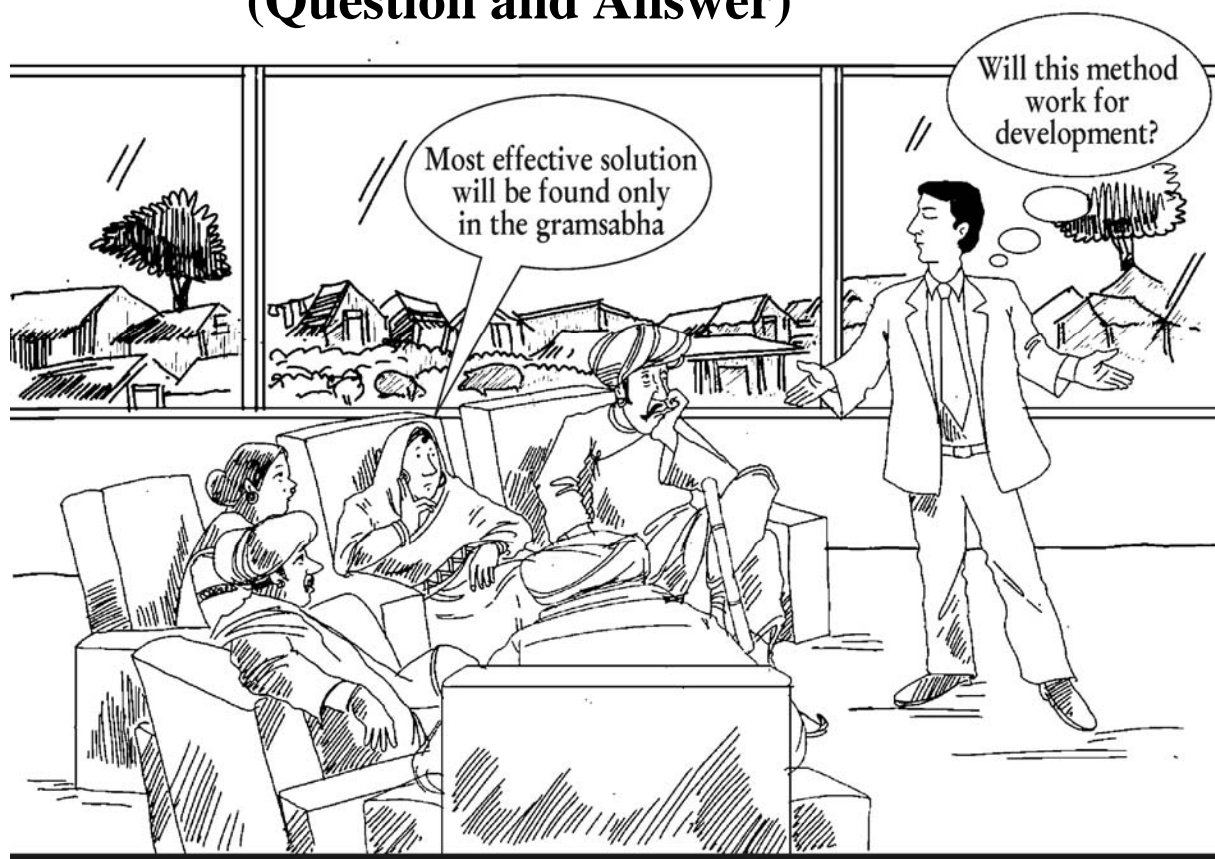# Compendium of Training Resources for Capacity Building of Panchayati Raj Institutions
(Question and Answer)

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.
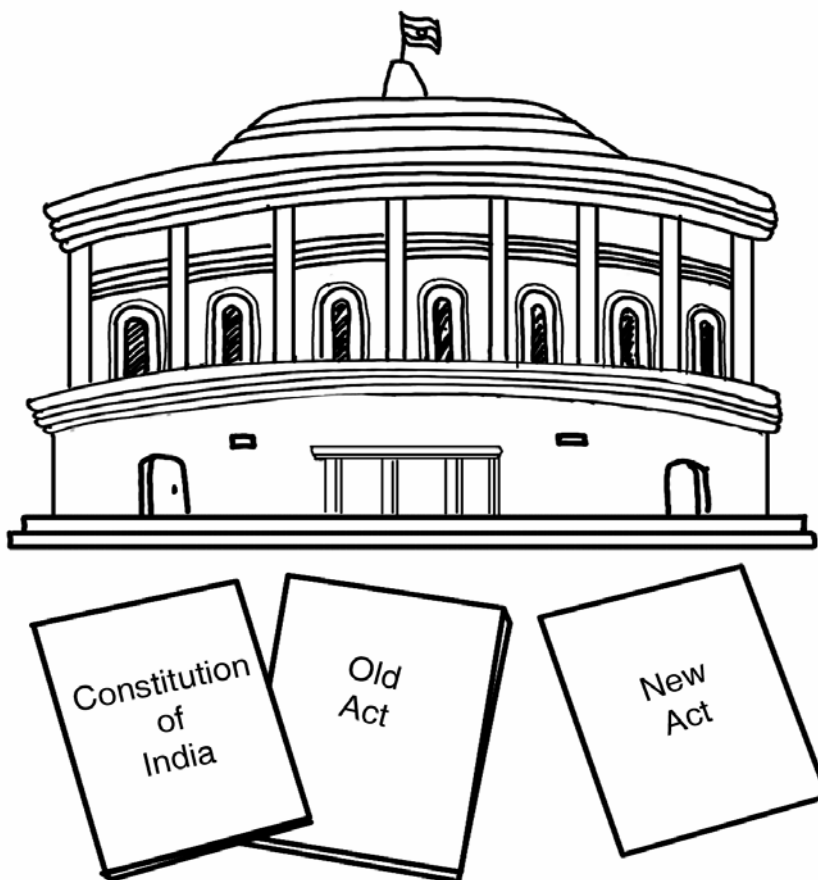
It gives a sense of satisfaction and achievement when one sees how the PRIs can effectively implement democratic decentralization governance with people's participation, particularly with the leadership with women, SCs, STs and other vulnerable section in planning and management of local development 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]Q1. What has been the history of Local Governance in India?

