Compendium of Training Resources for Capacity Building of Panchayati Raj Institutions

प्रज्वलितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः
Light the Lamp of Knowledge

SIRD
State Institute of Rural Development

Forward

Subsequent to the 73rd Constitutional Amendment in 1992, Gujarat Government enacted Gujarat Panchayati Raj Act 1993. This new act has the potential to transform the grass root democratic institution by participation of leaders from among women, SC and ST creating a new administrative set up. During the last 17 years, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) have been provided more roles and responsibilities through devolution process. To make government programmes and schemes participatory, PRIs have been strengthen to conduct gram sabha for planning and social accountability.
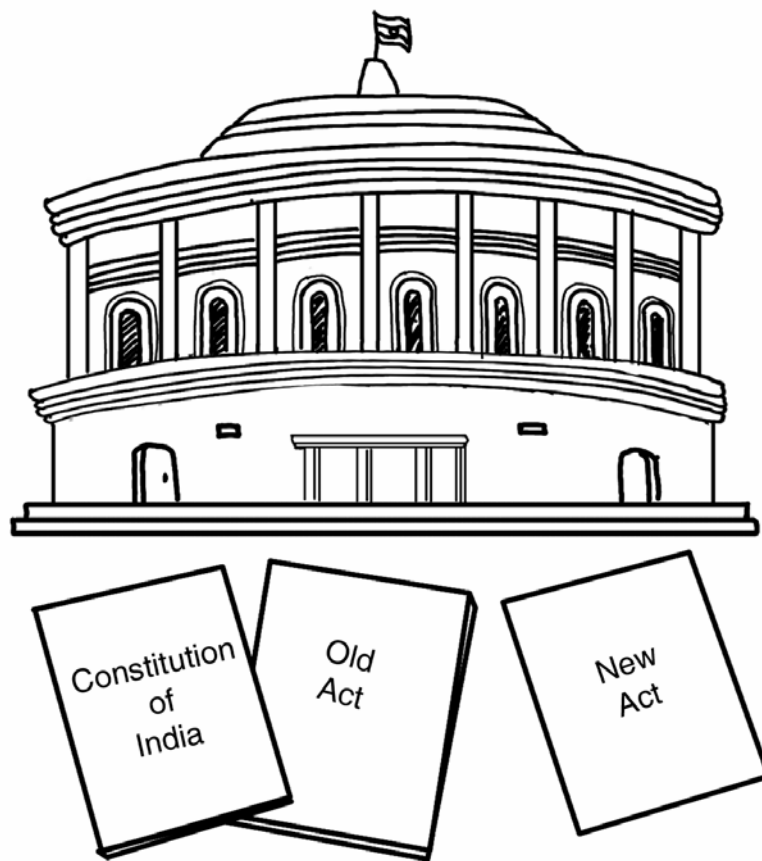
It gives a sense of satisfaction and achievement when one sees how the PRIs can effectively implement democratic decentralization governance with people's participation, particularly with the leadership with women, SCs, STs and other vulnerable section in planning and management of local development and social justice process. This will accelerate development along with social justice. There are six districts in Gujarat which is consider as backward district and for the development of the districts, government has created a progamme named "Backward Region Grant Fund" to facilitated decentralized developmental process in convergence with other schemes and programmes. It may be remembered here that government of Gujarat has instituted Cowlagi committee to develop indicators of backwardness. The backward regions can only be developed if the PRIs effectively play a participatory and transparent governance role.

Looking into the needs of capacity building of the elected representatives of PRIs, this training compendium has been prepared. This includes components like Panchayati Raj Act, role of PRIs, broader concepts like poverty, human development, gender and social justice and leadership development. This compendium is prepared by Unnati. It is hope that this compendium will be useful for the capacity building of representatives of PRIs.

Contents

1. PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA - AN OVERVIEW

[1]Local governance system is in practice from ancient period. It is mentioned in RIGVEDA. Evidences suggest that self-governing village bodies called 'sabhas' existed. With the passage of time, these bodies became panchayats (council of five persons). The word "panchayat" is derived from two Sanskrit words - *Panch* and *Ayat*. *Panch* means group of five people and *Ayat* means Place where these five people used to sit for resolving the village issues. Panchayats were functional institutions of grassroots governance in almost every village. The Village Panchayat or elected council had executive and judicial powers. Land was distributed by the panchayat. It also collected taxes out of the produce and paid the government's share on behalf of the village. For every cluster of village councils there was a larger panchayat or council to supervise and interfere if necessary. Casteism and feudalistic system of governance under Mughal rule in the medieval period slowly eroded the self-government in villages. A new class of feudal chiefs and revenue collectors (zamindars) emerged between the ruler and the people. During the British rule, the autonomy of panchayats gradually declined with the establishment of local civil and criminal courts, revenue and police organisations, increase in communications and growth of individualism and the operation of the individual Ryotwari (landholder-wise) system as against the Mahalwari or village tenure system.

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British rulers were interested in the creation of 'controlled' local bodies that could help them in their trading interests by collecting taxes for them. When the colonial administration came under severe financial pressure after the 1857 uprising, the remedy sought was decentralisation in terms of transferring responsibility for road and public works to local bodies. However, the thrust of this 'compelled' decentralisation was with respect to municipal administration.

Viceroy Lord Mayo's Resolution in 1870 for decentralization of power to bring about administrative efficiency in meeting people's demand and to add to the finances of colonial regime gave the needed impetus to the development of local institutions. It was considered a landmark in the evolution of colonial policy towards local government. The real benchmark of government policy on decentralisation can be attributed to Lord Ripon. His resolution recognized two aspects of local government: administrative efficiency and political education. The Ripon Resolution focused on towns and provided for local bodies consisting of a large majority of elected non-official members and presided over by a non-official chairperson. This resolution met with resistance from colonial administrators. The progress of local self-government was slow with only half-hearted steps taken in setting up municipal bodies. There was no effort on administrative reform for rural governance and thus, decentralization process in rural areas remained neglected.

For the first time, the importance of panchayat at the village level was recognised by The Royal Commission in the year 1907. The commission recommended that "it is most desirable, alike in the interests of decentralisation and in order to associate the people with the local tasks of administration that an attempt should be made to constitute and develop village panchayats for the administration of local village affairs". **Montague-Chemsford reforms** (1919) brought local self-government as a provincial transferred subject under the domain of Indian ministers in the provinces. Due to organisational and fiscal constraints, the reform was unable to make panchayat institutions truly democratic and vibrant. However, the most significant development of this period was the 'establishment of village panchayats in a number of provinces, that were no longer mere ad hoc judicial tribunal, but representative institutions symbolising the corporate character of the village and having a wide jurisdiction in respect of civic matters'. As a result of this, eight provinces had passed Panchayat Acts by 1925 and in 1926 six native states had also passed panchayat laws.

The provincial autonomy under the Government of India Act, 1935, marked the evolution of panchayats in India. Popularly elected governments in provinces enacted legislations to further democratise institutions of local self-government. But the system of responsible government at the grassroots level was least responsible. In spite of various committees such as the **Royal Commission on Decentralization** (1907), the report of Montague and Chemsford on constitutional reform (1919), the Government of India Resolution (1918), etc., a hierarchical administrative structure based on supervision and control evolved. The administrator became the focal point of rural governance.

Status of Panchayti Raj Institutions after Independence

The Indian National Congress from the 1920s to 1947, emphasized the issue of all-India Swaraj, and organized movements for Independence under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. The task of preparing a blueprint for the local level was neglected. There was no consensus among the top leaders regarding the status and role to be assigned to the institution of rural local self-government; rather there were divergent views on the subject. During the

drafting of the Constitution of India, Panchayati Raj Institutions were placed in the Directive Principles of State Policy, as Article 40. The Article read 'the State shall take steps to organise village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government'. However, no worthwhile legislation was enacted either at the national or state level to implement it.

In the four decades since the adoption of the Constitution, Panchayat Raj Institutions have travelled from the non-justiciable part of the Constitution to one where, through a separate amendment a new status has been provided to them.

Panchayat Raj had to go through various stages. The First Five Year Plan failed to bring about active participation and involvement of the people in the planning processes, which included plan formulation, implementation and monitoring. The Second Five Year Plan attempted to cover the country through National Extensive Service Blocks through Block Development Officers, Assistant Development Officers, Village Level Workers, in addition to nominated representatives of village panchayats of that area and some other popular organisations like co-operative societies. It failed to satisfactorily accomplish decentralization. Hence, committees were constituted by various authorities to advise the Centre on different aspects of decentralization.

Balwantrai Mehta Committee (1957) - The Balwantrai Mehta Committee was setup to study the Community Development Projects. It held that community development would only be deep and enduring when the community was involved in the planning, decision-making and implementation process. The recommendations given by the committee were as follows:

- Establishment of elected local bodies at the block/ samiti level since their area of jurisdiction should neither be too large nor too small and devolve them all of necessary resources, power and authority for sustaining citizen involvement.
- Such body must not be constrained by too much control by the government or government agencies. It should be constituted for at least for five years by indiredct election from the Village Panchayat.
- Its functions should cover the development of agriculture in all its aspects, the promotion of local industries and other services such as drinking water, road building etc.
- The higher level body, Zilla Parishad, would play an advisory role.

The PRI structure did not develop the requisite democratic momentum and failed to cater to the needs of rural development. There are various reasons for such an outcome which include political and bureaucratic resistance at the state level to share power and resources with local level institutions, domination of local elites over the major share of the benefits of welfare schemes, lack of capability at the local level and lack of political will.

K. Santhanam Committee (1963) - The K. Santhanam Committee was formed to look into PRI finance. It recommended that panchayats should have powers to levy special tax on land revenues and home taxes and all grants and subventions at the state level should be mobilised and sent in a consolidated form to various PRIs. This committee also advocated setting up a Panchayati Raj Finance Corporation to look after the financial resources of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Ashok Mehta Committee (1978) - A high-level committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Ashok Mehta to examine and suggest measures to strengthen PRIs. As per

the recommendation of the committee, the district is a viable administrative unit for which planning, co-ordination and resource allocation is feasible and technical expertise available. PRIs should be two tier systems with mandal panchayat at the base and Jilla Panchayat at the top. The committee suggested that representations of SC and ST in the election of PRI should be based on their population and tenure of the panchayata should be four years.

G.V.K. Rao Committee (1985) - The G.V.K. Rao Committee was appointed to once again look at various aspects of PRIs. The Committee was of the opinion that a total view of rural development must be taken in which PRIs must play a central role in handling people's problems. It recommended that PRIs have to be activated and provided with all the required support to become effective institutions of Local Self Governance. PRIs should be assigned the role to make plans, implement and monitor the Rural Development Programme at the district level and below and the block development office should be the spinal cord of the rural development process.

L.M.Singhvi Committee (1986) - L.M. Singhvi Committee was appointed to study Panchayati Raj. This committee recommended that Local Self Governance should be constitutionally recognized and political parties should not involve in the panchayat elections.

The suggestion of giving panchayat Constitutional status was opposed by the Sarkaria Commission, but the idea, however, gained momentum in the late 1980s especially because of the endorsement by the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who introduced the 64th Constitutional Amendment Bill in 1989. The 64th Amendment Bill was prepared and introduced in the lower house of Parliament. It got defeated in the Rajya Sabha. In 1989, the National Front introduced the 74th Constitutional Amendment Bill, which could not become an Act because of the dissolution of the Ninth Lok Sabha. All these various suggestions and recommendations and means of strengthening PRIs were considered while formulating the new Constitutional Amendment Act.

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act

The Constitutional (73rd Amendment) Act, passed in 1992 came into force on April 24, 1993. It was meant to provide Constitutional sanction to establish "democracy at the grassroots level as it is at the state level or national level". The main features of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act are as follows:

- The Gram Sabha or village assembly has been recognized as the foundation of the Panchayati Raj System.
- Three tier structure for Panchayati Raj Institutions has been introduced at village, Taluka and Jilla levels.
- All the seats in a panchayat at every level are to be filled by elections from respective territorial constituencies.
- One third of the seats for women will be reserved in all the tiers
- Reservation for SCs and STs has to be provided at all levels in proportion to their population in the panchayats.
- A State Election Commission has to be constituted in every State and UT for smooth election of PRIs and ULBs.
- A State Finance Commission in every State/UT has to be formed every five years to suggest measures to strengthen finances of PRIs.

- The District Planning Committee (DPC) in every district has been accorded constitutional status to promote bottom up planning.
- Indicative list of 29 functions have been entrusted to panchayats through Eleventh Schedule for effective role in planning and implementation of related works.

At present, there are around 3 million elected representatives at all levels of the panchayats of which one-third are women. These members represent more than 2.4 lakh Gram Panchayats, about 6,000 intermediate tiers and more than 500 district Panchayats. This is the largest experiment in decentralisation of governance in the history of humanity.

The Constitution visualises panchayats as institutions of self-governance. However, giving due consideration to the federal structure of our polity, most of the financial powers and authorities to be endowed on panchayats have been left at the discretion of concerned state legislatures. Consequently, the powers and functions vested in PRIs vary from state to state. These provisions combine representative and direct democracy into a synergy and are expected to result in an extension and deepening of democracy in India..

Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas

Article 244 (1) and (2) of the Constitution of India enables the government to enact separate laws for the governance and administration of the tribal areas. In pursuance of these articles, the President of India had asked each of the states in the country to identify tribal dominated areas. Areas thus identified by the states were declared as Fifth Schedule areas. Such areas have special rights and the Governor of the respective states have powers to make regulations for better governance and for protecting the rights of the tribal community.

When the 73rd Constitutional Amendment was brought in to effect for decentralized governance in rural areas, many states with substantial geographical area under Fifth Schedule (e.g. Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh) extended the implementation of the same act and provisions that were applicable in the non-schedule areas to the Fifth Schedule areas. Public interest litigation was filed in the Supreme Court and the court immediately intervened in the matter and directed the Parliament to take specific measures for local governance in Schedule V areas.

The Parliament appointed a special committee under the chairmanship of Dileep Singh Bhuria, a tribal MP from Madhya Pradesh for giving recommendation for the implementation Panchayat Raj in Fifth Schedule areas of the country. Based on the recommendations of the Bhuria committee, the Parliament, in 1996, passed a separate legislation as an annexure to the 73rd Amendment specifying special provision for Panchayat in Fifth Schedule areas. The provision came into force on December 24, 1996. This Act extended panchayats to tribal areas in eight States - Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan. The State Governments were required to enact their legislation in accordance with the provisions of the Act before the expiry of one year i.e 23rd December, 1997.

The Extension Act gives special powers to the gramsabha in the scheduled areas. For example, the state act on Panchayats in Madhya Pradesh provides that a non–elected tribal

member of gramsabha shall chair the meeting of gramsabha. Powers given to the panchayats vis-à-vis governance in scheduled area as follows:

- Power to manage natural resources
- Power to conserve and protect customs and traditions
- Power to manage community resources
- Power to resolve dispute through customary method
- Control over the business related to money lending
- Control and management of Non-timber Forest Produce

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4. Government of India, Report of the Team for the Study of Community Projects and National Extension Service, (Chairperson: Balvantrai Mehta), Committee on Plan Projects, National Development Council, (New Delhi, November 1957), Vol. I
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6. Constitution (Seventy Third Amendment) Act, 1992

2. PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN GUJARAT

[2]Gujarat is one of the states that has accepted pancahayats as the institutions of self governance since pre independence period. The State made periodic reviews and changes to improve the Act that regulates the functioning of panchayats. Prior to independence Local Self Governance Institutions were governed by the Bombay Village Panchayat Act, 1920. Powers and authority vested by this Act on the Village Panchayats included monetary resourses and public properties. The Bomabay Village Panchayat Act was reformulated in the year 1939 and further amended in 1947.

After independence many functions were included in the State list, consequent to the objective of a Welfare State as per Article 38 of the Constitution of India. According to Article 40 "the State shall endow such power and responsibilities to the panchayats so as to make them institution of self government". In pursuance the Directive principle also, it was conceived to decentralize power and function to the Panchayati Raj Institution (PRIs). Subsequent to this, The Bombay Panchayat Act 1939 was revised as the Bombay Village Panchayat Act, 1958.

The Balwantrai Mehta Committee was setup to study the Community Development Projects in the year 1957. The Committee held that community development would only be deep and

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enduring when the community was involved in the planning, decision-making and implementation process. The Balwantrai Mehta Committee pointed out that the absence of local agencies that represent the local community was the main reason for indifference of masses. Following the recommendation of this committee, a three tier structure in Panchayati Raj Institution was introduced all over the country and States took initiative in constituting PRIs in their respective jurisdiction.

Gujarat became a separate state on May 1, 1960. However, the primary tier i.e., the garm panchayats continued to be guided by the provisions of the 1958 Act. The state government appointed a committee under the chairmanship of the then Home Minister, Rasiklal Parikh to give recommendation for amendments in the 1958 Act. The committee made suggestions on the basis of the recommendations of the Balwantrai Mehta committee report. Based on the Parikh committee's recommendations, the new Gujarat Panchayat Act – 1961 was enacted. Two additional tiers viz, the Taluka panchayat at the Taluka level and Jilla panchayat at the district level were constituted to match with the three-tier structure followed all over the country. The Taluka panchayat was allocated supervisory and linking role, while the Jilla Panchayat had supervisory and executive powers which made it the moving force behind the high level performance of Panchayati Raj in Gujarat.

History of Gujarat Panchayati Raj
1920- Bombay Village Panchayat Act
1939- New Panchayat Act formulated
1947- Amendment in 1939 Act
1958- Amendment in 1939 Act
1960- Recommendation of the Rashik Lal Parikh Committee
1961- New Panchayat Act
1964- Jadavji Modi Committee
1972- Jinabhai Darji Committee
1978- Rikhavdas Shah Committee
1993- Gujarat Panchayat Act passed in the State Assembly
1994- Gujarat Panchayat Act -1993 came in to force.

Panchayati Raj Institutions in Gujarat functioned satisfactorily with regular elections to all the tiers. Panchayat elections were duly conducted even at the time of emergency and famines. Panchayat representatives from the upper tiers provided good leadership and guidance to the lower tiers and some of them even made their way to State politics. After the Gujarat Panchayat Act, 1961 came into force; the State Government constituted Jadavji Modi Committee (1964), the Jinabhai Darji committee (1972) and the Rikhabhdas Shah Committee (1978) to review Panchayati Raj in the state. The recommendations of these committees were well received and suitable amendments were made in the Gujarat Panchayat Act from time to time. 44 amendments were made in Gujarat Act till 1993. The series of committees constituted from time to time for the purpose included the Ashok Mehta Committee (1997), the G.V.K. Rao Committee (1985) and the L.M. Singhvi Committee (1986).

In 1992, the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Bill pertaining to the Panchayati Raj Institution was placed before the parliament. This Bill was passed in the Lok Sabha and the Rajya sabha, after getting ratification from more than half of the states in the stipulated six-month of time, it received the assent from the president of India and was enacted as the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA), 1992 on 24th April 1993. As a follow-up, all the States were to modify their respective State Acts in accordance with the provisions of the 73rd CAA within a stipulated time. In Gujarat, the new Act with necessary provisions was enacted in August 1993 and came into force on April 14th, 1994.

Salient Features of the Gujarat Panchayati Raj Act, 1993 (GPA-1993)

The Gujarat Panchayati Raj Act- 1993 was formulated as per the guidelines set in the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. However, the Act has also preserved many of its strengths from the previous Act. Aome of the salient features of the Act are as mentioned below:

Composition of three tier Panchayti Raj Institutions

Gram Panchayat - members of the Gram Panchayats are elected directly by the Gramsabha members. The President (sarpanch) of the Gram Panchayats is also directly elected by the Gramsabha members. One third of the seats are reserved for women while the reservation of seats is in proportion to the population of scheduled castes and tribes. Gram Panchayat having population not exceeding three thousand has seven members. If the population of the village exceeds three thousand then additional two members are increased. Total numbers of gram panchayts in Gujarat are as 13,693.

Taluka Panchayat - Second tier of panchayats are known as Taluka Panchayats. The voters in the area directly elect their representatives. The president and vice president of Taluka Panchayats are elected by the elected members from among themselves. According to the section 10(6) of GPA-1993, the members of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly elected from any constituency of the Taluka or a part thereof is the permanent invitee members of such Taluka Panchayat but he does not have the right to vote in the meeting. The seats in the Taluka Panchayats are reserved for scheduled castes, tribes, social and educationally backward calss and women as per Section 10(5) of GPA-1993. A taluka Panchayat has 15 members for a population of one lakh and two members are included for every increase in population by 2500.

Jilla Panchayat - The voters of the district directly elect their representatives from their constituencies. The president and vice president of Jilla Panchayats are elected by the elected members from among themselves. There are 17 members for a population of up to four lakh and two members are included for every increase in population by one lakh. Seats in Jilla Panchayats are also reserved for scheduled castes, tribes, socially and educationally backward and women as per the section of 11(5) of GPA-1993. Members of the Gujarat Legislative Assembly elected from any constituency of the Jilla or a part thereof is the permanent invitee members of such Jilla Panchayat but he does not have the right to vote in the meeting.

1. **Reservation**
- Representation of women to all the posts including members and chairperson at all the three tiers through reservation of 1/3rd seats for women candidates. This includes women representatives from SC/ST and OBC population also.
- Proportionate representation of SC/ST to all the posts [through reserved seats] as per their population.
- Reservation of 10% of the total seats in all the PRIs for representatives from socially and economically weaker sections (OBC).
- Rotation of the reserved seats and offices to different territorial constituencies for different panchayats.

2. **State Election Commission (SEC)**

State Election Commission was constituted in Gujarat on September 1993 under Article 243 K of the Constitution of India through which it has been empowered with Superintendence, Direction and Control of elections of local bodies. It is entrusted with the function of conducting free, fair and impartial elections to the local bodies in the state. SEC carries out

activities related to preparation of wards as per local bodies rules, decision on boundaries and distribution of seats, preparation of voters list for the Gram Panchayat, Taluka and District Panchayat / Municipality and Municipal Corporation of the state, conducting general / mid-term / bye-elections and supervising them.

3. State Finance Commission (SFC)

The State Government constituted the first State Finance Commission vide its notification dated 15.9.94 as per Articles 243(1) and 243 (Y) of the Constitution. The Commission submitted its report containing 67 recommendations of which 42 recommendation have been accepted, 8 recommendations have been partially accepted and 13 recommendations were not accepted. The Second Finance Commission was constituted on November 19, 2003 for the period of 2005 to 2010. Its report has been submitted to the Governor on June 12, 2006 but no further action has been taken. Third Finance Commission is yet to be constituted.

4. Funds and Finance

- Creation of the State Equalization Fund and District Equalization Fund for making grant to the backward panchayats to minimize economic disparity between district and gram panchayats.
- Creation of Village Encouragement fund to encourage the village panchayats to raise their own resources.
- Creation of District Development Fund from contribution of 10 % of each gram panchayat's income. This fund is being utilized to give loan to Taluka and Gram Panchayats to undertake development activities.
- Gram Panchayat has the authority to impose tax and generate revenue.

5. Constitution of District Planning Committee

District Planning Committee (DPC) has been constituted by a notification of General Administrative Department, Government of Gujarat. On March 29, 2008, The Gujarat District Planning Committee Act 2008 was formulated which provided the composition, structure and functions of the DPC. There was another notification in 2009 to change the composition of the DPC.

6. Tenure of Panchayats

The tenure of PRIs is five years. Election for a dissolved panchayat is to be held within a period of six months of dissolution and the new panchayat would to be in office only for the remaining period of the term. In November 2000, an ordinance was passed to remove Section 257 (2) of Gujarat Panchayat Act - 1993 that specified the time limit to hold gram panchayat election. There is also Anti-defection provision like that for Parliament and Legislation.

7. Constitution of Committee

Social Justice Committees have to be constituted at all the three-tiers of the panchayats to ensure social justice to the marginalized communities. The committee has a term equivalent to the panchayats. It ensures that basic services like education, health etc. are available to the marginalized communities and makes efforts to remove social inequalities. There is provision for constitution of Executive committee and other committee at all the three tiers to assist panchayats to execute the development plan. Special status has been given to the district level education committee.

8. Devolution

According to the Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993 provision is made for devolution of powers and responsibilities upon panchayats with respect to development plans and implementation of certain schemes. Matters in respect of which it is the duty of gram panchayat, taluka panchayat and zilla panchayat to make provision are mentioned in Sections 99, 130 and 154 respectively. These are known as Schedules I, II and III

9. Constitution of Gujarat Service Selection Board

The State Government has the responsibility to constitute the Board. There are five members including the chairperson. The member of the selection committee recommends to the State government regarding selection of candidates for panchayat service.

Extension of Panchayati Raj Act to the Schedule Areas

The Gujarat Panchayat Act, 1993 was enacted so as to bring the law relating to the Panchayat in the State in conformity with the mandate of the 73rd Amendment. Following the enactment of Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA), the Gujarat Panchayat (Amendment) Act, 1998 amended the 1993 State Act inserting new Sections 278A and 278AA along with new Schedules IV and V in the State Panchayat Act. The new sections apply to Scheduled Areas of the State subject to modifications specified in the Schedule IV and Schedule V of the Act. The Schedules were inserted by Act 5 of 1998 and published in the Gazette part IV Extra Ordinary dated 13/07/1998.

Main Features of Gujarat Panchayat Amendment Act 1998 are as follows:

Power to Gramsabha

- Sanction schemes and programmes for social and economic development implemented by the Panchayat.
- Selection of beneficiaries for poverty eradication and other programmes.
- Give utilization certificate to schemes or programmes implemented by panchayats.
- Sanction schemes and programmes for social and economic development.

Powers of Gram Panchayats

- Planning and management of water bodies
- Enforce prohibition and regulate or restrict the sale and consumption of any intoxicant
- Ownership of minor forest produce
- Exercise control over institutions and functionaries in all social sectors
- Exercise control over money lending to the scheduled tribes

Powers of Taluka Panchayat

- Consultation before acquisition of land in the scheduled area for development projects and before resettling or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects; the actual planning and implementation of the projects in the scheduled area shall be coordinated at the state level.
- Control over local plans including tribal sub-plans and resources for the plans.

Powers of Jilla Panchayat

Prevent alienation of land in Scheduled Areas and take appropriate action to restore unlawfully alienated land of a Scheduled area.

3. IMPORTANCE OF DEMOCRATIC DECENTRALIZATION AND PRIs
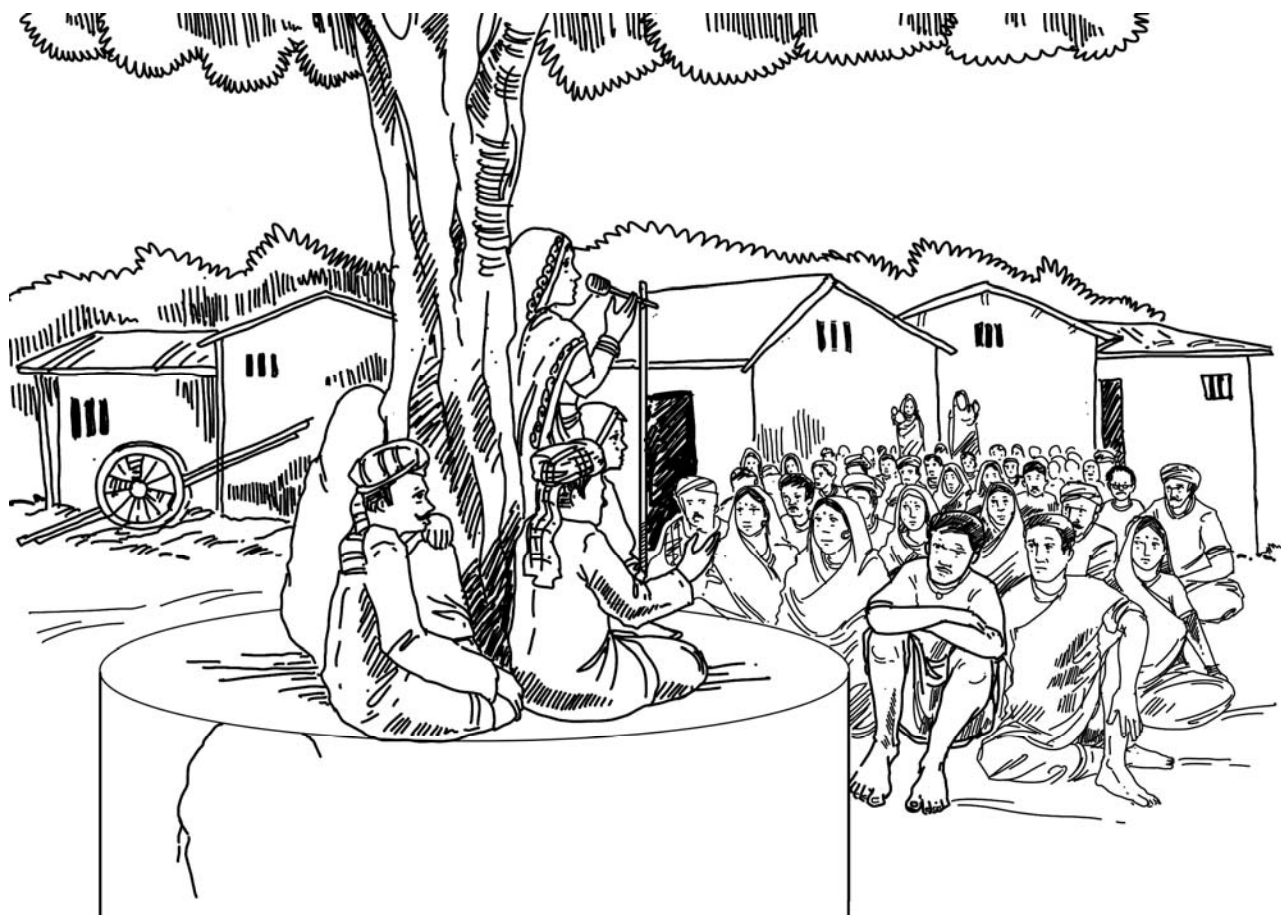
[3]Decentralization and people's participation are especially important in the context of participatory governace. It is based on the principle that decisions should be taken by the people and acts as an influencing force for enabling people to acquire control over decisions that influence their lives in critical areas. It also ensures political stability, public service, equity and macro-economic stability. Decentralisation can be achieved only through inclusive, accountable and transparent governance system.

In an era of globalization, decentralization is the principal countervailing trend which can ensure that the growth process is pro-poor, pro-women, pro-nature and pro-jobs. As market integration and technological innovation renders the national frontiers more permeable, it is crucial to put in place and strengthen systems of negotiation, regulation and decentralised governance. These can ensure that the voices and concerns of the poorest of the poor can take centre stage in policy dialogue at all levels, i.e from central to local goverment.

There are three types of decentralisation - **Political** decentralization involves the transfer of political authority to the local level through the establishment of elected local government,

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electoral reform, authorization of participatory processes, and other reforms. **Financial or fiscal** decentralization refers to the transfer of financial authority to the local level. It involves reducing conditions on the inter-governmental transfer of resources and giving local jurisdictions greater authority to generate their own revenue. **Administrative** decentralization entails the full or partial transfer of functional responsibilities to the local level (e.g. health care services, eduation, building and maintenance of roads, providing basic services and sanitation etc.)

There is also close link between reform and decentralisation. Apart from the theoretical logic of a reduced role of government creating opportunities both for private enterprise and for community action, in many countries actual reform programme has been built upon increasing institutional space for decentralisation. Reform programmes in developing countries as diverse in range as Poland, Chile, Argentina, South Africa and China, the autonomy to local units in decisions on incentives for investment and capital market access, has given a strong foundation to reforms. It clearly shows that economic decentralisation has been the key to success of reform programmes in such contexts. In the above-mentioned countries, only South Africa has undertaken the most comprehensive devolution of powers to the third tier. In China, the reforms were not related to political freedom. Political decentralisation provides a more durable 'rational-legal' framework that makes decentralisation an integral part of the political and civic discourse.

In recent time there is increasing realization that actual decentralization lead to development. It is also felt that decentralization of power to local unit of the government is the best way to empower the people, promoting people participation and increasing efficiency. According to the Human Development Report 1993, decentralization has been fairly successful in encouraging people participation, bringing accountability and transparency among the officials and in the system. It can help in mobilizing resources and promote equitable growth by bringing the poor in mainstream development. India is currently considered the world leader in creating space for political decentralization. All the government policies and programmes in India are focused more on creating space for people participations in each and every aspect of its implementations.

Article 40 of our Constitution provided for a Directive to the government to take steps to organise village *Panchayats* and endow them with the powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as the units of self-government. During mid-eighties it was realised that the said Directive was not sufficient to institutionalise Panchayati Raj in India. The practice of *Panchayati Raj* as per the Directive Principles of the State Policy was not to the satisfaction of the policy makers. One of the reasons was that no uniform pattern of *Panchayati Raj* was being followed by the State governments. While few States followed a two-tier system, the others followed a system of three tiers. Many States were not holding regular elections to the PRIs. Since the elections to the PRIs were being held by the State governments themselves, their fairness and independence was in doubt. There were no standard guidelines with regard to delegation of powers to such institutions. More important was the need to empower the people in the rural areas. It was observed that power had remained in the hands of socially and economically influential people, with the poor man having little participation in political decision-making. Same was true for women. The policy makers then began to think in terms of Amendment to the Constitution to empower the people in the rural areas, more particularly the women, and give a Constitutional status to the PRI, so as to bring uniformity in the country.

Democratic Decentralization through Constitutional Amendments

The Constitutional Amendment Act was passed in the year 1993 and the State governments were then required to enact revised *Panchayati Raj* Acts as per the provisions of the amended Constitution. Thus the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments have paved the way for actual realization of decentralize governance system and laid the foundation for grassroots democracy.

Articles 243, 243A to O were added as parts of newly inserted Part IX of the Constitution. The Amendment introduced across the board three-tier system of the PRIs at village, block and district levels. The electorate at *Gram Panchayat* level is called the *Gram Sabha* which elects the representatives to *Gram Panchayat* by way of direct election. Further, Article 243D provides for reservation of seats at all levels for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and women. While the reservation for the SCs/STs is as per their actual proportion in population of the concerned area, it is provided that not less than one-third of the total seats in all the tiers will be reserved for women. Reservation also has to be made for the offices of the Chairpersons at all the three tiers. Some States have also reserved seats for Other Backward Classes (OBCs). But there is no discretion with the States to reduce the reservation for women, which is prescribed to be not less than one-third of the total seats. The actual seats with women in the PRIs range from 35 to 42 per cent in various States. As a result, people belonging to the backward and the vulnerable sections, including the women, have almost 50 per cent seats in the PRIs.

The Constitution now provides that every PRI shall continue for a period of five years. The States have also been empowered to allow the PRIs in their respective legislative Acts to levy, collect and appropriate several tolls and taxes. Thus PRIs at all the tiers are able to generate financial resources at local-level and make expenditure in the desired field as per locally-felt needs. The State laws may lay down the procedure to be followed, as well as the limits of such taxes/levies. The State governments may also assign to the *Panchayats* various taxes and duties collected by it. The State governments are required to appoint a State Finance Commission to review the financial position of the PRIs and make recommendations with regard to the distribution of net proceeds of taxes between the States and the PRIs, assignment of certain taxes exclusively to the PRIs and the grants-in-aid.

To ensure free and fair elections to PRIs, the 73rd Amendment provides for setting up of a State Election Commission in every State and the State Election Commissioner is appointed by the Governor of the State concerned. With a view to ensure the independence of the State Election Commission, it is laid down that the State Election Commissioner can be removed only in the same manner and on the same grounds as the Judge of a High Court.

As per Articles 243G and 243H, The PRIs have been made responsible for preparing District, Block and *Panchayat*-level plans for ensuring economic development in their respective areas. The flow of funds for economic development would be based on such plans. With the power to levy several taxes at *Panchayat*-level, these provisions would empower the PRIs financially and make them self-reliant. These institutions are also responsible for implementation of schemes aimed at socio-economic development and exercise powers delegated in respect of 29 developmental items as prescribed in 11th Schedule of the Constitution. These items include: land improvement, irrigation, animal husbandry, fisheries, education, women and child development, etc. Most of the States have delegated these functions to the PRIs as per the spirit of 73rd Amendment.

Though in most of the States the PRIs are functioning as per the Constitutional provisions, yet it is seriously doubted whether the objective of empowerment of people at the grass root level has actually been achieved.

Challenges in Decentralization

1. **Cultivating mutual trust among the people and political leaders -** Promoting and encouraging peoples' participation in governance will require a great deal of leadership at all levels that is respected by the people. It is also required to build a consensus on different issues of decentralization.
2. **Political and civic will to promote decentralization process -** There should be political will at the national level to promote decentralize process through shared exercise of power and authority. Without political will decentralization cannot succeed. Secondly, the government official especially the civil servant must be ready and willing to facilitate the process of transferring power, authority, functions, responsibilities and the requisite resources. Without bureaucratic will, there will be many stumbling blocks in the way of decentralization. Third, the society at the grass-roots especially the elected leaders of local goverment must be rganized, capable and willing to receive and utilize the power and authority responsibly for the socio-economic development of the people. Without civic will and capability, the functions transferred through decentralization will not be carried out effectively and the resources transferred will be wasted.
3. **Capacity building of different stakeholders -** This is infect one of the important factor for success of decentralize governance. The argument commonly presented is that local people do not have the requisite capacity for managing local governments and therefore functions, responsibilities and resources should not be devolved to them. The capacity or lack of capacity for local governance should not be pointed out to local people or community only. There are several stakeholders are involved in the local government like government officials, civil society, state and central government etc. Therefore appropriate capacity building for local governance is to access capacity of each player and their roles in the process so that each one capacity is to be strengthened to play their role efficiently. Therefore Capacity building activities including awareness creation for decentralized governance should always include all stake holders and players.

References
Designing, Deciding, and Defending, Decentralization Policies: Challenges Issues and strategies by By Dr. John-Mary Kauzya (PhD)
Assessing the merits of decentralization as a conflict mitigation strategy by Joseph Siegle and Patrick O'Mahony

4. FUNCTIONS OF PANCHAYTI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN GUJARAT
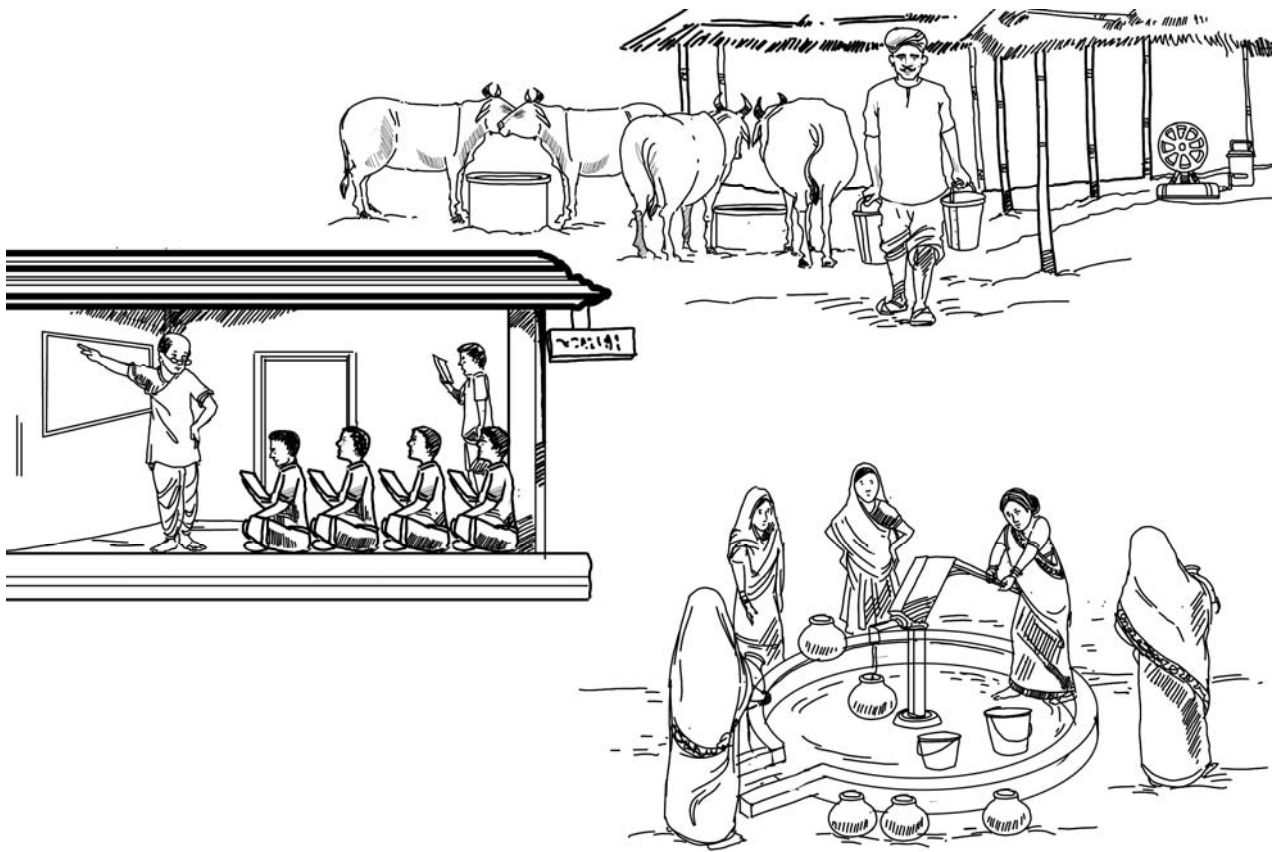
[4]Mahatma Gandhi advocated *Panchayati Raj*, a decentralized form of Government where each village is responsible for its own affairs, as the foundation of India's political system. His vision was *Gram Swaraj* or Village Self-governance. It was adopted by state governments during the 1950s and 60s as laws were passed to establish Panchayats in various states. It also found backing in the Indian Constitution with the 73rd Amendment in 1992 according to which panchayats have to be given powers and responsibilities so that they could plan for economic development and social justice. Primarily 29 subjects have been listed in the Eleventh schedule of the constitution on which panchayats could make decisions.

Powers and responsibilities delegated to Panchayats at the appropriate level are as below:
- Preparation of plan for economic development and social justice.
- Implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice in relation to 29 subjects given in Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution.
- Levy and collect appropriate taxes, duties, tolls and fees.

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[4] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

Gujarat enacted Panchayati Raj Act, 1993 pursuant to the 73rd Amendment Act, 1992. This was first published in extraordinary gazette English Part 4, Extra no. 20 on 26/8/93 and came into effect from 15th April 1994. It was further amended in the year 1998, 2000 and 2004.

According to Section 179 and 180 of the Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993 provision is made for devolution of powers and responsibilities upon panchayats with respect to development plans and implementation of certain schemes. Matters in respect of which it is the duty of gram panchayat, taluka panchayat and zilla panchayat to make provision are mentioned in Sections 99, 130 and 154 for gram pancahayats, Taluka Panchayts and Zilla panchayats respectively. These are known as Schedules I, II and III. Details mentioned therein are as below:

Functions of Gram Panchayat
Responsibilities and the work that have to be accomplished by the Gram Panchayat are in accordance with the section 99 of Gujarat Panchayat Act, 1993.

Public Health
- Keeping the village clean and abiding by hygienic practices is essential to protect health and keep diseases at bay. Cleaning of garbage dumps, filling up of abandoned wells, dirty and polluted lakes and ponds, cleaning of ditches and water logged areas and taking all necessary measures to propagate healthy practices are responsibility of gram panchayats.
- Villagers should be encouraged to adopt healthy practices like vaccinations for human beings and cattle for protection against diseases.
- Setting up and maintenance of public dispensaries and hospitals - All necessary arrangements for public medical treatment should also be made.
- Preventive measures should be taken to keep infectious diseases from taking epidemic proportions. All necessary arrangements should also be made to ensure that communicable diseases do not recur.
- Projects to ensure welfare of pregnant women and young children should be taken up. Setting up Anganvadis could be integral part of these projects. Such family welfare projects should be popularised and intensified.

Cleanliness
- Cleanliness drives, with sprinkling of water, should be organised at regular intervals. Maintaining hygiene and cleanliness standards on roads, ponds, wells and other public and private places.
- Public roads, gutters should be kept clean and unnecessary shrubberies that could help insects to breed and pose dangers of diseases should be weeded out.

Spread of Education and Culture
- Setting up of gymnasiums, play grounds, community centres, auditoriums for display of art and culture and welfare of women and youth.
- Establishment of theatres for promotion of arts and culture.
- Libraries should be set up and maintained for the benefit of the villagers.
- Promotion and encouragement of good/moral practices while discouragement to alcoholism, bribery and gambling.
- Efforts for upliftment of the backward sections of the society and abolishment of untouchability.
- Encouragement to enrolment of children to the primary schools. This will also be in assistance to the compulsory primary education norm of the government.

- Establishment of schools, construction and maintenance of school-buildings and provide necessary equipment for primary education.
- Set up pre-primary schools, nurseries along with child welfare centres.
- Extending necessary financial help to needy students and arranging food for students if possible.
- Organising celebration of festivals and annual functions at the schools. Staging cultural programmes with a view to educating the masses.

Impetus to Community Development
- Encouragement and assistance to cooperative activities in economic and social sectors.
- Propagation of family planning
- Relief for the destitute, crippled and the sick
- Assistance to the community when any natural calamity occurs - Arrange relief for the homeless and economically deprived at the time of famines or natural calamities; activities that would generate employment – like house building activities – for the unemployed should be taken up at times of such crisis; Financial and other forms of assistance to be extended to the victims of natural calamities. All these public works should be carried out by a village Panchayat within its jurisdiction, but in accordance with section 100 of Gujarat Panchayat Act, 1993, similar activities can also be carried out in other villages by the Gram Panchayat in consultation with the District Panchayat
- Organising the voluntary workforce of the village to help in the community works.

Social Development
- Eradication of social evils like untouchability and ensuring an equal status for men and women
- Adopt various activities to eradicate superstition and other evils
- Encouragement to secularism

An important aspect of social development is child welfare. The Panchayat members should decide how exactly to ensure health and education for the children.

Water Supply and Maintenance
- Supply of water for use at home and for drinking purposes of cattle and domestic animals
- If the current water supply is insufficient or polluted, then necessary arrangements should be made to ensure sufficient good quality water supply at a reasonable price.

Promotion of Village Industry and Livelihood
- Analysis of entrepreneurial abilities and employment capabilities of the villagers
- Preparation of a list of projects to help the unemployed and under employed to earn a decent livelihood.
- Promoting hand spinning, hand weaving dying, printing, embroidery, sewing, oil pressing industry, leather industry, pottery, carpentry, smithy industries, proseesing agriculture raw in to finished product, other cottage industry and special arts and craft of the village.
- The existing cottage industries in the village and unique handicraft styles, if any, should be revitalised with enough security, encouragement and assistance. Necessary inputs like raw materials need to be provided to invigorate the village enterprises. Efforts should also be made to ensure that the village artisans are trained in modern, efficient ways of functioning and also that they adopt cutting-edge technology.
- The village artisans should be introduced to benefits of forming cooperative societies to ensure quick and all-round development of the village enterprises.

Infrastructural Facilities, Construction of Public Buildings and Maintenance
- Buildings that are necessary for use in community and other developmental purposes should be constructed. Maintenance of the same should be ensured by the panchayats. Public roads, drainage pipelines, marking the boundaries of the panchayat, market places, butcheries, toilets and urinals, gutters, bathing places, spots to facilitate washing of clothes, drinking water facilities, ponds, wells, check dams are some of the public infrastructure that need to be created and maintained by the gram panchayat
- Specify terms and conditions for maintenance of and to regulate the use of Panchayat buildings, cattle grazing grounds, forest tracts, ponds and wells used for irrigation purposes
- Street lights
- Control on fair, market places (Bazar), tonga stand and cart stand
- Construction and maintenance of Dharmashala, cattle pounds
- Plantation of trees in the village and especially along roadside
- Construction and maintenance of housing for the employee of gram panchayts

Improvements in Farming Practices
- All possible measures should be adopted to bring improvement in the farming practices
- To ensure better farm produce agricultural loans should be made available at the least possible interest rate
- Setting up of warehouses to facilitate storage of food grains. Maintenance of the warehouses and ensuring smooth functioning of the same
- Develop barren and abandoned plots of lands that are handed over to the Panchayat by the State government for agriculture and other development purpose
- Stock taking of fertilizers should be carried out first. Then, the right mix of fertilizers should be prepared and sold to the farmers. Scientifically approved seeds should be provided. Centres should be specially set up for this purpose where apart from sale of seeds and fertilizers, farmers should be coached on the efficacy and need for advanced and improved agriculture tools. Easy and adequate availability of such tools should also be ensured at these centres.
- Cooperative farming should be encouraged
- Protection of crops and agricultural produce - For this purpose development, protection and betterment of grass plots for cattle grazing, plantation of fruit-bearing trees should be carried out. Adequate arrangements should also be made to keep at bay those animals which could pose a danger to the crops.
- Proper water supply should be ensured by taking up micro-irrigation projects and erect small water-storage tanks within the farm lands.

Animal Husbandry
- All necessary measures should be adopted for improvement and increase of cattle stock.
- Encouragement to dairy farming

Administration and Maintenance
- Punitive action against the owners of the cattle and dogs that are found loitering. Setting up and administering cattle and dog pounds
- Monitoring those forms of businesses and trades that are likely to prove dangerous to the public security, safety and well-being

- Dilapidated buildings and constructions that could pose a danger to the public safety should be secured or even demolished.
- Framing of practical guidelines for regulation of buildings and building construction
- Control places that are used to hold fairs and house market places. Fairs, festivals should also be organised regularly
- Regulation of tea, coffee and milk booths by issuing licences or through other means to keep a check on this form of business
- Maintenance and administration of cremation and burial grounds. Disposal of animal carcasses in a quick and hygienic fashion. Earmarking a spot and allied infrastructure for burial or cremation of unclaimed animal carcass or dead bodies
- Fire safety measures should be provided. Adequate measures should be taken for upkeep of infrastructure to protect life and property in any incident of fire
- Ensure adequate safety and security of all Panchayat buildings and properties
- For the protection of crops, voluntary crop-security teams of villagers should be constituted. Such self-help moves should be given encouragement
- The village youth should be trained in techniques of self-defence to be used for the protection of village, its inhabitants and its crops. State government's schemes for imparting such trainings should be used for assistance
- All forms of encroachments should be removed from public roads, open plots - Either arrangement for independent land survey should be conducted or assistance should be given to the state government's initiative for a land survey.
- Assistance should be given to the state government's land reforms projects. Efforts should be made to capitalise on all assistance for rural upliftment and development extended by the state and central government for various projects.
- Making budget, maintenance of records of expenditures and incomes - existing financial resources should be taken care of and put to constructive use that will benefit a large number of people. All financial activities should be in keeping with accounting and financial norms; special attention should be paid to maintenance of books of accounts containing financial transactions of the Panchayat.

Levy and collection of taxes
- Make adequate arrangements for earmarking and upkeep of the villages situated in the outskirts, cattle grazing ground and community plots
- Facilitating registration of marriages, births and deaths. Allocating numbers to houses and buildings within the Panchayat limits.
- Issues/problems that the Panchayat has not been able to address should be referred to concerned government authorities.
- Collection of land revenue as per powers bestowed on it by the state government under section 168. Proper arrangement for maintenance of accounts and documents necessary for the same.

Functions of Taluka Panchayat
The functions of the Taluka panchayats are as follows:

Sanitation and Health
- Controlling small pox and other epidemics and expansion & maintenance of health services.
- Family Planning
- Providing facilities for pure drinking water

- Supervision of stores of drugs, dispensaries, pharmacies, maternity home and primary health center
- Community education on methods for preservation of health and sanitation
- Control and eradication of contagious diseases
- Providing health and protection to the people against epidemics

Communication
- Construction and maintenance of village link road
- Providing necessary assistance for construction and maintenance of village approach road

Spreading Education and Culture
- Establishment and maintenance of primary school and propagation of pre primary education
- Constructing building for primary school and providing assistance to educational activities of village panchayat
- Enforcing the law relating to compulsory primary education
- Encouraging library and other cultural activities
- Establishing and maintaining information centers, community educational centers and recreation centers
- Establishing institutions for rendering social services such as youth clubs, women's clubs and farmer associations and encouraging any such institutions if already established
- Establishing village defence corps
- Encouraging physical and cultural activities
- Establishing voluntary health associations
- Training gram-sevaks and utilizing their services
- Training gram-laxmis and gram-sevikas and utilizing their services
- Promoting children activities
- Providing hostel facilities for SC , ST and OBC student
- Proganda for prohibition of and against drug addiction

Community Development
- Planning for increased employment and production and coordination with village institution
- Training for self help and self sufficiency among the village community on the principle of mutual cooperation.
- Implementation of the development programme entrusted by the state government
- Control over local plan and resources including the tribal sub plan
- Implemeting the schemes of women and child welfare. Promoting the women and child welfare, education, craft and tailoring centre.
- Sponsoring voluntary institutions of social welfare and providing support in their activities

Agriculture, Including Extension of Agriculture
- Development and promotion of agriculture and horticulture, planning for agricultural improvement in the Taluka
- Use of land and water resources and propagation of improved agriculture methods according to latest researches

- Construction and maintenance of irrigation work in the Taluka. Conservation of agricultural land in the Taluka
- Maintenance of seed multiplication farms, assisting registered seed producer and distribution of seeds in the taluka
- Improve the production of food and vegetable conservation of mineral resources for preparing compost manure, organic manure and mixture and to arrange for making them easily available
- Protection of crops, fruit tree and plants against diseases
- Establishment and management of model agriculture farm and providing credit and other facilities for irrigation and agricultural development
- Increase the area of land under irrigation by developing & maintenance of water resources. Promoting the development of the village jungle and pastures.

Rural Housing
- The Taluka Panchayat has the responsibility to develop village site with the cooperaton of local people to plan for rural hosing

Animal Husbandry
- Improve cattle breed by introduction of Stud bulls, castration of stray bullocks and establishment & maintaining artificial insemination centers
- Controlling and checking of infectious disease
- Introducing improved grass and cattle field and its warehouse
- Starting and maintenance of first aid center and veterinary dispensary

Village and Small Scale Industry
- Promote Cottage, village and small scale industry with a view to providing employment opportunity and improve the living standard of the people by establishing production and training center. Organizing skill building program for artisans
- Ensure implementation of schemes for cottage, village and small scale industry
- Establishment of industrial township at the Taluka level and develop wool industry

Promotion of Cooperatives
- Encourage cooperative institutions in the economic and social field.

Providing Relief during Natural Calamities
- Provide relief in case of floods, fires epidemics and other natural calamities on small and large scale

Administrative Responsibilities
- Collecting and coordinating statistics as may be required by the village panchayats, Taluka panchayats and District panchayats or by the State government

Functions of Zila Panchayts

General Functions
- Preparing annual plans for economic development, social justice of the district for the schemes entrusted to it by any law, by the Central or State Government and ensuring coordinated execution. Preparing annual budget of the district;

- Coordinating, evaluating, persuading and guiding the activities of Taluka panchayts and Gram Panchayats; Ensuring execution of the schemes, functions and works as well as the projects entrusted by any law or entrusted or transferred or delegated by the Central or State Government;
- Re-allotment of the funds made available by the Central or State Government appertaining to the transferred functions, work, schemes and projects, to the Taluka panchayats and Gram Panchayats according to their criteria
- Coordinating and forwarding to the State Government the resolutions of grants for any specific purpose received from Taluka Panchayat;
- Ensuring execution of plans, projects and other works for benefit of two or more than two Taluka panchayats
- Taking necessary steps to raise resources, in exercise of the powers conferred by any law or by the Central or State Government and power to do relief work during natural calamity; Maintenance of essential statistics.

Agriculture, in which exentension of agriculture is included
- Popularising use of improved agricultural implements, improved agricultural practices to increase agricultural production.
- Opening and managing agricultural seed farms and commercial farms;
- Conducting agricultural fairs & exhibitions;
- Preparing and executing plans for integrated extension of agriculture and horticulture
- Preparing and executing plan for integrated extension of land reclamation and soil conservation. Establishment and management of model agriculture farm

Minor Irrigation, Water Management and Watershed Development
- Construction and management of lift irrigation;
- Extension of watershed programme; Maintenance of available water sources; Development of ground level water resources; Encouraging community water committees and installing community pump sets.

Animal Husbandry, Dairy and Poultry
- Preparing and executing an integrated plan for improvement in breed of domestic cattle, poultry and other live stock
- Promotion of poultry farming and implement the schemes of Goshala Development
- Establishment of veterinary hospitals and artificial insemination centers;
- Integrated development of fodder;

Social and Agricultural Forestry
- Integrated management of plantation on flanks of roads and other public lands under its control; Integrated management of social & agricultural forestry;

Village & Small Scale Industries
- Aiding development of village & cottage industries
- Identifying traditionally expert artisans and implementing an integrated scheme of development of household industries befitting them;
- Provision for training and financial help to craftsmen and artisans;

Rural Housing
- Integrated management of execution of rural housing programmes in the district;

- Assisting the Gram Panchayats and the Taluka panchayats in coordinating, supervising and maintaining distribution of building sites within its jurisdiction;

Drinking Water Facility
- Control and prevention of water pollution; Extension of rural water supply;
- Management of drinking water sources.

