

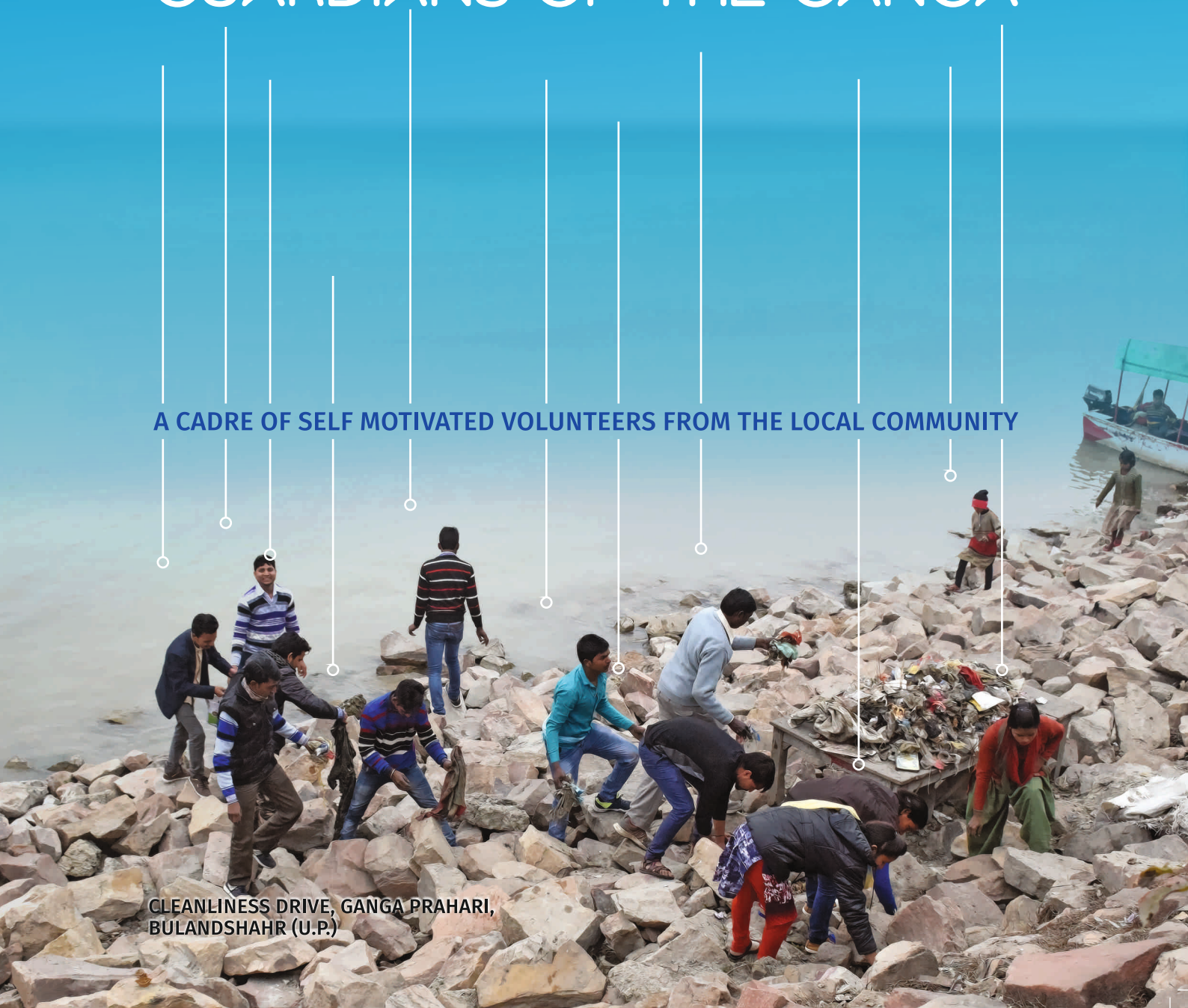


GANGA PRAHARI

GUARDIANS OF THE GANGA

A CADRE OF SELF MOTIVATED VOLUNTEERS FROM THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

CLEANLINESS DRIVE, GANGA PRAHARI,
BULANDSHAHR (U.P.)



PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

The biodiversity of the Ganga River is under stress due to reduced water availability, habitat degradation, pollution, and unsustainable resource extraction. To conserve the ecological integrity of the Ganga River, and, reduce the direct dependency of the local communities on the river, the National Mission for Clean Ganga-Wildlife Institute of India (NMCG-WII) project 'Biodiversity Conservation and Ganga Rejuvenation' aims to involve members of the local community as guardians of the river hereafter called as the "*Ganga Praharis*".

The aim of this initiative is to establish a motivated cadre of "*Ganga Prahari*" to support the local level institutions and monitor the quality of the natural resources of the river by mobilizing local communities at the grassroots level. This could be achieved by:

1

Creating awareness about the benefits of a clean and vibrant Ganga and a sense of belongingness among people towards Ganga River.

2

Link local communities and their livelihoods with the overall efforts of various agencies working for a clean Ganga and thereby creating a convergence point at grassroot level for such efforts.

