



Mains Practice Question

Q. Discuss the contribution of civil society groups for women's effective and meaningful participation and representation in state legislatures in India. (Answer in 250 words, UPSC Mains 2023)

12 Dec, 2023 GS Paper 2 Polity & Governance

Approach:

- Briefly define civil society groups and their role in promoting social and political change.
- Discuss the contribution of civil society groups for women's effective and meaningful participation.
- Conclude with highlighting the importance of civil society groups in shaping the future of women's participation in state legislatures.

Introduction:

Civil society refers to the communities and groups that function outside government to provide support and advocacy for certain people and/or issues in society. They work behind the curtains to influence policy making. In a nation as big as India, voluntary citizen groups are necessary to bring significant changes.

Body:

Contributions

- **Raising Awareness:** Civil society groups have educated the masses in small batches to build up necessary awareness at the grass-root level. Various initiatives by small groups have been taken in this regard like '50% reservation'.
- **Policy Changes:** These organizations provide legislative push via pressure groups to influence policy making by the legislature. They are also involved in research and data collection to identify key problem areas, and work on them specifically.
- **Capacity Building:** These groups have been providing training to women and helping them build up necessary skills to participate in the legislative process. Civil groups also create platforms for women leaders to come and collectively strategize for greater political participation.

Conclusion:

Therefore, the effects of civil society groups on the legislative process of India cannot be undermined. The passing of the 'Women Reservation Bill, 2023' is a testimony to the positive effects that civil groups have on the nation.