from local to national and international NGOs and from weak to strong. After observing all the details of NGOs in the District the present study preferred to group NGOs of Darjeeling District into the following categories i.e. Action Groups, Research and Consultancy Groups, Religions Organisations, Service Organisations, Development Organisations, Sustainable Systems Development Organisations.

There are both urban and rural based NGOs active in the District. The following table and chart depicts the fact of NGOs in the District.

**Table No. 24: Basic Facts on NGOs in Darjeeling District**

Area of operation	Total
Rural Based	35
Urban Based	45

Source: Responses received from mailed questionnaire



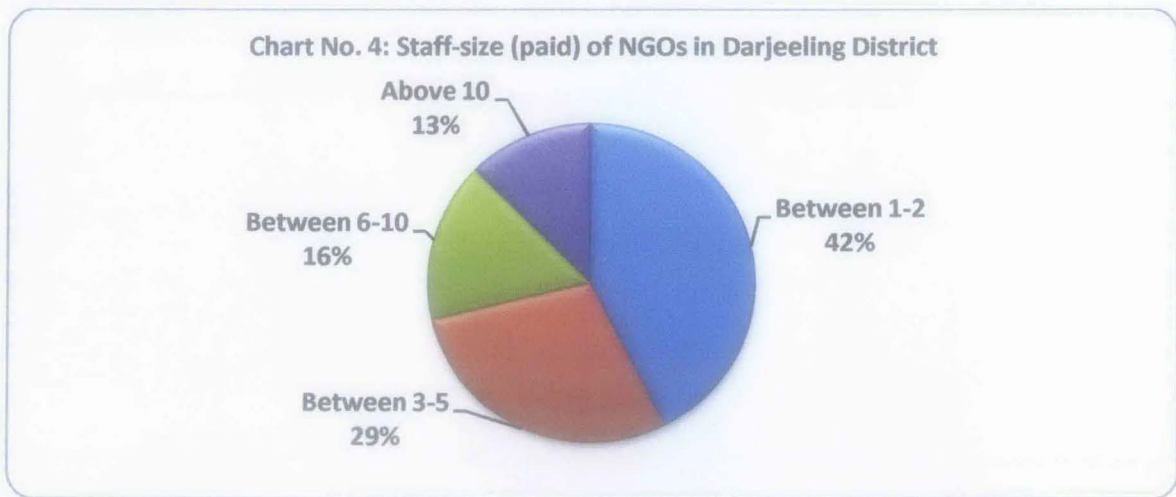
Source: Compiled through the data collected through the mailed questionnaire

The above table and chart shows that 44% NGOs in the District are rural based. The 56% NGOs in the district are urban based.

**Table No. 4.25: Staff-size (paid) of NGOs in Darjeeling District**

Staff members	No. of NGOs	Total No. of NGOs
Between 1-2	34	N=80
Between 3-5	23	
Between 6-10	13	
Above ten	10	

Source: Responses received from mailed questionnaire



Source: Compiled through the data collected through the mailed questionnaire

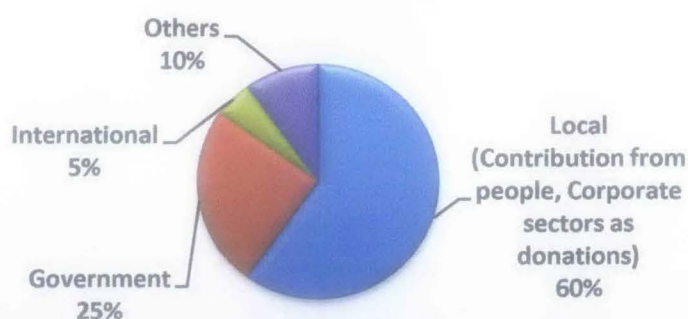
It is clear from the above chart that 34 (42%) NGOs in the District have between one to two paid staff. Only 23 (29%) NGOs are carrying out their activities with 3-5 staff. 13 (16%) NGOs in the District have between 6-10 paid staff members. 10 (13%) NGOs in the District have more than 10 paid staff members.

**Table No. 4.26: Sources of Funding in Darjeeling District**

Sources	Total
Local (peoples contribution and Corporate Contribution)	48
Government	20
International	4
Others	8

Source: Responses received from mailed questionnaire

**Chart No. 5: Sources of Funding in Darjeeling District**



Source: Compiled through the data collected through the mailed questionnaire

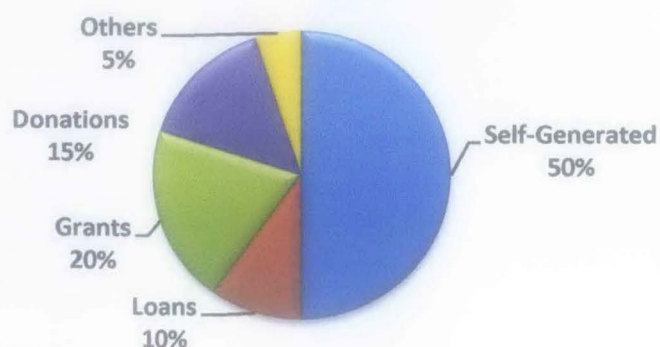
It is very clear from the above chart that 60% fund of the NGOs in the District are coming from the contribution from local people and corporate sectors as donations. The contributions of governmental, international and other sectors are 25% and 5% and 10% respectively.

**Table No. 4.27: Types of Funding in Darjeeling District**

Types	Total
Self-Generated	40
Loans	8
Grants	16
Donations	12
Others	4

Source: Responses received from mailed questionnaire

**Chart No. 6: Types of Funding in Darjeeling District**



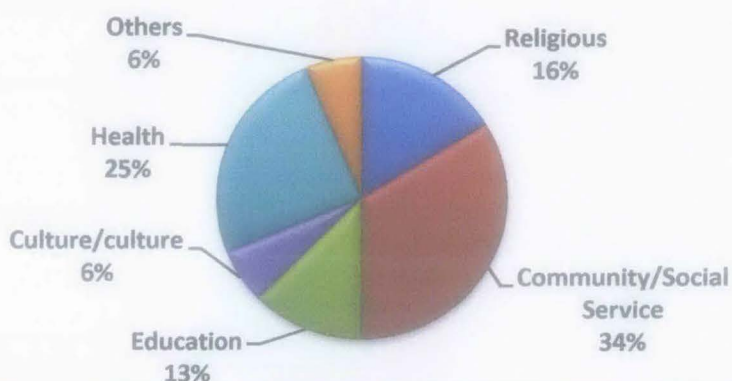
Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire

In the district 50% fund of the NGOs are self-generated. Loans and grants contribute 10% and 20% respectively. 15% funds are generated from the different sources of donations and 5% from others.

**Table No. 4.28: Dominant activities of NGOs in Darjeeling District**

Type of Activities	Bases	Total
Religious	13	N=80
Community/Social Service	27	
Education	10	
Sports/Culture	5	
Health	20	
Others	5	

**Chart No. 7: Dominant activities of NGOs in Darjeeling District**



Source: Compiled through the data collected through the mailed questionnaire

The different activities of NGOs include religious, social service, education, culture/sports, health and so on. In the District 16% NGOs are doing different activities in the field of religion. Social service and educational activities include 34% and 13% respectively. 25% NGOs are carrying out their activities in the health field. Culture/sports and others constitute 6% each.

#### **4.16 Factors responsible for the growth of large number of NGOs in Darjeeling District**

There are many factors responsible for the growth of large number of NGOs in the District and they are as follows:

1. At the present time, the number of tea estates has shrunk to about 87 but the average of plantation land has remained constant, exerting additional pressure on the local ecology and economy. Moreover, the use of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers has caused contamination of rivers/streams and degradation of land (Raina, 1992). As a result many workers are jobless nowadays.
2. The role of tea plantations in sustaining the communities has been declining and the growth population has resulted in increased unemployment in tea gardens.
3. The tea plantations in the Darjeeling District find themselves at the crossroad and the competition among the tea producing countries increasing. The tea price is declining but the cost of production is increasing (Moitra, 1991).

**Table No. 4.29: India's Share of Exports in World Market for Tea**

Year	Production of Indian Tea (Million Kgs)	Export of Indian Tea (Million Kgs)	Share in World Exports (%)
1960	321	103	36
1970	419	202	31
1980	569	224	26
1986	625	202	22
1990	715	210	N.A.

Source: Neelanjana Mitra (1991)

The table above reveals a clear picture of India's share in the world tea-market. The country's share in the world exports has been deteriorating gradually since 1960 and Darjeeling, being a vital zone producing as well as exporting world-class tea, cannot be an exception.

4. The potential loss of tea gardens is having a direct impact on the people of the area under study. In the event of job uncertainty rural out migration frequently seeing in the District.
5. Because of rural out migration urban area has become over crowded causing ecological hazards by increasing space-shortage, water scarcity

and drainage problems (Sarkar & Lama, 1986). This is another cause for the growth of NGOs in the urban areas of the District.

6. In India no other plantations provides large employment as done by the tea (Duncan, 2002). But with the increasing of population and many other reasons the plantation is no longer able to support the livelihood of the people of the District.
7. In Darjeeling District most of the households obtain their wages and other benefits from plantation work and for most households that forms the only livelihood source. And, since tea workers have no ownership right to the land they occupy, they may not be able to engage in agriculture nor raise livestock to diversify their livelihood sources (Subba, 1984).
8. Large scale unemployment problem is another cause for the development of large number of NGOs in the district.
9. The political problems sometime may hamper the developmental activities of those particular areas. The district is facing the political problem since long time.
10. The Christian Missionaries from the very beginning have been doing their best and carrying out large number of welfare activities in the district. By observing their activities people have the faith in such organisation.
11. Frequent accident and natural calamities because of the topographical or physical structure of the district may be the one cause for the formation of large number of NGOs in the area under study.
12. There are heterogeneous people living in the District. The people of one race trying to protect their customs and traditions. Sometimes this factor also playing a crucial role for the formation of an NGO.
13. There are many private schools in the District. The students come from different parts of the country and also from foreign countries. Sometimes, some parents do not know each and everything about their children. The students, because of frustration, sometime opt wrong



tract and become the victim of drugs addiction and some organisations in the District are carrying out their activities in this particular field.

14. The District is situated in the international border areas. Human trafficking, drug smuggling etc. are the regular phenomena of the areas. There are some organisations which are doing their activities in this particular field.

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## **Chapter - 5**

### **NGOs AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN: A STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF DARJEELING DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL**

# Chapter 5

## **NGOs AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN: A STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF DARJEELING DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL**

### **5.1 Introduction**

Darjeeling District is the northernmost District of West Bengal. It is located in the lap of the Himalayas. The District comprises of four subdivisions namely, Darjeeling (Sadar), Kalimpong, Kurseong and Siliguri. Darjeeling Himalaya forms a part of eastern Himalayan ranges and is bounded by Sikkim, Nepal and Bhutan in the north, west and east respectively. It consists of the first three subdivisions of the district while Siliguri is mainly characterized by the Terai and foothills of the District. The area covered by Darjeeling Himalaya is about 1721 Sq. Kms. while the total area of the district is 3202 Sq. Kms. Darjeeling Himalaya consists of a portion of the outlying hills of lower Himalayas and a stretch of territory lying along the base of the hills known as the Terai. The Terai is only 91 meters high above the sea level but there are parts of the District, which are as high as 3660 m. at Sandakpu. The exquisite scenic grandeur and invigorating climate in the area have earned the title of "Queen of the Hill Stations" (Chakraborti, P.K. 1989). Darjeeling District lies between 26° 31` and 27° 13` north latitude and between 87° 59` and 88° 53` east longitude (O'Malley, 1907).

The Darjeeling District, though economically backward compared to other parts of West Bengal, provides a different setting in terms of geographical, social, cultural, ethnic, environment; as such it calls for special treatment for the implementation of development programmes. The area under study provides enough curiosity and interest because of its physiographical condition. So, serious study is necessary. There are 12 Blocks in the District and the concentration of the population is not same in every block. The following table represents the population of different blocks in the District under study.

**Table No. 5.1: Population of CD Block in district (as per census 2001)**

Sl No.	District/ CD Blocks	Male	Female	Total	Density	Sex Ratio
	Darjeeling	556633	532107	1088740	354	956
1	Darjeeling Pul Bazar	57601	56603	114204	276	983
2	Rangli Rangliot	32304	32045	64349	236	992
3	Kalimpong I	34382	33298	67680	188	968
4	Kalinpong II	31309	28954	60263	250	925
5	Gorubathan	27572	26707	54279	123	969
6	Jorebanglow Sukhiapokhri	49816	50908	100724	453	1022
7	Mirik	21112	21125	42237	354	1001
8	Kurseong	36425	35779	72204	204	982
9	Matigara	65123	58798	123921	882	903
10	Naxalbari	67595	61546	129141	716	911
11	Phansidewa	87945	83563	171508	549	950
12	Khoribari	45449	42781	88230	609	941

Source: Statistical Handbook, West Bengal, 2004

While observing various blocks in Darjeeling District, it has been found that the male-female sex ratio is more or less the same everywhere. Only except Jorebunglow, Sukhiapokhri and Mirik, in all the other blocks, the number of women is less than that of the men.

## 5.2 Status of women in Darjeeling District

The status of women in any civilisation shows the stage of evolution at which, the civilisation has arrived. The term 'status' include not only personal

and proprietary rights but also include duties, liabilities and disabilities. With regard to the status of women in Indian society at large, no nation has held their women in higher esteem than the Hindus. The strong cultural background of Indian society and high status of women during Vedic Age kept them healthy from all perspective- social, physical and psychological. But the Post Vedic period, women started losing the status in society. During the Mughal rule, the status of women was very much lowered. But during the British rule in India various reforms and legislation were initiated with respect to the status of women.

Now, women constitute about half of the global population, but they are placed at various disadvantageous positions due to gender differences and bias. Women in Indian society have been victims of humiliation, torture, exploitation and discrimination in spite of legislative measures, spread of education and economic independence. Women are still relegated to second class status that makes them more vulnerable to abuse and less able to protect themselves from discrimination. Among the massive problems that confront Indian women are unemployment, poverty, inequality, health hazards, discrimination and so on (Prasad N. 2007).

Over the last quarter of a century, improved household, economic independence, food security, an expanding health care system, and maternal and child health interventions have brought about significant gains in women's status in the country. The girl child has become the focus of the universal primary education campaign. A large number of girls are enrolled in primary school.

However, gender analysis of most social and economic indicators demonstrates that women in India continue to be relatively disadvantaged in matters of survival, health, nutrition, literacy and productivity. India is one of the few countries where males significantly outnumber females. But, it is true that women are a vital part of the Indian economy, constituting one-third of the national labour force. Although most women are considered "marginal workers", by the definition used in national statistics, they are major

contributors to the survival of the family. The poorer families are more dependent on women's income. Indian women contribute a much larger share of their earnings to basic family maintenance than men do. Women's earnings have an immediate positive effect on the incidence and severity of poverty as increases in women's income translate into better health and nutrition, particularly for children. Despite this, social conventions and gender ideology deprive them of the resources which would enable them to increase their economic and social status. More than 90% of rural women are unskilled, restricting them to low paid occupations. Women generally have no control over land and other productive assets, which largely excludes them from access to institutional credit and renders them dependent on high cost informal sources of credit to secure capital for self-employment activities. This is the picture of national level and Darjeeling District cannot be an exception. The following table represents the Gender Development Index in the District of Darjeeling.

