

## **Social Action**

### **Introduction**

Social work as a profession is a product of this century. Although its roots are well established in history from the time when people 1st began to take responsibility for their neighbors through activities which were called charity, poor relief, philanthropy and social reform.

Social Work as a scientific helping profession applies methods like Social Case work, Social Group Work, Community organization, Social Action, Social Welfare Administration and Social Work Research. In social work practice settings, Social workers co-ordinate all the methods of Social work among Social action is very important.

### **Social action :**

Social action is a collective endeavor to bring about desirable changes in the existing structure or preventing undesirable change through a process of making people aware of the socio-political and economic realities conditioning their lives and mobilizing them to organize them as the living force so as to work for their own betterment. In addition, through social action the organized people themselves with conscious effort, stand against a change that adversely affect them. In this task, the social worker or social activist who guides their action, helps them to use what ever strategies found to be workable for achieving the desired goal, with the exception of resorting to violence.

It's an organized group process solving general social problems & furthering social welfare objectives by legislative, social, health or economic progress. The term social action refers to organized & legally permitted activities designed to mobilize public opinion, legislation & public administration in favour of objectives believed to be socially desirable.

## **Definitions**

In order to have a better understanding of the concept of social action, the following definition given by some known authors of the field can be examined:

**Mary Richmond**, the first professional thinker of social work, in 1922, defined social action as “Mass betterment through propaganda and social legislation”. From this definition it can be interpreted that social action is concerned with the problems of huge number of people and it can be solved with the active participation of people in large number. To bring about large participation, propaganda and legislation should be the appropriate strategies.

**Grace Coyle (1937)** stated, “Social action is an attempt to change the social environment in ways, which will make life more satisfactory. It aims to affect not individuals but social institutions, laws, customs and communities”. In his definition Coyle has emphasized that in social action, the main target is not on individuals but the social environment that consists of laws, social institutions, customs, communities etc.

**Wickendon (1956)** defined, “social action as term applied to that aspect of social welfare activity, directed towards shaping, modifying or maintaining the social institutions and policies that collectively constitute the social environment”. In this definition social action has been looked as one of the ingredients of social welfare which is basically concerned with the desirable change in the social structure that has a potential influence on the lives of the people.

**Walter Friedlander (1963)** gave his definition of social action as “Social action is an individual, group or community effort within the framework of social work values, philosophy and practice that aims to achieve social progress, to modify social policies and to improve social legislation, and health and welfare activities”.

In his definition Friedlander has stated that the practice of social action does not violate the basic tenets of social work. It operates within the guidelines of social work to achieve the goal of total development of individuals in the society.

Modifying social policies and improving social legislations are significant aspects of this definition.

**Nanawati (1965)** considered social action as “a process of bringing about desired changes by deliberate group and community efforts. Social action does not end with the enactment or signing of social legislation, but that the execution of policies was the real test of success or failure of social action.” The distinct point of this definition is that it has focused on the long term impact of social action with visible indication.

It should be looked at as an attempt to bring out desirable change or prevent changes that adversely affects human living. In social action process some activities like making people aware of the socio-economic and political realities, conditioning their lives, mobilizing them through formation of pressure groups and using them consciously to bring about a desired change through a socially accepted, legal and non-violent strategy. However, it is no denying fact that social action is generally conflict oriented. It is initiated and conducted by a mass of people or group of elites against defective social institutions, government policies, programmes and laws or practices.

### **Objectives of Social Action**

**1.Reduction of Discrimination :** In our society there are diverse forms of social discrimination such Gender discrimination , Economic discrimination , Cultural Discrimination, Social discrimination and Class diversity for this why various types of Psycho-social problems (Social mal-adjustment, disparity, frustration, ) occur and to remove all these problems is needed social action.

**2.Emancipatin of deprived , downtrodden :** Who are deprived or downtrodden. They mostly fail to social functioning and for various types of social inequality, injustice and discrimination. So to emancipate them from exploitation and oppression, repression , Social action is needed.

**3.Building awareness among mass people :** By social action process, Social workers try to make understand among mass people with various types of social problems and make them conscious about these problems.

**4.Building the field of Social Policies for the betterment and change in adjusting social policies :** By this process , Social workers try to make change in policy planning , make the suitable field for social policies and modify the existing social policies.

**5.Building social change from unexpected situation :** Unexpected situation like social injustice, immorality, mischievous, miscreants, drugs abuse, racism , violence, unfair labours and so on. By the social action process , social workers try to build a change from these unexpected situation.

**6.Form new laws and change unusual existing change :** Social action tries to form new policies, laws and pressurize administration and gov't to form new laws and modify existing laws in favour to mass people.

**7.Rising public opinion against harmful customs, rules and institutions :** It's the most fundamental process of Social Action to rise or gather public opinion by posters, festoons, seminars, meeting , symposiums, conferences, miking , dramas , TV shows, Ads etc. against harmful customs, rules and institutions.

**8.Solving social problems :** Social problems are like Poverty , drugs abuse, dowry, abortion, human trafficking, illiteracy, stress, violence, crimes, unemployment, child labour, eve-teasing, woman oppression, exploitation, maladjustment, inequality, injustice, maldistribution etc. The main goal and objective of social action is solving social problems by social awareness, public opinion, forming and modifying laws etc.

**9.Social and economic development :** The process of social action is to establish social (health, education, human resources, sanitation, hygiene, justice, environment) and economic (employment, creativity, banking system, market, road and transports, entrepreneurship, trade and commerce) development.