



Role of Social Worker in Social Empowerment

Dr. Tulika Sharma¹

Abstract

The pursuit of social justice and equitable development in India heavily relies on the efforts of social workers, who play a crucial role in uplifting various marginalized groups. This study examines the multifaceted contributions of social workers in empowering communities, particularly in rural and remote areas where government services often fall short. Social workers facilitate access to essential services, promote self-reliance, and drive social change by addressing inequalities and fostering sustainable development. Their work is vital in enhancing the socio-economic, political, and educational capacities of disadvantaged groups, including women, the elderly, scheduled castes, tribes, disabled individuals, and the LGBTQ+ community. Through case studies and an analysis of notable social workers and NGOs, this study underscores the indispensable role of social workers in achieving social empowerment and sustainable development. The findings highlight the need to recognize and support social workers' contributions to build a more just and inclusive society.

Keywords: *Social Empowerment, Sustainable Development, Marginalized Communities.*

Introduction

The quest for social justice and a truly equitable society remains a constant struggle in our world. Social workers have consistently served as the cornerstone of social development in India. The contribution of social workers has always been to the development and upliftment of society in India. Social workers made many efforts so that people from every section of society like women, old age people, scheduled castes, tribal, disabled, third gender, weaker sections etc could become economically, socially, politically and mentally strong. It is necessary to help their lives to empower them so that they can become a human resource to the country's development.

A significant portion of the Indian population, particularly in outlying areas and rural areas, struggles to meet basic needs due to limited government reach. Social workers bridge this gap by connecting these vulnerable communities with essential services and government welfare schemes. A large section of society does not find it possible to fulfil even their basic needs. Social workers try to fulfil the basic needs of these people, make them live a dignified life and become self-reliant. Through social work, individuals, groups and communities try to develop their skills, education, resources, and abilities and make them stronger.

Social empowerment cannot be achieved without the contribution of social workers. Social empowerment cannot be achieved without the contribution of social workers. Social worker

¹ DEPARTMENT - SoS in Social Work

ORGANISATION - Shaheed Mahendra Karma Vishwavidyalaya, Bastar, Jagdalpur, Chhattisgarh

E-MAIL ID- tulikabvs86@gmail.com

ensure that government benefits and welfare schemes reach the weaker sections. Their work fosters a sense of inclusion and social justice for all.

Social empowerment

Social empowerment means that every section of the society like weaker section, women, scheduled castes, tribes, children, workers, widows, disabled, third gender, all these people should have the control of their lives in their hands. They should be able to take decisions related to his life. There should be their socio-economic, political, educational and mental development. social empowerment means to develop capabilities and skills among people so that they can live their lives freely and with dignity.

Social empowerment is a continuous and multi-dimensional process. Its objective is to establish a just society so that there is no discrimination of any kind and people of all classes can live with respect.

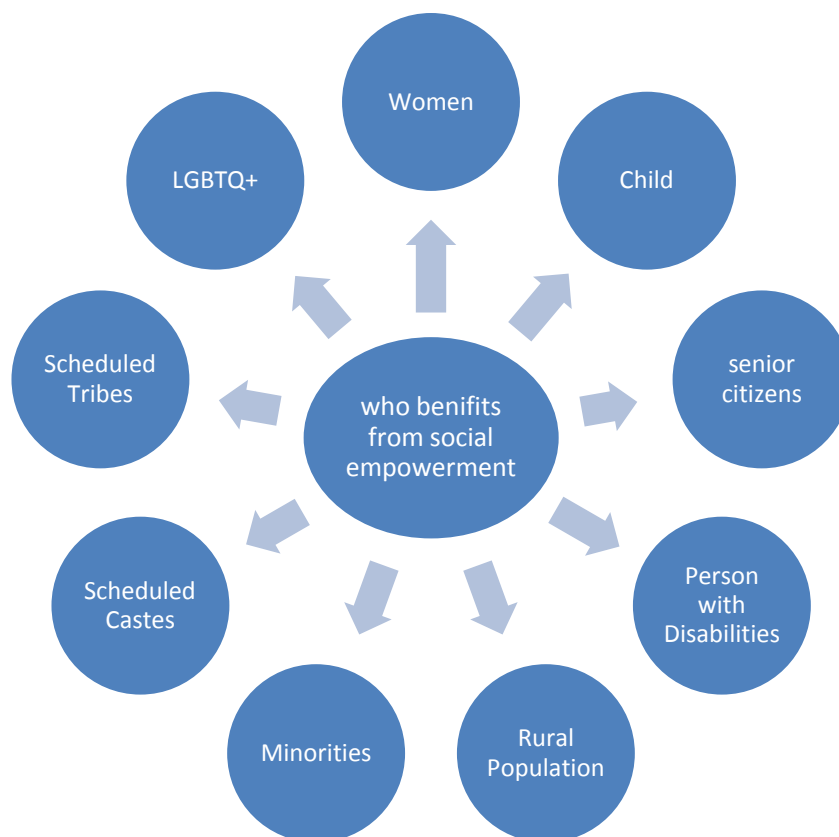


Figure 1

Need of Social Empowerment

- **Social Justice** – Ensure access to opportunities resources and schemes to different sections of people. Which promotes social justice.