Local governance system is in practice in India from ancient period. It is mentioned in the 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 the 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, growth of individualism and

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[1] 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 operation of the individual Ryotwari (landholder-wise) system as against the Mahalwari or village tenure system.

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.

Q2. What were the efforts made by the British to promote decentralized governance in India?

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 decentralization 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 recognized by The Royal Commission in 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. However, a hierarchical administrative structure based on supervision and control evolved. The administrator became the focal point of rural governance.

Q3. What was the status of Panchayti Raj Institutions post 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.

There was no consensus among the top leaders regarding the status and role to be assigned to the institutions of rural local self-government.

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 at the national or state level to implement it.

Panchayat Raj Institutions received a new status through a Constitutional amendment in 1992. Several committees were constituted during this period to advise the Centre on different aspects of decentralisation for establishing the Panchayati Raj Institution as a unit of local governance at the village level.

Q4. What were the major recommendations given by Balwantrai Mehta Committee to strengthen Panchayati Raj Institutions?

The Balwantrai Mehta Committee was setup in the year 1957 to study the Community Development Projects. Its recommendations are considered to be a landmark in the evolution of PRIs. It held that community development would only be enduring when the community was involved in 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 and devolve all necessary resources, power and authority for sustaining citizen involvement.
- Such body must not be constrained by too much control from the government or government agencies. It should be constituted for at least five years by indirect 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.

Q5. Were there other committees that gave recommendations with respect to strengthening PRIs?

The K. Santhanam Committee was formed in 1963 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 PRIs.

A high-level committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Ashok Mehta in 1978 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 panchayats should be four years.

The G.V.K. Rao Committee was appointed in 1985 to once again look at various aspects of PRIs. It 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 Programmes 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) recommended that Local Self Governance should be constitutionally recognized and political parties should not involve in panchayat elections. The suggestion of giving panchayat Constitutional status was opposed by the Sarkaria Commission, but the idea 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 Bill got defeated in the Rajya Sabha. All these various suggestions and recommendations and means of strengthening PRIs were considered while formulating the new Constitutional Amendment Act.

Q6. What are the main features of 73rd 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 or national level'. The main features of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act are as follows:

- The gramsabha or village assembly has been recognized as the foundation of PRI
- Three tier structures have 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 Union Territory for smooth election of PRIs and Urban Local Bodies
- 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

Q7. What is Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas Act and what are its main features?

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 5th schedule areas. Such areas have

special rights and the Governor of the respective states have powers to make regulations for better.

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 Gram Sabha in the scheduled areas. Powers given to the Panchayats at appropriate level vis-à-vis gramsabha 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

2. PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN GUJARAT

[2]Q1. What was the status of Panchayti Raj Institution in Gujarat during pre independence period?

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 to amend the Act that regulates the functioning of panchayats. Prior to independence Panchayati Raj Institutions were governed by the Bombay Village Panchayat Act, 1920. The Bomabay Village Panchayat Act was reformulated in the year 1939 and further amended in 1947.

After the independence, the Bombay Village Panchayat Act 1939 was revised as the Bombay Village Panchayat Act, 1958. As Gujarat was a part of the Bombay provinces

Q2. What were the processes followed by Government of Gujarat to formulate State Act on Panchayati Raj and describe its main features?

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

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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.

Q3. Describe briefly the steps taken by State Government for promoting Panchayati Raj Institutions in Gujarat before 73rd Amendment Act?

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. Total of 44 amendments were made in Gujarat Panchayat Act till 1993 to make more inclusive and participatory governance.

Meanwhile, the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Bill pertaining to the Panchayati Raj Institution 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.

Q4. Describe the 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. The salient features of the Gujarat Panchayati Raj Act are as mentioned below:

1. **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 for SC and ST is in proportion to the population. 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 to be included. 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 for Taluka Panchayat. 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 of the Taluka Panchayat. The seats in the Taluka Panchayats are reserved for scheduled castes, tribes, social and educationally backward class 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 to be included for every increase in population by 25000.

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 to be 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.

