

FAQ's

What are the typical problems with resettlement and rehabilitation?

It is a well-known fact that both natural and human made disasters force people to move out of their land. For example. Tsunami in South Asia in December 2004, Latur and Gujarat earthquake, the Orissa super-cyclone and scores of floods and droughts in other parts of our country have rendered thousands of people homeless and jobless. Disasters, like the Bhopal gas tragedy in Union carbide factory, derailment of trains, are examples of human made disaster.

Strategies for rehabilitation of thus displaced people are in the first place by way of preventive action. For instance, care is taken to build earthquake proof houses, gather advance information about cyclones and arrange for timely evacuation, build appropriate bunds in flood prone areas, maintain bridges that take regular up and down passing of trains/ road transport vehicles on them in order to avert likely disasters.

Secondly, advance preparation on the part of administration and local communities are made to face the consequences of sudden calamities. For both these remedial steps, the primary necessity is that of building awareness among the people in general and among administrative personnel in particular.

The scope for advance planning in the cases of natural and human made calamities is however quite limited and in comparison we can certainly plan better in the cases of development projects which are planned in advance.

Development projects come into existence after a fairly long period of planning and awareness of displacement caused by such projects already exists among those who initiate the projects. The tragedy is that despite this prior knowledge of the extent of displacement, those in-charge

of development projects pay little attention to the processes of resettlement and rehabilitation of displaced people.

Development projects instead focus on economic efficiency and not on those who stand to lose all that they have, their land, means of livelihood and stable patterns of social and cultural life. Those who give up substantial portions of their assets for the sake of development projects need to be recognized as stakeholders in development projects. They too need to be a part of development.

The strategies formulated for resettlement and rehabilitation of those displaced by development projects can of course be equally applied to those displaced by natural and human made calamities. As far as our country's preparation for coping with the impact of natural and human made calamities is concerned, we have begun to feel a little aware of negative impacts of such events because they are now occurring at frequent intervals.

As a result there are some institutional measure have been taken by the government by way of constituting committees at various levels. They exist on paper and their immediate response to the actual events is yet to come in any significant manner.

But we can say that a beginning has been made and we need to further consolidate the initiatives already taken so that such measure can bring some relief to disaster victims by way of their resettlement and rehabilitation. At present, we find that ad hoc relief measures are adopted to cope with the gravity of problems caused by such disasters.

What is a NGO? Describe the role of an NGO in ensuring protection of the environment.

NGO-Non Governmental Organization

Today we come across various non-governmental organizations whose concerns are focused on various areas such as social issues, health issues, and environmental issues. Non-Governmental Organization is a broad term, which includes charity organizations, advisory committees and various other professional organizations. NGOs in India are spread across the country and they have close contacts with communities.

They are involved in the whole spectrum of developmental activities from creating environmental awareness to undertaking watershed development: from disaster management to sustainable livelihoods; from joint forest management to giving inputs to policies. They range from clubs, which encourage nature camping to agencies, which undertake research and monitoring.

There are large number of NGOs in India and other countries that are exclusively working for environmental, protection, conservation, and awareness. The number of these non-governmental organizations which are actively involved in environmental protection in our country is, in fact, more than in any of the developing country. Increasingly, the government is viewing NGOs not only as agencies that will help them to implement their programs, but also as partners shaping policy and programs.

NGOs are now playing an important role in framing the environmental policy, mobilizing public support for environmental conservation, and protecting the endangered species of forests and animals. Environmental organizations such as Earth watch and Sea Shepherd Conservation Society have been successful in creating awareness about the environmental dangers in using drift nets in the commercial fishing industry.

Through driftnet monitoring, public education and action they were successful in banning drift- net system internationally. The issues like future of environmental protection, sustainable development and zero population

growth are some of the major concerns of the environmental NGOs.