Roads, Buildings, Bridges - Culverts, Waterways and other means of Communication
- Overall planning for roads except national and state highways, and bridges & culverts, getting them constructed and making provision for their maintenance
- Preparing a comprehensive plan for link roads to markets, educational and health centres, getting them constructed and providing for their maintenance

Poverty Aleviation Programme
- Preparing a time bound plan for poverty alleviation and ensuring its implementation;
- People's awareness for full employment, creation of productive assets and participation in poverty alleviation programmes; Supervision of poverty alleviation programmes.

Education and other Cultural Activities
- Propagation and publicity of science and technical education in rural areas;
- Ensuring layout and implementation of an incentive scheme with the object of ensuring full enrollment and attendance in primary schools;
- Planning and implementing an education guarantee scheme;
- Extension of adult and non formal education;
- Survey and evaluation of educational activities and recommending the course of study
- Implementation of any programme with regards to secondary education that may be entrusted to it by the State Government.
- Distribution of government aid with regard to primary education between the taluka panchayats
- Assisting, guiding and encouraging all educational activities of the district
- Recognize Private Educational Institutions within its jurisdiction

Hygiene and Sanitation
- Ensuring promotion of rural sanitation and cleanliness of public streets, ponds, wells and roads; Preparing an integrated plan for public toilets, getting the same implemented and their maintenance;
- Conducting extensive programme for disease, immunization and vaccination;
- Preparing and implementing a comprehensive plan for control and prevention of epidemics; Establishment and maintenance of hospitals, primary health centres and dispensaries save medical College hospitals, T.B. - Sanitariums, leprosy hospitals

Health and Family Welfare
- Extension of health and family welfare programmes;
- Integrated measures for control and prevention of malnutrition;
- Extensive encouragement to small family norm and assisting family planning.

Social welfare and social security including women's welfare
- Specific programmes for organisations of women and children and their development;
- Campaign against superstition, intoxication, untouchablity and others social evils

5. PANCHAYAT FINANCE

[5]In India's federal structure panchayats are the federating unit of the state. As per Article 240 G, states have to transfer powers and responsibilities so as to enable panchayats to function as institutions of local governance. Panchayats have to plan and implement schemes for economic development and social justice especially on 29 subjects listed in the 11th Schedule of the Constitution. Under article 243 H, States may authorize the PRIs to levy and collect certain duties and fees and may assign to them the revenues of certain state level taxes. Grants in aid may also be provided to them. Thus, most of the financial powers with panchayats are at the discretion of concerned state legislatures. As a result sources of obligatory and discretionary tax and non-tax revenue differ from state to state. However, PRIs in almost all states have a poor fiscal base and there is a mismatch between their fiscal powers and functional responsibilities. Own resources of PRIs only meet a part of their operations and maintenance (O&M) requirements. This increases their dependence on higher levels of governments.

Sources of Funds for Panchayats

Sources of funds for panchayats can primarily be divided into three types – own revenue, shared taxes and devolution and grants.

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Own Revenue - Own revenue is the income mobilised by panchayats themselves. It contributes only 6 to 7 percent of the total expenditure of PRIs. It is composed primarily of property tax, land cess, surcharge on stamp duty, tolls, profession tax, advertisement tax, non-motor vehicle tax, octroi, user charges etc. In most states, property tax contributes the maximum revenue. The relative importance of taxes and fees varies from state to state. Gram panchayats have more taxing powers than the other two tiers. In a number of cases, under the tax rental arrangement, the gram panchayat collects taxes and passes on to the higher level of panchayats (Jha, 2004:4).

Tax/ fees by Gram Panchayats in Gujarat
House/ property tax
Cess on land revenue/ surcharge
Entertainment tax
Pilgrim tax/ fees
Tolls
Vehicle tax
Animal tax
Conservancy rate
Lighting rate
Water rate
Drainage rate

Tax/ fees by Taluka Panchayats in Gujarat
Education cess
Surcharge on any tax imposed by gram panchayat

Tax/ fees by District Panchayats in Gujarat
Tax on professions, trades etc
Surcharge on any tax imposed by gram panchayat
Source: Alok (2006)

Shared taxes - Another source of revenue for PRIs is shared taxes. These are levied and collected by the state government and a portion is passed on to PRIs. There are variations across states in this. Stamp duty, cess or additional taxes on land revenue, profession tax, entertainment tax etc form part of shared revenue in some states while they are part of own revenue of PRIs in other states.

Revenue	2002-03
Own revenue (%)	6.8
Devolution and grants etc (%)	92.1

Division of various revenue sources (all tiers)
Source: Alok (2006)

Devolution and Grants - Major portion of the revenue of PRIs comes from intergovernmental transfers from the Union and State governments in the form of devolution, tied and untied grants and centrally sponsored schemes. Grants-in-aid are provided to fill the revenue gap of the local bodies so that they can meet the expenditure on basic functions. These can be (i) conditional or specific grants meant for specific purpose like some schemes or projects. It can be further classified into matching or incentive grants and non-matching grants and (ii) general purpose grants or block grants based on some criteria or formula meant for additional resources with no conditions attached. Grants are also classified as statuary or non-statuary. Statuary grants are compulsory transfers that may be in lieu of abolition of

withdrawal of certain taxes such as octroi. Gujarat has devolved 15 functions and the corresponding funds for them to the PRIs.

Own revenues of PRIs have tripled in a decade (1993-94 to 2003-04) while own tax revenues have quadrupled. Own revenues are merely 9% of total expenditures (per capita). Average increase in total revenues and total expenditures (in per capita terms) has been 1.7 times. Thus while own sources of revenue have increased, the increase has been slow and PRIs continue to depend heavily on the upper tiers of government for their expenditures.[6] Average PRIs own revenues are below 1% of states revenue.

Status of PRIs based on Key Indicators of 15 states[7] - Per Capita (Rs)

	Own tax revenue	Own revenue	Total revenue	Total expenditure
Average 93/94 to 97/98	4.224	11.673	218.641	212.565
Average 98/99 to 02/03	17.65	32.55	375.65	378.08

Resources and Expenditure of PRIs according to Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993

Sec 108 – 113 deal with property and funds of gram panchayats, Sec 133 – 135 deal with property and funds of taluka panchayat and Sec 157 – 160 deal with property and funds of district panchayat. Sec 191 – 225 cover aspects of taxation and financial assistance to panchayats while Sec 228 covers provision for expenditure towards pay allowance.

Own resources
- Taxes and fees – Two types of taxes are collected. Some are collected and retained by panchayats as their revenue while others are collected on behalf of the state government. State government then redistributes them to the panchayats based on the average collection of the past three years. Taxes levied by the gram panchayats are house tax, street light tax, water tax, sanitation tax, drainage tax, vehicle tax, boat and animals, fee for grazing land, local fund cess and education cess. The taluka panchayats may levy a cess on stamp duty, water tax, tender fee, rent on building of panchayat. Under section 208 of Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993, district panchayat may impose any of the taxes and fees that are leviable by the gram panchayat provided that the rate of tax or fee does not exceed 10% of the rate of tax or fee actually levied by the gram panchayat. Under sec 191, the state government can levy a cess starting at the rate of fifty paise on every rupee. District panchayat may recommend the state government to increase the rate of cess in relation to districts provided that the increase is not more than 300 paise on every rupee. On receipt of an application, the state government may increase the rate of cess by notification. Under sec 209, district panchayat may, by resolution passed at its meeting, apply to the state government, for increasing the rate of stamp duty leviable under the Bombay Stamp Act, 1958 on instruments of sale, mortgage, lease or any other kind of transfer of immovable property situated within the limits of the district so as not to exceed 20% of the specified duty.

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[7] 15 states considered are Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal. 1st data set provided by 11th Finance Commission while the 2nd data set provided by 12th Finance Commission

- Non-tax revenues including income from remunerative enterprises and contribution from the public. Under section 202, 50% received from the collection of royalty is given to the district panchayat.

Grants
- establishment grants
- incentive grants for unanimous election of sarpanch and panchayat body, collection of taxes
- matching grants
- equalisation grants
- Gujarat – state and district Equalisation Fund

Central Finance Commission (CFC) and Panchayat Finances

10th CFC made recommendation regarding local self governance institutions for the first time. It made grants amounting to Rs4,380.93 crore for the period 1996-2000. It was Rs100 per capita based on 1971 census. Eleventh Finance Commission (EFC) recommended Rs1,600 crore and Rs400 crore respectively for panchayats and municipalities from Central Fund for each of the five years during 2000-05. It was to be distributed among the states on the basis of weighted criteria (Population – 40%, Index of Decentralisation – 20%, Distance from highest per capita income – 20%, Revenue effort – 10% and Geographical area – 10%). Twelfth Finance Commission made allocations to the states based on the following indicators – Population – 40%, Distance from highest per capita income – 20%, Revenue effort with respect to state's own revenue – 10%, revenue effort with respect to GSDP = 10%, Geographical area – 10% and Index of deprivation – 10%. TFC's consideration of index of deprivation is the addition from earlier criteria. Gujarat was allocated Rs69.61 crore by the EFC and Rs186.2 crore by the TFC.

EFC expressed concern over the maintenance of civic services, including provision of primary education, primary health care, safe drinking water, street lighting and sanitation. It recommended speeding the transfer of these responsibilities to local bodies along with funds and staff. The capital cost of the civic services was recommended to be met by budgetary heads of the state and O&M costs by raising tax revenues, user charges and by devolution of funds from the state. EFC also found that there was no mechanism for collection of data on the revenue and expenditure of local bodies. It recommended developing a computerized database on finances to be developed at the district, state and central government levels and linking through V-SAT at the cost of Rs200 crore for 25 states. Utilisation of amount allocated to PRIs has been increasing. It was 66.46% for the tenth commission, 82.52% for the eleventh commission and 92.58% for the twelfth commission.[8]

On the basis of dialogues with local bodies and the urging of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Thirteenth Finance Commission recommended to substantially support PRIs to enable them to effectively provide basic services to their constituents. The total grant to local bodies amounts to Rs87519 crores. It allotted the following weights to the criteria for grants to PRIs – population – 50%, area – 10%, distance from highest per capita sectoral income – 10%, index of devolution – 15%, SC/ST proportion in the population – 10% and FC local body grants utilisation index – 5%. As opposed to the earlier criteria, Thirteenth Finance Commission has laid stress on the aspects of devolution and fund utilisation. Thirteenth

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[8] Source: Ministry of Finance, Government of India

Finance Commission has also recommended direct transfer of funds to local bodies as it considers them to be key players in bringing about development transformation.

State Finance Commissions (SFCs) and Panchayat Finances

Article 243-I mandates the states to form SFCs to review the financial position of the PRIs and make recommendations to the Governor on the principles that should govern:

1. The distribution between the state and the local bodies of the net proceeds of the taxes, duties, tolls and fees leviable by the state, and their inter se distribution between the PRIs at all levels for such proceeds;
2. The determination of the taxes, duties, tolls and fees which may be assigned to, or appropriated by, the PRIs;
3. The grants-in-aid to PRIs from the consolidated fund of the state;
4. The measures needed to improve the financial position of the PRIs; and
5. Any other matter in the interest of sound finance of the PRIs.

> **Gujarat Finance Commissions**
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> The First Gujarat Finance Commission was constituted on 15th Sep'94 and submitted its report in 1998. Out of 63 recommendations, 42 were fully accepted, 8 were partially accepted while 13 recommendations were rejected. It had recommended devolution of Rs293 crore.
>
> SFC primarily recommended that gram panchayats be mandated to levy property tax, water tax and conservancy tax; land revenue distribution to be based on the average of last three years; reconstitution of Panchayat Finance Board having an independent status and a share of professional tax to be given to panchayats. SFC has recommended grants-in-aid on roads, non-agriculture land assessment and agriculture to non-agriculture conversion tax.
>
> Second Gujarat Finance Commission was constituted on 19th Nov'2003 and submitted its report in June 2006 for the period 2005-06 to 2009-10. The report is still under consideration. Third Finance Commission has not been constituted.

SFCs have to be constituted by the state at regular interval of five years. There have been delays in constitution of SFC, partial constitution and delay in submission of reports. CFC has to suggest measures to augment consolidated funds of states based on the recommendations of SFCs. However, the 10th, 11th and 12th CFCs have felt handicapped due to the non-availability and non-synchronisation of SFC reports for the relevant periods.

The states through their conformity acts provide for the composition of the commission, qualification of its members and the manner of their selection. Members and chairpersons of SFCs are drawn generally from amongst serving or retired civil servants.

Funding under Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF)

In Gujarat there are six districts under BRGF – Banaskantha, Dangs, Dahod, Narmada, Panchmahal and Sabarkantha. BRGF has two funding windows, (i) A capacity building fund of Rs250 crore per annum primarily to build capacity in planning, implementation, monitoring, accounting and improving accountability and transparency and (ii) Untied grant of Rs3,500 crore allocation of 2006 and 2007 and the outlay during the Eleventh Five Year Plan is intimated every year. It is guided by transparent norms and is to be used by panchayats and ULBs to address critical gaps in integrated development identified through participative planning processes.

The criteria for distributing the funds between districts are defined as:
- Every district to receive a fixed minimum amount of Rs10 crore per annum
- 50% of the balance allocation is divided on the basis of the share of the population of the district in the total population of all the districts under BRGF
- Remaining 50% of the amount is divided on the basis of share of the area of the district in the total area of all the districts under BRGF
- The criteria for distributing funds between districts are population and geographical area with weightage to population.

Development funds released under BRGF are to be used for filling critical gaps vital for development. Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies may use these funds for any purpose coming within the items that are devolved to them respectively as listed in the Eleventh and Twelfth Schedule of the Constitution respectively. Key gaps in local infrastructure under Bharat Nirman on which BRGF could focus, at the option of the Panchayats, include:
(a) Rural electrification, where intensive electrification of a village may be beyond what is proposed to be done from investment at the national level at present.
(b) Adoption of appropriate technology options by Panchayats for drinking water supply in hilly and tribal areas, where conventional pump and pipe water supply is not able to deliver.
(c) Augmenting Indira Awas Yojana

The principle of financial subsidiarity is followed, by which even if a higher level of Panchayat, such as a District or Intermediate Panchayat sanctions a work of a value less than a prescribed floor limit, it transfers the money allocated for that work to the Gram Panchayat concerned for implementation. In case the works are outside the domain of the Panchayats and Municipalities, the Dis trict Planning Committee decides the implementing department/agency and get the works executed through them. Powers of monitoring and supervision remains with the Panchayat(s) concerned.

Proposals for use of the developmental grant give details of the following:
(a) Criteria followed within the district for allocation of funds between the district, block and gram panchayat levels and ULBs, taking into account the visioning exercise and prioritization of development goals in the district
(b) The detailed deployment of funds receivable in the district, from several sources, including Centrally Sponsored Schemes,
(c) Steps taken by the State to equip PRIs and ULBs with substantive financial power in order to generate adequate resources, as also the own resources expected to be raised by Panchayats for the plan
(d) Steps taken by the State to equip Panchayats with substantive administrative and technical help or means to access these through contracts/outsourcing arrangements.

Conditions to be met for the release of funds to districts are detailed below:
2006-07 – First year of the programme - Total allocation for each District for capability building will be released subject to the groundwork detailed in the guidelines. First preference will be given to the release of developmental grants to those Districts where the Draft District Development Plan has been consolidated by the District Planning Committee and approved at the State level by the High Powered Committee.

2007-08 - First installment will be released automatically to those Districts on submission of application in the prescribed performa. Second installment will be released on the fulfillment of the following conditions: (a) Submission of physical and financial progress reports, (b)

The opening balance should not exceed 40% of the funds available during the previous year. The amount in excess of this limit will be deducted at the time of the release of the second installment. (c) Audit Reports for the programme for the last year and submission of Action Taken Report should contain a Certificate from the Chartered Accountant that while auditing the district account of the programme, he has taken into account the Bank Reconciliation Statement and the accounts of all Implementing Agencies and that advances have not been treated as expenditure, (d) Utilization Certificates are required to be submitted within one year of the release of funds in the prescribed Proforma; (e) Submission of non-diversion and non-embezzlement certificate; (f) All pending progress/monitoring reports should have been sent; (g) Confirmation that the district concerned (if Part IX of the Constitution is applicable to it) has established a District Planning Committee in accordance with Article 243 ZD of the Constitution and (h) Any other condition imposed from time to time in the interest of smooth implementation of the programme.

2008-09 onwards – first installment released unconditionally to those districts that were released the second installment of the immediately preceding year. Districts, which could not draw the second installment in the immediate preceding year for want of not having met the conditions stipulated, shall submit proposals for the first installment after fulfilling those conditions. Districts which received second installment in the previous year conditionally shall submit their proposal for first installment after fulfilling conditions imposed at the time of the release of second installment in previous year.

Fund Flow Mechanism
Funds are transferred to the Consolidated Funds of State governments. Funds to be transferred to Panchayats and Municipalities by the State Governments will be transferred to their bank accounts within 15 days of the release of funds to the Consolidated Fund. From the State level, funds are directly deposited in the bank accounts of the Panchayat or Municipality concerned, using the mechanism of bank transfers suggested by the Task Force of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to study the feasibility of rapid transfer of funds through banks to Panchayats. Diversion of resources from one district to another is not permitted. The interest amount accrued on the deposits is treated as additional resources under the BRGF and should be utilized as per the guidelines of the programme.

Good Practices in Panchayat Finance

Maharashtra has delegated considerable financial powers to the PRIs and transferred several schemes to them. 20 years back it started the practice of compilation of a large matrix on financial year basis depicting the fund flows from the line departments to the PRIs. The state instituted incentive awards under the Yeswantrao Chavan Panchayat Abhiyan.

Some states transfer CSS funds directly to PRI bank accounts automatically through the Fund Transfer Software developed by NIC. Sometimes separate funds are created within the Treasury and the panchayats are allowed to open bank accounts through which the transfers are made. It is also an enabling provision that these funds are non-lapsable and can be carried forward across financial years.

Some states allow outsourcing especially in technical matters and mandate to raise resources through borrowings. Madhya Pradesh has transferred the rights of extraction of minerals. Quantum of untied and programmatic schematic funds that reaches each panchayat is high in states like Himachal Pradesh and Kerala (20 to 30%). As per a policy decision by the state

government at the beginning of the 9th five year plan, Kerala has provided substantial untied funds for local prioritisation and local resource allocation to identified priority areas. Kerala is the only state in which three SFCs have submitted their reports and almost all of their recommendations have been adopted. The SFCs have also made path breaking recommendations. The first SFC recommended integrating 17 small specific purpose grants into a broader general purpose grant and also in streamlining the determination and transfer of the share of state taxes, making it fully formula-based and non-discretionary. The 2nd SFC suggested sharing of state's own tax revenue instead of sharing specific state taxes. 3.5% was fixed as general purpose grant while 5.5% as maintenance grant. The 3rd SFC fixed the base year's grant equivalent to the recommendations of the 2nd SFC and suggested 10% annual increases for the five year period. This has improved predictability as the SFC has indicated Local Government wise share for each year over the five year period under the three streams of General Purpose Fund, Maintenance Fund and Development Fund. Kerala has also been able to consolidate CSS in some cases leading to welcome increase in untied grants.

Issues in Panchayat Finance and Way Forward

Non-availability of Consistent Financial Data

There is a five year lag in availability of consistent financial data at the state level. Financial data is not available separately for each tier of panchayat. Details of expenditure and functional classification are not available. Lack of coordination between different departments makes compilation of data difficult. Across states, the heads under which the various data are stored are different.

Most SFCs have also reported difficulties in carrying out their tasks owing to non-availability of reliable fiscal data on most aspects of state-local finances. Since an SFC ceases to exist after the submission of report, many SFCs do not have access to the data generated and scrutinised by the previous SFCs. A uniform format for compilation is necessary across states and PRIs.

Actual Devolution of Finances and Functionaries

Actual devolution of finances is a major issue. There is also divergence between the allocation and actuals in the case of CSS or accepted SFC transfers. Financial resources and functionaries have to be placed with the PRIs. The CFC must pro-actively make devolutions on account of non-plan expenditure. Serious consideration needs to be given to omitting parallel structures.

Nature of Transfer of Funds to PRIs

Decision for providing a window for PRIs within the state budget was made to reduce the transaction numbers and nodes so that the cost of transaction could be reduced and efficiency ensured. Also, it would be easy to find out the actual transfers to PRIs through the budget. This widow has not been provided for PRIs within their respective budgets. State continues to transfer funds through the line departments through routine project or scheme line items to the Rural Development Department, DRDAs or to the Commissioner of Panchayati Raj. Then they are transferred to the Zilla Panchayats for transmission to the lower tiers.

There are usually delays in transfer of funds owing to various reasons, in state as well as centrally sponsored schemes. Some states have started to take measures to track the fund movement and keep the limit for the time from receipt to transfer to two weeks.

Possibilities of 'Own Revenue'

There is possibility to increase own revenue. The obligatory tax handles have to be seriously implemented along with the floor rates prescribed in a mandatory manner. This will require sorting out problems due to 'nearness with taxpayer'. Apart from granting greater taxation powers to the PRIs, newer innovative sources could be thought of. Non-revenue sources like user fees etc also have to be rationalised and properly tapped.

SFCs have usually recommended several taxes. However, collection of taxes at local level has remained difficult. Each tax requires a mechanism for collection and many a times cost of collection exceeds the actual collection of a particular tax. It is necessary to take measures to tighten tax administration for better compliance of existing taxes, rationalisation of taxes and recovery of cost through appropriate user charges.

Consolidation of Schemes

More than 200 Centrally Sponsored Schemes distort the multi-level planning process because they deal with subjects included in the state and local lists (11th and 12th schedules of the Constitution respectively). The share of CSS in the plan budget has shot up to 70% from the 30% of early 1980s. According to review of state finances by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI, Bulletin, Feb. 2008) reveals that Central Plan Schemes and Centrally Sponsored Schemes have increased by 127.8% and 49.6% in the Revised Estimates (RE) of 2006/07 over the actuals of 2005/06. Seven CSS currently are related to core functions of panchayats.

Strengthening SFCs

SFCs have a major role to ensure that democratic decentralisation envisaged under the CAA becomes operational and effective. Will of the State Governments is required to make efforts to enhance the credibility and acceptability of the SFCs. This will involve composition of SFCs, qualification of members, streamlining method of state-local fiscal transfers and creation of an authentic database of finances. Seriousness is also required in consideration of SFC reports and the next steps for implementation and filing of ATR. Efforts are required for synchronisation of SFCs with CFC. SFCs also have to critically examine the functional domain of the local bodies as envisaged in the 11th Schedule and the resource generation potential of PRIs. They should initiate and evolve the mechanism of rewards and punishments.

Many SFCs have suggested changes in the legislative and administrative spheres to strengthen local government institutions. Many of their recommendations regarding process improvements need to be heeded.

- Almost all SFCs except that of AP, Assam, Bihar, Goa, Haryana, Orissa and Uttarakhand have recommended establishment of a local development fund/ incentive fund/ common purpose fund.
- First SFCs of Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh and second SFC of West Bengal have recommended that local body should be allowed to levy taxes and service charges on all Government properties (including the properties of Public Sector Undertakings of the Central and State Governments, Boards, Corporations).
- First SFC of Rajasthan recommended that the powers, functions and responsibilities of the State Governments and the local bodies may be bifurcated similar to the division of subjects that exists between the Centre and the States in the form of the Union and the State Lists. A third list for District Governments may be inserted in the Constitution.
- First SFCs of Assam and Gujarat recommended appointment of Tariff Commission to streamline the existing rates, taxes etc of local bodies.

- Goa recommended a mandatory provision of vigilance committee.
- First SFC of Karnataka, Kerala and Tamil Nadu recommended that Finance Commission Cell should function in the Finance Department of the State government after the expiry of the SFC's term to review the implementation of the recommendations of the SFC.
- First SFC of Punjab recommended Tax Valuation Committee to listen to the objections of the tax payer regarding Property Tax Assessment.
- First SFCs of Maharashtra and UP have recommended public private participation for the improvement of essential services.
- First SFC of AP also recommended that a statuary authority may be entrusted with the review of implementation of recommendations of the SFCs.

Conclusion

First ever all India report on panchayat finance published in 1963 called Santhanam Committee Report clearly brought out the need for financial and administrative autonomy - "Panchayati Raj Institutions, being mainly an elected body, has to be self-governing and autonomous to some extent. No representative body will be content to be a subordinate agency. Financial resources have to be adequate for the functions allotted to each Panchayati Raj Institution. Nowhere in the world can local bodies function without substantial assistance from governments. At the same time, it will detract from the dignity and autonomy of a self-governing institution if it is to be entirely dependent on assistance from above. It is essential for stability and growth of these institutions that they should have substantial and growing resources which are entirely within their power to exploit and to develop. We deem it essential that every Panchayati Raj Institution should have control over its staff whether such staff is appointed by itself or placed at its disposal by the state government." (Government of India (1963) pp4-5).

6. PANCHAYAT PLANNING AND BUDGET

[9]Planning is the conscious designing of the most feasible course of action to achieve a certain target. It involves the optimum utilization of existing resources. It includes setting goals and objectives, situation analysis, identification of problems and making an action plan with detailed strategies and programmes. Planning implies harmonization of resources – internal and external, financial and human with the needs. When planning is done at the local level it can be harmonized with local needs. Village level planning with people's participation is suited to take into consideration the different eco-systems and socio-cultural traditions and be a resource planning for the village rather than a mere distribution of government funds.

Article 243 (G) of the Constitution states that "legislature of a state may, by law, endow the panchayats and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self-government with respect to (i) The preparation of plans for economic development and social justice and (ii) The implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them. 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution have provided a universal platform for planning from below.

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[9] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

History of Decentralised Planning in India

First Five Year Plan (1951-56) recognized the need for decentralized planning and divided the planning exercise into national, state, district and local community levels. Second Five Year Plan introduced elements like establishment of the District Development Council, village plans and people's participation in planning. However, operational aspects were not spelt out and there was lack of an enabling framework. The Administrative Reforms Commission Report (1967) emphasized that district authorities should be given a clear indication of the resources that would be made available to them so as to enable them to prepare purposeful plans. It stressed the need for focusing on local variations in development patterns.

In 1969, the Planning Commission communicated its first guidelines to the States for formulating annual, medium term and perspective district plans detailing the concept and methodology and several states made district plans. However the initiatives in district planning tapered away as the local planning exercises were not linked to the annual planning process in most states. They also did not incorporate urban planning as part of district planning. The process was directed from above and panchayats were at best consulted or co-opted. Gramsabhas were to be held to allow people to voice their preferences but the action was to be taken by line departments. Panchayats were unable to function as independent planning units exercising autonomy within their functional sphere because most of them had few financial resources.

From the late sixties to the mid-eighties, the trend was towards greater centralization of administration. By the late sixties panchayats had been superseded in most states. Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) were formulated and implemented mainly through line departments. Several efforts to strengthen decentralized planning (Dantwala Committee, G.V.K. Rao Committee) were largely unsuccessful. Owing to various reasons, decentralized planning has not yet become a reality.

Planning in India at the state and national level has been sector based. Five year and annual plans amalgamate sector plans. Even area development programmes like Drought Prone Area Programme, Desert Development Programme are based on sector needs rather than people's needs. Thus inter-sector linkages are weak.

Decentralised Planning and Status of District Planning Committees

Under Article 243 ZD, District Planning Committees (DPC) have to be constituted in every state (except Jammu & Kashmir, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and the NCT of Delhi) at the district level to consolidate the plans prepared by the panchayats and the municipalities and to prepare a draft development plan for the district. DPC has to take into consideration matters of common interest between the rural and urban local bodies including spatial planning, sharing of water and other physical and natural resources, the integrated development of infrastructure and environmental conservation and the extent and type of available resources.

District planning is a process of preparing an integrated plan for the district taking into account the natural, human and financial resources available and covering the sectoral activities and schemes assigned to the district level and below and those implemented through the local governments. District plan embodies the details of resources and their

allocation for various purposes and takes into account plans prepared by rural and urban local bodies in respect of activities assigned to them and the national/ state schemes implemented by them with their own resources and those earmarked for these purposes. Keeping these requirements in view, Article 243 ZD (2) specifically states that the Legislature of a State may, by law, make provision with respect to

1. The composition of the District Planning Committees
2. The manner in which the seats in such committees shall be filled, provided that not less than four-fifths of the total number of members of such committee shall be elected by and from amongst the elected members of the panchayat at the district level and of the municipalities in the district in proportion to the ratio between the population of the rural areas and of the urban areas in the district
3. The functions related to district planning which may be assigned to such committees
4. The manner in which the Chairpersons of such Committees shall be chosen.

In most states elections have been held for constituting DPCs. Elections have mostly been supervised by district administration or state. In Gujarat DPC is constituted with the in charge Minister as the chairperson and the District Panchayat President as Vice-chairperson as per the Gujarat District Planning Committees Act, 2008. DPCs may consult institutions and organizations for planning on the suggestion of State government. Person(s) determined by the State Government having special knowledge in the fields of economics, planning, finance engineering or administration can be special invitees.

Recent Efforts for Decentralised Planning

Second Round Table (August 28-29, 2004 at Mysore) convened by Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) resolved that the Planning Commission be requested to ensure that the Eleventh Five Year Plan is based on district plans. It also recommended constituting DPCs in all states by the end of 2004-05. States were also required to outline their functions and procedures, and to identify agencies to assist in the district planning process. The states were to provide untied resources to panchayats and municipalities to strengthen their finances.

An Expert Group for Planning at the Grassroots Level (chaired by V. Ramachandran) set up by MoPR in May'05 gave an action plan for strengthening participatory planning. It laid out the modalities of preparing perspective five-year

> **Recent Initiatives at a Glance**
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> - Guidelines issued by Planning Commission in 2006
> - Engagement of Technical Support Institutions (TSIs) to facilitate and provide professional support in the preparation of Integrated District Plans (IDPs) in 250 BRGF districts
> - Development and implementation of PlanPlus Software
> - Constitution of task force for the preparation of IDP Manual in 2007
> - National convention and release of IDP Manual in January 2009
> - Guidelines on IDP from MoPR issued on May 2009
> - National Advisory Cum Review Committee of BRGF, 2009

and annual plans at the district level and gave further suggestions for strengthening DPCs. The DPC, as per the report, should be a permanent institution provided with a secretariat to support its functioning. It should be the nodal agency for district level planning. District planning tasks including those relating to Central Plan schemes, need to be routed through DPCs. The DPC can take the assistance of technical and academic institutions and experts to perform its functions effectively. The Group laid out detailed guidelines for the district level planning process and the role of DPCs therein.

Accepting their recommendations, Planning Commission in Aug'06 issued detailed guidelines according to which a summary of the district plans were to be presented as part of the state's Eleventh Five year plan and annual plan proposals together with a note on the

Guidelines issued by Government of India for extending technical support to the DPCs and the panchayats for the preparation of the Five Year Perspective Plan for the Eleventh Plan period, lists the following steps for effective district planning.
1. Needs assessment and priority setting through participatory forum like gramsabhas and SHG networks
2. Situation analysis using locally available data through simple methods supplemented by Participatory Rapid Appraisal techniques
3. Resource Assessments from the following sources – own resources of PRIs, untied grants from state and central governments, partially tied funds from schemes like BRGF and MGNREGA, schemes devolved for local level planning and implementation, people's contribution in cash, kind and labor and credit linkages
4. Formulation of a vision of development as well as strategies for attaining the vision by the PRIs through a process of interaction with stakeholders and local experts
5. Development of project ideas based on the needs assessment and situation anlysis by expert working groups at different levels of PRIs
6. Consolidation of development proposals of the working groups
7. Prioritisation of proposals and allocation of resources to the prioritized proposals
8. Preparation of project reports in detailed formats
9. Vetting of project reports on technical and financial aspects by Technical Advisory Groups of DPC
10. Integration of projects into plans by PRIs
11. Consolidation of PRI plans into district plans
12. Clearance of the plan by the DPC

present status of empowerment of local governments and procedures adopted in getting local draft plans prepared. It was suggested that the sum total of the outlay of the districts plan in a state may be around 40% of the gross state plan outlay. These guidelines have been reiterated under BRGF.

GOI has taken steps like linking the provision of central assistance under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), MGNREGA and BRGF on availability of district plans. These plans will put together resources from various existing schemes and channelise them to panchayats on the basis of the district plan. BRGF funds will be used by the panchayats for gap filling and to converge and add value to other programmes, which provide much larger resources to these

Provisions related to Planning and Budget in Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993
Sec 116 to 121 contain provisions related to budget estimates and audit of gram panchayat, Sec 138 to 143 relate to taluka panchayats while Sec 163 to 167 relate to district panchayat. Sec 179 provide for preparation of development plans by panchayats

Budgetary processes in local bodies
State Acts and rules contain elaborate provisions for preparation and approval of budgets in PRIs and ULBs. Budgets are prepared primarily to comply with statutory requirements, are incremental and are not generally used as tool for financial control, long term planning and effective management decision making. Top down approach in budget making reduces public participation, transparency and accountability and can lead to insufficient attention to the felt needs of the local populace. Recent initiatives in states like Karnataka, Kerala and West Bengal have tried to make the budgetary process more effective and outcome oriented.

All the three tiers of panchayats are required to submit their budget by 31st March every year. Having the same deadline for submission of budget makes consolidation and integration of the lower level plans in the higher level planning difficult.

districts. The formula for disbursement of BRGF funds within the district is also to be derived at the local level.

Best Practices in Decentralised Planning

Karnataka

Karnataka had prescribed a detailed planning process on April 1, 1987 through the PRIs under the two-tier system of Mandal and Zilla panchayats. The process consisted of identification of people's needs and local resources, formulating local development projects by matching these two, prioritizing projects for implementation in the light of the resource constraints, linking the projects with various schemes and finally locating and sequencing these projects in the integrated area development framework. Though the gramsabha was expected to undertake the planning in its open meetings, in practice a list of demands or aspirations were made that were considered by the Mandal Panchayat consisting of a group of villages. A sub-plan was made for the Mandal Panchayat accommodating the demands of the village panchayats as much as possible. These were passed on to the Taluk Panchayat that was a nominated body consisting of all the chairpersons of the Mandals within the Taluk and all elected members of the Zilla Panchayat (ZP) from the Taluk. Local Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) was the chairperson of the Taluk Panchayat. Taluk panchayat incorporated Mandal plans into its own and sent it to ZP for similar action. Planning calendar was issued by the State Government prescribing the dates by which each tier of governance would finalise their plans. This system was discontinued after 73rd Amendment.

Kerala

Kerala's innovative model of a people's campaign for decentralized planning aims at involving the people in the setting of plan priorities. Around 40% of the state plan budget has been devolved to the local bodies. There are five stages in the campaign for planning that started during 1996.

1. Gramsabhas or ward sabhas were convened for identifying local development problems. Efforts were made to ensure maximum participation of people, especially women and other weaker sections of the society like gramsabhas were convened on holidays; squads of volunteers visited households and explained the programme; preparatory meetings were held; and an active propaganda using colorful posters and advertisements in all forms of media were resorted to. Around 650 key resource persons at the state level, 12,000 resource persons at the district level and more than 1,00,000 resource persons at the local level were identified to take part in the conduct of gramsabhas and facilitate structured discussions. A set of questionnaire was distributed to regulate the flow of discussion.

2. Local development seminars were organized to suggest solutions to the problems identified by the gramsabhas. Participants were provided relevant background information for sector-wise discussions through a printed report on the socio-economic status of the gram panchayat/ municipality. They were drafted on the basis of gramsabha reports, review of ongoing schemes, collection of secondary data, geographical study of the area and a brief survey of local history. Preparatory task included training of state, district and local resource persons. Line departments were directed to provide available data and information on on-going projects.

3. Sector-wise task forces (around 12 task forces in each local body) constituted at the grassroots level projected the recommendations and suggestions that emerged from the

development seminars. Thus around 12,000 task forces of 1.2 lakh persons functioned at the village level. They prepared around one lakh projects for the consideration of the panchayats. Special efforts were made to ensure participation of officials and local technically qualified people. A comprehensive list of potential retired and non-official experts in the state was prepared. Any expert who was willing to spend at least one day a week to render voluntary help to panchayats was enrolled in the voluntary technical corps. Chairperson of the task force was an elected representative while the convener was an officer from the concerned line department. A published training programme and handbook suggested a simple and transparent format for preparation of projects. State Planning Board had issued a set of guidelines for the preparation of projects benefiting the weaker sections of the society. It was recommended that the local bodies earmark 10% of the plan assistance for development of women. Care was taken to see that projects were prepared with an integrated approach.

4. Projects were prioritized and incorporated into the five year plans of the panchayats. For finalizing the plan, the panchayats had to make a clear assessment of their capacity to mobilize resources from various sources; evolve a development strategy on the basis of problems identified and resource potential of the locality, prioritise and select projects to be implemented and decide on a monitoring mechanism for successful implementation of each project selected. On the basis of this analysis, each panchayat prepared a plan document comprising of eight chapters – introduction, the development strategy, resource mobilization, sectoral programmes, integrated development, welfare of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, women's development programmes and monitoring.

5. Block and district panchayats prepared their plan documents integrating local level plans and designing complementary programmes wherever necessary. For this they undertook a detailed analysis of local development reports, local plan documents and the recommendations from below.

Thus the plans reflect local needs and aspirations and true attempts to fulfill them. As per the current planning procedure in Kerala, at the intermediate level there is a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to vet and verify the plans prepared by GPs and recommend to the DPC for approval. All the plans of GP, Block Panchayat, Urban Local Bodies and ZP reach the DPC and the TAC then vets and verifies the plans. Integration is made at the instance of the TAC and the Plan Preparation Support Group (PPSG). The DPC consolidates the plans received from local bodies within the district and submits the same to the State Government.

Planning Process followed by DPC: A Comparative Matrix

Key steps	Kerala	Rajasthan
Plan preparation at the local level	Sectoral sub-groups & working group prepare draft plan which is then approved in Gram Sabha meeting	Sectoral discussions in villages / ULBs on 17 identified sectors – demands not being met by all sectors were also recorded
Rural-Urban linkage	Consolidation only at DPC level by PPSG	Defined by community needs / ensured by Block and DPC
Panchayat level plan	Joint meeting of Panchayat Committee & Working Group draws up final Panchayat plan – this is then again vetted in a Development Seminar with all stakeholders on board	At Panchayat Samiti level sectorally

Approval to Panchayat / Block plan	Vetted by Block Level Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) & Block level Gram Sabha	By Block officials – through vetting and consolidation of Panchayat & city plans
District plan	All rural plans integrated to District Panchayat Plan; Municipal plans undergo same process	Prepared by Chief Planning Officer of district by consolidating block plans
Final submission	DPC approves plan in consultation with District level TAG and submits to State Planning Board	DPC approves integrated plan and submits to State Government
Institutional Arrangement	PPSG (to finalise sector-specific district plans)	Coordination Committee – state, district & block level
Technical Support	Technical Support Group, TAG, TAC	Expert services; participation by departmental officials

Link with Sectoral Plans

The planning process being carried out in the district is largely sectoral and the DPCs play an instrumental role in integrating sectoral plans for a unified district plan. Different states have provided different instruments to do so. In Rajasthan, it was observed in all 3 DPCs that officials from all line departments were invited to the DPC meetings and hence participated jointly in the discussions on district plan. In this way DPC could monitor implementation of sectoral plans and schemes.

In Karnataka, the DPCs can form sub committees with officials and experts for different sectors to facilitate plan preparation, monitoring and implementation. Mysore has formed 7 such committees but none are functioning. Mandya has yet to form any. This implies ineffective role being played by DPCs in integrating sectoral planning at the district level. The Karnataka study notes that even experts engaged by the DPC for sectoral planning were not necessarily adept in integrating the sectoral plans, and hence needed additional capacity building for comprehensive social, economic and spatial planning.

Kerala has the system of Technical Advisory Committee with sectoral sub-committees to study sectoral aspects of the plans. Integration of plans takes place only at the district level. As per latest state government guidelines, sectoral research teams can be formed under the plan preparation support group to aid the process of preparation of annual plans by all local bodies in the district. All these various means for enabling DPCs to integrate sectoral planning have been devised by the states, but their effectiveness depends on how effectively the DPCs are able prepare district plans. This remains to be seen.

Issues in Panchayat Planning and Way Forward

Despite concerted efforts by Government of India and some good practices in various states, it can be said the concept of development planning from below has not taken root. Wherever they are made, the district plans cover only the district sector schemes which have been assigned to the local bodies for implementation. Status of DPCs in most states is not satisfactory. Though their functions have been clearly defined by the Constitution and have been adopted as such by most states, the functions are not being performed largely because DPCs are not functional themselves. All recommendations of the Ramachandran Committee and Planning Commission's Task Force on Integrated District Planning, only when

implemented in sincerity, will enable DPCs to emerge as the nodal institutions for grassroots planning in India.

Database, Institutional Mechanism, Devolution - There are data constraints. Demographic, educational, resources, household and various socio-economic data are necessary for effective planning. Currently local governments are involved in collection of demographic data though they are ideally located to collect and maintain spatially comprehensive database. Current trends in satellite connectivity and advances in ICT provide excellent opportunities for data collection, maintenance and dissemination for local planning.

In the absence of meaningful devolution of powers and responsibilities, motivation of local self government institutions for planning is less. Carving out an autonomous jurisdiction of PRIs on the basis of activity mapping and ensuring flow of untied funds are necessary pre-conditions for institutionalizing local level planning. Political commitment is required for the same.

As pointed by an expert groups set up by the Planning Commission in Oct'05, line departments have a tendency to create stand-alone committees or groupings of stakeholders to oversee implementation, certify completion, monitoring, maintain assets created, distribute benefits etc. While this augments social capital and deepens democracy, they should not be looked upon as substitutes for panchayats. These groups could be conceived as sub-systems drawing their powers and resources from panchayats, performing specific tasks that are delegated to them.

Viable Framework for Preparing Local Plans - CSS have their own stand-alone planning process. The procedure has to be modified to enable the preparation of integrated village plans by the panchayats at all levels. As a welcome move following the recommendations of the expert group set up by the Planning Commission in Oct'05, role of PRIs in CSS is being specified and includes planning, executions and assessment of impact.

Some issues are already recognised like confusion regarding the nature and domain of plans to be made, i.e., whether the district plan is supposed to be a consolidation of sub-plans or the macro view has to be taken and whether the planning has to be regarding only the devolved subjects or comprehensive. Nature and quantum of technical support also has to be assured and specified. Under BRGF, the MoPR has already initiated identification of NGOs who can function as technical support groups to the PRIs and the DPC in preparing the district plan. There needs to be a framework for coordination between experienced planners and people's representatives. Further efforts are required for effective integration of district plans with state and national plans.

Owing to the varying sizes of gram panchayats across the country, in some cases the unit being very small, they could serve as generators of demand and needs while the intermediate panchayat undertakes the role of consolidating the demands and bringing them into the planning frame.

In order to facilitate the district panchayats making their plans before the states send their draft plans to the Planning Commission usually in October or November, a tentative allocation can be intimated to the district panchayat and in turn to the lower tiers. For this each state will have to adopt a tentative reasonable outlay even before the Planning Commission holds resource discussions with the states. This could be aided by SFCs settling

on a agreed criteria for distribution of plan outlays among the districts, giving a relatively higher outlay to the backward regions. Planning calendar is another necessity. There is also need to build the capacities of the staff engaged in planning at the panchayat level.

Strengthening DPCs - The status of DPCs in most states is less than satisfactory. In Bihar, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh no meetings have been held since constitution of DPCs, except the formal first meeting for oath taking. DPCs have not been able to effectively enable rural-urban linkages. Coordinated planning is not taking place. Block level integration of rural and urban plans is very important especially in the case of small towns which have strong links with the rural hinterland. Inter-sector coordination was not realised.

Some steps that could be taken for strengthening DPCs and the district planning process (as per study by PRIA in Nov'09)
- Adequate financial support, permanent office and secretariat
- Capacity building of members on the role and functions of DPC and on the tenets of integrated planning for social and economic development.
- A campaign approach can be adopted for orienting people towards participatory planning. Alongside the local bodies also need to be trained and equipped to implement the decentralised plans so prepared.
- The Rural and Urban Local Bodies also need to be oriented to adopt an integrated approach to planning. While preparation of annual plans they have to keep in mind the medium and long-term vision and goals for the district.

Conclusion

Local people should be involved in the process of planning and decision-making. The importance of regular convening of gramsabhas and adequate participation of local people cannot be underscored. Thus, planning is an important function to be assigned to all the tiers of the local government as they are better equipped to express the needs and aspirations of people.

Planning by its very nature demands a measure of centralisation as its need arises from the fact that financial resources that the country can mobilise are inadequate in relation to the requirement for economic development. Thus, available resources should be utilised properly to reach the desired socio-economic goals in time. A balance of cooperation and compromise is required. Decentralised planning can succeed only if grassroots participation is ensured. At the same time it is also necessary to give adequate thought to process of plan preparation, mechanism for monitoring and evaluation and mid-course correction.

In this context, carving out an autonomous jurisdiction of PRIs on the basis of an activity mapping and ensuring flow of untied funds are necessary pre-conditions for institutionalising local level planning. State plans should be made only after consolidation of district plans. Efforts to harmonize area plans made by DPCs and state level sectoral plans present a challenge and require dedicated efforts and strengthening of the planning machinery at all levels. Restructuring of the state budget is required where provisions for PRIs are made in lump sum and routed directly to the district panchayats on the passing of the budget. A strong system of decentralised planning through elected local bodies coupled with a vigilant civil society will successfully take the planning process, growth and development nearer to the people.

7. PANCHAYAT ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT
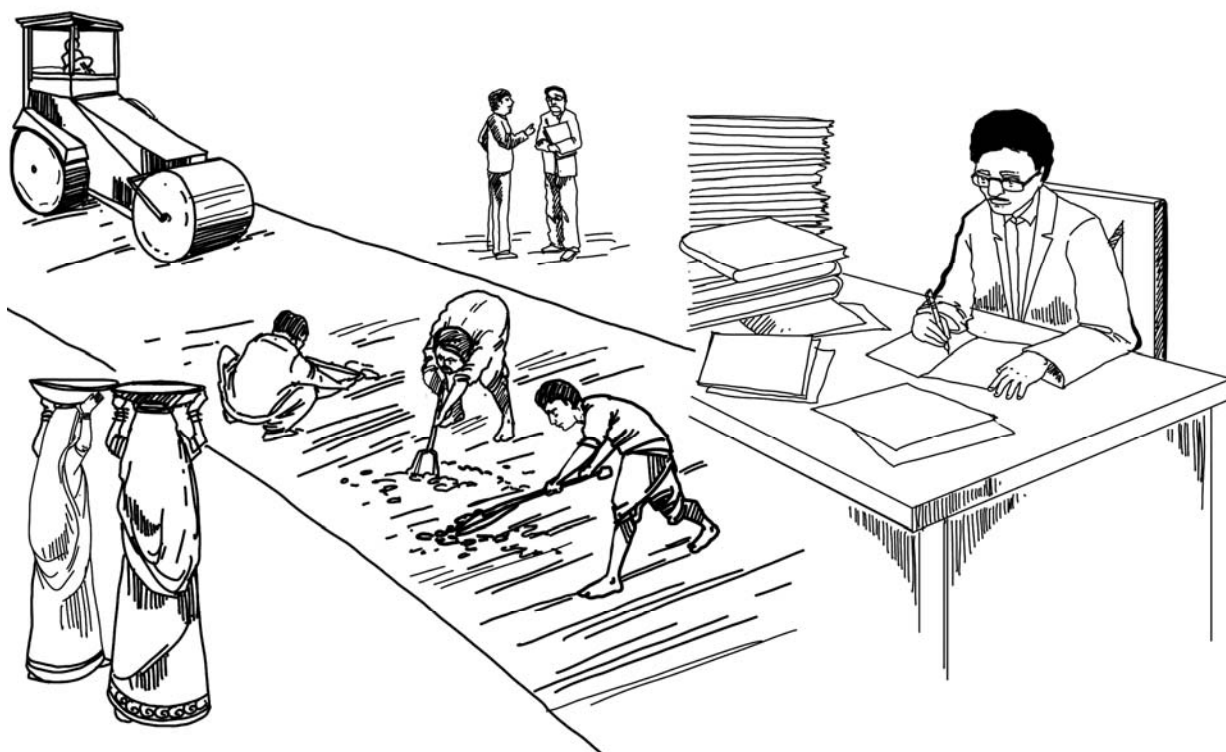
[10]The increasing efforts to promote decentralization, the PRIs are expected to handle large number of schemes and funds from different sources. Accountability is thus of paramount importance. Financial accountability considers (i) whether the resources have been utilized according to legal requirements and (ii) whether they have been utilized efficiently. This requires timely preparation and publication of accounts statements followed by professional audit that provides an assurance to the community that public funds have been spent judiciously as per law.

PRI Accounts

There is a lack of standardized accounting practices and book-keeping among the local governments in the country. Evaluation of the accounting system in PRIs by Comptroller and Accountant General (C&AG) has revealed the following aspects:
a. Weak budgeting and budgetary control – expenditure is incurred without budget or in excess of budget and budget proposals are not approved by PRIs or gramsabha.

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[10] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

b. There are multiple cash books and they are not closed. There is difference in opening and closing balances and incorrect postings and non-accounting of receipts.
c. Physical verification of cash is not done.
d. There has been non-reconciliation of cash book with bank pass book.
e. Register of Advances has not been maintained.
f. There is delay in preparation of monthly and annual accounts and submitting it for audit.
g. Accounts are not submitted for amounts drawn on AC bills.
h. Cash in excess of permissible limit is retained in hand.
i. Asset registers are not available and physical verification of stock is not done.

Good Practices in PRI Accounts

The Karnataka Local Fund Authorities Fiscal Responsibility Act, 2003 provides for withholding grants if final accounts are not prepared on time. Karnataka Panchayati Raj Act also provides that the audited accounts of the Zilla Panchayats shall be submitted to the Government by 31st July of the succeeding year. This is reviewed regularly by a Committee of the legislature.

In Maharashtra, duly approved and certified annual accounts of the ZPs for a particular year are to be published in the Government Gazette by 15th Nov of the subsequent year.

Government of Kerala issued guidelines in August 2006 for clearing arrears in accounts by engaging serving or retired PRI/ Government staff. In Uttar Pradesh, GPs have got PRI accounts prepared as per C&AG's formats up to 2003-04 by engaging Chartered Accountants on contract basis. In Himachal Pradesh, Panchayat Sahayaks have been appointed on contract basis for maintaining GP accounts.

Eleventh Finance Commission (EFC) had found that there was no mechanism for collection of data on the revenue and expenditure of local bodies. It recommended an enhanced role of C&AG for streamlining the accounting system, making it uniform across states and maintaining a financial database. C&AG had to provide support for maintenance of accounts of local bodies and their audit. It also had to provide technical guidance to the Director Local Fund Audit (DLFA) that is the primary auditor of local governance institutions.

EFC also recommended outsourcing the upkeep of accounts where the panchayats did not have trained staff. It recommended earmarking an amount of half percent of total expenditure incurred by the panchayats for audit purpose and an average of Rs4,000 per panchayat per annum to meet the expenditure on maintenance of accounts on contract basis. EFC recommended developing a computerized database on finances at the district, state and central government levels and linking through V-SAT. States spent only Rs93 crore on this account out of the outlay of Rs200 crore. Rs113 crore (23%) was utilized out of an outlay of Rs483 crore for maintenance of accounts.

C&AG prescribed 16 database, accounts and budget formats (in annexure 1) in 2002 for PRIs and ULBs with a view to rationalize them, present a comprehensive financial profile of Local Bodies and provide information on use of funds received from Central Finance Commission (CFC), State Finance Commission (SFC) and programmes/ schemes, expenditure and income from own sources besides physical progress of allotted funds. Relevance of accounting heads, appropriateness of nomenclature, ease of classification and comprehensive coverage of all activities carried out by PRIs were some of the guiding principles in preparing the formats. The prescribed receipts and payments formats for PRIs were on a modified cash basis. Some commonly used items of expenditure were standardized. Activities in the 11th Schedule of the

Constitution (functions of panchayats) were listed. The formats showed funds transferred to the local bodies under various programmes and schemes. The accounts and the budget formats were synchronized with and linked to the classification in Union and State Government accounts making it amenable to computerization, generation of all India level data and effective monitoring. The simplified formats and accounting procedures were finalized in 2006 and were accepted by 22 states. 11 states passed suitable orders adopting the same. However, the accounts are being maintained on existing formats in most states. In Gujarat, the C&AG formats are being implemented from March 2007.

Provisions related to PRI Accounts in Gujarat

Sec. 119 of GPA 1993 provides for accounts of income and expenditure of every panchayat to be made in the prescribed form and manner and balanced annually on the first day of every year. According to sec 120, secretary of every panchayat has to prepare the annual report of the administration of the panchayat and place the accounts and report for approval before the panchayat. It is also stipulated that annual statement of the accounts and the annual report shall be sent to the district panchayat through the taluka panchayat before prescribed date. Sec 141 and 142 make similar provisions for taluka panchayat and sec 166 and 167 make provision for district panchayat.

Gujarat Village Panchayats (Custody and Investment of Village Funds) Rules, 2000 provides that a village panchayat may allow its secretary to keep a permanent advance not exceeding Rs1000. At the end of each month, sarpanch or in his absence the up-sarpanch checks the permanent advance account maintained by the secretary, verifies the balance and a certificate regarding correctness of expenditure and balance is recorded in the general cash book under his/ her dated signature.

All other funds obtained in the form of grants, loans or taxes have to be deposited in a Government treasury or a bank to which government treasury work is entrusted and draw them as and when required for relevant purpose. Funds may also be deposited in a cooperative bank approved by the government for deposit of local funds, any scheduled bank approved by government or invest in public securities in its own name. Surplus funds have to be deposited immediately

PRI Audits

In West Bengal, Bihar and Jharkhand, audit of local bodies is done by C&AG. C&AG's responsibility regarding audit of local bodies is outlined in Sec 20(1) of the C&AG's Duties, Powers and Conditions of Service (DPC) Act, 1971. In other states (also Gujarat) Director, Local Fund Audit (DLFA) is the primary auditor of Local Bodies. Its staff works under the administrative control of the State Government. C&AG is the Examiner, Local Funds Accounts. It is expected to provide technical guidance on framing of audit plans, audit standards and guidelines besides conducting a percentage check of PRIs for audit assurance. Apart from legalistic concerns and adherence to rules and procedures, C&AG's audit provides the necessary assurance on achievement of programme objectives and efficiency in utilization of funds. Thus audit by DLFA and C&AG complement each other.

C&AG's audit findings have been presented in the form of separate reports for the state legislatures in Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. The reports provide insights into the functioning of PRIs and ULBs, quality of account keeping and the functioning of DLFAs.

To strengthen the audit process, C&AG has prescribed Auditing Standards for PRIs that would help auditors in proper conduct of audit,

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Innovative Exercises Regarding PRI Audits

There was a joint training-cum-audit exercise in May 2005 in tribal block of Dahod district, Gujarat. It also educated villagers about their participation in gramsabha meetings when accounts are placed before them as per the legal provisions.

In 2007, the Director of State Audit in Kerala did a Performance Audit of schemes implemented in a selected GP based on guidelines issued by the Principal Accountant General.

In West Bengal, a booklet was prepared in Bengali in 2006 on the Report of the Examiner of Local Accounts and was distributed widely among PRI functionaries and elected representatives. A CD on best practices in PRI accounts and the role of audit has also been prepared in 2007 to reach out to rural population, PRI functionaries and elected representatives.

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promote public accountability and provide assurance to concerned Union/ State agencies and all stakeholders. To ensure that accounts of PRIs properly present the financial position of the authorities, C&AG has prescribed 'Guidelines for Certification Audit of PRIs' that would improve the quality of audit being undertaken by primary auditors and result in greater accountability. Over the last few years, training programmes have been organized on PRI audit for improving the audit skills of the DLFA's staff in different states. Extensive training (ToTs) and capacity building exercises have been undertaken in over 15 states for staff of PRIs and DLFAs. Audit Training Modules have been developed by C&AG covering various aspects of PRI finances, accounts, their historical background and statuary basis, audit of various Local Bodies schemes including works and contracts and also social audit and gender perspective.

Good Practices in Local Fund Audit

In Rajasthan, a checklist has been developed for purpose of conducting local fund audit. There is provision for withholding grants in case of not furnishing records for audit. Also, the DLFA has launched a website with a periodical newsletter.

Audits can serve their intended purpose only if there is a mechanism for discussion by stakeholders to whom the institution being audited is accountable and responsibility is fixed for resolving queries and taking corrective action.

Internal Audit

Internal audit is an important component of internal control. It examines the effectiveness of accounts maintained by PRIs and recommends improvement. C&AG's reports have observed lack of an institutionalized internal audit in PRIs in many states and its ineffective functioning in others. It recommends establishment of internal audit systems and their strengthening.