2. 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.

3. 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.

4. 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 to recommend the financial viability of the panchayat.

5. 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 given the authority to impose tax and generate revenue.

6. 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.

7. 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.

8. 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. The committee has to ensures that basic services like education, health etc. should be 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.

9. 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 as mentioned in Sections 99, 130 and 154 respectively. These are known as Schedules I, II and III

10. Constitution of Gujarat Service Selection Board

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

Q5. What is Gujarat Panchayat Amendment Act 1998 and describe its main features?

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 <u>Fifth Schedule</u> areas. Such areas have special rights and the Governor of the respective states have powers to make regulations for better governance.

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 known as Panchayat Extension to Schedule Area Act (PESA)-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.

Following the enactment of Panchayats Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA), the Gujarat Panchayat (Amendment) Act, 1998 amended the Gujarat Panchayti Raj Act- 1993 by 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
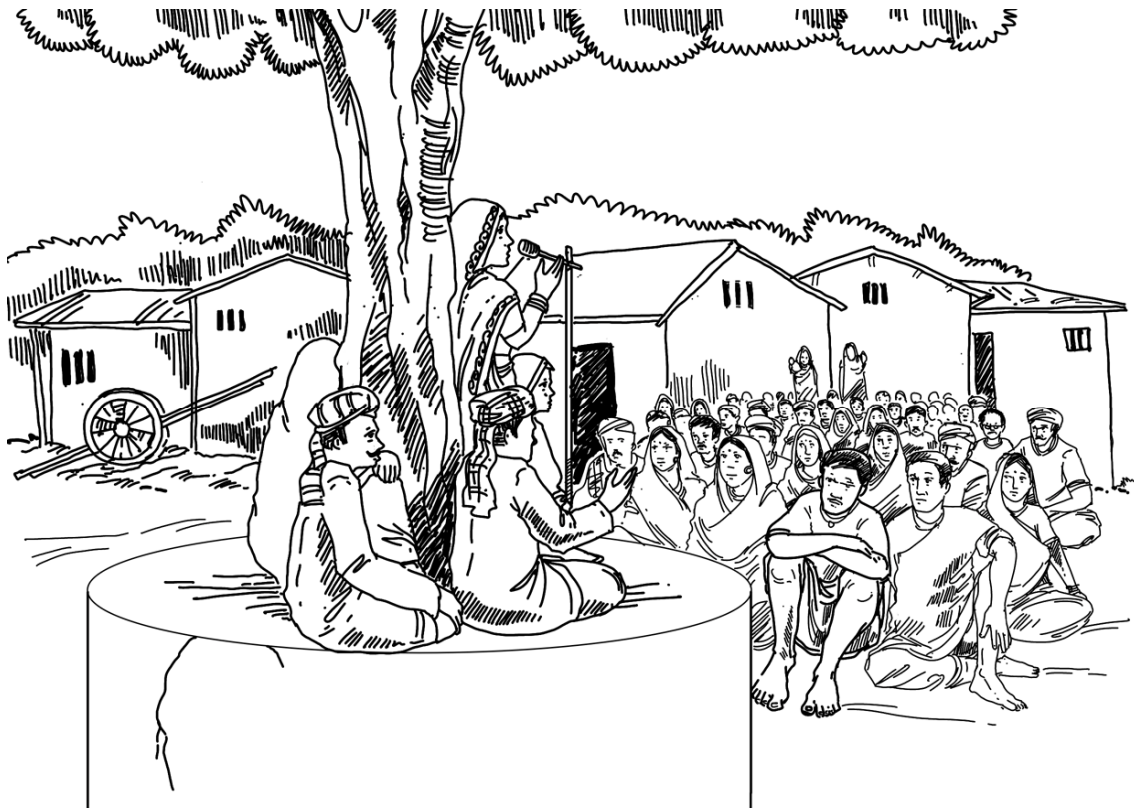
[3]Q1. What are the types of decentralization and describe the link between reform and decentralization?

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, 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, education, 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,

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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.

Q2. Can decentralization in governance system lead to development?

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.

Q3. What was the status of decentralization in PRIs before 73rd Constitutional Amendment?

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.

Q4. Describe the importance of 73rd Constitutional Amendment in bringing decentralization and improving the participation of marginalized in local governance.

The 73rd 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. Though reservation of seats for the SCs/STs is based on their actual proportion in the population, yet 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 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..

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.

Q5. What are the challenges in Decentralization?

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 levelsthat is respected by the people. It is also required to build a consensuses on different issues of decentralization.

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 government must be 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.

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.