**Table No. 5.2: Gender Development Index**

District	Life Expectancy Rate		Literacy Rate (%) (2001)		School Enrolment Rate		No. of Workers to Population (%)		GDI Index	Rank in West Bengal
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F		
Darjeeling	67	71	81.28	63.92	71.5	68.8	25.1	10.18	.57	2

Source: Human Development Report, West Bengal, 2004

According to the GDI index (shown by the Human Development Report, West Bengal, 2004), Darjeeling ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> among the Districts of the state. But, then also, the performance of the women is not at a satisfactory level. In the field of literacy, enrolment in the schools and as working figures, women are less in number than the men. Only 63.92% of female are literate in the District.



**Table No. 5.3: Demographic Trends in Darjeeling District**

Place of Residence Rural/Urban	Literacy Rate (2001) (%)		Literacy Rate SC (%)		Literacy Rate ST (%)		Total enrolment (I to XII) (30.01.01)	Teacher Pupil Ratio			
	M	F	M	F	M	F		Primary	Middle	High/Sec	
	68.2	81.28	63.92	47.54	30.8	58.14	33.25	180552	0.02	0.28	0.02

Source: Human Development Report, West Bengal, 2004

In the field of literacy also the women of Darjeeling occupy position below the men. The above table is the representation of this statement as it clearly shows that the women literacy rate in the district is much less in comparison to that of men.

**Table No. 5.4: Income and employment**

Sl. No.	District	No. Block	Percentage of main workers (2001)		Percentage of workers (2001)		Percentage of non-workers (2001)	
			M	F	M	F	M	F
1	Darjeeling	12	22.43	7.30	25.10	10.18	26.35	38.36

Source: Human Development Report, West Bengal, 2004

The secondary position of women in the fields of population, enrolment in the schools, literacy, as working figures (as discussed earlier), also affects the total income of the district. According to the 2001 Census Report, only 7.30 % of women are the main workers and 10.18 % are the workers who have low income in comparison to men in the District.

Politically, socially, economically and culturally, women in the District are not in a good condition. Many women in the District are engaged in the informal sectors and their contribution has been neglected. Because of poverty

and unemployment problems women has to work throughout the day with their male counterpart. Women are occupying secondary position in the field of politics and decision making processes. Young educated Nepali women are engaged as security guards, salesgirls in showrooms, call centers in the big cities in the country. Some are forced to out-migrate because of poverty and unemployment problems. Their percentage in the government employment sectors is small. Under these circumstances the present study is trying to show the contribution and the roles of NGOs in the District in general and empowerment of women in particular.

For the purpose of study the questionnaire was mailed to all 80 NGOs in the District. A purposive random sampling technique was used to select the NGOs. For this purpose, a list of NGOs was collected from the districts. Out of the lists, the NGOs which are functioning in the field of women empowerment are separated out and selected for this study. With a view to removing bias, the four NGOs from the District are randomly selected. The sample pattern is representative of the universe. There are many NGOs in the District and their activities, programmes, schemes, initiative, missions and visions are mainly for the uplifting and empowering women in the society. The names of the NGOs selected are:

1. Darjeeling (Sadar) Subdivision: Hayden Hall Institute (HHI)
2. Kalimpong Subdivision: Hill Social Welfare Society (HSWS)
3. Kurseong Subdivision: Indian Forces Ladies' Association (IFLA)
4. Siliguri Subdivision: Balason Society for Improved Environment (BSIEN)

Particulars of the four NGOs of Darjeeling District selected one from each subdivision for the purpose of my study are as follows:

**Table No. 5.5: Particulars of selected NGOs**

Sl. NO	Name of NGOs	Base of operation in the district (Subdivision)	Year of establishment	Area of operation
1	HAYDEN HALL INSTITUTE (HH)	Darjeeling (Sadar)	1969	Hill Areas of Darjeeling District
2	HILL SOCIAL WELFARE SOCIETY(HSWS)	Kalimpong	2000	Kalimpong-I Block, Kalimpong-II Block (Algarah) & Jorebonlow Block of Darjeeling District
3	INDIAN FORCES LADIES' ASSOCIATION (IFLA)	Kurseong	1991	Kurseong Subdivision
4	BALASON SOCIETY FOR IMPROVED ENVIROMENT (BSIEN)	Siliguri	1997	Chathat, Mithbazar, Migirgachh Hansagachh, Malgachh, Bairgachh, Rasamgachh, Ghoshgachh, Paschim Mith-bazar & Haptiagachh of Phansidewa Block and Jhingajote, Raymoti, Ramvola, Jhorujote, Paschim Dhulia, Bitanjote, Baktarvita, Khurirjote, Singhivita, Rangolichina, Budhan, Dhulia, Najibjote, Badalvita, Foudijote, Dewanvita, Kuiry, Rangoli, Hatidoba, and Jatru of Kharibari Block. Target areas of Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) project-II and awareness programmes intervention areas are Matigara Block, Phansidewa Block, Naxalbari Block and Kharibari Block of Siliguri Sub-division. Apart from these, Ambulance services are providing in Matigara and Phansidewa Block of rural hospitals under Siliguri Sub-division.

(Source: Field Survey)

### 5.3 Profile of Selected NGOs

From Darjeeling (Sadar) Subdivision I have selected Hayden Hall Institute for the purpose of my study. The particulars of the selected NGO are as follows:

**1. Name: HAYDEN HALL INSTITUTE (HH)**

**2. Infrastructure:**

- a. Own Building: Yes (Three Buildings)
- b. Rooms: Many rooms including big Halls
- c. Toilet facilities: Yes
- d. Drinking water facilities: Yes
- e. Van: Yes
- f. Computer: Yes
- g. Total Number of Staff: 40

**Chart-1: Chief Functionaries**



Source: Field Survey

The structure of the chief functionaries has been displayed through the above pyramid. At the apex is the director of the organisation followed by Deputy Director and both these posts are occupied by the S.J. Fathers. Next is the Administrator followed by the heads of different programmes, the staffs of the programmes supported by their office and the field staff. As it is seen in the

above figure, the base block is occupied by the target communities or the beneficiaries. That means the target communities (which are mostly women) are the recipients of the services provided by the joint efforts of all its former position holders.

#### **5.4 Historical Background of Hayden Hall**

Father Edgar P. Burns, S.J., the founder of Hayden Hall was born in Montreal, Canada in 1925. He was educated in Jesuit schools in Canada, where he was an all-round student and an enthusiastic ice hockey player. He entered the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits') in 1943. In 1952 he came to India and act as a sub-prefect of the upper division of North Point School, Darjeeling. In 1952-1954 he joined St. Alphonsus High School, Kurseong to learn Nepali. In 1958 he was ordained as a Jesuit priest in Kurseong. In 1960 he joined St. Joseph's College, Darjeeling, where he taught English for 25 years till 1985. The Hayden Hall was established in 1969. Fr. Burns, the founding member was died on May 17, 2010.

After the devastating landslides of 1968, a fire in Darjeeling and the incoming refugees from Tibet and Bangladesh Fr. Burns began to formulate what would become his greatest legacy, the idea of what he called his 'integrated developmental dream'- Hayden Hall.

Hayden Hall was actually bought in 1969 from the Patton Family, whose two-storied wooden and glass home was called Albert Lodge, on the then Mac Kenzie Road, the present Laden La Road. Originally, it accommodated for a library, a night college, and rooms for some lay staff, while the top floor was used as Hayden Hall's office and a residence for the Jesuits, originally for Fr. Burns and then Fr. Macdonald. The centre was named after an Irish Jesuit priest Father Hayden, who supported the work done at the centre and his name at the Hall served as a reminder to all to continue his commitment to Christ's mission to the poor. The building accommodated programme offices, the Functional Literacy Shop, the Carpet Weaving Rooms, the Library, and the Godowns for CRS food rations. There are three buildings of Hayden Hall. The first building was established in 1969. When Hayden Hall expanded its

programmes, requiring more building space, at that time the organisation was fortunate enough to get Holly Lodge from Mr. Bajpaie, of Kolkata, who had bought it from Mr. and Mrs. Patton, and Hayden Hall II was opened in 1976. And, again Hayden Hall III was opened in 1994, to accommodate the training of Paramedics and Adult Education Teachers.

### **5.5 Area of operation**

Hill Areas of Darjeeling District

### **5.6 Target Groups**

Distressed & Deserved women and Children (emphasis on Community Development)

### **5.7 Objectives**

The main objectives of the organisation is to (i) make visible and community sustained contribution (ii) to focus on communities and selected urgent issues towards a profitable transforming of society. The foundation of all Hayden Hall's programmes is to work with women to define and solve the problems of their children, families and communities faced by utilising a variety of methods to ensure self-sufficiency. Throughout the decades countless events and achievements have shaped the development of the organisation and have helped to improve the lives of the people. Nearly 42 years of working in the field with families and communities has taught that poverty need not be a life sentence. Hayden Hall's self-help approach to relief, recovery and on-going development has nurtured the seeds of hope for thousands of people. In order to restore the balance for sustainable development in the communities where they serve, the organisation has offered the underprivileged a chance to address the basic needs of health, housing and food. Once the basic needs are met, the organisation work on improving the quality of life by enabling women to be involved in their own self-development through skills training, non-formal education and interactive development of self-worth. The final step is to offer windows of opportunities by involving them in credit union and self-help income-generation programmes.

## **5.8 Philosophy**

Hayden Hall is a private, non-profit relief and development association based in Darjeeling District, West Bengal, India. The organisation was founded in 1969 and focuses on providing opportunities to poor families through empowering women. The main philosophy of the organisation is simple but effective: by helping women help themselves economically, there will be a positive effect on their children and families.

## **5.9 Present Activities at a Glance**

The main Programmes and the activities of Hayden Hall for the empowerment of women are as follows:

### **5.9.1 Health Programme**

At the initial stage only the adult literacy programme was introduced by the organisation. But, with the landslides of 1968, a devastating fire in Darjeeling and the incoming refugees from Tibet and Bangladesh, the focus of the work began to change, and with it the need was expanded. The adult literacy classes continued, but Fr. Burns wanted to add more medical programmes, more nutrition programmes and other income generating programmes. Mother and Child Care Programme (MCC) started in the year 1972. It aims at giving assistance to poor and needy mothers. The main attraction of this programme is the mothers and who wanted to join this programme have to pay a sum of Rs. 60/- every year. In exchange of that their families get various facilities from the center. They get medicine from the dispensary along with pre and post natal check-ups, food and various others facilities.

### **5.9.2 Paramedic Training**

There are many unique contributions of this organisation. Every year, since 1978 some women are selected to undergo training as village level health workers or 'Paramedics'. They are trained for 1-2 years in preventive health care. The main function of the paramedics is to frequently visit various villages and also maintain records of their house visits. The paramedics conduct



**Teaching programme at Hayden Hall**



**Children in Crèche in Hayden Hall**



meetings weekly with other members of the organisation and discuss the problems they saw and heard about during their visits and they work together to find a solution and take the needed steps. Another common health problem in the District is malnutrition. The pregnant mothers in most cases suffer from malnutrition. In such cases pregnant mothers are asked to join the food programme. They use to provide instruction about health, hygiene, nutrition, child care and so on.

### **5.9.3 Crèche**

Crèche, a day care centre which offers a safe place, food and bed to the children from 9 months to 2.5 years, was started in 1976 and the target groups of this scheme were the families with working mothers below the poverty line. It remains open from 9:00 AM to 4 PM so that the working women can easily concentrate on their jobs and can contribute some earning to their family. It is also a kind of play group school. The organisation is providing nutritious food in the centre.

### **5.9.4 Dispensary**

Hayden Hall's dispensary was set up in 1975. The main aim of this centre is to provide assistance to poor and needy mothers. This dispensary is distributing the medicines in a low costs. The payment processes for the medications vary depending on the economical possibilities of the families. They can also pay for the medicines by parts but if they are not able to pay their part then the debt is forgiven. In case that the patient has been directed to the hospitals, Hayden Hall helps with the rest of the medicines that government doesn't provide.

### **5.9.5 Education Programme**

We all know that education is playing a vital role in any society. Hayden Hall is playing very important role in this field. It is very clear in the organisation that in order to join any of the educational programmes the family has to become a member of the Mother and Child Care Programme for which membership fees is Rs. 60/-. Apart from this, mother has to give one day per month of their



**Children with teacher in Hayden Hall**



**Children at Hayden Hall**

service to other programmes like Crèche and Strive and have to involve in activities like cleaning, sweeping, looking after children and so on. More interesting is that in any case the mother for some reason cannot give her service then she has to pay a sum of Rs. 70/- so that someone else will be asked to do her work that day. Children's registration is Rs. 200/- for a year. Generally three meetings are conducted every year where topics related to hygiene, punctuality, saving strategies, health and other issues are discussed. Hayden Hall's After-School Tuition programme allows children a place to study, do their homework and participate in other extra-curricular activities like sports, dance and theatre. Several teachers oversee the children's progress to improve the grades of the students. The organisation charges no fees, but requires that mothers help out at Hayden Hall once a month.

#### **5.9.6 Adult Literacy**

This programme was started in the 1971 in the Hills as well as in the Plains by the organisation. The main aim of the programme was to make the people literate.

#### **5.9.7 Strive (a preparatory centre for admission in school)**

This programme was started in 1976. The programme focuses primarily on poor families with working mothers. It remains open from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. The main aim of this programme was to prepare the children to get admission in the schools, offering a safe place, food and bed for children between 2.5 and 4.5 years. The Montessori Method is followed here and focus is on developing the child's mental potentials. Apart from this, three tests are given to the students every year, in June, September and December.

#### **5.9.8 Girl Child Scholarship Programme**

This is another very important scheme provided by this organisation. This scheme provides monetary help to students of 5 to 18 years and covers paying of school fees, purchase of uniforms and stationery, etc. Basics medicines are also given from the Hayden Hall dispensary but in case the sickness is major



**Woman doing her work at Hayden Hall**



**Young woman preparing shawl at Hayden Hall**

then the organisation works towards providing the fund. The students can assess the library facilities in the Hayden Hall after the school. The students who cannot come to the library after school due to distance can come on Saturday. These students get to have lunch in the centre. In choosing the student girl child is giving more preference and in absence of girls child boys can be chosen. 94% of scholarship recipients are girls in the organisation.

### **5.9.9 Study Group Programme**

This scheme is provided to the students between 5 to 18 years. Teachers in this scheme give remedial classes to the students, go through the lessons, teach in the school and also help the students in their homework.

### **5.9.10 Helping Hands Programme**

This scheme aims to help problem-facing families, like single parent or those suffering from alcoholism and orphans.