Good Practices in Internal Audit

The State Performance Audit Authority constituted under the Kerala Panchayat Raj (Manner of Inspection and Audit System) Rules 1997 functions as the internal auditor of PRIs and its annual audit reports are submitted to the Government. In Assam, consolidated annual internal audit reports are submitted to the Director of Panchayat and Rural Development and he is responsible to take follow-up action for settlement of audit objections.

In West Bengal, the Panchayat Accounts and Audit Officer, the Samiti Accounts and Audit Officer and the Regional Accounts and Audit Officer are required to examine accounts and undertake internal audit of GPs, Panchayat Samitis and Zilla Panchayat at least once in every month.

PRI Audit Provisions in Gujarat

In Gujarat, the three tiers of panchayats are audited as per the provision of Gujarat Local Fund Audit Act, 1963. A consolidated report on irregularities in taluka and district panchayats is submitted by the DLFA to the legislative assembly. A separate committee examines these reports and recommends improvements, a compilation of which is available. According to Sec 94 of the Gujarat Panchayat Act (GPA), 1993, audit reports have to be read out in the gramsabha. This provision ensures that local government institution is not only accountable to the state government but also to the local community. The state is trying to improve the accounting and auditing system of panchayats under the guidance of C&AG. Accounts officers are being trained. An order has been passed to conduct the audit of panchayats under the technical guidance and supervision of C&AG. Gujarat has an internal audit system for more than 25 years.

Maintenance of Accounts and Audit of Works as per BRGF Guidelines

Each panchayat and municipality is responsible for maintenance of accounts of the funds allocated to them. The various panchayat accounts are consolidated by the district panchayat and presented to audit. State is responsible to provide adequate manpower and resources. The support may be pooled at the Intermediate Panchayat Resource Center. Expenditure under the programme is to be mentioned in the annual accounts of the concerned panchayats and municipalities and consolidated in the manner prescribed in the respective state Panchayati Raj Acts.

Regular physical and financial audit of the works has to be carried out at the end of each financial year, in each district. The audit is done either by Local Fund Auditors or by Chartered Accountants listed in the panel of the State Government or AGs of the State. The audit report together with action taken on the Auditor's observations is required to be submitted along with the proposal for release of second installment of funds. Action Taken Note has to be authenticated by Auditor.

Way Forward

It is essential to strengthen the accountability mechanism in PRIs in order to facilitate their emergence as strong institutions of local governance. The EFC recommendations, the resulting enhanced role of C&AG and the RTI Act have brought issues of accounting and auditing in PRIs to the forefront.

A regional conference of DLFA and representatives of the C&AG in May'07 made the following suggestions for improving maintenance of PRI accounts and database.
- Prescription of a due date for finalization of accounts with a possible penal clause for non-finalisation (this already exists in Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993);
- State governments should furnish concrete proposals for overcoming arrears in PRI accounts and consider innovative methods for clearance including appointment of para accountants;
- A centralized agency should be established in each state for consolidation of information in respect of accounts and finances of local bodies;
- States should enhance the pace of adoption of the data base formats on finances of local bodies recommended by C&AG;

- Consider and adopt the successful pattern of district level committees (in Tamil Nadu) comprising DLFA and the administration to review and take action on accounts and audit related matters in local bodies.

Formats for maintenance of accounts suggested by C&AG have received acceptance but few states have made efforts to set up infrastructure for collection, transmission and maintenance of database. Efforts are required at the earliest for adoption of the formats. Efforts could be made for computerization and networking. Also, a consolidation of accounting and financial and physical performance indicators is required to build a credible database on finances of PRIs. Skill upgradation and building of a dedicated cadre for PRI accounts is required. C&AG's support could be utilized for strengthening the system and training. Twelfth Finance Commission grants should be utilized for accounts and maintenance of database. A centralized agency for consolidation of database, accounts and financial information might help improve the financial management of local bodies, assess their working and analyse possible trends.

The regional conference of DLFAs and Accountants General in May'07 and then again in Jan'08 also made several recommendations regarding audit of Local Body funds.
- Enactment of a separate Act for Local Fund Audit, wherever not enacted and amendments of DLFA Acts as required to strengthen it.
- The DLFA's organization in each state to be strengthened and modernized in terms of human resources, budget and capacity building to be able to adopt and implement new audit techniques like IT audit, statistical sampling, performance audit etc.
- Constitution of a separate cadre of personnel for audit of local bodies
- Introduction of provisions in Local Fund Audit Acts for conducting verification of stores and assets
- Prompt discussion of DLFA's reports and formation of separate committees of the legislature to discuss such reports; Enable publishing of reports after discussion
- The power of surcharges and disallowances to be reviewed to improve its effectiveness
- Formation of district level committees comprising of DLFA and the administration to review and take action on accounts and audit related matters
- Provision to punish non-production of records by withholding grants may be considered
- Statistical sampling to be adopted for improving effectiveness of audit
- Local fund audit gradually also take up performance audit in consultation with Accountants General.

In consonance with the above suggestions, it is clear that DLFA needs institutional safeguards and capacity building. Training efforts by the C&AG need to be further intensified in coordination with state governments. Upgradation of skills is specially required in the areas of IT, statistical sampling in audit and performance audit, i.e., efficiency and effectiveness of programmes and schemes. Establishment of a dedicated cadre of accountants and auditors would go a long way in strengthening the system.

DLFA's inadequate coverage and mounting arrears of audit might accrue from lack of resources. There is a need to revisit audit priorities and plans and rationalize available resources to yield optimum results. Use of an intensive statistical sampling could bring a greater level of assurance in audit of local bodies.

Foundation has been laid for increased collaboration between the C&AG and the Local Fund Departments in various states. Local Fund Audit would concentrate on procedures and

compliance that would be validated by C&AG. Audit by C&AG would also offer insights into the actual delivery of services by local governments, quality of implementation and its impact on the lives of citizens besides audit checks to prevent fraud, misappropriation and corruption.

Introduction of certification of accounts by the Local Fund Audit, verification of assets and publication of audited accounts could serve as important means of assurance. There is need for incorporating innovative techniques of evidence gathering like physical verification, photographs, interviews etc. In order to improve the overall effectiveness of audit, non-measurable parameters like people's participation, grassroots planning and empowerment of marginalized groups etc needs to be considered while assessing and evaluating the extent of accountability. Efforts have also to be made for adequate publicity of audit findings to facilitate discussion. It is necessary to have formal mechanisms to ensure that Audit Reports are discussed and corrective action is taken promptly. The discussion needs to happen in higher tiers of governance as well as with the local community. Oversight functions of the gramsabha need to be substantially strengthened.

Synergies need to be developed with the social audit mechanism and other instruments of transparency and accountability like neighborhood committees, monitoring committees and beneficiary committees to execute public works schemes, citizen's charter, watchdog institutions like Ombudsman so that their findings could be further probed by formal audit mechanisms.

8. BACKWARD REGIONS GRANT FUND – SALIENT FEATURES

[11]The Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF), launched by the Prime Minister at Barpeta in Assam on Feb19, 2006, signifies new approach to addressing persistent regional imbalances in development. The programme subsumes the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY), a scheme being administered by the Planning Commission. BRGF covers 250 districts in 27 states, of which 232 fall under the purview of part IX and part IX - A of the Constitution dealing with the panchayats and Municipality respectively. The remaining 18 districts are covered by other local government structures, such as autonomous districts and regional councils under the sixth schedule of the Constitution and state specific arrangements as in the case of Nagaland and hill areas of Manipur.

Objectives and Important features of the Scheme

The Backward Regions Grant Fund is designed to redress regional imbalances in development. The fund will provide financial resources for supplementing and converging existing developmental inflows into 250 identified districts, so as to:

- Bridge critical gaps in local infrastructure and other development requirements that are not being adequately met through existing inflows.

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[11] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

- Strengthen, to this end Panchayat and Municipality level governance with more appropriate capacity building, to facilitate participatory planning, decision making, implementation and monitoring, to reflect local felt needs,
- Provide professional support to local bodies for planning, implementation and monitoring their plans
- Improve the performance and delivery of critical functions assigned to Panchayats, and counter possible efficiency and equity losses on account of inadequate local capacity.

Integrated development will commence with each district undertaking a diagnostic study of its backwardness by enlisting professional planning support. This will be followed by preparing a well-conceived participatory district development perspective plan to address backwardness during 2006-07 and the period of the Eleventh Five-Year. The Panchayats at the village, intermediate and district level will undertake planning and implementation of the programme, in keeping with the letter and spirit of Article 243 G, while the Municipalities will similarly plan and implement the programme in urban areas in conformity with the letter and spirit of Article 243 W, read with Article 243 ZD of the Constitution.

This plan will integrate multiple programmes that are in operation in the district concerned and therefore address backwardness through a combination of resources that flow to the district. This will be done without giving any schematic overlay to BRGF that would be subversive of the principle of local prioritization in planning. Programmes identified for implementation under the Fund will be selected through people's participation, particularly through Gram and Ward Sabhas in rural areas and Area Sabhas and Ward Committees in the urban areas. Participatory plans will be prepared in each Panchayat and Municipality, which would take into account all resources being spent in the area of Panchayat and cover at the very least.

- Sectoral and district segments of the state plans,
- Centrally sponsored schemes (particularly flagship programmes),
- Fund inflows on account of the National Employment Guarantee Scheme,
- Tied and untied grants from central and state finance commission and,
- Fund inflows on account of Bharat Nirman

The participatory plans prepared by the each Panchayat and Municipality would be consolidated into the district plan by the District Planning Committee. This would reflect all the financial resources available in the district, and ensure their optimal use, without delay, diversion, duplication and leakage.

Fund Allocation

The Programme has two components namely, a district component covering 250 districts and Special plans for Bihar and the Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput districts of Orissa. A total provision of Rs5000 crore had been made for the two components in the Budget of 2006-07. Out of this allocation, Rs1250 crore had been provided in the Demand for Grants of the Ministry of Finance for the Special Plans dealt with by the Planning Commission. The remaining Rs3750 crore had been placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj for the District Component. The allocation of Rs3750 crore consists of two funding windows

Capacity Building – Rs250 crore per annum i.e. 1 crore for each district will be used primarily to build capacity in planning, implementation, monitoring, accounting and improving accountability and transparency. This could include arrangements for contracting and out sourcing.

Untied Grant Fund – The allocation of this fund is for Panchayats and ULBs guided by transparent norms and they will use these funds to address critical gaps in integrated development, identified through the participative planning process cited in the guideline.

Criteria for Distribution of Funds
The untied grant will be distributed among the districts in the following manner.
- Each district will receive a fixed minimum amount of Rs. 10 crore per annum.
- 50% balance allocation will be on the basis of share of the population of the district in the population of all the backward districts.
- 50% will be distributed on the basis of the share of the area of the district in the total area of all backward districts

Formula for inter-se allocation of BRGF fund in Panchayats/ ULBs within the districts
Every state will indicate normative formula for BRGF funds to each panchayat and ULBs (excluding cities/ cities with one million population). The normative formula will consider:
- The share of each local self government institution category (Panchayats and ULBs)
- Within the overall allocation made for each category, the norms governing the inter-se sharing of each Panchayat and Municipality concerned.

Components that go into formula may include:
- Any index that is prepared and accepted by state which reflects backwardness and level of development.
- Addressing specific district - wise priorities identified in the envisioning exercise, as described under guideline of the planning commission on district planning, dated 26.8.06
- A reasonable percentage of funds that may be separately earmarked as performance incentives, based on specified criteria.

As per the BRGF guideline the details of above allocation should be widely disseminated, particularly to all panchayats and ULBs concerned. Once the above norms are agreed upon, they will be in force for 2006-07 and the entire eleventh plan.

Transmission from Rashtriy Sam Vikas Yojana into BRGF

All 147 RSVY districts will be released funds when they meet the required stipulations under the scheme, such as submission of utilization certificates. Non-RSVY districts will begin the process of district plan preparation in 2006 – 07, in accordance with BRGF guidelines. Those non RSVY - BRGF districts, which have consolidated their draft development plan for the district through DPCs in 2006 – 07, will receive their entire allocation for 2006 – 07, so that they can immediately commence implementation of their plan.

During 2006 – 07, an initial tranche of 10 crore each will be given to each non RSVY-BRGF district, where DPCs have been set up and a district plan has been prepared. States that are in process of setting of District Planning Committee would be eligible to receive funds if DPCs are set up by February 15, 2006 in accordance with Article 243 ZD of the Constitution.

Planning Process under BRGF

Each panchayat and municipality within the backward districts concerned will be the unit for planning under BRGF. Plans prepared by the panchayat or municipality will be consolidated into the district plan by the District Planning Committee. In keeping with the Vision set out in

the Planning Commission's guidelines, during consolidation of plans, particular care shall be taken to ensure that the District Plans addresses issues related to SC/ ST development.

- A separate Sub plan should be prepared, within the plan of each Panchayat and ULB, showing the scheme wise allocations for SCs and STs.
- Scheme benefiting SCs/STs should be allocated fund at least in proportion to the population of these communities in the jurisdiction for which plan has been prepared.
- Amenities such as schools, Aganwadis, health centers etc should be provided on priority in those villages that have a substantial SC/ST population.

Capacity Building of Panchayats and ULBs

Provisions of Capacity Building programmes for Panchayats and Urban local bodies are made for effective planning and implementation of BRGF programme and it's a critical component of BRGF.

Key Objectives
- Upgrading the knowledge and skills of ULBs and PRIs elected representatives to better perform their responsibilities
- Orient key officials associated with functions devolved to panchayats and who are working under or closely with them to effectively serve and facilitate the panchayats in the performance of devolved functions.
- Improve functioning of the gramsabha, particularly through building the capability of pressure groups such as SHGs and CBOs to participate more meaningfully

Resource for Funding Training Programme
Effective implementation of BRGF will require continuous and sustained building of capability of all stakeholders. An amount of Rs.250 crore per annum is especially earmarked under BRGF for capacity building of panchayats. The allocation of fund for each state is calculated at the rate of Rs.1crore per BRGF district in that state.

Key Components
- Provision of adequate functionaries for the panchayats for planning and implementation.
- Provision of technical assistance particularly accessing services of the resource persons to support the PRIs as well as gramsabhas in decentralized planning process.
- Providing sufficient infrastructure, including office buildings wherever required and connectivity to these offices through roads, telephones, power supply and e connectivity.
- Provide adequate training
- Conduct surveys, studies on backwardness and development of a baseline databank.
- Establishment and maintenance of the accounting and auditing system
- Securing assistance for panchayats and District planning Committee for preparing and consolidating plans.

BRGF has clear focus on building community capacities through professional assistance to the Panchayats.
- A trained community level person for agricultural extension who will be a multi task functionary to provide knowledge inputs to the community on agricultuture, water management, livestock development, post-harvest management and agri-business.
- A gender empowerment community leader or volunteer who will promote women's participation in the public domain.

- Trained 'barefoot engineers', or creation of local engineering capacity to facilitate technical approval adn prepare rough estimates for the panchayts.
- Support for professional planning
- Training for the above personnel

Accrding to the National Capability Building Framework prepared by the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj, State and District specific training strategies and plans prepared by respective state government will be suitably supported by Ministry of Panchayati Raj.

Operationalisation of BRGF

Implementation Mechanism at the Panchayat level - The panchayats, Muncipalities and DPC would undertake the management of the programme. No special bodies, management committees, society's etc. shall be set up for implementing the scheme at any panchayat level or ULB level. In order to facilitate specific attention for the supervision, management and monitoring of the programme, standing committees constituted within such bodies under legal provisions may be strengthened for the purpose.

Approval at the State Level - The State Government may designate a department, preferably the Department of Panchayati Raj as the nodal department at the state level, responsible for the management, monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

A high-powered committee headed by the state Chief Secretary and consisting of inters alia, the Development Commissioner, planning Secretary, State Secretary of Panchayati Raj, State Urban Development Secretary, state secretaries in charge of sectors under which works are going to be taken up under the programme, a representative of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the State Plan Advisor of the Planning Commission as well as other Government of India nominees deemed to be necessary, shall consider and approve the proposed District Plans to be taken up under the District Window of the BRGF and the training plan.

The Nodal Department will be responsible for maintaining a computerized database of all panchayats in BRGF districts, including a database of Panchayat Bank Accounts to which developmental grants will be created.

Purpose of Development Funds - Development funds released under BRGF are to be used for filling critical gaps vital for development in spite of other major interventions. Panchayats and ULBs may use these funds for any purpose coming within the items that are devolved to them respectively as listed in the Eleventh and Twelfth schedule of the constitution respectively.

Special attention could be paid to the following:
- Rural electrification, where intensive electrification of a village may be beyond what is proposed to be done from investment at the national level at present.
- Adoption of appropriate technology options by Panchayats for drinking water supply in hilly and tribal areas, where conventional pump and pipe water supply is not able to deliver.
- Augmenting Indira Awas Yojana, where the Bharat Nirman only meets a portion of backlog in provision of new housing.

Fund Flow Mechanism - All funds will be transferred to the Consolidated Funds of state governments. Those funds that are to be transferred to Panchayats and Municipalities by the State Governments will be transferred to their bank accounts within 15 days of the release of funds. From the State level, the funds will be directly deposited into the bank accounts of the Panchayat or Municipality concerned, using the mechanism of bank transfers suggested by the Task Force of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj to study the feasibility of rapid transfer of funds through banks to Panchayats. BRGF funds shall be kept in a nationalized bank or a Post Office. The interest amount accrued on the deposits shall be treated as additional resources under the BRGF and should be utilized as per the guidelines of the Programme.

Funds will be released immediately on the sanction of the works either in full or in installments as may be decided by the Panchayat concened, in accordance with procedures prescribed by the Panchayat concerned for clearance of such payments. Drawing of funds by Panchayats and Municipalities shall be as per the existing practice detailed in the finances and accounts rules prescribed by the state government, enacted under the relevant provision of the state Panchayati Raj Act.

Maintenance of Account - Each Panchayat and ULBs shall be responsible for maintenance of accounts of the fund allocated to them. These accounts can be consolidated by the District Panchayat in case of PRIs and presented for audit. Similarly, any executing agency entrusted with funds under the programme would also maintain separate accounts, which shall be submitted to audit. State shall provide adequate manpower and resources to all the Panchayats and Municipalities.

Audit of Works - Regular physical and financial audit of the works under the schemes shall be carried out at the end of each financial year, in each district. The audit shall be done either by Local Fund auditors or by chartered Accountants listed in the panell of the State Government or AGs of the state.

Review Committee at the District Level - Peer reviews of the progress by Panchayats themselves, upto the intermediate Panchayat level may be instituted. At the District level, a review committee shall be constituted by the DPC, chaired by the chairperson of the district panchayat and chairperson of the intermediate panchayats and ULBs in the district in rotation such that the committee consist not more than 8 to 10 members.

Schedule of Inspection of Works - In order to maintain quality of works, a quality monitoring system shall be instituted. The working of the system shall be reviewed by the high power committee.

Social Audit and Vigilance at the grassroots level - Clear guidelines on social audit by Gram and Ward sabhas in rural areas and area sabhas and ward committee in urban areas may be issued by state. The gramsabha will authorize the issuance of utilization certificates of funds allocated for the plans, projects or programmes of the panchayat and the process followed will be the same as prescribed in the guidline for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Gurantee Scheme.

Ref: Programme Guidelines, Backward Regions Grant Fund

9. UNDERSTANDING ON POVERTY AND STRATEGIES FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION

Rebuilding after Kutch Earthquake
Housing at Harinagar (Baniari), Bhachau
Vivek Rawal, Bhanubhai Mistry, Dinesh Prajapati

UNNATI

[12]One of the biggest challenges that has arisen since the dawn of twentieth century is the growing disparities between nation, between states and regions in specific third world countries and the 'haves' and 'have-nots'. The ever widening divide, despite efforts being made to build a humanitarian world has resulted in the development of a large section of the population living on the brink of poverty and survival with less than one meal a day and no security for life and existence. Studies on this concern for inequitable growth reveal that this is not a natural phenomenon, but has resulted due to historical and structural developmental processes that have gradually impoverished the planet, marginalising and subjecting to deep injustice a large section of the population.

Critics therefore explain poverty to be human made, in which the self interest of a powerful few is sustained, legitimised and established with the development of a socio-economic and political structure which necessarily creates and perpetuates poverty. One may argue at this juncture that substantial investments have been made in promoting development after World War II in India. The gross domestic product (GDP) and the per capita income have increased in the past 63 years. There has been growth in the industrial sector, infrastructure, and we have made inroads in newer fields like the IT sector. Amidst overall growth in economic terms we need to look at the reality of increasing disparities, marginalisation, exclusion and widespread injustice, driving certain sections of the population to starvation deaths. So one

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[12] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

needs to stop and ask, development for whom and at what cost? Or what then is development all about?

Economic activities determine the life of a society. Certain progressive economists analyse the basis of poverty to be embedded in the surplus generated in an economy which in turn decides the pattern of development to a great extent. The size, composition and the pattern of distribution of this surplus determines the socio-economic structure of society. Hence, it is crucial to analyse how people achieve control over the surplus: As it is ultimately the effective ownership of assets that entitles groups and individuals to control the distribution of assets. This effective ownership must be understood not in terns of legal rights alone but rather in terms of existing power relations: an unequal distribution of assets is associated with unequal distribution of power. An asymmetrical power relation determines a social structure that in turn maintains and reproduces an unequal and unjust pattern of asset distribution.

Structural Nature of Poverty

In pastoral economies the surplus generated was used to barter other essential goods and services by communities. Slowly, as the nature of economies transformed to an agrarian one, the surplus generated was used by a few to buy more land to produce and sell more. In this way the process of class divisions was introduced where the land owners became the feudal gentry, who owned the surplus from the produce and the workers/ tillers served to cultivate, for which they were paid wages. A class of traders emerged to manoeuvre the process of buying and selling along with the craftsmen who were skilled workers offering specific services.

With the onset of the industrial revolution in Europe, in the 18th Century, the divide created was increased, as mechanisation resulted in the production of finer quality goods and at a cheaper rate. More surpluses were generated leaving the workers in a state of penury and inhuman working conditions: Thus, emerged the working class in rebellion to the coercive structures and oppressive working conditions. On the one hand were a few who had control over assets like land, natural resource, machinery and surplus and on the other hand were the workers who had only the wages earned through hard work.

After Independence, India too opted for Industrial growth, although, basically the economy was an agrarian one. The subsequent process has resulted in lopsided development and even though the Gross Domestic Product and the Per Capita Income of the country has increased manifold in the past 63 years, the disparities have widened leaving a large section of the population in the informal sector. As a result poverty has not decreased relatively from a human development perspective (Explained in detail in the chapter on Human Development). Poverty is not only a situation of deprivation from basic needs, like food, clothing, shelter - but a set of unequal/ unjust power relations in which a number of people are unable to determine the course of their own lives and destinies. Poverty is not a line or number, but is a result of structural and coercive relations. The dominant groups, controlling the distribution of surplus and ownership of assets needs to be identified in order to understand the nature of poverty. In India this is coupled with dimensions of caste, gender, religious ethnicity and disability that create a web of oppression for marginalised groups and exacerbates their situation of poverty.

The famous economists, Amartya Sen, explains that poverty depends on two main factors, one the ownership bundle, the number and types of assets possessed and second, the

exchange entitlement, that is how much and what can be purchased by the assets owned, from the market. Let us examine the structural nature of poverty that maintains the status quo and makes the powerful more powerful:

1. Unequal Distribution of Assets and Income

A large number of the poor are landless or seem to hold unproductive landholdings. The reasons for this are many, like non-implementation of land reforms, eviction of tenants due to indebtedness, degradation and loss of common property resources, technical revolution and use of harmful fertilisers and in recent times, use of genetically engineered seeds in the wake of globalisation. The industrial assets rest in the hands of a few and with the coming of Multinational Companies due to liberalisation large industrial houses have emerged. Here too the control is limited to a few corporate houses and the rest are all salaried employees like wage labourers in the rural sector. It needs to be understood here that 80 per cent of the tax received is through indirect taxes affecting the common man. This revenue is siphoned off by the industrial sector through loans and low rate of interests offered by the government through the financial institutions. Thus, an unequal distribution of assets clearly accrues to unequal flow in income.

2. Inequality of Human Capital

Human capital refers to the quality of human capita, the acquired skills and the health of a human being. This is primarily determined by the availability/ access to basic amenities particularly health and educational opportunities. The indicators for health are infant mortality, life expectancy, and general availability of health services related to nutrition and availability of clean drinking water. The urban rural disparity in this regard is in the ratio of 80: 20. The number of literates is quite low in the country with a high drop out, especially of girls in the primary and secondary education. With privatisation of health and educational services due to globalisation and liberalisation policies; will certainly push the poor to brink of survival as they will not be able to buy these services.

3. Inequality in Employment Opportunities

A large section of the poor are unskilled or semi-skilled, who only possess their labour power as the only asset through which they can buy food and other necessities of life. Unemployment or partial employment is one of the major causes of poverty. The distribution of work opportunity is unequal between rural and urban areas, between men and women, between organised and unorganised, between the affluent and the middle class. The impact of globalisation has resulted in dis-integration of the public/ organised sector resulting in loss of jobs and more and more workers being employed on a daily contractual basis, with a lower pay, especially for women.

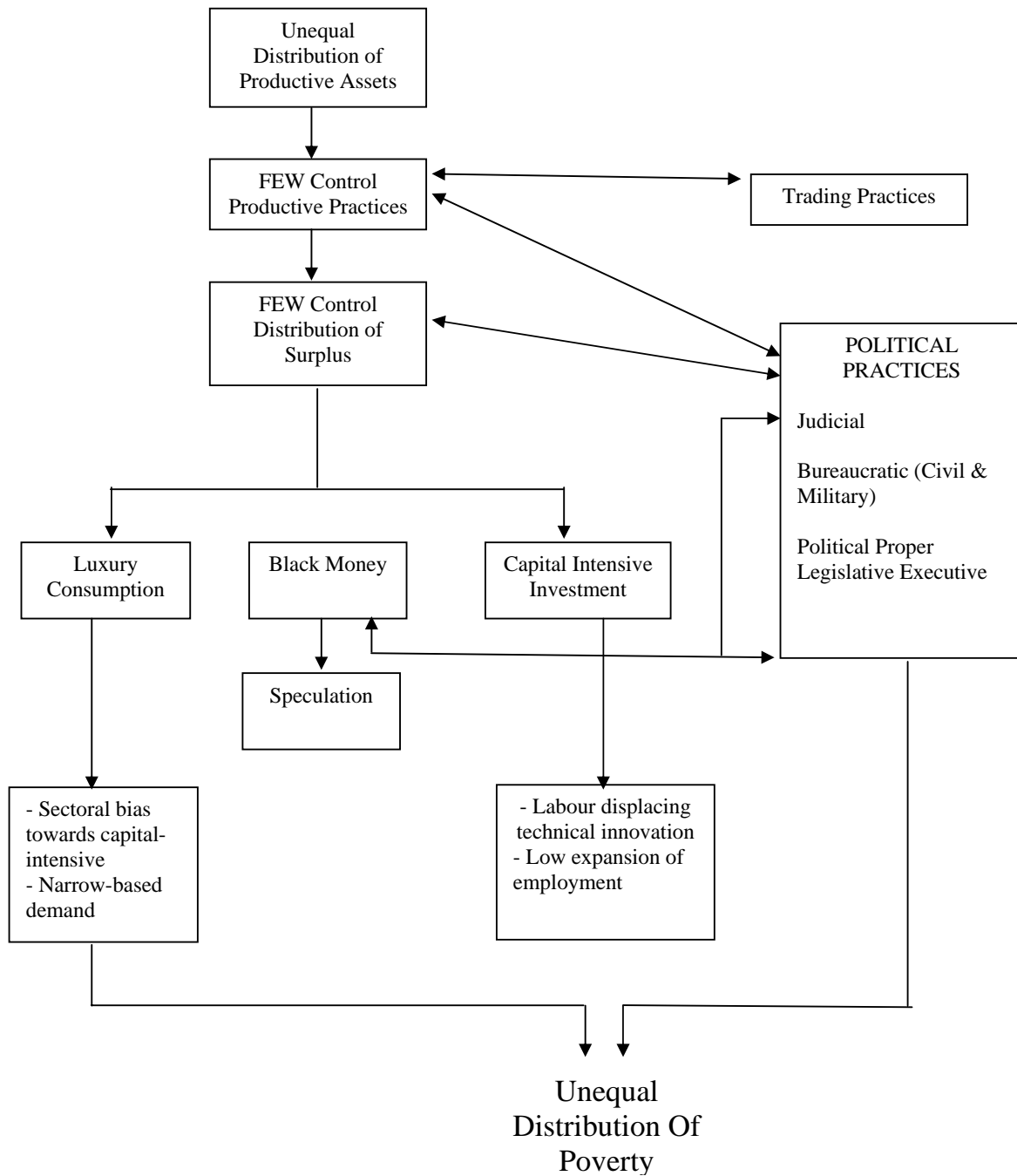## 4. Unfavourable Exchange Entitlements for the Poor

Added to the shrinking sources of secure employment, is the fact that reduced opportunities for employment restricts the buying capacity or the exchange entitlements that reduces the number of goods and services they can get in change of their assets/ income. The exchange entitlements of the poor are directly affected by rising inflation, indirect taxation and ineffective implementation of laws like land ceiling, minimum wages, liberalisation policies trading off common property resources to Special Economic Zones and MNCs. As explained by Amartya Sen the 'earning capacity' and the 'conversion capacity' of individuals are largely affected by their socio-economic position. For example, the same wage component for a person with a disability cannot be compared with a non-disabled person, as the person with a disability will have to spend far more to get services as they would require the

additional support due to functional limitations. To this there will be added factors of caste, class, gender and religion that makes the individuals position vulnerable leaving little choice for them to be and do what they want to do.

A majority of the poor are caught up in the vicious cycle of poverty that has not only a economic basis explained above, but a host of social and psychological pressures on the individual and community due to discrimination and unjust social practices, that are deeply imbedded in religious practices and fatalism, low risk taking capacity, fomented divisions and rivalries capped with political practices: administrative, legislative and judicial. With the control of surplus in the hands of the few, the disposal of this surplus influences the demand for luxury goods. This in turn demands for investing in the sector producing luxury goods. This tendency reinforces and complements investments in the capital-intensive sectors. This results in displacement of labour force and reduces the opportunities for employment. Because of the labour displacing nature of these productive activities employment opportunities may tend to fall. The gap created between the new employment opportunities generated in the capital/ high investment sector and the rising supply of labour (due to demographic pressures) increases, with the result that there is a low expansion of employment opportunities.

In India black money forms an important source of surplus utilisation which tends to increasingly be used in luxury consumption, speculation of property and company shares in the financial markets. Black money also plays a significant role in establishing smooth linkages between integrative practices and productive activities. For example there is easy availability of liquid finance for procurement of licenses, raw material, this is also used to pressurise authorities to provide the supply of electricity, water and transportation for these work sites. In this way the unequal distribution of resources is maintained and new conditions of poverty are created.

PRODUCTIVE PRACTICES INTEGRATVE PRACTICES

Unequal Distribution of Productive Assets

FEW Control Productive Practices

Trading Practices

FEW Control Distribution of Surplus

POLITICAL PRACTICES

Judicial

Bureaucratic (Civil & Military)

Political Proper Legislative Executive

Luxury Consumption

Black Money

Capital Intensive Investment

Speculation

- Sectoral bias towards capital-intensive
- Narrow-based demand

- Labour displacing technical innovation
- Low expansion of employment

Unequal Distribution Of Poverty

Source: 'The Structural Nature of Poverty' by F Franco SJ (Chapter V) in Poverty in India: Challenges and Responses, J Murickan SJ eds. (1988), Pg 64

Ultimately, the state is the custodian of all integrative and productive activities. In post-independence India the state assumed the role of a guardian. It began to plan productive activities aiming to reduce the economic gap by controlling the distribution and use of surplus generated. But the state has to a great extent failed to redistribute and has directly appropriated the surplus or has managed to enable the dominant group reap the fruits. The dominant groups in India comprise of the industrialists, the rich farmers and the professionals including the bureaucracy.

It is thus clear that poverty is a result of unequal access to resources, to levers of social, economic and political power; it is unequal participation in decision making processes. Hence, development is about more equal distribution of resources, balancing the power relations and empowering the poor/ excluded/ vulnerable in decision making. Any development programme / activity undertaken must ask questions: Who benefits? Who decides? Who controls and do these interventions aim to minimise/ reduce the unjust structure/ practices that continues to exclude/ marginalise certain sections of the population?

The Need for Rural Development

A large part of India still resides in rural areas. Due to inadequate employment opportunities in the rural areas, the poor are compelled to migrate to the nearby urban towns and cities, and work as contractual labourers and live in unhealthy conditions. In order to reduce poverty, effectively, the rural poor must be productively engaged and the surplus equitably distributed within the rural areas itself. In a agrarian economy like India, land is the main source of capital and if only a few own this asset, then the control over the surplus will be utilised by these few individuals/ dominant groups.

Effective redistribution of land through proper implementation of land reforms is essential. However, this will not be enough as this needs to be backed by support so that surplus can be generated and be used for the benefit/ development of rural areas only. Along with land, the farmers will require additional support for greater productivity from land in order to produce a surplus: access to credit, to improved seeds and tools, and to new knowledge. The surplus thus generated could be used for diversification of the rural economy, like putting to use unused land for animal husbandry and forestry. Water and land conservation measures must be adopted to increase the productivity of the land, at the same time provide clean drinking water and electricity. Basic quality services of education and health need to be accessible, especially to the poor and marginalised sections. The surplus generated in rural areas must not be siphoned off for the development of urban areas or for the production of luxury goods and capital intensive production. Surpluses are extracted by the comparative pricing of primary products and manufactured goods as in recent times, due to globalisation, the prices of food are very high and the price of luxury items have witnessed a grave downfall. Rural surplus is also extracted by the combination of regressive taxation and the allocation of government expenditure to services for urban areas rather than for rural areas. This requires a political will and policy advocacy on issues like emphasising on primary and technical education rather than advanced studies; giving preference to rural health than sophisticated hospitals in urban centres and focus on rural connectivity than the modern systems of transport like BRT and metro railway in cities.. For attacking the root causes of poverty, decision making power on activities that affect people's lives must be transferred through not only legal measures, but by enhancing their participation from the planning stage itself and in determining their priorities.

Strategies/ Approaches for Poverty Alleviation

There are three schools of thought / approaches to poverty alleviation: welfaristic, basic needs and capability. Each of these schools has emerged during different periods of time in the history of development. The welfare approach was largely followed during the early days of development before World War II. Welfarism is concerned with well being – happiness or desire – generated by the consumption of commodities generally measured by the minimum level of income. The traditional poverty line, based on per capita income, is generated on this basis. During the 1970s, it became increasingly evident that even though the per capita income and the gross domestic product of a country/ region increased, relative poverty continued to exist and grow. Increase in income did not assure equitable distribution of the surplus and did not in any way improve the standard of living. On the contrary certain groups tended to be further marginalised. Income was viewed only in terms of meeting needs. Hence, the concept of basic needs evolved broadening the scope to include a decent standard of living that included health, nutrition and literacy. Poverty alleviation strategies/ programmes shifted its focus from merely improving aggregate levels of living standards to more concrete measures for vulnerable groups and emphasised on public provisioning of basic services such as primary health care and education. The capability approach emerged as a critic to welfarism on the basis that policies should enhance people's capabilities, that is what people can do and be, rather than the utility and availability of services. People need to take advantage of existing resources, make their choices and convert them into capabilities – being free from hunger, to be able to participate in public life with dignity. The capability approach has been used to inform the human development approach advocated by UNDP as an alternate to growth focused on economic basis. In India, all three schools have been drawn upon while measuring poverty. The poverty line has been constructed on several income and non-income indicators including education, disability, social group affiliation, dwelling type including sanitation, land and livestock owned, formal training for skill development for household members, consumption expenditure, food security, type of indebtedness and migration. Each household is classified as either below poverty line (BPL) and above poverty line (APL). The households classified as BPL are important as they are entitled to certain benefits and the target group for various poverty alleviation programmes.

Poverty Alleviation Programmes / Schemes

1. Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)
The Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana scheme aims at establishing a large number of micro enterprises in rural areas. The list of below poverty line (BPL) households identified through BPL census duly approved by gram sabha will form the basis for identification of families for assistance under SGSY. The objective of SGSY is to bring assisted family above the poverty line within three years by providing them income generating assets through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy. The rural poor such as those with less land, landless labour, educated unemployed, rural artisans and persons with disabilities are covered under the scheme. The assisted families known as swarozgaris can be either individuals or groups and would be selected from BPL families by a three member team consisting of Block Development Officer¸ banker and sarpanch. SGSY focus on vulnerable section of the rural poor. Accordingly the SC/ST will account for at least 50%, Women 40% and the disabled 3% of those assisted.

The SGSY scheme is operative from 1st April 1999 in rural areas of the country. SGSY is holistic scheme covering all aspects of self-employment such as organisation of the poor into self help groups, training, credit, technology, infrastructure and marketing. The scheme will be funded by the financial institutions, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs), non-government organisation (NGOs), and technical institutions in the district; will be involved in the process of planning, implementation and monitoring of the scheme. NGO's help may be sought in the formation and nurturing of self help groups (SHGs) as well as in monitoring of the progress of the swarozgaris. Where feasible their services may be utilised in the provision of technology support, quality control of the products and as recovery monitors cum facilitators.

2. National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)

The National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP) which came into effect in, 1995 is a centrally sponsored programme. The programme aims at ensuring minimum national standard of social assistance in addition to the benefit that the states are currently providing or might provide in future.

NSAP has three components namely, National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) and National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS). The NMBS has since been transferred to the Ministry of Health and Family aims at providing social security in case of old age, death of primary breadwinner and maternity. The objective of the schemes is to extend financial assistance to old persons having little or no regular means of subsistence, to households living below the poverty line in case of death of the primary bread earner and to pregnant women of BPL households up to first two live births. The programme aims at ensuring a minimum national standard of social assistance in addition to the benefit that States are already providing. The Central assistance is not to displace expenditure by states on social protection schemes. However, the States/UTs are free to expand their own coverage of social assistance whenever they wish to do so. The NSAP provides opportunities for linking social assistance packages to the schemes for poverty alleviation and provision of basic needs. Specifically, old age pension can be linked to medical care and other benefits for the old and the poor. Assistance under SGSY, may be provided in addition to the benefit under NFBS to the families of poor households who suffer the loss of the breadwinner. Maternity assistance can be linked to maternal and child care programmes.

2.1 National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)

Under the National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS), central assistance is available as per the following criteria: Age of the applicant (male or female) is 65 years or above. The applicant is destitute in the sense of having little or no regular means of subsistence from his/her own sources of income or through support from family members or other sources. In order to determine destitution, the criteria if any, currently in force in the States/UTs may also be followed. The amount of old age pension is Rs. 75/-per month per beneficiary for the purpose of claiming central assistance.

2.2 National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)

Central assistance under the National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS) is available on the conditions of death of primary breadwinner, while he or she is more than 18 years and less than 65 years of age. The primary breadwinner shall be a member whose earnings contribute substantially to the household income. The bereaved household qualifies as one below the poverty line according to the criteria prescribed by the Government of India. The amount of

benefit is Rs. 10,000/- in the case of death of primary breadwinner due to natural or accidental cause and is paid to the member of the household of the deceased who, after local inquiry, is determined to be the head of the household.

2.3 National Maternity Benefit Scheme (NMBS)

Under the National Maternity Benefit Scheme, benefit is provided in the form of a lump sum cash assistance to pregnant women of households below the poverty line subject to the following conditions:- The benefit is restricted to pregnant women for up to the first two live births provided they are of 19 years of age and above. The beneficiary belongs to a household below the poverty line as per the criteria prescribed by the Government of India. The amount of benefit is Rs.500. The maternity benefit is disbursed in one instalment 12-8 weeks prior to the delivery. Timely disbursement of maternity benefit shall be ensured. In case of delay, it can be disbursed to the beneficiary even after the birth of the child.

3. Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)

The National Rural Employment Guarantee Act launched on 2nd February 2006 as a momentous initiative towards pro-poor growth. For the first time, rural communities have been given not just a development programme but also a regime of rights. NREGA guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year to any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work. Employment needs to be given on demand within 15 days of application after obtaining the job card. This scheme also serve other objectives: generating productive assets and skills thereby boosting the rural economy, protecting the environment, empowering rural women, reducing rural urban migration and fostering social equity, among others. The Act offers an opportunity to strengthen our democratic processes by entrusting principle role to panchayats at all levels in its implementation and ensures transparency through involvement of community at planning and monitoring stages by conducting social audits.

4. Housing and Infrastructure Development Programme
4.1 Indira Awaas Yojana

Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) was launched during 1985-86 as a sub-scheme of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP) and continued as a sub-scheme of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) since its launching from April, 1989. It has been delinked from the JRY and has been made an independent scheme with effect from January 1, 1996. The objective of IAY is primarily to provide grant for construction of houses to members of Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, freed bonded labourers and also to non-SC/ST rural poor below the poverty line. The target group for houses under IAY will be people below poverty line living in rural areas belonging to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, freed bonded labourers and non-SC/ST subject to the condition that the benefits to non-SC/ST should not exceed 40% of total IAY allocation during a financial year.

The Programme will be implemented through the zilla parishads/ DRDAs and houses will be constructed by the beneficiaries themselves. The district panchayat/ zilla panchayat/ DRDAs on the basis of allocations made and targets fixed shall decide the number of houses to be constructed/ upgraded panchayat wise under IAY, during a particular financial year. The same shall be intimated to the gram panchayat concerned. Thereafter, the gram sabha will select the beneficiaries from the list of eligible BPL households, restricting this number to the target allotted as per the programme guidelines.

Allotment of dwelling units should be in the name of female member of the beneficiary household. Alternatively, it can be allotted in the name of both husband and wife. Dwelling units should normally be built on individual plots in the main habitation of the village. The houses can also be built in a cluster within a habitation, so as to facilitate the development of infrastructure, such as, internal roads, drainage, drinking water supply etc. and other common facilities.

From 1995-96, the IAY benefits have been extended to ex-servicemen, widows or next-of kin of defence personnel and para military forces killed in action irrespective of the income criteria.

4.2 Sardar Patel Awas Yojana
Sardar Patel Awas Yojana is for landless agricultural labourers and village artisan living below poverty line in rural areas of the Gujarat.

4.3 Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)
The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna is sponsored by the Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Rural Development, and Government of India in 2000. The main objective of the scheme is to provide connectivity by way of an all-weather road to the unconnected habitations in the rural areas with a population of more than 500 persons by 2007. In the process, all unconnected habitations having a population of more than 1000 persons were covered in the last three years. In the case of hilly/ desert tracts, the size should not be less than 250 persons.

The primary focus of the programme is on construction of new roads. The scheme will permit the up-gradation (to prescribed standards) of the existing roads in those districts where all the habitations of the designated population size have been provided all-weather road connectivity. It must be noted that u-pgradation is not central to the programme and cannot exceed 20 per cent of the State's allocation where unconnected habitations in the State still exist. In up-gradation works, priority should be given to conversion of fair weather roads to all weather roads in the Core Network. Up-gradation involves conversion, depending on the need, of gravel roads/ water bound macadam roads to black-topped. Extension of existing roads to SC/ST habitations in the village are also covered under up-gradation. Up-gradation does not cover repairs of existing roads.

4.4. Gokul Gram Yojana
Many villages of Gujarat had remained deprived of even the basic amenities even after many years of independence due to uneven and lopsided development in the state. With a view to providing certain basic amenities to all the villages in the state, in an uninformed manner in a disciplined time-frame, the state government has introduced a very ambitious scheme called Gokul Gram Yojana. The intention is to ensure that each of the village in the state should not only be equipped with the basic amenities but should also make it clean and environmentally beautiful.

5. Wasteland Development

5.1 Integrated Wasteland Development Project (IWDP) Scheme
The basic objective of this scheme is an integrated wastelands development based on village/micro watershed plans. These plans are prepared after taking into consideration the land capability, site condition and local needs of the people. The scheme also aims at rural employment besides enhancing the contents of people's participation in the wastelands

development programmes at all stages, which is ensured by providing modalities for equitable and sustainable sharing of benefits and usufructs (legal right to use another's property) arising from such projects.

5.2 Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP)

The Drought Prone Area Programme is supported by the Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Rural Development, and Government of India. The objective of the scheme is to tackle the special problems faced by those areas constantly affected by severe drought conditions. Based on the recommendations of the Hanumantha Rao Committee (1994), the programme has been under implementation on a watershed basis since 1995. The responsibility for planning, executing and maintaining the watershed projects is entrusted to local peoples' organisation specially constituted for the purpose. The focus of the scheme is to minimize the adverse effects of drought on the production of crops, livestock and productivity of land, water and human resources for drought proofing of the affected areas. Promote the overall economic development and improve the socio-economic condition of the resource poor and disadvantaged sections inhabiting the programme areas. Take up development works by watershed approach for land development, water resource development and afforestation/ pasture development.

5.3 Desert Development Programme (DDP)

The objective of the Desert Development Programme launched in 1977-78, is. The aim is to mitigate the adverse effects of desertification and adverse climatic conditions on crops, human and livestock population, combating desertification; to restore ecological balance by harnessing, conserving and developing natural resources i.e. land, water, vegetative cover and to tackle the special problems faced by those areas constantly affected by severe drought conditions rising land productivity and to implement developmental works through the watershed approach, for land development, water resource development and a forestation/pasture development.

The programme was started both in the hot-desert areas of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana, and the cold-desert areas of Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. The programme is being implemented through Watershed Approach. The thrust of the programme is on capacity building and empowerment of village communities, ensuring participation of Panchayati Raj Institutions and NGOs in programme implementation at grass root level and transfer of funds as well as decision-making power to local people.

5.4. Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)

Area development programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) like the Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Drought Prone Area Programme (DDP) and Integrated Wasteland Development Programme (IWDP) has been following the watershed development approach since 1995-96 with the first watershed development guidelines coming into force. With the coming into effect of the new Common Guidelines, 2008, the individual Watershed Development Programmes have been merged together to form one comprehensive programme, namely, Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP). The main aims of the IWMP are to restore the ecological balance by harnessing, conserving and developing degraded natural resources such as soil, vegetative cover and water. The outcomes are prevention of soil run-off, regeneration of natural vegetation, rain water harvesting and recharging of the ground water table. This enables multi-cropping and the introduction of diverse agro-based activities, which help to provide sustainable livelihoods to the people residing in the watershed area. Gujarat is among the front runners in

the country in taking up new projects. To manage the IWMP at state level, Gujarat State Watershed Management Agency has been established.

6. Water and Sanitation

6.1. Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)
The total sanitation campaign (TSC) is sponsored by the Department of Drinking Water Supply, Ministry of Rural Development, and Government of India and has been launched in 1999. It is mainly a demand led scheme with emphasis on awareness generation.

The main objective of TSC is to bring about an improvement in the general quality of life in the rural areas. Generate felt demand for sanitation facilities through awareness creation and health education. Through this scheme, schools/ anganwadis in rural areas are covered with sanitation facilities and hygiene education and sanitary habits is promoted among students. It encourages cost effective and appropriate technologies in sanitation. It aims to eliminate open defecation to minimize risk of contamination of drinking water sources and food. Dry latrines are converted to pour flush latrines, and eliminate manual scavenging practice, wherever in existence in rural areas.

6.2 Swajaldhara
Swajaldhara is centrally sponsored by the Department of Drinking Water Supply, Ministry of Rural Development, and Government of India in 2002. The scheme adopts a demand-responsive, adaptable approach along with community participation based on empowerment of villagers to ensure their full participation in the project through a decision making role in the choice of the drinking water scheme, planning, design, implementation, control of finances and management arrangements; full ownership of drinking water assets with appropriate levels of panchayats / communities to have the powers to plan, implement, operate, maintain and manage all water supply and sanitation schemes, partial capital cost sharing either in cash or kind including labour or both, 100% responsibility of operation and maintenance (O&M) by the users; an integrated service delivery mechanism; taking up of conservation measures through rain water harvesting and ground water recharge systems for sustained drinking water supply; and shifting the role of government from direct service delivery to that of planning, policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation, and partial financial support. Swajaldhara has two dharas (streams). First dhara (Swajaldhara I) will be for a gram panchayat (GP) or a group of GPs or an intermediate panchayat (at Block / Tehsil level) and the second dhara (Swajaldhara II) will have a district as the project area.

7. Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)
The integrated Child Development Scheme was launched in 1975, today; ICDS Scheme represents one of the world's largest and most unique programmes for early childhood development. ICDS addresses the challenge of providing pre-school education on one hand and breaking the vicious cycle of malnutrition, morbidity, reduced learning capacity and mortality, on the other.

The main objectives of ICDS is to improve the nutritional and health status of children in the age-group 0-6 years; to lay the foundation for proper psychological, physical and social development of the child; to reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout; to achieve effective co-ordination of policy and implementation amongst the various departments to promote child development; and to enhance the capability of the mother to look after the normal health and nutritional needs of the child through proper nutrition and health education.

The above objectives are sought to be achieved through a package of services based primarily on the consideration that the overall impact will be much larger if the different services develop in an integrated manner as the efficacy of a particular service depends upon the support it receives from related services.

(i) Nutrition including Supplementary Nutrition: This includes supplementary feeding and growth monitoring; and prophylaxis against vitamin A deficiency and control of nutritional anaemia. All families in the community are surveyed, to identify children below the age of six and pregnant & nursing mothers. They avail of supplementary feeding support for 300 days in a year. By providing supplementary feeding, the Anganwadi attempts to bridge the caloric gap between the national recommended and average intake of children and women in low income and disadvantaged communities.

Growth monitoring and nutrition surveillance are two important activities that are undertaken. Children below the age of three years of age are weighed once a month and children 3-6 years of age are weighed quarterly. Weight-for-age growth cards are maintained for all children below six years. This helps to detect growth faltering and helps in assessing nutritional status. Besides, severely malnourished children are given special supplementary feeding and referred to medical services.

(ii) Immunisation: Immunisation of pregnant women and infants protects children from six vaccine preventable diseases-poliomyelitis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, tuberculosis and measles. These are major preventable causes of child mortality, disability, morbidity and related malnutrition. Immunisation of pregnant women against tetanus also reduces maternal and neonatal mortality.

(iii) Health Check-ups: This includes health care of children less than six years of age, antenatal care of expectant mothers and postnatal care of nursing mothers. The various health services provided for children by anganwadi workers and primary health centre (PHC) staff, include regular health check-ups, recording of weight, immunization, management of malnutrition, treatment of diarrhoea, de-worming and distribution of simple medicines etc.

(iv) Referral Services: During health check-ups and growth monitoring, sick or malnourished children, in need of prompt medical attention, are referred to the Primary Health Centre or its sub-centre. The anganwadi worker has also been oriented to detect disabilities in young children. She enlists all such cases in a special register and refers them to the medical officer of the Primary Health Centre/ Sub-centre.

a. **Non-formal Pre-School Education (PSE):** The Non-formal Pre-school Education (PSE) component of the ICDS may well be considered the backbone of the ICDS programme, since all its services essentially converge at the anganwadi – a village courtyard. Anganwadi Centre (AWC) – a village courtyard – is the main platform for delivering of these services. These AWCs have been set up in every village in the country. In pursuance of its commitment to the cause of India's Children, present government has decided to set up an AWC in every human habitation/ settlement. As a result, total number of AWC would go up to almost 1.4 million. This is also the most joyful play-way daily activity, visibly sustained for three hours a day. It brings and keeps young children at the anganwadi centre - an activity that motivates parents and communities. PSE, as envisaged in the ICDS, focuses on total development of the child, in the age up to six years, mainly from the underprivileged groups. Its programme for the three-to six years

old children in the anganwadi is directed towards providing and ensuring a natural, joyful and stimulating environment, with emphasis on necessary inputs for optimal growth and development. The early learning component of the ICDS is a significant input for providing a sound foundation for cumulative lifelong learning and development. It also contributes to the universalization of primary education, by providing to the child the necessary preparation for primary schooling and offering substitute care to younger siblings, thus freeing the older ones – especially girls – to attend school.

b. **Nutrition and Health Education:** Nutrition, Health and Education (NHED) are the key elements of the work of the anganwadi worker. This forms part of BCC (Behaviour Change Communication) strategy. This has the long term goal of capacity-building of women – especially in the age group of 15-45 years – so that they can look after their own health, nutrition and development needs as well as that of their children and families.

Three of the six services - Immunisation, Health Check-up and Referral Services Are delivered through Public Health Infrastructure under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.

Source: http://wcd.nic.in/icds.htm

8. Food and Public Distribution

8.1 Annapurna Scheme
The Annapurna scheme is sponsored by the Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Rural and Urban Development, Government of India since 2001-02. The main objective of the scheme is to provide food security to those senior citizens who through eligible have remained uncovered under the National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS). The collector/CEO will make arrangement for the distribution of food grains and issue the Entitlement Cards through the panchayat/municipalities and ensure that the Beneficiaries covered under Annapurna are not receiving any old age pensions. 10 Kgs. of food grains per person per month are supplied free of cost under the scheme. The applicant must be a destitute in the sense of having little or no regular means of substance from his/her own source of income or through financial support from family members or other sources. In order to determine destitution, the criteria, if any, in force in the States/UTs may also be followed. The beneficiaries under the scheme are selected in the gram sabhas and the gram panchayat distributes the entitlement cards to the beneficiaries.

8.2 Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)
Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) was launched in December, 2000 for one crore poorest of the poor families. AAY contemplates identification of one crore poorest of the poor families from amongst the BPL families covered under targeted public distribution system (TPDS) within the States and providing them food grains at a highly subsidised rate. The States/UTs are required to bear the distribution cost, including margin to dealers and retailers as well as the transportation cost. Thus the entire food subsidy is being passed on to the consumers under the scheme. The AAY has further been expanded with effect from 1st August, 2004 by another 50 lakhs BPL families by including, inter-alia, and all households at the risk of hunger. Beneficiary will get food grains at a subsidized rate of Rs.2 per Kgs. for wheat and Rs. 3 per Kgs. for rice. The scale of issue that was initially 25 kg per family per month has been increased to 35 kg per family per month. Extent of assistance: Maximum 35 Kg per family at the rate of Rs. 2/kg for wheat and Rs. 3/kg for rice.. AAY is applicable to

landless agriculture laborers, marginal farmers, rural artisans/craftsmen such as potters, tanners, weavers, blacksmiths, carpenters, slum dwellers, and persons earning their livelihood on daily basis in the informal sector like porters, coolies, rickshaw pullers, hand cart pullers, fruit and flower sellers, snake charmers, rag pickers, cobblers, destitute and other similar categories in both rural and urban areas; households headed by widows or terminally ill persons/disabled persons/persons aged 60 years or more with no assured means of subsistence or societal support; and widows or terminally ill persons or disabled persons or persons aged 60 years or more or single women or single men with no family or societal support or assured means of subsistence.

8.3 Mid - Day Meal Scheme (MDMS)

The Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS) launched since 1995 is intended to give a boost to universalisation of primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance, and simultaneously impacting upon nutritional status of students in primary classes. Full central assistance is available for meeting the costs of food-grains (wheat and rice) by Food Corporation of India and transportation charges to the district authorities for movement of food grains from FCI godowns to schools at actual cost up to Rs. 50 per quintal. Food grains (wheat and rice) are allocated at 100 grams per child per school day where cooked/ processed hot meal is being served and 3 Kg. per student per month subject to a minimum attendance of 80 per cent by the students. Expenditure on kitchen sheds and labour charges is to be met from funds available for works and employment generation under poverty alleviation schemes (JRY/NRY) of the Ministry of Rural Areas and employment and the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment. Food grains (wheat and rice) are supplied free of cost @ 100 gram per child per school day where cooked/processed hot meal is being served with a Minimum content of 300 calories and 8-12 grams of protein each day of school for a minimum of 200 days and 3 Kgs per student per month for 10 months in a year, where food grains are distributed in raw form. The scheme covers students (Class l-V) in the government primary schools / primary schools aided by government and the primary schools run by local bodies. Private unaided schools and non-formal education are not covered under the programme.

9. National Project on Biogas Development (NIPBD)

National Project on Biogas Development **(NPBD)** is sponsored by The Department of Non-conventional Energy Sources; Government of India and has been operational since 1981-82. The main objective is to provide fuel for cooking purposes and organic manure to rural households through biogas plants, mitigate drudgery of rural women, reduce pressure on forest and accentuate social benefits and improve sanitation in villages by linking toilets with biogas plants. The scheme promotes indigenously developed models of biogas plants. States have designated nodal departments and nodal agencies for implementation. Besides, Khadi and Village Industries Commission, Mumbai; National Dairy Development Board, Anand (Gujarat), and national and regional level non-governmental organisations are involved in implementation. The scheme provides for different types of financial incentives including central subsidy to users, turn key job fee to entrepreneurs, service charges to State Nodal Departments / Agencies and support for training and publicity. This is a 100 per cent centrally sponsored scheme envisaging a subsidy of Rs.2,100 for general category and Rs. 2,800 for SC/ST and small farmers and Rs.3,500 for hilly areas. Commercial and co-operative banks provide loan for setting up of biogas plants under Agriculturally Priority Area. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) is providing the facility of automatic refinancing to banks.

10. Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of AIDS/Appliances (ADIP) Scheme

Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of AIDS/ Appliances (ADIP) Scheme are sponsored by the Department of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India since 1996. The main objective of the scheme is to assist the needy disabled persons in procuring durable, sophisticated and scientifically manufactured, modern, standard aids and appliances that can promote their physical, social and psychological rehabilitation, by reducing the effects of disabilities and enhance their economic potential.

The implementing agencies are provided with financial assistance for purchase, fabrication and distribution of such standard aids and appliances that are in conformity with objective of the scheme. The implementing agencies have to take care of/ make suitable arrangements for fitting and post-fitting care of the aids and appliances distributed under ADIP scheme. The scope of the scheme has been further enlarged to include use of mass media, exhibitions, workshops etc. for exchange of information and promoting awareness and distribution and use of aids/appliances. The scheme also include under its ambit, medical/surgical correction & intervention, which is essential prior to fitment of aids and appliances. The cost could range from Rs. 500/- for hearing & speech impaired to Rs. 1,000/- for visually disabled and Rs. 3,000/- for orthopedically disabled.

Only those aids/appliances which do not cost less than Rs. 50/- and more than Rs. 6,000/- are covered under the Scheme. For visually mentally, speech & hearing or multiple disabled, the limit should be Rs. 8,000/- during their study period up to XII standard. The limits will apply to individual items of aid and where more than one aid is required, the ceiling will apply separately.

The travelling cost is admissible limited to bus fare in ordinary class or railway by second class sleeper subject to a limit of Rs. 250/- for beneficiary irrespective of number of visits to the centre and a certificate from doctor or rehabilitation professional. Travel expenses subject to the same limit is admissible to an attendant/escort accompanying the beneficiary. The beneficiary should attend the rehabilitation centre nearest to his/her place of residence, except in the North-Eastern Region where he may be allowed travel cost for travelling outside the Region till such facilities become available within that Region. Boarding and Lodging expenses at the rate of Rs. 30/- per day for maximum duration of 15 days is admissible, only for those patients whose total income is up to Rs. 5,000/- per month.

A person with disabilities fulfilling following conditions would be eligible for assistance under ADIP Scheme through authorized agencies: He/she should be an Indian citizen of any age; Should be certified by a Registered Medical Practitioner that he/ she is disabled and fit to use prescribed aid/appliance; Person who is employed/self-employed or getting pension and whose monthly income from all sources does not exceed Rs. 8,000/ - per month; In case of dependents, the income of parents/guardians should not exceed Rs. 8,000/- per month; Persons who have not received assistance from the Government, local bodies and Non-Official Organisations during the last 3 years, for the same purpose and for children below 12 years of age this limit would be 1 year.

Role of Panchayats in Poverty Alleviation

In implementing the rural development programme the panchayats can perform the following roles;

- Undertake rural planning as per the needs and requirements of the people with the voice of the vulnerable groups and approve and prioritise these in the gram sabha.
- Execution of the approved plan within the stipulated time frame.
- Pooling of all available village resources, materials and money needed for rural development.
- Stock taking of the work done and its evaluation from time to time as per the suggestions made in the gram sabha.
- Help in consolidation of land holding in the village by educating people.
- Bringing waste land under cultivation by developing the scheme with the approval of village people.
- Promoting the construction of pucca irrigation projects like tanks and bandharas.
- Raising village forests, grazing land and orchards for common benefit.
- Encourage villagers to grow improved seed to meet local demand with storage facility.
- Take responsibility for all community undertaking such as: construction, maintenance and repairs of roads, drains, bunds, culverts and bridge and construction work of public buildings and village market.
- Look after village water supply and sanitation and preventive measure against disease.
- In the socio – cultural field the panchayat can help in the following activities:
   a. Spreading education and encourage better attendance in school.
   b. Ensure the follow-up of medical advice.
   c. Establish recreation centres, libraries, village theatres and community centres.

In order to enable the panchayats to carry out these activities it is necessary to make adequate provisions in the existing act to enable the panchayats to raise its own income by levying some taxes fees and cess for different items, besides receiving a share from the taluka and district funds allotted by the state government.

It is also necessary for the panchayat to take the assistance of knowledgeable persons available in the village by nominating them as members of the panchayat sub-committees or designate them as leaders for various programmes and activities.

Gramsabhas should be empowered to and take leadership in poverty alleviation programmes. All village development work should be undertaken by the village panchayats only under the overall guidance of the grams sabhas. Gram sabhas should employ a full time secretary to look after the village development programmes especially those dealing with poverty alleviation. Village panchayats are to be treated only as executive functionaries of the gram sabha. The gram sabhas have power to relieve the panchayat if the latter's work is found unsatisfactory by the gram sabhas. All the states should empower their gram sabhas complete authority for planning and implementing poverty alleviation programmes and empowering them with authorities. All gram sabhas should conduct monthly meeting to consider planning and implementing. Programmes of poverty alleviation, especially the work of mobilising, organising, utilising human resources of the village in various commonly oriented programmes should be considered by the gram sabhas. This should help in the development of local initiative and responsibility on the part of local people especially the local leaders. Before starting any rural development programme relating to poverty alleviation, it should be obligatory to take the approval of the gram sabha before implementing the programme.

United Nations has declared 1997-2006 as the first UN decade for the eradication of poverty. There is growing concern in poverty eradication among various international forums. Poverty

is the most deep rooted, complex and critical concern especially for the world countries. One of the major challenges facing the human society is poverty eradication. Government and Non-Government organizations in various countries have adopted various strategies, mechanisms and instruments to fight poverty. Setting up the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is one major step in this direction. This has been discussed on the chapter on Human Development.

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10. ROLE OF PANCHAYATS IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

[13]Every year in India on an average 4350 persons lose lives and 30 million are affected in natural disasters. In addition, 1.4 million hectare cropped land is affected and 2.36 million houses are damaged. It is estimated that 2% of GDP of the country is directly lost every year due to disasters. Also, there are indicators of increasing frequency of disasters. In the last two decades we have witnessed many major disasters such as Latur earthquake, Orisssa super cyclone, Gujarat earthquake and South Asia Tsunami.

In January 2005, the world conference on disaster reduction held in Kobe, Japan stressed the need to build linkages between Disaster Risk Management (DRM) strategy with local development planning, strengthen political will, sustained allocation of resources and political action, developing quality data base on vulnerability reduction and hazard risk and early warning mechanisms. It also emphasis to develop legislative provisions and policies as facilitative mechanisms.These points were articulated as three strategic goals and five priority action areas. This is known as Hyogo frame work for action 2005-2015. India has adopted and committed it self to implementing the Hygo frame work of action by being a signatory.

The impact of unprecedented and frequent disasters led the disaster management practitioners and policy makers to rethinking on the appropriateness of the disaster management structures

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[13] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

and functions. It has also been articulated that until the vulnerability are reduced during normal time, just post disaster response can not address the human miseries and reduce the disaster risks. At the policy level it was articulated that pre-disaster mitigation and preparedness need to be the focus to control the damage and reduce loss of developmental gains. It was also recognized that managing disaster required multi dimensional, multi-disciplinary and multi sectoral approach. This learning has led to a paradigm shift from relief centric approach to proactive approach of prevention, mitigation and preparedness..

Disaster Management Structure and Functions in Gujarat

Some of the states like Gujarat and Orissa had formulated state level Disaster Management Act and set up Disaster Management Authorities prior to the enactment of National Act. Gujarat government declared the disaster management policy in the year 2002.Following this policy the Government passed the –Gujarat state disaster Management Act 2003 .The bill was passed by the state assembly on March 28-2003 and the act has come in to force from May 13, 2003.The state of Gujarat became the first state in India to have enacted an act to provide legal and regulatory frame work for disaster management. The Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) created soon after the Gujarat earth quake has taken many initiatives in strengthening a sound DM structure with Emergency Operation Centers at the district level with state of the art equipments to take up search and rescue. It has one of the best Incident Command System to respond to any emergencies. It is believed that no management system is going to be effective if the community based management systems are not strengthened. For the preparation of village level contingency plans and effective community response, community based disaster preparedness (CBDP) process has been institutionalized. Besides these interventions special programmes are launched on preparation of district, taluka and city level disaster management plans, popularly known as DDMP, TDMP and CDMP respectively, school safety disaster management, cyclone risk mitigation, mainstreaming gender in disaster management, capacity building of masons through trainings and camps and certification etc.

The act calls for a coordinated functions of all departments of the state government to provide assistance to the Authority, Commissioner, the Collector and the local authority in setting up communication centers for drawing up contingency plans ,capacity building, data collection and identifying training personnel ,relief operations, damage assessment, reconstruction and rehabilitation
Thus the Act,
- Provides the legal support for the disaster management approach
- Specifies roles /responsibilities of various agencies within and out side the government
- In principle, it allows legal space for private sector, voluntary organizations, and community groups etc.
- Includes provision to find risk sharing /offset financial or insurance mechanisms
- Provides option for cost sharing
- Emphasis on preparedness ,planning, risk reduction ,quick return to normalcy

An important feature of the DM act is to prepare and implement preparedness and mitigation plans in coordination with the line departments, local bodies and communities at village – block-district and state level. Local community is considered as a primary stack holder .These plans are conceived as dynamic in nature and there is provision to review and up date them periodically. These plans should be formulated by ensuring the people's participation at all levels and any such plans should be available in public domain.

Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction

Strengthening and building resilience at the community level is an important area along with building institutional capacity. Panchayati Raj Institutions can play an effective role to promote disaster risk reduction strategies. Some of the key principles that need to be built into the community level are as follows:

- Living in disaster-safer communities is considered as a basic human right
- Sustainable development can only be achieved by integrating CBDP in all developmental plans & initiatives
- Community knowledge, culture and customs are recognised and respected.
- Central role for vulnerable groups and persons
- Development-oriented approach, with long-term goal to promote sustainable development
- Addresses root causes of vulnerability, while transforming or removing structures that generate inequity or underdevelopment
- Role of multiple stakeholders: NGOs, other civil society organisations and government are supportive. Media can play an important role in awareness building and early warning.
- Gender – Women's participation   integrated into disaster risk management at all levels

The key components of the disaster management plan at the community level

1. **Hazard Assessment:** Hazards are usually referred to by many people as disasters. A hazard, however, can only be called a disaster when it hits a community which is unable to cope with its effects. According to the Glossary of Terms of United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN-ISDR), a hazard is "a potentially damaging physical event, phenomenon or human activity that may cause the loss of life of or injury, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation." It is necessary to charaterise a hazard in terms of its cause and effect. There are hazards that affect wider communities and some that affect individuals. The community hazard assessment refers to the community defining the threats and understands the nature and behavior of particular hazards. The assessment brings out information on the characteristics of hazards, specifically, the hazard force, warning sings and signals forewarning, speed of onset, frequency, period of occurrence an duration.

2. **Vulnerability Assessment:** Vulnerability is the degree of exposure of elements (people or things) at risk to the hazard. People's lives and health are usually directly at risk from the destructive effects of the hazard. Their livelihood may also be at risk because of the destruction of assets they depended on, e.g. buildings, crops, livestock or equipment. Vulnerability is a set of prevailing condition which adversely affect the community's ability to prevent, mitigate or prepare for respond to the hazard event. Vulnerability are unsafe conditions and degree of vulnerability is in relation to ideal safe condition. Hence community need to identify structures and conditions which are unsafe in response to a particular hazard. The extent of disaster risk is determined by the force of the hazard and the extent of vulnerability. Vulnerability assessment of physical structures and social conditions primarily increases the impact of disaster risk. By vulnerability analysis community can also identify the elements that are at risks and how to build capacity to reduce vulnerability.

Disaster risk is viewed as (hazard X vulnerability) divided by Capacity. Capacities are categorized as prevention, mitigation, survivability and readiness majors.

3. **Capacity Assessment:** It is to distinguish various disaster resilience capacities of the community. ISDR refers to capacities as a combination of all the strength and resource available within a community, society or organisation that can help reduce the level of risks or the effects of a disaster. Capacity may include physical, social, institutional or economic means as well as skilled personal or collective attributes such as leadership and management. Similar definition of capacities are strength and resource, which exist or are present in individuals, households and the community – enabling them to cope with, withstand, prepare for, prevent, mitigate, or quickly recover from a disaster. Capacities can be broadly categorized under mitigation, prevention, survivability and recovery.

   Mitigation covers measures that minimize the effects of hazards and thus lessen the magnitude of a disaster. Mitigation measures can range from physical measures such as flood control, safe building designs, non structural measures such as training, organizing disaster volunteers, public awareness, food security programmes etc.

   Prevention covers activities designed to impede the occurrence of a disaster event and/or prevent such an occurrence from having harmful effects on communities and facilities. Examples are creation of flood water channel, afforestation, preventive healthcare etc.

   Survivability refers to activities that deal with reducing individual vulnerabilities. These are individual level capacity like access to food, shelter, drinking water, to manage to stay alive or continue to exist, despite the difficult situations.

   Recovery deals with capacities of the community and organisations to function as a system to deal with the hazards interms of search, rescue, relief and rehabilitation.

   Community capacities on the four areas can be developed during the normal time. For example, the mitigation and prevention activities can be taken up under various developmental programmes. Similarly the survivability and recovery skills like swimming, first aid, healthcare facilities, search and rescue systems, mason training for safe construction can be introduced before the hazard. The capacity of the community also varies in terms of casts, gender, age etc. The capacity assessment also needs to be done in a disaggregated manner.

4. **Disaster Risk Analysis:** After assessing the hazard, vulnerability and the capacity, the community need to analyse the disaster risk specific to different disasters and examine which elements are under what kind of risk. For example, a poorly constructed school building close to the sea front / flooded area / earthquake zone / creates risks not only for the damage to the building but also risks the students and teachers. Households living between the sea and an open drainage are expose to risks at the time of flood or cyclone as they cannot be easily evacuated. One needs to look into who are the people at risks, what is the location of risks and how vulnerable the people and location is with regard to a hazard. The disaster risk analysis provides a great deal of understanding to design and develop risk reduction strategies.

5. **Development of Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Strategy:** Strategies are a set of plan of action and concepts that guide and organisation's use of resources in the best possible

way to pursue it mission or main purpose. Incase of DRR all action plans need to be designed in such a way during regular developmental activities, mitigation, prevention, survivability and preparedness is created in the community. The main driver of the DRR action plan is the community itself. Many of the DRR plans are within the capacity o the community. For example, in a regular flood affected area, farmers prevent their loss of life stock by selling them in the market before the floods and repurchase after the floods. This community action reduces distress cell and loss of assets. Community assessment of vulnerable houses to flood, cyclone, earthquake, helps in identifying strengthening strategies which panchayats can help. Increasing the height of the hand pumps can prevent contamination of drinking water at the time of floods. Many such DRR action plans can be developed which community directly initiate. However, some actions like mechanized boat for evacuation during a flood may be a requirement to the community but they cannot have it. In such cases effective linkage (Phone numbers, contacts) can help in building DRR capacity.

6. **Community Action and Contingency Plan on DRR:** Finally community needs to demonstrate its action plan to make all households safe. Hence, capacity building review of plan has to be a continue exercise. Panchayats can make DRR as an agenda in the gram sabhas. Mostly at the community level tasks forces are made in the sphere of early warning, search and rescue, first aid, drinking water, shelter, damage assessment etc.

Importance of Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction
Gujarat DM Act has created the provision of village disaster management committee as a mandatory institution for DRR. It will enable creation of village level plans for mitigation and prevention under various developmental programmes. For example, the MGNREGA has provision to undertake works for flood control and drought prevention. The structural vulnerabilities like school, hospital buildings, bridges can be taken up under various works programmes of the government. Preventive healthcare facilities can be taken up by making the grass root healthcare providers more accountable. In other words, the community assumes more responsibility to address risks associated with the disasters. It enables efficient use of resources to mitigate and prevent disasters in the normal time. It also builds the community capacity in terms of leadership, linkage building and accessing various support services which in the long run builds community resilience.

Importance of Community Participation
Community participation leads to promotion of awareness about their risk and vulnerability. Community develops better understanding on the impact of different disasters. It builds ownership of the DRR plans and people feel encouraged to use their experience and resources. Speedy action on the plan is possible when community is involved as local level issues are resolved by people themselves and people volunteer to contribute.can be resolved speedily. It is easy to decide about priority action /agenda. Community also feels empowered to build linkages outside for resource mobilisation. Since it leads to a community owned process, the community confidence is increased which leads to self sufficiency and provides an opportunity for local level leadership development.

Hindering Factors to Community Participation
When the community has competing demands over the basic development sector like food security, health care services, disaster risk management assumes a low priority and people loose interest to talk about disaster in a normal time. Moreover, DRM/DRM are fairly new

concepts with different meaning to different stakeholders. Adequate orientation on the issue can remove the basic barrier to participation. Currently most of the institutional approach including of the PRIs are emergency-focused, resulting in lack of organisational mechanisms for disaster risk management. There is a need to create a political will on capacity building on DRR.

Panchayati Raj Institutions and Disaster Management

Article 243-G of 73rd Amendments of the Constitution of India encourages panchayat to plan for the development of the village. It provides a legal status to local self governance to make decentralized plan and use resources. Gram panchayat is obliged to prepare their annual plan in consultation and approval of the Gram Sabha every year .The Gram Sabha is a forum to debate, discuss and share the views of different stake holders in preparation of comprehensive development plan for the village guided by the principles of equal participation, social justice, accountability and transparency. These plans are implemented through panchayats.

Disaster management in India was viewed as a discipline to provide relief and rehabilitation to the people affected by natural calamities. For a long time disaster management has been remained under the Ministry of Agriculture, in the States it was a concern of the Revenue or Relief Departments, while in the districts it was one of the many crisis management functions of the Collectors. In past Panchayats were largely involved during the drought since it is the common and frequently occurring hazard. Scarcity works were organized by the Revenue Department at the time of drought so that employment opportunity is created at village level and migration is restrained. District Collectors were in charge of the implementation under the guidance of Relief Commissioner .Relief Manual was used as guide for payments and measurement system .Panchayat were involved in suggesting the names for people ready to work for manual labor and also suggest the works which can fall under relief work .Monitoring and payment was done by Revenue Department.

Looking at the new approach of Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction, Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) created under the Act has taken up initiatives to involve Panchayats in the planning process. However, there are many constraints which need to be addressed to make the role of Panchayats effective.

Constraints	Suggestion for Improvement
Competency and credibility of village panchayat is questionable in planning and implementation. People in general lack confidence in performance of Panchayats.	• Panchayat members to be oriented through training/orientation so that they understand the importance of people centered planning rather than depending on the central and state sponsored programmes. • Success full examples may be disseminated to to build people's confidence on the Panchayats.
Panchayats are not looking DRR plan as integral part of development plan.	• Community based DRR trainings needs to be demand based and Panchayats need to be oriented to converge development programmes for DRR.
No budgetary allocations either from government or panchayat is made for this purpose	• New budget should not be tapped, guide line needs to be made to converge the developmental programmes and schemes for all aspects of DRR. • Synergy with other government program

Limited capacity building initiatives for promotion of CBDRR with special focus on building the capacity of Panchayat.	• Periodic training for Task Force and panchayat members should be planned and implemented • Village level resources can be developed for sharing for capacity building on different dimensions of DRR strategy like early warning, rescue, first aid,etc. It will reduce dependence on a centalised authority.
In general Gram Sabhas are not very active and responsive.	• Strengthen the Gram Sabha • Emphasis on participation of women and weaker sections.
Lack of structured efforts to sustain the initiatives	• Periodic review of the development and DRR plans of the Gram panchayat and its achievements. • Effectiveness of DRR practices like early warning, evacuation, rescue shelter, firstaid must be examined by conducting mock drill.

Panchayats shall activate a village disaster management committee to take initiate action on DRR. Once the planning process is initiated with people's participation an overall enabling climate will be developed to think and act for reducing risks rather than looking for relief services after a disaster. Panchayat shall see that all houses are safe irrespective of their location, material and technology used, all the masons are trained and certified on safe building technology, health services including emergency services are responsive to the people's need, school children are educated about disasters so that the new generation is aware about mitigation and prevention strategies. Overall the Panchayats shall be inclusive in the approach so that women, children, people with disability, elderly and the SC, ST communities are included in the plan of action with dignity. It needs to be remembered that all development programmes can be designed to reduce disaster risk with social justice which is the main objective of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

11. ROLE OF PANCHAYATS IN NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

[14]Natural resource management refers to the management of natural resources such as land, water, soil, plants and animals, with a particular focus on improvement in the quality of life for both present and future generations. Natural resource management is congruent with the concept of sustainable development, a scientific principle that forms a basis for sustainable land management and environmental governance to conserve and preserve natural resources.Natural resource management specifically focuses on a scientific and technical understanding of resources and ecology and the life-supporting capacity of those resources. The term environmental management is also similar to natural resource management.

Interconnectedness of Natural Resources
Main components of natural resources, namely, soil, water and biomass are intimately related and contribute to each other if natural processes and cycles are allowed to proceed without interruption. The extraction of biomass for human and animal consumption should be within the carrying capacity of the ecological system. This is well recognized by both modern science as well as traditional knowledge systems as a basic principle for maintaining the sustainability of natural resources.

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[14] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

The interconnectedness of natural resources in any ecological unit, be it a farming system or a micro-watershed, provides an uncommon opportunity to harness synergy when all components are treated simultaneously. It is not surprising, therefore, that integrated approaches to NRM such as micro-watershed development (MWD), as compared to the piecemeal interventions, give best results.

Status of Natural Resources

India's total cultivable area is 1,269,219 km² (56.78% of total land area), which is decreasing due to constant pressure on land for non agricultural purposes like industialisation, mining, urban infrastructure, road networks etc. India has a total water surface area of 314,40 km² and receives an average annual rainfall of 1,100 mm. Irrigation accounts for 92% of the water utilisation, and comprised 380 km² in 1974, and is expected to rise to 1,050 km² by 2025, with the balance accounted for by industrial and domestic consumers. India's inland water resources comprising rivers, canals, ponds and lakes and marine resources comprising the east and west coasts of the Indian ocean and other gulfs and bays provide employment to nearly 6 million people in the fisheries sector. In 2008, India had the world's third largest fishing industry.

Natural Resources in Gujarat: Status and Issues
Land

Gujarat is the seventh largest state in India with 19.60 hectares of land mass. In 1991, the per capita land available in Gujarat was 0.70 ha. The all India figure was 0.49 ha. It is generally believed that Gujarat and other semi-arid and arid regions in the country have large areas of uncultivated wastelands and they offer good scope for development. Improving the status of wastelands will add to the productivity of the area under cultivation and the income generating potential of the wastelands in itself would be augmented.

Besides the physical erosion of land, there is the erosion of community institutions that used to manage and protect the common land as well. Research in economic history of land management in India has brought out that at the time of Independence, the de facto administration of uncultivated public land lay with the village and/or community panchayats and the state administration hardly interfered. After Independence and the merger of princely states, the revenue departments in all states took over these common lands, relegating the panchayat and community management to the background. A degenerating effect of the shift in management and regulation was that most of the land became open access, further contributing to serious degradation of the uncultivated land. This generated a serious threat to the environment in general as also to privately owned and operated cultivated lands. Second, the open access status made management and regulation ineffective. Yet another important aspect is the dependence of the poor on Common Property Resources for their livelihood.

In short, land use and land management in the last 50 years has undergone significant changes.

Forest

Gujarat has a total forest area of 19112.54 sq. km. The forests are unevenly distributed all over the state. The major forests are found along the eastern border of the state and the hilly portion of Saurashtra. The districts of Dang, Valsad, Surat and Junagadh are under deep forests cover. There are four major types of forests found in Gujarat based on environmental adjustments and the general morphological character. These are tropical moist deciduous

forest, tropical dry feciduous forest, northern tropical thorn forest and littoral and swamp forest.

As compared to the norm of about 30 per cent forest cover for Gujarat (the norm depends on the topography and physiography of the region), the forest area in the state cover about 10 percent of its area. The actual forests, however, cover only 6 per cent of the area. (Forest Survey of India, 1997). There is some improvement in mangroves, after a consistent loss for decades, in the recent years. This gain, however, is limited only to a few regions, around the gulf of Kachchh (Forest Survey of India, 1997) In short, Gujarat has experienced an overall declining trends in forests, which are supposed to play a critical role in protecting and stabilising its environment and ecology.

Water

There are three major groups of rivers flowing through the state in different directions. The major rivers of central and northern Gujarat include Narmada, Sabarmati, and Mahi. Rivers flowing through the Saurashtra region are Mithi, Khari, Bhadar, Shetrunji and Bhogavo. Rivers in the southern part of the state include Narmada, Tapi, Purna, Ambika, Auranga and Damanganga. Kutch has many rivers but most of them are small and dry up during summer. While Khari meets the desert, Magh and Tara empty their waters in the Gulf of Cambay.

Gujarat has total 185 river basins. Out of 185, Saurashtra region have 71 river basins while Kutchh region have 97 river basins. The river basins of Kutchh are very small. The available surface water resources of Gujarat state are 38,000 MCM and available ground Water is 12,000 MCM as below. Total Water resources of state are 50,000 MCM. Availability of water resources in different regions is inequitable.

Based on the level of ground water development the assessment units have been categorized as safe, semi critical, critical and over exploited. Out of 223 talukas in the state of Gujarat 31 units are over exploited (level of GW development > 100%), 12 are Critical (level of GW development between 90 & 100%) and 42 are Semi Critical (level of GW development between 75 & 90%). Over exploited talukas are mostly located in north Gujarat Alluvial plain area.

Ground water scarcity areas are mostly located in North Gujarat, Saurashtra and Kutch regions of the state. In north Gujarat the ground water scarcity areas cover parts of Panchmahals, Banaskantha, Mehsana, Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad districts of Gujarat. The scarcity in these areas is faced on account of erratic and scanty rainfall, high level of irrigation development and partly due to inherently saline

Salinity Ingress in Coastal Areas

Problem of salinity ingress is being faced by Gujarat along Saurashtra and Kachchh coast for coastline of approximately 1125 kms. The problem is severe along Una-Madhavpur stretch of Saurashtra and Maliya – Lakhpat stretch of Kachchh Region. In these stretches in select tracts intensive agricultural development and exploitation of ground water and poor recharge from upland areas has resulted into sea ingress even up to 5 to 6 Km inland causing salinity. The factors responsible are irregular and very low precipitation, highly porous geological formations, Low natural charge, Poor land management and Excessive withdrawal of water for irrigation.

The phenomenon of salinity ingress has adversely affected the lives of people, both on agricultural front and drinking water front. Approximately 10.80 lac of people of 534 villages are badly affected by salinity.700120 ha. of cultivable land has become useless and about 32750 nos. of wells have gone dry.

Livestock

Livestock forms an integral part of farming systems in rained areas. Not only does it help in maintaining the nutritional cycle of soils, it also provides food and nutritional security to the human population during years of drought and scarcity. Different livestock species are adapted to different ecological conditions. Arid zones are particularly known for having developed drought-resistant breeds over the centuries. However, recent changes in the ecological environment, leading to widespread scarcity of fodder, is threatening this traditional livelihood activity and making people more vulnerable. We have, therefore, tried to collect experiences of strengthening and reviving livestock-based livelihood strategies

Emerging Crisis of Indian Agriculture

Like most other developing economies, India began as an agrarian State. Even today Agriculture is a source of livelihood for about 60% of its population and provides Employment to about 56% of the country's work force. However, the growth rate of Agriculture steadily declined from 3.2% in the 80s to around 2% in the last 4-5 years. On the other hand, industrial growth has been buoyant at around 8%. Such skewed growth rates are a matter of serious concern for planners and policy makers of the country at the highest level.

Watershed Development: An Integrated NRM Strategy

Among the celebrated cases of micro-watershed development, the name of Sukhomajri stands out. Sukhomajri is a small hamlet of about 80 families, located in the foothills of the Shivaliks in Haryana. Under the leadership of Sri P.R. Mishra, the Central Soil & Water Conservation Research and Training Institute, (CSWCRTI), Chandigarh, made an intervention that brought about dramatic changes both in the ecology of the watershed as well as the economic situation of Sukhomajri and adjoining villages. These interventions comprised of the creation of a series of earthen dams on the drainage line, the protection of degraded community and forest lands through plantations and 'social fencing' by the villagers themselves and the reclamation of wastelands through the cultivation of valuable tree species and grasses. Keeping all the experiences in account government of India has initiated different types of watershed programme in India. Ralegon Siddhi, Adgaon and Dharewadi in Maharashtra and many others have become inspiration in the area of micro-watershed development and a large number of initiatives and programmes have been inspired by their success.

General Principles for Natural Resources Management

Practitioners interested in natural resources conservation/development need to consider the following basic principles, which hold the key not only to successful programme implementation but also the sustainability of natural resources and the livelihoods based on them.

1. Interconnectedness of Natural Resources

The interconnectedness of natural resources in any ecological unit, be it a farming system or a micro-watershed, provides an uncommon opportunity to harness synergy when all components are treated simultaneously. It is not surprising, therefore, that integrated approaches of NRM, as compared to piecemeal interventions, give the best results.

2. Interconnectedness of Natural Resources with Social Equations

Natural resources do not follow man-made boundaries; the treatment, therefore, must perforce follow ecological boundaries and processes. But the ownership and control of these natural resources follow social and economic equations in a given village. Hence, the implications of any natural resource intervention on existing social relations are inevitable and must be taken into account while designing the intervention.

3. Need to Recognize Gender Differences in Natural Resource Use

Whereas women use natural resources as much as men and contribute equally, if not more, to agriculture and animal husbandry, they are rarely able to exercise control over these resources. Women's preferences in the use to which resources are put and in the choice of species, etc., are known to be distinctly different from those of men. Yet the men are rarely willing to accommodate these. Externally supported NRM interventions provide a unique opportunity to address the gender balance by empowering women and involving them in decision-making.

4. Need to Acknowledge and Harness Local Technical Knowledge and Innovations

Local knowledge systems have helped to accumulate valuable knowledge about local natural resources and evolved technological practices over time. This technical knowledge should be taken as the starting point in the search for sustainable and innovative solutions for augmenting natural resources.

5. Collective Wisdom for Sustainable Use of Augmented Resources

There are important choices to be made in the utilization of newly developed resources. If wisely utilized, it will lead to sustainable and equitable development. If not, all the advantage could be frittered away and social relations could become more skewed whereas a few powerful individuals corner the resources.

6. Giving Priority to Drinking Water Security

Drinking water is the fundamental right of all citizens. In the absence of access to the necessary quantities of potable water within the village, women and men have to travel long distances to meet this basic requirement, thereby depriving themselves of the opportunity to engage in productive activities. Hence, care should be taken to ensure that natural resource-based interventions.

7. Critical Role of Livestock

Livestock forms an integral part of rainfed (particularly dry-land) farming systems. Animal husbandry represents a traditional livelihood strategy, particularly of the poor, to survive during droughts and scarcity years. Strengthening livestock-based livelihoods is critical for improving the resilience of farming communities in arid and semi-arid regions.

8. Indispensable Role of People's Institutions

All NRM interventions need to place people in charge of the development process in order for outcomes to be sustainable. Building people's institutions is critical for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and for the maintenance of common property assets, on which the poor rely the most for their livelihoods. Adopting the above principles and ethical values can spell the difference between success and failure. Hence, we need to understand these in more detail.

Developing Plan for NRM

NRM can be related to treatment of five broad groups, namely,• Soil and water treatment, • Agronomic practices in agricultural land, • Afforestation, • Pasture land development and • Treatments in Saline lands. Whereas the purpose of soil and water structures is to check the erosion of soil and conserve water as well as soil moisture, the remaining treatments serve to conserve soil and water and, at the same time, make the land productive.

i) Soil and Water Treatment

The most important and basic form of treatment is that of soil and water conservation through the creation of physical structures. Different sets of treatments are available for wastelands, cultivable lands (including pasture lands) and for the drainage line. The choice of a particular treatment will be guided by a number of ecological factors, the most important among them being *climate* and *slope* of the land.

ii) Agronomic Practices

Certain agronomic practices help to conserve soil and moisture whereas faulty practices can actually lead to soil erosion and loss of valuable soil moisture. These practices are knowledge intensive and do not need much investment. Farmers whose land has been treated within the watershed programme should be sensitized about these practices so that they adopt crops that promotes improvement of soil moisture.

iii) Afforestation

Afforestation includes the protection of natural forests and the creation of community and private forests on wastelands. On private lands, this could take the form of farm forestry or cultivation of tree crops such as dry land horticultural crops and bio-fuel crops. The benefits of afforestation are varied and include both economic goods as well as ecological services. Ecological services include control of erosion, better infiltration of rainwater into soil, building soil and restoring wastelands, improving micro-climate and restoring local agro-ecology, providing sanctuary to natural predators of crop pests, providing protection from the wind and stabilizing sand dunes. Economic benefits include provision of fodder, fuel, fruit, minor forest products and timber. Some of the ecological services such as water conservation through groundwater recharge also translate into economic benefits over time. It is most common to find wastelands, particularly in the upper reaches of the watershed being treated with afforestation, in combination with soil and water conservation measures such as gully plugs and contiguous contour trenches or variations thereof. In case of wastelands belonging to the Revenue Department, local communities can take these up for development on lease, provided they are willing to set up a collective or a cooperative to manage the land as a common property asset. In case of forest lands, forest protection groups under Joint Forest Management schemes of the various state departments can be empowered to protect and develop degraded forests on a long-term agreement with the department. However, getting permission for soil and water treatments such as check dams within the forest land is often difficult because the department works according to its own plans and has its own funds for carrying out developmental works within forest lands. The choice of species in all afforestation programmes is of paramount importance if the people are to sustain interest over time. It has been seen that there are significant differences between the choices of the local communities versus the Forest Department.

Even within the local communities, men and women exhibit different choices, based on their own criteria. The expectations of the people should be matched with the agro ecological situation, which will allow only a particular set of species to establish and grow to maturity.

iv) Pasture Land Development

Most Indian villages used to have common pasture lands called *gaucher*, traditionally managed by local village institutions. Over time, these village institutions have broken down. The village *panchayats* are technically in charge of these lands whereas the ownership rests with the Revenue Department. In practice, most of these lands are in a degraded condition or are encroached by powerful elite of the village and, hence, inaccessible to the common villager. Treatment of pasture lands becomes all the more important in arid and semi-arid areas, where animal husbandry forms either the main or subsidiary source of livelihood. During drought years, when crops fail, it is again animal husbandry that sustains the population. The treatment and the upgradation of pasture land is an integral and important component of watershed development. Yet, few organizations have actually been able to achieve success in this component of the programme. This is because of the inherent problems of encroachment and related conflicts, which need to be tackled before a village-level institution can be established to manage the village common. A good deal of investment in developing human capacity is needed to accomplish this goal, which most agencies are often not equipped to make because of their own limitations or due to lack of adequate funds for software component of the programme.

v) Development of saline lands

Specialized NRM strategies are needed for lands with special problems, for instance, salt affected lands, laterite soils, acidic lands, waterlogged lands, desert lands, lands affected by mining and rocky lands. With the pressure on productive lands accumulating, problem lands can be seen as opportunities for livelihood augmentation in the near future. The potential of these lands can be gauged by the extent of such land lying unutilized or under-utilized and the availability of new/emerging technology to put these to productive use. The most extensive of problem lands are salt-affected lands. These can be classified into two broad groups a) lands with *induced salinity* and b) lands with *inherent salinity*. Salinity can occur in coastal areas as well as in hinterlands.

Participatory Methods of Planning and Monitoring NRM

The decade of the eighties saw a plethora of participatory methods being tested and put to use. The term Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) was coined to describe a growing family of approaches and methods that enabled local people to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and to act. Robert Chambers from the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, UK, played a major role in the development and proliferation of participatory methods among NGOs in India. Agencies such as the AKRSP-I, DSC, PRAXIS, UNNATI, MYRADA, among others, were at the forefront of the PRA movement. Some of the more popular methods are:

Participatory Mapping and Modelling: People use the ground, floor or paper to make social, demographic, health, natural resource or farm maps or construct three-dimensional models of their land.

Seasonal Diagramming: Farmers prepare diagrams that bring out seasonal patterns (by major season or by month) to show days and distribution of rain, amount of rain, crops, agricultural labour, diet, types of sicknesses, prices, fodder security, etc.

Participatory Analysis of Aerial/Satellite Photographs: These are used to identify soil type, land conditions, land tenure, crop estimates, forest cover, stock of water resources, etc.

Transect Walks: Systematically walking with informants through an area, observing, asking, listening, discussion, identifying different zones, local technologies, seeking problems, solutions and opportunities and mapping and diagramming resources and findings.

Time Lines: Documenting chronologies of events, listing major remembered events in a village with approximate dates.

Wealth Ranking: Identifying clusters of households according to well being or wealth, including those considered poorest or worst off.

Scoring and Ranking: Matrices and seeds are used to compare/rank different parameters through scoring, for example, different trees, soils or methods of soil and water conservation or varieties of a crop.

Key Local Indicators: Using local indicators such as poor people's criteria of well-being, local indicators of soil health, productivity, etc

Mobility Mapping: Shows the patterns of mobility of different groups within a community, for example, caste groups, women, elders, youth, etc. Mobility is used as an indicator of a person's contact with and knowledge of the outside world and his/her authority in the community.

Livelihood Assessment: Used to understand the livelihoods situation of an individual, group or community. The analysis involves listing of all livelihood options pursued as well as the constraints and strategies to overcome these. It also includes seasonal variations in livelihood options, activities and survival strategies.

Vision Building: Describe, through a diagram, the vision building and planning of the people, based on their understanding of the local situation. This can also be used to develop indicators for monitoring progress towards this vision.

Group Self-Assessment Chart: To monitor the progress and performance of the group as a whole, against a pre-determined set of indicators. The tabular presentation is helpful to make comparisons across CBOs within a village or across a number of villages.

Impact Mapping*: It involves developing a flow diagram that depicts the impact of an activity, intervention or an event, capturing both planned and unplanned, positive and negative impacts.

In addition to the above, **social audit** and **peer review** are also used as tools by NGOs, Government departments and local communities to assess the performance and impact of projects and programmes.

Important of Local Technical Knowledge
Local communities have their own knowledge systems and a resultant body of local technical knowledge. They also have unique traditional institutions that have evolved to manage particular natural resources in a sustainable way. Unfortunately, this traditional knowledge is discounted by the modern educational system. In the process, many of these traditional

institutions and technical practices are either getting extinct or are under tremendous pressure.

A different approach is needed to recognize, validate and diffuse grassroots innovations of farmers, artisans and local communities. A few NGOs and departments are trying to revive traditional institutions and practices that are still relevant today. There is also tremendous scope for harnessing the creativity of farmers by making them partners in the technology development process. Given the importance of starting developmental initiatives from what people already know.

Importance of People's Institutions

People's institutions play a significant role in facilitating inclusive, gender-sensitive development and ensuring that the resources are used in a sustainable manner. Agencies can pursue a policy of *positive discrimination* to ensure that the poorest of the poor are not denied access to the newly developed resources. Because building people's institutions and placing people at the centre of the development process are critical for success in all NRM initiatives

Indispensable Role of PRIs

All NRM interventions need to place people in charge of the development process in order for outcomes to be sustainable. Building people's institutions is critical for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and for the maintenance of common property assets, on which the poor rely the most for their livelihoods.

PRIs are seen not only as a means to implement projects but also as a process of empowerment and self-governance, leading to sustainable management of natural resources. There is widespread acknowledgement of the fact that unless people are involved in the planning and implementation of their NRM projects, they are unlikely to take an interest in maintaining structures and productive assets in the future. Institutions offer a unique opportunity not only to build the capacity of the local community but also to instill modern values of democracy, equity, gender sensitivity and inclusiveness. Respect for nature, which is a traditional value, needs to be reinforced. PIs have demonstrated superior results in virtually every aspect of livelihood augmentation, whether it is the management of small resources such as check-dams or the development of plans for treating an entire river basin.

Gram panchayats should have better control over village resources. The regulation of resources should vest with the village panchayat. The panchayat should be claimants whereby they develop a stake in the management. Unless property rights are defined clearly, panchayats and village residents would not find it an attractive proposition to protect, regenerate and improve the productivity of resources. If panchayats are not effective institutions for the purpose, there must be a serious search for alternatives. The open access status may have to be changed to restricted access.

12. RIGHT TO INFORMATION

[15]Democracies require informed citizenry to take active interest and participate with responsibility in the governance of its country, state, village. For ensuring transparency of functioning, curtailing corruption and promoting access and justice, to vulnerable and poor sections of the population, the Right to information Act is a formidable and progressive legislation that has the potential to change the nature and functioning of governance in the country. It establishes the missing link between the government and the governed. The Right to Information Act 2005, popularly known as the RTI Act 2005, was passed by the parliament on June 15, 2005 and came fully into force on October 12, 2005. The Act applies to all States and Union Territories of India, except the State of Jammu and Kashmir. This Act aims to inform citizens about decision taken by the government machinery and the circumstances/reasons for the same except those pertaining to the security and intelligence agencies, the disclosure of which would threaten the security and integrity of India. However, the law allows access to information pertaining to security or intelligence agencies, if the information sought relates to corruption or violation of human rights.

The RTI Act equips any ordinary citizen with the power to find out the status of all public works, including the expenditure incurred. Citizens can request any information as defined from government departments, take copies of the requested documents, inspect documents,

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[15] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

works and records, take certified samples of works, obtain information in the form of printouts, diskettes, floppies, tapes, video cassettes or in any other electronic mode or through printouts.

Information can be sought from any department of the central or state government, from Panchayati Paj Institutions (PRI), and from any other organization or institution (including NGOs) that is established, constituted, owned, controlled or substantially financed, directly or indirectly, by the state or central government. The Act also requires every public authority to computerise their records for wide dissemination and to proactively publish certain categories of information so that the citizens need minimum recourse to request for information formally. Government officials will be fined if response is not received within the stipulated timeframe of 30 days. There is provision for exemption of fees for below poverty line population. A separate commission is constituted at the central and state level for enforcement of the law.

In a special clause of the legislation, all government departments are instructed to adhere to the norms of pro-active disclosure, on the implementation status of all schemes along with budgetary allocations both in print form and electronically. The information should be shared through notice boards, public announcements, media broadcasts and the internet.

Mazdoor Kissan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS), Rajasthan has played a pioneering role in promoting the cause of right to information in the country under the leadership of Ms. Aruna Roy, Mr. Nikhil Dey, Mr. Shanker Singh along with Mr. Arvind Kejriwal from Parivartan, New Delhi and many other activists from the grassroots and civil society groups, with the support of the National Advisory Council (NAC).

Movement on the Right to Information
It has been widely accepted that right to information is a crucial pre requisite for democracy to function. It is recognised as the fundamental human right linked to the inherent dignity of all human beings. As opposed to secrecy that is the breeding ground for 'corruption', 'abuse of power' and mismanagement. The fundamental principles of democracy demand that public bodies operate in a transparent and accountable manner. The right to access information by the state has been recognised by the Swedish law for over 200 years. The issue of 'freedom of information' gained considerable importance after the formation of independent states following World War II. The First Assembly of the United Nations (1946) adopted the resolution (59) in which freedom of information (FOI) was accepted as part of fundamental right to freedom of expression. The Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948) and The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) further reiterated the importance and the need for freedom of information. Prior to the new legislation like other countries in South Asia, India too was governed by the Official Secrecy Act 1923 drawn upon from the British Official Secrets Act 1911. The system of governance has been largely influenced by the patronizing colonial rule and feudalistic mindset of keeping a distance between the rulers and the ruled. The net result of secrecy has been disempowerment of common people and their exclusion from processes which vitally affect their existence. Information on matters such as employment schemes, obtaining certificates for various purposes, recommendations for different types of loans, access to different poverty alleviation programmes, irrigation, drinking water, sanitation and education is a must for ordinary people, whether provided proactively or on request.

In the past two decades, to alleviate poverty and bridge the ever widening gap between the rich and the poor access to information on matters related to food, shelter, livelihood, and education, the most important for the poor has been mitigated by factors such as the growth of democratic values, the 'information revolution' and decentralization of governance through the gram panchayats. However, although political power has been decentralised, the problem of gaining access to information remained at the level of local officials, who are often reluctant to be open because they represent vested interests or are party to corruption and misappropriation.

The main thrust of the right to information movement, hence has been closely related to the right to survival and has thus engaged the participation of the common people from the grassroots as much as the academia, media and political parties.

Various Acts like the Section 76 of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, Section 25(6) of The Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974, Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981, The Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, have elements of right to information with respect to self disclosure. In 1977, a working group was formed by the government to amend the Official Secrets Act. In 1997 in a Conference of the Chief Ministers of Indian States a working group was appointed to revise the Secrecy Act. The draft prepared by this group was again revised and presented to the parliament in 2000 as the Freedom of Information Bill which ran into criticism. Since then several states enacted their state specific laws like Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Rajasthan much before the central Act was approved by the parliament..

Advocacy for the Right to Information was first initiated by Mazdoor Kisaan Shakti Sangathana (MKSS) during 1990 in Rajasthan on the issue of minimum wages on work sites and demands made to see the muster rolls. These led to a series of demonstrations, sit-ins, hunger strikes, rallies followed by jan sunwais. Effort was made to widen the campaign on right to information by involving other civil society groups, media, lawyers, poets, writers, journalists, and academia and government officials. With publicity and support from the press the campaign began to be recognised internationally as well as nationally. .There was opposition from government officials and village level officials who even went on strike. But as the campaign was rooted in the basic needs of the common masses it gained momentum. The National Campaign on People's Right to Information (NCPRI) was constituted to provide support to MKSS and carry out advocacy at the national level. Other eminent civil society groups like Parivartan, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI), Consumer Education and Research Centre (CERC) Ahmedabad, Consumer Action Group (CAG) Chennai joined the movement. Senior revolutionary bureaucrats also joined the movement and have played a seminal role in drafting the RTI Act.

At the international level, people's right to information has been widely accepted as a basic prerequisite for the effective functioning of a democracy. Over 40 countries across the world have comprehensive laws to facilitate access to state records and more than 30 are in the process of enacting such legislation.

Process of Seeking Information
In each department, at least one officer has been designated as a Public Information Officer (PIOs). He/She accepts the request forms and provides information sought by the people. In addition, in each sub-district/divisional level there are Assistant Public Information Officers

(APIOs) who receives requests for information and appeals against decisions of the PIOs, and then send them to the appropriate authorities.

Any person seeking information should file an application in writing or through electronic means in English or Hindi (or in the official language of the area) along with the application fees with the PIO/APIO. Where a request cannot be made in writing, the PIO is supposed to render all reasonable assistance to the person making the request orally to reduce the same in writing. Where the applicant is a person with disability, the public authority is supposed to provide assistance to enable access to the information, including providing such assistance as may be appropriate for the inspection. While filing the application, besides the applicant's contact details, the applicant is not required to either give any reasons for requesting the information or any other personal details.

A reasonable application fee of at least Rs. 10/ as prescribed by the central government (this may vary in other states) will be charged for each application and supply of information. However, no fee is chargeable from persons below the poverty line or if the information is provided after the prescribed period. Additional fees will be charged for obtaining a copy of the documents. (The central government has prescribed fees of Rs.2 for each page created and copied. In some states the charges may vary (refer to the fee rules chart given below). If the Information is not provided in the stipulated time limit then the information will be provided for free. If the applicant is a below poverty line (BPL) card holder, then no fee shall apply. Such BPL Card holders have to provide a copy of their BPL card along with their application to the Public Authority. State Government and High Courts fix their own rules.

Fee Rule Chart

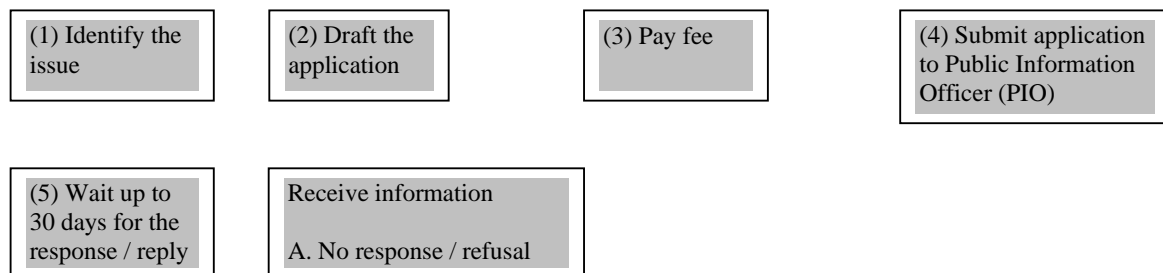| Government	Application Fee	Additional Fee	Mode of Payment
Central	Rs. 10	- A4/A3 paper – Rs. 2 per page; - Larger paper – actual cost; - Printed publications - fixed price, photocopies/extracts – Rs. 2 per page; - Floppy/diskette – Rs. 50; - Samples/models – actual cost; - Inspection of records – 1st hour free and Rs. 5 for each subsequent hour.	Cash against receipt/demand draft/ banker's cheque
Gujarat	Rs. 20 (electronic applications – fees to be submitted within 8 days).	- A4/A3 paper – Rs. 2 per page; - Larger paper – actual cost; - Publications – actual price; - Floppy/diskette – Rs. 50; - Samples/models/photographs – actual cost; and - Inspection of records – 1st half an hour free and Rs. 20 for each subsequent half hour. Existing rates of fees for inspection of records where such system or procedure exist and above fees shall not apply.	Cash/demand draft/ pay order/ non-judicial stamp

If the PIO feels that the sought information does not pertain to his department then it shall be his responsibility to forward the application to the related/relevant department within five days and also inform the applicant about the same. In such instance, the stipulated time limit for provision of information would be 35 days.

In case PIO does not furnish information within the prescribed period or unreasonably troubles the applicant, then the applicant can file a complaint against him with the State Information Commission. In case a PIO, without any reasonable cause, fails to receive an application for information, malafidely denies a request for information, or knowingly gives incorrect, incomplete or misleading information, or asks for high fees for furnishing the information the applicant can file a direct complaint to the Central or the State Information Commission.

The PIO can deny information in some cases/matters. The various exemptions from disclosure of information are listed in Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005. If the sought information is in public interest then the exemptions enumerated in Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005 can also be disclosed. Any information that cannot be denied to the parliament or legislative assembly cannot be denied to a common citizen.

In case a person fails to get a response from the PIO within the prescribed period or is aggrieved by the response received, or misuses Section 8 of the Act, then he/she can file an appeal within 30 days with an officer superior in rank to the PIO (first appellate authority). If the appellant is not happy with the 1st appeal then he/she can file a 2nd appeal with the State Information Commission or the Central Information Commission within 60 days.
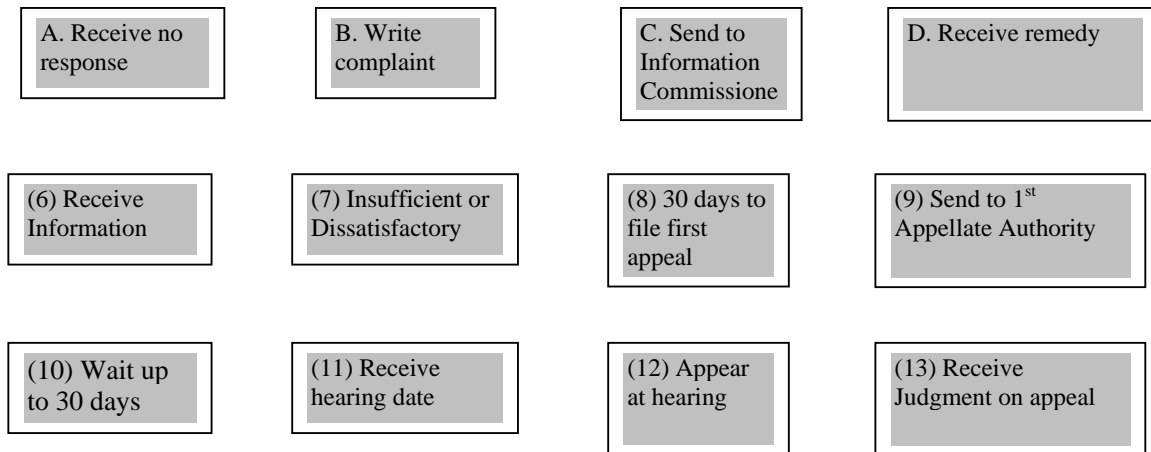
Application Process

| (1) Identify the issue | (2) Draft the application | (3) Pay fee | (4) Submit application to Public Information Officer (PIO) |

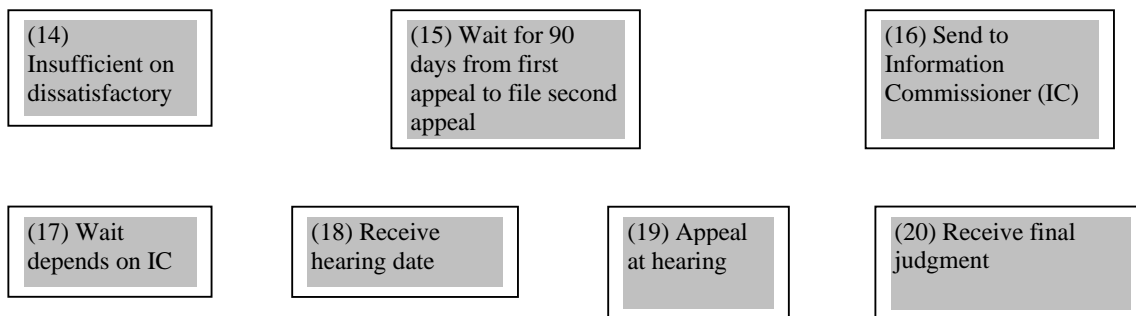| (5) Wait up to 30 days for the response / reply | Receive information

A. No response / refusal |

First Appeal should be made

If the PIO has not:
 • Replied to your application
 • Has provided wrong/incomplete/confusing information
 • Has misinterpreted Section 8 to refuse the provision of information to you

In the above mentioned situation, an appeal will have to be filed with the first appellate authority (an officer senior to the PIO appointed under the provisions of the Act) after 30 days from the date of submission of application but within 60 days of such submission. If you are not satisfied with the action taken on your first appeal then a second appeal will have to be filed with Central/State Information Commission.

Process for First Appeal

A. Receive no response	B. Write complaint	C. Send to Information Commissione	D. Receive remedy
(6) Receive Information	(7) Insufficient or Dissatisfactory	(8) 30 days to file first appeal	(9) Send to 1st Appellate Authority
(10) Wait up to 30 days	(11) Receive hearing date	(12) Appear at hearing	(13) Receive Judgment on appeal

Process for Second Appeal

(14) Insufficient on dissatisfactory	(15) Wait for 90 days from first appeal to file second appeal	(16) Send to Information Commissioner (IC)
(17) Wait depends on IC	(18) Receive hearing date	(19) Appeal at hearing (20) Receive final judgment

If a PIO fails to furnish the information asked for under the Act or fails to communicate the rejection order, within the time specified, the PIO will be liable to pay a penalty of Rs 250 per day for each day of delay, subject to a maximum of Rs 25,000. The information commission can also recommend disciplinary action against the concerned PIO, under the service rules applicable to him/her Since the information sought by the applicant/ citizen is to be paid for, the reply of the PIO is necessarily limited to either denying the request (in whole or part) and/or providing a computation of "further fees". The time between the reply of the PIO and the time taken to deposit the further fees for information is excluded from the time allowed. If information is not provided within this period, it is treated as deemed refusal. Refusal with or without reasons may be ground for appeal or complaint. Further, information not provided in the times prescribed is to be provided free of charge.

When filing an RTI application, the questions to ask with a particular goal in mind are of utmost importance. Given below is a general application format that can be used:

Format for Application

To,
The Public information Officer
Address……………………
………………………………..
Pin no………………………..

Subject: Request for Information under Right to Information Act 2005.

Sir,

I Sri / Smt /Ms……………………………………………………………………………………………
Son/Daughter/wife of Shri/Smt/Ms …………………………………………………………………...
resident of …………………………………………………………………………………….……
telephone number (with STD Code) …………………….and/or mobile number: ………………..
wish to seek information as under
………
………
………
………
………
I hereby inform that following formalities have been completed by me:

1. That I have deposited the requisite fee of Rs………….by way of Cash / banker
cheque / Draft / Postal Order/ others…………………………………) favoring
…………………………………………………………dated ………………………………..

2. I need the photocopy of the documents and I had deposited the cost of the photocopy of Rs………… for …………….(Number of Pages)

or

3. I had deposited sum of Rs………….for the charges of CD. (strike out which ever is not applicable)

4. That I belong to Category of below Poverty Line (BPL): Yes / No .(Strike whichever is not applicable). If yes, I am attaching the valid photocopy of the certificate. Yes / No

5. That I am 'Citizen' of India and I am asking the information as 'Citizen'.

6. I assure that I shall not allow/ cause to use/ pass/share/display/ or circulate the information received in any case and under any circumstances, with any person or in any manner which would be detrimental to the Unity and Sovereignty or against the Interest of India.

Signature of the Applicant
Dated:

Operational Structure of the RTI Act

The Chief Information Commissioner (CIC), set up as a separate appellate authority, is the head of all the information officers. At the state level the State Information Commission will be selected by the State Government through a Gazette notification. It will have one State Chief Information Commissioner (SCIC) and not more than 10 State Information Commissioners (SICs) to be appointed by the Governor.