4. FUNCTIONS OF PANCHAYTI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN GUJARAT
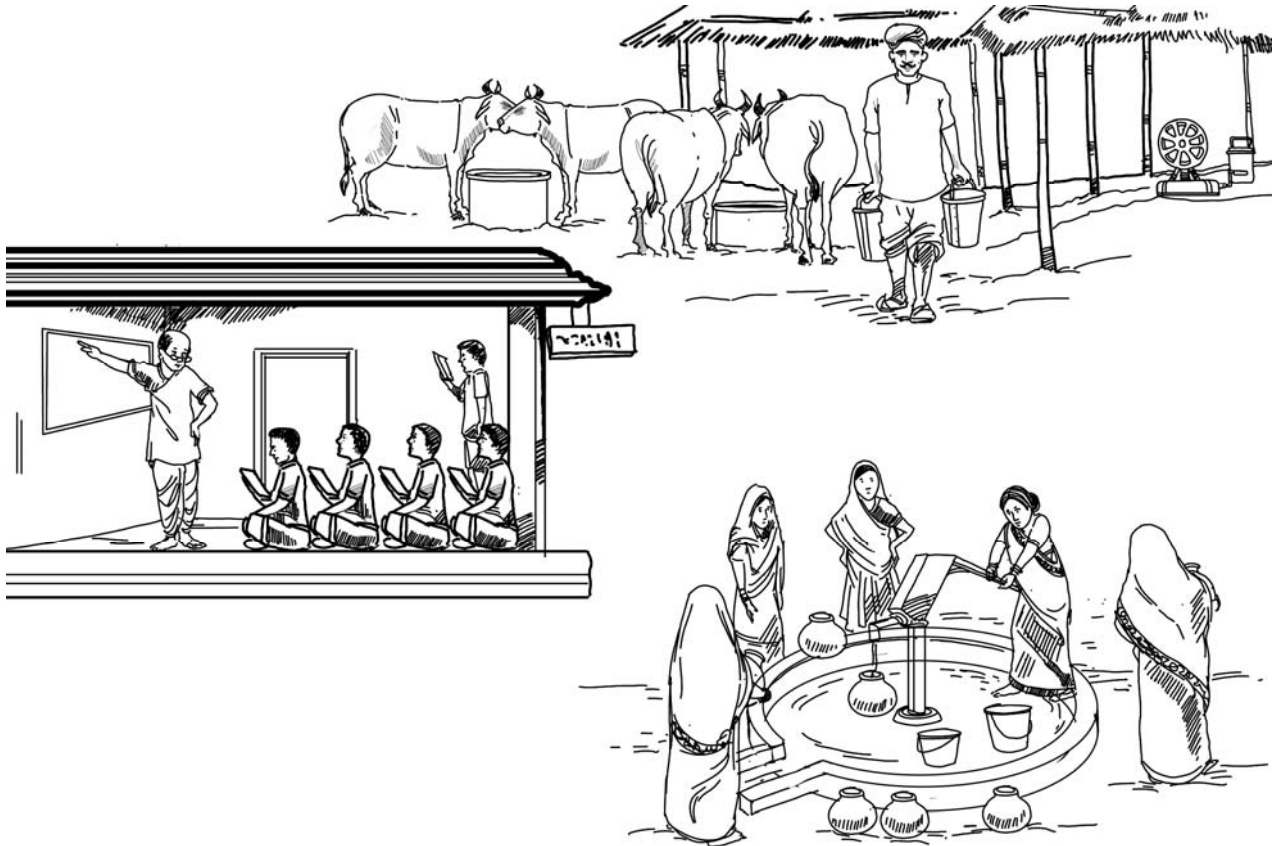
[4]**Q1. Describe briefly the powers and responsibilities delegated to Panchayats at the appropriate level through 73rd Amendment**?

Panchayati Raj Institution have been entrusted the following three sets of powers and responsibilities through 73rd Amendment

- 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.

Q2. When did the Gujarat Panchayati Raj Act in accordance to 73rd Amendment come in to effect?

Government of Gujarat enacted Panchayati Raj Act in the year 1993 in accordance to the 73rd Amendment Act. This was first published in extraordinary gazette English Part 4, Extra no.

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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.

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.

Q3. Describe the role of Gram Panchayat with regard to Public Health and Hygiene?

The gram panchayat has to facilitate the following activities in its jurisdiction with regard to Public Health and Hygiene
- 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 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.

Q4. What are the functions of gram panchayat to promote Education and Culture?

The Gram Panchayat has to facilitate the following function to promote Education and Culture at the panchayat level
- 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 should be made 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.
- Pre-primary schools, nurseries should also be set up 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.

Q5. Describe the role of gram panchayat in Community and Social Development.

Following are the important functions of Gram Panchayat to promote Community Development imitative in their respective areas
- Encouragement and assistance to cooperative activities in economic and social sectors.
- Propagation of family planning
- Organising the voluntary workforce of the village to help in the community works.
- Relief for the destitute, crippled and the sick
- **Assistance to the community when any natural calamity occurs**
(i) Arrange relief for the homeless and economically deprived at the time of famines or natural calamities.
(ii) Activities that would generate employment – like house building activities – for the unemployed should be taken up at times of such crisis.
(iii)Financial and other forms of assistance to be extended to the victims of natural calamities.
All the above mentioned 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

- 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.

Q6. What are the responsibilities of Gram Panchayat with regard to Water Supply and Maintenance?

It is the responsibility of the Gram Panchayat to supply water for use at home and for drinking purpose of cattle and domestic animal. Subsequently, 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 to the people. Gram panchayat is to ensure for the maintenance of available water sources coming under its jurisdiction

Q7. Describe the role of Gram Panchayat in promoting village industry and livelihood.