### **5.9.11 Income Generation Programme**

The very important and unique contribution of this organisation is the income generation programme. The various schemes adopted by the organisation in the field of income generation programme are as follows:

#### **5.9.11.1 Skill Training**

The Hayden Hall has started income generation programme in 1975. Under this scheme various courses are run for women to provide them with the necessary skills for the sum of Rs. 800 (knitting), Rs. 700 (sewing), and Rs. 100 (weaving) and there is a provision of scholarship in case of necessity. The training period for knitting and sewing is four months while weavers continue to get training for three to four years until they gain full mastery over their work. The very important contribution of this organisation is that the trainees after the completion of their training are offered work at the centre itself. Women trained in knitting and cutting get a certificate at the completion of their training. They are allowed to take yarn from Hayden Hall and bring the knitted products and sewed items from their homes. The final produce is sold

in a shop which is located at Hayden Hall itself. So, the organisation is providing both skills development as well as marketing facilities to the women in the hills. The women also get a bonus from time to time as encouragement and also to enable them to increase a bit of their income. It was found that over 20,000 women have been trained since the scheme inception and some among them are still working in the Hayden Hall and others are working in the different places and earning their daily breads.

#### **5.9.11.2 Savings Programmes**

The Savings Programme was started in Hayden Hall in 1997. The main objective of this scheme is to inculcate saving habits in families living below the poverty line. It is true that for opening a bank account the people have to maintain some formalities of the different banks with certain amount of deposit at the initial stage and sometime it will be difficult for the poor families. The Hayden Hall in its function as a saving union not only asks for a much lesser deposit, but also removes the unnecessary hassle of the banking system. First of all to become a member of saving union mother should be the member of Mother and Child Care programme. After that she can open an account just by paying the deposit of Rs. 20 and can start saving.

#### **5.9.11.3 Loan Programme**

Hayden Hall is provides Loans mainly for the families of Below Poverty Line. Two types of loans are given by the Hayden Hall i.e. individual loans and group loans (Self Help Groups)

**Individual Loan:** The scheme was started in 1997. The individual can apply for the loan and for that he/she first of all should be the member of saving union. The initial requirement for the loan is to have at least 1/3 of the loan amount in their savings account. Here the paramedics evaluate the necessity and genuineness of the applicants. The applicant must then produce a person who is willing to be his/her guarantor and who will take liability for him/her. The organisation is then sure that the security level is 100% and it is only then,

that the individual loan will be sanctioned. The main features of loan scheme are as follows:

- Maximum amount in rural areas: Rs. 50,000
- Maximum amount in urban areas: Rs. 50,000
- Repayment period: One year
- Interest rate: 15%
- Security rate: 100%

**Group Loan:** The group member can apply for the loan. The initial requirement for the loan is to have at least 1/3 of the loan amount in their savings account. Beside this, the group members must also do regular saving for a year. In this case all the group members have to be the guarantors. They have to make an application to the President of the organisation and final decision is taken at the meeting. Their main features of loan scheme are as follows:

- Maximum amount in rural areas: Rs. 50,000
- Maximum amount in urban areas: Rs. 2.5 lakhs
- Repayment period: One year
- Interest rate: 15%
- Maximum number of applicants for group loans: 5-6

#### **5.9.12 Food Programme**

Since 1971 Hayden Hall has been distributing bulgur and cooking oil to pregnant women, women with infants, senior citizens and people with disabilities.

#### **5.9.13 Programme for the aged**

Paramedics visit various villages and come to know about various problems faced by the old people. The main feature of this programme is the old people. They don't need to belong to the Mother and Child Care programme. The organisation helps them by giving dry rations and medicines from the

dispensary but in case they don't take ration they can take a sum of Rs. 100 every week to help them pay house rent, buy clothes and meet other expenses.

#### 5.9.14 Housing

The housing scheme was started in 1969 to rehabilitate landslide and fire victims in Darjeeling hills. The housing programme covers both urban and rural areas. The government donated land and the organisation started with an initial 139 homes. The organisation is providing housing to the homeless poor, and there is a scheme that provides interest-free loans for low income earners to build houses on land that they own. The housing programme has so far supplied a basic need for 1,513 families so that they can now concentrate on making better lives for themselves.

**5.10 Table No. 5.6: Staff Related Information of Hayden Hall**

Sl. No.	Male	Female	SC		ST		OBC		Gen		Total
			M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	15	25	02	03	05	10	02	03	05	10	40

Source: Field Survey

The Hayden Hall consists of 40 staff members in total. 15 members are male while the rests 25 are females. This is a clear evidence to say that this organisation gives preference to the women in order to maintain the gender equality by strengthening the issue of women empowerment through more job opportunities

**5.11 Table No. 5.7: Salary of the Staffs of Hayden Hall**

Sl. No.	Lowest Salary per month	Highest Salary per month
1	6500/-	20,000/-

Source: Field Survey

As far as the salary is concerned, every staff of the organisation is happy because both the highest and the lowest salary per month are good enough for the one to live a happy life.



## **5.12 Empowerment of Women**

After observing all the activities of this organisation one can conclude that Hayden Hall is planning, formulating and implementing different schemes and programmes for the transformation of society into self and real one. The organisation is empowering women in different ways. Through the different activities of this organisation women have been empowered socially, economically, culturally and politically in the District. The different activities and schemes of this organisation are proving fruitful in all the ways of the life of the people of Darjeeling in general and women in particular. The different activities and schemes of this organisation which are very effective for the empowerment of women in the District are training programmes, formation of SHGs, loan programme, educational facilities, medical care and so on. This organisation has implemented and still implementing different schemes and projects for the empowerment of women. They are getting different types of income generating programmes and have trained accordingly. Many SHGs (especially of women) are attached with this organisation. Their day to day earnings have been increased after joining the SHGs which facilitates their economic empowerment. With this, increases their public exposures. After joining the SHGs, women nowadays can easily interact with other people in the society without any type of hesitation which facilitates their social empowerment. With the help of many health-awareness programmes conducted by this organisation, women became more conscious about their health, health of their children and husband too and also adopting proper family-planning. This again leads to Social and educational empowerment of women. Moreover, because of the awareness training programmes, the percentage of women's participation in politics and decision-making processes has also been increased resulting into the Political empowerment of women.

From Kalimpong Subdivision, I have selected Hill Social Welfare Society for the purpose of my study.

### **2. HILL SOCIAL WELFARE SOCIETY (HSWS)**

A brief Sketch of the selected NGO under the study is as follows:

## Infrastructure

Building:	Rented
Rooms:	6 Rooms
Land:	Own land donated by Government
Computer:	3 Nos.
Chairs (Executive):	16 Nos. and Plastic Chairs: 50
Table:	14 Nos.
Van:	Nil
Total Number of SHGs attached:	67
Sources of Funds:	Various mother NGOs, Govt. Department and funds raised through different types of donations collected.

**Chart No. 2: Chief Functionaries**



Source: Field Survey

The functionary structure of all the organisations under study is more or less the same with a little difference. Thus, the office of the HSWS is controlled by a series of chairs comprising the Office Administrator at the top followed by the Programme Officer, the Project Coordinator, the Accountant, the in-charges and the Support and the Field Staff members. And at last comes the target communities who are the beneficiaries.

### **5.13 Historical Background (HSWS)**

The Hill Social Welfare Society (hereafter HSWS), Kalimpong was established at Kalimpong, West Bengal, India in 2000 with the intention to uplift the downtrodden poor women and girls. Right from 2000 to July 2005 the society could run their organization with the help of funds or donations collected from the then members. It was for the first time that the NABARD sanctioned a total sum of Rs. 25000 for the purpose of organizing Self Helps Groups programme.

### **5.14 Area of operation**

Kalimpong-I Block, Kalimpong-II Block and Jorebonlow Block of Darjeeling (Sadar) Subdivision of the District.

### **5.15 Target Groups**

Distressed & Deserved women and Children, dropouts, unemployed youths and female commercial sex workers.

### **5.16 Mission Statement**

Hill Social Welfare Society is a secular, learning oriented and non-profit making association, whose mission is to (i) make visible and community sustained contributions and (ii) to focus on the communities and selected urgent issues towards a profitable transformation of our society and thereby technically bridging up the gap between the empowered and underpowered sections of the society in the hills.

### **5.17 Vision Statement**

The organisation strives to work as a team towards the sustainable empowerment of people through mainstreaming the marginalised and, therefore, is equipping themselves in order to contribute to the process of nation building and envisioned value-based holistic growth of the hill society.

### **5.18 Core Values**

The core values of the HSWS are as follows:

1. Teamwork
2. People-oriented programmes.
3. Compassionate Professionals.
4. Responsiveness to needs and issues of people.
5. Accountability and transparency.
6. Individuals and corporate competency.

### **5.19 Nature of the programme**

Most of the programmes and schemes are of short term duration. A close observation to the fact reveals that almost all the programmes are based on various short-time schemes as for example, a project is to be completed in six months to one year and the fund is supplied accordingly. In this case, the organisation is bound to terminate the programme or scheme after the stipulated period. Another striking nature of their work is that the women are given preferences while formulating the projects and implementing the same.

### **5.20 Present Activities at a Glance**

The following are the different ongoing programmes conducted by the HSWS for the empowerment of Women are as follows:

1. Formation of Self Help Groups (mostly women groups). HSWS is organizes different awareness programmes to give importance to self-employment and several training-cum- workshops with the sponsorship of the NABARD.
2. Reproductive and Child Health Scheme RCH-II Project under the managing NGO- West Bengal Voluntary Health Association, Kolkata (w.e.f. 01.01.2006) have established two Health centers at rural areas named Lolay and Lingseykha under Kalimpong subdivision for women and child health care.
3. HIV/AIDS Project under the Darjeeling AIDS control centre sponsored by the National AIDS Control Programme (NACP-II, Govt. of India).



**Training Programme of HSWS, Kalimpong**



**Training Programme of HSWS, Kalimpong**

4. With the sponsorship of SANLAAP, a Kolkata-based NGO dealing with early marriage and dowry system abuses and human trafficking, the HSWS is conducts several rescue and rehabilitation and extensive awareness generating programmes for the victims in remote rural villages.
5. Youth and children welfare activities under the sponsorship of Nehru Yuva Kendra, Darjeeling.
6. 'SWALAMBAN' NORAD PROJECT- a vocational handloom training programme under the West Bengal Women Development Undertaking, Kolkata. A total number of 50 deserving rural women have already been imparted the training for self-employment and the scheme is being continued to another batch of 30 rural women to make them economically self-sufficient.

#### **5.21 Programmes Already undertaken and completed**

1. Establishment of crèche centers under National Crèche Fund Scheme and Human Resource Development, Government of India.
2. Training Programme for the preparation of Incense sticks and Phenyl for 30 deserving women under skill development initiative of NABARD.
3. Beautician training courses for 30 rural and urban educated unemployed women group under the initiative of NABARD.
4. Training in agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, animal husbandry and organic vermin compost making under the Nehru Yuva Kendra, Darjeeling.
5. 1<sup>st</sup> phase of 4 months Handloom vocational training programme for 50 rural deserving women under the West Bengal Women Development Undertaking. The scheme is being undertaken as a continuing scheme.

#### **5.22 Schemes proposed to be executed**

1. Short Stay Homes for deserving, distressed women/girls between 15-35 years of age of all communities under West Bengal Social Welfare Advisory Board.

2. 10 crèche centres under Rajiv Gandhi crèche Scheme under Central Social Welfare Board.
3. 10 Crèche Centres for Tea Gardens under West Bengal Social Welfare Advisory Board.
4. SHPI (Self Help Promoting Institute for SHGs formed under the NABARD).
5. Family Counselling centres at Kalimpong under the West Bengal Social Welfare Advisory Board.
6. Working Women Hostels at Kalimpong under the West Bengal Social Welfare Advisory Board.
7. Formation of clusters of Self Help Groups to ensure better performances of the groups through bank finances.

**5.23 Table No. 5.8: Staff Related Information of HSWS**

Sl. No.	Male	Female	SC		ST		OBC		Gen		Total
			M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	13	26	2	3	4	6	2	2	5	15	39

Source: Field Survey

The organisation consists of 39 staff members in total out of which only 13 are males and 26 are females. This means that the HSWS is providing more employment opportunities to the women and making them economically self-sufficient. This is mainly because this organisation deals with various women welfare measures.

**5.24 Table No. 5.9: Salary of the Staffs of HSWS**

Sl. No.	Lowest Salary per month	Highest Salary per month
1	1500/-	13000/-

Source: Field Survey

In comparison to the other organisations under study, the salary structure of HSWS is somewhat low. But, then also, HSWS is playing a major role in the economic development of the sub-division by providing jobs to the local people, especially to the women.

### **5.25 Empowerment of Women**

The HSWS is formulating and implementing many schemes and programmes and empowering the women in different ways. In a place where medical facilities and employment opportunities are less, this organisation is doing its best by empowering women in economic, social, cultural, political fields. The different activities of this organisation for the empowerment of women are training, education, financial support through SHGs, consciousness programmes, and so on. The women are getting different types of income generating programmes and have trained accordingly. Many SHGs (especially of women) are attached with this organisation. Their day to day earnings have been increased after joining the SHGs which facilitates their economic empowerment. With this, increases their public exposures. After joining the SHGs, women nowadays can easily interact with other people in the society without any type of hesitation which facilitates their social empowerment. With the help of many health-awareness programmes conducted by this organisation, women have become more conscious about their health, health of their children and husband (if married) and also adopting proper family-planning. This again leads to Social and educational empowerment of women. Moreover, because of the awareness training programmes, the percentage of women's participation in politics and decision-making processes have also been increased resulting into the Political empowerment of women.

### **3. INDIAN FORCES LADIES' ASSOCIATION (IFLA)**

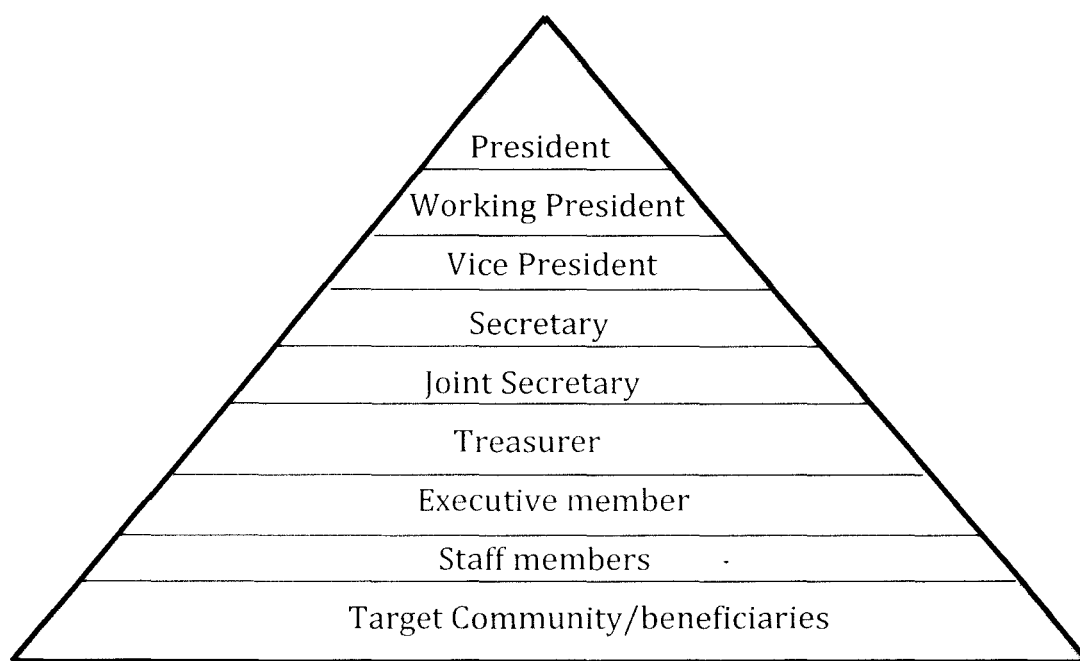
From Kurseong subdivision I have selected Indian Forces Ladies' Association (IFLA) (hereafter IFLA) for the purpose of my study. As per my observation, the activities of the NGOs in Kurseong sub-division are found less in number in comparison to the other three sub-divisions of the District. The possible reason behind this could be its closeness to both Darjeeling (Sadar) and Siliguri sub-divisions. And the NGOs based in both of these sub-divisions are conducting their works in Kurseong by establishing a sort of sub-centres there.