At the end of each year, CIC is required to present a report which contains: (a) the number of requests made to each public authority; (b) the number of decisions where applicants were not given permission to access to the documents which they request, the provisions of the Act under which these decisions were made and the number of times such provisions were filed; (c)details of disciplinary action taken against any officer in respect of the administration of the Act; (d) the amount of charges collected by each public authority under the Act

One or more existing officers in every government department have been designated as the Public Information Officer (PIO). These PIOs act as nodal officers and the respective applications are filed under them. It is the duty of the PIOs to collect information requests from various departments and provide information. In addition several officers have been appointed Assistant Public Information Officers (APIOs) who accept applications and forward them to the right PIO.

Challenges

Through studies carried out and experiences shared at various forms it can be conjectured that citizen find it cumbersome to fill in the requisite application forms and submit it to the relevant department. Even if this is done with the support of civil society groups, the officiating personnel most often refuse to accept the application on pretext of it being incomplete or irrelevant. If persistent efforts are made, no acknowledgement receipts are given to ensure follow up. In many states the Public Information Officers (PIOs) appointed are from the same department from which information is requested. As the attitude of government officials is non-cooperative, unapproachable and apathetic, individual citizens find it difficult and often the task is given up. The limitations of the Act is to only provide copies of decision made but there is no provision for redressed mechanism for any decision that has been made otherwise. The PIOs are most often unaware about the rules and procedures mentioned in the Act. Citizens have to wait for long hours to submit their application, and also receive relevant information. Applicants from below the poverty line are forced to pay an application fees. Under the clause of self disclosure all public authorities have to publish a document on self disclosure within 120 days of the enactment of the Act. At times, self-disclosure documents are available at the state level; almost none are available at the district level but perhaps may be available on the internet. Documents put up on the internet are badly designed and it is difficult to access the links. As regular updates are not made information is outdated.

At the panchayat and block level there is greater resistance towards completing formalities for self-disclosure. In places where these reports are prepared by the efforts of civil society groups, it is not shared at the gram sabha. When attempts were made to conduct social audits many a times it leads to conflict and violence. Most of the appeals made are from urban areas and only the economically well off go in for second appeal.

Civil society groups have to support marginalised community groups, helping them to access and demystify government data. They need to analyse the information accessed and to highlight its significance. They also need to make people aware of the law and its provisions and help them get over their inherent hesitation and apathy, by demonstrating to them that this is one law that can make a difference. The Supreme Court has recognised the right to information as a fundamental right. As governments and people begin to operate in this new era of transparency, it is inevitable that the culture within and outside the government will change. Within the government, the realisation is sinking in that in a true participatory democracy the government is constantly, and not just once in five years, answerable to the people, and not merely for its achievements and failures. It not only empowers the people but also create a sense of responsibility that, along with the right to participate in governance, they also now have an obligation to do so.

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13. Human Development
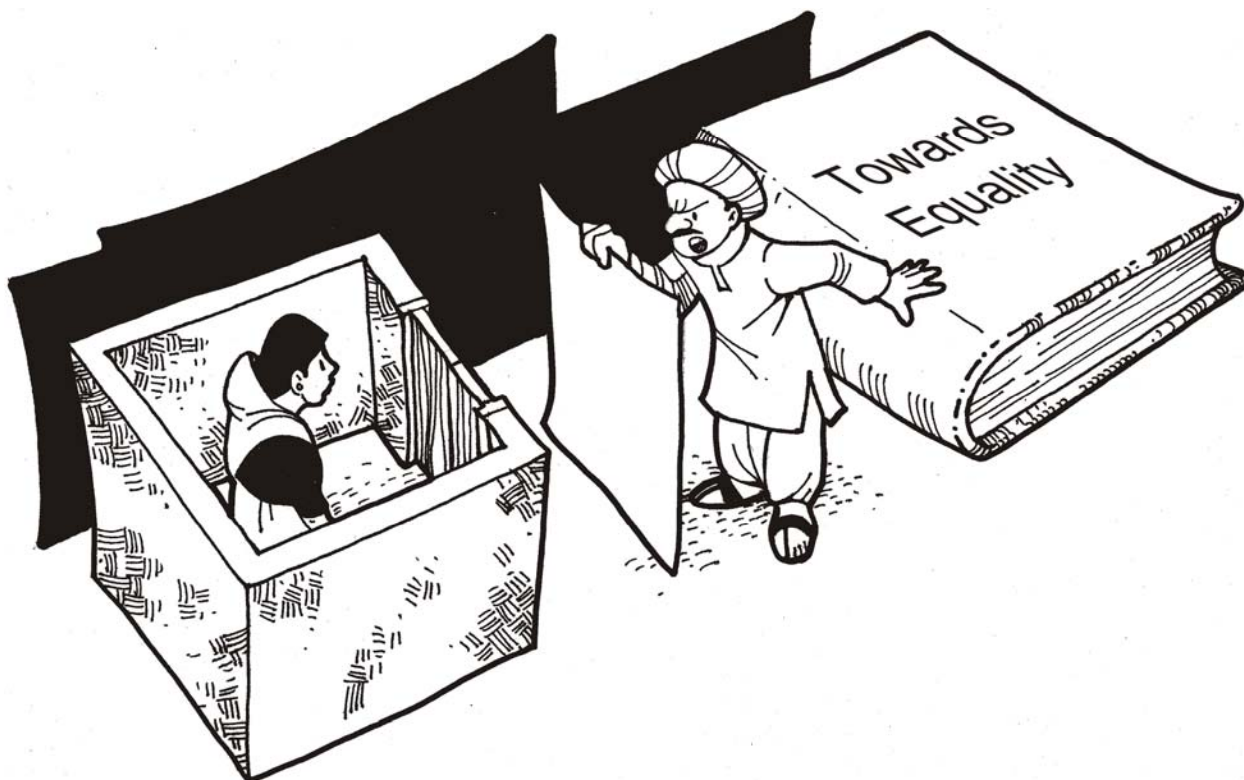
[16]Meaning and Concept of Human Development

Development entails advancement or growth through a series of progressive changes. The concept of human development was introduced in the late 80s as an alternative to concepts of development that focused on economic growth. Economic development is defined as a process whereby the real per capita income of a country increases over a long period of time while simultaneously poverty is reduced and the inequality in society diminishes. It is assumed that with growth the benefits would reach to all sections of the society including the poor reducing inequalities and disparities. However, growth in terms of income is dependent on the quality and distribution of economic growth and not the net income of a country.

With decades of focus on the economic model of development, the growing disparities between nations and within nations, it was realised that a conscious effort needs to be made to create a link between income growth and human welfare, through public policies that aim at providing services and opportunities as equitably as possible to all citizens. This cannot be left alone to the market mechanisms; the state machinery needs to be responsible for the protection of the poor, the weak and the vulnerable. In addition to economic growth to combat mass poverty, the overall redistribution and utilisation of resources contribute to better quality of life.

The human development paradigm/ model is thus about much more than the rise or fall of national incomes. It is about creating an environment in which people can develop their full

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[16] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

potential and lead productive, creative lives in accord with their needs, interests and aspirations. People are the real wealth of nations. Development is thus about expanding the choices people have to lead lives that they value. Human development has two aspects; one is the formation of human capabilities such as improved health, knowledge and skills and the other is the use of acquired capabilities for productive purposes, for leisure or for being active in cultural, political and social arenas of one's life.

Human development paradigm primarily focuses in three essential areas of opportunity, (i) to lead a long and healthy life (increasing life expectancy), (ii) the opportunity to acquire knowledge (literacy/ education) and (iii) the opportunity to have access to resources – access to land, credit, income and other resources (GDP – gross domestic product or income per capita) needed for a decent standard of living. The last indicator is directly related to the purchasing power to buy commodities/ services for satisfying basic needs

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Features of Human Development

1. Human development is an end or the basic purpose of development while economic development is one of the means.
2. It focuses on the capabilities or choices that people have to be and become what they want to be.
3. It leads to higher productivity as a healthy, educated and skilled labour force will be the most important productive asset.
4. It aims at slowing the pace of human production as reduced infant mortality and higher health standards would lead to slower population growth. Fewer child deaths would lead to smaller family size.
5. It aims to curb environmental degradation. The poor are both a cause and a victim of environmental degradation. Desertification, deforestation and soil erosion declines when poverty is reduced.
6. It ensures a responsive civil society through better democratic governance.
7. It has a political appeal as it reduces civil disturbances and increases social stability.
8. On the one hand it focuses on meeting basic needs and on the other in improving the quality of human life.

Over the decades, several other dimensions and aspects were added to the human development paradigm, and the name of the concept itself was changed from 'human development' to 'sustainable human development' in order to highlight the importance of sustaining all forms of capital and resources – physical, human, financial, and environmental – as a precondition for meeting the needs also of the future generations.

Sustainable development is not about environmental preservation but a new concept of economic growth based on the premise of justice and opportunity for all the people of all nations, without destroying or impacting the natural resources. It is a process through which all policies – economic, fiscal, trade, energy, agriculture, industrial are designed to bring about development that is economically, socially, and ecologically viable and sustainable. Available natural resources are treated as scarce and are priced for asset management, as they may not be available in future; achieving a balance between today's needs and tomorrow's requirement, between human greed and social compassion, between competitive markets and regulatory mechanisms to provisions of safety nets to those vulnerable with unequal access, and between reduced military expenditure to more humane investment. This requires a sea change in global policies and consumption patterns. This is truer in the face of new economic

policy, liberalisation and introduction of structural adjustment programmes in developing and under developed countries since the 90s.

Sustainable development does not aim only for economic growth; it is growth with equity and environmental protection. As expressed in the words of Mahbub ul Haq, the founder of the Human Development Report series, "Poor people and poor countries depend on the soil for food, the rivers for water, and the forests for fuel. Because they need these resources desperately, they have little choice – without assets or income – but to overuse and to destroy their natural environment simply to survive. In so doing they threaten their health and the lives of their children. Economic growth is vital for giving more options to poor societies, but these models must become less energy intensive and more environmentally sound." (Haq, 1995)

Some Facts about Environmental Degeneration Globally

1. Over the last 50 years, the population of the world has more than doubled to reach sixty crore and is likely to similarly multiply with an increasing pressure on natural resources.
2. 10 % of fertile land has converted into wasteland and 25 % is endangered as of now. Most poor live in most ecologically vulnerable area: 80 % in Latin America, 60% in Asia and 50 % in Africa.
3. About 13 crore people lack access to safe drinking water, 23 crore lack access to sanitation facilities and 15 crore lack access to fuel wood for cooking.
4. Global warming, rising heat, high carbon emissions, depletion in the protective ozone layer in the earth's atmosphere, melting glaciers have far reaching consequences on rising sea level and unpredictable consequences for ecological systems and survival of all species.
5. Nearly half of the world's original forest cover has been lost, and each year another 160 lakh hectares are cut, bulldozed or burned.

Source; Haq, 1995

Status of Natural Resource in India

1. India having 18% of the world's population on 2.4% of world's total area has greatly increased the pressure on its natural resources.
2. An estimated 60% of cultivated land suffers from soil erosion, water logging and salinity. It is also estimated that between 4.7 and 12 billion tons of topsoil are lost annually from soil erosion.
3. From 1947 to 2002, average annual per capita water availability declined by almost 70% to 1,822 cubic meters, and over exploitation of groundwater is problematic in the states of Haryana, Punjab, and Uttar Pradesh.
4. Forest area covers 18.34% of India's geographic area (637000 km²). On the other hand, forests account for only 2 to 6 per cent of the total land area in States like Gujarat, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan. Most of these states have large tracts of land that are classified as 'Non Forest Wastelands'.
5. The Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARC) has estimated that a 3° C rise in temperature will result in a 15 to 20% loss in annual wheat yields.
6. For waste water treatment, out of India's 3,119 towns and cities, 209 have partial treatment facilities and only 8 have full facilities. 114 cities dump untreated sewerage

and partially cremated bodies directly into the Ganges River. Downstream, the untreated water is used for drinking, bathing and washing.

7. Open defecation is widespread even in urban areas of India.
8. The level of water quality parameters vary across states. At the national level, 90 % of the urban population has access to safe drinking water but only 49 % has access to sanitation services.
9. It is estimated that indoor pollution in India's rural areas is responsible for 500,000 premature deaths annually, mostly of women and children under 5.

Source: India Human Development Report 2001

Status of Natural Resources in Gujarat

1. Gujarat falls in third category at the all India level with respect to excessive fluoride. This implies that more than 50% of districts are affected by it. About 15% of villages in the state have groundwater with excessive fluoride.
2. Over use of groundwater in the coastal region has resulted in sea water intrusion, leading to increased salinity of land. Other reasons for increased salinity in coastal areas are destruction of mangroves, discharges by human settlements and industries, reduced flow of fresh water from rivers in the downstream and salt-pan discharges on the sea coast.
3. There are serious shortages of potable water supply in the state. Saurashtra, Kachchh and North Gujarat are the worst affected regions. In drought years (which are fairly frequent), 75 to 80% of villages and more than half the towns in the state suffer from shortage of potable water.
4. Overexploitation of natural resources through overgrazing, irrigation practices, deforestation and poor natural resource management in general has led to desertification of several areas in north and northwest parts of the state which has led to water logging and salinity of land in many command areas of irrigation projects.
5. Gujarat is a highly drought prone state. In normal years also about 10 to 15 per cent of talukas are declared drought affected and scarcity works are undertaken. Droughts are now accompanied by serious drinking water shortages.

Source: Gujarat Human Development Report 2004

Components of Human Development

There are four components of human development paradigm: equity, sustainability, productivity and empowerment.

1. Equity: equity denotes access to political and economic opportunities for all human beings as a basic human right. This is based on the assumption that all individuals must be enabled to develop their capabilities to use to the best of their ability. This does not necessarily imply that provided similar opportunities the result will be the same. Providing access to opportunities demands restructuring of power – redistribution of productive assets through land reforms, income through revising the fiscal policy, expanding credit systems to the poor to enhance their entrepreneurship, enhance political opportunities through reforms in voting rights, social and legal barriers limiting the access of certain groups, women, ethnic minority, and persons with disabilities in exercising their political rights.

2. Sustainability: The next generation deserves to enjoy the same opportunities that we have enjoyed. Depleting any form of resource capital: financial, human, physical, environmental robs future generation of these opportunities. Hence preservation of all forms of capital in its present form should be the primary concern. This also implies that the present conditions of poverty, deprivation and inequity must not be sustained. Efforts need to be made to reduce the existing disparities. "An unjust world order is inherently unsustainable", says Haq. Adjustment in the lifestyles and consumption patterns by a few privileged is thus inevitable if the goal of sustainable development has to be met.

3. Productivity: To enable people perform to their maximum potential requires investing in and building their capacities and skills and promoting an enabling environment. As mentioned economic growth is only a subset and an essential part but without the focus on the other components of equity, sustainability and empowerment it will only tend to shift the focus from human development which is the end and production is only the means.

4. Empowerment: The human development paradigm is people centred and rejects the paternalistic approach adopted by charity and welfarism that is against human dignity. People must participate in the decision making processes that affect and shape their lives. Empowerment means that people are or become capable of exercising their choices and influence decision making. The underlying assumption being economic liberalisation and decentralised governance mechanisms, investing in the education and health sectors, increased access to credits and productive assets, equally for men and women and other vulnerable sections. The human development paradigm is different from the basic needs model which requires provision of basic services normally by the state, hence, health, education and social safety nets are a part and need to move on to embrace all aspects political, social and cultural expressions.

A desirable link needs to be created between economic development and human development firstly by investing in health, education, skill enhancement and capacity building. This will enable individuals to participate in the growth process as well as share the benefits through remunerative employment. Second is distribution of growth benefits and assets i.e. land reforms, corrective public policy action through people's participation, like access to basic services. Third is empowerment of people especially vulnerable groups (dalits, tribals, minority and ethnic groups and persons with disabilities). Women along with men are equally important for development to be participatory and long lasting.

Human Development and Human Rights

After World War II the United Nations (UN) was established in 1945, with 51 member states. The purpose of UN is to bring all nations of the world together to work for peace and development, based on the principles of justice, human dignity and the well-being of all people. There are currently 192 members of the United Nations. On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). The declaration has been the foundation for ensuring/ demanding protection from unjust laws and practices, with the inherent binding for securing access to freedom or resources (adequate health protections, freedom of speech and thought) for all the citizens of all countries by virtue of their humanity. They also inherently outline the duties and responsibilities of citizens to refrain from harming each other and to help them. Since then a number of conferences have been convened and organizations have been set up for the

promotion of human rights. In fact the spirit of the UDHR is deeply enshrined in the Fundamental Rights and the Directive Principles of the Indian Constitution.

Both the human development paradigm and human rights approach reflect a fundamental commitment to promoting the freedom, well-being and dignity of individuals in all societies and are closely related in a compatible and complimentary way. Human rights focus largely on political, civil and democratic rights. For reasons of difficulty in measuring these indicators of progress the Human Development Index (discussed in the following section) has not been able to devise a composite measure for assessing progress for these. But it has certainly provided the premise that all human beings have duties to fulfil and contribute towards enhancement of human development. The invoking of duties brings in accountability, culpability and responsibilities. An analysis of these failures through the human development approach leads to development of appropriate strategies for addressing the problems identified. As the process of human development and demanding rights involves conflict and struggle, empowerment plays an unprecedented role. Human rights perspectives offers policy measures to be adopted for enhancing human development and tools for measuring the progress.

Measuring Human Development

The birth of the human development Index (HDI) is found in the search for a yardstick to measure, capture and reemphasise that people's capabilities and the choices they make should be the basis for measuring the progress of a country and not economic growth. Under the leadership of Mahbub ul Haq and the support to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the series of Human Development Reports have been devised and launched since 1990 with the aim to convince the public, academics and policy-makers that they can and should evaluate development not only by economic advances but also improvements in human well-being. Since then selected country wise and state wise reports have also been prepared periodically.

The Human Development Index (**HDI**) is used to rank countries by level of 'human development'. Countries are classified as: developed (high development), developing (middle development), and underdeveloped (low development) countries. The ranking of countries is deciphered from statistics for life expectancy, education and gross domestic product (GDP) collected at the national level using a formula originally construed by the renowned Indian economist Amartya Sen. The first Human Development Report was published in 1990 by the UNDP. The HDI was calculated for three indicators: life expectancy, literacy and GDP per capita income. The index has been able to thus capture a few of people's choices and leaves out many that people may value highly - economic, social and political freedom and protection against violence, insecurity and discrimination, to name but a few. Over the years, an attempt has been made to incorporate political freedom index, gender development index, gender empowerment index and human poverty index but owing to inadequate data this goal has not been fully realised.

Human Development Index (HDI): measures the average achievement of a country or a geographic region based on three indicators. First is a long and healthy life as measured by life expectancy at birth. Second, knowledge as measured by the adult literacy rate (with two third weigh) combined by primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment rate.and third, a decent standard of living as measured by GDP per capita (PPP US$). The GDP dollar estimates are derived from purchasing power parity (PPP) calculations. Using a PPP basis is arguably more useful when comparing generalized differences in living standards on the whole between nations because PPP takes into account the relative cost of living and the inflation rates of the countries, rather than using just exchange rates which may distort the real differences in income.

Political Freedom Index: This is a proposed index to be incorporated with the HDI if countries agree to do so. The main components of this suggested index are (i) political participation - freedom to participate and influence political decision making processes at the national and international levels; (ii) rule of law - protection and security of individual human life through legal reforms; (iii) freedom of expression - to seek and receive information and freedom of the media; (iv) non-discrimination - equality of opportunity of all individuals regardless of gender, caste, class, religion and ethnicity.

Gender Development Index (GDI): This takes into consideration the same basic capabilities of HDI but takes note of inequality between man and women.

Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM): This measures whether women and men are able to actively participate in the decision making process in their economic and political life. GDI focuses on expansion of capabilities and GEM is concerned with the use of those capabilities to take advantage of the opportunities in life. GEM is measured through three indicators; (i) political participation and decision making as measured by women's and men's percentage shares of parliamentary seats; (ii) economic participation and decision making are measured by women's and men's percentage shares of position as legislators, senior officials and managers, professionals and technical position held; (iii) power over economic resources as measured by women's and men's estimated earned income (PPP US$). Both the GDI and GEM were introduced in 1995 Human Development Report.

Human Poverty Index (HPI): Poverty was traditionally measured in terms of income. The human development concept measures poverty in the light of denial of choices and opportunities of living a long and healthy life. HPI-1 for developing countries like India measures the same three indicators mentioned in HDI; longevity is measured by life expectancy at birth of not surviving 40 yrs of age; education as measured by the percentage of illiterate adults; deprivations in a decent standard of living are measured by two variables the percentage of people not having sustainable access to improved water source and percentage of children under five who are under weight.

Human Development Status in India and Gujarat

In the context of India human development implies promoting basic capabilities among those that lack the most. It means supporting those that are marginalised and excluded from the mainstream development process. Each country is accorded a rank every year. However, the HDRs and ranking given to countries are not comparable owing to revision in the data series, methodology and variations in the country coverage.

As mentioned in the previous section India is classified as belonging to the group of 'medium human development' countries. In 2004 out of out 174 countries, India was ranked 128. In 2009, it was ranked 134th among 182 countries despite economic growth as reflected in the GDP. India continues to belong to the bottom one-third of the countries of the world. For Example in 2004 in terms of per capita GDP India ranked 117th whereas on the HDI it ranked 126th. In comparison to this, Vietnam ranked far higher in the HDI at 109th, than in per capita GDP at 121. This means that Vietnam has done much better with its limited income to improve the quality of life of its citizens.

Similarly, Gujarat is one of the most economically prosperous states in the country. It ranks 4th in the country out of data available from 15 states. As stated by the Gujarat Human development Report 2004, its per capita income is 27 per cent higher than the national income of the country. The state is more urbanised than India with 38 per sent living in urban areas. It has well developed capital and money markets and the population is enterprising. It has attracted significant number of investors under the new economic reform period and stands 3rd in the country with respect to industrial growth. Despite economic growth the state has comparatively not fared well in terms of human development. In 2001, it ranked 6th for human development. With respect to human development, over the years, from 1981 – 2001, the performance of human development indices indicate stagnation in literacy rate, and life expectancy. As reported in the Gujarat HDR 2004, the reasons for the gap between income poverty and human poverty are linked to (i) low employment opportunities in the unorganised sector with minimum support of social security benefits, (ii) low performance of social sector programmes with poor targeting of girl child enrolment and reduction of infant mortality.

For strengthening the linkages between economic growth and remunerative employment, in a sustainable way, this cannot be achieved solely by a programmatic intervention but by creating an enabling environment through appropriate policy intervention. The vulnerable sections tend to become more insecure and experience severe deprivation in situations of disaster and conflict. Their routine life gets disrupted. They require special attention while framing and implementing policies resettlement, rehabilitation and reconstruction. Vulnerable groups like dalits, children, women and persons with disabilities are least equipped to face situations of crisis/ disasters and are easily bypassed by relief services and rehabilitation opportunities. Disaster and situations of crisis halt development processes and the occurrences of which need to be taken into account while framing a strategy for human development.

Human Development Index for States in India

Sr No.	States	1981	1991	2001
1	Gujarat	4	6	6
2	Kerala	1	1	1
3	Punjab	2	2	2
4	Tamil Nadu	7	3	3
5	Maharastra	3	4	4
6	Haryana	5	5	5
7	Karnataka	6	7	7
8	West Bengal	8	8	8
9	Rajasthan	12	11	9
10	Andhra Pradesh	9	9	10
11	Assam	10	10	14

12	Bihar	15	15	15
13	Orissa	11	12	12
14	Madhya Pradesh	14	13	12
15	Uttar Pradesh	13	14	13

Source: India Human Development Report 2001 – Planning Commission

As can be seen from the above table, Kerala has ranked first among the major Indian states for its human development index (HDI) in 1981, 1991, and 2001. This has been possible despite its per capita income being much lower than the national average. Kerala's birth, death, infant mortality and literacy rates compare favourably even with countries having a much higher income levels. According to the India Human Development Report 2000, there are several factors that explain Kerala's performance but these cannot be easily replicable. After independence several mass movements laid the foundation for mobilising and in enabling people to fight for their rights. Effective implementation of land reforms contributed to poverty reduction. The practice of Matrilineal System, although confined to certain higher castes, created an enabling social environment for according a higher status to women compared to other States in India. The marriage age of girls and boys increased continuously and this has made a significant impact on birth rate. Late marriages and educated mothers resulted in lower rates of maternal, infant and child mortality and higher practice of contraception. Massive investment in health and education combined with good administration, private and civil society participation helped in enriching the human resource development strategy, yielding better health standards and adoption of small family norms. Lastly, migration in large numbers other than easing population pressures and unemployment has brought in considerable monetary remittances to families in Kerala, which has improved the living standards.

But at the same time it needs to be critically examined here that there are several challenges the state is facing as traced out in an article by Pinaki Chakraborty in 'Intra-Regional Inequality and the Role of Public Policy: Lessons Learnt from Kerala' (EPW, 2009). On the one hand Kerala demonstrates progressive human development indicators, while at the same time the present phase of economic growth is not adequate to provide quality employment to the rapidly growing educated workforce or to generate sufficient revenues. A vast network of educational and health institutions supported by the government, an effective public distribution system, rural connectivity, and social security measures impose a very heavy recurring expenditure. Meanwhile, additional investments in social and physical infrastructure are required if the quality of services is to be improved to keep up with the rising expectations of a new generation. For example, the quality of public school education has been deteriorating, and higher education facilities have to be diversified and expanded. The new challenge is to tackle these problems without compromising equity and quality. The health transition in the state has generated new geriatric health and social problems. There has also been a shift in the morbidity pattern, raising the need for specialised healthcare system. There is an urgent need for overhauling the social security system in the state to make it more comprehensive and efficient. These may be viewed as the second generation problems of Kerala's human development. Then there is the challenge of including the marginal groups such as dalits, fisherfolk, and adivasis who lag behind in the development process. The next development challenge is related to gender equality in the development process. While the condition of women in Kerala in terms of education and health is much superior to the rest of the country, the status of women in terms of economic and social participation is not all that different.

Finally, there is the issue of ecological sustainability of the development process within the state. Economic processes have been highly resource depleting, causing serious crises in the marine and forest sectors and disruption of the water cycle. Modern industrial development has also been highly energy intensive. How to build environmental concern into the developmental process so that sustainable development is achieved is of critical importance. More importantly, in the context of the decentralisation programme, in Kerala,, most of the functions that are directly related to human development have been devolved to panchayats. Proportionate resources have also been devolved. Therefore, local-level strategies of development and interventions will play a vital role in furthering future human development.

Human Development and Governance

Sustainable human development can only be promoted by creating a system of governance that promotes, supports and sustains human development – especially for the poorest and most marginal. The UNDP Policy Document on Governance for Sustainable Development states that, "Governance can be seen as the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences." Good governance comprises of processes that are participatory, transparent, accountable, effective and equitable. It promotes the rule of law and ensures that political, social and economic priorities are based on broad consensus in society and that the voices of the poorest and the most vulnerable are heard in decision-making.

The three pillars of governance are the state, private sector (market) and civil society that interact and achieve the purpose of governing of societies. The state includes political and public sector institutions that attends to the needs of its people. The private sector covers private enterprises (manufacturing, trade, banking, cooperatives and so on) and the informal sector is the marketplace. Civil society organisations are the host of associations around which society voluntarily organises. They include trade unions, non-governmental organisations, language, cultural, religious and caste based groups; charities, business associations, social and sports clubs, cooperatives and community development organisations, environmental groups, professional associations, academic and policy institutions, media and political parties. The institutions of governance operating in the three domains of the state, civil society and the private sector must be geared and motivated to contribute to sustainable human development by establishing the political, legal, economic and social circumstances for poverty reduction, job creation, environmental protection and the advancement of vulnerable and.socially excluded groups.

The state is the biggest player in promoting human development. It has been implementing social legislations and development programmes for equity and social justice for decades, but their effectiveness and reach is limited as the poor and the vulnerable do not have access to these mainly due to lack of political power. It is now being recognised that the marginalised and the poor must have access to the political arena to articulate their problems and grievances. Participation in political process at the grassroots is likely to provide greater opportunities to such persons to aspire to political power and authority, through which they can also upgrade the social and economic status of other members of their community

Based on the understanding that human development entails enlargement of people's choices, welfare and equitable access to opportunities, on the one hand it is important to ensure

effective management of public resources, available mainly through the state, for human development, and on the other hand, it is equally important to create an enabling environment for people's participation in exercising of choices and decision making processes.

Management of public resources for human development involves mobilisation, allocation, and utilisation of resources so as to meet as equitably as possible the needs of all citizens. Taking into consideration the sustainability perspective, this further implies meeting the needs of current generations without compromising the needs of future ones. In more specific terms, management of public resources must ensure more effective and efficient provision of social infrastructure and delivery of basic social services like education and health. In order to achieve the capacity of governments and institutional frameworks need to be strengthened in enabling it to reach out to the most needy. Creation of an enabling environment relates to institutional arrangements and procedures that promote people's participation in decision making, human security, and a genuine dialogue between government and civil society.

As human development is about more than raising income, similarly governance for human development requires much more than effective functioning of public institutions. This requires governance that is democratic in nature and practice. Democracies guarantee political and civil freedom and the right to participate as a fundamental human right. It provides protection from economic and political catastrophes such as famines as the elected representatives take interest and steps to avert them to maintain political stability. It provides space for political freedom and empowers citizens to advocate for policies that aim at expanding social and economic opportunities and choices through free press and active civil society. Two prominent examples are participatory budgeting and gender-responsive budgeting. In Porto Alegre, Brazil, citizen's participation in preparing municipal budgets has helped reallocate spending to critical human development priorities. Gender-responsive budgeting (GRB), which examines the implications for gender equity of national and local budgets, has been pursued in at least 40 countries. In South Africa, such efforts have trained parliamentarians in scrutinizing budget proposals and led to the inclusion of gender-sensitive analysis in policy papers and to more effective targeting of public spending. However, the links between democracy and human development are not automatic; they need to be consciously built by creating mechanisms for empowering people. For deepening democratic processes the key institutions responsible for promoting democracy need to be strengthened.

As mentioned above government and institutional frameworks includes both central and local level. It is being increasingly recognised that transferring authority and responsibility to regional and local governments can more effectively and efficiently promote human development. These sub-national authorities may be in better positions than the central government to establish genuine partnerships with citizens and communities which, in turn, will help the authorities to become better at providing basic services and performing key functions, while at the same time generating an enabling environment for people's participation.

It is in the light of these emerging debates that, the 73rd and the 74th Constitutional Amendments Acts were passed in 1993-94. Through this an opportunity has been created, by providing reservations of seats for representation of vulnerable groups – tribals (Scheduled Tribes), dalits (Scheduled Castes), women and other backward classes (OBCs) – in panchayats and urban local bodies, The gram sabha was conceived as a space, at the lowest level of governance, to provide opportunity to the people to voice their needs and aspirations. The gram sabha could also be used as a platform through which the elected representatives

could be made accountable to the people for their actions and to serve as a means of ensuring transparency in administration. Through provision of reservation of seats for elected representatives, space has been created for a large proportion of first time/first generation representatives from vulnerable groups. The Right to Information Act 2005 is another step made to promote transparency and accountability in government structures and delivery mechanisms.

NGOs and CBOs have the potential to support and strengthen decentralised governments and work with them as partners. They can play a role in revitalising decentralised governments at three levels: motivating people to participate in the decision-making process, providing information to people on various aspects of local government and planning, and providing inputs on attitudinal change.

Suggestions for Promoting Human Development in the Karnataka Human Development Report 2005 on Institutional Reforms for Panchayati Raj

- Human development objectives should be incorporated in District Plans and the outcomes monitored; Increases in district Annual Plan outlays should not be distributed on a pro-rata basis to districts. Instead, districts with poor human and economic development indicators should receive more resources;
- Increase untied funds to districts with very low human development indicators (HDI)
- Strengthen District Planning Committees by building capacity;
- Provide planning infrastructure to talukas panchayats;
- Strengthen gram panchayats by providing managerial and technical assistance to enable them to perform more effectively;
- Gram panchayats should increase their resource base through mobilisation of taxes. government could award incentives to gram panchayats that perform well; and
- Build capacity of community based organisations so that they can function as effective agents of change.

There is more than one path to human development, and multiple strategies need to be considered to make a substantial impact, but any successful strategy will have to pay attention to the allocation of public expenditure and the institutional arrangements that determine the distribution of wealth and income and the vulnerability of various sections of the population to events which can threaten their livelihood and perhaps even their life.

To achieve the goals set out since the advent of the human development reports, in September 2000, 189 world leaders agreed to the Millennium Declaration to reduce extreme poverty and expedite the process of human development and promote human rights. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are a set of quantifiable, time-bound goals that are required to achieve sustainable gains in human development by 2015 – eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality, reducing child and maternal mortality, reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS and malaria, reducing by half the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for development, with targets for aid, trade and debt relief.

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger
- Halve the proportion of people with less than one dollar a day
- Halve the proportion of people who suffer from hunger

2. Achieve universal primary education
- Ensure that boys and girls alike complete primary schooling

3. Promote gender equality and empower women
- Eliminate gender disparity at all levels of education

4. Reduce child mortality
- Reduce by two-thirds the under-five mortality rate

5. Improve maternal health
- Reduce by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio

6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
- Reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS

7. Ensure environmental sustainability
- Integrate sustainable development into country policies and reverse loss of environmental resources
- Halve the proportion of people without access to potable water
- Significantly improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers

8. Develop a global partnership for development
- Raise official development assistance
- Expand market access

The MDGs have for the first time been able to bring together countries all over the world and invoked a political consensus on time bound quantified indicators for achieving human development. The MDGs offer a framework of accountability for national governments, bilateral and multilateral donors, and many other actors that have a role in development such as local NGOs, international NGO networks, women's groups, trade unions, private businesses, global corporations, the media, the judiciary and indeed all of us who are in fact global citizens. Each stakeholder is in a position to translate the goals into action plans everywhere. Tracking progress made on the outcomes of these goals reveals a slow pace of achieving the targets globally within a short span of 15 years. The data reemphasises the fact that economic growth does not appear to be a pre-requisite for promoting human development. This is only a beginning and may take several decades to make headway in achieving human development among and within countries.

Poverty has many dimensions. In addition to low income (living on less than $1 a day), illiteracy, ill health, gender inequality, and environmental degradation are all aspects of being poor. This is reflected in the MDGs. Five of the eight MDGs concern health and education. But progress in human development has lagged behind that in reducing income poverty. The world as a whole is on track to achieve the first goal – reducing by half the proportion of people living on less than $1 a day –mainly due to rapid economic growth in India and China, where many of the world's poor live. But the world has a long way to go in reaching the MDGs for primary education, gender equality, and child mortality.

Action that may be taken at the Grassroots

A society is considered to be developed when it is viewed and assessed in terms of what it does for an average individual or the poor— the benefits and opportunities that it generates for people and how these are eventually distributed — between men and women and vulnerable groups, the well off and deprived and across regions. As explained above, often, there is no direct link between economic attainments and the quality of life. Regions and nations with high levels of income and economic growth need not necessarily have similar social attainments. Hence, it is important to have a framework and evolve development strategies that strengthen the linkage between the two, and encourage the most effective and efficient use of available resources for furthering the well-being of the people. India being a diverse and multi cultural country there are considerable difference in the level of attainments in human development of people depending on the location – rural or urban, caste, class, gender, religion and ethnicity.

While India has made substantial progress towards achieving better social indicators over the past two decades, the rates of improvement have not been sufficient to achieve the targets set in the 11th five year plans and the MDGs. To reach all of these goals, economic growth is essential. But it will not be enough. The projected growth in per capita GDP ensuring basic health and education outcomes is the responsibility of the state. To meet this responsibility, governments and citizens need to make the services on health and education; water, sanitation, energy, transport, health, and education to reach the poor people.

Some Aspects that need to be effectively Implemented and Monitored

Economic Attainment and Wellbeing
Employment for men and women minimum100 days with minimum wage

Access to Basic Amenities

Shelter – pucca or kuccha house and one room or two roomed
Sanitation – access to toilets in the dwellings
Sanitation – disposal of waste water and solid waste including night soil
Water – portable drinking water at dwelling
Road connectivity – to the sub divisional town or the district head quarters road and bus service
Electricity – access to electricity at home

Education

ICDS – enrolment and attendance of children 0-6 years
Literacy rate – above 7 years of age
Adult literacy rate for men and women
Enrolment, attendance and drop-out (including repeated year) rate in primary and secondary schools both boys and girls class wise

Health

Infant mortality
Weight of child at birth
Immunisation
Nutritional status of children under 5 through anganwadis and mid meal scheme
Deliveries by trained personels
Functioning and availability of equipment, medicines and professionals at the PHCs, CHCs levels
Life expectancy: Registration of birth and death, marriage and pregnancy, universal coverage of vaccines and promote delayed marriages not less than 18 – 20 years

Most of these services are interrelated, for instance, a household having access to sanitation (safe disposal through sewer) may value the attainment only when it also has access to safe drinking water. Further, it is not necessary that all households having access to sanitation also have access to safe water. Similarly, improvements in educational attainments have invariably been accompanied by improvement in health and longevity of the population and in their economic well-being. There is a need to look into the interconnectedness between different sectors. Besides the social context, the physical environment also has a direct bearing on the well-being of individuals. The development cycle need to be converted into equitable distribution of resources, improving the human development indicators and environmental sustainability.

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14. WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

[17]Constitution of India guarantees equality to all its citizens irrespective of sex, caste, community, language and religion. The Preamble of the Constitution, Fundamental Rights and Directive Principles safeguard the principle of gender equality. The latter, is in essence, an acknowledgement of and a response to the gender based inequalities that exist in our society. The Constitution also provides for affirmative action and positive discrimination by entrusting the States to make special provisions for women (National Policy for the Empowerment of Women).

Different measures have been adopted over the years at different levels, based on the evolving understanding of the reasons for women's lack of power. In 1974, a Committee was constituted to analyse and comment on the Status of Women in India. The Committee's report highlighted that poor women were being marginalised in the development process and that their access to resources was considerably low. This recognition led to the setting up of the Department of Women and Child Development in 1985 to offer development schemes for women and children, especially for their health, education and employment.

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[17] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

In the following years, experience indicated that there was a need to go beyond inclusion of women in development process; that they needed to be empowered to understand their subordination by the patriarchal norms of society and collectively demand for their rights. This led to different initiatives, among them the setting up of the National Commission for Women in 1990, followed by States setting up such Commissions that focussed on safeguarding the rights of women. A National Policy for Women was formulated in 1996 that served as a guide for the states. Gujarat developed and finalised its policy –'Nari Gauruv Niti' in 2004 and a Gender Resource Centre was set up as an autonomous body under the Women and Child Development Department for facilitating Government Departments, NGOs, Academic Institutions, International agencies and independent experts in planning, implementing and evaluating gender sensitive programs, policies, laws and schemes.

During the 90s, another significant Constitutional change was introduced through 73rd and 74th amendment providing 33 percent reservation for women in the Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies. Some of the States have increased the women's political representation to 50 per cent. In the planning process, women's component plans have been introduced in some states that require a specific allocation of resources only for women's development. In addition, gender budget cells have been set up in most Ministries for planning and monitoring of schemes using a gender perspective. In some cases these changes have been the result of lobbying by women's groups while in others it has been a response to changes at the international level or even a combination of both.

Several women's organisations and NGOs have also been implementing programmes for women's empowerment using a range of activities from individual self assertion to collective resistance, protest and mobilisation that challenge basic inequities in relationships. Demands of women's groups in the 80s have led to legal reforms in personal laws, laws related to their reproductive rights, female foeticide, rape, dowry, sexual harassment and domestic violence.

Internationally, in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognized that all human beings are free by birth and have the same rights. Although the Declaration did not make a distinction between men and women, it recognised that women are daily subjected to human right violations for the mere fact that they are females, though they play a major role in the family, in the socio-economic development of their countries as well as internationally.

In 1970s, the declaration of the UN Decade for Women led to a special focus on women's issues and concerns. A major landmark in 1979 was the adoption by the UN General Assembly of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which became a law in 1981. This was a worldwide recognition of the fact that women are discriminated against and that concerted steps need to be taken to fight such discrimination. 140 countries have agreed to adopt this Convention, with India ratifying it in 1993.

The objective of CEDAW is to put an end to all gender-biased attitudes, practices or distinction, exclusion or preference of any kind aimed at either favouring men over women or subjecting the women to demeaning treatments. The Convention, defines 'discrimination against women' as any sexual act, practice or behaviour aimed at excluding or preventing the woman, whether she is a young girl, a spinster, a married person, a divorcee or widow, from enjoying the same rights as the man, whether political, economic, social, cultural, civic or in any other sphere. In most developing countries, for instance, the woman cannot inherit land; however the man is fully given that right. This customary practice is discriminatory against

woman, because it does not recognize that as a human being, the woman is equal to the man and has the same rights as him. It is therefore, unfair to prevent the woman from enjoying inheritance rights, which every human being is entitled to. Hence States have to pass laws which not only ensure equality between women and men, but also address discriminatory practices against women. Member nations should also ensure that these laws are properly enforced and women are protected under the same conditions as men before courts and public offices.

CEDAW specially emphasises that:

- Women can benefit from exceptional policies eg. Free education to promote their enrolment in schools

- Prejudices and cultural notions about what men and women can or should do/not do should be examined and countered; for example the notion that women should be confined to the household and the public spaces are for men prevents women from participating in community and public activities and dis-empowers them.

- Women in rural communities have the same rights as women in urban areas. Countries must take measures that will enable women in rural communities to participate in decision making and implementation of development programmes of their areas. Women in rural communities have the right to be treated in hospitals, to information and to be advised on family planning, to education, and professional training. Women have the right to form cooperative groups to help each other. Countries must make sure that women in rural areas participate in their community activities in the same way as men. They must allow women to have access to agricultural credit and loan. In the process of distribution and exploitation of lands, women must be treated in equality with men.

Two significant legal instruments whose debates and formulation began before India ratified CEDAW but which were passed as laws post ratification of CEDAW were the Pre Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act (PNDT) (1994) and the Protection from Domestic Violence Act (2005). The PNDT Act was enacted to check discrimination against girls even before they are born (natality inequality). The Act prohibits determination and disclosure of the sex of the foetus. It also prohibits any advertisements relating to pre-natal determination of sex and prescribes punishment for its contravention with imprisonment and fine. The Act was amended in 2003 to make its implementation more effective and is now referred to as the PCPNDT Act.

In India, 40-60% women suffer from domestic violence. Violence has serious social implications for women besides impacting her physical and mental health. It is a breach of their human right and restricts their contribution to society. The Protection from Domestic Violence Act was passed following long standing demands of civil society groups, especially of women's organisations for a civil law to assure victims of domestic violence, freedom from fear of eviction or physical harm in their paternal and matrimonial homes and friendship relationship and to have access to family resources for adequate maintenance. In Gujarat, the Saurashtra-Kutch Network has been formed to collectively campaign against violence in the state. The Network conducted a study in 4 areas and found that almost 90% of the women interviewed had faced violence.

The key challenges in the effective implementation of this Act include the appointment of insufficient and untrained Protection Officers (PO) to attend to the complaints, inadequate budgetary support, lack of co-ordination among various government departments and poor court records. In Gujarat, unlike some other states, the District Social Defence Officers and

Zonal Dowry Prohibition Officers are entrusted with the additional responsibility of the PO and are not provided the requisite training in legal matters required for performance of this role. (Ref: Report by Lawyers Collective Women's Rights Initiative, GRC and UNDP).

Why women's empowerment?

Historically women have always played a subservient role to men. Domination over women and the attitude of subordination comes primarily from social conditioning. Men and women are conditioned to believe that they are different – that women are meek, weak and made to serve and men are tough, strong and made to rule. Such social and cultural definitions of men and women are called 'gender'. The gender differences learnt and internalised very early in life are continually reinforced in various ways. The cultural expressions and practices like sayings, folklore and symbols that men and women are expected to wear not only reflect the gender based inequalities but also reinforce them. This leads to unequal power relations between men and women. Any digression from the socio-cultural norms for both sexes is unacceptable to and frowned upon by society.

In any unequal relationship the more powerful has a tendency to exploit and pressurise the less powerful to succumb to their control. Various coercive means are used by men to maintain control and this extends through the woman's life cycle and in all spheres of life. Women, on the other hand, accept and even perpetuate their own subordination.

Since gender inequality is not due to biological differences between men and women but is socially constructed, it is possible to change it. It requires a change in the mindset of both the powerful and the powerless.

Women cannot be treated as a composite category or group. The needs, issues and situations of women in rural areas differ from those in urban; single women and especially widows differ from their married counterparts; disability, caste, ethnicity, class are some of the other aspects that affect women's status and position in society. It is important to look at these aspects and their intersection with gender while assessing the extent of marginalisation faced by them.

Defining Empowerment

Sarita is a 38 year old woman who was content with being a housewife and a mother of three children. She was a member of a self help group and regularly making savings. She was one of the SHG leaders and used to take active role in making women share their daily problems and difficulties. During the last panchayat election, she was elected as sarpanch of her village from a reserved seat. She belongs to the SC community and was asked to file nomination by the 'upper caste' community. At this point of time Sarita ben was not clear about contesting election. She consented as it was from the 'higher caste male' who enjoyed significant power in the village. The dominant group in the village suggested her name with the expectation that they will maintain their control and power over her on the matters of panchayat level decisions and functions. Sarita ben was unaware of what this new position would mean to her and how it would change her life. She had never been to school and was therefore at the mercy of the 'literate' advisors for most of her work.

She attended a training for elected representatives where she learnt about her role and how she could contribute to the development of her village. Enthused by her new position of power and with the support of many women, she took more interest in the process of organising women into self help groups. This gave her the opportunity to meet with them and learn more about their common concerns. With their support, she was able to initiate a few

development projects such as installation of hand-pumps and establishing anganwadi. She also took up action against encroachment of common land which is mostly grabbed by the powerful people of the village. The increase in her popularity met with stiff resistance from the powerful groups, including the other panchayat members. Charges of corruption were levelled against her. Initially, she was unable to comprehend the forces working against her and was at a complete loss in addressing the adversity in her situation. On several occasions she was almost forced to resign from the post, but she decided that she would not give in to the pressures.

Her resolve received support from the women in her village and an NGO that was engaged in building the capacities of women leaders including formation of network of women elected representatives. With the support of the network she was able to muster the courage to counter the pressures of the powerful people. She developed strategies to prove that the charges levelled against her were false. She was also able to collect information on the different sources of funds so that she could independently mobilise resources for the development work in her village.

Sarita participated in a literacy campaign for elected women leaders and with her strong desire to emerge as a successful leader, she was able to develop adequate literacy skills to aid in her role. She encouraged women to use the gramsabha to voice their concerns. She also encouraged them to take an active part in the village level committees. Having experienced the benefits of literacy, she became an active promoter of education for the girls in her village and made sure that they had access to the basic facilities in their schools. Her active interest, participation and perseverance have helped her to come back to power a second time from a general seat.

Sarita's case demonstrates clearly that she moved from a position of dependence and helplessness to a position of self assertion and confidence to demand justice in most adverse conditions. The process of empowerment of Sarita ben is stimulated and facilitated by external forces like the the network of women elected representatives. The empowerment in this case is visible at the individual level. This process takes place at both the individual to collective levels and vise-versa. It must begin with the woman becoming conscious of her beliefs, aware of gender and its impact on her life, recognition of her strengths and the felt need to act to change the gender imbalances. The process of empowerment must also involve collective responses since the power of a group to challenge the dominant system that obstructs equal opportunity, women's autonomy and independent life choices is always greater than that of an individual. Organisations, formal and informal provide the marginalised groups to voice opinions and exchange ideas and increase their bargaining power in their interactions with those in power and has the potential to sustain their actions. Apart from a change in the access and control to resources, it requires creating time and space whereby women can develop a new consciousness through examining their lives critically. In addition to a change in their way of thinking, it requires initiation of small changes like participation in decision making at the household and community level rather than silently approving every thing, encouraging girls to go to school, altering conventional gender division of labour, forming self help groups, etc. that are visible and which the society recognises and responds to. Collective strength can help women to negotiate and change the existing power equations.

Change agents facilitating women's empowerment often face the dilemma whether to respond to the immediate problems faced by poor, marginalised women i.e. work towards

changing their 'condition' or raise their consciousness about the root cause of their powerlessness i.e. aim to change their 'position' in society. Most interventions target the former and focus on improvements in women's condition through better income, health or education. There is a lot to be done in the area of improvement of women's status (Strategic Gender Needs – SGN) like abolition of the sexual division of labour, improving women's access to resources such as credit and land, removal of institutionalised forms of discrimination, establishing political equality or enhancing women's access to decision making positions, elimination of violence against women.

Most interventions of the government and NGOs focus on initiating income generation activities for women but few work on enhancing women's access to cooperatives, developing their marketing and linkage building skills. In the field of education, schemes have been initiated to provide better access to girls to schools through free elementary education but limited work has been done to ensure that once enrolled girls have access to equal opportunities for higher education and non-traditional fields of study or that the school curriculum is not gender biased.

The term 'Empowerment' contains within it the word 'power'. It refers to changing power relations and the distribution of power between individuals and groups. Power can be understood as control over material, human and intellectual resources. These include:
a. Physical resources like land, water, forests

b. Human resources like people, their bodies, their labour and their skill

c. Intellectual resources like knowledge, information and ideas

d. Financial resources like money and access to money

Power is dynamic and relational and is also unequally distributed. Hence, a person or a group that has access to and control over one or more of these resources wields power over others who do not possess or possess lesser control. The greater the access and control, the greater the power; this also leads to greater control over decision making, making others implement one's decisions and influencing other's decisions without making any direct intervention.

So if 'power' refers to access and control over all kinds of resources, 'Empowerment' refers to the process and its result, whereby the powerless or less powerful members of a society gain greater access and control over material and knowledge resources. Empowerment also means challenging the ideologies of discrimination and subordination which justify this unequal distribution. It involves an individual's or group's ability to critically analyse their social and political environment and engage in pro-active behaviour to change the situation of powerlessness.

Women's empowerment, therefore, is the process by which women gain greater control over material and intellectual resources, and challenge the ideology of patriarchy and the gender based discrimination against women in all institutions and structures of society. It begins when poor and marginalised women understand and recognise the causes of their situation and take action to bring a change in it. It entails changes in the laws, civil codes, property and inheritance rights, control over women's bodies and labour and the social and legal institutions that perpetuate male control. Women's empowerment is not against men but against the systems of patriarchy and all its manifestations.

Women's Empowerment: A Multi-level Process

There has been an increasing emphasis on understanding the forms and reasons for the gender inequalities and developing measures to reduce them. With an increasing emphasis on human rights and women's rights, the term 'Women's empowerment' has gained special prominence in the last three decades.

> The Mahila Samakhya Programme initiated by the government of India in 1988 sought to promote women's empowerment through organising and mobilising them for action against the oppressive patriarchal forces leading to their subordination. The women's collectives promoted by trained local women helped create spaces and time for women to address issues such as their right to mobility to participate in meetings and training programmes, confronting violence against women, challenging and changing the gender division of labour in their homes, reclamation of alienated land in women's names, acquiring skills for reaching and dealing with men in influential positions, developing negotiation skills and self confidence, strengthening and managing their sanghas etc. This was facilitated through raising the consciousness of women about their condition and position and helping them to identify issues that concern them, providing them information and linkages, helping them to analyse and act upon the issues. This included activities like legal awareness, skill training for non-traditional occupations and linkages for employment, literacy classes, setting up of co-operatives etc.

Empowerment approach focuses especially on interventions that seek to address the fundamental causes of powerlessness. Development projects that focus on changing the position of women seek to enable a structural change from below.

Indicators of Gender Inequality in Gujarat

Gujarat has established itself as an economically progressive state. It has ranked fourth among the major states in India for almost two decades on its per capita income. It is also relatively more urbanised than other states. 38 per cent of its population stays in the urban areas as against 27 per cent at the national level. However, a review of social indicators highlights the gender based inequalities. These are evident in the form of differing literacy rates (58.6% for women and 80.5% for men). The Gross enrolment rate for children in 6-14 age group is 94 for boys and 78 for girls (Education Statistics, 2000-01). The dropout rate for girls is higher than boys at all levels of education. The highest differential is at the elementary school level where it is 14.02 for girls as compared to 9.97 for boys (Statistical Abstract of Gujarat 2006).

The male female sex ratio has declined from 934 in 1991 to 920 in 2001. The child sex ratio (0-6 years) has declined from 927 to 878 and Gujarat ranks 20th in India. Gujarat has 27.2 per cent of currently married women with age at marriage below 18 years. 55.3% women suffer from anaemia as compared to 22.2 % men (NFHS - 2005-06). The Infant Mortality Rate is higher for girls (82) than boys (74) (and higher for girls in rural areas as compared to urban areas - 64 and 38 respectively in 2005)

The female work participation rate is 28.03% compared to 55.02% for men (2001 Census). However, in the informal and the agriculture sector, women outnumber men – these sectors offer little by way of social security and the wage patterns are unregulated. Women are

further subject to violence both at home and in the workplace. 33.8 per cent ever married women aged 15-49 years have experienced emotional, physical or sexual violence (NFHS 2005-06). There is little recourse for women in such situations owing to societal pressures and social taboos. 12% of BPL households are women headed and 14% are houseless (2002 – gswan@govt.in).

Measures for gender equality and women's empowerment in local governance

As is evident from the above, steps need to be taken at several levels by various stakeholders to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Gender equality can only be achieved by making both men and women aware about the discrimination towards women. Men need to provide space to the women creating equal opportunity and eliminating all forms of violence. Women need to reconstruct their self image which is devoid of dependence and rooted in the spirit of autonomy and empowerment. It needs to be remembered that women's subordination is a historical injustice which requires a sustained effort by all to eliminate and curb the injustices. It is not the role of the State alone; it is a responsibility of all.

For women's empowerment at the local level, two key strategies are normally used:
Organising women's collectives and promoting awareness through gender sensitisation and conscientisation so that they become the vehicle of women's participation in different activities and processes. Women's groups can be formed at local levels and federated at higher levels to enhance their collective voice and bargaining capacities for effecting policy level changes. These groups can also be the media for enhancing women's access to resources through activities such as savings and credit, literacy, health awareness etc.

Providing concrete services or programmes to women such as health services, literacy classes, credit or income generation programmes and ensuring that these reach maximum number of marginalised women.

Women's participation in local governance needs to be facilitated by actively discouraging dummy candidates and proxy candidates (Pati Sarpanch Syndrome). Once elected into local governance, the women elected representatives have the powers to influence plans and budgets. Hence one of the first steps that they can take is to facilitate the formulation of plans that are gender sensitive. For several years it was assumed that interventions targeted at families would automatically benefit women as families were considered a socio-economic unit where women have equal access and control over resources. Experience indicated that this is not true. Plans need to specially target women to make any transformation in their lives.

Gender planning was thus introduced to examine the different needs and priorities of men and women, formulate projects and allocate resources from a gender perspective. It aims to improve the status of women by developing projects that will address problems arising due to gender discrimination and inequalities. This also then requires that projects be monitored and assessed to examine whether the plans are actually reducing the inequalities that they sought to do.

Elected representatives can introduce gender planning through collation of accurate data and need identification of women and men. It is important that women are involved in the

planning process since that is one of the key ways of getting to know what their needs are and having them included in the plans. This cannot be achieved merely by the presence of a large number of women in committees, community based groups, gramsabha etc. but it requires equipping women to regularly meet and discuss their needs and issues. Local self help groups can be strengthened to provide such spaces to women. Women who are potential leaders can be identified and trained to do gender analysis and planning. Elected representatives must be aware that such planning will lead to conflicts as it will lead to a change in the power relations in homes and in public spaces. They will need to handle such conflicts and deal with them maturely.

Gender planning can be done for improving the condition as well as status of women. Interventions aimed at improving water and sanitation, employment, health and education facilities can help alleviate the daily drudgery faced by women. Simultaneously it is important to address the inequalities in the division of labour through increase in men's participation in household tasks, prevention of and protection from violence, increasing women's participation in political and cultural activities, skill training and upgradation, facilities for higher education, mobility etc. Local level planning can take the latter needs of women into account and build these into their projects and budgets. It is important that the differing needs of women based on their caste, class, religion, age, marital status etc. are taken into account.

Gender Planning in Education: The data on education indicates that while percentage enrolment of girls in primary education is high, the difference in enrolment rate of girls and boys becomes quite pronounced in higher education. The retention rate of girls is also lower than that of boys. As a result, expenditures in education are higher for boys than for girls. This is especially true for higher and technical education.

Some of the common reasons for this disparity include the distance of schools from the village, limited facilities to aid in the mobility of girls, attitudes of family towards educating girls especially beyond primary level and in non-traditional streams and absence of gender sensitive provisions/ facilities like clean toilets in the schools. Specific reasons in a village/taluka/district can also be collated through discussions with women and girls.