Environmental policies will achieve positive results only when they are addressed to local issues and solve the problems of local people. The policymakers should keep in mind the needs of the people while framing the policies and implementing the environment-friendly projects.

Unless the needs of the people are identified and supported, sustainable development cannot be achieved. Policymakers and administrators should take care in selecting, financing, and implementing projects, which are aimed at promoting social welfare. They should not encourage the enterprises that promote private ownership and cooperation.

Some of the international environmental organizations are Greenpeace, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), Earth First, etc. Let us now have a detailed discussion on some of the environmental organizations and their efforts in protecting environment.

What are environmental ethics?

Environmental ethics is the part of environmental philosophy which considers extending the traditional boundaries of ethics from solely including humans to including the non-human world. It exerts influence on a large range of disciplines including environmental law, environmental sociology, ecotheology, ecological economics, ecology and environmental geography.

There are many ethical decisions that human beings make with respect to the environment. For example:

- Should humans continue to clear cut forests for the sake of human consumption?
- Why should humans continue to propagate its species, and life itself?

- Should humans continue to make gasoline powered vehicles?
- What environmental obligations do humans need to keep for future generations?
- Is it right for humans to knowingly cause the extinction of a species for the convenience of humanity?
- How should humans best use and conserve the space environment to secure and expand life?

Global warming, global climate change, deforestation, pollution, resource degradation, threat of extinction are few of the issues from which our planet is suffering. Environmental ethics are a key feature of environmental studies, that establishes relationship between humans and the earth. With environmental ethics, you can ensure that you are doing your part to keep the environment safe and protected. Every time that a tree is cut down to make a home or other resources are used we are using natural resources that are becoming more and more sparse to find. It is essential that you do your part to keep the environment protected and free from danger. It is not as difficult to do as you may think so long as you're willing to make a few simple and easy changes.

With the rapid increase in world's population, the consumption of natural resources has increased several times. This has degraded our planet's ability to provide the services we humans need. The consumption of resources is going at a faster rate than they can naturally replenish.

Describe the process of environmental management.

Environmental management system (EMS) refers to the management of an organization's environmental programs in a comprehensive, systematic, planned and documented manner. It includes the organizational structure, planning and resources for developing, implementing and maintaining policy for environmental protection.

More formally, EMS is "a system and database which integrates procedures and processes for training of personnel, monitoring, summarizing, and reporting of specialized environmental performance information to internal and external stakeholders of a firm."

An environmental management information system (EMIS) is an information technology solution for tracking environmental data for a company as part of their overall environmental management system.

The goals of EMS are to increase compliance and reduce waste:

- Compliance is the act of reaching and maintaining minimal legal standards. By not being compliant, companies may face fines, government intervention or may not be able to operate.
- Waste reduction goes beyond compliance to reduce environmental impact. The EMS helps to develop, implement, manage, coordinate and monitor environmental policies. Waste reduction begins at the design phase through pollution prevention and waste minimization. At the end of the life cycle, waste is reduced by recycling.

An environmental management system (EMS):

- Serves as a tool, or process, to improve environmental performance and information mainly "design, pollution control and waste minimization, training, reporting to top management, and the setting of goals"
- Provides a systematic way of managing an organization's environmental affairs
- Is the aspect of the organization's overall management structure that addresses immediate and long-term impacts of its products, services and processes on the environment. EMS assists with planning, controlling and monitoring policies in an organization.

- Gives order and consistency for organizations to address environmental concerns through the allocation of resources, assignment of responsibility and ongoing evaluation of practices, procedures and processes
- Creates environmental buy-in from management and employees and assigns accountability and responsibility.
- Sets framework for training to achieve objectives and desired performance.
- Helps understand legislative requirements to better determine a product or service's impact, significance, priorities and objectives.
- Focuses on continual improvement of the system and a way to implement policies and objectives to meet a desired result. This also helps with reviewing and auditing the EMS to find future opportunities.
- Encourages contractors and suppliers to establish their own EMS.