The Gram panchayats have been entrusted the following function through schedule 1 of Gujarat panchayat Act -1993 for promoting village industry and livelihood option at the panchayat level

- 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.

Q8. Describe the functions of Gram Panchayats in providing Infrastructural Facilities, Construction of Public Buildings and its 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

Q9. What are the roles of Gram panchayats for Improvements in farming practices and Animal Husbandry?

The gram panchayat has to facilitate the following function for improvements in farming practices and Animal Husbandry
- 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.
- All necessary measures should be adopted for improvement and increase of cattle stock.
- Encouragement to dairy farming

Q10. Describe the Administration and Maintenance function of Gram Panchayats as per the Gujarat Panchayat Act -1993

The administrative and maintenance function of the gram panchayats are as mentioned below
- 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.

Q11. Describe the functions of Taluka Panchayats with regard to Sanitation and Health

Taluka Panchayat has to facilitate the following functions with regard to Sanitation and Health at Taluka lelve
- 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

Q12. What are the functions of Taluka Panchayat in 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

Q13. How does Taluka Panchayat promote 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

Q14. Describe the role of Taluka panchayat in promoting Agriculture, including extension of agriculture and Animal Husbandry

The role of the Taluka panchayat to promote Agriculture, including extension of agriculture and Animal Husbandry in its Jurisdiction are as mentioned below
- 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.
- Improve cattle breed by introduction of Stud bulls by 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

Q15. What is the function of Taluka panchayat in the sphere of Rural Housing?

The Taluka Panchayat has the responsibility to develop village site with the cooperaton of local people to paln for rural hosing

Q16. Describe the Role of Taluka panchayat in promotion of cooperatives, Village and Small scale Industry

Taluka panchayat has to facilitate the following functions to promote cooperatives, Village and Small scale Industry
- Encourage cooperative institutions in the economic and social field

- 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

Q17. What are the Administrative responsibilities of Taluka panchayat

The administrative responsibilities of taluka panchayat is to collect and coordinating statistics as may be required by the village panchayats, Taluka panchayats and District panchayats or by the State government

Q18. What are the Administrative function of Zilla Panchaya?

- Preparing annual plans for economic development and social justice of the district and ensuring coordinated execution
- Preparing annual plans 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.

Q19. What are the key function of Zilla Panchayat with regard to promoting agriculture, minor irrigation, water management and watershed development?

Following are the detail functions that are to be facilitated by zilla panchayat in promoting Agriculture, Minor irrigation, water management and watershed development in its area.
- 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
- 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.

Q20. Describe the role of Zilla Panchayat in promoting animal Husbandry, dairy and poultry farm

- 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;

Q21. What kind of role Zilla Panchayat can play to promote Village & Small Scale industries at the district level

- 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;

Q22. What kind of role Zilla panchayat can play to promote Education and other Cultural Activities at the district level?

Zilla panchayat can facilitate the following function to promote Education and other Cultural Activities at the district level?
- 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

Q23. Describe briefly the role of the Zilla Panchayats in respect to Health, Hygiene, Sanitation and Social Welfare?

Zilla panchayats can facilitate the following activities with regard to Health, , Hygiene, Sanitation and Social Welfare
- 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 hospital
- 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.
- Specific programmes for organisations of women and children and their development;
- Campaign against superstition, intoxication, untouchablity and others social evils

5. PANCHAYAT FINANCE
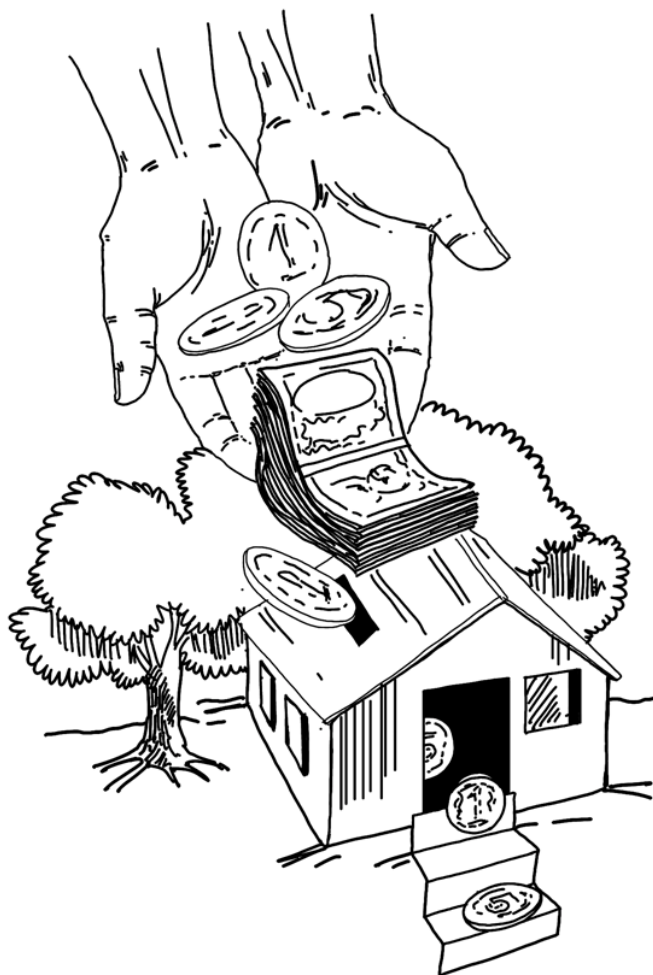
[5]Q1. Why do PRIs require funds?
Panchayats are institutions of local governance. As per Article 240 G, they have to plan and implement schemes for economic development and social justice especially on 29 subjects listed in the 11th Schedule of the Constitution. Funds are required to meet these responsibilities.