To address the gender discrimination and disparities in education, plans can include formation/ strengthening of Village Education Committees that can be sensitised towards girls' education and can take steps to promote it in the village; construction of separate toilets for girls, provision of cycles to girls, introducing incentives and residential facilities for pursuing higher education at taluka/district etc. Some of these measures may already be available through state sponsored schemes; the elected representatives need to ensure that the schemes are properly implemented.

Gender Planning in Health: Both men and women have health needs but girls and women have some additional needs related to their reproductive functions. Data on the use of local health facilities by girls and women can be collated to understand the gaps. In many states, including Gujarat, limited access of women to health care during all stages and especially during maternity leads to nutritional deficiencies, complications in child birth and death. Provisions can be made to strengthen the immunisation and ANC services at the PHC/CHC levels. Provision of basic facilities for obtaining nutrition supplements and de-worming at the PHC level can be made. To help reduce anaemia, the rates of which are generally higher among adolescent girls and women as compared to males, iron supplements can be made

available locally. Plans can also focus on special health needs of women who are mentally or physically disabled and make provisions such that they can access health services.

Gender Planning in Employment: As the data on women's employment in Gujarat indicates, there are more women in marginal and informal employment and their access to organised sectors is limited. Women generally face hardships due to limited child care support services at worksites. Their access to loans, land, agricultural schemes is low since they do not possess land, a pre-requisite for access to such schemes. At the local levels, elected representatives can ensure that women are enrolled and obtain employment under employment schemes such as MGNREGA; get equal wages for equal work, provisions such as child care and toilet facilities are made to retain women in employment; loans are disbursed to marginalised women especially to single women; women get access to common property resources and receive support for joint ventures.

For gender planning and gender sensitive implementation of schemes and plans, an important factor is adequate resource allocation; budgets are the most important tool for converting policies and programmes into action. Since people differ in their needs and government budgets involve prioritisation, an ideal budget should focus on those least able to provide for themselves. However, budgets and their utilisation were thus far not examined from this perspective to see their effects on addressing gender disparities.

Gender budgeting has been introduced in the past decade both internationally and in India to focus more on the needs of women and girls because they are usually at a disadvantage on all fronts. The other focus of gender budgets is on those women and girls who are the most disadvantaged – the poor, scheduled castes and tribes, women from rural areas, single women, women with disabilities and so on.

It is important to understand that gender budgeting does not mean separate budgets for women nor does it mean seeing how much money is allocated to women. Gender budgets are a means to ensure that there is gender awareness in all policies and budgets of all government agencies and allocating budgets based on the differing needs of men and women. Taking an example from education, some states have introduced free education for girls to reduce the existing gender gap. Similarly, schemes for transportation of women in emergency situations have been introduced to ensure safe institutional deliveries. Setting up of support centres for women in distress and facing violence is yet another example of gender budgeting.

In Karnataka, elected women representatives have used gender budgeting to prevent a proposed budget cut targeting women's groups. They ended up securing a 56% increase in funding instead and started advocacy for more transparent public information in the future.
For gender budgeting, collection of sex disaggregated data is the first and foremost requirement as it will help to:

a. Describe the situation of women and men, girls and boys

- Number of anaemic boys and girls

- Number of boys and girls being immunised

- Number of girls and boys enrolled in primary, upper primary and higher education

- Attendance of girls and boys in primary, upper primary and higher education

b. Assess the outreach of programmes and projects to men and women

- Number of women and men accessing primary health services

- Girls and boys covered under the School Health Programme or Mid Day meal programme

- Number of men and women covered under medical insurance

In some cases, it may be important to collect data on the number of men and women requiring a particular service/ treatment as compared to those actually receiving it and analysing the reasons for this to help take corrective action. The gap may be due to attitudes and beliefs that may be impacting the utilisation of a particular programme.

c. Assess the impact of policies and programmes

- Number of women and men in main and marginal workforce

- Wages earned by men and women for the same work

- Subsidies availed by men and women in a specific sector

- Presence of grievance redressal mechanisms at workplace for men and women etc.

d. Understand gender issues that affect only one sex eg. Data on maternal mortality or violence against women.

Elected representatives have the power and responsibility to promote women's empowerment through conscious and concerted means. It requires developing an understanding of the patriarchal forces that perpetuate gender inequalities at all levels; a sensitivity to gender concerns and understanding the ways in which these can be integrated in their local initiatives, plans and budgets. This requires capacity building of elected representatives on gender and how it impacts the lives of men and women; how the existing spaces like gramsabha, mahila gramsabha, planning committees etc. can be used to promote gender equality and using their networks to share experiences and initiatives taken by them to reduce gender based inequalities and promote women's empowerment. As mentioned earlier, such initiatives are likely to lead to a change in existing power relations and hence to some degree of conflict. Collectivisation of efforts of elected representatives on this front is likely to provide them the ideas and strength to deal with the changes that are likely to result in women's empowerment.

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15. SOCIAL JUSTICE
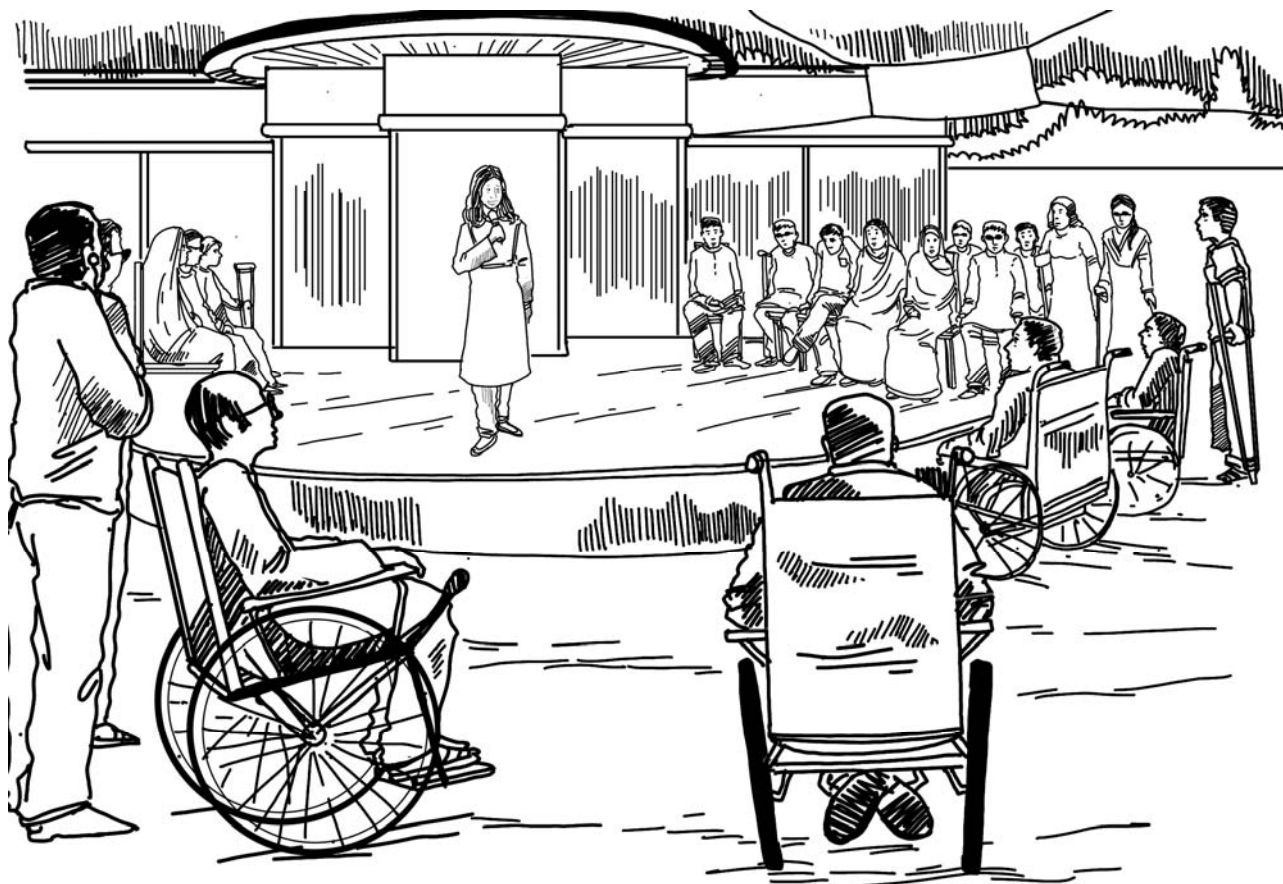
[18]A general definition of social justice is hard to arrive at and even harder to implement. In essence, social justice is concerned with ensuring and protection of basic civil rights to the vulnerable people whose rights are infringed by vested interests and dominant groups. It is not about justice making process in the court of law, but in all aspects of social behavior which demands that people have equal rights and opportunities; everyone, from the poorest person on the margins of society to the wealthiest deserve and enjoy a dignified living, devoid of discrimination and even equal opportunities. Injustice occurs when one or more people abrogate and/or derogate the rights of some other people. The law of natural rights is that all people have them. Social justice is a revolutionary concept that provides meaning and significance to life and makes the rule of law dynamic. When the society seeks to meet the challenge of socio-economic inequality, a democratic governance system evokes its legislative power to protect social justice without creating any harm.

The term social justice was first used in 1840 by a Sicilian priest, Luigi Taparelli d' Azeglio, and given prominence by Antonio Rosmini Serbati in La Constitution Civil Second la Giustizia Sociable in 1848. The word social distinguishes Social Justice from Justice as applied in the law-state-administered systems, which label certain behavior as unacceptable

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[18] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

and enforce a formal mechanism of control. Social justice has the potential to produce results that transform social power structure in favor of the weak and vulnerable. Social justice is also used to refer to the overall fairness of a society in its divisions and distributions of rewards and burdens and, as such, the phrase has been adopted by political parties with a redistributive agenda. Social Justice derives its authority from the codes of morality prevailing in each culture.

But what do the words "just" or "fair" mean, and what defines equal? Who should be responsible for making sure society is a just and fair place? How do you implement policies regarding social justice? Alternately, should you legislate for justice in society or merely rely on the moral compass of society's members?

Issue of discrimination, marginalization, atrocities and exclusion in India

Social exclusion is a universal phenomenon which has existed over time and space. However, in India, social exclusion has been predominantly used in understanding caste based discrimination. Caste is a unique determinant of social exclusion in the Indian Sub-continent. There are various forms of social exclusion experienced by the Dalits in different spheres. Historically, the Dalits were deprived of education; right to possess assets; and the right to possess weapons to protect themselves. The code of conduct that deprives them of these rights – Manusmriti - was written three thousand years back. The dalits experience the agony of exclusion in social, economic and political spheres. There are instances where Dalits are not permitted to draw water from common wells and hand pumps; separate utensils are used to serve them tea in food stalls, they are not allowed entry into the temples and Dalit children are made to sit at the back of the classroom. The situation is even worse in rural areas. The constitution of India grants Dalits certain privileges that include reservations in education, government jobs, and government bodies; and protection against caste based discrimination. However, the dominant caste people have been demanding the withdrawal of these Acts by rendering the argument of meritocracy and misuse of these Acts.

Despite these provisions and assumed 'misuses', Dalits are subjected to atrocities and social exclusion by the dominant castes in order to maintain their caste superiority and display power. Rise in the incidence of violence against the Dalits is also attributed to the increasing level of awareness and assertion among them. Therefore, social exclusion is related to lack of access to services and goods offered by societies. Social and religious groups appear to accentuate social exclusion by denying certain opportunities pertaining to social and religious practices and access to services and resources. Caste based exclusion percolates through various opportunities for enhancing access to resources- education, health care and work. Social exclusion primarily takes three forms - complete exclusion, partial exclusion and unfavorable inclusion. In case of complete exclusion or complete denial of services and access to resources, people are completely excluded from availing some services and accessing resources for whatever reasons. Many a times some people have access to some services and not to others. There is discrimination by the services providers and co-users at the place of services delivery in terms of priority and proximity. This is partial denial of services and access to resources. It is evident in three ways-
Differential treatment by the service providers/ resources owners
Differential treatment by the co-users of the services/ resources
Differential treatment for certain services/ resources

Discrimination means the treatment meted towards or against a person of a certain group in consideration based solely on caste, class, gender, and ethnicity or like aspects. Discrimination is the *actual behavior* towards another group. It involves excluding or restricting members of one group from opportunities that are available to other groups [1]. The United Nations explains "Discriminatory behaviors take many forms, but they all involve some form of exclusion or rejection."

According to UNICEF and Human Rights Watch, caste discrimination affects approximately 250 million people worldwide. Currently, there are around 160 million Dalits or "untouchables" in India. The majority of Dalits live in segregation and experience violence, murder, rape and other atrocities to the scale of 110,000 registered cases a year, according to 2005 statistics. An estimated 40 million people in India, most of them Dalits, are bonded workers, many working to pay off debts that were incurred generations ago. According to Indian government statistics, an estimated one million Dalits or "untouchables" are manual scavengers, cleaning latrines and sewers by hand and clearing away dead animals. Majority of human scavengers suffer from respiratory diseases, with 23% suffering trachoma, leading to blindness. Dalit women have been stripped naked by mobs and paraded in public to humiliate those who dared to demand their due rights and entitlements, even for expressing desire to conduct marriages or other festivals as other citizens do. Although the modern day atrocities and violence against the Dalits is appalling, they have been through worse, as indicated by caste laws, which also provides an insight into the violent ethos that drives the excesses against the Dalits

Case
The village of Khairlanji near Nagpur is an unremarkable settlement of brick huts and cement houses. Less than 200 families live here. Dirt roads run between flat farmlands. There was always a gaping silence in this village, even before 29 September 2006 when an upper caste mob, according to eyewitnesses, paraded a mother and her 17-year-old daughter naked, raped and killed them. Two other members of the family, brothers aged 19 and 21 also were murdered. Their bodies were dumped in a canal. Thirty-eight men have been arrested and they are being held under police custody. The gruesome incident occurred 780 km from Mumbai. Why this happened is a mystery that readily resolves itself depending on who you are talking to. Some say one Siddharth Gajbhiye, a police patil (village cop) had an affair with 45-year old Surekha, wife of Bhaiyyalal Bhotmange and mother of three children. This, apparently, churned the villagers who, after a string of events, took the drastic step. Others say the Bhotmanges, a land-owning Dalit family, were battling a land dispute with the upper castes. They owned five acres of land in 1996, before two acres were taken away to build a road. When their land was again demanded for road construction they objected, and the tensions caused by that defiance resulted in their slaughter. Whatever be the cause, there is not much doubt over what happened on the evening of 29 September 2006. A mob broke down the frail door of a house that is nothing more than a heap of loose bricks without the adhesion of mortar. The mob was armed with bicycle chains, axes and bullock cart pokers. Surekha and 17-year-old Priyanka, a 12th standard topper, were paraded naked through the village. According to eye-witnesses, one of them was even strapped to a bullock cart.

Dalits and Social Injustice
India's caste system assigns individuals a certain hierarchical status according to Hindu beliefs. Traditionally, there are four principal castes (divided into many sub-categories) the Brahmins (teachers, scholars and priests), the Kshatriyas (kings and warriors), the Vaishyas (agriculturists and traders), and Shudras (artisans, service providers, laborers).. As members

of the lowest rank of Indian society, Dalits face discrimination at almost every level: from access to education and medical facilities to restrictions on where they can live and what jobs they can have. The discrimination against the Dalits is especially significant because of the number of people affected; there are approximately 167 million Dalits in India, constituting over 16 percent of the total population.

Approximately three-quarters of the Dalit workforce are in the agricultural sector of the economy. A majority of the country's forty million people who are bonded laborers are Dalits. These jobs rarely provide enough income for Dalits to feed their families or to send their children to school. As a result, many Dalits are impoverished, uneducated, and illiterate.

Dalits have been oppressed, culturally subjugated, and politically marginalized. The principals of untouchability and "purity and pollution" dictate what Dalits are and are not allowed to do; where they are and are not allowed to live, go, or sit; who they can and cannot give water to, eat with, or marry; extending into the minutia of all aspects of daily life.

Dalits in Gujarat
If compared to states like Punjab, Himachal Pradesh or West Bengal where Dalits constitute more than 20 per cent of the population, Gujarat counts (7.1%) a fairly low proportion of Dalits. According to the 2001 Census, there are approximately 3.6 million members of Scheduled Castes in Gujarat, which represents 7.1% of the state's total population. This relatively low figure is, however, inversely indicative of their miserable condition. More than 80 per cent of the Dalits in Gujarat are daily labourers, the majority of which are in the agricultural sector. Half of the SC population is landless or owns less than one acre of land, which forces them to work under the dominant caste groups.

 The government of Gujarat has implemented certain policies designed to uplift those belonging to the Scheduled Castes. The most prominent is the reservation system, where certain seats in the government are set aside only for Dalits. In Gujarat, 7% of seats in the government and education sectors are reserved for Dalits (as opposed to 14% set aside on the national level). Two of the 26 Members of Parliament (MP) and 13 of the 182 Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLA) currently held by members of the SC. There are also established reservation systems in place at the district, block, and village levels throughout the state. Special boards and committees have been formed for the development of the SC community. In the Gujarat panchyati Raj Act, there is provision of Social Justice Committee to ensure social inclusion and equity in the implementation of developmental programmes.

Even with this promise of upliftment through reservation, Dalits continue to be discriminated against throughout Gujarat. The number of atrocity cases against Dalits and the practice of untouchability continue to occur. In 1998, Gujarat ranked second highest among all Indian states in the volume of crimes committed against the Scheduled Castes, at 62 cases per one lakh of population. While this is high, it is important to note that underreporting is very common; thus this number conceals the extent to which these atrocities occur. A recent study conducted by Navsarjan, a Non Government Organisation demonstrated that of all of the atrocity cases that occurred across four districts in Gujarat, 36.6% were not registered under the Atrocity Act and that of the cases where the Act was applied, 84.4% were registered under the wrong provisions, thus concealing the intensity of the violence in the cases.

The police and the legal system are also often very slow in responding to cases filed under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act,1989. In 2000, in Gujarat, there were 13,293 cases

registered in courts under the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act: 1989, all of which remained pending at the courts at the end of the year; none of them ended in convictions or in acquittals. In terms of police response to registered cases, in cases of murder, an average of 121.2 hours lapsed between the registration of the case and police action, while for cases of rape, the gap was at 532.9 hours. The practice of untouchability is also still very common in Gujarat and occurs in the following forms:

i. In rural areas, Dalits are often not allowed to engage in cultural and social activities with the rest of the community, including entering temples, sitting in the main spaces of villages, taking part in religious programs, and eating with the rest of the community during village ceremonies.

ii. Dalits are also not allowed to use the same items as non-Dalits in the communities; they are not allowed to rent or even enter homes of non-Dalits, use the same wells, eat and drink from the same dishes.

iii. In schools, Dalit children are often forced to sit separately from the rest of the students during the midday meal and are the only ones asked to clean latrines in the schools.

iv. As a result of this caste-based discrimination in schools, Dalits are often less educated than the rest of the community.

v. Due to low levels of education, the majority (78%) of Dalits are labour workers. They have limited opportunities for upward mobility and remain economically backward.

vi. Attempts to set up stores in villages by Dalits are often unsuccessful. Due to untouchability practices, the rest of the villagers do not to purchase articles from their shops.

vii. Dalits are forced to do some of the dirtiest jobs in Gujarat. For instance, manual scavenging is still widely practiced almost entirely by women belonging to the Valmiki sub-caste.

viii. Government basic services often do not reach to the dalit hamlets. , The dalit hamlets are not connected by village roads, anganwadi centers, primary schools are not constructed in the dalit hamlets.

ix. When Dalits do try to stand up for their legal rights, members of the dominant castes often assault them and/or practice social boycotts against the community.

x. The SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act: 1989 is often not implemented properly (i.e., cases are either not registered under the Act when they should be, or are not registered under the relevant provisions) due to discriminatory practices by government officials.

xi. Dalits are often landless, and in those cases where the government does allocate land for the Dalits, they are often denied access to that land because of the practice of caste-based discrimination in the villages.

Women and Injustice

Gender discrimination continues to be an enormous problem within Indian society. Traditional patriarchal norms have relegated women to secondary status within the household and workplace. This drastically affects women's health, financial status, education, and political involvement. Women are commonly married young, quickly become mothers, and are then burdened by stringent domestic and financial responsibilities. They are frequently malnourished since women typically are the last member of a household to eat and the last to receive medical attention. Additionally, only 54 percent of Indian women are literate as compared to 76 percent of men. There is a strong positive correlation between violence against women, and women's social power and equality.

Gender-based violence exists in many forms – physical, sexual, psychological and economic. It can be seen within the country in the form of violence occurring within the family, such as domestic violence, marital rape, harmful traditional practices, and "honour killings", as well as in the community, such as sexual harassment and violence in the workplace, or in transborder contexts, such as in the case of trafficking of women and girls. These are only a few examples, as violence against women exists in myriad other forms.

Domestic violence, sexual harassments, was common and a serious problem. In a survey by the National Family Health Survey released in 2002, 56 percent of the women said that domestic violence was justified. These sentiments led to underreporting and, combined with ineffective prosecution, made progress against domestic violence difficult. According to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), there were 49,170 cases of domestic violence reported in the country from 1998-2001.

According to a UN press report two third of married Indian women are victims of domestic violence. Seventy percent of married Indian women between the ages of fifteen and forty nine were proven victims of ugly incidences like rape, beating, forced or coerced sex and each incident of domestic violence leads to the loss of seven working days for a woman in a country like India.

The Constitution of India and Social Justice

The Constitution of India has solemnly promised to all its citizens justices-social, economic and political; liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship; equality of status and of opportunity; and to promote among the all fraternity assuring the dignity of the individual and the unity of the nation. The Constitution has attempted to attune the apparently conflicting claims of socio-economic justice and of individual liberty and fundamental rights by putting some relevant provisions.

Article 19 enshrines the fundamental rights of the citizens of this country. The seven sub-clauses of Article 19(1) guarantee the citizens seven different kinds of freedom and recognize them as their fundamental rights. Article 19 considered as a whole furnishes a very satisfactory and rational basis for adjusting the claims of individual rights of freedom and the claims of public good.

Articles 23 and 24 provide for fundamental rights against exploitation. Article 24, in particular, prohibits an employer from employing a child below the age of 14 years in any factory or mine or in any other hazardous employment. Article 31 makes a specific provision

in regard to the fundamental right to property and deals with the vexed problem of compulsory acquisition of property.

Article 38 requires that the state should make an effort to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may a social order in which justice social, economic and political shall inform all the institutions of national life. Article 39 clause (a) says that the State shall secure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice, on a basis of equal opportunity, and shall, in particular provide free legal aid, by suitable legislation or schemes, or in any other way, to ensure that opportunities for securing justice are not denied to any citizen by reason of economic or other disabilities.

Article 41 recognizes every citizen's right to work, to education & to public assistance in cases of unemployment, old age, sickness & disablement and in other cases of undeserved want. Article 42 stresses the importance of securing just and humane conditions of work & for maternity relief. Article 43 holds before the working population the ideal of the living wage and Article 46 emphasizes the importance of the promotion of educational and economic interests of schedule castes, schedule tribes and other weaker sections.

The social problem presented by the existence of a very large number of citizens who are treated as untouchables has received the special attention of the Constitution as Article 15 (1) prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. The state would be entitled to make special provisions for women and children, and for advancement of any social and educationally backward classes of citizens, or for the SC/STs. A similar exception is provided to the principle of equality of opportunity prescribed by Article 16 (1) in as much as Article 16(4) allows the state to make provision for the resolution of appointments or posts in favour of any backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the state, is not adequately represented in the services under the state. Article 17 proclaims that untouchability has been abolished & forbids its practice in any form & it provides that the enforcement of untouchability shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law. This is the code of provisions dealing with the problem of achieving the ideal of socio-economic justice in this country which has been prescribed by the Constitution of India.

Initiatives by the Government and the Legal frame work to protect Social Justice

In the year 1985-86, the erstwhile Ministry of Welfare was bifurcated into the Department of Women and Child Development and the Department of Welfare. Simultaneously, the Scheduled Castes Development Division, Tribal Development Division and the Minorities and Backward Classes Welfare Division were moved away from the Ministry of Home Affairs and also the Wakf Division from the Ministry of Law to form the then Ministry of Welfare.

Subsequently, the name of the Ministry was changed to the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment in May, 1998. Further, in October, 1999, the Tribal Development Division had moved out to form a separate Ministry of Tribal Affairs. In January, 2007, the Minorities Division along with Wakf Unit have been moved out of the Ministry and formed as a separate Ministry and the Child Development Division has gone to the Ministry of Women & Child Development.

The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is entrusted with the empowerment of the Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens and

Victims of Substance Abuse and marginalized sections of the society. The Ministry has been implementing various programmes/schemes for social, educational and economic development of the target groups. As a result there has been considerable improvement in the welfare of these groups.

Following are some of the Acts and rules passed by the Government of India to ensure social justice in the society

Scheduled Castes Welfare

The Protection of Civil Rights(PCR) Act, 1955 and The Protection of Civil Rights (PCR) Rules, 1977 are legal instruments to prevent untouchability. Under this Act, the preaching and practice of 'Untouchability' or the enforcement of any disability arising there from and for matters connected therewith, was made cognizable and non-compoundable offence and the terms of imprisonment were enhanced. The State Governments have been empowered to impose collective fines on the inhabitants of any area found committing and abetting the commission of untouchability offences. This Act, along with the Rules framed there under, lays down elaborate procedure for ensuring protection of the victims of such practices by providing for special courts, special prosecution, fixing period for investigation, etc

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 and the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Rules, 1995 were enacted in the light of the limitation of the enforcement of Protection of Civil Rights Act. Society as a whole never accepted the Protection of Civil Rights Act. Meanwhile various atrocities against scheduled castes and scheduled tribes continued to be committed in different parts of the country. It was realized that even the amended Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955 and normal provisions of IPC did not provide deterrence in preventing violence on scheduled castes and scheduled tribes especially offences committed on caste grounds Accordingly, Parliament passed another law called **"Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989".** The Rules under the Act were framed in 1995 to prevent commission of atrocities against members of the Schedules Castes and Tribes, to provide for special courts for the trial of such offences and for the relief and rehabilitation of the victims of such offences and for matters connected there with or incidental thereto.

The Act, for the first time, lays down the contours of 'atrocity' so as to cover all multiple ways through which members of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes have been for centuries humiliated, brutally oppressed, degraded, denied their economic and social rights and relegated to perform the most menial jobs. The objectives of the Act very clearly emphasise the intention of the Government to deliver justice to these communities through affirmative action to enable them to live in society with dignity and self-esteem and without fear or violence or suppression from the dominant castes. The Act provides for strong punishment and compensation to victims and also lays down preventive measures.

Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities

Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995 ; National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disability Act, 1999 are some of the important legal provisions for the empowerment of persons with disabilities.

The PWD Act, 1995 recognises the following seven categories of disability for providing equal opportunities, protecting the rights and ensuring full participation of persons with disabilities. The definition of each disability, as given in the Act, is also indicated.

Blindness means total absence of sight, visual acuity not exceeding 6/60 or 20/200 (snellen) in the better eye with correcting lenses or limitation of the field of vision subtending an angle of 20 degree or worse.

Low Vision means a person with impairment of visual functioning even after treatment or standard refractive correction but who uses or is potentially capable of using vision for the planning or execution of a task with appropriate assistive device.

Leprosy Cured refers to a person who is cured of leprosy but is suffering from loss of sensation in the hands or the feet as well as loss of sensation and paresis in the eye and eyelid but with no manifest deformity; manifest deformity and paresis but has sufficient mobility in the hands and the feet to engage in normal economic activity; or extreme physical deformity as well as advanced age which prevent the person from undertaking any gainful occupation.

Hearing Impairment means loss of 60 decibels or more in the better ear in the conversational range of the frequencies.

Locomotor Disability means disability of bones, joints or muscles leading to substantial restriction of the movement of the limbs or any form of cerebral palsy.

Mental Retardation refers to a condition of arrested or incomplete development of the mind of a person which is specially characterised by subnormality of intelligence.

Mental Illness refers to any mental disorder other than mental retardation.

The PWD Act seeks to empower disabled persons to be part of the mainstream. It is comprehensive and encompasses provisions for the prevention of disability, promoting education, employment, affirmative action, non-discrimination, research and manpower development, recognition of institutions for persons with disabilities and monitoring the implementation machinery.

PRI and the Social Justice Mechanism

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment and the provision of reservation for women and SC, ST is an invocation of social justice at the grass root democracy. Ensuring legitimacy and acceptance of the elected representatives from among the women, SC, ST is itself the first step of building social justice.

According to the Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993 it is mandatory for every Panchayat to set up Social Justice Committees (SJC). These Committees are statutory bodies meant to ensure the participation of weaker sections of society such as women, dalits and tribals in the decision-

making process of the Gram Panchayat. The elected members of the Panchayat nominate adult representatives belonging to these communities to the SJC in every village. The SJC has a distinct identity within the Panchayat structure. It is empowered to identify developmental requirements in the village with particular emphasis on the needs of these marginalized communities and make recommendations to the Gram Panchayat to include these demands in its budget. The Panchayat has a duty to undertake the implementation of these projects upon receiving sanction from the administration. During the three decades since the passing of the Panchayat Act, these committees have at best remained inactive or at worst exist only on paper. In hundreds of villages these committees just do not exist at all.

The functions of the Social justice Committee in the panchayats need to be followed in its true spirit. The functions are as follows:
1. Provide the facilities of education, village land for housing, drinking water and health care facilities to the weaker sections of the society;
2. Make and implement plans for the provision of these facilities;
3. Inquire into the cases of discrimination against weaker sections;
4. Check that corpses are disposed off properly;
5. Provide equipment and decide the place for the proper disposal of unclaimed corpses;
6. Provide encouragement to rural housing schemes;
7. Maintenance of street lights in the residential areas of the weaker sections;
8. Promote prohibition and eradicate untouchability;
9. Discourage anti-social activities and gambling;
10. Organize child welfare activities and cultural programs for weaker sections;
11. Arrange for pre-primary education.

Functions of the block and district Social Justice Committees are as follows:
1. Provide the facilities of education, village land for housing, drinking water and health care facilities to the weaker sections of the society as also make plans for and implement the same;
2. Inquire into the cases of discrimination against weaker sections;
3. Work towards prohibition of liquor, eradication of untouchability, promotion of social and cultural welfare of the weaker sections as well as discourage gambling and other anti-social activities;
4. Organize cultural programs for the propagation of non-formal education among the weaker sections of the society;
5. Report to appropriate authorities in case the panchayat is not able to address the complaints related to the weaker sections of the society;
6. Organize, promote and help in cooperative activities related to social and economic areas for the welfare of the deprived sections of the society;
7. Plan for achieving these activities as also manage and implement them;
8. Look after every aspect related to the weaker sections of the society.

What is the way out?
The solution to social injustice lies within the society. Any expression or action that undermines or violets the civil rights or flouts the dignity and entitlements of the poor, the backwards shall not be acceptable at any context. In every public forum social injustices must be raised. The victims need to be provided full support including self mobilisation and organizing to raise voices against injustices. Free and supportive legal services need to be made available to the affected people. Over and above, social awareness and reform for a dignified inclusive society need to be continued with the hope that a social just society becomes a reality to be cherished by all.

16. MICRO LEVEL PLANNING

[19] Planning is an attempt to work out a rational solution to problems. This involves formulating a strategy to promote the need for a clearly defined set of objectives at the least cost in terms of time effort and money. One common and consistent concern that has emerged is that the benefits of planning have not trickled down to the have-notsand have failed to address the issues of the community. One reason behind this failure is that common people have been left out of the planning process. Macro and meso level plans should be formulated on the basis of micro plans (planning at the lowest unit) so that people become involved in planning and their needs and concerns are reflected in the macro level plans.

Various Approaches to Planning have been followed in India over a period of time
Multipurpose approach – The rural development programme in India began with a multipurpose approach. The Community Development Programme (CDP) started in 1952. The primary unit for the CDP was a block, which consisted of a population of one lakh and viewed the development of the community in an integrated manner. The government was the main implementing agency promoting development through extension of knowledge, inputs and resources. The basic aim was to raise the standard of living, promote social welfare, social justice and community cohesion. The main limitation of the approach was that it focused on the community as a unit without addressing the issues related to socio-economic inequality.

Minimum package approach – This approach focused on enhancing a particular sector. Integrated Agricultural Development Programme (IADP) was launched under this approach.

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[19] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

The main lacuna of this approach was that the benefits of this programme were reaped mainly by the better-off section of farmers in rural areas.

Target group approach – Under this, a particular group was studied in-depth and priorities were fixed accordingly. This approach recognized the fact that the problems were different for different groups of people. Development schemes like Small Farmers Development Programmes (SFDP) and Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) emerged out of this approach.

Target area approach – Recognition of the fact that different geographical areas had different development demands led to the introduction of special programmes like Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP), Command Area Development (CAD) etc.

Integrated rural development approach – The Integrated rural Development Programme (IRDP) was geared to alleviate poverty and bring about economic development through the generation of land based activities. Subsidies were extended to the beneficiaries to initiate self-employment ventures. They however, created further dependence on the government delivery system.

None of these approaches proved to be sufficient for effective rural development. Two main reasons were identified for this, i.e., failure in identification of the actual problem and formulation of programmes without people's involvement. They assumed that the villagers lacked inputs and resources and hence, fulfilling these needs would lead to development.

Increasing poverty, unemployment, inequality and ecological degradation have raised questions about the validity of conventional models of development and during the past three decades, efforts have been made by grassroots institutions to develop an alternative development approach, which is more people centred and controlled by the people with special focus on gender equity, empowering the people to enable them to choose. These efforts are known as micro planning which is based on existing popular knowledge, skills and resources available to the people.

Meaning of Micro Planning

Planning is generally defined at three levels – macro (national or sub-national level), meso (state or sub-state level) and micro. Micro level planning is planning at the lowest level of development. It gives due importance to local tradition, history, values and practices. The objective of introducing micro level planning in the framework of multi level planning is to bridge the gap between growth and equity through the optimal exploitation of the resource potential in relation to specific problems of an area or unit. Also, micro level planning enables local participation and helps in reducing regional tensions. The main reasons for undertaking micro level planning are advocated as follows:
- Specific attentions may be paid to the needs of the poor;
- Programmes are geared more towards the specific needs of the area and its growth potential;
- The planning process will be decentralized;
- A closer partnership with the people and partners can be established; and
- The lowest echelons of the administration can be organized and coordinated.

Through the 73rd Amendment, panchayats have been entrusted with the task of planning and address the local issues of economic development and social justice. Focus is on bottom-up planning process. The gram panchayats submit their annual development plans to the taluka panchayats, which in turn consolidate the plans after necessary assessment and prepare a consolidated annual development plan for the taluka. The taluka panchayats submit their respective annual development plans to the jilla panchayat that prepares a consolidated annual development plan for the district.

Process of Micro Planning
Primarily eight steps have been identified through various experiences for micro planning:

1. **Selection of panchayat/ area:** The selection of a panchayat/ area or how to approach the community is a crucial aspect to be examined.
2. **Environment Building:** As this exercise requires an active involvement of the community, it is essential to motivate it from the onset.
3. **Compilation and Classification of Information:** The difficulties in the ward and the status of the residents can be best informed by the residents of the ward themselves but it is advised to collect information from government and non government organizations whatever is available so that the planning can be accurate. Formal or informal meetings should be organized with different groups of villagers so that practical problems can be understood in depth. Along with this wards residents view for solution to these issues should be also taken. All the information collected should be tabulated and analysed.
4. **Sharing of findings with the people**: Sharing of findings with the community from whom the information has been collected empowers them to make informed collective decisions.
5. **Community problem analysis and identification of development priorities:** Collective analysis of village issues is done and the problems are tanked according to priorities.
6. **Identification of solutions and strategies:** To find a solution to the problems the past efforts, results and experience along with alternatives should be discussed. In this process the government policies/projects are to be kept in mind.
7. **Preparation of Micro Plans:** Village or ward level plans can be consolidated at the panchayat level.
8. **Execution of Plan:** During planning it has to be kept in mind that which job is delegated to whom and the time frame. In this process the role of government departments, panchayat members and villagers is to be ascertained so that the plan is executed as required.

Participatory Rural Appraisal as an Approach to Micro Planning

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is a methodology for interacting with the villagers personally, to develop an understanding about them and learning from them. It involves a set of principles and a menu of methods for seeking villagers' participation in putting forward their point of view about various issues enabling them to analyse, reflect and derive action plans based on their learning. PRA is a means of collecting different kinds of data, identifying and mobilizing intended groups, evoking their participation and also opening up ways in which intended groups can participate in the decision-making process, formulating the project design, execution and monitoring. PRA has an inbuilt mechanism to encourage the participation of local people in the process of development, by investigating local insights gained and by interfacing with the common man resulting in more effective information being generated.

Community Mapping

In this process/method many indications and signs can be used for giving primary information about the village like house, fields, temple, wells, ponds, plantations, roads etc. this method is very useful for knowing about the basic amenities in the village, sitting at one place. The information derived from such maps lead to use of other methods for detailed information of different aspects, different maps can be made like social mapping, recourses mapping, public amenities mapping etc. Example of such a case is given below:

Process: First of all an open place is to be chosen where all kinds of people can congregate and it is not inconvenient for anyone (especially dalits and women). In the beginning some of the villagers can be called and general discussions can be initiated. Eventually others get to gather. People should be encouraged to draw pictures of school, temple etc. It has to keep in mind that everyone should feel bound and a party to the whole affair. In between other villagers can also be included. During such mapping, there are bound to make mistakes so openness is to be maintained and correct them wherever required.

Material Required: Full sheet, 4-5 sketch pens of different colours, marker and color pencils.

Peer/Pair Ranking: In the gram sabha this has been observed that everyone wants his issues should be taken up in the planning. Practically it is not possible to work on every problem at the same time so prioritization is must but with peoples consent. This is not an easy job. This is where one can use the peer/pair ranking method.

Process: First of all a list of problems or things to do is to be made. After discussion this list is to be précised to 7-8 problems or things to do. Now we have to see which 7-8 issues are to be taken up, so list them as per the diagram given and get a comparison done between two issues. The problem which comes on priority should be listed no 1. After counting we get to know which issue/problem is listed so many times and accordingly priority list can be made with everyone's participation.

Material Required: 3 full sheets, one each for listing, peer ranking and priority, sketch pens 4 each of different colors, marker and colored pencils
Apart from the above-mentioned two methods there are other methods of P.R.A. like circular graphs, time bar and season analysis. By using the PRA methods the time taken for planning may be more but it is a strong mean or way of ensuring public participation.

Ensuring Involvement of Different Opinions:

KAIN's western university USA has developed a method for micro planning. In this method one particular topic/problem is taken up for discussion in a group of different opinions. For example if the issue is education, the people related like students, teachers, panchayat representatives, parents, officers from education department (taluka or district level) and NGO working for education are involved. They all are called for a meeting wherein they put across their opinion/view. In these meetings a common consensus is evolved and a time bound programme is prepared. During the execution of such a plan themselves ascertain the role for participants. Now because the role and time frame is decided by them only the chances of practical implementation also increase and sure.

This method can be used for a specific problem and it is also useful in general for all kinds of planning's because it ensures participation all opinion holders and such a situation increases the validity of the planning.

Many of the issues have easy public participation with such planning and this should be encouraged. Especially a mention should be made in the planning about such public participation. It is advised that even the government, NGO, alternate resources (finance, labor, public participation etc) should be clearly mentioned in the planning. This increases the worth of the planning and obviously attracts attention of the government agencies.

Which Method to Use: This question cannot have a sure shot answer. As per the need any of the three methods can be used. There could be a combination of 2 methods or any relevant value addition is always possible.

Important Points for Effective Planning Process

Dates for gramsabha or ward sabha should be fixed well in advance. Notice should be circulated and put up at public places like hospitals, school, bus stop and religious places. In the gram and ward sabha the deprived section (woman and dalits) should participate. They must get an opportunity to put their views and their suggestion/views should be given weightage.

For prioritization peer-ranking process can be adopted. In gramsabha itself proposals for financial requirements could be prepared for such proposed activities.

Looking to the size and strength of the gram panchatyat it is quite evident that they need outsiders help. Thus for these activities governmental, non-governmental organization should help but the decision should be of gramsabha. All the planning's and projects should be prioritized and listed in gramsabha. For planning in panchayat meeting first of all recommendations of gram sabha are taken into notice.

This has to be ensured that planning should be in most simplified manner so that every villager and representative easily understands it. This planning (annual) is sent to the taluka panchayat. (Taluka development officers)

At taluka level their important role is to help gram panchayat in different stages of planning. Therefore they assess the technical priorities of gram panchayat. Usually they maintain the gram panchayat priorities. There could be some common issues of more than one-gram panchayat, which are taken up in taluka panchayat programme.

While preparing for a planning different departmental staff and officers experience should be included but the decisive role will be of panchayat representatives. The taluka panchayat level planning's are sent to district panchayat.

In district level panchayat meetings after discussions the district level rural planning is done. District level panchayat's most important role is assisting in taluka panchayat's various plans and programmes. They also check and verify the technical viability of taluka panchayat's planning. Mostly it maintain the important and priorities of taluka panchayat. There could be some plans common for more than one taluka panchaya where district panchayat includes these plans in its own plan. Apart from this district job is to look into the development levels

of all backward areas in jurisdiction and bring them at one level. Giving guidelines to lowest level of panchayats and having sub plans and separate fund allocation can do this. District panchayat members must ensure that their participation in concerned taluka level meetings, gram panchayat meetings and gram sabhas is positively done. This on one hand will give them the benefit of the experience at the lowest level and on other hand they will be able to understand and advocate the real issues in district panchayat.

The planning prepared by district panchayat is sent to district planning committee. The details prepared by district planning committee contain the details of resources and their allocation for different projects. These have 3 major aspects:

1. Villages local units have allocated work to them and the work delegated by national/state level plans. These plans have their own resources allocated too. DPC ensures implementation.
2. Urban local units allocated work to them and also by national/states level plans. The resources are allocated too. They have to ensure the plan and implementation.
3. Urban and rural local units plan to be united and finally put into action within the district.

District planning committee (DPC) does look into all three factors and then add in their planning. The following important aspects are also taken into account.

1. Self help groups, cooperative samitis etc have their activities which evolve planning's.
2. Commercial banks (public and private sectors) nabard, cooperative banks and parallel banks local branches have their activities, which evolve planning's.
3. District's, NGO's and other by party planning's.
4. Other private agents have plans, which have effect on government activities, or they expect government as far as their area work is concerned will react on their development work.

Priorities of District Level Plannings

1. Basic minimum requirements (drinking water, housing etc)
2. Basic services (education, health etc)
3. Rural commercial center
4. Normal economic development

Recommendation of ministers of state round table conference mysore 28-29 august 2004 on planning for panchayati raj organization.

A wide range of techniques are available but much depends on how the process is facilitated and whether it is being facilitated with a vision to empower the people so that they are more confident, self-reliant and are able to make their own decisions to ensure equitable distribution of resources.

17. CONVERGENCE

[20]Substantial public investments are being made for strengthening the rural economy and the livelihood base of the poor, especially of the marginalized groups like Scheduled Castes (SCs)/ Scheduled Tribes (STs) and women. There is an increase in outlay in various sectors under the 11th five year plan. But the increase in outlay need not lead to improved results. To effectively address the issue of poverty alleviation, there is need to optimize efforts towards inter-sectoral strategies. Convergence of different programmes like Watershed Programmes, National Agriculture Development Programme/ Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (NADP/RKVY), National Horticulture Mission (NHM), Scheme of Artificial Recharge of Ground Water through Dug Well (ARGW), AIBP, Command Area Development and Water Management Programme (CAD & WM) and Scheme of Repair Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies (RRRWB), Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF), National Afforestation Programme (NAP) with MGNREGA will enable better planning and effective investment in rural areas. These new initiatives in the rural sector present new opportunities for leveraging growth.

The five strategies proposed for the Eleventh plan are (i) Improving Panchayat Raj Institutions (ii) Strengthening the administrative machinery (iii) Convergence of resources (iv) Alternative delivery mechanism and (v) Removing bottlenecks in scheme guidelines. One of the strategies proposed by the eleventh plan for optimal results is convergence of resources. The key principle behind convergence is that a key programme is identified to

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[20] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

which other programmes are dovetailed for value addition to the programme so that the outcomes can be maximized. For example convergence can be initiated through MGNREGS. It is possible to converge MGNREGS works with similar works under different programmes like drought proofing and water conservation. It is also possible to converge with different programme components. For example there can be convergence between NRHM and MGNREGS for women work force. Women working on MGNREGS work sites can be provided with the health services through ASHA workers. Such convergence can help improve the health of the workers and their productivity.

The premise on which convergence is conceptualized is that, convergence implies a coming together of existing schemes and resources, rather than the creation of a new scheme with additional resources. The objective of convergence is to optimize public investments made under existing schemes through suggested ways of linking and steering them towards a common recipient both physical in terms of area or creating an infrastructure and human as a person or a specific group.

Convergence brings synergies between different government programmes and/or schemes in terms of their planning, process and implementation Effecting convergence of development projects and initiatives being implemented in the state by different agencies and line departments is a major challenge.

Convergence need to be taken up at two levels:
(i)   Strengthening the mechanism, of planning and allocation of resources at the local level for preparing plans across sectors by different agencies and departments.
(ii)   Institutional mechanism for approval and implementation of the plans prepared under various guidelines of ministries/departments

The 73rd amendment and the underlying logic of decentralization and people centered development are the bases for planning at the local level. The District Planning Committee as a structure for planning is constitutionally mandated. The DPC, taluka level committees and panchayat level committees need to be in place to promote people centered planning and resource allocation. The process of planning needs to be bottom up starting from the village plan and moving to the district plan.

People have to be seen as resources and having the capacity to plan for the local area since they know the problems best and have the knowledge to find solutions to their problems. The process needs to be facilitated and process strengthened by by filling gaps in technology.

While planning from below will ensure convergence of programmes and plans there is need for convergence in implementation also. This can be achieved by strengthening the PRIs. There is need to set clearly the limits of authority of different development functionaries and elected members. The overlapping areas of authority have to be identified to avoid wastage in effort and resources. Once the plan is prepared for implementation funds are to be allocated as per the plan. Various works have to be identified at the panchayat level and the implementation should be done through the panchayat. An institutional mechanism has to be created so that all the plans get approved at one point, and resources are also distributed for various works from the point for implementation by the panchayat. The line departments should provide technical support and should not be involved in implementation.

Process in Convergence

Though the issue of convergence seems difficult to tackle there are models and mechanisms of convergence available in the country and in various states. There have been attempts of preparing a framework for convergence under various centrally sponsored schemes. One of the mechanisms for convergence is through planning.

Participatory planning from the grassroots level by the local government can lead to a strong sense of ownership and lead to better results at the local level. However, currently planning has been done in different sectors to utilize resources available for the sector. There has been increased specialization and sector wise thrust in development and emphasis on sector specific planning using guidelines issued by line departments/ministries like District health plan, District education plan, District water and sanitation plan etc. Preparation of sector plan is leading to vertically integrated plans. In order to use resources efficiently and involve local governments actively vertical planning process needs to be transformed into horizontal planning process. This will enable local governments to work along with other planning entities to develop and integrated plan for the area. An attempt is being made to prepare district plans through district planning committees.

Central Ministries and state government departments are implementing various rural development programmes through a set of guidelines and by using separate set of administrative and institutional mechanisms. There is total compartmentalization of functions which are very often similar between agencies and departments such that several departments engaged in identical activities under similar circumstances achieve dissimilar results. There is wastage of resources and there are delays in implementation of work and organizational functions. In order to facilitate the horizontal planning process at various levels of local government the present sector specific guidelines which are there in the various departments need to be modified to bring in uniformity in planning, sanctioning, release of funds, implementation and monitoring of the programmes.

Another way is to bring convergence through major flagship programmes. The major flagship programmes for local area development are MGNREGA, SGSY, SSA, BRGF, PMGSY, IAY, MDMS, Drinking Water, NRHM and RKVY. There are similarity in the process and procedures in the programmes. To bring about coordination and convergence among theses flagship programmes all the guidelines stipulate inter programme coordination and convergence. All of them have their bases in local planning and consolidation at the district level. Where they differ is the approval system and implementing agency and mechanism.

Most often given the fund allocation the line departments at the district level prepare proposals based on the guidelines. In this process the PRIs are not central in the planning and the lower plans are not integrated at the higher level. There are multiple planning units without a common platform. Plans are approved by the central or state level after technical and financial appraisal. Financial sanction is by sanctioning committee constituted by the concerned Ministry and technical sanctions are by departmental officials based on administrative sanction which is usually done by district level agencies. The funds are released from the district agencies. Project official of specific programme or line department implement the programme and monitor and report at the prescribed intervals.

Convergence through MGNREGA

Convergence of inter-sectoral programme with MGNREGA will enable better planning and effective investment in rural areas. MGNREGA notified in September 2005 marked a paradigm shift from the previous wage employment programmes with its rights based approach that makes the Government legally accountable for providing employment to those who demand it. The aim was to enhance the livelihood security of the households in rural areas by providing 100 days of guaranteed wage employment to households who volunteer to do unskilled manual work. It was seen that MGNREGA had the potential to strengthen livelihood, create a resource base in terms of infrastructure at the local level, address poverty and strengthen democracy. Therefore it was important to identify linkage with other development initiatives and projects so that their combined energies and resources can be leveraged for overall development of the area.

In view of the intersectorality of MGNREGA, the need to create durable assets and the fact that NREGA workforce constitutes the target group of most development programmes a task force was set up by Government of India to explore more comprehensive and effective possibilities of convergence through MGNREGA and to suggest strategies for convergence. A convergence model was developed for convergence through MGNREGA. General frame work and broad principles for convergence has been outlined by Government of India in 2009. Convergence of the MGNREGA funds with funds from other sources can help in creating durable assets. For instance, funds available with PRIs from other sources like National Finance Commission, State Finance Commission and state departments and other centrally sponsored schemes can be dovetailed with MGNREGA funds for construction of durable assets for the community under works that are permissible.

The model considered programmes and schemes in which planning process and works are similar to MGNREGA. Pilot projects on convergence are to be taken up in 122 selected districts from 22 states in India. Guidelines have been prepared for convergence with 5 ministries/programmes. These include Indian Council of for Agricultural Research (ICAR) and Ministry of Agriculture (MOA), Ministry of Environment and Forest, Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana of the Ministry of Rural Development for rural connectivity, schemes of the Ministry of Water Resources and Watershed Programme of the Department of Land resources.

The guiding principle of this framework is that convergence has to be planned within the parameters of the MGNREGS. Only work permissible under the MGNREGA can be undertaken as part of convergence and the ratio of wage to material cost of 60:40 and non involvement of contractors has to be maintained. MGNREGA funds should not be used as a substitute resource by different departments and agencies for their own activities. The gram panchayat will be central to the process of convergence. Convergence framework consists of three parameters – formation of the technical consortium, inclusion at planning level and implementation of specific activities and works. Convergence is planned at management, planning and works level.

The works permissible under NREGS are:

1. Water conservation and water harvesting;
2. Drought proofing, including afforestation and tree plantation;
3. Irrigation canals, including micro and minor irrigation works;
4. Provision of irrigation facility, plantation, horticulture, land development to land owned by households belonging to the SC/ST, or to land of the beneficiaries of land reforms, or to land of the beneficiaries under the Indira Awas Yojana/BPL families
5. Renovation of traditional water bodies, including de-silting of tanks;
6. Land development;
7. Flood-control and protection works, including drainage in waterlogged areas;
8. Rural connectivity to provide all-weather access. The construction of roads may include culverts where necessary, and within the village area may be taken up along with drains. Care should be taken not to take up roads included in the PMGSY network under NREGA. No cement concrete roads should be taken up under NREGA. Priority should be given to roads that give access to SC/ST habitations;
9. Any other work that may be notified by the Central Government in consultation with the State Government

To execute the convergence model at the village, block, district and state level a technical consortium is to be formed in consultation with various departments. The technical consortium will have experts and technical personnel to advise, formulate, appraise and monitor the implementation of the convergence model. The MGNREGA state council will take responsibility of the State level Technical consortium, the DRDA the District technical consortium, the block officer the block technical council the gram panchayat the village technical consortium. The technical council may have representatives from departments with which convergence is to done and Rural Development and Panchayati Raj Department at the district level. The technical consortium will facilitate the sharing of guidelines of MGNREGA and schemes with department that are part of the convergence plan, lay down the planning process, take up effective IEC with community workers and user groups, train personnel and agencies with whom convergence is being considered, identify technically feasible works, design and technology, facilitate pooling of human, financial and information resources and undertake appraisal and documentation of impact of concerned schemes and MGNREGA based on performance indicators.

For convergence in planning two sets of plans are to be prepared - an annual work plan of NREGA and a perspective plan for long term development plan for the district based on NREGA guidelines. The perspective plan will identify the needs and gaps in the district in all the sectors and the type of NREGA work that can be encouraged in the district. The department project plans are important. Department plans can be multi year plans. These department plans can be dovetailed in the NREGA perspective plan. The annual work plan of NREGA will list the shelf of projects recommended by the gram sabha. The annual work plan should be broadly based on the perspective plan and needs to be endorsed by the gram sabha and the GP/TP/DP as per the act.

Convergence through works can be affected through filling gaps through MGNREGA in similar works undertaken schemes of departments, dovetailing inputs into a common project, providing value addition to MGNREGA work and providing technical support for ensuring quality in planning, selection and execution of MGNREGA work. Convergence has been proposed through water conservation/ harvesting, drought proofing, minor and micro

irrigation canals, renovation of traditional water bodies, horticulture, land development, flood control and protection work including drainage in water logged areas and rural connectivity.

The panchayat is central to scheme of convergence. The role envisaged for the intermediate panchayat was of technical support. But given the fact that manpower and financial resources are not available at the panchayat level but at the intermediate level much of the planning and implementation happens at the intermediate level. Most of the funds from the departments is transferred to the line department at the intermediate level which them implements the projects. Even in the case of NREGA although the gram panchayat is the unit of planning and implementation the funds and functionaries are still available at the intermediate level. Without the required capacity at the gram panchayat level it will be difficult to achieve convergence. Therefore it is necessary to build capacities through training of block and village level resource group on the methodology of convergence. Along with capacity building devolution of funds and functionaries to the panchayat is important. This will help in building complementarities between annual work plan of NREGA and projects taken up with concerned department.

Convergence in Gujarat

As early as 2003 Government of Gujarat had taken a decision to improve the quality of life of its citizens particularly the most vulnerable and disadvantaged of the society by bringing together the financial and human resources. The GoG took up a pilot project to develop a convergence project for the state. The objective was to package the social sector schemes together to maximize their impact and efficiently utilize the scare financial resources. The project also envisaged active involvement of community. The duration was for 3 years from 2003-2006. Five departments participated in this project which included health and family welfare, education, industries and mines, women and child development and panchayat, rural housing and rural development. The project covered one taluka each from seven districts. A set of indicators were developed. The convergence was based on the preparation of village plans by the community which identified the needs and priorities of the village for 3 years. The village plans are to be collated into the gram panchayat plan. The taluka plan is prepared by integrating the gram panchayat plans and the district plan can be prepared by taking into account demand of the line departments, the taluka plan and the district sector plans. Based on the plan schemes and programmes from various departments that can be linked and converge with the plan can be identified. The micro plan will guide the departments in dovetailing the schemes with this project.

With the implementation of MGNREGA in 2005 the convergence model was given an impetus. Gujarat also has made attempts to attain convergence through MGNREGS. In Gujarat the main focus is to generate employment, create sustainable assets, upgrade rural infrastructure and multiply benefits of schemes. Convergence is planned with forest department, roads and building department, irrigation department, line departments implementing water conservation, water harvesting and water resource programmes, tribal development and agriculture department. Convergence of the MGNREGA funds with funds available with PRIs from other sources from Central and State Governments can also be dovetailed with MGNREGA for the construction of durable community assets/works permissible under MGNREGA.

With forest department the activities planned are roadside and pond side plantation, check dams, afforestation, social forestry, roads in the forest area and village drought proofing.

Construction of internal roads and drainage, village to village roads, approach road to village and culverts on roads are planned in convergence with the roads and building department. The labour intensive part of the road which requires earth works and metal spreading can be taken under MGNREGA and the Bitumen spreading and rolling can be taken up under State Budget Funds. With the irrigation department water conservation and water harvesting, micro and minor irrigation works, renovation of traditional water bodies, desilting of ponds, drainage in water logged areas, check dams and flood control and protection works is planned to be taken up. All the mud work which engages labour is to be taken up under MGNREGS and material and infrastructure expenses from central and state programmes/schemes like repair, renovation and restoration of water bodies, accelerated irrigation benefits programme, flood control and river management works, dug well recharge scheme, groundwater management and regulation scheme. Convergence with tribal and agriculture department will be through works related to land development, providing irrigation including micro irrigation facility to tribal agriculturists, horticulture projects, cannel and channel digging, providing pipelines to the field of agriculturists and irrigation wells. The convergence is planned by using funds for construction work from MGNREGS and infrastructure expenses being booked under Swaranajayanti Gram Swaroozgar Yojana/ Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (SGSY/RSVY).

