

# CHILD PROTECTION: CASE STUDY OF AN NGO IN TINSUKIA

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## ABSTRACT

As the name says, non-governmental organizations are those organisations which work independently i.e., without government, their main purpose is to work for social, political and economic problems of a society or country. NGOs are working hard for the social development of a country or its society. millions of children become victim of child labour, kidnaping, sexual abuse etc. Despite aggressive attempts to implement a pro-child rights policy environment, India still needs the support of civil society, and concerned citizens to help children. At every stage, Indian children face difficult challenges. The many improvements made for children's welfare can be credited to India's NGOs, which have tirelessly provided on-ground support and activism while working with officials. 'Child Protection' refers to protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. Even in Assam lots of children goes missing every year. This study is based on an NGO of Tinsukia district of Assam, Keshav Baheti Surjuday Children Home which is a safe custody for children kidnapped or losing contact with their parents. This study is based on Primary data. Data is collected from an instructed interview method and questionnaire. This study is done to examine the work of the NGO and to know their problems in day-to-day functioning, analysis of the problems which they face while treating the trauma which the children must have gone through and provide suggestions to overcome the problem.

Key words: NGOs, child rights, child protection, problems faced, suggestions.

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## INTRODUCTION

Non-governmental organizations are those organisations which work independently i.e., without government, their main purpose is to work for social, political and economic problems of a society or

country. NGOs are working hard for the social development of a country or its society. Millions of children become victim of child labour, kidnaping, sexual abuse etc. Despite aggressive attempts to implement a pro-child rights policy environment, India still needs the support of civil society, and concerned citizens to help children. At every stage, Indian children face difficult challenges. The many improvements made for children's welfare can be credited to India's NGOs, which have tirelessly provided on-ground support and activism while working with officials. 'Child Protection' refers to protection of children from violence, exploitation, abuse and neglect. Even in Assam lots of children goes missing every year.

NGO can also be define as- According to World Bank :- "NGO's are private organization that pursue activities to relieve suffering , promote the interest of the poor , protect environment , provide basic social services , or under take community development."<sup>(1)</sup>

According to Department of Public Information- An NGO is a not for profit , voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local , national or international level so as to address issues in support of the public good.<sup>(1)</sup>

### **TYPOLGY ORIENTATION:**

1. Charitable: Needs of the poor/disaster relief (Feed the Hungry, Red Cross)
2. Service: Provision of health, family planning or education (Planned Parenthood)
3. Participatory: Self-help project with local people involvement (Habitat for Humanity)
4. Empowering: Help poor people develop a clearer understanding of social, political, and economic factors (Amnesty International). <sup>(1)</sup>

### **LEVEL OF OPERATION:**

1. Community-based organizations,
2. Citywide organizations,
3. National NGOs,
4. International NGOs. <sup>(1)</sup>

### **CHILDREN'S RIGHTS:**

Children's rights are human rights specifically adapted to the child because they take into account his fragility, specificities and age-appropriate needs. Children's rights take into account the necessity of development of the child. The children thus have the right to live and to develop suitably physically and intellectually. Children's rights plan to satisfy the essential needs for a good development of the child, such

as the access to an appropriate alimentation, to necessary care, to education, etc. Children's rights consider the vulnerable character of the child. They imply the necessity to protect them. It means to grant a particular assistance to them and to give a protection adapted to their age and to their degree of maturity. So, the children have to be helped and supported and must be protected against labour exploitation, kidnapping, and ill-treatment, etc.<sup>(2)</sup>

### CHARACTERISTICS OF AN NGO:

- An NGO is a non-profit, voluntary, development-oriented organisation either for the benefit of members or of other members of the population. <sup>(3)</sup>
- An independent and democratic organisation working for the empowerment of economic and social marginalized group.<sup>(3)</sup>
- It is social development organisation assisting in empowerment of people. <sup>(3)</sup>
- An organisation not affiliated to political parties and generally engaged in working for aid, development and welfare of the community. <sup>(3)</sup>
- NGOs established by and for the community with or without little intervention from the Government, they are not only charity organisation, but also work on socio-economic-cultural activities. <sup>(3)</sup>
- An organisation committed to the root causes of the problem and trying to improve the quality of life especially for the poor, the oppressed and marginalised group in urban and rural area. <sup>(3)</sup>
- NGOs are organisation of private individuals who believes some basic social principles. <sup>(4)</sup>
- An organisation of people working independent of any external control with specific objectives and aims to fulfil the task which are oriented to 24 bring desirable change. <sup>(5)</sup>