## Infrastructure

1. Building: No
2. Rooms: Three rooms
3. Toilet facilities: Yes
4. Drinking water facilities: Yes
5. Van: No
6. Computer: No
7. Total No. of paid staffs: 2

**Chart No. 3: Chief Functionaries**



Source: Field Survey

At the apex of the organisation is the President followed by Working President. The organisation is keeping the option of working president because in the absence of president the latter can do all the functions assigned to the President. Like other organisations, there are vice president, secretary, and joint-secretary. Treasurer, executive members, staff and at the bottom are the beneficiaries.

### 5.26 Historical Background (IFLA)

A very precise observation to all the three hill sub-divisions reveals that a large number of the local people are employed in the military and the

paramilitary forces. And as the communication and the other advanced facilities were very feeble during the nineties, the families of the service personnel used to face various problems that included financial, informational, social and even psychological problems. Unlike the facilities provided by the modern services nowadays, the then systems hardly allowed easy monetary transactions which created various financial problems to the dependent families. With this they also suffered from informational crisis (due to lack of telecommunications) and weakness in health, service and desires. All these resulted in various social as well as psychological problems as mentioned above. In addition to that the families also suffered from a feeling of loneliness and security. That is why to support these dependents, especially ladies, both financially as well as morally the Indian Forces Ladies' Association (IFLA) was formed on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1992, in Kurseong subdivision of Darjeeling District by the wives of serving and retired personnel of the Armed Forces and Para-military Forces of India namely Army, Navy, Air Force, Assam Rifles, Border Security Force and Border Road Organisation.

### **5.27 Aims and Objectives**

The aims and objectives of IFLA are as follows:

1. To spread awareness amongst the families of the serving and retired service personnel of the Armed Forces and the Para-Military Forces regarding the benefits and welfare schemes/facilities provided by the government.
2. To encourage self-employment and concurrently to generate employment.
3. To provide financial assistance to widows, orphans and paraplegics.
4. To provide medical assistance.
5. To provide educational assistance to deserving wards of retired personnel.
6. To foster the spirit of good will, unity and cooperation amongst all family members of the serving and retired personnel irrespective of

caste, creed, religion or services affiliation towards the cause of national integration.

With the changing of time the aims and objectives of the organisation is also changing. Earlier the focus of the organisation was confined with the military wings but nowadays the civilian are also the part of the organisation.

### **5.28 Area of operation**

Kurseong Subdivision of Darjeeling District.

### **5.29 Target Groups**

The families of the serving as well as retired service personnel of the Armed Forces, the Para-Military Forces and the civilians as well.

### **5.30 Present activities at a glance**

The main activities and the programmes of the organisation for the empowerment of women are as follows:

#### **5.30.1 Widow wings**

The organisation is doing its best by helping widows in different ways since its inception. The organisation is providing help in matter of pension, salaries and making them aware of their rights. The organisation is conducting different types of medical camps, skill development and income generating programmes such as sewing and weaving training camps for the empowerment of the widows.

#### **5.30.2 Working women wings**

This scheme covers both military and civilian women who are working as daily wage labourers, maid servants etc. They are the target groups who can undergo different types of training for their skill development. The organisation also conducts various income generation programmes to the needy women in the locality. Nowadays, such trained ladies are skilled enough in making carpets, socks, woolen garments and various hand-made products etc. the organisation is also providing raw materials to the trainees for the preparation of the same which are later on marketed by the organisation. The

trainees are paid a handsome sum of money in exchange which makes them economically self-sufficient.

### 5.30.3 School IFLA

One of the very important contributions of this organisation is the School IFLA. This scheme is mainly for the women who come under the BPL category. The organisation is running a special school which remains open from 3 PM to 5 PM. There are trained teachers in the school in order to teach the women who are uneducated and are working as house maids, domestic helpers, and who are very much interested in education. The organisation, thus, is educating large number of women since its establishment.

**5.31 Table No. 5.10: Staff Related Information of IFLA**

Sl. No.	Male	Female	SC		ST		OBC		Gen		Total
			M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
	-	02	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	02

Source: Field Survey

There are only two teachers in the IFLA School who are teaching in a part-time basis. The peculiar feature of this organisation is that all the executive members are actively participating voluntarily in different activities carrying out by the organisation when the situation demands. The total numbers of such members are 16.

**5.32 Table No. 5.11: Salary of the Staffs of IFLA**

Sl. No.	Lowest Salary per month	Highest Salary per month
1	-	250

Source: Field Survey

There is no particular salary-structure in this organisation. All the people who are attached with IFLA are rendering their services as a voluntary member. There are only two staff members who are paid Rs. 250 per month for the purpose of purchasing and preparing teaching-learning materials.

### 5.33 Empowerment of Women

In Kurseong Subdivision the contribution of IFLA in the field of

empowerment of women is no doubt a great. School IFLA is educating the illiterate women of the subdivision. The different activities of this organisation include training programme, education, health care, and so on. IFLA is working and organising different types of activities which are very closely associated with the wife of the military and Para-military forces and making them aware of their rights and duties. This programme not only helps the wives of the military personnel but also empowers civilian women to generate income. They are getting different types of income generating programmes and have trained accordingly. Their day to day earning has been increased after income generating programmes which facilitates their economic empowerment. With the help of many health-awareness programmes conducted by the NGOs, women became more conscious about their health, health of their children and husband too and also adopting proper family-planning. This again leads to Social and educational empowerment of women. Moreover, because of the awareness training programmes, the percentage of women's participation in politics and decision-making processes has also been increased resulting into the Political empowerment of women.

From Siliguri Subdivision I have selected Balason Society for Improved Environment for the purpose of my study and its particulars are as follows:

#### **4. BALASON SOCIETY FOR IMPROVED ENVIROMENT (BSIEN)**

##### **5.34 Historical Background**

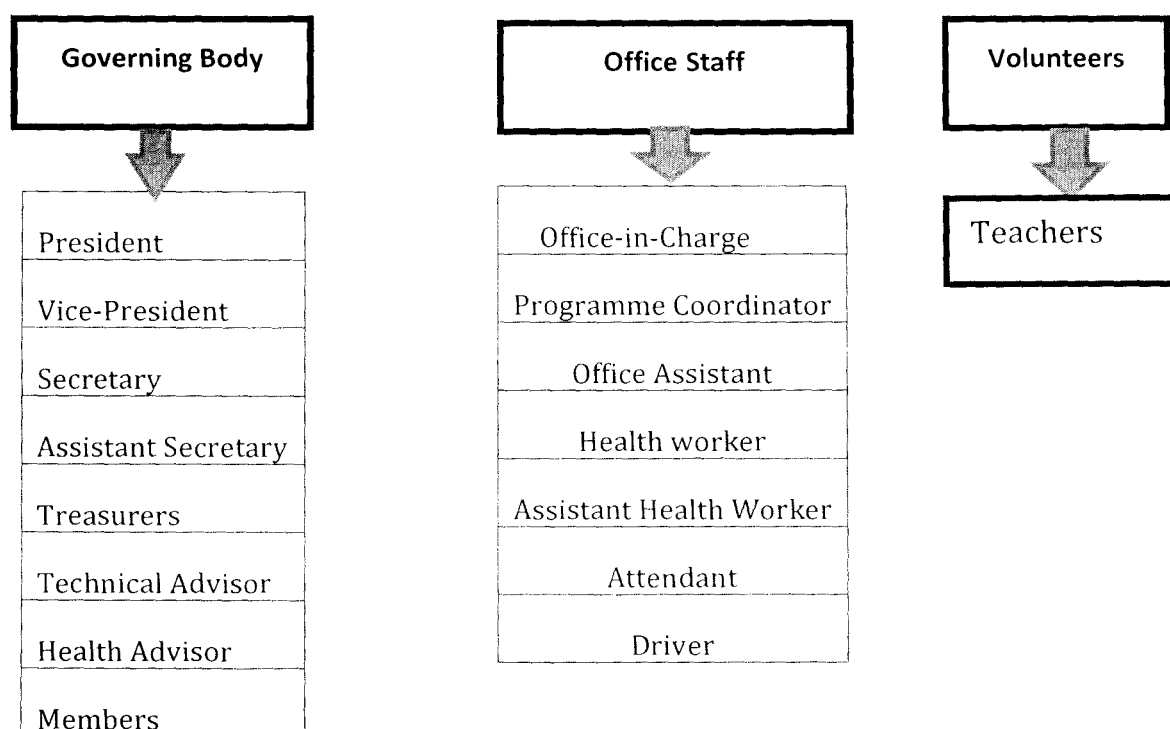
The Balason Society for Improved Environment (hereafter BSIEN) has started its journey as an informal group with the initiative of like-minded social workers with an aim to the welfare of the poverty stricken people in this region. This informal group later on started different type of welfare activities and in due course of time it took the shape of an NGO with its own registration in September 1997 under the West Bengal society Registration Act, 1961.

##### **Infrastructure:**

1. Own Building: Yes
2. Rooms: 7 (Seven) including two Halls

3. Toilet facilities: Yes
4. Table and Chairs: 10 and 60 Nos.
5. Drinking water facilities: Yes
6. Van: No
7. Computer: 2 Nos. with Printer
8. Total Number of Staff: 23

**Chart NO. 4: Governing Body and the staff pattern of the Organisation**



Source: Field Survey

There are three sections of staff pattern in this organisation and they are Governing Body, paid staff and the volunteers. There are President, Vice - President, secretary, assistant secretary, treasurers, technical advisors, health advisor and members in the section of Governing Body. The office staff members of the organisation consist of office-in-charge, programme coordinator, office assistant, health worker, assistant health worker, attendant and driver. There are some teachers also who are rendering their services as volunteers.

### **5.35 Area of Operation**

The Balason Society for Improved Environment (BSIEN) operated in Chathat, Mithbazar, Migirgachh, Hansagachh, Malgachh, Bairgachh, Rasamgachh, Ghoshgachh, Paschim Mith Bazar & Haptiagachh of Phansidewa Block and Jhingajote, Raymoti, Ramvola, Jhorujote, Paschim Dhulia, Bitanjote, Baktarvita, Khurirjote, Singhivita, Rangolichina, Budhan, Dhulia, Najibjote, Badalvita, Fougijote, Dewanvita, Kuiry, Rangoli, Hatidoba, and Jatru of Kharibari Block. The target area of Reproductive and Child Health (RCH) Project-II and awareness programmes are Matigara Block, Phansidewa Block, Naxalbari Block and Kharibari Block of Siliguri Sub-division. Apart from all these, ambulances services in the rural hospitals under Matigara and Phansidewa Blocks of Siliguri Sub-division are provided by this organisation.

### **5.36 Target groups**

The target groups cover the poverty stricken people, especially women, of the above mentioned regions.

### **5.37 Objectives**

The main objectives of the organisation are education; health and social-work and are as follows:

1. To promote, protect and safe guard the interest of the marginalised people.
2. To impart and assist some vocational trainings to the women to achieve gainful self-employments.
3. To collect and circulate all the necessary information, up-to date happenings, government policies and programmes to the rural people time to time.
4. To collect donations, grants and subscriptions from national, international organisations and individuals, for the smooth functioning of the organisation.
5. To subscribe and contribute donations to any other institutions whose objectives are same.

6. To arrange and provide facilities in order to improve the environmental conditions and especial emphasis is given on the use of safe drinking water and sanitary toilets, production and use of bio-gas and bio-fertilizers etc.
7. To develop rural health and Sanitation services.
8. To promote and develop the literacy of the rural people / marginalised people with special emphasis on Non formal Education of both adults and children.
9. To promote the public interest for preservation of forest and to check deforestation.
10. To generate consciousness regarding integrated population management and to provide related services or facilities wherever possible and / or necessary.
11. To provide improved and healthy health services & facilities for mother and child.
12. To purchase, sale, take on lease, exchange, hire and otherwise acquire and hold any movable or immovable property that must be deemed necessary. All these are convenient and useful for the advancement of the objectives and proposals of the society.

### **5.38 Present activities at a glance**

The activities of Balason Society for Improved Environment (BSIEN) which are mainly for the empowerment of women can be classified into four broad categories, viz. (i) Educational activities, (ii) Health related activities, (iii) income generating activities especially for women and (iv) Miscellaneous.

#### **5.38.1 Educational Activities**

**Awareness:** The Balason Society for improved Environment organizes different types of educational activities with a view to create an educated and informed society since its inception in 1997. It is carrying out the following educational activities:





**Free Medical camp organised by BSIEN**



**Woman Taking part in a programme organised by BSIEN**

1. Study Centre of the West Bengal Council of Rabindra Open Schooling, since December 2004, for Secondary and Higher Secondary level students.
2. Providing assistances to Educational Institutions (formal / non-formal). And also granting merit scholarships/books to poor and meritorious Students.
3. Campaign in favour of literary campaigns such as observing World Literacy Day, Mothers Awareness Day and so on.
4. Regularly conducting Girl Student Educational Tour for the girl student on behalf of Sarva Siksha Mission, Siliguri Educational District.
5. Reading-cum-Library services through the Boidyiti Jana Granthagar.
6. Organizing training and awareness programmes in economically backward rural areas and is making them aware about education, health, nutrition, women and child care.

#### **5.38.2 Health related activities**

1. A free of cost health service for children and women through its Uma Chetterjee Memorial Charitable Health Centre established in 1997.
2. Total Sanitation Campaign in Phansidewa block, sponsored by UNICEF, Kolkata, Panchayat and Rural Development Department, Govt. of West Bengal and Siliguri Mahakuma Parishad. Constructions of low-cost Family Latrines for the poor families are on progress.
3. Implementing Reproductive and Child Health Project –II, sponsored by the department health and family welfare Govt. of west Bengal for the 20 village under Rangali sub-Centre of Buragang Gram Panchayat and 15 Villages under Chaterhat sub-Centre under Chaterhat Bansaon Gram Panchayat of Darjeeling District.
4. Sealed Community latrines (SCL) with bath rooms for 100 users with 9 sweat rooms and its regular maintenance at Balason colony.
5. Supply of safe Drinking water for about 600 families of Balason Colony and experimental low cost safe Drinking Water supply Scheme for the poor.



**Women in queue for treatment in the programme organised by BSIEN**



**Participation of Women in the programme organised by BSIEN**

6. Vaccination of poor patients for preventing Hydrophobia in Collaboration with other institutions and organizations.

### 5.38.3 Income generating programme

1. Organizing training and awareness programmes on income generating activities in a regular intervention in collaboration with other institution or organization.