3

Link local people's livelihood and well-being with a clean and vibrant Ganga.



Ganga Praharis are primarily volunteers from among the local community, who have a common objective of conservation of the aquatic life of Ganga, by maintaining the river's *Aviral* and *Nirmal Dhara*. The creation of this cadre of *Ganga Prahari* was visualized in the framework of participatory conservation efforts, where people involved in the process usually live in communities with considerable social cohesion and regularly work together on shared projects of community concerns.

PROCESS OF IDENTIFICATION AND RECRUITMENT OF GANGA PRAHARI

The Community participation through the *Ganga Praharis* will promote local pride and a sense of belonging towards the Ganga River ecosystem ensuring human well-being.

The *Ganga Praharis* have been identified through a series of site level consultative meetings and workshops held in selected villages located on the bank of the Ganga River in all the five Ganga states. Focus has been made to identify self-motivated individuals who can mobilize others in Ganga conservation efforts. The local communities, have been approached through other agencies too like State Forest Departments, Educational Institutes, National Cadet Corps (NCC), National Service Scheme (NSS) *Mahila Mangal Dal*, *Yuva Mangal Dal*, Nehru Yuva Kendras and *Ganga Vichar Manch* to identify the potential *Ganga Praharis*. The primary criterion for identification in a candidate is passion and zeal to serve the Ganga River for maintaining its integrity in terms of its cleanliness and biodiversity value. These '*Praharis*' have to be above 18 years of age on the date of joining the project, preferably from the Ganga River side villages. The younger school students too have been recruited for Bal *Ganga Prahari* cadre which is being launched soon.



**GANGA PRAHARI, NADIA, WEST BENGAL
WITH ECOLOGICAL SURVEY TEAM OF
WILDLIFE INSTITUTE OF INDIA**

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT



Ganga Prahari Assistants conducting awareness meeting at Umrasu Village, District Pauri Garhwal, Uttarakhand.

Once recruited, the *Ganga Prahari*s will be trained for; ecological monitoring of the Ganga River and its biodiversity, tree plantation techniques, awareness generation through meetings and workshops, community mobilization etc (Figure 1). The idea is to develop their capacity for involving them in various activities conducted by the stakeholders, such as Forest Department, State Project Management Group of NMCG, NGOs etc. Additionally, the *Ganga Prahari*s will be linked to various local environmental authorities, non-governmental and government organisation in their respective states and various national academic and research institutions for their capacity development.



Figure 1: Capacity building of *Ganga Prahari*s to assist in various activities.

STRUCTURE OF GANGA PRAHARI CADRE



Figure 2: Structure of *Ganga Prahari*s

In each of the five Ganga River States, a maximum of five villages from the riverside will form a 'Cluster' (Figure 2). Each cluster will have a leader who will be chosen by the WII in consultation with other members from the cadre. A Block Cluster Leader will lead the entire cluster in a particular block. The Block Cluster Leader and Cluster Leader will be selected from among the Ganga Prahari of these villages, on rotational basis for three months initially. Each Cluster Leader, with the support of Ganga Prahari, will conduct minimum ten relevant activities in three months time. These activities will be proposed to NMCG-WII team for approval. All the necessary logistic support

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Ganga Praharis will be the leaders from among the local community. They will be the role models in inspiring other members of the community to join hands in the efforts for conservation of the biodiversity of the Ganga River. Thus, each Prahari shall work on the model of 'Each One make Ten'. Ganga Praharis will be the torchbearers who ensure a proactive role at their respective sites. The Ganga Prahari will be the key person for the activties provided in figure 3.