### ROLE OF NGO IN CHILD WELFARE:

Tens of millions of Indian children are made the victims of exploitative practices like child labour, sexual abuse and trafficking. Despite aggressive attempts to implement a pro-child rights policy environment, India still needs the support of civil society, and concerned citizens to help children. At every stage, India's children face difficult challenges. The many improvements made for children's welfare can be credited to India's NGOs, which have tirelessly provided on-ground support and activism while working with officials.<sup>(6)</sup>

Here is how India's NGOs are working as child development NGOs and giving underprivileged children their due:

#### 1. Eliminating child labour

Ten million children today are forced to work 14-16 hour shifts in horrible working conditions, in sectors like farming, stone cutting sector, embroidery and mining industries.

India ranks among the 74 countries with 'significant incidence of critical working conditions' (US Department of Labor report – List of Goods Produced by Child Labor or Forced Labor).

To end child labour, NGOs offer intervention, both at the demand and supply side.

i. Demand: NGOs educate trade organisation to reach out to business owners and educate them about the evils of child labour. If necessary, NGOs like Save the Children perform regular raids at workplaces like farms and factories where child labour is practiced, and free these children from the practices of bonded labour.

ii. Supply: NGOs also develop relationships with locals in villages and cities to report child labour within businesses. Families are advised to push their child towards higher education, with the support of NGO scholarships and other programs. Access to education and essential services are enabled to prevent families from taking the desperate decision of selling their child into a life of slavery.

## **2. Education and enrolment**

India faces low literacy due to low enrolment, as well as high dropout rates.

How Save the Children is working for child education:

- i. Emphasising the importance of education to children and communities
- ii. Working to establish 'safe schools' that do not discriminate on gender, caste or socio-economic background
- iii. 'Inclusive Learner Friendly Environments' (children aged 3-18 years)
- iv. Pushing for a financial framework supporting the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009
- v. Create fun school environments, using child-friendly and interactive methods
- vi. Driving funding for libraries, computers, sports equipment and Mobile Learning Centres
- vii. Bringing out-of-school children back to the classroom
- viii. Bringing street children and child labourers back to school

## **3. Rehabilitation and relief**

Through awareness campaigns on nutrition and essential health care, NGOs like Save the Children reduce new-born and child deaths. The NGO's programs are closely linked with Integrated Child Development Services Scheme, Department of Health and Family Welfare and Panchayat Raj Institutions, through whom it pushes for better policies and their implementation.

Additionally, it provides on-ground assistance to Community Healthcare Workers (CHWs) so they can help mothers, new-borns and pregnant women. Communities are educated about the importance of natal check-ups, hospital deliveries, breastfeeding, and access to nutrition. Malnourished mothers and children are provided cooking demonstrations as well as health camps. In disaster situations, the NGO generates

massive fundraising to provide non-stop aid to communities. It does so by reaching out to lakhs who support an NGO rescue operation at such an adverse time<sup>(6)</sup>

#### **NGOs have some limitations:**

Many NGOs are small in both size and scope of operation and their impact sometimes is limited. NGOs can suffer from financial and technical constraints. Many small NGOs are loosely structured and many have limits accountability. Management and Planning also may be weak and flexible.