### 5.38.4 Miscellaneous

1. Providing Ambulance services for carrying poor and needy patients for better treatment from Matigara and Phansidewa block to the nearby hospitals and nursing homes. Two Ambulances have been donated by the German organization GTZ through Siliguri Mahakuma Parishad for this purpose.
2. Observing World Health Day, World Environment Day and World Population Day as part of awareness programme.

### 5.39 Table No. 5.12: Staff Related Information of BSIEN

Sl. No.	Male	Female	SC		ST		OBC		Gen		Total
			M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
1	16	7	4	2	-	-	4	1	8	4	23

(Source Field Survey)

The table shows that total 23 people are working in the organisation as paid staff members. Among them 16 are male and 7 are female which also include the Scheduled Caste and Other Backward Caste people in the organisation.

### 5.40 Table No. 5.13: Salary of the Staffs of BSIEN

Sl. No.	Lowest Salary per month	Highest Salary per month
1	500	3500

Source: Field Survey

The people who are doing their job as paid members are paid Rs. 3500 per month as remuneration and the part time staff members are paid Rs. 500 for their voluntary efforts.

#### **5.41 Empowerment of Women**

The BSIEN formulates and implements different schemes and programmes for the empowerment of women in some parts of Siliguri Subdivision of the District. Different types of training, educational facilities, medical facilities, hygiene consciousness, income generating programmes, etc. are some of the activities of the BSIEN and with the help of these activities they are empowering the women in different fields. The women are getting different types of income generating programmes and have been trained accordingly. Their day to day earning has been increased after joining the SHGs which facilitates their economic empowerment. It has increased their public exposures. With the help of many health-awareness programmes conducted by the NGOs, women became more conscious about their health, health of their children and husband too (if married) and also adopting proper family-planning. This again leads to Social and educational empowerment of women. Moreover, because of the awareness training programmes, the percentage of women's participation in politics and decision-making processes has also been increased resulting into the Political empowerment of women.

#### **4.42 Empowerment of women and the roles of NGOs in the District (Data Analysis)**

To draw the findings and conclusions of my research, forty key informants were interviewed informally. This forty were categorized into two groups- (i) **Group I** - The twenty informants (both men and women) were bureaucrats, social activists, beneficiaries, staff, non-beneficiaries, politicians, common man, etc. (ii) **Group II** - The rest twenty informants- these were women directly associated with the organisation as beneficiaries and the staff members. They were interviewed separately to know the different roles, importance and activities of NGOs for the empowerment women in the District.

But, to derive the following information all forty were interviewed informally: (i) socio-economic factors that influenced the growth of a large number of NGOs, (ii) the degree of satisfaction of the beneficiaries, (iii) the government's reaction and response towards the NGOs, (iv) the degree of job satisfaction of the staff members, (v) the degree of response from the non-beneficiaries, (vi) the problem of NGOs and (vii) the role of the NGOs for the empowerment of women in the District.

### Group I

Here the responses of the all forty (40) (which include the 20 women respondent of Group - II) respondents have been analyzed to know the: (i) socio-economic factors that influenced the growth of a large number of NGOs, (ii) degree of satisfaction of the beneficiaries, (iii) the government's reaction and response towards the NGOs, (iv) degree of job satisfaction of the staff members, (v) degree of response from the non-beneficiaries, (vi) problem of NGOs and (vii) nature of works of NGOs in the District. The profiles of the respondents are as follows:

**Table No. 5.14: Profile of the Respondents- I**

Sl. No.	Sex		Marital Status				N=40
	Male	Female	Married	Unmarried	Divorcee	Widow	
1	9 (22.5%)	31 (77.5%)	18 (45%)	20 (50%)	1 (2.5%)	1 (2.5%)	

### No. II

Sl. No.	Distribution of Respondents according to age groups					N=40
	15-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	Above 56	
1	10 (25%)	13 (32.5%)	10 (25%)	5 (12.5%)	2 (5%)	

### No. III

Sl. No.	Distribution of Respondents according to Religion					N=40
	Hindu	Buddhist	Christians	Muslims	Others	
1	17 (42.5%)	7 (17.5%)	11 (27.5%)	3 (7.5%)	2 (5%)	

**No. IV**

Sl. No.	Distribution of Respondents according to Caste				N=40
	SCs	STs	OBCs	Others	
1	6 (15%)	7 (17.5%)	8 (20%)	19 (47.5%)	

**No. V**

Sl. No.	Distribution of Respondents according educational background					N=40
	Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	Graduate	PG	
1	3 (7.5%)	8 (20%)	7 (17.5%)	14 (35%)	8 (20%)	

**No. VI**

Sl. No.	Main occupations of the parents/husbands of the respondents			N=40
	Occupations	Number	(%)	
1	Day labourers	6	15%	
2	Farmers	12	30%	
3	Service	6	15%	
4	Business	4	10%	
5	Professional Practice	2	5%	
6	Self-employed/ Pensioners	6	15%	
7	Others	4	10%	

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

There are forty respondents. Special care was taken while selecting the respondents. Respondents' age, sex, marital status, religion, caste, educational qualifications, occupation of the parents/guardians were taken into account. Of the total respondents 22.5% are males and 77.5% are females. Among them 45% are married, 50% unmarried, 2.5% are divorcee, and 2.5% are widow. Of the total respondents 25%, 32.5%, 25%, 12.5%, and 5% are the group of 15-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55 and above 56 years respectively. Again, 42.5% are Hindus, 17.5% are Buddhists, 27.5% are Christians, 7.5% are Muslims and 5% are others. Similarly, 15%, 17.5%, 20%, and 47.5% are SCs, STs, OBCs and Others respectively. Among the respondents, 7.5% are illiterate, 20% are primary, 17.5% secondary, 35% are graduates and 20% are of PG standard. Again, 15%, 30%, 15%, 10%, 5%, 15% and 10% parents/guardians of the respondents' occupations are day labourers, farmers, service, business, professional practice, self-employed/pensioners and others respectively.

### 5.43 Job satisfaction of the working staff

As far as the job satisfaction of the working staffs is concerned, I have found a mixed conclusion. Because of natural calamities, political disturbances and unemployment, a major portion of the youth of the hills are working in the call centres, shopping malls, as security guard, in the beauty parlours and are therefore scattered in different parts of the country. But the people working with the NGOs in the District are more or less happy and satisfied with their job, be it in a big organisation or a small one.

**Table No. 5.15: Job satisfaction of the working staff members**

Sl. No	Total No. of Sample respondent	The Extent of Expression				
		To a great extent	To some extent	Not at all	No response	total
1	N=40	21 (52.5%)	11 (27.5%)	6 (15%)	2 (5%)	40 (100%)

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table shows that among the forty respondent 52.5% are happy with their present job and 27.5% are happy to some extent. But 15% respondents are not happy with their job.

### 5.44 Reaction of the people as well as government towards NGOs

It is true that nowadays government is giving more and more emphasis to the different NGOs through the distribution of some programmes and schemes. People are also actively participating and helping different NGOs. But the real story is that sometimes it becomes really difficult to accept various proposals given by the NGOs easily.

**Table No. 5.16: Reaction of the people as well as government towards NGOs**

Sl. No	Total No. of Sample respondent	The Extent of Perceptions				
		Providing large opportunity	It should be abolished	Not providing any help	No response	total
1	N=40	16 (40%)	8 (20%)	15 (37.5%)	1 (2.5%)	40 (100%)

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)



The table shows that the perceptions of respondents towards the NGOs are varied. Some said that it is a good organisation on the other hand some are disagreeing with the former.

#### 5.45 Reaction of the beneficiaries

Beneficiaries are more or less happy with the programmes and schemes formulated by the different NGOs in the district. This is because of the common tendency of the people to gain more and more than to accept what they are provided actually.

**Table No. 5.17: Reaction of the beneficiaries**

Sl. No	Total No. of Sample respondent	The Reaction of the Beneficiaries				
		Providing large opportunity	It should be abolished	Not providing any help	No response	total
1	N=40	27 (67.5%)	4 (10%)	8 (20%)	1 (2.5%)	40(100%)

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

It is clear from the above table that almost all the beneficiaries are happy with the ins and outs of the NGOs in the district.

#### 4.46 Problems

Various problems and difficulties have been faced by the different NGOs in the district. The people rarely have a clear knowledge about the NGOs. There is scarcity of funds. Only the reputed and large organisations are getting different sources of funds and it becomes really very hard to implement different projects in the district because of the physical structure of the areas. In addition to that, political situation form another great threat for the local NGOs.

**Table No. 5.18: Problems**

Sl. No	Total No. of Sample respondent	Problems				
		Monetary	Management	Political	No response	total
1	N=40	27 (67.5%)	8 (20%)	4 (10%)	1 (2.5%)	40 (100%)

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table reveals that the main problem of the NGOs in the district is monetary or fund followed by management. In some cases political interference is also playing very disturbing role in the proper functioning of the NGOs.

#### **5.47 Nature of the programme of NGOs**

It is clear from the field observation that both the short-term as well as long term projects and schemes are being conducted by the different NGOs in the District. But many NGOs they are carrying out short term projects. If the funding authority is strong then the local NGOs can plan their programme on a long term basis without any hesitation. In actual sense, the performing ability of the organisation depends on the source of funding and the alertness of the organisation. Another very important characteristic of the NGOs in the district is that most of them do not have any fixed target. Hence, their activities and focus of attention is changing day by day.

#### **5.48 Different programmes of NGOs**

The different programmes of the NGOs in the district include campaigns on women development and empowerment, education, health, orphans, anti-trafficking, HIV AIDS, environment consciousness, income generation, training and so on. The most peculiar characteristic of the programmes of NGOs in the District is that almost all NGOs deals with the orphans and women which indicates a very strong point towards the development of the society.

#### **5.49 Empowerment of women and the roles of NGOs in the District (Data Analysis)**

##### **Group II**

Here the responses of the Twenty (20) key women respondents have been analyzed separately to know the different roles, importance and activities of NGOs for the empowerment women in the District.

**Table No. 5.19: Age group of the Respondents**

Sl. No	Total No. of women Sample respondent	Age group of the Respondents					Total
		15-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	Above 56	
1	N=20	5 (25%)	8 (40%)	4 (20%)	2 (10%)	1 (5%)	100%

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table shows that out of twenty women respondents 25% are in the age group of 15-25, 40% are in the age group of 26-35, 20% are in the age group of 36-45, 10% in the age group of 46-55 and 5% are above 56 years.

**Table No. 5.20 : Caste group of the Respondents**

Sl. No	Total No. of women Sample respondent	Caste group of the Respondents				Total
		SCs	STs	OBCs	Others	
1	N=20	3 (15%)	5 (25%)	4 (20%)	8 (40%)	100%

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table reflects that out of twenty women respondents 15% are SCs, 25% are STs, 20% are OBCs and the rest 40% are of other caste groups.

**Table No. 5.21: Religion of the Respondents**

Sl. No	Total No. of women Sample respondent	Religion of the Respondents					Total
		Hindus	Christians	Buddhists	Muslims	Others	
1	N=20	9 (45%)	6 (30%)	3 (15%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	100%

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

From the table we come to know that out of twenty women respondents 45% are Hindus, 30% are Christians, 15% are Buddhists, 5% are Muslims and the rests are from other religions.

**Table No. 5.22: Marital Status of the Respondents**

Sl. No	Total No. of women Sample respondent	Marital status of the Respondents				Total
		Married	unmarried	Divorcee	Widow	
1	N=20	8 (40%)	10 (50%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	100%

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table clearly shows that out of twenty women respondents 40% are married, 50% are unmarried, 5% are divorcee and the remaining 5% are widows.

**Table No. 5.23: Education of the Respondents**

Sl. No	Total No. of women Sample respondent	Education of the Respondents					Total
		Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	Graduate	PG	
1	N=20	2 (10%)	2 (10%)	5 (25%)	10 (50%)	1 (5%)	100%

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table concludes that out of twenty women respondents 10% are illiterate, 10% are Primary pass-outs, 25% are Secondary pass-outs, 50% are graduates and 5% are Post Graduates (PG).

**Table No. 5.24: Main occupations of the parents/husbands of the respondents**

Sl. No.	Occupations	Number	(%)
1	Day labourers	3	15%
2	Farmers	6	30%
3	Service	4	20%
4	Business	2	10%
5	Professional Practice	1	5%
6	Self-employed/ Pensioners	2	10%
7	Others	2	10%
Total		20	100%

(Source: Compiled through the data collected through the field survey)

The table reads that out of twenty women respondents 15% parents/husbands are day labourers, 30% parents/husbands are farmers, 20% parents/husbands are servicemen, 10% parents/ husbands are businessmen, 5% parents husbands are professionals 10% parents/husbands are self-employed and the rest are from others.

**Table No. 5.25: Exposure to Media**

Sl. No.	Level of Exposure							N=20
	Before joining the NGO				After joining the NGO			
	Media	Regular	Occasionally	Never	Regular	Occasionally	Never	
1	Radio listening	5 (25%)	3 (15%)	12 (60%)	12 (60%)	6 (30%)	2 (10%)	
2	Watching T.V.	6 (30%)	4 (20%)	10 (50%)	15 (75%)	5 (25%)	-	
3	Newspapers	7 (35%)	7 (35%)	6 (30%)	15 (75%)	5 (25%)	-	

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table tells us about the exposure of women to media. Before joining the NGOs, 25%, 15% and 60% of the women listened to radio regularly, occasionally and never, respectively. 30%, 20% and 50% watched television regularly, occasionally and never, respectively. 35% and 65% read newspapers regularly and occasionally, respectively. After joining the NGOs, 60%, 30% and 10% of them listened to radio regularly, occasionally and never, respectively. 75% and 25% of them watched television regularly and occasionally, respectively. 75% and 25% of them read newspapers regularly and occasionally, respectively.

**Table No. 5.26: Level of Awareness**

Sl. No.	Level of Awareness							N=20
	Before joining the NGO				After joining the NGO			
	Indicators	Aware	Not Aware	%	Aware	Not Aware	%	
1	National issue	5 (25%)	15 (75%)	100%	16 (80%)	4 (20%)	100%	
2	Local issue	8 (40%)	12 (60%)	100%	19 (95%)	1 (5%)	100%	
3	PRIs	6 (30%)	14 (70%)	100%	17 (85%)	3 (15%)	100%	
4	Corruption	7 (35%)	13 (65%)	100%	15 (75%)	5 (25%)	100%	

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table tells us about the level of awareness of women regarding different issues prevailing around. Before joining the NGOs, 25% of them were aware of national issues while the rest 75% of them were unaware of it. 40% of the women were aware of the local issues and 60% of them were unaware of it. Regarding PRIs, only 30% were aware but remaining 70% of them were unaware. 35% were aware of corruption while 65% were totally unaware. After joining the NGOs, the level of awareness has tremendously increased. 80% of them were aware of national issues and just 4% were unaware of it. 95% were aware of local issues while just 5% were unaware of it. 85% were aware of the PRIs and just 15% were unaware. 75% of the women were aware of corruption and the rest 25% were unaware.

