

## **Role of Voluntary Organizations in Ground Water Management of Hard Rock**

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Ground water is a renewable natural resource with rainfall as the sole-supplier. It is essential for drinking, agricultural development, economic development and improved quality of life. The criticality of water is realized only when the water scarcity is confronted in drought periods, which are happening quite frequently in many parts of States. Presently, in such drought affected areas, the wells get dried and water scarcity increases in alarming proportions making life miserable in rural areas, which contain more than 70% of the population. The "water tanker culture" has almost become a regular part of annual water supply system in many "scarce" areas. Ground water development in such a situation is not only an integral part of state planning priorities but its judicious management has also become a key issue. It becomes still more important in the areas occupied by hard rocks.

'What Government wants to do but can not do of its own being Government' may explain the role of Voluntary Organization in water sector. The role is not only techno-social but much more. Now-a-days it is quite common to hire services of Voluntary Organization in water sector. The externally aided projects make it a 'non-negotiable' instrument in the form of umbrella Voluntary Organization or smaller Support Organizations. The idea behind their involvement is faith building of the community in the projects and bringing the sense of ownership of the assets and institutions created in the project for the sustainability.

If water related sources and contributing resources need to be sustainable, then one has to look into it not on village level, not even on watershed level, but on an aquifer level. Pseudo-scientific approaches will never make the management of water successful even through participatory approaches. The exact delineation of aquifer boundaries need to be done by the technical experts in the field. This must be well explained to the Voluntary Organization to take further to the community.

The role of the Voluntary Organization in the recent decade in the water sector is envisaged as:

- Smooth entry & easy mixing
- Mobilize & Faith build
- Involving women and other stakeholders
- Organising frequent Common *Gram Sabhas* (meetings)

- Formation of committees
- Bring synergy with other line departments
- Facilitating identification of problem, provide solution in terms of options with participatory approach performing role of catalyst
- Training & Capacity Building
- Identifying local leaders & local skills and their utilization
- Procurement of goods, services
- Managing with account keeping
- Erecting facilities needed
- Hand holding for preventive maintenance & repairs, etc.
- Safe & timely Exit

**Key Words:** Aquifer, Community, Voluntary Organization, Demand Driven Approach, Participatory approach, Local Wisdom, *Gram Sabha*, Self – Regulation, Sustainability