The Government of India as a part of its policy of focusing particularly on weaker sections of society initiates several development activities by offering assistance to individuals, families and Organizations. The assistance is granted in the form of development schemes which are generally implemented by the state Government through the existing administrative structure and through some voluntary Organizations. These Schemes are:

- The scheme of Integrated Programme for Street Children.
- The scheme for construction of Hostel for S.C. boys and girls.
- The scheme of National Rehabilitation Programme for the Disabled.
- The scheme of Crèches (Central Social Welfare Board).
- The scheme of Integrated Education for Disabled Children.
- The scheme of Environmental Orientation to School Education.
- The scheme of Vocational training for Secondary Education.
- The scheme of improvement of Science, Education in Schools.
- The scheme of Boarding and Hostel Facilities for girl students.
- The scheme of Grant-In-Aid for Research and Publications.
- The scheme of National Crèches Fund Scheme, 1994.
- The scheme of Organization Assistance to Voluntary Organization for Women and Child Development etc<sup>(7)</sup>

These children are more vulnerable in term of risk to their rights to survival/ development/ participation. These children can be segregated as follows:

- Homeless Children (Pavement dwellers/ displaced etc.)
- Orphan or abandoned children
- Street and working children
- Disabled children
- Child beggars

- Trafficked children
- Victim of child marriage
- Child prostitution
- Refugee and migrants children
- Children whose parents are not able to take care of them
- Children of prostitute
- Children of prisoners
- Children of broken family
- The girl child
- Children belonging to ethnic, religious minorities and other socially marginalized groups.
- Children with behavioural problems or emotionally disturbed children
- Children in conflict with law
- Children who are victims of crime
- Children of delinquent parents
- Children of beggars <sup>(8)</sup>

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:**

The study is done keeping in mind the various underlined objectives:

- To examine the work of the NGO
- To know their problems in day-to-day functioning
- To provide suggestions for the problems faced by them.

### **METHODOLOGY:**

#### **DATA COLLECTION METHOD:**

Data are collected from both primary and secondary sources. Personal interaction with the director of the organisation was done to know about the organisation, its operations, the problems which they are facing. A set of unstructured questionnaires was used to get the information. Information from various published data, magazine, books, and websites were collected.

#### **AREA OF STUDY:**

This is based on an NGO named surjudaya. SURJUDAYA Non-Governmental Organization is located in Tinsukia Assam. SURJUDAYA is registered as a Society at GUWAHATI of state Assam with Ngo

unique registration ID 'AS/2013/0058520' . The NGO registration is done by Registrar of Societies with registration number RS/TIN/244/A/19 on the date of 13-09-2002, Its parent Organisation is Paul Foundation. The Chairman of SURJUDAYA is Santanu Bailung and Chief functionary officer is Akhil Chandra Baruah. Promoters are Ritumoni Saikia, Manashi Bar Uah, Lujee Sonowal, Kaberi Borpujari Sarmah<sup>(9)</sup>

## ABOUT TINSUKIA

Tinsukia district is one of the 33 administrative districts in the state of Assam, India. The district headquarters is located at Tinsukia city. The district occupies an area of 3790 km<sup>2</sup> . According to the 2011 census Tinsukia district has a population of 1,327,929, roughly equal to the nation of Mauritius or 4.22 percent of the total population of Assam. This gives it a ranking of 371st in India (out of a total of 640). The district has a population density of 347 inhabitants per square kilometre (900/sq mi) . Its population growth rate over the decade 2001-2011 was 14.51%. Tinsukia has a sex ratio of 948 females for every 1000 males, and a literacy rate of 70.92%. Scheduled Castes and Tribes made up 2.8% and 6.2% of the population respectively.

Hindus were 1,181,347 (88.96%), Christians 76,877 (5.79%), Muslims 40,000 (3.64%) as of 2011. The majority are Assamese. There are also other indigenous communities like Bihari and Bengali.

According to the 2011 census, 47.8% of the population spoke Assamese, 14.1% Sadri, 10.21% Bengali, 8.54% Hindi, 7.51% Nepali, 2.3% Bhojpuri, 2.11% Odia and 1.46% Missing as their first language<sup>(10)</sup>

## ABOUT THE NGO

### Key Issues

This SURJUDAYA NGO charity is working on Key Issues of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries, Agriculture, Art & Culture, Children, Civic Issues, Disaster Management, Drinking Water, Education & Literacy, Environment & Forests, Health & Family Welfare, HIV/AIDS, Human Rights, Legal Awareness & Aid, Panchayati Raj, Prisoner's Issues, Right to Information & Advocacy, Rural Development & Poverty Alleviation, Sports, Tribal Affairs, Tourism, Vocational Training, Women's Development & Empowerment, Youth Affairs.