**Table No. 5.27: Annual income of the respondents**

Sl. No.	Before joining the NGO		After joining the NGO	
	Level of Income	Number	Level of Income	Total
1	Upto 10,000	18 (90%)	Upto 10,000	-
2	10,000-25,000	1 (5%)	10,000-25,000	2 (10%)
3	25,000-50,000	1 (5%)	25,000-50,000	12 (60%)
4	50,000-100000	-	50,000-100000	4 (20%)
5	100000-200000	-	100000-200000	2 (10%)
6	200000-300000	-	200000-300000	-
7	Above 300000	-	Above 300000	-
Total		20 (100%)		20 (100%)

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table shows that before the women joined NGOs, 90% of them used to earn upto Rs. 10,000, 5% used to earn something between Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 25,000 and the last 5% used to earn anything between Rs. 25,000 and Rs. 50,000 annually. Now, after they joined the NGOs, 10% earned between 10,000 and 25,000, 60% earned between 25,000 and 50,000, 20% earned between 50,000 and 100000 and the last 10% earned between 100000 and 200000.

**Table No. 5.28: Annual income of the family of the respondents**

Sl. No.	Before joining the NGO		After joining the NGO	
	Level of Income	Total	Level of Income	Total
1	Upto 10,000	-	Upto 10,000	-
2	10,000-25,000	1 (5%)	10,000-25,000	-
3	25,000-50,000	4 (20%)	25,000-50,000	-
4	50,000-100000	14 (70%)	50,000-100000	5 (25%)
5	100000-200000	1 (5%)	100000-200000	15 (75%)
6	200000-300000	-	200000-300000	-
7	Above 300000	-	Above 300000	-
Total		20 (100%)		20 (200%)

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

This table shows us the annual income of the family of the respondents. Before joining the NGOs, 5% of the twenty families earned something between 10,000 and 25,000, 20% of them earned between Rs.25,000 and 50,000, 70% of them earned between 50,000 and 100000 and the remaining 5% earned between 100000 and 200000. But, after the women respondents joined the NGOs, the annual family income of 25% and 75% of them increased to something between 50,000 and 100000 and between 100000 and 200000, respectively.

**Table No. 5.29: Knowledge of Self Help Groups and Micro-credit**

Sl. No.	Availability of Knowledge						
	Before joining the NGO				After joining the NGO		
	Knowledge	Aware	Not Aware	%	Aware	Not Aware	%
1	SHGs	4 (20%)	16 (80%)	100%	19 (95%)	1 (5%)	100%
2	Micro-credit	2 (10%)	18 (90%)	100%	18 (90%)	2 (10%)	100%

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table informs us about the women's knowledge of Self-Help groups and Micro-credit. Before they joined the NGOs, 20% of them were aware and 80% of them were unaware of the SGHs. 10% of them of them were aware and

90% of them were unaware of the Micro-credit. But, after they joined the NGOs, 95% of them became aware and just 5% of them still remained unaware of the SGHs. 90% of them became aware and 10% still remained unaware of the Micro-credit.

**Table No. 5.30: Bank Account Holders**

Sl. No.	Bank Account Holders						
	Before joining the NGO				After joining the NGO		
	Type of Account	Yes	No	%	Yes	No	%
1	Individual	3 (15%)	17 (85%)	100%	20 (100%)	-	100%
2	joint	1 (5%)	19 (95%)	100%	8 (40%)	12 (60%)	100%

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table shows us that before they joined the NGOs, only 15% of the women had individual accounts in the banks and the rest 85% did not have. Only 5% of them had joint bank account and remaining 95% had no such account. But, after they joined the NGOs, 100% of the women had individual account. 40% of them had joint account and the rest 60% had no such account.

**Table No. 5.31: Knowledge regarding welfare measures of Government**

Sl. No.	Level of Knowledge						
	Before joining the NGO				After joining the NGO		
	Welfare Measures	Yes	No	%	Yes	No	%
1	MNREGA	3 (15%)	17 (85%)	100%	18 (90%)	2 (10%)	100%
2	IAY	2 (5%)	18 (95%)	100%	16 (80%)	4 (20%)	100%
3	Mid-day Meal	10 (50%)	10 (50%)	100%	20 (100%)	-	100%
4	SSA	5 (25%)	15 (75%)	100%	19 (95%)	1 (5%)	100%

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

From the table we come to know that before they joined the NGOs, just 15% of them had knowledge about MNREGA, 5% had knowledge about IAY,



50% had knowledge about Mid-day Meal and 25% of them had the knowledge about SSA. But, after they joined the NGOs, 90% knew about MNREGA, 80% about IAY, 100% knew about Mid-day Meal and 95% of them came to know about SSA.

**Table No. 5.32: Decision making in the family**

Sl. No.	Level of participation						
	Before joining the NGO				After joining the NGO		
	Time	Active	Not Active	%	Active	Not Active	%
1	Always	2 (10%)	18 (90%)	100%	19 (95%)	1 (5%)	100%
2	Sometimes	5 (25%)	15 (75%)	100%	20 (100%)	-	100%

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

Before the joining of the NGOs, a few of them were active about making decision in the family and more remained inactive. Only 10% of them always made the decision and 90% had no voice in such matters. Only 25% of them sometimes made the decision and 75% remained close-lipped. After they joined the NGOs, 95% of them always made the decision and just 5% did not. 100% of them sometimes made the decision.

**Table No. 5.33: Decision making at the time of election**

Sl. No.	Level of participation		
	Particulars	Before joining the NGO	After joining the NGO
1	Self-motivated	2 (10%)	16 (80%)
2	Motivated by parents/husbands	7 (35%)	3 (15%)
3	Motivated by others	1 (5%)	1 (5%)
4	Never motivated	10 (50%)	-

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table reflects how the women were motivated during election. Before they joined the NGOs, only 10% were self-motivated, 35% were motivated by parents/husbands, 5% were motivated by others and the rest 50% remained unmotivated. After the joined the NGOs, 80% were self - motivated, 15% were motivated by parents/husbands and the rest 10% by others. No women remained unmotivated.

**Table No. 5.34: Visit in different banks**

Sl No.	Number of Visits				
	Before joining the NGO			After joining the NGO	
	No. of visit	Public Banks	Private Banks	Public Banks	Private Banks
	Never	5 (25%)	16 (80%)	-	-
	1-2	4 (20%)	3 (15%)	-	-
	3-5	5 (25%)	1 (5%)	-	-
	6-10	3 (15%)		-	-
	11-20	2 (10%)		1 (5%)	5 (25%)
	Frequently	1 (5%)		19 (95%)	15 (75%)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>20 (100%)</b>	<b>20 (100%)</b>	<b>20 (100%)</b>	<b>20 (100%)</b>

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

This table shows us the frequency of visits to the banks by the respondents. Before they joined the NGOs, 25% of them never, 20% of them 1-2 times, 25% of them 3-5 times, 15% them 6-10 times, 10% of them 11-20 times and 5% of them frequently visited the Public Banks. 80% of them never, 15% 1-2 times and 5% 3-5 times visited the Private Banks. After they joined the NGOs, 5% of them 11-20 times and 95% of them frequently visited the Public Banks. 25% of them 11-20 times and 75% of them frequently visited the Private Banks.

**Table No. 5.35: Participation in public meetings, seminars, etc.**

Sl. No.	Participation in public meetings, seminars, etc.		
	No. of Participation	Before joining the NGOs	After joining the NGOs
		No. of women	No. of women
1	Never	10 (50%)	-
2	1-5	3 (15%)	-
3	5-10	4 (20%)	-
4	10-20	2 (10%)	-
5	20-30	1 (5%)	1 (5%)
6	Frequently	-	19 (95%)
Total		20 (100%)	20 (100%)

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table shows the participation of women respondents in public meetings, seminars, etc. before and after joining the NGOs. Before joining the NGOs, 50% of the women never, 15% 1-5 times, 20% 5-10 times, 10% 10-20 times and 5% of them 20-30 times attended the public meetings and the seminars. No women attended such gatherings frequently. But, after they joined the NGOs, 5% of them 20-30 times and 95% of them frequently attended such seminars and public meetings.

**Table No. 5.36: Empowerment of women**

Sl. No	Total No. of women Sample respondent	The Extent of acceptability				Total
		Providing large opportunity	It should be abolished	Not providing any help	No response	
1	N=20	17 (85%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	20 (100%)

(Source: Compiled through the data collected from the mailed questionnaire)

The table tells us the acceptability of NGOs by women respondents in empowering women. Out of 20 women respondents 17(85%) of them believed that a large number of opportunity was provided by the NGOs. 5% of them

favoured abolishing such organisations. 5% of them thought that such organisations were not providing any help whereas 5% of them did not respond.

#### **4.50 Result of data interpretation and justification**

Ours is a male dominated society. From time immemorial, our culture and tradition has tried to limit the space and importance of women. Even in the present days, a small percentage of women are found to be representatives and administrators. Despite the arrogance of our society more women in the present days are found to be empowered in comparison to those of 50 years, or say, of 30 years back. The NGOs have played the vital role in empowering women. I have taken four NGOs – Hayden Hall Institute, Hill Social Welfare Society, Indian Forces’ Ladies Organisation and Balason Society for Improved Environment – in the District of Darjeeling under my case study. The study draws out picture of the women respondents in the society before and after they joined the NGOs. The study reveals that after the joining of NGOs, 75% out of 20 women respondents started reading dailies. Only 35% of them used to read dailies before they joined the NGOs. This jump from 35% to 75% is remarkably commendable. A good percentage of them now are exposed to media like radio and television. A commendable increase in the level of awareness of women respondents regarding different issues like local, national, international and corruption has been seen. 75% of the 20 women respondents, after they joined NGOs, were aware of corruption, the devil that has been corroding the spine of our nation. Just 35% of them were aware of such corruption before they joined the NGOs. No women respondents could earn more than Rs. 50,000 annually but after they joined the NGOs 20% of them could earn something between Rs. 50,000 and one lakh. And 10% of them earn anything between one lakh and two lakhs. After they joined the NGOs their family income has also moved up. Before the joining in the NGOs, only 5% of 20 women respondents’ family earned between one lakh and two lakhs, but, after joining the NGOs, 75% of families earned that much of amount. Today, 95% of women respondents know about SHGs and 90% of them about micro credit. Before they joined the NGOs a few of them knew about such

developments. Before they joined the NGOs only 15% of them had individual bank accounts and just 5% of them had joint bank accounts. After they joined the NGOs, 100% of them owned individual account and 40% of them owned joint account. Before, most of the women respondents were unaware of government schemes like MNREGA, Mid-Day Meal, IAY, SSA, etc. but now, a good percentage of them know about such matters. Most of them are well informed. Before the joined the NGOs only 10% of the women respondents were active in making family decision and today this percentage has increased to a remarkable 95%. Before, a few women respondents were motivated to make decision during election and 50% of them remained never motivated and because of this they were forced to elect undeserving and inefficient representatives. Now, 80% of them are self-motivated and conscious in such matters. Before, 25% of them never visited Public Banks and 80% of them never went to Private Banks. Today, 95% of them visit Public Banks and 75% of them frequent the Private Banks. As far as their participation in public meetings and seminars is concerned, 50% of the women respondents had never attended such gatherings. But after they joined the NGOs, 95% of them go to such meetings frequently. 85% of the women respondents are of the view that the NGOs have contributed a lot in providing opportunities to women.

From this insight we can conclude that the NGOs in the District of Darjeeling have contributed lot in uplifting and empowering womenfolk. The NGOs have, to a large extent, mobilised women in the District. It would not be an exaggeration to be of the view that the social, political, educational and economic faces of women have been geared up by the NGOs. If we observe the condition of women before and after they joined the NGOs, it cannot be said that the activities of the NGOs have not empowered the women in the District. This conclusion, in no way, suggests that the women in the District are totally mobilised, motivated and empowered. Instead, the women need more mobilisations and thus, they need to be empowered more if we want to develop our society. The help of the NGOs in this expedition will always be sought.

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## **Chapter - 6**

### **MAJOR FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

# Chapter 6

## MAJOR FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

### 6.1 Introduction

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the States to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women.

Within the framework of a democratic polity, our laws, development policies, plans and programmes have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres of life and knowledge. From the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78) onwards it has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The National Commission for Women was set up by an Act of Parliament in 1990 to safeguard the rights and legal entitlements of women. The 73rd and 74th Amendments (1993) to the Constitution of India have provided for reservation of seats in the local bodies of Panchayats and Municipalities for women, laying a strong foundation for their participation in decision making at the local levels.

Since the 1980's the Government of India has shown increasing concern for women's issues through a variety of legislation promoting the education and political participation of women (Collier, 1998). International organizations like the World Bank and United Nations have focused on women's issues especially the empowerment of poor women in rural areas.

Since the 1990's women have been identified as key agents of sustainable development and women's equality and empowerment are seen as central to a more holistic approach towards establishing new patterns and processes of development that are sustainable. The World Bank has suggested



that empowerment of women should be a key aspect of all social development programs (World Bank, 2001). Although a considerable debate on what constitutes empowerment exists, in this paper we find it useful to rely on Kabeer's (2001) definition: "The expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them." For women in India, this suggests empowerment in several realms: personal, familial, economic and political.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have also taken on an increased role in the area of women's empowerment (Sadik, 1988). NGO's, previously catering to women's health and educational needs have moved beyond this traditional focus to addressing the underlying causes of deprivations through promoting the economic and social empowerment of women (McNamara 2003). But, there are many challenges that face NGOs who make it their goal to empower women (Narayan 2002; Mayoux 2000; Malhotra and Mather 1997).

In every modern state of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries the concept of welfarism has taken a prime place in the government's objectives. Since the state declared themselves as welfare states, they have responsibilities of amelioration of various programmes for the vulnerable sections of the society. The dawn of independence has given a chance to propose several programmes. The Government of India evolved several economic programmes (Sreeramulu, 2006). But, after the Second World War almost all the countries of the world had faced financial crisis. In order to overcome this crisis, many countries cut-back on spending in the welfare sectors. Thus, during the late nineteen seventies and beginning of the eighties, many developed and developing countries decided to introduce privatization, liberalization and limited the role of the state in social sector programmes (Sarkar, 2005).

We know that there is a long history of NGOs activities in India. But it is true that only after the late 1970s and beginning of the 1980s the importance of the NGOs in comparison to the state activities has been increasing gradually. Our government has implemented several schemes and programmes for the upliftment of women which is insufficient for them. And to bridge this gap

between sufficiency and insufficiency, the NGOs are playing a vital role and hence are strengthening their importance in the society. It is true that there is large number of studies which is already taken in different parts of the world and India cannot be an exception by large number of researchers. But the attention of scholars regarding women empowerment through NGOs in Darjeeling District is not a healthy one. After observing all the NGOs in Darjeeling district, I have drawn some research findings and finally some suggestions have been made on the basis of this empirical study. The names of the NGOs selected are:

1. Darjeeling (Sadar): **Hayden Hall Institute (HHI)**
2. Kalimpong subdivision: **Hill Social Welfare Society (HSWS)**
3. Kurseong subdivision: **Indian Forces Ladies' Association (IFLA)**
4. Siliguri subdivision: **Balason Society for Improved Environment (BSIEN)**

## **6.2 Research Findings**

### **History of NGOs**

As far as the history of the origin of the NGOs is concerned, there is no record of finding the exact date when it started expanding its roots in the soil of Darjeeling because there were some informal organisations previously. It is true that some volunteer groups were active there initially but the fact is that none of them were registered according to the Society Registration Act. At this nascent stage, these groups were used to perform various activities for the sake of humanity without the help of any proposed guidelines and were mainly for the betterment of the society and humanity. On the basis of the field study and also the oral record of the people, it can be inferred that the Christian Missionaries were the originators of these types of organizations in the District.