Q2. What are the various 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.

Own revenue - Own revenue is the income mobilised by panchayats themselves. 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.

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Tax/ fees by Gram Panchayats in Gujarat	Tax/ fees by Taluka Panchayats in Gujarat	Tax/ fees by District 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	Education cess Surcharge on any tax imposed by gram panchayat	Tax on professions, trades etc Surcharge on any tax imposed by gram panchayat

Shared taxes - These are levied and collected by the state government and a portion is passed on to PRIs. Stamp duty, cess or additional taxes on land revenue, profession tax, entertainment tax etc form part of shared revenue in Gujarat. The taluka panchayats may levy a cess on stamp duty, water tax, tender fee, rent on building of panchayat. District panchayat may impose any of the taxes and fees that are leviable by the gram panchayat provided that the rate does not exceed 10% of the rate of tax or fee actually levied by the gram panchayat. 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

Non-tax revenues – It includes income from remunerative enterprises and contribution from the public. Under section 202 of Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993, 50% received from the collection of royalty is given to the district panchayat.

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. Gujarat has devolved 15 functions and the corresponding funds for them to the PRIs. 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 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. In Gujarat incentive grants are provided for unanimous election of sarpanchs and panchayat body and collection of taxes

Thirteenth Finance Commission (2011 – 2015) has recommended Rs87519 crores as total grant to local bodies to substantially support PRIs to enable them to effectively provide basic services to their constituents. For division of grant money, Thirteenth Finance Commission has laid stress on the aspects of devolution and fund utilisation. It has also recommended direct transfer of funds to local bodies as it considers them to be key players in bringing about development transformation.

Q3. What is the role of State Finance Commission in improving panchayat finance?

Article 243-I mandates the states to form SFCs at regular interval of five years to review the financial position of the PRIs and make recommendations to the Governor for the sound finance of PRIs. The First Gujarat Finance Commission constituted on 15th Sep'94 submitted its report in 1998 and recommended devolution of Rs293 crore. It 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

Q4. How much funds are available 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.

Q5. For what purpose should the funds of BRGF be used?

The funding is guided by transparent norms and is to be used to address critical gaps in integrated development identified through participative planning processes. Panchayats may use these funds for any purpose coming within the items that are devolved to them. Key gaps in local infrastructure on which BRGF could focus include:

(a) Rural electrification

(b) Appropriate technology options 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

Q6. What are the criteria for distributing funds between the districts?

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

Funds are transferred to the Consolidated Funds of State governments. State Governments have to transfer the amount to the panchayat's bank accounts within 15 days of the release of funds. Diversion of resources from one district to another is not permitted. The interest amount accrued on the deposits is treated as additional resources and utilized as per the guidelines of the programme.

Q7. How can panchayats increase their funds?

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. Newer innovative sources could be thought of. Non-revenue sources like user fees etc also have to be

rationalised and properly tapped. It is necessary to take measures to tighten tax administration for better compliance of existing taxes.

Panchayats can access and try for consolidation of schemes and sources of revenue. Tamna gram panchayat in Gujarat has innovatively combined schemes for development of unused land and horticulture thus generating further income for the panchayat. Currently panchayats can utilize MGNREGS not only to provide employment to the rural population but also to development durable assets for further income generation.

6. PANCHAYAT PLANNING AND BUDGET

[6]Q1. What is meant by planning?

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.

Q2. Why is planning an important function of PRIs?

Planning is necessary because 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. 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 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. Giving credence to this view, 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution have provided a universal platform for planning from below. Article 243 (G) of the Constitution states that "legislature of a state may, by law, endow the panchayats and authority as may be necessary

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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.

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.

Q3. What is the history of decentralised panning in India?
First and Second Five Year Plans recognized the need for decentralized planning but operational aspects were not spelt out and there was lack of an enabling framework. 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. The process was directed from above. 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. Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) were formulated and implemented mainly through line departments. 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 rather than based on needs of people. Thus inter-sector linkages are weak.

Q4. What is the role of District Planning Committees in decentralised planning?
Under Article 243 ZD, District Planning Committees (DPC) have to be constituted 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. District planning is a process of preparing an integrated plan for the district and embodies the details of resources and their allocation for various purposes. It 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.

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.

Q5. What have been the efforts made by the Government for enabling decentralised planning?

An Expert Group was constituted for Planning at the Grassroots Level (chaired by V. Ramachandran - May'05). It laid out detailed guidelines for the district level planning process and the role of DPCs. 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.