- **Reducing social inequality** – The first step towards the development of any society is to reduce the inequality prevailing in the society. Social empowerment is the process by which efforts are made to provide social, economic, political and educational benefits to the people of a particular section of the society. Efforts are made to alleviate the plight of the weaker section of the society.
- **Sustainable Development** – Development is not possible by empowering any one section of the society, but every section, group, community of the society will be empowered only then the country will be able to develop. Only when work is done for the welfare of people of different sections of the society can we imagine sustainable development.

Role of Social Worker in Social Empowerment

To better solve people's problems and make them self-reliant is a need to understand and understand them, which a social worker does very well, social worker plays a vital role in social empowerment.

- **Self – reliance** – People from different sections of the society have different problems which effects their self-confidence and increases negativity in them. The social worker makes them aware of the needs of their lives and tries to bring positive changes.
- **Change in thinking** – Most of the work depends on the thinking of the person. The social worker also plays his role in the society as a change maker. It brings about a change in the way people think and how people think about each other. A social worker makes efforts to know the personality and behaviour of a person and to bring changes in his attitude so that he can bring adjustment in society and move towards social empowerment.
- **Help to proper utilization of available resources** – To develop the community, the social worker makes them aware of the available resources and motivates them to utilize them properly. Along with this, they tries to show the way as to how people can use the available resources for their livelihood.
- **Awareness and Education** – Social workers try to educate and make people aware about various schemes and activities for the upliftment of the society.
- **To stimulate the inner and outer qualities of the individual** – Many people gave some special talents and abilities which are related internally and externally. By stimulating and awakening all these powers, social workers provide guidance and support to the people of the society to do appropriate work for the welfare of the society.
- **Solving Social Problems** – Social worker addresses the problems of poor and marginalized people and tries to reduce the impact of these problems on society. They provide protection to the society from the effects of evil prevalent in the society and try to bring about change to root out the evils.
- **Helpful in policy making** – Social workers identify the problems of community, groups and individual, understand the needs and help the government in formulation strategies

and policies to solve their problems. So that welfare programs can be created for the communities.

- **Legal aid** – Rights and law play an important role in empowering the society. Social workers make people of all religions, genders, backgrounds, economically weaker section, and homosexuals aware about their rights and laws. Also support and advocate them.

Famous Social Workers who has played an important role in empowering the society (Table No. 1)

There are many social organization in India who are playing a big role and contributing in strengthening the country. 10 name of famous social worker are as follows:

Table 1

S.No.	Social worker	Act as social empowerment
1	Shri Kailash Satyarthi	He worked mainly for children. He Gave great contribution to the rights and education of children. Bachpan Bachao Andolan was founded to end child Labor.
2.	Medha Patkar	She did many things to improve the quality of life of women. Always strived for the welfare of tribal, dalit and other marginalized women. Along with this she play an important role to elimination casteism and discrimination.
3.	Marcy Methew	Marcy Methew, she is also known as ‘Daya Bhai’, who works for women empowerment and tribals. She fought a lot the rights of tribal.
4.	Kiran Bedi	She made efforts for the upliftment of women and various sections of the society. Along with this, many works have been done for the development of the villagers, community and raised voice on women social issues.
5.	Aryna Roy	Especially did many works to improve the lives of poor people.
6.	Shamshad Begam	She played an important role in increasing the education of Scheduled Castes, Tribes and Backward Class communities of Chhattisgarh.
7.	PhoolBasan Bai Yadav	Her efforts are laudable for the development and empowerment of economically and socially backward women of Chhattisgarh. She has empowered many women economically.
8.	Dharampal Saini	Dharampal Saini is called Gandhiji of Chhattisgrh. Seeing the poor condition of the girls of bastar, he decided to take them forward. He contributed to girl’s education.

Source : <https://hi.m.wikipedia.org>



It can be concluded from table no. 1 that there are many social workers in India who are working for the upliftment, development and empowerment of the society and are still doing so.