The convergence model is being tried out in the many districts of Gujarat. In Dangs and Dahod district a detailed plan has been prepared on number of units/works to be taken up and cost that can be booked into NREGS and other schemes. Convergence is sought in rain water harvesting, group irrigation wells, vermi compost, lift irrigation, better management of agricultural activities and capacity building. For channel spreading and construction of structure of dug wells for rain water harvesting expenses will be booked under NREGS and expenses on infrastructure under SGSY/RSVY. Similarly for lift irrigation costing Rs. 5 crores (Rs 3 crores labour + Rs 2 crores material) will be booked in NREGS and other expenses under SGSY/RSVY. For group irrigation wells and laying drip irrigation facility the expenses will be booked under NREGS and infrastructure works expenses will be covered from SGSY/RSVY. To take up vermi compost SHGs will be involved. They will be provided labour employment under NREGS and materials will be booked under SGSY/RSVY.

It is planned that due to convergence of the schemes ground water will be recharged, 5000 acres will be provided irrigation facility and increase income of families, lift irrigation will provide irrigation to 8000 acres and 4120 families will benefit. Vermi compost will improve the environment and also encourage the use of natural fertilisers and lead to additional employment generation. Capacity building on better management of agricultural activities is planned through Krishi Vijyan Kendra (KVK) through technology support and demonstrations.

In Tapi district an initiative has been undertaken to provide door to door banking facility for the workers in taluka of Songadh with the support of State Bank of India and FINO. This district has high rate of illiteracy and created difficulties in opening accounts in banks and in dealing with banking transactions. Workers in general workers and women in particular women workers face lot of inconveniencies and difficulties. The workers had to first fill up account application at village level. The applications are submitted to District CD V (Customer Delivery Vertical) branch tor verification and digitization of forms. On the basis of information customer card is prepared. No charges are levied on any transactions. All transactions and data transfer are made with GPRS connectivity. The door to door banking

provides facilities like cash deposit, cash withdrawal, account details and mini statement. The facility is highly secured with fingerprints, photo printed on the card, amenable to audit and follows widely accepted open standards to allow interface among the different systems adopted by different banks. The pilot initiative has proved to be cost effective and nave led to timely disbursement of money. In SongaJh Taluka 23,600 people have been provided employment, wages of Rs 2 .23 crores has been distributed so far. Attempts are being made to provide single customer card for multiple uses, audio announcements of the balance, and linkages with MIS with compatible software and to make the e-gram functional.

Panchamahal district has taken initiative for multilateral convergence initiatives. The initiative also includes an elaborate strategy for implementation and impact assessment with each project convergence. The activities include a community irrigation, renovation of existing sources of irrigation, water conservation, pucca roads in remote tribal areas, rural malnutrition and enhancement of rural livelihood. Most projects are in operation and independent impact studies have been proposed. However the impact created in renovation of existing sources of' irrigation has enhanced the irrigation potential of 1265 hectares and the water conservation project has enhanced water storage capacity by 3 million cubic meters while doubling the Rabi cultivation in a matter of 3 years.

In Kutch district all activities of the National Afforestation Programme (NAP) are to be converged with NREGA. Two models artificial regeneration and pasture development are being implemented under NAP. Both have 60 percent labour component and 40 percent material component. Under pasture development revival of grass lands, barbed fence and trench for protection, grass development in forest grassland is being taken up. Under artificial regeneration conservation and afforestation of forest area, soil and water conservation through earthen and rubble bunds with grass, earthen dams and raising plantation is been taken up.   For a three year period 2009-12 a proposal of Rs 1297.60 lakhs under NAP has been prepared. Other activities planned in next three years include mangrove regeneration, rubble wall, trench and barbed fence around forest area, plantation along coast line, shelter belt along coast line and Silvi pasture development.

District Planning: A Mechanism for Convergence in BRGF

The Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) is a major shift in the approach from top down plans to participative plans prepared at the grassroot level. The panchayats at the village, intermediate and district level and municipalities are positioned as institutions for planning and implementing programmes. The conviction is that local democratic institutions are in the best position to understand poverty at the local level, the needs and priorities of the community and have the experience and knowledge to tackle poverty.

The objective of BRGF is to bridge critical gaps in local infrastructure and other development requirements that are not met through the existing inflows, to strengthen panchayats and municipalities through capacity building and facilitating planning, decision making, implementation and monitoring to reflect the local needs. Each panchayat and municipality will be treated as a planning unit. Panchayats and municipalities in the district will undertake planning and implementation of the programme. The planning process envisions people's participation through gram and ward sabhas in rural areas and through areas sabhas and ward committees in urban areas. Participatory plan will be prepared in each panchayat and municipality in the district which will take into account the resources being spent in the area of the panchayat through sectoral plan, centrally sponsored schemes, NREGS, central and

state finance commission and fund inflow on account of Bharat Nirman. The participatory plan prepared by the panchayats and municipalities would be consolidated at the district level. The plan would reflect all financial resources available in the district and ensure optimum use without delay, diversion, duplication and leakage.

The enabling constitutional provision within Article 243 provided an opportunity to take up district level planning. For planning at the district and sub district level and to prepare people centered development plan the 73rd and 74th CAA proposed the constitution of the District Planning Committee (DPC). The constitution of the DPC is detailed in Article 243 ZD of the constitution. The idea behind district planning was to arrive at an integrated, participatory and coordinated idea of development of the local area. Each panchayat and municipality is to be treated as a planning unit. DPC will consolidate the plans prepared by the panchayats and municipalities in the district and prepare a development plan for the district as a whole.

Expert group constituted as part of 11th five year plan prepared an action programme for local level planning and detailed out how national programme of importance in health, education, employment, poverty alleviation, housing and rural infrastructure could achieve their objective better through integrated district planning. A manual for integrated district planning outlined broadly the steps to be followed to prepare district plans. In the entire scheme of thinking centrality was to be given to the panchayats. It was believed that planning from below can ensure convergence of programmes and plans.

Considerable amount of funds are available through central and state schemes for poverty alleviation, infrastructure development and improvement of services delivery. But most of these funds spent as per separate plans which make it sub optimal. Funds are available under MGNREGS, NRHM, ICDS, Drinking Water Supply and sanitation programme, Sarva Siskha Abhiyan, Mid Day Meal Scheme, PMGSY, Irrigation Development and RKVY. BRGF intends to view all these resources to ensure that they are utilized efficiently.

BRGF can be used to supplement and converge existing flow of fund to districts to fill gaps in local infrastructure linked to flagship programme. A fund flow mechanism has also been detailed. All funds will be transferred to a consolidated fund of the state government from where it will be transferred to the bank accounts of panchayats and municipalities as per the stipulation of the 12th Finance commission. Panchayat implementing the sanctioned work will have to provide accounts and utilization certificate for funds released. Regular physical and financial audit of works will be carried out by professional listed in the panel of the state government. Social audit will be conducted by the gram sabha/ward sabha in rural areas following the process prescribed in the guidelines of MGNREGA. In urban areas the social audit is to be done by areas sabhas/ward committees. There is no detailing of the process to be followed in urban areas.

To achieve converge in implementation of work a mechanism has been worked out at the panchayat level. All works will be implemented by panchayat and municipalities in accordance with the respective activity mapping exercise and money allocated for the works. All funds will be transferred to the municipalities and panchayats for implementation. However, in case the work is outside the domain of the panchayats and municipalities then the DPC will decide the department/agency for implementation and get the work executed with panchayats and municipalities having the power to monitor and supervise.

In Gujarat there are 6 districts under the BRGF – Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, Dahod, Panchmahals, Narmada and Dangs. The district plans have been prepared for all the six districts as per the guidelines. The district plans have been approved by the district panchayats body.

For Panchmahals district the expected allocation from all schemes (only untied) is Rs 51 crores. There is sector wise plan outlay of which roads, drinking water, social welfare, health and sanitation and agriculture has the highest outlay. For construction of Anganwadis they have mobilized funds under the Women and Child development scheme and for health under NRHM. 491 works have been identified in the district on a priority bases for period ending April 2010. The expected allocation for Narmada from all schemes (both tied and untied) is 78 crores. The highest outlays are in roads, minor irrigation rural housing, education and drinking water during August 2009 to April 2010. Schemes were funds are expected includes, 2210-Health GoG, minor irrigation scheme, animal husbandry, education state scheme, Accelerated Rural Water Supply programme, agriculture schemes and SCBC taluka scheme. 170 works have been identified on a priority bases. Banaskantha the expected allocation is 33 crores from all schemes. Apart from BRGF funds are being mobilized from social forestry and farm forestry and Manav Kalyan (poverty alleviation progamme). For Dahod the expected allocation (untied) is 8.85 crores and funds are being dovetailed from Total Sanitation Scheme, and Animal Husbandry.

Gujarat under the BRGF district plans have been prepared and approved and funds are being moblised from various central and state schemes along with the BRGF to bridge gaps in local infrastructure, provide improved quality services with the aim of poverty reduction.

Some Issues in Achieving Convergence

Convergence of development programmes and development initiatives has been an issue of concern among development administration in the states for a considerable length of time. Some of the issues in convergence are outlined below.

(i) Fear of Losing Control
Even though all guidelines stipulate inter programme coordination and convergence consultation between departments does not happen. There is always a reluctance to commit funds for projects planned by other departments. There is a fear of losing control over 'their' resources. This reluctance has to be removed to bring about convergence. All the related departments at the state level have to arrive at a consensus which has to be passed to the district to initiate the process of convergence.

(ii) Absence of Institutional Platform
There is no institutional platform for convergence at present. The question most of often raised by department functionaries is how to monitor and ensure that the planned convergence takes place. This becomes difficult if resources are coming from outside the departments trying to seek convergence. A uniform monitoring and accounting system has to be maintained by various departments. Otherwise it can result in double recording of work. Appropriate mechanisms should be in place to ensure that the same work does not get recorded in different programmes. At present there is no mechanism to cross check records of various departments.

(iii) Facilitating Inter Department Coordination

There is no authority at present to ensure inter department coordination and resource pooling. There is need to notify a district level official for example district collector who is provided with the mandate and authority to accomplish convergence. There is also general feeling that convergence can happen better and is feasible at the state level as compared to the district level. Many convergences between departments may not be amenable to gram panchayat level convergence. A mix of approaches may have to be used.

(iv) Lack of Information on Funds

There are competing demands for funds particularly from departments that are less endowed and have no reciprocal dovetailing arrangements. Information on funds available is difficult to get. Committed funds under various sectors are either not known or there is a reluctance to provide the details. Without information on fund flows convergence exercise may not be feasible.

(v) Lack of Comprehensive Training Programme

At present there is no integrated or comprehensive training programme which happens. Training is compartmentalized and each department has its own training. This will not help in achieving convergence. Resources from the different departments need to be pooled in to design a holistic training programme which will equip functionaries with the necessary skill for achieving convergence.

18. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

[21]Large development initiatives across world have been conceptualized and implemented through programme/ projects. The Central and State sponsored programmes are developed with detailed guidelines for implementation. The programme/ projects require regular supervision and monitoring to ensure that the resources are utilized for the desired purpose and activities are carried out as per the plan and that the programme is moving in the right direction without any obstruction or risks to achieve its objectives.

Monitoring

As per the European commission[22] Monitoring is defined as a "Systematic and continuous collection, analysis and use of information for management control and Decision making". United Nation Development Programme defines monitoring[23] as "A continuing function that aims primarily to provide managers and main stakeholders with regular feedback and early indications of progress or lack thereof in the achievement of intended results. Monitoring tracks the actual performance or situation against what was planned or expected according to pre-determined standards. Monitoring generally involves collecting and analyzing data on implementation processes, strategies and results, and recommending corrective measures."

In simple term, **monitoring represents tracking the progress** of an on-going activity against planned tasks. It is regular feedback on the implementation of an activity in terms of

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[21] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

[22] Alok B Guha "Logical frame work Approach:" Project Planning Management and monitoring" 2003 Page no. 67 Para 1

[23] As per the Book titled "Handbook on Monitoring and evaluation for results" published by the Evaluation office of United Nation Development Progrramme.

inputs, work schedules and targeted outputs. Monitoring represents a continuous assessment of project implementation in relation to project plans, resources utilization, infrastructure and services provided and use of these infrastructure and services by project beneficiaries. It is a process through which regular feedback can be solicited to enhance the ongoing learning experience and to improve the planning process and effectiveness of interventions. This is important for both, grant making body and implementing agency to increase the project accountability to the various stakeholders especially to the target group.

Monitoring is very essential for the perspective of managers and the implementing team. On the one hand monitoring enables to identify and reinforce positive project results, strengths and successes and on the other it alerts managers to actual and potential project weaknesses, problems and shortcomings before it is too late. This would provide the project managers with the opportunity to make timely adjustments and corrective measures to improve the program/ project design, work plan and implementation strategies. Therefore in simple term we can say that monitoring is the routine process of checking input (timely and appropriate resource provisioning) and output (implementation of activities) of the project. It provides information whether an intervention is on right track or not.

Evaluation
As per the DANIDA[24] (Danish International Development Agency) evaluation is an assessment, as systematic and objective as possible of an on-going or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, developmental efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.

UNDP defines Evaluation[25] as a selective exercise that attempts to systematically and objectively assess progress towards and the achievement of an outcome. Evaluation is not a one-time event, but an exercise involving assessments of differing scope and depth carried out at several points in time in response to evolving needs for evaluative knowledge and learning during the effort to achieve an outcome. All evaluations, even project evaluations that assess relevance, performance and other criteria need to be linked to outcomes as opposed to only implementation or immediate outputs.

In simple terms, **evaluation is a systematic and independent examination of a project in order to determine its efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and relevance** of objectives determined by the implementing institutions. Evaluation looks into how best the resources are used (salaries, materials, tools, people) to achieve the project goal - efficiency; appropriateness of products and services (coverage in terms of number and quality of services) of the project intended to provide – effectiveness. Evaluation also looks into the intended changes and its continuity without additional project intervention (impact and sustainability). Evaluations shall not see only tangible numbers, but also look into change in level of knowledge, skill, attitude, behaviour, change in quality of life, level of participation in public decision making, empowerment, group strengthening, etc. The qualitative factors are extremely important in determining the success of the project.

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[24] DANIDA uses OECD (1991), Principles for Evaluation of Development Assistance. Paris.
[25] As per the Book titled "Handbook on Monitoring and evaluation for results" published by the Evaluation office of United Nation Development Progrramme in 2002.

Evaluations can be used as a pointer on the choice of activities, resources, tools to achieve the project goal. It can be a learning guide for use of project implementing methods for future programmes. It is also an accountability tool used by different stakeholders if involved in the evaluation process.

Key Terms
It is important to understand a few words before one starts on a monitoring and evaluation exercise.

Impact Assessment: Positive or negative changes both direct and indirect that happen in the area as a result of the project.

Sustainability: The extent to which the implementing organization will continue to pursue the objectives after project assistance is over.

Relevance: The degree to which the rationale and objectives of the project are, or remain pertinent and significant in relation to the identified priority needs and concerns.

Output and Outcome: There is clear distinction between the outcome and output. Output is a short term result where as outcome is long term result and may or may not be sustainable. For example - If a project aims to improve the basic services in an area (water, sanitation, health etc.) and installed ten hand pumps in a village. In such situation output is installation of ten hand pumps where as outcome would be drinking water scarcity in the area is addressed. Therefore we can say that output is immediate effect and outcome is impact.

Stakeholders: People, groups or institutions that have a role and interest in the objectives and implementation of a programme or project. They include the community whose situation the programme seeks to change; local institutions, providers of various basic services, project field staff who implement activities; project and programme managers who oversee implementation; donors and other decision-makers who decide the course of action related to the programme and others who influence the programme environment. In simple words stakeholders are community, interest groups, agencies or institutions who can directly or indirectly influence the project or are associated with the project.

Evaluator: The person who evaluates the project or programme is called evaluator. Evaluator can be external and internal. External evaluator is the person who is hired from outside project, whereas internal evaluator is directly associated with the project.

Tools
There are several tools and methods that are available for undertaking a monitoring and evaluation exercise. Over the years many of these tools have been tried and tested in monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes in different contexts. While monitoring is done to track progress and use of resources, evaluation predominantly focuses on impact and sustainability. In the current project management framework, a hierarchy of result areas are emphasized to ensure better quality – these are: activities (out put), use of the project services and products (outcome), changes in the overall scenario (impact), and continuity of benefits after the external support is withdrawn (sustainability). Monitoring looks into resource use (input) and output, where as evaluation examines higher level results like outcome, impact and sustainability. This is the reason Monitoring and Evaluation is termed as a twin concept with very close links.

Different people associated with the project/ scheme have different perceptions about the project, hence for monitoring and evaluation a common criteria of assessment needs to be developed, without this each stakeholder will be assessing in a different set of criteria/ indicators providing diverse set of feed back causing confusion to the implementers.

Indicators

Indicators are used to track what is being done and how, use of resources, recording of activities, effect of the project on the lives of people, community, women, environment etc. Indicators are measures of inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes and impacts for development projects or programmes. If stakeholders are involved in defining the indicators then it is more likely to be used for management decision making. Performance indicators can help to set performance targets and assess progress towards achieving them. Problem can be identified to allow for corrective action. The indicators, if supported with sound data collection, analysis and reporting can enable managers to track progress, demonstrate results, and take corrective action to improve service delivery. It can also be used for benchmarking for comparison between different regions and over time. But the indicators have to be defined carefully for each development project or programme. It is important to have few good indicators rather than have too many indicators with no reliable data source.

Indicators can be quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative concerned with numbers or amount – number of families received wage, number of children received immunization; qualitative indicators concern with description of participation, empowerment, attitude. Indicators, whether quantitative or qualitative, must be **objectively verifiable.** In project management it is termed as Objectively Verifiable Indicator (OVI). Ideally indicators should be identified at the outset of the project. One needs to have full understanding how and from where information can be collected on those indicators. This is called **means of verification (MoV)** and **sources of verification (SoV).** There is often a tendency to develop a long list of indicators making the evaluation process very tiring, time consuming and expensive. Hence, attention must be given on choosing appropriate and significant indicators which can show changes over a period of time. As a thumb rule, clearer are the project objectives and outcome level results, the indicators are easy to define. Many a times the projects are implemented without articulating the objectives or vaguely defining it. In such situations, any project outcome is acceptable as at the beginning of the project nothing was clearly defined. Monitoring and evaluation process actually starts at the time of project planning. It is not a post project exercise.

Methods

For the purpose of monitoring, data must be collected as a part of the implementing process. The registers used to capture various project data, field notes, formats for collation are useful for monitoring. In evaluation the monitoring data can also be useful. However, in evaluation, formal surveys can be used to collect standardized information on a project from a selected sample of people or households.

To track process on issues of enrolement, maternal and child mortality, it is always advisable to develop **baseline information** for which a survey can be undertaken at the start of the project. Baseline information provides a point from which to measure change and to provide 'before' and 'after' picture. On projects like land development, a-forestation, de-siltation a 'before' picture will be very useful. In the absence of photographic facilities, the local people may be asked to draw (not artistic) the prevalent situation which can be used as a comparision.

Rapid appraisal methods are quick, low-cost ways to gather the views and feedback of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders, in order to respond to decision-makers' needs for information. It helps in providing rapid information for management decision-making, especially at the project or program level. It provides qualitative understanding of changes due to the project through interactions with various stakeholders. Some of the ways to do a rapid assessment are interviewing key informants, focus group discussions/ interviews, community level meetings/ group interviews, direct observation, mini surveys and documenting case studies from the project/ programme area and target group. It can also be used to provide context and interpretation of qualitative information and more formal surveys. Rapid appraisals are low cost, can be conducted quickly and are flexible in the sense that one can add new parameters as the appraisal is in progress. However, these rapid assessments are usually conducted in a way that it covers a locality or specific communities and the finding cannot be used to generalize. It is considered less valid, reliable, and credible than formal surveys.

Cost benefit and cost effectiveness analysis are tools for assessing if the cost of an activity can be justified by the outcomes and impact. Cost Benefit measures both input and output in monetary terms. Cost effectiveness measure inputs in monetary terms and outputs in non monetary quantitative terms. For example if Rs 50 per person has been spent on health care then it measures the outcome in terms of the morbidity rates of the population of the area. It is a good method to measure/ estimate the efficiency of a programme. The finding from such analysis can be useful to convince policy makers and funding agency and justify the activities showing the benefits. However it is very technical and requires human resources that are trained in the exercise.

Approaches

Concept of monitoring and evaluation has its own history and came in to development sector because of the large scale investment through government and bilateral and multilateral development projects and increasing demand for accountability as well as desire to learn on project formulation for making desired changes. Over a period of time the approaches to monitoring and evaluation shifted from the control of project management to the hands of the people for whom the project is designed or created. In popular parlance it is termed as a shift from Conventional Evaluation to Participatory Evaluation.

The conventional approach relies heavily on the measurement of outputs and outcome using quantitative data with only minimal allowance for looking at the qualitative aspects of the project. It views people as mere beneficiaries without any involvement in project process. Since the time participatory development has been recognized in the official programme development, Participatory monitoring and evaluation has replaced the conventional evaluation as it focuses primarily on project stakeholders as against the funding/donor agency. This is believed that it will bring in a sense of ownership and commitment and will help in planning the future course of action. In participatory evaluation the evaluation is conducted by insiders and not by external evaluators. In participatory monitoring and evaluation a range of stakeholders particularly from the marginalized groups can be involved in the process to get diverse views. A consensus on the findings can help to make a plan to improve performance. The whole exercise can be a learning process which can allow participants to improve the programme implementation and also to assess whether the targets were achieved.

Narayan (1993)[26] offers a useful summary of the differences between conventional and participatory evaluation approaches.

	Conventional Evaluation	**Participatory Evaluation**
Why	Accountability**,** usually summary judgments about the project to determine if funding continues	To empower local people to initiate the process, to take control and take corrective action
Who	External experts	Community members, project staff, facilitator
What	Predetermined indicators of success, principally cost and production output	People identify their own indicators of success
How	Focus on "scientific objectivity" distancing of evaluators from other participants; uniform complex procedures; delayed limited access to results	Self evaluation; simple methods adapted to local culture; open immediate sharing of results through local involvement in evaluation processes
When	Midterm and on completion	Any assessment for program improvement; merging of monitoring and evaluation, hence frequent small evaluations

Participation has become a critical concept in development sector. International donors, governments and civil society organisations are insisting on participatory approaches in assessing needs and in implementing programmes. Participation is important in the entire project cycle - programme planning and design, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. This brings in a sense of ownership of the program/project among the stakeholders. With more opportunities to promote broad based participation in development there is an increased recognition that monitoring and evaluation should also be participatory. The concept of participatory monitoring and evaluation **(PM&E)** has entered the policy domain of large donors and development organisations including the government since the 1980s.

Participation can be built into monitoring and evaluation of a program/project in the entire process starting from designing the tools for monitoring, setting the indicators, gathering and analyzing the data, identifying the gaps, in preparing report on the findings, listing recommendations, disseminating results and in preparing an action plan to improve program performance. Participatory monitoring and evaluation provides for active involvement of those with a stake in the program/project. These groups popularly known as stakeholders include community/ beneficiaries of the project, service providers, implementers of the project, policy makers, beneficiaries, and any other interested groups.

Participatory monitoring provides an ongoing picture of the project that allows determining whether activities are progressing as per the planning or not. By interacting with the stakeholders the process allows for adjustments and modification in case the activities are not in the right directions. It helps in recognition of problems and space for resolving them and ensures optimal use of resources. Participatory evaluations improve program performance. Listening to and learning from program beneficiaries, field staff, and other stakeholders who know why a program is or is not working is critical to making improvements in the future. The more the insiders are involved in identifying evaluation questions and in gathering and analyzing data, the more likely that they will use the information to improve performance.

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[26] Narayan Parker D (1993), Participatory Evaluation: Tools for Managing Change in Water and Sanitation, World Bank Technical Papers 207, Washington DC: World Bank.

Participatory evaluation empowers program providers and beneficiaries to act on the knowledge gained.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation has been used for impact assessment, programme planning and management, organization/institution strengthening, understanding stakeholder perspective and in building public accountability. Largely PM&E has been used for impact assessment and programme planning and implementation. In recent time PM& E is being used for public accountability and policy making. PM&E is use to evaluate the impact of a given programme and the change that has occurred as a result of the programme initiatives. It helps to find out whether programme interventions are achieving the identified objectives. Different actors/stakeholders can be part of the process and they can work together to assess and reflect on the project impacts. In project planning and management various stakeholders reflect on their experience to plan for future goals and activities.

PM&E is widely being used for building public accountability and policy advocacy. Conventionally PM&E was used by donor agencies and government institutions to hold programme recipients and beneficiaries accountable to the agreed goals and performance targets. In recent times PM&E is increasingly being used by project participants and local community to monitor and evaluate the performance of donors and government institutions. This kind of monitoring holds government accountable and assesses the extent to which public programmes meet the needs of the community. Social audit, community/citizen's monitoring of essential services, public hearings are some of the techniques used to monitor and evaluate development programme with stakeholder participation. Most of the new generation development schemes have recognized the importance of participatory process in the entire project cycle i.e. in planning, implementation and monitoring. The governments have also to some extent accepted the need for building community participation in large scale development programmes. To what extent it is participation depend on how, to what level, in what form and who participates in the process differs based on the development programme or scheme. Most national and state level programme in India has an inbuilt system of participatory monitoring and evaluation.

Many development programmes have a mechanism for planning, implementation and monitoring inbuilt into it. The Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) has prepared a handbook for monitoring the implementation of the fund. It includes formats for data collection and reporting on process and physical output from expenditures. In the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) the monitoring of implementation has an elaborate web based data collection. To involve local people and ensure downward accountability social audit in the Gramsabha has been prescribed. Social audit of MGNREGS is mandatory. The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) has also developed a toolkit for monitoring the implementation of the mission. A set of indicators have developed as part of the mission document. The system of community monitoring of the MGNREGA has brought out the gaps in implementations like delay in payment of wages, issues in measurement of work done, appropriateness of choice of work to generate long term community assets etc. Information on the hands of people empowers them to question the programme implementation and provide insights for redesigning the programme. It made a paradigm shift from the concept of Management Information System (MIS) to Janta Information System (JIS) as practiced by Aruna Roy and KSSM in rural Rajasthan. Such a shift in approach will hand over the power of programme monitoring and evaluation to ordinary people who are the final authority to define the success and failure of the project.

19. SOCIAL AUDITS

[27]The basic objective of a Social Audit is to ensure public accountability in implementation of projects, laws and policies. It is a process in which details of the financial and non-financial resources used by public agencies for development initiatives, how effectively the target population benefit from the scheme and how the benefits are shared with the people are evaluated, often through a public platform such as Gramsabha. Social Audits allow people to enforce downward accountability and transparency, providing the ultimate users an opportunity to scrutinize development initiatives. Social Audit is a continuous process of public vigilance and monitoring. One simple form of Social Audit is a public assembly where all the details of a project are scrutinized. Transparency through proactive disclosure as per the Right to Information Act does not automatically lead to accountabilility. When common people question the implementing agency based on information it leads to accountability.

Broadly, process of Social Audit involves the following components: a) Availability of information / details of the financial and non-financial resources used by public agencies for development initiatives, b) Organizing the ultimate users / beneficiaries / people and, c) Scrutiny of the information by the end users. Success of Social Audit depends on how the relevant information is demystified and how widely it is disseminated. Usually poor people do not ask questions on public programmes, hence they need to be encouraged and empowered to ask questions about the effectiveness of the programmes meant for them.

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[27] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

Different approaches adopted for Social Audits
In the recent past, there has been wide ranging social audit practices and discourse as a part of reforming governance and ensuring public accountability. Broadly there have been three types of practices in different parts of country.

The first approach focuses on legislative framework of self regulation through pro-active disclosure in the Gramsabha. The information bulletin boards at the work sites to provide information on involvement of labour and expenditure started from Kerala and are being practiced in many States. Kerala has made significant progress in disclosing details of NREGA related information in the bulletin board. This is linked to their prior commitment to the peoples' planning process and proactive disclosure. Citizen interest and engagement is enhanced when they are provided relevant information about the development programmes. In many of the States there has been increase in peoples' participation in the Gramsabha for beneficiary selection where local people discuss in a transparent manner.

The Social Audit manual of Rajasthan provides step by step approach to conduct effective Social Audits. It also initiated the process of appointment of government officials, outsourcing the Local Audits at the Gram Panchayat level. This is expected to work as the necessary monitoring mechanisms are in place. Kerala has also been piloting and field testing the Social Audit Guidelines in the Wayanad and Palakkad district, which are shortly being extended to Idduki and Kozhikode.

The second approach is a collaborative model between the local bodies and civil society organisations rooted in the values of partnership for consensus building and promoting accountability. The approach is centered on creating spaces for dialogue and collective assessment. However, this approach is in a nascent stage. The civil society organisations in many States have been approaching Panchayats and government officials to conduct report card not only in MGNREGS but for other service delivery programmes.

The third model relates to challenging the corruption. The critical and distinctive factor of this model is the absence of the State agencies and the PRIs. The approach relies on the use of the Right to Information (RTI) to access public records. The primary forum is Jan Sunvai (public hearing) which is used for community mobilisation for action on the issue of corruption. It is evident that such initiatives have developed road map for empowered engagement of common people to hold the service delivery institutions accountable.

The first model (proactive disclosure) has continued to remain an officially approved procedure as it has the potential to scale up with the involvement of the network of government agencies at different levels. In the absence of empowered citizens to facilitate the process often the powerful people facilitate the process without valuing the voices of the marginal people. The decisions are an outcome of 'coercive agreement' rather than 'consensual agreement'. In this model, the community participation is very weak, information is put in such a manner that people do not understand and any public questioning is highly discouraged. The institution conducting the Social Audit has internal resistance and the process lack public confidence.

In such circumstances, the deprived groups are not able to marshal their strength to raise questions before the Gramsabha. To avoid this states like Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat have created an independent group of facilitators to support the village vigilance and monitoring committee (VVMC).

The overall purpose of Social Audit is to identify programme gaps by the people themselves under a forum of public scrutiny to ensure programme effectiveness and check leakage. However, in order to reach this stage, a step by step enabling mechanism needs to be created so that the poor, the beneficiary, the workers, feel empowered to raise their voice in a free and fearless environment. There is a need for countering the environment which has resistance to Social Audit. The first step is establishing the legitimacy of the process in the eyes of all the stakeholders. The process needs to be viewed as objective, not aligned to any particular group and needs to be robust in terms of its acceptance and redressal of issues. The process needs to be framed under a legislative framework/ government order/ resolution. In addition to this, support mechanisms need to be created for participation of villagers in all stages of the social audit process.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has clear provisions to conduct social audit and it is the first programme in our country that ensures downward accountability and transfers the rights to the people to exercise it as an entitlement. Provisions for social audit under MGNREGS are explained below.

Facilitating Social Audit under MGNREGS

Social Audits for governance institutions and basic service providers like primary schools, primary health centers, fair price shops, calls for the involvement of citizens who are the primary stakeholders thus enforcing transparency and accountability in a tangible and direct manner. It brings to fore the local self-governance institutions like Panchayati Raj Institutions and particularly the Gramsabha as a constitutional body for peoples' participation for accountability. If good governance in the true sense is to be ensured at the Gram Panchayat level, they should try to facilitate Social Audit process for all projects and development interventions that are being implemented as well as for other service providers operating in the village. Therefore, it is very important to create an enabling environment to conduct Social Audit.

The basic requisite for facilitating Social Audit should be largely based on the following principles:
1. Gram Panchayats should own the process and organize the Gramsabhas;
2. It should be very simple and easy to replicate;
3. It should be non-threatening but at the same time empowering for the people; and
4. Linkage and proper coordination in the administrative structure to take corrective measures.

Gram Panchayat should own the process of Social Audits and organize Gram Sabhas

Being the grass root level institutions of local governance, it is important for the Gram Panchyats to own the process of Social Audits and organize Gram Sabhas (Social Audit Forums). Social Audit Forum/ Committee are to be formed as the mandatory committee according to the MGNREGA guidelines. They are the appropriate group to undertake the process of Social Audits. All the members of the Social Audit Forum/ Committee are selected by Gramsabha and have mandatory representation of women and the workers who have worked in current/ previous work under MGNREGS of the same Gram Panchayats. The Gram Panchayat should fully support and provide required help to the Social Audit Forum/ Committee who should be the principal authority for conducting Social Audits in their respective Panchayats.

Process should be very simple

Social Audit at the Gram Panchayats level is to be facilitated by the members of Social Audit Committee (SAC) with the involvement of the people. As literacy level of some members of Social Audit Committee might not be adequate to understand the technicality involved in the process, the process of Social Audit needs to be very simple and easy so that the members can carry out the process without any difficulty. Orientation for the members of Social Audit Committee could go a long way in building their confidence and improving the effectiveness of Social Audits. An independent group of Social Audit facilitators can be created to support the panchayat level social audit.

Focus should be on the empowerment of people

Another important aspect is that the focus should be on the empowerment of people so that they are able to voice their concerns and problems. This primarily requires raising awareness of rights, entitlements and obligations under the scheme, specifically about the right to participate in a Social Audit. This might be possible through a large scale awareness campaign focused on these aspects as well as demonstration by the state machinery about the seriousness and commitment over the process.

Linkage and proper coordination in the administrative structure

Social Audit brings out not only the issues of leakages and corruptions but also gaps in the programme implementation as experienced by the people. The outcome of the social audit is a direct citizen feedback to the different departments of the administration and policy makers. Though the Panchayati Raj Institutions are the main facilitating agency, Social Audit can be facilitated by State Legal Authority, civil society organisations, Women's Self Help Groups, Youth Groups like NYK, Department of Higher Education, Universities, etc. Success of social audit is dependant on the institutional coordination.

Facilitating environment and strategies for Social Audits

A coherent strategy and operational guideline can only help facilitate the implementation of social audit state wide covering all Panchayats in a periodic interval.

User-friendly forms and documents for collecting data with regard to the implementation of MGNREGS should be developed. The formats should be such that the villagers could fill information on different components of the programme. Some of the important information about implementation of MGNREGS needs to be displayed proactively. A format for proactive disclosure can be developed and the information can be painted on the wall of the Panchayats building or any other public place. Information on the list of workers, number of days of work and wages paid can be displayed so that issues of ghost workers, non payment of wages can be made public.

All relevant information needs to be made accessible to the people. Public announcement of the social audit through area-specific traditional means like beating of drums, display of notices in common places needs to be undertaken one month in advance. However to develop faith of people on proactive information sharing, on regular basis work allocation orders, work completion details, payments details may be displayed at the worksites and the Panchayat office. In the Social Audit gramsabha all information should be read out aloud to ensure that illiterate people are also informed. The name of the members of Social Audit Committee along with their roles and responsibilities should be put up on the Panchayat notice board and also displayed at the worksite. Operational Guidelines suggest that wage and wage norms (Schedule of Rate) should be displayed at the work site and there should be a

board with details of work – estimates and running costs, material, labor and funds. It also needs to be ensured that the findings of Social Audits are immediately acted upon and results are informed back to the people. In an entitlement based programme like MGNREGS, people must be encouraged to monitor, question and identify loopholes in the execution of the programme meant for them. Questioning by people (Social Audit) ensures awareness building, participation and accountability. It enables the administrative machinery to take corrective action.

Mandatory social audits can be organized with Departmental notification during the months of September (mid-term) and March (end of financial year). Office of the State Commissioner (MGNREGA) should issue a Government Order (GO) to all the District Programme Coordinators (DPCs) mentioning detailed institutional mechanism and timeline for different activities to facilitate the process of Social Audit in their respective districts. Suggestive steps for initiating the Social Audit are mentioned in the government order.

The details of the social audit process are mentioned below:

Notification on Gramsabha for Social Audit:
After the GO is issued by State Commissioner of MGNREGA, each office of DPC will issue a notification for the Gramsabha 30 days in advance for all the Gram Panchayats. In this notification, Programme Officers will be made responsible to finalize the dates and time of the Gramsabhas of their respective blocks and the same information should be made available to all the Gram Panchayats as well as concerned office of the DPC. GPs should be made responsible for organizing Gramsabhas for Social Audits while the responsibility of conducting the audit should be vested in the SAC. SAC is a group of 9 members of the local community to monitor the progress of works undertaken under MGNREGS. It has representation of women and SC/ST. This committee should be encouraged to undertake Social Audits in their respective villages.

• After date and time for Gram Sabhas are finalized by the Programme Officer, a calendar of Gramsabhas and deputation chart for the different Blocks and District level officials involved in MGNREGS to attend the Gramsabhas can be prepared by the office of DPC. These will be sent to all the blocks and also shared with the Office of State Commissioner, MGNREGA. Presence of concerned officials in Gramsabha for Social Audit ensures that many issues could be addressed appropriately there itself. While preparing the deputation chart care should be taken that at least one block level official is present in every Gramsabha.

• Programme Officers should send the deputation chart of Gramsabha to all Gram Panchayats and the Social Audit Committees. Roles and responsibilities of Gram Panchayat should also be outlined and attached with the letter.

• Sarpanch should issue notice for the Gramsabha as per the date given from the office of the Programme Officer. Notice of Gramsabha should be given to the village people one month before the scheduled date. This notice should include the date, place, time and agenda of the Gramsabha and pasted in the common places. The Panchayat should also inform people by beating drums or making announcement before Gramsabha

Activation of Social Audit Committee (SAC) in all the Panchayats

It is mandatory to form the Social Audit Committee in every Panchayat. It has representation of women, SC/ST and workers. It is observed that the SAC members are not active in most Panchayats. Therefore, instruction should be given to the Panchayat Secretary to take the initiative to activate these committees. The Panchayat Secretaries should call a meeting of Social Audit Committee of their respective Panchayat after the notification of Gramsabha.

During this meeting, they should be appraised about their roles and responsibility and their involvement in conducting Social Audit. Gram Panchayat Secretaries who are at present working as Member Secretary to Social Audit Committee are not eligible to hold the meeting during the time of Social Audit. In such a situation, an educated person or primary school teacher from the village should be nominated as Member Secretary of the committee in this meeting. This person will also provide support in collecting data and to finalise the report of the findings to be read in the Gramsabha. The minutes of this meeting should be sent to concerned Programme Officer for his/her records. This process will help all the members of the committee to be active and build their confidence to carry out the process of Social Audit.

Collection, Verification & Analysis of Data for Social Audits

Programme Officer (PO) should instruct the Gram Panchayat Secretary through official letter as well as in their monthly meetings to provide all data related to progress of MGNREGA. Social Audit Committee will collect and analyze data from their respective Gram Panchayat. The most important aspect is that analyzed data should be presented to the people in a very simple format. Social Audit Committee could also involve SHG leaders, community leaders, school principal or some active youth for the purpose of information analysis and dissemination. Social Audit Committee will primarily verify and present their report during the Gramsabha based on the following four levels of information.

i. Records and information from Gram Panchayat
ii. Verification of information through household visits
iii. Verification at worksite and
iv. Evaluation and assessment of completed work

i. Records & information from Gram Panchayat
Social Audit Committee will ask for records and answers questions. They will also note if any of the mentioned records are not available. The Social Audit Committee will also fill the format on 'Pro-active disclosure under MGNREGS so that all information could be presented in a simple way to the people. Social Audit Committee can verify the Gramsabha resolution and Panchayat resolution on the 'shelf of projects'. This is important to verify whether the decision on the 'shelf of project' was made by the Gramsabha or the Panchayat. For the works that have been completed, sanctioned amount and actual expenses could be compared. Information like number of household worked, muster roll related information, timely payments and actual payments made can be obtained.

ii. Verification of information through household visits
The Social Audit Committee will acquire muster rolls and visit a number of households randomly to find out their work experience – type of works undertaken, usefulness of the work to the community, work place related facilities, timely measurement and payment. There is a need for covering unregistered households to understand the reason for families not

registering for work under the MGNREGS. 10 to 15 workers can be selected at random from each muster roll and they have to be interviewed through household visits.

Those workers marked absent in the muster roll can be asked the reason for their absenteeism and whether they were informed about the work or not. Workers could also be shown the muster roll and asked if workers mentioned there worked at the site? They should also note down any complaints made by the people.

iii. Verification at worksite

Some of the members of the Social Audit Committee will visit the worksite to verify the quality of work undertaken.They should check whether daily materials register is kept at the worksite and whether it is verified by five workers every day. They should also report on whether measurement records are available for inspection. If a kutcha muster roll is being used for marking presence of workers, its copy should be acquired and it should be verified with the entries in the pucca muster roll. Use of kutcha muster roll is totally prohibited in MGNREGS and should be reported immediately to the concerned Block Programme Officer.

Display of the board at the worksite informing details as prescribed in the guideline is to be checked by SAC. Availability of other facilities, such as drinking water, first aid box and crèche also to checked. These can be verified by visiting the worksite or by asking the laborers.

iv. Evaluation and assessment of completed work

Social Audit Committee will visit all completed works and judge the quality of work. Specifications of work have also to be displayed at the worksite and a copy of administrative sanction can be obtained from the Gram Panchayat. As quality of any work would depend on how closely it follows the measurement specifications detailed out in technical and administrative sanction, Social Audit Committee should take a measuring tape and hammer with them when they visit the site for verification. They will also check if the completion data is made public in a people friendly format. Any variation in any of the above mentioned aspects should be noted down. As per the guideline the Panchayat has to take photographs of the site before and after the works. These photographs can help the SAC to assess the work completed at the various sites.

The records should be displayed in the Panchayat office at least 15 days before the Gramsabha. Analyzed data of the Social Audit Committee will also be displayed at some other public places (village square 'chaura', water stand points, provision store, primary school, outside anganwadi, cooperative milk society and at worksite/s), at least five days before the scheduled date of the Gramsabha so that people have the chance to read and understand it.

Social Audit Committee should conduct meetings with workers at work sites and falia/ hamlet (locality) levels to generate awareness about provisions of MGNREGA and importance of Social Audit. This is a very important requirement for improving the participation of people in the Gramsabha.

In these meetings, Social Audit Committee should also explain to the people the exercise undertaken by them and their findings in brief. They should also note down views and their concerns with regards to progress of implementation of MGNREGS and encourage them to raise these concerns and ask questions in the Gramsabha. The date, time and venue should

also be communicated to the community very clearly so that they can be present.

Copy of muster rolls as well as other important documents should also be made open for public scrutiny at the Panchayat office and village chaura. Panchayat Secretary should be made primarily responsible for this. Rojgar Sewak or any members from the Social Audit Committee should be present in the Panchayats and Village chaura where the data is available for public scrutiny to explain the records to the people.

Gramsabha for Social Audits
The day of the Gramsabha should be marked by enthusiasm and interest among the community. The pro active disclosure should be updated.
The steps listed below should be strictly followed
• Muster rolls and all other documents related to the implementation of MGNREGS should be placed at the location of the Gramsabha for the scrutiny of the people.

• The analyzed data should also be written in enlarged and simple format and displayed at the site of the Gramsabha.

• Data regarding the work (shelf of project), sanctioned budget, approved works, registered families, job cards issued, total person-days of work provided to men and women and payments made should be displayed on charts at the venue of the Gramsabha. Schedule of Rate should be displayed on a chart for public knowledge. Care should be taken that all the information displayed in the Gramsabha should be visible and readable. Photographs before and after the work should be displayed for public scrutiny.

• Representative of implementing agency or agencies should be present in the Gramsabha. If implementing agency is not the Gram Panchayat then the Sarpanch should inform the concerned agency, like line department, NGOs, CBOs, Private agency etc, 15 days before the Gramsabha.

• Gramsabha for Social Audit (Social Audit Forum) should be chaired by the president of the Social Audit Committee. As Gram Panchayat is the implementing agency, Sarpanch should not chair this Gram Sabha.

• Gram Sabha should start by reviewing the progress (action taken) on the major issues in the last Social Audit Gramsabha and the major decisions taken. Before the Gramsabha, Panchayat Secretary will prepare an 'action taken' report and have it approved in the monthly meeting of Panchayat. Sarpanch or Panchayat Secretary should read this report loudly during the Gram Sabha meeting. People can give comments or ask questions and further decisions could also be made on its basis which should be duly noted down by the person taking minutes of the meeting.

• During Gramsabha, Panchayat Secretary or Rojgar Sewak should provide details of implementation of MGNREGS.

• Social Audit Committee should then present a report card of the implementation of MGNREGA, i.e., they should present the information that has been analyzed, verified and presented.

▪ Names of laborers should be read out loudly in the Gramsabha. Discrepancies should be duly noted. After the verification of muster roll, the floor should then be left open for the

issues of citizens. All the issues raised by the members should be addressed properly by the concerned authorities present in the Gramsabha i.e. official present from implementing agency (if there is any), Sarpanch, Panchayat Secretary, PO and any other concerned official attending the Gramsabha.

- Decisions are taken by majority. The minutes are signed by all members present.

Challenges in Institutionalizing the Process of Social Audits

Facilitating Social Audit requires great deal of effort and willingness at all levels. Social Audits if institutionalized can help build transparency and accountability. However, experience shows that there are several challenges in institutionalizing the process. Some of them are outlined here.

Culture of Silence: People do not speak up even if they see something wrong is happening because they are either not aware of appropriate forums or have developed a sense of apathy that there will be no change in existing situation. Also, there is fear of repercussions.

To deal with this challenge, the administration should ensure prompt action on issues raised during the Gramsabha and the action taken should be communicated again to the people in the subsequent Gramsabha. This will assure the people that their voices are heard. It will make the community engaged and raise their confidence to voice issues.

Low participation in Gramsabha: Low people's participation in Gramsabha is another bottleneck. Style of facilitation, non-response to past resolutions, domination by powerful and lack of meaningful discussion are some of the causes why people think attending Gramsabha is a waste of time.

Social Audit needs lots of facilitation and mobilization and hence involvement of local CSOs makes it more effective. As they are not associated with execution of works, it enhances the objectivity and credibility of the process. Also, as mentioned earlier, timely actions by competent authorities on findings has impact on Social Audit for next round. Since Social Audit of MGNREGS is to be done every six months, timely actions on earlier Social Audit encourages people. In the contrary if this does not happen, people get disappointed and this will result in lack of participation in future.

Social Audit has spin-off benefits like increased awareness and demand generation. During process of data collection, verification and Gramsabha mobilization, committee and volunteers interact with people personally and share the provisions of the Act, their entitlements and procedures to get them. Interested households are encouraged to apply for registration and also to demand work. This not only improves the quality of implementation of programme, it also facilitates involvement of people.

Social Audit has negative connotations and conflicting socio-economic interests: Social Audit evokes fear and resentment among elected representatives, especially Sarpanchs. Also, rural Indian society is not homogenous and there are conflicting interests based on caste, class and gender lines. Process of Social Audit takes into account interests of weaker sections such as poor, dalits, women and minorities and empowers them. Hence powerful groups also resist such process.

To combat this challenge, if at initial stages, Social Audit is promoted more as learning process to inculcate culture of transparency and accountability rather than fault finding, it is easier to overcome the resistance of Sarpanchs, elected representatives and other groups as mentioned above. Small but incremental success will boost the confidence and morale of people, specially poor and marginalized.

Resistance of village-level officials to share information: It is important to establish in the minds of all officials involved in the implementation that they are accountable to the people and that this should show in their attitude and behavior. Perhaps this sensitization can be made part of all official meetings or orientations. Also, Right to Information Act 2005 is an important enabler. It has been observed that officials are now providing information even before applications are submitted for demanding information under the Act.

Unverifiable Records: The main purpose of the Job Card is to enable workers to verify their own employment and wage details. Job card entries are either not done or entries in records at some places are made in a manner that it is impossible to verify for semi-literate laborers and difficult for even trained investigators.

Instruction to implementing agency about maintaining up to date records in proper handwriting will facilitate transparency as workers themselves will be able to check their employment and wage details on a regular basis. This will also go a long way in plugging malpractices if any. Whenever any official of the state, district or block visits a village, they should make it a point to conduct random checks of job cards with workers and also other records. This will inculcate the habit of updating all records regularly in the concerned village functionary.

Finally, it has been observed that mere statutory provisions are not sufficient to promote transparency and accountability. Demand side needs to be strengthened with awareness about entitlements, capacity building, mobilization and facilitation. Supply side, primarily responsible for follow up actions, should be supported by creating a non-threatening environment and capacity building in record keeping. It is also important to complete the process of devolution to Panchayats because accountability without power is as absurd as power without accountability.

20. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

[28]Leadership is a topic that has received much attention in management, business, community and political organizations. Everyone knows that leadership exists, but few are able to define it. Effective organizations do not exist without effective leaders. What you do and do not do as a leader is very important. If you do not take *initiative* to improve your community, and do not lead your people to *achieve* high standards of public service, your community as well as organization will not be very effective. *Leadership* is a key factor.

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[28] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose. This article was developed by Biju Varkkey from Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad. He is teaching and doing research in the area of Organisational Behaviour. The article was developed as part of capacity building initiative of municipality and panchayat functionaries and elected representatives for Unnati.

Concept of a Leader and Leadership

"Leadership is a process by which a person influences others to accomplish a mission, task, or objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent". (Brin, D. 1998) A person carries out this process by applying his/her leadership attributes (for example - belief, values, ethics, character, knowledge and skills). The key concept of leadership is "the process of getting things done through people".

People in an organisation want to be guided by those they respect and who have a clear sense of direction. It is the leader's ability to inspire and stimulate others to achieve defined worthwhile goals.

Leader is "A role conferred on a person by followers. This involves conforming to a set of behavioral norms and expectations originating from followers, in return for which they confer on the leaders a degree of power that (within prescribed limits) allows the leader to influence their actions" (Huczynski, A. & Buchanan, D. 2000).

"Leadership is the ability to inspire confidence and support among the people who are needed to achieve organizational goals (Brin, D., 1998)

"Leadership is influencing people – by providing purpose, direction and motivation – while operating to accomplish the mission and improving the organisation".

The two important aspects of leadership are:
1. The people to be led, and
2. The objective or a goal to be achieved.

It is true that chairmen and kings lead, but people who hold no leadership position also lead. At the same time you can find some people who have a leader's title and ought to lead. But they do not lead. Leadership is a quality that is found in everyone so long as they have the essential traits and characteristics of a leader.

In other words, you are not a leader because you wear the leader's hat. You are a leader only when you are getting things done through other people.

Leadership, then, is something people do. Some people inherit leadership positions, such as kings, or heads of family businesses. Some are elected for example, chairman, governor, etc. Or they may just happen to be there when a situation arises that demands leadership, for example when a disaster occurs.

You don't have to be born with leadership. Chances are most of us were not born as leaders but we were born with a brain. If you can learn to swim or do math or play chess, you can learn leadership skills as well.

Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela or Margaret Thatcher were not born as leaders. They possessed high level of ambition coupled with clear vision of precisely where they wanted to go and wanted to do for the betterment of their people. They had high-energy, self-confidence, decisive knowledge of their field etc. Leadership does take skill. The basic idea remains that if a person possesses these traits, they will be able to take the lead.

Although your position as a leader, manager, supervisor, etc. gives you the authority to accomplish certain tasks and objectives in the organization, this *power* does not make you a leader, it simply makes you the *boss.* Leadership makes people *want* to achieve high goals and objectives, while, on the other hand, bosses tell people to accomplish a task or objective.

To manage means to have responsibility for something, to conduct activities, to accomplish something. Managers routinely plan, organize, supervise, control, monitor and evaluate. They implement organisation policies, rules, procedures, and plans. Managers perform the duties and tasks that are in their job descriptions.

Leaders may do the above things too. In fact, if they are managers, they are expected to do those things. By the definition, we have seen that, leading involves influencing or guiding the direction, course, action, and opinions of people.

Characteristics (Approach) and Traits (Qualities) of a Good Leader

Leaders do not have to be great men or women by being intellectual geniuses to succeed, but they need to have right qualities and values (characteristics and traits). The characteristics of good leader are;

Characteristics	Description
Ability to build relationships throughout the organization	Establish a high level of trust and credibility with bosses, peers, and subordinates and the ability to get things done through cooperation and influence.
Have strong personal strengths	Have ambition, initiative, self-confidence, personal accountability for their actions and do not make excuses or blame others.
Have a plan	A clear idea of where they are going and how they are going to get there and concentrate their efforts and energy on main goals and objectives.
Have a shared vision	Have a vision of how things should be which is effectively and enthusiastically communicated to the workers to attain 100 percent results.
Are flexible and adaptable	Ability to recognize what actions are required in a given situation and then act accordingly.
Ability to encourage participation	Make people feel part of the company by encouraging others to have a say in almost every aspect of work
Ability to communicate	Ability to transmit his or her ideas, convictions, purpose, methods, and approaches to the workforce who will turn these ideas into action.

The traits of an effective leader include the following:

Trait	Description
Drive	Desire for achievement; ambition; high energy; initiative
Honesty and integrity	Trustworthy; reliable; open
Leadership motivation	Desire to exercise influence over others to reach shared goals
Self-confidence	Trust in own abilities
Cognitive ability	Intelligence; ability to integrate and interpret large amounts of information

Knowledge of the business	Knowledge of industry, relevant technical matter, legal aspects
Flexibility	Ability to adapt to needs of followers and requirements of situation
Emotional stability	Able to tolerate frustration and stress
Enthusiasm	Active, expressive, and energetic; often very optimistic and open to change
Maturity	Ability to recognize that more can be accomplished by empowering others than can be by ruling others
Team orientation	Strong emphasis on team work
Empathy	Able to "put yourself in the other person's shoes"

Source: Bennett, R. (1997) *Organisational Behaviour* 3rd Ed., Pittman Publishing

What Followers Expect and Admire in their Leaders

Majority of us admire leaders who are **honest, competent, forward-looking and inspiring**. Here what we mean by honesty is a leader must practice what they preach. Promises must be kept, and the leader must have the confidence to follow their own beliefs. At the same time leader also needs to be competent enough to accomplish goals. Very often it happens that leaders enter their office with grand ideas, or to accomplish few things in a week's time. But as the time passes by they lose their interest and as a result, projects are not completed and the workers feel "let down" by their leaders.

The next most frequently selected characteristic of good leaders is that of being **forward-looking**. This requires foresight, an ability to see the needs and wants of the future generations and an ability to motivate people to deliver these needs and wants. Leaders need to be intelligent, far-seeing and creative at all levels of the organizational structure. Next expected quality is **inspiration**. As discussed, the leader's vision must be communicated throughout the organization. This communication must not only be informative but also inspirational. If I, as a leader am not enthusiastic about my visions, how can I expect others to be? If I am not excited about the potential success computerisation would bring to the company, why should my workers take the extra training required to use the device?

All of these characteristics are ones that people are seeking. When employees don't see them, they lose confidence in their leaders and the organizations, and ultimately themselves. This low confidence is very destructive to any organization. It leads to employees not working and inspiring others to do so as well.

A leader must know that it is not just the title "of being leader" that makes them great and makes people follow them. It is human understanding, judgment, reason, imagination, curiosity, and the desire to learn, grow and ensuring betterment of the entire community that makes them a leader.

Leadership Styles

Leadership style in general is the manner or an approach one adopts while leading, for example, a manner in which the leader directs, implements plans, or motivates people. On the other hand personal leadership style is our preferred way of leading people. However, a leader might have to change his personal preferred and leadership styles. This is because different situations and people demand different leadership styles. Style flexibility refers to

our ability and need to adapt a personal or leadership style to a certain situation and the needs of the "follower" so that we can be more effective as leaders.

As a leader you may find yourself using different leadership styles at different times. Sometimes, you may have to give orders to your team members while on other occasions you may ask for their contributions through discussions. There are many different ways of working with people.

There are four styles of leadership. They are:
1.   Authoritarian or Autocratic Leader
2.   Participative or Democratic Leader
3.   Delegative or Consultative Leader
4.   Laissez-Faire or Free Reign Leader

Although good leaders use all four styles, with one of them normally dominate, bad leaders tend to stick with only one style. We will first understand what these three leadership styles are and then through Personal Style Assessment, find out your personal leadership style.

1. Authoritarian/Autocratic Leadership
Under this style leaders:
•   Rely on threats and punishment to influence employees;
•   Do not trust employees; and
•   Do not allow for employee input.
Authoritarian (autocratic) Leadership is one in which the manager retains as much power and decision-making authority as possible. Autocratic leader does not consult employees, rather tells them what they want to be done and how he/she wants it done. It is more of a **"Do as I say"** approach. The question arises then what motivates employees to deliver. In such a case motivation provided is in the form of rewards and punishments.

The authoritarian style should normally only be used on rare occasions. However on rare occasions it is the most effective style to use. For example it can be used with -
•   new, untrained employee who does not know which task to perform or which procedures to follow to accomplish the given the task;
•   employees who do not respond to any other leadership style; or
•   When there is limited time in the leader is required to make a decision.

The autocratic leadership style should not be used when –
•   employee becomes tense, fearful, or resentful;
•   employees expect to have their opinions heard;
•   there is low employee morale, high turnover and absenteeism in the office.

2. Participative/Democratic Leadership
Typically the democratic leader:
•   Encourages employees to grow on the job;
•   Recognizes and encourages achievement;
•   Allows employees to establish goals.