GOI has linked the provision of central assistance under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), MGNREGA and BRGF to 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.

Q6. What can be the steps for effective district planning?

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
2. Situation analysis through simple methods supplemented by PRA techniques
3. Resource Assessments– 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 and strategies for attaining it through a process of interaction with stakeholders and local experts
5. Development of project ideas based on the needs assessment and situation analysis by expert working groups at different levels of PRIs
6. Consolidation of development proposals of the working groups
7. Prioritization 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

Q7. What are the 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

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.

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

Q8. What has been Kerala's approach in decentralised planning?
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; 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. 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 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 handbook provided a simple and transparent format for preparation of projects. 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, prioritize 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.

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. 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. 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. 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

Q9. What steps can be taken for effective local level planning with people's participation?
Efforts are required to improve the demographic, educational, resources, household and various socio-economic data that are necessary for effective planning. Current satellite connectivity and advances in ICT provide excellent opportunities for data collection, maintenance and dissemination for local planning.

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.

Efforts are required for enabling 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.

Technical support is required and there also 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.

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. Planning calendar is another necessity. There is also need to build the capacities of the staff engaged in planning at the panchayat level.

7. PANCHAYAT ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT
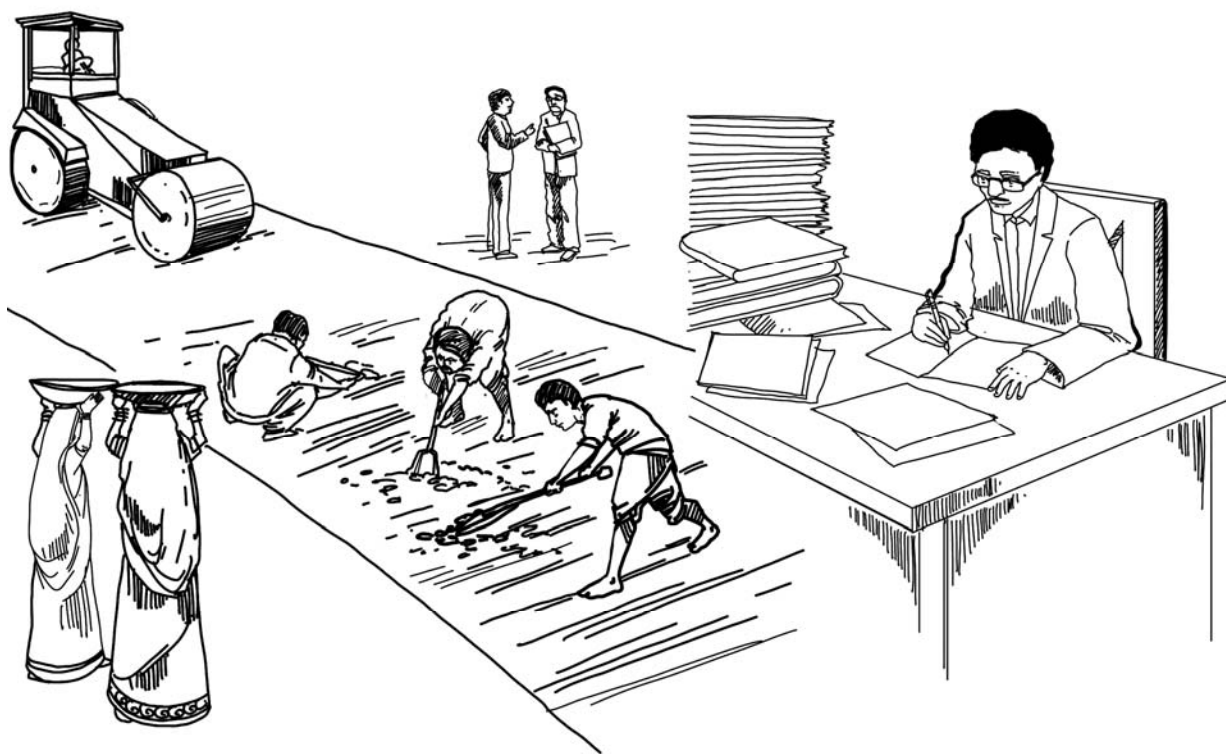
[7]Q1. Why is maintenance of accounts and audit important for PRIs?
PRIs handle large number of schemes and funds from different sources and accountability is thus of paramount importance. Financial accountability considers (i) whether the resources have been utilized according to legal requirements 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. It is essential to strengthen the accountability mechanism in PRIs in order to facilitate their emergence as strong institutions of local governance.

Q2. What is the current status of accounts of PRIs?
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.
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.

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[7] 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.

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.

Eleventh Finance Commission (EFC) had also found that there was no mechanism for collection of data on the revenue and expenditure of local bodies.

Q3. What have been the various steps taken recently at the national level for strengthening accounting systems of PRIs?
EFC has recommended an enhanced role of C&AG for streamlining the accounting system, making it uniform across states and maintaining a financial database. 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 has prescribed simplified formats and accounting procedures for PRIs and ULBs in 2006 with a view to rationalize them, present a comprehensive financial profile of Local Bodies and provide information on use of funds received from various sources, 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. Some commonly used items of expenditure were standardized. 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. In Gujarat, the C&AG formats are being implemented from March 2007.