### **Features of NGOs of Darjeeling District**

The main features of NGOs of Darjeeling District include:

1. The large number of NGOs in the District is found in the field of social welfare so far their function is concerned. There are many NGOs which

are active in the rural areas but have no legal entity, or in other words, they are not formally registered under any Act.

2. There exist some regional variations in terms of the number of organisations and actions. For example, the concentration of NGOs is not same in different subdivisions. The number of large-sized NGOs is few in the District and they are mainly urban based.
3. Some big NGOs (in Size) are religious affinities and sometimes along with social welfare they are preaching religious and moral values too in the District.
4. There are some urban-based registered NGOs in the District and even though they are working in the rural areas, have their offices located in cities and towns.
5. There has been a growing professionalism and specialization in the NGOs sector. Earlier, one organisation used to perform multiple activities. Nowadays, NGOs in the District performing more or less specialized and professionalized functions for which they are formed.

### **Typology of NGOs**

Different types of NGOs have been recorded both in international and national level by the different scholars. After observing all the details of NGOs in the District the present study preferred to group NGOs of Darjeeling District into the following categories i.e. Action Groups, Research and Consultancy Groups, Religions Organisations, Service Organisations, Development Organisations, Sustainable System Development Organisations.

### **Status of women**

According to the survey report, the society of Darjeeling District is patriarchal. The social, economic and political conditions of the women are not healthy. Several reasons are responsible for this. First of all, the young and educated women of the District are out-migrated and doing different types of jobs in different parts of the country. Secondly, the literacy rate among women

in the District is less as compared to that among men. Thirdly, a large numbers of women are engaged in the unorganized sectors. The most striking feature to be highlighted here is that maximum Nepali speaking girls of the District (between the ages of 16-30) are working as salesgirls in the showrooms, as security guards and in the beauty-salons in the big cities, especially in metros and in urban areas. This may be due to dominant position of women in the society, scarcity in economy or due to the unemployment problem existing in the District. Hence, their work, labour and contribution remain unaccounted. Overall, the number of working women in the District is very little. A very few numbers of women are working in the governmental sector. The number of labourers (women) in tea gardens is also decreasing day by day due to the frequent closing of the tea-estates which is, no doubt, a serious matter of concern. The research reveals that the status of women in the District is not in a good condition.

### **Factors influencing the rise of NGOs**

Various factors influencing the rise of large numbers of NGOs in the District includes social, economic, political, religious, cultural and even environmental conditions. Social conditions include the active participation of each and every people to help each other as well as the society as a whole.

Similarly, the economic condition of the local inhabitants due to unemployment plays an important role for the rapid and continuous multiplication of the NGOs in the district. The role of tea plantations in sustaining the communities has been declining and the growth population has resulted in increased unemployment in tea gardens.

The uncertainty of the politics of Darjeeling, frequent hartals, human rights violation, politics of popular sentiments, etc. all contributing the boosting and increase of the NGOs in the District.

‘Dharma’ or religion comes ahead of everything in every religion and for the attainment of dharma, serving every individual becomes a spiritual sentiment of people. Moreover, a competitive tendency to preach one’s own religion among the mass are resulting in the growth and prosperity of many religion-based NGOs in the District.

The competition again exists in the field of culture. To prove the superiority of culture of a particular class in the society some culture based NGOs is coming up and is responsible for the increase in the number of NGOs in the District.

The district is situated in the international border areas. Human trafficking is frequently taking place which is responsible for the increase in the number of NGOs in the District.

Apart from all these and over all are the environmental conditions, Natural calamities such as landslides, thunderstorms, and cyclones causes innumerable accidents which instigates the local people with the sense of helpfulness which again encourages a stretchable extent of this helpfulness in the form of NGO activities.

### **Organisational Set-up**

The structural pattern of the NGOs in Darjeeling District is a little different from that of the traditional framework of any other organization of this type. The specialty lies in the ability of the head of the organization. Almost every organization prefers a senior, experienced and influential person to be the head whereas most of the NGOs in Darjeeling District give preferences to the person who is young, educated and unemployed. In addition to that, the evidence of a single person performing the entire responsibility of the organisation without the help of any sub-staff has also been found in the District.

### **Job satisfaction of the staff**

Scarcity of staff and unequal distribution of work-load does not put any hindrance in the path of job satisfaction and this is evident in the job scenario of the NGO staffs in Darjeeling District. There are organisations where sufficient number of paid-staff members work. There are some organisations where one or two persons conduct the whole business of the organisation. The work-load is more or less same everywhere. The staff members of the smaller NGOs are less satisfied in comparison to those working in bigger organisations only because they are paid less. In the situation of job scarcity and

unemployment problem the people who are working in the different NGOs in the District more or less satisfied with their job.

### **Nature of programmes**

The NGOs conduct both short term as well as long term programmes. And both of them start with definite aims and objectives to work on. But, it has been found that most of the NGOs in the district of Darjeeling are suffering from frequent shift in their focus. Most of the NGOs are frequently changing their mission and vision. This may be due to lack of seriousness, steadiness, unavailability of necessary funds, lack of interest etc. Nature of programme sustainability also plays a vital role here. There is a lack of sustainability in the schemes. Most of the NGOs, working at the grass-root level, lack the technical expertise, professional competence, organisational infrastructure and capabilities which restrict their endeavours. They also face inner conflicts within the organisation due to difference in the mindset of people- mainly, on the issue of roles and responsibilities of the NGOs as most of the members do not have a clear conception regarding this.

### **Extent of People's participation**

It is seen that people of Darjeeling District are actively participating and helping different NGOs in several ways. The possible reasons may be the massive unemployment problems, hope for earning something and so on. After this comes the issue of feedback regarding the perception of the beneficiaries. What do they think? Are they satisfied with the service provided to them or not? And if the answer is yes, then are they interested in serving the others in the same way? Every answer to these questions (be it positive or negative) are hidden in the quality of service provided by the NGOs. More the people are benefited more will increase the periphery or the extent of participation. People's perception and public recognition to voluntary efforts are often involved with certain preconditions as well as critical success factors, for the achievement of their social objectives. There lies a conflict between the voluntary organisation and the beneficiaries. People, who stand to be benefited from the actions of the organisations, could often pose serious constraints for effective voluntary work. The growing international recognition to voluntary

efforts and the continuous flow of international funds to NGOs have led many people to consider them as 'privately owned shops' and blame them on the grounds of siphoning off funds. Hence, the NGOs experience great difficulties in securing social acceptance and appreciation. This stands as one of the major hindrances in the way of implementing many programmes that indispensably requires people's mobilisation, generation of right awareness and, of course, their co-operation. After observing all the details of NGOs of the District, it can be concluded that the participation rate of the people in the different activities are high in the District.

### **Economic Sources**

Unlike the NGOs of many other advanced places, most of the NGOs in the District of Darjeeling lack in their own organisational funds. They have to depend on the funds coming from either Central and state governments or from foreign countries. Unavailability of necessary funds in appropriate time results automatically in the delay of the proposed works as the organisations has to wait till the money gets sanctioned. This wait sometimes continues for a long time which may again result in to the loss of interest to work with followed by obvious public dissatisfaction.

### **Funds crisis and mismanagement**

Unavailability or less availability of funds is also a major factor that affects the smooth progress in the works of an organisation. Most of the NGOs in Darjeeling District are conducting their works with a very low amount of fund. Despite of increasing recognition of the role of NGOs in the process of social development in the country, the voluntary sectors are facing enormous problems (which include legal, structural, operational and financial constraints) in their endeavours. This may be due to lack of accountability, responsibility and transparency of the NGOs.

On the other hand, despite of having sufficient fund, there exist lacks of proper financial management. Many NGOs do not have definite service rules and regulations. A large number of NGOs lack proper infrastructures to utilise the inputs and assistances (financial and technical) provided to them by the government. Besides, many others like conceptual, organisational and

operational problems are found as the results of lack in transparency, autonomy, accountability and credibility.

### **Shortage of staff**

Lack of sufficient staff members and the lack of trained staff members is the main problem of the NGOs of Darjeeling District. On the one hand, the salary of the staff members is low; on the other hand, there exists lack of proper knowledge among the target groups and beneficiaries. The major thrusts of NGOs of the District are towards social justice, social development, social planning and action and so on. They are unable to promote community initiative and peoples' organising capacity effectively due to lack of knowledgeable and trained social workers. Thus, in order to transform the vision and mission of NGOs they have to employ trained social workers who can tackle the new challenges, needs, demands and the aspiration of the society in general and women in particular.

### **Low level of participation of women**

It is evident from the study that the level of the participation of women in NGOs the District is comparatively low than that of men. This does not mean that they possess no interest in self-services. Participation in social work through NGOs is less in case of women which may be because of their unwillingness to express themselves or may be due to some other engagements. But with the successful actions of many NGOs a sense of awareness has been generated among women which facilitated improvement in their participation now-a-days.

### **Satisfaction of the beneficiaries**

The beneficiaries are more or less happy with the different activities of the NGOs in the District under study. This could be inferred from the record of the increase in the participation in the Self Help Groups. After the introduction of Self Help Groups movement, women in Darjeeling District are improving their economic conditions slowly and gradually. The "learn to earn scheme" is proved to be successful in incorporating a sense of self-confidence among the women of the District and this is the contribution of NGOs.

### **Focusing on trafficking and orphans**



Large number of organisation is carrying their activities in the field of trafficking and orphans. The possible cause is that the District is situated in the international border areas and the business of alcohol and its uses is large here. Many parents if they could earn their bread here are easily going and settling in the neighbouring countries.

### **Domination of big NGOs (in size)**

Competition of being superior and the domination of the superior over the inferior exist everywhere. The District under survey gives clear evidence that domination of big NGOs (in size) over the comparatively smaller ones frequently occurs here.

### **Domination of Christians Missionary**

Christians Missionaries are heralded the journey of NGOs in the District. As they are self-saturated with enough funds, it becomes an easy task for them to initiate any project without waiting for the funds. Moreover, they also possess the tendency of converting people to Christianity by providing them with some sorts of reliefs and opportunities which encourages the common men to lean towards the missionaries more. This facilitates the domination of the missionaries based NGOs which is found in some areas in the District.

### **Relation between NGOs and GOs**

It is true that now-a-days the government is sanctioning some schemes and projects for the NGOs. But Self- assessment mechanisms are almost absent among the NGOs. So there occurs a mixture of opinions automatically. The importance of acquiring a legal status through a form of registration under the common forms such as Indian Societies Registration Act, 1860, Trust Act, Cooperative or Trade Union Act, Companies Act etc., restricts the overall autonomy of the organisations. In addition, the choice for a form of registration is rather limited. Organisations promoting income generation, asset creation programmes, finds it difficult to create an appropriate form of registration. There are also a large number of NGOs in the District running without a valid registration. Some others are only present in papers. I can conclude that the relationship between the NGOs and GOs in the District is good because many

organisations they are getting funds from the governmental sectors and are carrying the business jointly in many cases.

### **Political interference and unhealthy competition**

Any kind of social work should be away from any kind of political interference. Partial or total interference of the local political parties is one of the major problems of NGOs in the District. Again, excessive unhealthy competition among the NGOs sometimes makes the routine of the programmes a mess which is seeing in the District.

### **Resource Mobilisation**

The NGOs of the District do not have sufficient resources to expend on the task of their operations, governance and meeting the developmental challenges. Besides financial resources, the type of resources required for voluntary action include material, human resources, including availability of the requisite expertise, administrative and managerial capabilities, technical knowledge and the basic infrastructural facilities. But all these are not sufficiently available in the District of Darjeeling.

### **Only in papers**

There are many NGOs in the District which are present only in paper. They do not have any office, staff members and infrastructures and almost in a closed situation.

### **Women empowerment**

The NGOs of Darjeeling District have implemented and still implementing different schemes and projects for the empowerment of women. They are implementing different types of income generating programmes and have trained women accordingly. Many SHGs (especially of women) are attached with the NGOs. Their day to day earnings has been increased after joining the SHGs which facilitates their economic empowerment. With this increases their public exposures. After joining the SHGs, women nowadays can easily interact with other people in the society without any type of hesitation which facilitates their social empowerment. With the help of many health-awareness programmes conducted by the NGOs, women became more conscious about their health, health of their children and husband too and also

adopting proper family-planning. This again leads to Social and educational empowerment of women of the District. Moreover, because of the awareness training programmes, the percentage of women's participation in politics and decision-making processes has also been increased resulting into the Political empowerment of women of the District. From this insight we can conclude that the NGOs in the District of Darjeeling have contributed lot in uplifting and empowering womenfolk. The NGOs have, to a large extent, mobilised women in the District. It would not be an exaggeration to be of the view that the social, political and economic faces of women have been geared up by the NGOs. If we observe the condition of women before and after they joined the NGOs, it cannot be said that the activities of the NGOs have not empowered the women in the District. This conclusion, in no way, suggests that the women in the District are totally mobilised, motivated and empowered. Instead, the women need more mobilisations and thus, they need to be empowered more if we want to develop our society. The help of the NGOs in this expedition will always be sought. Thus, the role of the NGOs in the path of empowering women must be applauded.

### **6.3 Suggestions**

After observing each and every side of NGOs in the District I am making the following suggestions for the betterment of NGOs so that they can emerge as a third sector:

- NGOs should not rely on 'one man's show' i.e., the total concentration of power on a single person may hamper the democratic attitude of the entire organisation.
- Transparency, accountability and responsibility should be taken into account. An organisation should be transparent, responsible as well as accountable to the people for whom it was built actually.
- There should not be more tussles in between GOs and NGOs while performing their respective programmes. The NGOs should learn the good and noticeable features from the GOs and vice-versa and should try

to implement them in order to enrich the services of both types of organisations.

- Caste based NGOs should be abolished. There should be no discrimination regarding caste, religion and creed while serving the society. Equal and quality service to every people of the society enhances the good reputation and acceptability of the organisations which further leads to good co-operation and trustworthiness of the localities.
- Some political parties are highly antagonistic towards NGOs. To avoid any type of political interference should be the prime principle of the NGOs.
- NGOs, by and large, must improve their professional knowledge, skill and competence to meet the needs of the day.
- NGOs have to articulate their vision and mission clearly and must become organisations that thinks and acts practically.
- Their activities must be highly process-oriented and not product-oriented which means that the service providers must concentrate more and more on the quality of their service and not on the outcome as because the improvement in the quality of the service will automatically cause into the improvement in the satisfaction of the beneficiaries.
- The wisdom of the NGOs should not only base on the grassroots level but should rise up to the level of policy framers and law- makers.
- NGOs are supposed to be good model organisations for the society in terms of professional ethics, social codes and human values.
- The emphasis of NGOs should be on the culture of self-reliance and not on a culture of dependency. This may be done through various types of local resource mobilisation such as implementation of micro-finance, self-help schemes, and voluntary donations and so on.
- NGOs should strive for ensuring sustainable solutions rather than providing temporary remedies to the people. Rescue measures due to accidents, landslides and other natural calamities, human trafficking etc.

are no doubt essential but what are to be emphasized more are the long term sustainable activities.