### Operational States

Arunachal Pradesh, Assam

## Operational Districts

Changlang, Lower Dibang Valley, Lohit, Tirap, Dibang Valley, Dibrugarh, Golaghat, Jorhat, KarbiAnglong, Lakhimpur, Sivasagar, Tinsukia

## Major Activities and Achievements

Women's Development & Empowerment, Child Right, Working with Tea Community, TANGSA, Singphow, Taiphaka, Missing, Deouri, Moran and others local community, Educational issues, Health & Family welfare Issues, Selfemployment Issues, Awareness programme in several social sector and promote to Community base Eco-Tourism in Local areas.

The (Keshav Bahety) Surjudaya Children Home, a child care institution and located at Barhapjan in Tinsukia district, became euphoric after its parent body Surjudaya established in 2002 was felicitated among four other NGOs in social service category during the Republic Day celebration in Tinsukia on Sunday.

## Objective of the organisation:

- a. to create awareness among all the section of people with regard to population, education, functional literacy, financial literacy environment and ecology for protecting the environment.
- b. To encourage the spirit of voluntary service and sense of involvement community works which itself would create a great force for the development of the society and the state and organised self help groups, women empowerment etc.
- c. To create awareness among children regarding the improvement of the health and hygienic, education and other social attitude.
- d. to provide water and sanitation services when and where necessary through concern department or other sources.
- e. To create awareness among the rural people regarding the Banking System, agricultural and rural credit and assist them to the furthest extent possible to make them avail the banking services and other financial services.
- f. To understand the socially desirable and economically feasible projects sanctioned by government bodies state as well as central and district administrations of all the 27 districts in the state of Assam



- g. To understand project to uplift the standards of living of the people through the generation of entrepreneurs in the rural areas.
- h. To help the people in promoting and development of micro and small scale enterprises within the geographical boundaries of the north east region.
- i. To find innovative way to make optimum utilization of the resources ( local products) like bamboo, water hyacinth, patchouli and such other natural resources which are found in the abundance in the North East States.
- j. To organize free medical camp in inaccessible areas of the state.
- k. It is basically a social service providing organization and non-profitable organization.
- l. The organization also conducts cultural work in remote area. SURJUDAYA have a Motive for cultural integration in Border area and disputed area of the state.
- m. SURJUDAYA is a Social and cultural Organisation has the responsibility with respect to any socio-economic works for the society.

## ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS:

- a. The organisation has to get its registration under the Child Welfare Committee. State Child Protection Society (SCPS), Assam is a registered Society under the aegis of the Department of Social Welfare, Government of Assam. The Society was notified by Government of Assam on 12th July, 2010 vide notification no. SWD.168/2009/pt-1/306. SCPS was registered under the Societies Act on 15th June, 2015<sup>(12)</sup>
- b. After a face-to-face conversation with the director of the NGO, Mr. Akhil Ch. Baruah and asking various relevant questions it was found that, this NGO is mainly focused on women upliftment and child protection, educating people etc. They protect the children from child marriage, child marriage, child labour, domestic violence, etc. They are a home for the rescued, homeless children.
- c. The NGO get the information about the children with the help of the child-line number 1098. They organise child welfare awareness programmes in the deep rural places so that anyone suffering from any exploitation can come forward secretly to the NGOs. Their information is kept confidential and are promised to never expose them in front of others. Moreover, any other person seeing anyone

suffering can also contact the organisation for help. The organisation with the help of local police go to rescue the child and bring him or her with themselves.

- d. Both male and female children from the age of 4 years to 18 years are given shelter. Special attention to both male and female children are given as per their needs. They have a limit of 25 male and 25 female students.
- e. The NGO provides proper education under the affiliation of state board. The student as per their capabilities are provided with the facilities. Two student who were above 18 are still supported. One of the students scored above 80 in three subjects and secured a very good marks in the higher secondary, the student is now admitted in a good college with hostel facility provided by the NGO. And the other one is provided with the Vocational training.
- f. Proper food, medical facility in collaboration with OIL and CIL and other government and private medical institutions are provided time to time.
- g. There are plenty of staffs to take care of all children. They stay 24 hrs with the children and act as guardian for the children.
- h. Children who come to shelter may have gone through a lot, so that children can overcome the trauma due the their past regular counselling are done so that thechild can forget past and start a better future.
- i. With the good bonding with NABARD has helped a lot of people in improving their livelihoods by loans sanctioned by NABARD.
- j. This NGO has been able to achieve a lot of successful attempts regarding child protection in tea garden. They were able to rescue 3 girls below 18 years who were trafficked.