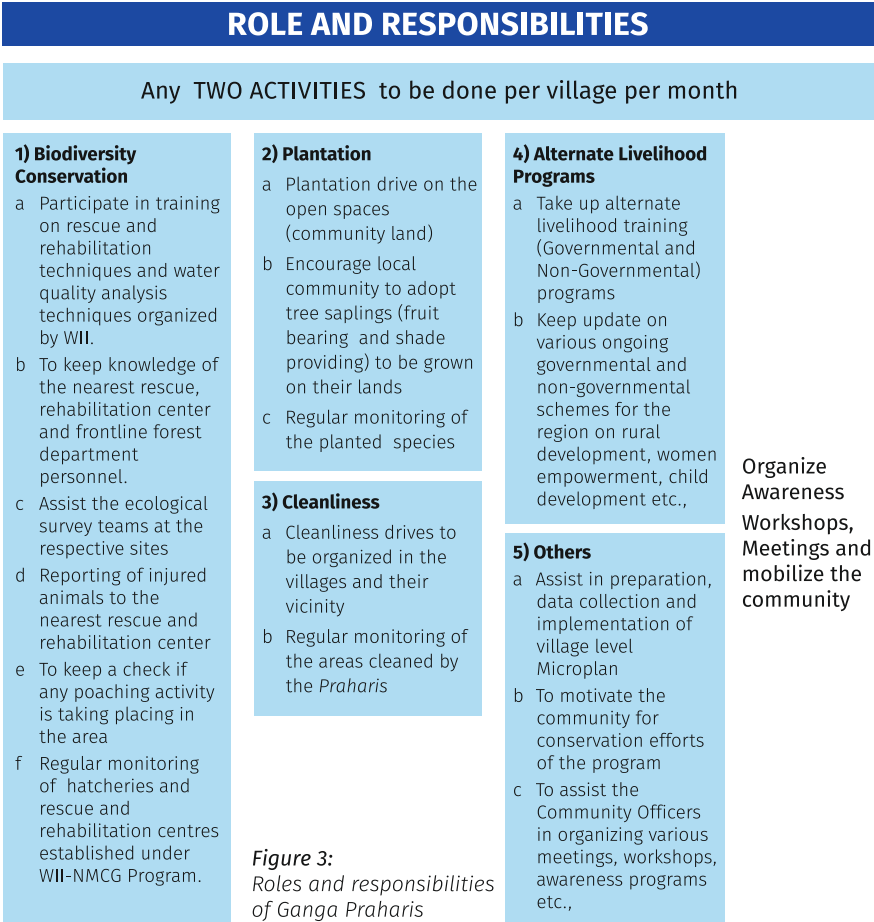


Ganga Praharis conducting socio-economic survey and livelihood assessment at Nayachaur Village, District Nadia, West Bengal.

- 1 Mobilizing the local communities in their respective villages for maintaining the integrity of the Ganga River ecosystem
- 2 Liaising with the local Forest Department staff at their respective villages in maintaining a clean and vibrant Ganga by providing support for biodiversity monitoring, taking part in anti-poaching operations, and river side planation programs
- 3 Assisting the NMCG-WII teams in preparation, coordination and implementation of village level micro plans for sustainable development in aligning with *Swatchh Bharat Abhiyan*, and
- 4 Act as the convergence point for developmental activities, livelihood programmes and biodiversity conservation at village level so as to reduce the direct resource dependency on the Ganga River.

during those activities shall be provided by WII through the NMCG-WII project. The Cluster Leader will be paid a token amount as honorarium.

The overall supervision will be done by Drs. Ruchi Badola, S.A. Hussain and Deepika Dogra at Wildlife Institute of India. The performance of the Cluster Leaders will be evaluated on the basis of their performance in the field and the best Cluster Leader award will be given to encourage the Ganga Praharis.



CONNECTING THE DOTS

Ganga Praharis will be the means to establish link with the local communities to link them to various Ganga biodiversity conservation initiatives. The role of WII shall be that of guidance and facilitation. The implementation of joint actions between institutions and local actors strengthens conservation and management of resources. For this *Ganga Praharis* of the five states will be linked through mobile applications (such as *Bhuvan Ganga*, *mygov.in*, *swatchta app*.) creating a broad network among them.



Ganga Praharis conducting awareness programme with school children at Haridwar, Uttarakhand.



Ganga Praharis being trained for rescue and rehabilitation activities at Sarnath, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh

BENEFITS OF BEING A GANGA PRAHARI



Ganga Praharis training workshop at Devprayag, Uttarakhand.

The *Ganga Praharis* will be provided with a certificate after training on skills development. The database of the *Ganga Prahari* will be shared with the NMCG and all its concerned organizations, institutes and other line agencies. As per the interest/skills of the individuals they will be linked to the concerned agencies for further training/skill development opportunities. They will be recommended to the line departments such as the Forest Department, Irrigation Department, Fishery Department, State Programme Management Groups (SPMGs) and other research and development organizations for work opportunity. *Ganga Praharis* will be given preference for work/assistance in field-based survey conducted by WII and other research institutes in the main stem Ganga and its tributaries. They will be recommended by the WII to various educational Institutions for pursuing higher education/training/skill development.

The other objective of the *Ganga Prahari* is to enable them to secure their livelihood in a manner that is conducive to a cleaner Ganga with its biodiversity restored. The leadership of these individual shall become a source of inspiration for rest of the society in invoking a sense of belonging to the Ganga River and work in direction of its betterment. Thus, these leaders of the masses will ensure the sustainability of Ganga biodiversity conservation efforts.

DO YOU WANT TO BECOME GANGA PRAHARI ?

Email: gangaprahari@wii.gov.in
Phone no.: 0135-2646263

PROGRAMME OUTPUT

This trained cadre of *Ganga Praharis* will ensure

1

Protection and conservation of biodiversity by local communities residing along the banks of River Ganga.

2

Motivate the communities residing along the stretch of Ganga to adopt sustainable practices for collection/use of bioresource.

3

Ensure cleanliness of the Ganga River along the stretch of their village.

4

A grassroots level movement for a clean and vibrant Ganga.



**Ganga Prahari,
Bhagalpur, Bihar**



राष्ट्रीय स्वच्छ गंगा मिशन
National Mission for Clean Ganga



भारतीय वन्यजीव संस्थान
Wildlife Institute of India

NMCG

National Mission for Clean Ganga, Ministry of Water Resources, River Development & Ganga Rejuvenation

GACMC

Ganga Aqualife Conservation Monitoring Centre

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This initiative is financed through the project 'Biodiversity Conservation and Ganga Rejuvenation' initiated by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) under the NMCG Project.