- Salaries of the staff should increase considerably so that they can manage to lead their lives happily. A person who is happy in his life can always contribute his best to his organisation. Moreover, a sound salary system always possesses the capability to hire the best talents which is indispensable indeed in the prosperity of the organisation.
- Interventions NGOs must be process oriented and not donor-driven. This is because it is quite impossible for an organisation to achieve the desired goal without a fixed and focused mission-target and proper planning for progress.
- Every activity of the NGOs should be a people-friendly one. Considering the present literacy scenario of the area under study, a people-friendly approach may attract a great uneducated mass to join the campaigns successfully.
- There should be close cooperation between the NGOs and the Panchayati Raj Institutions. India is a democratic country and in democracy, decisions always flow from the bottom to the top. The Panchayati Raj Institution is the place where the actual decisions are made which is transferred to the upper level for implementation later on. A good relationship between the local governments and the NGOs may prove more fruitful for both.
- Self Help Groups of women should be well-managed by the NGOs in order to bring the economic independence of women. This may be done through acts of encouragement and enthusiasm to the local women.
- NGOs are no doubt putting great efforts by giving trainings and conducting campaigns for making the local people economically self-sufficient. My suggestion in this context would be that besides giving the local talents a global exposure, they should also concentrate on fixing up a good market-price for the manufactured products. This would provide more enthusiasm and encouragement to the common mass.

- The NGOs should consider the moral and ethical values of the society every time they work.
- Preaching of religious principles does not come under the mission and vision of any NGOs. India is a secular country and the principles of secularism are enshrined in the constitution of our country. Therefore, while performing their duties, the NGOs should not forget the secular nature of Indian society and its importance.

#### **6.4 Conclusion**

In the context of a welfare state the NGOs have gained popularity since the middle of 1970s. The demand and popularity of NGOs is increasing day by day. The number of NGOs is also increasing tremendously in each and every part of the country and Darjeeling District cannot be an exception. Darjeeling District is situated in the international border areas and is experiencing natural calamities from time to time. More than this, the areas under study is under tea cultivation which is facing various problems since long time and present condition is miserable. A large number of women in the District is directly or indirectly are dependent on tea gardens. But the women tea workers, nowadays, are facing large number of problems because of scarcity and sustainability of jobs because of the uncertainty of the tea gardens. Here, the NGOs are giving their best by helping the women in the District by different ways and making them self-sufficient and independent in different spheres of their life. The contributions of the NGOs should not be ignored in the District where large numbers of women are uneducated, economically dependent and ignorant. The different NGOs in the District is formulating and implementing different schemes and programmes and are making the women more aware of their rights and duties towards her family, the society and the nation. And a revolutionary change can be brought to the society by the joint venture of the NGOs and the women participation if the former succeed to make correct and fruitful use of the latter's potentials.

The 73<sup>rd</sup> and the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Act on the local self-government on rural and urban areas respectively, one-third seat reservation

for women and again one-third reservation for the socially oppressed and exploited women has opened up new opportunities and challenges for the NGOs at the lower level of society. The NGOs now can provide large number of opportunities and make them educated in different ways. With the help of proper education, training and active support of the NGOs, women, nowadays can enter into these bodies democratically which also gives new dynamism to the entire development process.

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## **Journals and Periodicals**

Alternative  
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Frontline  
Geographical Review  
Himal  
Human Ecology  
IASSI Quarterly  
Indian Journal of Public Administration  
Indian Journal of Political Science  
Indian Journal of Politics  
Indian Journal of Rural Development  
Mainstream  
Rural Sociology  
Seminar  
Social Research  
Social Scientist  
The Journal of Social Work  
Third Concept  
Women and Environment

# Appendix

## **NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN: A STUDY ON SOME SELECTED NGOs OF DARJEELING DISTRICT OF WEST BENGAL**

### **Questionnaire**

#### **Part I**

##### **I. Organization Details:**

1. Name of the organization:
2. Office Address of the organization:
3. Objectives of the organization:
4. The organization was established in Year:
5. Who are the direct beneficiaries of your organisation?
6. Where does the organization operate?
7. How far is the organization from the District town?
8. What type of organization is yours?
9. Organisation has
  - (a) Institutionalized Service:
  - (b) Community based service:
  - (c) Both:
10. What was the background/profession of the promoter who initiated this organization?
  - a. Medical practitioner
  - b. School teacher
  - c. Retired Government officials
  - d. Political leader
  - e. Freedom fighter
  - f. Activities of movements after independence
  - g. Any other, specify
11. What factors motivated to established this organization
12. Why is Women empowerment necessary?
13. Why are the initiatives of the government facing problems?
14. Are you sure that NGOs activities are better than the government ones?

## **Basic information**

### **Column A**

1. Name of the organization.
2. Office address :
3. Philosophy, mission and vision of the organization:
4. Present objective of the organization:
5. Target group:
6. Organisation set-up:
7. What is the working language of your organization?
8. What type of infrastructural capacity do you have in order to carry out different programmes?
9. How do you take decision in the organization?
10. Who were the targets groups at the beginning of this organisation?
11. When did you start women empowerment programme?
12. What factors or issues motivated to establish this organization?
13. Who was the initial promoter of this organization (Name and Social background)?
14. What were the initial aims and objectives of this organization? How many times were they changed?
15. What programme did the founder of this organisation initiate at the beginning? Please mention name and nature.
16. When did the programme get registered?
17. How did you manage land and office for this organization?
18. How did you manage fund?
19. Where and how did you manage initial working shed?
20. Is there any incident of shifting office from one place to another? If so, please mention name, place and reasons for shifting.
21. Please mention any five programmes that you have at present in your organization.
22. Please indicate the total number of workers:
  - a) No. of full type time paid staff:
  - b) No. of part time paid staff:

- c) No. of honorary staff:
- d) No. of volunteers:
- 23. Total male full time staff:
- 24. Total female full time staff:
- 25. Total male SCs full time staff:
- 26. Total female SCs full time staff:
- 27. Total male STs full time staff:
- 28. Total female STs full time staff:

### **Programme Related Information**

#### **Column B**

1. Programmes completed previously:
  - Name of the programme:
  - (a) Duration:
  - (b) Target group:
  - (c) Budget:
  - (d) Sources of fund:
  - (e) Nature of Activities :
  - (f) System of Service Delivery:
2. Current programmes:
  - (a) Name of the programme:
  - (b) Duration:
  - (c) target group:
  - (d) budget:
  - (e) Sources of fund:
  - (f) Nature of Activities :
  - (g) System of Service Delivery:
3. Title/name of the project to be supported:
4. Motivation for doing the project:
5. Short term objectives of the project:
6. Who will be covered?
7. Long term objectives of the project:
8. Planned operation of the project:

- (a) Project coordinator:
  - (b) Number of staff members: (i) Full time .... (ii) Part time....
  - (c) Phases of implementation, if any
  - (d) Details of material available and those that are required
  - (e) Method of implementation
9. Community participation in the project:
- (a) Services offered
  - (b) Financial contribution
  - (c) Donation of common land
  - (d) any other

### **Financial Information**

#### **Column C**

1. What are the sources of funds of your organisation?
  - (a) Central government,
  - (b) state government,
  - (c) central social welfare board, ,
  - (d) non-government funding agencies(Indian),
  - (e) Public donation,
  - (f) Local self-government,
  - (g) Collection of contribution,
  - (h) Internal sources,
  - (i) If any other, please do specify
2. What problems or barriers do you find in financial matters?
3. What is your organization's policy of fund rising?
4. Do you prepare annual budget?
5. What criteria do you use for allocation of funds to the different programmes?
6. How do you allocate funds to various aspects of a particular programme?
7. Are you getting any support from the government?
8. What are the others sources of funds for the projects?
  - (a) organizations,

- (b) individuals and
- (c) community participation

9. Roughly indicate the percentage of source of funding:

- a) Self-generated = %
- b) State government = %
- c) Central government = %
- d) Indian funding agencies = %
- e) Foreign funding agencies = %

10. Are you facing any monetary problem?

11. What were the sources of funds in the beginning?

12. When did you receive first time external fund and for what?

### **Information related to Staff**

#### **Column A:**

- 1) Your name:
- 2) Name of the NGO:
- 3) Your position in NGO:
- 4) Contact details of NGO:
- 5) Age:
- 6) Sex:
- 7) Caste:
- 8) Religion:
- 9) Marital Status:
- 10) Educational Qualification:
- 11) Experience:

### **Job Satisfaction of the programme implementing staff:**

#### **Column B:**

- 1. I am satisfied in my present position as per my ability and qualification: Agree/Disagree/undecided.
- 2. I am satisfied with the salary that I am getting for: Agree/Disagree/undecided.
- 3. Job security is sufficient in this organisation job: Agree/Disagree/ undecided

4. All the jobs of NGOs help for my professional growth:  
Agree/Disagree/undecided.
5. I am feeling that mine salary is better than the other NGOs are paying for: Agree/Disagree/undecided.
6. There are any rules and regulations as far as leave is concerned in your organization: Agree/Disagree/undecided.
7. My supervisor increases team spirit in the work group always:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
8. My supervisor keeps me informed about all happenings of the organizations: Agree/Disagree/undecided.
9. All my colleagues are good enough and help me whenever necessary:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
10. My job is good enough for learning new things:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
11. Our programmes are sufficient for the empowerment of women:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
12. I am interested to continue this job:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
13. I am doing this NGOs job just for my daily bread:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
14. My job does not provide opportunity for independent thought and use of my talents: Agree/Disagree/undecided.
15. There is no any recreational facility in my organization:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
16. The activities of my supervisor are governed by self-interest:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
17. I am ready to quit this job of NGO if I get chances in other fields:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
18. My parents/relatives are happy with my present position:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
19. I am not interested to continue this job:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.



20. Hard work is not appreciated in my organization:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
21. Infrastructural facilities are sufficient in my organization.  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
22. People with the same ability, quality are getting more advantages in some other NGOs:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
23. There is no proper office management in my organization:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
24. There is one man rule in my organization:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
25. There is always political interference in our activities:  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.
26. In my organization there are no rules and laws so far new recruitment is concerned.  
Agree/ Disagree/ undecided.

**Responses of the beneficiaries:**

**Column A:**

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Sex:
1. Caste:
4. Education:
5. Marital status:
6. Occupation:
7. Address:

**Column B:**

1. Do you support the argument that men enjoy superior position than women in society?
2. Why do you think that the women empowerment is necessary?
3. What role can the state play for the empowerment of women?

4. Are you satisfied with the role played by state for the empowerment of women?
5. Do you think that the NGOs can perform better functions for the empowerment of women?
6. What do you expect from an NGO for the women empowerment?
7. What type of services are you getting from an NGO?
8. Are they sufficient for the women empowerment?
9. Is there healthy relationship in between PRIs and NGOs in your locality?
10. What is your opinion regarding cooperation of the local people?
11. What was the real condition of women before establishing this NGO?
12. Do you think that the condition of women has changed after the establishment of this NGO?
13. In which field/area is the NGO facilitating women empowerment?
14. Are you satisfied with these facilitations of the NGOs for women empowerment?
15. Do you experience men's interference in the working of NGOs for women empowerment?
16. Do you experience stratified (mass/elite) women empowerment?
17. What, according to you, are the major shortcomings in the activities of the NGOs in women empowerment?
18. What is the source of income of your parents/guardians?
19. Your valued suggestions:

**Responses of the non-beneficiaries:**

**Column A:**

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Sex:
4. Education:
5. Marital status:
6. Occupation:
7. Caste:

8. Address:

**Column B:**

1. What is your opinion regarding activities of NGOs for women empowerment?
2. Are the NGOs working in your locality playing positive role in women empowerment?
3. What type of support do you expect from an NGO for women empowerment in general and your empowerment in particular?
4. Why do feel that you are not being supported by an NGO for your empowerment?
5. Do you consider monetary and power relationship direct the activities of an NGO rather than your needs and desires?
6. Are you really interested in getting the benefits by an NGO?
7. Do you think that the partisan nature of NGO is generating your personal disappointment towards the NGO?
8. Why do you think that the NGOs working in your locality do not approachable for the promotion of your interest?
9. What, according to you, are the major shortcomings in the activities of the NGOs in women empowerment?
10. Your valued suggestions:

**Responses of the NGOs**

**Column A:**

1. Name of the organization:
2. Office Address of the organization:
3. Objectives of the organization:
4. The organization was established in Year:
5. Who are the direct beneficiaries of the work of your organisation:
6. Where does the organization operate?

**Column B:**

1. What according to you is women empowerment?
2. Why does your NGO think that women empowerment is necessary?
3. What do you think are the various ways of empowering women?

4. Does your NGO work for women empowerment?
5. What are the various activities that your NGO undertake for women empowerment?
6. What problems do you face in implementing such activities?
7. Do you think that governmental activities are insufficient for women empowerment?
8. What are such shortcomings in governmental activities?
9. Is your NGO capable of bridging the gap between the government and the people?
10. What objectives has your NGO set for overcoming the inefficiencies of governmental activities for the empowerment of women?
11. How does the government react or support your activities relating to the empowerment of women?
12. How does the society react when your NGO intervene in their daily lives?
13. What do you think the beneficiaries expect from your organisation?
14. How do you find and react to the expectation of the beneficiaries of your organisations?
15. Do you think that your NGO is working according to their expectations?
16. Do you experience any tussle between your activities and their expectations?
17. If yes, how do you think that this tussle can be overcome?
18. How far have you been able to achieve your objectives as designed by your NGO for the empowerment of women?
19. Is your NGO satisfied with what you have achieved so far in the field of women empowerment?
20. Your valued suggestions:

## **Responses of the Women beneficiaries**

### **Part II**

#### **Column A:**

Name:

Age:

Sex:

Caste:

Religion:

Education:

Marital status:

Occupation of the Parents/Husband

Address:

**Column B:**

1. Are you satisfied of being a woman?
2. Do you have any knowledge of media?
3. Your preferable media before and after join the NGO is: Radio/ T.V. / Newspaper.
4. Did you have any interest in local/national/international issues before joining the NGOs and is there any change after joining the NGOs?
5. Do you have any knowledge of PRIs? (Before or after joining the NGOs)
6. Do you have any knowledge of corruption? (Before or after joining the NGOs)
7. What was your annual income before joining the NGOs?
8. Is there any increase in the annual income after joining the NGOs?
9. What was your annual income of the family?
10. Is there any increase in the annual income of your family after joining the NGOs?
11. Do you have any knowledge of SHGs and micro credit? (Both, before and after joining the NGOs)
12. Do you have any bank account? (Both, before and after joining the NGOs)
13. What type of account do you have? Individual/Group.
14. Do you have any idea of MNREGA, IAY, Mid-Day Meal, SSA etc.? (Level of Knowledge (Both, before and after joining the NGOs)
15. Do you playing any role in the making decision in the family? (Roles both, before and after joining the NGOs)

16. Do you play any role during election time? (Both, before and after joining the NGOs)
17. How many times did you visit the banks before joining the NGOs?
18. How many times did you visit the banks after joining the NGOs?
19. If yes, what type of bank was it ?Public/Private.
20. How many times did you participate in public meetings, seminars, etc. before joining the NGOs?
21. How many times did you participate in public meetings, seminars, etc. after joining the NGOs?
22. Do you think that NGOs are providing large number of opportunities for women and empowering them in all sphere of life in the District?
23. Your valued suggestions:

