

Research & Advocacy

Although, we have successfully implemented many projects in the fields of rural development, we are also aware that only successful demonstrations will not garner the enthusiasm of the public and the policy makers. We need to actively take them to new audiences and disseminate the information in order to affect policy decisions, and change established social practices.

With this in mind, we are consciously turning towards advocacy as a potent tool of change. We have recently begun the process of documentation of the valuable expertise that we have gained on various subjects concerned with development issues. At the same time, we are engaging more with the decision makers, both at the local and the national levels.



For more information or questions about this programme, contact: mail@ledeg.org

Through awareness building and knowledge based action, we hope to strengthen Ladakh's ability to determine its future soundly

ADVOCACY

RESEARCH

We are aware of the need to ground our work in science, in order to sharpen our project objectives and also to assess the value of our interventions. Therefore, we are trying to engage with development scholars whose research interests coincide with our action needs, and offer them logistical support. Our collaboration with the Kyoto University led consortium of Japanese Universities is an example of one such interaction, where we provide the local partnership and human resources for the scientific study led by experts from Japan.

At the same time, we are in the process of building our inhouse research capacity. For instance, under the Groundwater Initiative we have taken lead in developing research structure and methods, with support from ACWADAM, an education and research centre for water resources development and management.

In short, we are open to partnerships with individual researchers and research institutions in order to examine the development questions facing Ladakh today.



Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG)

About LEDeG

In 1978, four years after Ladakh was opened to tourism, Helena Norberg-Hodge, a scholar of Ladakhi language, started the 'Ladakh Project' over the concern that the winds of change might prove too strong for the fragile roots of a culture that had developed tenaciously over the millennia in an equally fragile environment and therefore change would need to be carefully guided.

In 1981, LEDeG grew as an indigenous institution out of the 'Ladakh Project' (now ISEC). In 1983, it was registered as an autonomous NGO under the Societies Registration Act. In 2011, LEDeG completes 30 years of working to promote ecologically sustainable models of development in Ladakh.

VISION & MISSION

Our Vision is a sustainable future for Ladakh built on its culture & environment, and in order to achieve this, our Mission is to demonstrate ecologically sound development models & to advocate for regionally appropriate development policies.

In order to achieve our Mission, we are currently focusing our activities in four broad programme areas:

- Rural Livelihood
- Renewable Energy
- Urban Initiative
- Research & Advocacy

More information about these programmes available inside this brochure.



Office/Library/Crafts Shop opening hours

Winter (Oct. - March): Monday - Saturday: 10.00 am - 4.00 pm

Summer (Apr. - Sept.): Monday - Friday: 9.30 am - 5.00 pm

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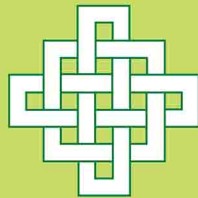


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GENESIS

Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG)



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...dedicated to promote

ecological and sustainable development
which harmonises with and builds
on the traditional culture

Renewable Energy

LEDeG encourages a decentralized approach of energy production, based on the natural endowments of the region – abundant sunshine and swift flowing streams.

Besides being a basic need for almost any economic activity, energy is also required for space heating in Ladakh - a basic requirement for surviving the harsh winters. Still, many remote villages and hamlets remain deprived of electricity for productive uses. Appropriate technology has been an effective tool to change this situation.

SOLAR ENERGY INITIATIVE

Ladakh enjoys almost 300 days of sunshine annually. LEDeG has tapped into this resource to substitute for bio-fuel needs by promoting devices like solar water heaters, solar lanterns, solar cookers, etc. Also, we have tried to popularize solar passive building technologies (like trombe walls, direct gain walls) which translate into significant fuel savings for space heating.



For more information or questions about this programme, contact: ate@ledeg.org or mail@ledeg.org

LEDeG's active promotion of solar energy as a viable energy alternative was awarded in 2005 with the 'Solar Society of India NGO Award'

MICRO HYDRO POWER UNITS (MHPUs)

The MHPU is a relatively simple technology for the generation of electricity using water flow, sometimes as low as 100 l/s available in the snow fed streams of Ladakh. The installation, maintenance, and operation of the MHPUs are sustained through locally established electricity management committees (EMC). LEDeG provides technical expertise in the design of the power plants, and trainings for capacity building of the EMCs in operation & maintenance, and management. The median size of such power plants is 5kW, and our largest plant so far is of 30kW capacity. Besides providing lighting for a better quality of life, rural communities can also channel the electricity for drudgery reducing and income generating devices like flour mills, oil expellers, sawing machines, etc.

Rural Livelihoods

The villages of Ladakh have been the main focus of LEDeG since its beginning. While the autonomy and the health of agriculture was always at the heart of the initiative, a big challenge for us was to look for avenues for the communities to participate in the monetized economy without giving up their agrarian heritage.

AGRICULTURE

The early years were marked by our work on strengthening the rural agricultural base through the introduction and diversification of crop portfolios in remote villages through improved seeds, training on vegetable production for self consumption, awareness programs about use of pesticides, fertilizers, etc. More recently, we have decided to engage in value addition to agricultural produce, and enabling participation in the market economy through processing of apricots and seabuckhorn, two major horticultural produce.

These products can be purchased at the Crafts Shop at Ecology Centre.

HANDICRAFTS

One of our earliest initiatives, handicrafts promotion was a priority for us in the early days due to the rapid erosion of the traditional skills and crafts in the face of the influx of cheap factory-made goods. Alumni of the first project - carpenters, tailors, weavers, etc. - are now successfully running their own businesses in and around Leh town. We soon realized the potential that handicrafts have as an supplementary income source for the women in the villages.

Today, our work includes providing skill upgradation trainings to women's groups, and helping them with design diversification, and marketing support. These products can be purchased at the Crafts Shop at Ecology Centre.



For more information or questions about this programme, contact: handicraft@ledeg.org, agriculture@ledeg.org or mail@ledeg.org

LEDeG's achievements in sustaining and improving traditional rural livelihoods have been recognized with the 'Right Livelihood Award' in 1986

Urban Initiative

Three decades of tourism and development have accelerated the urbanization of Leh and led to the deterioration of the urban environment, endangering not only its aesthetic appeal to visitors, but also the resource base of the valley. The Urban Initiative of LEDeG is in recognition of this fact, and the urgent need to reverse the direction of this change.



For more information or questions about this programme, contact: urb-in@ledeg.org or mail@ledeg.org

Dialogues with sectoral stakeholders is critical for the success of the Urban Initiative

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

The influx of packaged goods into the Leh lifestyle has meant more than 500 tonnes of waste generated every year.

Along with other local NGOs, LEDeG was successful in seeking a ban on the use of plastic bags in Leh town. We have also conducted awareness programs among the students. The next step is to launch a larger program to ensure a return to 'zero-waste' lifestyle.

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER USE AND MANAGEMENT

The growth of tourism sector has led to an increasing demand for water, which is being met through a growing number of private borewells. In absence of any groundwater management policy, uncontrolled extraction is a cause for concern about its sustainability.

LEDeG has therefore launched the Groundwater Initiative to create a comprehensive, knowledge based approach to sustainable use and management of groundwater in Leh town.

YOUTH & ENVIRONMENT INITIATIVE

We at LEDeG recognize that the youth can be powerful partners in our initiatives - not only are they the decision makers of tomorrow, but they also can be catalysts for change for the present. Keeping this in mind, LEDeG is launching a Youth & Environment Initiative, which will be targeted at high schoolers and college goers, with the aim of grooming a generation of citizens sensitized to ecological concerns, as well as agents of change for today.

