



## “Empowerment of Women through Non-Governmental Organizations”

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Date of Submission: 05-07-2023

Date of Acceptance: 16-07-2023

**Abstract:** Women account for about half of the world's population, and in developing nations women are restricted to their homes, shouldering all household duties, and play a smaller role in the country's economic activities. Women's empowerment is a relatively new and widespread phenomenon. Of course, women's opportunities continue to fall behind those of men over the world. The term "women empowerment" refers to authority, decision-making, and the power bestowed upon them, which confers inalienable rights. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are developing as an important tool for achieving women's empowerment by providing them with vocational training, self-employment, participation in self-help groups, and a range of other useful aids. The United Nations, other governments, and numerous non-governmental organisations have all made "women empowerment" a priority in their policies, operations, and agendas.

**Key Words:** NGO, Women Empowerment, United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals

### I. Introduction:

The term non-governmental organizations are used for those organizations that are engaged in granting financial and non-financial aid to those who are denied certain rights in society but are not directly controlled by any governmental agencies or other autonomous authorities. According to the World Bank non-governmental organizations can be defined as "private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services or undertake community development". Since the United Nations needed to distinguish between participation rights for intergovernmental specialised agencies and those for

international private groups in its Charter, the term "non-governmental organisation" or "NGO" came into common usage in 1945. (Peter Willets). NGOs have grown to play a crucial role in the institutional framework for addressing issues including gender equality, rural development, and poverty. The NGOs have greatly expanded their activities to encompass group formation, microcredit, official and informal education, training, social welfare, agricultural activities, health care, and other sectors in order to help the social and economic empowerment of the underprivileged. The organisation primarily employs the target-group technique, in which groups of the impoverished with comparable socioeconomic interests are formed to accomplish their goals.

India's limited government development plans led to the rise of NGO's after independence, particularly after the 1970s. Despite 50 years of state-led initiatives, India still faces issues like poverty, starvation, malnutrition, unemployment, gender equality, and illiteracy. NGOs have become increasingly important in rural development, as government organizations struggle to reach rural poor and disadvantaged women. Their growth and significance have led to numerous experiments in the field.

### NGO Statistics worldwide and in the context of India

It has been estimated that the total number of NGO's are 10 million all over the world (Source: standardizations.org). The total number of enrolled NGO's in India is 129456. (Source: ngo darpan.in).

### Registration of NGOs:

In India, development organisations are classified into three types: charitable trusts, societies, and Section 25 companies. NGOs are



subject to the Societies Registration Act of 1860 and the Income Tax Act of 1961, regardless of whether they are registered as a trust, society, or company. Trusts are overseen by the Public Trust Act (1976), as well as federal rules and the State Office of the Charity Commissioner. NGOs are exempt from government registration requirements. However, registration enables an NGO to collect international contributions, deduct expenses from income for tax purposes, and be taken into consideration for government grant-in-aid programmes. Additionally, since the Income Tax Act allows donors to deduct donations made to registered NGOs, registration aids domestic fundraising.

### **Women Empowerment:**

According to statisticstimes.com, women make up 49.58 per cent of the world's population, with India accounting for 48.04 per cent of all people worldwide (World Population Prospects, 2019). The phenomenon of women's empowerment is a challenging issue, particularly for developing countries where gender inequities remain and women are confined to their homes, shouldering all household liabilities and unable to participate in the country's economic activity. It is critical for the economy to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the country's development. Empowerment is the ability to analyze one's world and to recognize and mobilize for social change, NGO have scope to flourish that three variables to ensure sustainable development of that community (Batliwala, 1994). According to Sen and Batliwala (2000) it leads to a growing intrinsic capability greater self confidence, and an inner transformation of one's consciousness that enables one to overcome external barrier. Women's empowerment is a modern, widespread phenomenon. Of Course, Women's opportunities still lag behind those of men worldwide. But the historic and current role of women is indisputable. In India, Women empowerment is one of the most effective tools for development because in present days, women around the world are emerging as a leader, actively working and also surpassing others in all spheres of life. Women in India had already been subjected to many prejudices from the centuries ago. Women in the country faces differentiation in various sectors like education, health, economic opportunities, political participation, which shows that there is a huge gap between strategy formula and their implementation at community level. The term women empowerment emphasis mainly on authority, decision making and the power invested in them providing inseparable

rights. "Empowerment is the development in the course of which one increase power, ability and influence over others", Chauhan (2018). The term actually focuses on the salvation of women from the different restraints of society like cultural, socio-economic barriers.

### **NGO as catalyst for women empowerment:**

Since the United Nations Organization's founding, the issue of women's empowerment and development has drawn attention from academics all over the world and been incorporated into the political platforms of numerous nations. Empowerment is not only essential for women but also for general advancement of society and the country. The United Nations, other governments and many non-governmental organizations all now prioritize the issue of "women empowerment" in their policies, activities and agenda. The theme for International Women's Day 2019, "Think equal, build smart, innovate for change" was chosen to identify innovative ways to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women, accelerating the 2030 Agenda, building momentum for the effective implementation of the new U.N. Sustainable Development Goals. With an increasing number of "Non-governmental Organisations" (NGOs) in the twenty-first century, many organisations have been developed and created to protect and advance the rights of women around the world. Women have seen as passive beneficiaries of development by NGOs with focus on their reproductive role (Hossain *et al*, 2017). Empowerment strategies gained popularity in the 1990s. The government acknowledges NGOs for their contributions in rural reconstruction. In the latter half of the 1980s, the government gave them explicit recognition. The Seventh Five Year Plan (1986–1990) placed a strong emphasis on the participation of non profit organisations in various projects. The Eighth Plan also praised NGOs and urged them to take part in cutting-edge initiatives like the DPAP watershed development project and agro climatic regional planning (ACRP). Involving NGOs from the beginning of planning was envisioned for the Ninth Plan. The SGSY scheme was introduced in 1999 and group lending is still the main focus. NGOs are heavily active in influencing the SHGs because they have pioneered the promotion of SHGs. Non-Governmental Organizations are emerging as an important tool to achieve the state of empowerment of women by providing them vocational training, self-employment, involving them in self-help group, and many other helpful aids. Many NGOs have worked hard to include children with disability in



schools, end caste-based stigma and discrimination, prevent child labour and promote gender equality resulting in women receiving equal wages for the same work compared to men. NGOs have been instrumental in the formation and capacity building of farmers and producer's cooperatives and women's self help groups (Hiremath, 2021).

## II. CONCLUSION:

The phenomenon of women's empowerment is a challenging issue, particularly for developing countries, as well as critical to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the country's development. NGOs that strive to empower women have focused on stopping domestic abuse, educating women and adolescent girls, and teaching women in ways to make money. NGOs can be used as a crucial tool for the all-around development of women because they operate at the community level, have higher influence in energising people and communities, fight for social justice, etc. NGOs can be proven to be effective in achieving the sustainable goal of achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

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