Democratic style is the most desired leadership style. The democratic leader keeps the employees informed about everything that affects their work, and consults them to determine

what to do and how to do it. However, the leader maintains the final decision making authority. Many employees like the trust they receive and in return they respond with cooperation, team spirit, and high morale.

The democratic leadership style is most effective when the leader –
- wants to keep employees informed about matters that affect them;
- wants employees to share in decision-making and problem-solving duties;
- wants to provide opportunities for employees to develop a high sense of personal growth and job satisfaction;
- wants to encourage team building and participation.

Democratic leadership should not be used when –
- there is not enough time to get everyone's input;
- it is easier and more cost-effective for the leader to make the decision;
- the organisation is not in a position to afford mistakes;
- the employees are not highly skilled or do not have proper knowledge about the subject.

3. Delegative/ consultative leader
Typically the delegative leader:
- Asks for ideas from people;
- Holds the final decision making authority.

The delegative leader permits the employees to make the decision within the prescribed limits. Under such leadership style, employees assume responsibility for their work and for the success of their department. For example employees undertake the identification and diagnosis of the problem, developing alternative procedures for solving it and deciding on one or more solutions. The leader provides little direction and support.

Delegative leadership style is effective when-
- Employees are willing to talk harmoniously
- Employees are highly skilled, experienced, and educated;
- Employees are highly motivated
- Employees are willing to accept manager's final decision

Delegative leadership style is not effective when-
- Employees are new and inexperience

4. Laissez-Faire/Free-Reign Leader
The Laissez-Faire leader exercises little control over the employees. In an organisation where the employees are skilled, experienced, capable and motivated, it is often best to give them authority and responsibility for work assigned to them, without participating or interfering in this process. By handing over ownership, a leader can empower his group to achieve their goals.

Laissez-Faire style is effective when –
- employees are highly skilled, experienced, and educated;
- employees are highly motivated;
- employees are trustworthy and experienced.

This style should not be used when-
- it makes employees feel insecure at the unavailability of a leader;
- the leader cannot provide regular feedback to let employees know how well they are doing, as this will leave the employees clueless about their performance.

Situational Leadership

A situational leader is one who can adopt different leadership styles depending on the situation. Situational leadership is classified according to the relative amount of **task and relationship behavior** the leader engages in. The **task/directive behavior** is the extent to which the leader spells out the duties and responsibilities of an individual or group. It includes giving directions and setting goals. On the other hand the **relationship/supportive behavior** is the extent to which the leader engages in two-way or multi-way communication. It includes such activities as listening, encouraging staff and coaching.

➢ **Task/Directive Behavior** Involves:
- clearly telling people
  - what to do
  - how to do it
  - where to do it
  - when to do it
- and then closely supervising their performance

➢ **Relationship/Supportive Behavior**
Involves:
- listening to people
- providing support and encouraging their efforts
- facilitating their involvement in problem solving and decision making.

Situational leadership allows you to analyse the needs of the situation you're dealing with, and then adopt the most appropriate leadership style. The style can one of directing /telling where there is high task focus and less relationship focus, coaching systle where there is high task focus and high relationship focus, participating/supporting style where there is low task focus and high relationship focus and delegating style where it is Low task focus, low relationship focus. The leader delegates responsibility for a task to a group member and is simply kept informed of progress.

Summing Up
The basis of good leadership is honorable character and selfless service to your organization and community. In your employees' eyes, your leadership is everything you do that effects the organization and community's objectives and their well being.

Leaders take actions that:
- Have a positive, unifying effect (help establish vision, values, and beliefs).
- Lead to the accomplishment of goals (help set goals and create an empowering environment in which others can succeed in the work and activities).
- Enhance personal development and organizational productivity (remove obstacles and assist followers to use their power)

Outstanding leadership requires much more than people being really good at their jobs. It requires innovative thinking; it requires people making positive and inspiring impacts; and it requires them to be able to motivate others. What is needed is an ability to think and act 'out of the box'

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21. MOTIVATION - PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE

[29]Leaders motivate people to move toward a goal with a set of values. The study of motivation helps leaders understand what prompts people to initiate action, what influences their choice of action and why they persist in that action over time. **"A person's motivation is a combination of desire and energy directed towards achieving a goal."** (Gray, L. J. & Starke, A.F. 1988). Motivation is basically having a clear distinction between getting employees to do something and getting employees to *want* to do something. Not every employee is motivated by the same thing; hence understanding what motivates your people is the key to effective and efficient performance.

What motivate people?

People have basic **needs** – such as need for food, achievement or monetary gain – which motivates specific behaviour that would result in fulfillment of the need. To the extent that the behaviour is successful, the person is rewarded in the sense that the need is satisfied. The reward also informs the person that the behaviour was appropriate and can be used again in the future.

Most of us assume that pay is the primary motivator. While it is true that paying regular salary to people motivates them to work, but it is not always about money. Contrary to popular belief, most employees are not motivated solely by money. What employees really desire is great relationships with their managers, appreciation and recognition for their efforts, and opportunities to grow and learn. While paying salary would help you get the work done, appreciation and recognition for their work would help you get better results.

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Motivated employees help organizations survive and are more productive and creative. Some of the motivating factors are: (a) interesting work, (b) good salary, (c) full appreciation of work done, (d) job security, (e) good working conditions, (f) promotions and growth in the organization, (g) personal loyalty to employees, and (h) sympathetic help with personal problems.

A job may be enriched by:

1. giving workers more freedom in deciding about such things as work methods, sequence and pace or the acceptance or rejection of materials;
2. encouraging participation of subordinates and interaction between workers;
3. giving workers as feeling of personal responsibility for their tasks;
4. taking steps to make sure that workers can see how their tasks contribute to a finished product and the welfare of the organisation
5. By setting targets that reasonable and realistic with high probability of succeeding
6. Through encouraging participation in planning and implementation of their work

Identifying employee actions which show that they are de-motivated is also important for leaders. The following factors indirectly determine moral or motivational problems:

- High absenteeism
- High turnover rates
- Increase in number of accidents
- Excessive breakage or waste
- Unusually high number of complaints or grievances received from employee.

Dealing with Non Performance
"Dealing with an employee who is not performing his/her work duties well". This statement seems to be very familiar to all of us. Some of these performance problems may be result of low morale, low motivational level, unclear goals and performance expectations.

There are four major causes of performance problems:

- **Knowledge or Skills** - The employee does not know how to perform the process correctly - lack of skills, knowledge, or abilities.
- **Process** - The problem is not employee related, but is caused by working conditions, bad processes, etc.
- **Resources** - Lack of resources or technology to perform the task.
- **Motivation or Culture** - The employee knows how to perform, but does so incorrectly.

The most common approach while dealing with low performers is either to fire them from their jobs, or transfer them to some other department thinking they will perform well or cut their pay or demote them punishing them. This approach is called stick approach. However such approach not only fails in getting the desired results but all leaves the employees discontented and with low morale.

In contrast to the stick approach is the carrot approach. This approach involves recognition and appreciation of the efforts, which results in improved work atmosphere, good quality of products and results in employee satisfaction.

Punishing low performers is no solution to the problem. There is a possibility that strict discipline and punishment may aggravate the problem. It is essential for leaders to understand the reasons behind low performance and then taking appropriate action.

The leader's main task is now to motivate the employees, so that they can deliver the results and at the same time satisfy their needs. The following tips may help leaders to motivate the employees to perform well.

Determine what levels and kinds of performance are needed to achieve organizational goals: Good results are achieved when workers have a clear understanding of what needs to be accomplished.

Combine organizational needs with the needs of your people: It is very important to ensure that your oragnisational and employees' needs meet at a common point.

Train and encourage people: Leaders should give group members the necessary training and encouragement to be confident that they can perform the required task.

Reward good work: Although a certificate, letter, or a thank you may seem small and insignificant, they can be powerful motivators.

Allow your employees to be part of the planning and problem solving process: People who are part of the decision making process become the owners of it, thus it gives them a personal interest in seeing the plan succeed.

Taking care of your employees: You must be able to empathize with them. Although you do not have control over their personal lives, you must show concern for them.

Keep them informed: Keeping the communication channel open and transparent helps in achieving the goals efficiently and quickly.

Make their jobs challenging, exciting, and meaningful: People need meaningful work, even if it is tiring and unpleasant; they need to know that it is important and necessary for the survival of the organization.

Summing Up

Employee motivation affects productivity, and part of a leader's job is to channel motivation towards the accomplishment of organisational goals. Employees are motivated by interesting work, challenge and increasing responsibility. These intrinsic factors clubbed with extrinsic rewards (salary) answers their deep-stated need for growth and achievement.

22. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
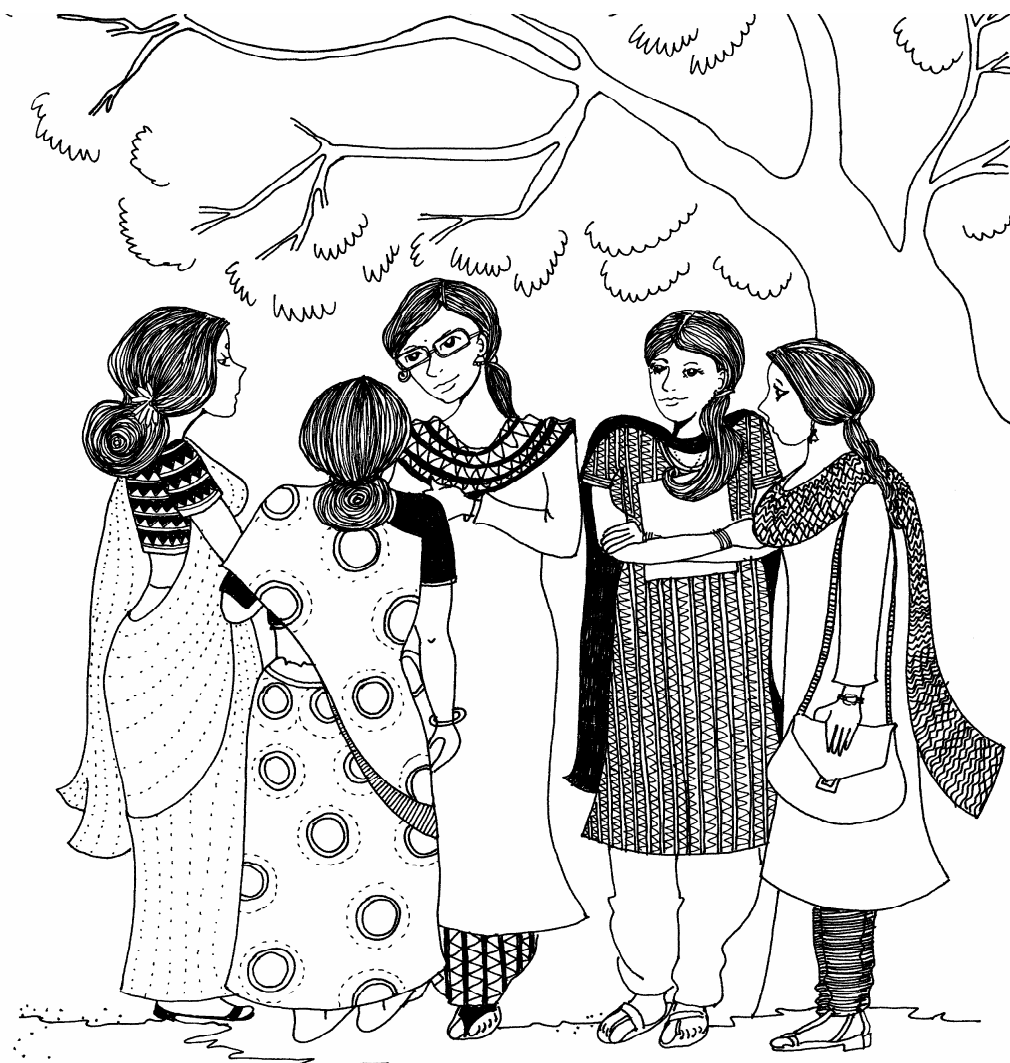
[30]Good communication ensures individuals know what is expected of them, that the appropriate person receives the correct information and that there is coordination within the organisation. In general terms communication is exchange of information and sharing ideas. However the exchange of information and ideas is complete if the person, to whom the message is meant for, understands it in the same sense in which the sender of the message wants him/her to understand.

The correct interpretation and understanding of the message is important from the point of view of organizational efficiency. The greater the degree of understanding present in the communication, the more the likelihood that employee actions and efforts will proceed in the direction of accomplishment goals.

(i) Benefits of Effective Communication
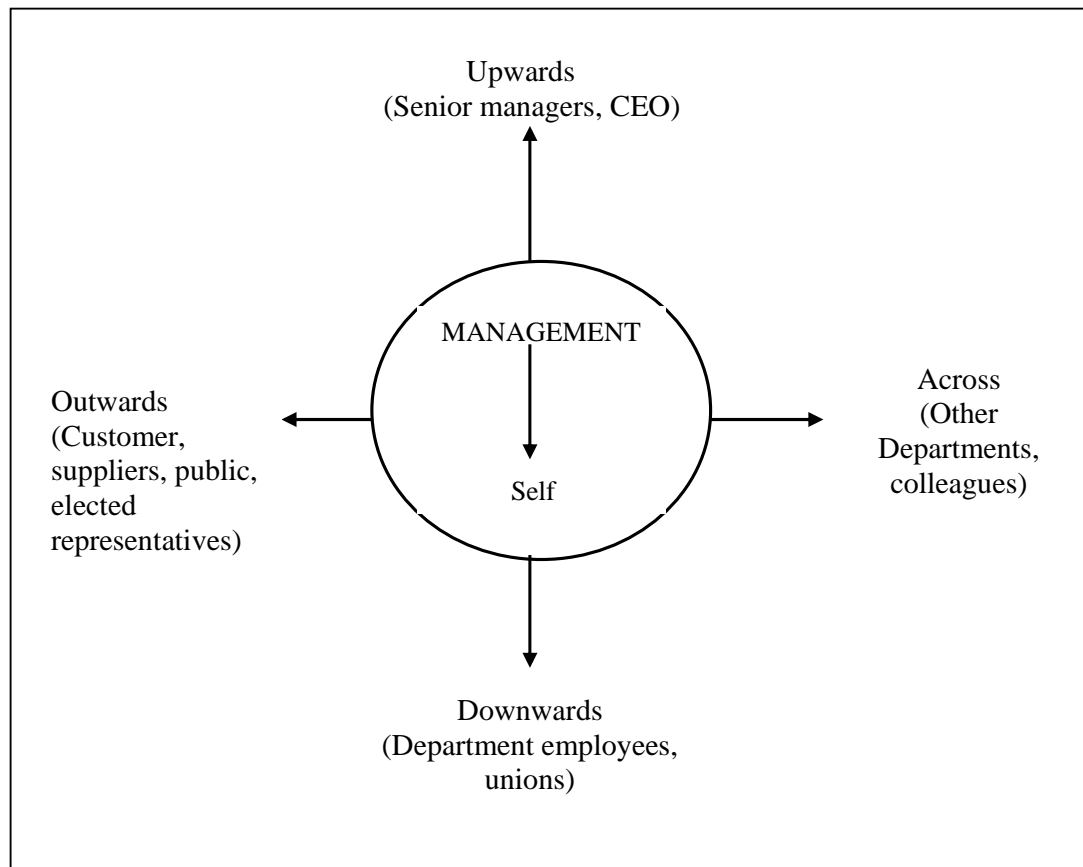The benefits of effective communication practices are:

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[30] This is a compilation of material from existing literature. Proper referencing has been overlooked to maintain simplicity for use of PRI representatives. It will not be used for any commercial purpose.

- Increased productivity
- Better quality of services and products
- More staff suggestions
- Higher levels of creativity
- Greater employee job satisfaction
- Decreased absenteeism and
- Reduced staff turnover[31].

(ii) Patterns of Communication
Managers at all levels engage in four main types of activity, that is, planning, organizing, leading and evaluating (to be covered in next session). As shown in figure 4, there are five levels at which managers must communicate, that is upwards, downwards, across, outwards and self.

Figure 4: The five directions of management communication

Upwards
(Senior managers, CEO)

MANAGEMENT

Outwards
(Customer,
suppliers, public,
elected
representatives)

Across
(Other
Departments,
colleagues)

Self

Downwards
(Department employees,
unions)

Source*: Hargie, G., Dickson, D. & Tourish, D. (2004), Communication Skills for Effective Management, pp. 9.

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[31] Hargie, G., Dickson, D. & Tourish, D. (2004), Communication Skills for Effective Management, pp. 5-9

In many organizations, communication flows in one direction only i.e. is downwards. In downward communication mangers perceive their role as directive i.e. decisions are taken by management and imposed on subordinates, who are expected to obey orders. There is a wide gap between the employees and the management. Such a situation clearly states the concept of "workers work and managers manage". Communication in such a workplace takes place on "need to know basis" which results in low morale and low productivity.

Upward communication is usually communication initiated from the employees and tends to be non-directive in nature. In upward communication manager asks for suggestions, gives adequate information and thereby ideas are shared. This is top-down-top communication. Communication flows in all the directions and employee opinions are actively solicited and valued. Such an approach to communication results clear understanding of roles and responsibilities at work which further results in increased productivity, and positive attitude towards work and the management.

Present day organisations demands high degree of coordination among work groups across organisation. This coordination is possible only through effective, clear and two-way communication in an organisation. Communication has been shown to perform information, motivational, social/maintenance functions in an organisation and control function.

(iii) Active Listening
Active listening is a way of listening and responding to another person which results in mutual understanding. Often when people talk to each other, they don't listen attentively. Active listening is a structured form of listening and responding to the speaker. Active listening involves listening to the speaker with a **purpose,** that is, purpose to gain information, understand others, solve their problems, show support, concern, etc. It requires that the receiver carefully and attentively listen to the various messages, understand the meaning, and then verify the meaning by offering feedback. This also helps in avoiding misunderstandings between people.

(iv) Forms of Communication
There are four forms of communication:
Written Communication: Written communication should be used when the situation is formal, official, or long term. Letters are formal in tone and addressed to an individual. They are used for official notices, formally recorded statements, and lengthy communications. Reports are more impersonal and more formal than a letter. They are used to convey information, analyses, and recommendations. Written communications to groups include bulletin-board notices, posters, exhibits, displays, and audio and visual aids. Written communication should be drafted in simple words to promote uniformity and help in clear understanding.

Online Communication: Electronic mail (e-mail) is a quick way to send a message to one or more people. However few points to be considered while communicating through emails are:
- Make sure that your access password is protected;
- Use proper structure & layout;
- Be careful with formatting;
- Use a meaningful subject;
- Do not write in capital letters as it indicates that you are angry;
- Read the email before you send it;

- Save a copy of your email.

Verbal or Spoken Communication: This includes informal staff meetings, planned conferences, and mass meetings. In oral communication care should be taken that there is clarity in voice and delivery of message. Oral communication results in speedy transfer of message with immediate feedback. People can clarify doubts (if any) by asking questions that very moment. Moreover it has a motivating effect as well. Face-to-face meeting with the supervisor can result in high morale and a feeling of being heard.

Nonverbal Communication: Nonverbal messages include images, actions and behaviors used to communicate. Images include photographs, film, charts, tables, graphs, and video. The effective communicator maintains eye contact with the people to whom he/she is communicating.

(v) Communication Channels
Thus organisational communication network is made up of two types of channels which are interrelated and interdependent, that is, formal and informal channels. These channels determine the extent of smoothness, rapidity and correctness with which the message flows in an organisation.

The formal channel is the deliberately created, officially prescribed path for flow of communication between the various positions in the organisations. This channel though a narrow communication channel allows for flow of essential information through the line of superior or subordinate only.

The informal channel of communication also known as grapevine is the result not of any official action but of the operation of social forces at workplaces. Grapevine is more active when there is high organisational excitement such as policy changes, automation, computerisation or personnel changes. The informal communication is part and parcel of the organisational process. The only thing management can do in this respect is to take suitable action to minimize the adverse effect of this channel.

(vi) Communication Behavior
There are a variety of ways in which we behave (knowingly or unknowingly) while communicating with other. There are four different types of communication behavior-Aggressive, Passive, Avoidance and Assertive

Aggressive Ehaviour offends or isolates someone else's rights. It is a showing, perhaps both physically and verbally, of anger or dominance. Aggression can sometimes be an expression of fear, lack of self-esteem, or inability to control a situation in any other way.

Passive or Accommodating behaviour is often shown in not wanting to say "no" to unreasonable requests, wanting to appear polite and helpful in an excessive way. Submissive behaviour often leads to a build up of resentment which can show itself in loss of self-esteem or an eventual aggressive outburst.

Assertive Behaviour means stating your own feelings whilst acknowledging the other person's point of view. Assertive behaviour is often thought of as a Win-Win situation where both parties in the communication process benefit from increased effectiveness. It involves

clear and steady communication, standing up for your rights and beliefs, whilst looking for ways to resolve possible problems.

(vii) Barriers to Effective Communication
No matter how good the communication system in an organisation is, unfortunately barriers can and do often occur. Recognizing barriers to effective communication is a first step in improving communication style. Barriers to effective communication include:

➢ **Physical Barriers**
Factor which frequently causes communication difficulties are staffs located in different buildings or on different sites, staff shortages etc.

➢ **Organisational Structure**
Organisational structure which is unclear makes it confusing as to whom to communicate with. Inefficient or inappropriate information systems leads to staff being uncertain about what is expected of them also result in unclear or failure in effective communication

➢ **Attitudinal Barriers**
Attitudinal barriers come about as a result of problems with staff in an organisation, for example, poor management, lack of consultation with employees, personality conflicts which can result in people delaying or refusing to communicate.

➢ **Lack of Sensitivity to Receiver**
Communication may fail when a message is not adapted to its receiver for example, receiver's needs, knowledge of the subject, and language skills.

➢ **Lack of Basic Communication Skills**
The use of difficult or inappropriate words in communication can prevent people from understanding the message.

➢ **Insufficient Knowledge of the Subject**
If the sender lacks specific information about something, the receiver will likely receive an unclear or mixed message. For example if a receiver is unable to understand a message filled with technical information, communication will break down.

➢ **Channel Barriers**
If the sender chooses an inappropriate channel of communication, communication may fail.

➢ **Long Communication Chain**
The longer the communication chain, the greater is the chance for error. If a message is passed through too many receivers, the message often becomes distorted.

➢ **Emotional Distractions**
If emotions interfere with the creation and transmission of a message, they can also disrupt reception. If you receive a report from your supervisor regarding proposed changes in work procedures and you do not particularly like your supervisor, you may have trouble even reading the report objectively. You may read, not objectively, but to find fault. You may misinterpret words and read negative impressions between the lines. Consequently, you are likely to misunderstand part or all of the report.

➢ **No Provision for Feedback**

Since communication is a two-way process, the sender must search for a means of getting a response from the receiver. If a team leader does not permit any interruptions or questions while discussing projects, he may find that team members may not completely understand what they are to do.

Barriers in communication can be overcome through clarity in the purpose of communication, being sensitive towards the receiver, encouraging two communication and using appropriate language.

Summing up

Clear communication is not easy. The method, context, structure, language, knowledge and an understanding of the needs of the recipients to whom the information is being transmitted are vital in understanding the importance of communication in the organisation. Without proper and clear communication, no organisation can survive.

23. TEAM BUILDING

[32]"A team is a group organized to work together to accomplish a set of objectives that cannot be achieved effectively by individuals." On the other hand "teamwork is the ability to work together towards a common vision".

Organizations are now looking to build teams with people of complementary skills to work towards achieving the corporate objectives and goals. Teams are formed when a combination of skills, knowledge and expertise are required to undertake a particular task and a single individual may not have such a combination. Teams play a very vital role in organizations. For example a combination of skills, competencies, attitudes, expertise can help organisation in overcoming the challenges, can help in improving its quality standards, can help in planning and accomplishing new projects, and help in tackling change initiatives. It can also help in cross-functional co-ordination especially in large and complex organisations.

(i) Characteristics of a Good Team
The characteristics of a good team are it has:
- **Purpose:** Members share a sense of why the team exists, what tasks are to be accomplished and are committed in accomplishing its mission and goals

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- **Priorities:** Members know what needs to be done next, by whom, and by when to achieve team goals.
- **Roles:** Members know their roles, have a clearly specified authority to manage their own work processes and have a clearly designated team membership in getting tasks done.
- **Shared Responsibility**: Establishing an environment in which all team members feel responsible for the performance of the team.
- **Decisions**: Authority and decision-making lines are clearly understood. Team members encourage others in the decision-making process as well.
- **Conflict:** Conflict is dealt with openly and is considered important to decision-making and personal growth.
- **Personal Traits:** Members feel their unique personalities are appreciated and well utilized.
- **Norms:** Group norms for working together are set and seen as standards for every one in the groups.
- **Success:** Members know clearly when the team has met with success and share in this equally and proudly.
- **Training:** Opportunities for feedback and updating skills are provided and taken advantage of by team members.
- **Sharing atmosphere:** Shares openly and authentically with others their personal feelings, opinions, thoughts, and perceptions about problems and conditions
- **Interpersonal skills:** Members believe in high communication and there by create a climate of trust and open and honest communication. Each team member respects and is tolerant to individual differences.

(ii) Stages of Team Development
Understanding the stages of development of the team is key to successful team management. Tuckman and Jenson have described the sequence of the team evolution in their work which is the best model to understand and manage teams.

<u>Stage 1:</u> Forming

This is the stage when the team members assemble and get together. People get acquainted with each other and try to assess their own roles in the team. At this stage two most common questions in the minds of the new team members are *where and how they fit in with the team.* This stage involves easy acceptance of each other, avoiding controversies and direction and support from team leader in settling down.

<u>Stage 2:</u> Storming

This stage introduces conflicts and competition as each individual begins to start work on the plan. The polite interactions of the orientation stage may soon be replaced by conflict. Stress of the work teamed with individual differences on issues may give rise to conflict. Interpersonal and communication issues dominate this stage leading to a flare up of conflict and confrontation.

The leader needs utmost restraint and maturity at this stage of team development. He has to bring forth all his networking skills, emotional intelligence and people management abilities in creating the right atmosphere, create winning relationships between team members and

bring their focus back on team vision and goals. Although conflict may damage or destroy a team, it may also strengthen the team as the members learn to accept and constructively resolve their differences.

Stage 3: Norming

As conflicts begin to get resolved, the work flows smoothly and quickly. Team conflict is replaced by a feeling of cohesiveness as the team experiences a sense of unity or team identity. This stage is characterized by feeling of satisfaction, higher self esteem and lower anxiety. The focus now shifts to common team objectives and performance related issues. Team members knowing their strengths and weaknesses try to achieve common goals and improve performance by leveraging the complementary skills of their other team members. In other words, team members feel more confident in delegating and sharing their work responsibilities.

Stage 4: Performing

This is the stage where a perfect group identity is created. Now that the teams have been together for quite some time, there are higher chances of improved and efficient productivity. The performance is at the peak due to high motivation.

Stage 5: Adjourning

Fifth phase, *adjourning*, involves completing the task and breaking up the team. A successful team leader understands the different stages of the group formation and development. He manages the team effectively by moderating his team managerial styles according to the stage of development in which the team is passing through.

(iv) Problems in a Team

Figure 1: The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

Source*: http://www.pfdf.org/leaderbooks/L2l/summer2003/lencioni.html*

The five dysfunctions in a team are

1. Absence of Trust

Strategy for Overcoming:
- Identify and discuss individual strengths and weaknesses
- Spend considerable time in face-to-face meetings and working sessions

2. Fear of Conflict

Strategy for Overcoming:
- Acknowledge that conflict is required for productive meetings
- Understand individual team member's natural conflict styles, and establish common ground rules for engaging in conflict

3. Lack of Commitment

Strategy for Overcoming:
- Review commitments at the end of each meeting to ensure all team members are aligned
- Adopt a "disagree and commit" mentality—make sure all team members are committed regardless of initial disagreements

4. Avoidance of Accountability

Strategy for Overcoming:
- Explicitly communicate goals and standards of behavior
- Regularly discuss performance versus goals and standards

5. Inattention to Results

Strategy for Overcoming:
- Keep the team focused on tangible group goals
- Reward individuals based on team goals and collective success

(v) Leading Teams – How to Get Teams Going

➢ **Help the Team Identify its Purpose**

People work more effectively when they understand the goals they are trying to achieve. As a leader it is your job to help the team see the desired outcome of their efforts and help them set specific goals and milestones along the way.

➢ **Set the Scope and Boundaries**

By helping teams manage the scope of their work you will keep them more focused on target, to reach the goals more quickly.

➢ **Show your Belief**

If you don't believe in the team concept, you will not effectively lead teams. Show through both your words and actions that you believe in them. Once they have purpose and goals and your belief, they are on their way to success.

➢ **Define your Role**

Your role is to lead, not to do the work or make all of the decisions. Let the team know what your role is. Help them see how you are relying on their experience, knowledge and intellect in the completion of the team's work.

➢ **Be a Supporter**

Support the team with your actions. Teams will experience obstacles and road blocks and it is your job to remove those roadblocks, find additional resources, and generally provide support.

➢ **Be a Facilitator**

To facilitate means "to make easier" and that is your role. Help the team succeed. Provide guidance when needed. Let the team succeed and develop themselves towards greater future achievement at the same time.

➢ **Communicate**

Communication is the foundation for all team functioning. Without good communication between team members, the team will fall apart and not work as an effective team unit. A team must have an efficient mechanism to meet, discuss and share information, for example regular team meetings. Poor communication in a team may lead to conflict among team member, mixed or wrong information being passed on, and lack of direction for the team. If every member of the team just does there own thing, the team has lost its direction and has failed to work as a team and the team not giving feedback to each other.
There can barriers to effective communication. These include:
• Lack of a clearly stated, shared and measurable purpose
• Lack of training in interdisciplinary collaboration
• Role and leadership ambiguity
• Team too large or too small
• Lack of appropriate mechanisms for timely exchange of information.

Team members look for following qualities in their leader:
• commitment to people as well as task
• desire to support and serve the team
• enthusiasm, energy, inspiration and sufficient expertise.
• willingness to shoulder responsibility rather than delegating the entire workload to the team members
• ability to make the team come together to achieve the goals and objectives

24. SAAKSHAR BHARAT MISSION

[33]Since independence, the central and state governments have been expanding the provision of primary formal and non-formal education to realize the goal of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE). However there are still drop-outs from school, those who never went to school due to economic conditions, unorganized laborers, child laborers, other marginalized communities like SC, ST and women from rural and even urban families, who have not been accounted in surveys and Censuses for various reasons. Female literacy is much poorer than male literacy in India.

To impart functional literacy to non-literates in the age group of 15-35 years in a time bound manner, the National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched in 1988 and continued through Ninth and Tenth Five Year Plans. By the end of the Tenth Five Year Plan (March 2007), NLM had covered 597 districts under Total Literacy Campaign (TLC), 485 districts under Post Literacy Programme (PLP) and 328 districts under Continuing Education Programme (CEP). As a cumulative outcome of these efforts, 127.45 million persons became literate. Of these, 60% learners were females, 23% Scheduled Castes (SCs) and 12% Scheduled Tribes (STs). Despite significant accomplishments of the Mission, illiteracy continues to be an area of national concern. Though precise number of illiterates at this stage is not available and will be known only after 2011 census, 2001 census had revealed that there were still 259.52 million illiterate adults (in the age group of 15 +) in the country. Gender, social and regional

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disparities in literacy also continue to persist. Adult education is therefore indispensable as it supplements the efforts to enhance and sustain literacy levels through formal education.

The Prime Minister launched Saakshar Bharat, a centrally sponsored scheme of Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India (GOI), on the International Literacy Day, Sep 8, 2009. The aim of the programme is to promote and strengthen adult education in the lifelong learning perspective and create a literate society. To this end, it seeks to establish adult and continuing education as a permanent and institutionalized set up parallel to formal education system. This would strengthen the rights perspective for adult education. It aims to further promote and strengthen adult education, specially of women, by extending educational options to those adults who, having lost the opportunity of access to formal education and crossed the standard age for receiving such education, now feel a need for learning of any type, including, literacy, basic education (equivalent to formal education), vocational education (skill development), physical and emotional development, practical arts, applied science, sports and recreation.

In this context Saakshar Bharat has been devised as the new variant of National Literacy Mission. Saakshar Bharat will cover all adults in the age group of 15 and beyond though its primary focus will be on women. The scheme has not only been relieved of the shortcomings noted in its preceding editions, but also has several new features added to it. Basic literacy, post literacy and continuing education programmes will now form a continuum, rather than sequential segments. Besides the volunteer based mass campaign approach, provision has been made for alternative approaches to adult education. Jan Shiksha Kendras (Adult Education Centres - AECs) will be set up to coordinate and manage all programmes within their territorial jurisdiction. State Government, as against the districts in the earlier versions, and Panchyati Raj Institutions, along with communities will be valued stakeholders. Vigorous monitoring and evaluation systems will be installed. Last, but not the least, budgetary support has been enhanced substantially.

The Government has recognized literacy as its key programme instrument for emancipation and empowerment of women. Efforts of the Government to give impetus to school education, health, nutrition, skill development and women empowerment in general are impeded by the continuation of female illiteracy. Government expects increase in female literacy to become a force multiplier for all other social development programmes. However, this is only the instrumental value of female literacy. Its intrinsic value is in emancipating the Indian woman through the creation of critical consciousness to take charge of her environment where she faces multiple deprivations and disabilities on the basis of class, caste and gender.

About the Mission

Saakshar Bharat Mission came into operation from Oct 1, 2009 and will be in operation till March 31, 2012 unless decided otherwise by the Government of India. Literacy programmes will have timeframe of 18 months. Equivalency, Vocational and Continuing Education Programme will run uninterruptedly from the date of sanction till March 31, 2012. Within three years, the Saakshar Bharat Programme will cover 70 million non-literate adults (60 million of them, women) in 15 plus age group in 365 low female literacy districts of India. In the state of Gujarat it will cover 121 talukas of 13 districts - Dahod, Banaskantha, Panchmahal, Dangs, Narmada, Patan, Surendranagar, Kutchh, Sabarkantha, Bhavnagar,

Amreli, Junagadh, and Jamnagar, where the adult female literacy rate is below 50% as per 2001 census.

Key Components of the Mission

- The programmes under the Mission will strive to impart functional literacy to illiterate adults in the age group of fifteen and beyond; enable the neo-literates to continue their learning beyond basic literacy and acquire equivalent to formal educational system; equip the neo-literates with skills to improve their living and earning conditions and provide them opportunities for continuing education.
- To ensure equity and inclusiveness, and achieve overall objectives of reducing gender gap in literacy levels and minimize social disparities, nearly 60 out of 70 million targeted beneficiaries, that is 85% of the total target, will be women and nearly 50% of the target group will comprise of SCs/STs and minorities (Muslims).
- Since illiteracy is far more widespread in rural areas, as compared to urban areas, the programme will concentrate on rural areas, especially in the districts that have low (50% and below) female literacy rates besides 33 extremists affected districts. Nearly 1,70,000 gram panchayats in 370 odd districts will be covered. Residual illiteracy in urban areas will be addressed through innovative partnership with NGOs, private sectors, convergence, etc.
- The remaining areas could be covered through convergence with other poverty alleviation and similar programmes of the government.
- District, block and gram panchayats have been given key role in planning, implementing and monitoring of the programme. The mission will be implemented through gram panchayats at the grass roots level and by other Panchayati Raj Institutions at the district and sub-district level.
- State Government will be involved in overall monitoring. NLMA will be the national implementing agency at the apex level.

Objectives of the Mission

The Mission has four broad objectives, namely:
1. Impart functional literacy and numeracy to non-literate and non-numerate adults
2. Enable the neo-literate adults to continue their learning beyond basic literacy and acquire equivalency to formal educational system
3. Impart non and neo-literates relevant skill development programmes to improve their earning and living conditions
4. Promote a learning society by providing opportunities to neo literate adults for continuing education

Targets

The principal target of the mission is to impart functional literacy to 70 million adults in the age group of 15 years and beyond. Auxiliary target of the mission is to cover 1.5 million adults under basic education programme and equal number under vocational (skill development) programme. Within these targets, the Mission will primarily focus on, but not limit to, women. Schedules Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Minorities, other disadvantaged groups and adolescents in rural areas in low literacy states will be other focus groups. For each focused group and area, there will be a specific target and for each target, an explicit approach and strategy.

Women

Women being the prime focus and predominant participants, the entire programme will be given gender treatment. The gender, social and cultural barriers that women face will be taken into consideration while designing teaching learning programmes. Gender will not be seen in isolation but in conjunction with other social categories like caste, ethnicity, religion, disability, etc. Gender perspective will permeate all components of the programme, including the approach, strategies, planning, management structures, teaching-learning materials and monitoring and evaluation. Special priority will be given to women belonging to SC, ST, Minority and other disadvantaged groups in rural areas.

The approach will be to build on women's existing knowledge and levels of their literacy and numeracy in order to ensure that in the long run the existing levels are substantially upgraded and they are able to use the acquired skills in their own contexts. Innovative, tried and tested programmes related to women's literacy, including interventions related to thematic or issue-based literacy will be up scaled. Women will be engaged in large numbers as volunteers and instructors to encourage women learners to participate in the programme.

Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Minorities

The SCs (15%), STs (8%) and Minorities (20%) together constitute more than 40% of India's population. In terms of illiterate population, SCs constitute 20.5% and STs 12%. Minorities, especially Muslims, constitute another large block of illiterate population. Targets have been fixed taking into account not only the share of their total population, but also their share of the non-literate population and commensurate resources should be invested for raising their literacy level. State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA) and other sub-state level implementing agencies must draw special strategies taking into account their socio-cultural background and sensitivities and share these strategies with National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA). Larger roles for their respective communities need to be conceived in planning and implementation structures and processes. Monitoring mechanism will have an inbuilt feature to maintain a constant watch and highlight the progress made by the learners belonging to these groups while simultaneously taking timely corrective measures to prevent relapse to illiteracy.

Adolescents

The dominant aspect of the design interventions of the prevalent educational programmes for non/semi-literate adolescents is fertility, sexual behavior, planned parenthood etc. To address the real life needs of these adolescents, innovative design interventions will be conceived that would lead to acquisition of marketable qualifications supported by certification. These programmes will be a combination of basic education and practical training in a skill or vocation. Camp based instruction has been found more suitable for the needs of the adolescents. The Mission will have a flexi approach to provide room for such innovations

Geographical Area Coverage

Another goal of the Mission is to minimize inter and intra regional/state disparities. Inter state disparities range between 33% and 88%. Intra state disparities are equally stunning. To minimize regional disparities, the programme, in its first phase, that is during the 11th Plan period (Mar 31, 2012) will remain confined to districts with adult female literacy rate of 50% or less as per 2001 Census. Nearly 18 crore non-literate adults live in these districts. Besides,

districts affected with left wing extremism will also be covered under the Mission irrespective of the existing literacy rate.

According to 2001 Census, 84% of India's non-literates live in rural areas. Since illiteracy is far more widespread in rural areas as compared to urban India, and for the reason that urban areas are better endowed with educational infrastructure leading to better access to opportunities, the Mission would concentrate on and deploy public resources in rural areas. An all out effort may be made to saturate rural areas first before expanding to non-rural areas. In these areas, the focus will be on women and adolescents belonging to SC, ST, Minorities and other disadvantaged groups.

Strategy for Urban Areas

In the urban areas, Mission objectives may be achieved innovatively, using new actors. The programme may be handled through Jan Shikshan Sansthans, State Resource Centres, NGOs, social groups and any other institutions identified by NLMA through Public Private Partnership (PPP) or any other mode. Linkages with Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation under Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM) could also be developed for synergy and augmentation of resources.

Financing and Budget

A total financial outlay for Saakshar Bharat during the last 3 years of Eleventh Plan period is Rs.6502.70 crores, out of which the Central share will be Rs.4993.02 crore. The share of funding between Central and State Government is in the ratio of 75:25 and in the case of North-Eastern States including Sikkim in the ratio of 90:10. The allocation of funds to the states will be based on adult female illiterate population in the districts covered under the programme. As the Mission progresses, the expenditure pattern will follow the overall inter-se distribution.

Approach for Mission

Success of the Mission will depend on creating a social environment conducive to literacy by addressing the whole society, both educated and the non-literate, especially the women. A key aspect of the demand creation will be making visible to the learners the value, importance and relevance that literacy will have in their day to day lives, including women in SHGs, PRIs, CBOs and NGOs.

The central objective of environment building for literacy will be to generate a positive, natural and spontaneous demand for literacy which does not exist uniformly in all parts of the country. Along with this, the environment building activities will be directed towards addressing mis-conceptions about literacy on the one hand and to enlist the involvement and support of all sections of the civil society in literacy promotion efforts on the other. Multiple strategies will be adopted in context to local conditions. All forms of media including print, electronic and folk media, will be simultaneously harnessed to create positive perceptions about literacy and to simultaneously motivate and spur to action both potential literacy volunteers and learners. Information Education and Communication (IEC) materials, designed with the help of State Resource Centres and other agencies, will be used extensively to create a conducive environment for literacy learning. As part of the environment building campaign, events and meetings will be organized at village panchayat and block levels with

all stakeholders such as community and political leaders, PRI functionaries, mahila mandals, educational institutions and the intelligentsia to seek their support and involvement in the programme. A Steering Committee and supporting committee, as decided by NLMA, may oversee and coordinate the campaign nationally. Funds from the management head besides sponsorships may be used for this purpose.

Though Mass Campaign Approach will continue to be the dominant strategy, the scheme discounts a homogenous approach uniformly throughout the country. To ensure that basic literacy is provided through a variety of context specific and group specific approaches, innovation would be encouraged and flexibility in sanctioning projects within a broad range of approved costs will be exercised. Implementing agencies may adopt any approach/ model or a mix of approaches/ models, including the formats outlined below

Volunteer-based Mass Campaign Approach
Under this approach, volunteer teaching takes place on a mass scale. A volunteer acts as a mobiliser, trainer and teacher and is responsible for imparting literacy, on an average, to 8-10 learners. The implementing agency at the operational level, will be responsible for identification of the potential learners as well as volunteers, making arrangements for their training, distribution of literacy kits to learners and volunteers, keeping track of the progress made by each learner-volunteer group, ensuring that the momentum of learning is not lost and simultaneously ensuring that learning takes place at the pace suitable to the learner.

Incentives to the Volunteers and Learners
Voluntary Literacy Educators are not paid any remuneration. Since high motivational level of Voluntary Literacy Educators is critical, they need to be motivated through different means including public recognition, at different levels, of their contribution besides other incentives and rewards. Payment of honorarium to Literacy Educators may also be considered by the State Governments, gram panchayat or NLMA through any funding source, including donations or public private partnership, but not from budgetary support of Government of India. SLMA/District/gram panchayat could also explore the possibility of giving motivational incentives to learners in an innovative manner.

Centre-based Approach - Resident Instructor
In the eventuality of qualified volunteers not being a resident in the village, instructors may be engaged from outside to live with the community and provide instructional teaching to the learners and assist them in completing basic literacy course. On an average, one Resident Instructor will be required to teach at least 30 learners in a period of one year. The Resident Instructor will be provided an honorarium fixed by the NLMA.

In this approach the centre will function for about 7-8 hours every day, and individual/groups of learners will attend classes for a couple of hours or more depending on the free time available to them. The instructors will be especially chosen for their sensitivity to issues of gender and caste equality and their commitment to Constitutional values of democracy and secularism. Basic educational qualification and selection procedure for a Resident Instructor will be laid down by NLMA.

Residential Camps
The residential camps may be organized, specially for adolescents and young adults in the age group of 15-25 years, who might have already completed primary education (Standard IV/V) but later relapsed to illiteracy for want of follow up; those who dropped out of the

school system and are now too old to rejoin school and those altogether excluded from systematic education. Identified young adults and adolescents will be motivated to participate in residential camps, which would be organized at a suitable location in the block with support of a team of Resource Persons. Resident camps may be organised through NGOs, SRCs, JSSs etc. provided they have experience and expertise.

<u>Part-Residential Camp – Part-Volunteer-Based Approach</u>
This approach may be suitable for group-specific learners, such as non literate members of self-help groups, women's groups, members of gram panchayats or persons who may have joined together in a common cause. There are many such groups in the country today and many of them also function as a forum for credit and savings. It would provide for basic literacy in camps conducted for a suitable period, keeping in view the convenience of the beneficiaries, interspersed with guided learning in volunteer mode. These camps would enable learners to acquire literacy skills of pre-determined levels, simultaneously, providing opportunity for discussion and debate on issues relevant to their living and working conditions.

Operational Framework

To implement the programme, 1.70 lakh Lok Shiksha Kendras (Adult Education Centers - AECs) will be established in gram panchayats of the districts covered under the programme. It will subsume the already sanctioned Continuing Education Centers (CECs) in a particular district. Existing CECs and the nodal CECs in the districts not covered under the programme will have to be closed down, unless the state government wishes to run them at their own cost through Public Private Partnership or otherwise. Gram panchyats may also be given this offer. Specific approval of NLMA will be required to continue an existing CEC under this programme. Well equipped multi- functional Lok Shikha Kendras (AECs) will be set up at gram panchayat level to provide institutional, managerial and resource support to literacy and life long education at grass root level. One AEC will be set up in a gram panchayat with a population of 5000. An additional AEC may be set up if the population of gram panchayat is more than 5000. The AEC will be manned by two paid Coordinators (Preraks) to be engaged on contractual basis. AECs will function from buildings provided by gram panchayat. Preraks should preferably be from marginalized groups (SCs/STs/ Minorities) and at least one of them should be a woman. A Prerak should at least be a matriculate

The Lok Shiksha Kendra will be the operational arm of the mission at the grass root level and responsible for delivering the entire range of activities under the Mission including, Literacy, Basic Education, Vocational Education and Continuing Education within their territorial jurisdiction. Two Preraks may be engaged on payment of honorarium to discharge administrative and academic tasks. Preraks will also be assigned teaching responsibilities. Together with volunteer teachers they will constitute the resource group in a village. Since the Kendras will not have buildings of their own, panchyats and concerned line departments may be obligated to allow the centers to function from the Panchyat Ghars, schools, aganwadi centers etc. Gradually funds may be made available for construction of such centers.

A Lok Shiksha Kendra will act as a centre for registration of learners for all teaching learning activities in their jurisdiction; Nerve center for literacy campaign including identification of the learners and volunteers, batching and matching of the learners with suitable volunteers as well as their training, providing literacy kits to learners and volunteers, keeping track of the progress made by each learner-volunteer group; Nodal centre for mass mobilization

Management Structure

- The programme will be implemented in Mission mode. Institutional framework, from the national to the state, district, block and gram panchyat, will be set up involving the state government, district administration and PRIs. Adequate representation of women in these structures, especially in decision-making roles will have to be ensured.
- The National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA), an autonomous wing of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, will be the Nodal Agency at the national level. It would be responsible for the overall planning and management of the scheme, including release of funds to States/Voluntary Agencies, mobilization of resources, procurement, mass campaigns, maintenance of national database on illiteracy and adult education, publicity, facilitate techno-pedagogical support, research, monitoring and evaluation, etc.
- A National Resource Group (NRG) will be set up to render technical and managerial support to the Mission through NLMA. No permanent employee will be posted to NLMA or NRG. However, NLMA may engage short term/ medium term consultants and support services in the field of general management, pedagogy, mass mobilization, evaluation, ITC or any other activity as may be decided by the Executive Committee of NLMA for a period not exceeding three years.
- At the State level, the State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA) would be responsible for preparation, implementation and monitoring of the programmes. Respective State Governments will provide a full time Secretariat to the SLMA besides contractual employees as may be agreed to by the NLMA.
- The State Plan will be an ensemble of district Plans. Based on the Mission Strategy and Guidelines, SLMA would facilitate preparation of the District AE Plans through intensive discussion and guidance, to reflect the variety in programme types and innovation in implementation methods in relation to local specific situations, within the overall framework of national guidelines.
- The NLMA and SLMA would encourage and provide services of experienced and committed persons from all sections of society, including persons who are employees of Central/ State government, district administration, university/ college or a public sector undertaking. These persons may be released by their establishments to work for the literacy and continuing education programme on secondment basis. The period of their work should be treated as duty in their parent departments and they would continue to draw their salary and allowances for this period from their parent establishments.
- The SLMA will also be responsible for disbursal of funds to the district implementing agency, monitoring and review of the progress of the scheme in the state, collection of Utilisation Certificates (UCs) from the districts and submission of a consolidated UC to NLMA. It would also be responsible for capacity building, field appraisals and pedagogic support and act as State Resource Group for the programme in the state
- At the district level district administration or Zilla Parishads (ZP) may be made responsible for the implementation of the programme. A special committee and District Resource Group will have to be constituted to function under the aegis of ZP. Gram Panchyats, along with communities, will be the implementing agency at the operational level, that is, all villages within a GP.

Suggestive Management Structure
At Gram Panchayat Level:
A Panchyat Lok Shiksha Samiti will be formed of approximate 13 members. Panchayat president (Sarpanch) will be the chairperson of the committee and vice chairperson will be selected from among the committee members
Members (50% women)
Women elected representatives of the Panchayat - 2
Head Master/ Teacher from the local school chosen by the Panchayat - 1
Representatives of the community (with proportionate representation from
SCs/STs/ Minorities) - 3
Member Secretary of the Education Committee – 1
Mahila Mandal/ SHG Member - 1
User Group – 2
Social Activists – 1
Literates/ Opinion Makers (Sr. Govt. Employee/ Doctor) - 1
Member Secretary: Senior Prerak
Secretariat - Two full time contractual employees (Senior Prerak and Prerak)

Major task of the committee is management of the Lok Shikshan Kendra

1. Identification of non-literate women and voluntary teachers in the gram panchayat
2. Sourcing, storing and supply of teaching-learning material and making them available to enlisted teachers
3. Micro planning at gram panchayat level and supervision of literacy classes
4. Logistical support for National level Test/ Learners Assessment
5. Payment of honorarium to literacy educators
6. Evaluation
7. Claim to be made for award of Panchayat Mahila Shakshrata Puraskar award after achieving 100% female literacy
8. Setting up Lok Shiksha Kendra for continuing education with funds from Panchayat and award money.

Block Level: Block Lok Shiksha Samiti
Chairperson - President of the Block Panchayat
Members - All women elected representatives of the Block Panchayat, College/School teachers, representatives of the community, NGO, etc
Member Secretary - BDO
Secretariat – Up to two full time contractual employees
Tasks –
1. Preparation of Block Panchayat-level Literacy Plan
2. Supervision of literacy classes
3. Coordination between gram panchayats and district level agency
4. Monitoring of the programme at block level

District Level: Zilla Lok Shiksha Samiti
Chairperson - District Panchayat President
Members –
District Collector: Coordinator

Selected block and gram panchayat Presidents (of which at least 50% women), District Heads of selected departments, NGO representatives, Educationist and Social Workers, Directors of JSS

Member Secretary – CEO, Zilla Panchayat

Secretariat - A full time officer of the Samiti will hold no other additional charge. State Government will provide a minimum supporting staff to manage the affairs of the Samiti. Besides, Samiti may engage up to 5 contractual employees.

Tasks

1.   Planning of district level campaign for literacy
2.   Communication of strategy to all gram panchayat heads
3.   Undertaking mass mobilization and environment building activities.
4.   Organisation of Mahila Saksharata orientation at sub-district levels and through district-wise gramsabha meetings
5.   Creating the work chart and role definitions for participating agencies such as learners, teachers, evaluators, panchayats
7.   Organising supply of teaching-learning material to panchayats
8.   Supervising teaching-learning
9.   Organising complementary action through SHGs and MGNREGA groups
10. Planning and implementing common testing/ evaluation on 1st week of September each year (to begin on Sept. 1st, 2010)
11. Payment of honorarium and award of Panchayat Mahila Saksharata Puraskar
12. Setting up Lok Shiksha Kendra for continuing education through convergence of funds
13. Placing all relevant information in the public domain on the programme

Role of Panchayats

The Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) are the main implementing agency at the district, block and gram panchayat levels, with the SLMA and the communities at the village level as valued stakeholders.

Especially at the gram panchayat level, it is envisioned as a programme of, for and by the people under the auspices of the village panchayat. All stakeholders, especially at the grassroots level would have due say and role in the planning and implementation of the programme. The role of MLMA and SLMA is that of catalytic agencies, facilitators and resources providers.

Activities and responsibilities have been delineated to the gram panchyat level. Panchayats or the agency designated by the SLMA will be responsible for micro-planning in respect of preparation of action plan at GP level. Micro-planning includes survey, data collection, mass mobilization, training schedules of different levels of functionaries, procurement and distribution of teaching learning materials, evaluation of learning outcome of the learners, budgetary requirements, etc. A GP level plan will have to be formulated taking into account all programmes and activities of the Mission. Blocks will aggregate gram panchayat plans in the block and add their own activity budget to it. The District Implementing Agency assembles all the block plans, adds its own activity budget and submits it to SLMA. SLMA aggregates all district plans, add their own state activity and submit it to NLMA. The state plan will thus be an ensemble of all district plans plus SLMA's own activity budget. The NLMA will appraise each state plan and issue administrative and financial sanction based on which funds (Central Government share) will be released to SLMA.

Convergence of other Programmes

NLMA and SLMAs work towards actively promoting convergence of the Mission's programs and activities with other development strategies especially in education, rural development, health, child and women development, poverty alleviation, agriculture, Panchayati Raj and social welfare sectors. The Mission would take the unified energies of the Departments of School Education and Literacy and higher education down to the village level. Teachers would be encouraged to motivate non-literate parents of their students to enroll as learners and motivate educated youth in the village to volunteer as teachers for the campaign. They could also act as teachers of the literacy classes. Physical infrastructure created under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan may be used for the literacy programme during non-school hours.

Role of Non-Government Organisations

Alliance between GOs and NGOs would be further strengthened. NGOs and other groups that have demonstrated long-term commitment to issues of adult education and which have an established and unsullied track record of performance in this area will be drawn in as resource groups at all levels. Voluntary sector will be encouraged to take up activities under any programme of the Mission as well as innovative programmes aimed at achieving its objectives for which they may be provided grant-in-aid at the approved cost norms. Selection of the NGO will be the responsibility of the SLMA or the sub-state implementation agency as decided by the SLMA. However, NLMA may select any NGO to assist it in any aspect of the Mission.

Public Private Partnerships

Adult education in India has always been predominantly a government responsibility with some degree of involvement of NGOs. In contrast to very prominent collaboration in the case of formal school system, the contribution of private and corporate sector in adult education has been miniscule. Private and corporate sector can play a momentous role in promoting objectives of the Mission. As in the case of NGOs, institutions in private sector that have the urge, inclination and commitment to adult education programmes, may be encouraged to undertake any activity for which they could be provided grant-in-aid at the approved cost norms. Selection of such agencies will be the responsibility of the SLMA or the sub-state implementation agency as decided by the SLMA. However, NLMA may select any agency to assist it in any aspect of the Mission. NLMA is authorized to develop Public Private Partnerships and other models of partnership to generate funds and also to obtain donations. Alike in selection of NGOs as also institutions in the private sector, there would be total openness and transparency in the process. Fiscal incentives like income tax exemptions may be considered to encourage larger role of private sector in adult education.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Objective performance parameters will be prescribed for each agency involved in implementation of the scheme. A web based Management Information System (MIS) will be put in place for real time monitoring, which would be critical for optimising the outreach and impact of the programmes. NLMA, SLMA and district bodies will review the progress at their respective levels. Names and progress of each learner will be placed in the public domain. Monitoring will not be uni-directional but a two way communication process.

Feedback as to what is happening on the ground will be received through appropriate channels and correctives will be sent back to the ground level through the same channels.

Enormous resources, financial as well as human, are to be deployed in the programme. It is but obvious and imperative that high quality evaluations are carried out to facilitate detailed analysis, including cost benefit analysis and future planning. Elaborate procedures for concurrent, summative and impact evaluation will be laid down. Literacy data will also be supplemented through field research. Reputed agencies with an impeccable track record, expertise and experience will be commissioned to carry out evaluations. The evaluation process will be a tool of correction through participation. Total openness and transparency will be the watch words in the entire evaluation process.

Activity wise financial norms

Sr.	Activity Component	Budget (Upper ceiling)
1	Establishment of *Adult Education* Centre	N/Recurring: Rs 60,000/ for new centers and Rs. 25,000 for old centers Recurring: 75,000 per annum/ centre
2	Basic Literacy	
(a)	Through volunteer mode	Rs 230 per learner
(b)	Through resident instructor	Rs.40,000 per resident group per 30
(c)	Residential Camps	learners per year.
(d)	Tuition Fee to basic literacy volunteers	Rs.125 /day/learner/45 days
3	Basic Education (Equivalency programs)	Rs.5968 per learner (NIOS norms)
4	Common Elements	
(a)	Survey and Community Mobilization	Rs.2,500/- per AEC (Gram Panchayat)
(b)	Training	Rs.1,000/- per literacy functionary
5	Management, Monitoring & Evaluation	4% of the Programme cost
6	National Resource Support	Rs.78.50 Crore (Lump sum)

Reference:
1. Guidelines Saakshar Bharat , Ministry of Human Resources Development

Publication

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