Case study of Social Worker

1. Rekha Paria – Social Worker

She has been working for basar division for a long time. She mainly works for the rights of the children and people of third gender. She has done commendable work in empowering the third gender. She counsel third gender people and tell them what they can do apart from bagging. Also encourages to do job. In 2022, there was vacancy in police battalion i.e. Bastar Police, in which she encouraged and helped 13 third gender candidate to fill the form. Along with this, advocacy was done with SP Bastar for the practice of third gender, in which a separate trainer was appointed for the third gender people, Due to which their training became possible. Later, with the encouragement of Rekha Paria, the third gender participants training started along with all participants. The commendable thing is that with the help of Rekha Parya, out of 13, 9 third gender participants were selected in Bastar Police. She has done a lot of good work towards empowering LGBTQ+.

2. Mhfuz Hussain – Social worker

She is a director of Aarfa Welfare Foundation. She does social work in Bastar District. She works to strengthen women Socio-economically, physically and mentally. She also works to provide economic empowerment to the villagers.

Often the benefits of the schemes do not reach the target group and we reach the schemes to the needy people. Also make them aware about the schemes and help the government in this. This work is going on in seven block of Bastar District.

She has filled the communication gap between the government and the villagers worked to increase trust in health centers by removing the superstitions among the villagers regarding health. Efforts were made to improve the education, health and economic condition of the villagers without changing their lifestyle.

The villager's production was linked to the government mandi so that they could get the right price for their production.

She rescue mentally challenged nomadic women and get them treated with the help of other agencies like social welfare department, women and child development department, Red Cross society etc.

Further, she will try to empower physically challenged women economically by forming a self help group.

3. Kanak Kashyap – Social Worker

She is working in Chetna Child and Women Welfare Society as a Volunteer. This NGO works for Women, child, third gender, community health and education. Women do not consider it necessary to speak, let alone discuss, their health related matters. It is very

difficult to talk about HIV AIDS openly and especially for Women, because community views this disease with inferiority complex. There is also a fear that they may be ostracized by the community, due to which they consider it better to remain silent.

It has been a very challenging task for her, because the health facilities in Bastar division are not as good as community needs. Working on such issues as HIV has been very challenging. It was not so easy to talk about this topic but still this topic was raise among the community and it was discussed continuously. Earlier, people did not even like to listen to us let alone understand what she said, but after seeing the situation in Bastar, especially the situation of HIV among women, it was quite terrible, she decided that, through all means, I should make women aware so that they can come forward and get themselves examined and can be saved from future diseases.

Through these three case studies, we see that a social worker is always ready for the welfare and development of the society. Social workers work to empower people from weaker sections so that their future can be secure.

Table 2. NGOs in Bastar Division who are working for social empowerment

S.No.	NGOs Name	District	Work
1	Bastar Sevak Mandal	Bastar	Work related to agriculture, education, medical and development in rural areas, women development and empowerment
2	Bastar Samajik Jan Vikas Sanstha	Bastar	
3	Chetna Child and Women Welfare	Bastar	Working for child rights, Women, LGBTQ+ and HIV AIDS
4	ALFA Welfare Foundation	Bastar	Working for Health and Women child safety
5	Piramal Foundation	Bastar	Working for Tribal Health and Education
6	Sikh Foundation	Bastar	Work in the field of the education for the poor.
7	Shanti Foundation	Kondagaon	Work in the field of Mental disabled persons
8	Family Health India	Bastar and Kondagaon	Work to provide employment to youth
9	Learning and Language Foundation	Bastar	Work for Child Education
10	Bastar Bal kalyan Society	Dantewada	Child education, Literacy and Nutrition
11	Bastar Samagra Vikas Samiti	Bastar	Women development and empowerment, youth development, employment

Source : Primay data collection



According to NGO Darpan, there are 206585 enrolled Non Government Organizations in India. Table no. 2 gives a list of some NGOs of Bastar Division which shows that NGOs work in various sectors of the society and work to bring change and development in the society. When a social worker wants to work for the society, he provides his services to the society either by forming his own committee or by joining some organization.

Conclusion

Social worker play active role in the development of the nation by supplementing the efforts of the government. Social workers can play their important role in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. A social Worker can do the work as a pillar in providing skilled training to the youth, in making development strategies in bringing about change in thinking, in the field of employment and in various other areas for empowerment. Social worker are committed to improving the lives of the people of the society. They are moving towards building a better society for the present and future generations. For this it is necessary to recognize the importance of social workers and support them.

References

1. National Association of Social Workers India (NASWI) 2024.
2. Kumar, S., & Desai, A. (2018). Social Work and Social Development in India: Challenges and Opportunities, ISBN 9781138696289
3. Jayaram, N. (2017), Social Work and Development in India. Taylor & Francis, ISBN 9781138691055
4. Desai, A. R., & Patel, Z. 2014, The role of social workers in promoting social justice in India, International Social Work, 59(2), 222-234.
5. Rao, K. S. (2010), Social work and empowerment of marginalized communities in India, Social Work & Society, 5(3), 321-332.
6. <https://www.napswi.org/>
7. <https://hi.m.wikipedia.org>