#### **SOURCES OF FUNDS FOR THE ORGANISATION:**

- 1. **Government incentives or grants:** Normally, this is the first thing an NPO would aim for. Grant funding agencies who provide funding for non-profit organizations are the constant topics of research for non-profits. Applying for grants can be time-consuming and even stressful especially when denied. However, to continually fund many of their projects, grants are usually the biggest contributors. Apart from being the biggest contributors, applying for a grant, even in the event of rejection, really helps non-

profits grow as an organization. The time dedicated to planning or organizing proposals can only help implement them more surely, whether they receive grants or not.<sup>(13)</sup>

2. **Donations in cash:** One of the easiest ways to acquire funds would be through the donations some individuals or organizations give in cash. Sometimes, during an event, or even in the NPOs office, interested parties would hand over their donations. Although this is an effective and relatively easy way to find capital, most non-profits don't and shouldn't really rely on this method. Although they're not relied upon, cash donations are still highly anticipated by non-profits as it often provides a huge relief to struggling organizations.<sup>(13)</sup>
3. **Donation in kind:** Similar to cash donations, in-kind donations are also just received by the particular NPO. There's no need to apply for such grants, and although it doesn't require much work to be done, NPOs cannot simply rely on this. In-kind donations are usually commodities such as clothing, food, furniture, transportation, and etc. Supposedly, these donations help NPOs and their projects function more efficiently.<sup>(13)</sup>
4. **Membership dues:** Because acquiring grants on a regular basis can be challenging, some NPOs have formed memberships with large corporations who in turn will need to pay a certain fee known as their membership dues. These members are not only beneficial because of the dues they pay, as they're also often partner institutions for many projects. Members also help NPOs become more known to the public through their partnership with big corporations, and in effect will give NPOs the capacity to receive more donations as well.<sup>(13)</sup>
5. **Development banks**

## PROBLEMS FACED BY NGO

- a. The NGO face a major problem of finance. The financial assistance for the NGO is not enough for the day to day functioning of the organisation. The day-to-day expenses of the staff members family is around Rs 15,000 p.m. ,but they can only support the staffs by Rs6000 per person per month. Which is even less than half. This is a very big problem is faced by the NGO.
- b. In the initial stage,when the children come to the organisation, both the NGO and the child face a big cultural as well as language gap which slowly and steadily overcome with regular training and interaction. NGOs also face problem to interact with the local people.

- c. Allowance for food of per children given by government is Rs 66 only, in which providing proper nutritional food is not at all possible. From their personal income the NGO are trying to provide best food to the children
- d. Some times during the rescue process the NGO also has to face violence by the local people.
- e. NGOs mainly work in the rural sector where they have to face network problems.
- f. The organisation has to face technical support problems. There is a lack of technical support.
- g. Some children who are drug addicted are very difficult to handle. There is not a 100% result in this situation.

### **SUGGESTIONS:**

- Various training and awareness programmes can be organised very frequently so that people can be educated about their rights. Government should organise such programmes where youth are educated and brought forward to spread awareness related to the various issues. Counselling sessions and cultural programmes can be increased.
- Smaller NGOs can get into partnership so that they can have better insight of the rural issues and can fight together.
- NGOs can leverage the use of social media for fund raising activity and creating awareness
- The government bodies should recognise and praise such organisation so that the NGOs are encouraged to continue their work.

### **CONCLUSION:**

In this study we have seen that NGO is working very hard to provide protection to children. In spite of so many barriers they are working whole heartedly to serve the children in the best possible manner. They have rescued children, provided them home, educated them and are doing a great job in making the future of the children bright.

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