Q4. What are some good practices in maintenance of PRI accounts?
Following are some examples of 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.

Q5. What are the main aspects of 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

Q6. What are the provisions for PRI audit in Gujarat?

In Gujarat, the three tiers of panchayats are audited as per the provision of Gujarat Local Fund Audit Act, 1963. 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 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.

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 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.

Q7. What have been the various steps taken to strengthen the audit of PRIs?

To strengthen the audit process, C&AG has prescribed Auditing Standards for PRIs that would help auditors in proper conduct of audit, promote public accountability and provide assurance to concerned Union/ State agencies and all stakeholders.

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.

Q8. What have been some innovative exercises regarding PRI audits?

There have been several innovative efforts in the recent times. 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.

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.

Q9. What are the major provisions regarding 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.

Q10. What steps can be taken to further strengthen accounting and audits in PRIs?

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);
- 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;
- 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.

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.

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.

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

[8]Q1. What are the objectives of BRGF?

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 fund will provide financial resources for supplementing and converging existing developmental inflows so as to:

- Bridge critical gaps in local infrastructure and other development requirements that are not being adequately met through existing inflows
- Strengthen 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
- Improve the performance and delivery of critical functions assigned to panchayats, and counter possible efficiency and equity losses on account of inadequate local capacity.

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Q2. What is the first step to be followed by the district selected under BRGF?

Each district has to undertake 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 plan. 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.

Q3. What is the process of planning?

District Development Perspective Plan has to integrate multiple programmes that are in operation in the district and therefore address backwardness through a combination of resources that flow to the district. Programmes identified for implementation under the Fund are 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 are prepared in each panchayat and municipality and take into account

- 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 are consolidated into the district plan by the District Planning Committee. This reflects all the financial resources available in the district, and ensures their optimal use, without delay, diversion, duplication and leakage.

Each panchayat and municipality is the unit for planning. Plans prepared by the panchayat or municipality will be consolidated into the district plan by the DPC. In keeping with the Vision set out in the Planning Commission's guidelines particular care shall be taken to ensure that District Plans address 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.

Q4. What is the total fund allocation for the programme?

The Programme has two components - a district component covering 250 districts and special plan component for Bihar and the Kalahandi, Bolangir and Koraput districts of Orissa. A total provision of Rs5000 crore had been made in the Budget of 2006-07. Out of this, 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.

Q5. What are the criteria for distribution of funds?

The untied grant is distributed among the districts in the following manner.
- Each district receives a fixed minimum amount of Rs10 crore per annum.
- 50% balance allocation is 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

Every state indicates normative formula for distribution to each panchayat and ULBs considering:
- 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 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.

Q6. As BRGF subsumes Rashtriy Sam Vikas Yojana what is the process of transition for RSVY districts?

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

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

Q7. What are the provisions for Capacity Building under BRGF?

Effective implementation of BRGF requires continuous and sustained building of capability of all stakeholders. So Capacity Building for panchayats and ULBs is a critical component of BRGF. An amount of Rs250 crore per annum is especially earmarked the purpose. The allocation of fund for each state is calculated at the rate of Rs.1crore per BRGF district in that state.

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

Key Components
- Adequate functionaries for planning and implementation.
- Technical assistance particularly accessing services of the resource persons to support the PRIs as well as gramsabhas in decentralized planning process. Securing assistance for panchayats and District planning Committee for preparing and consolidating plans.
- 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

Q8. What are the provisions for building community capacity?

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 on agriculture, 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 panchayats.
- Support for professional planning
- Training for the above personnel

According 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.

Q9. What is the implementation mechanism under BRGF?

The panchayats, muncipalities and DPC undertake the management of the programme. No special bodies, management committees, societies etc. are set up at any panchayat or ULB

level. In order to facilitate specific attention for the supervision, management and monitoring of the programme, there is provision for strengthening the standing committees of panchayats and ULBs.

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 inter 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 forwarded.

Q10. What is the purpose of development funds released under BRGF?

Funds released under BRGF are to be used for filling critical gaps vital for development. Panchayats and ULBs may use these funds for any function devolved to them 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.

Q11. What is the fund flow mechanism?

All funds are transferred to the Consolidated Funds of state governmentsand from there to panchayats and municipalities in their bank accounts within 15 days. From the State level, the funds are 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 are treated as additional resources and 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 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.

Q12. What are provisions related to maintenance of Account and Audit

Each Panchayat and ULBs is responsible for maintenance of accounts that 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.

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.

Q13. What are the various mechanisms under BRGF for accountability and transparency?

BRGF provides for the below-mentioned mechanisms at various levels:
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 guideline for the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

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

[9]Q1. Why efforts need to be made for poverty alleviation?

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.

Q2. What is poverty?

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

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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.

Q3. What is 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.

Q4. What are the strategies/ approaches for poverty alleviation?
There are three schools of thought / approaches to poverty alleviation: welfaristic, basic needs and capability. 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. But soon it was realised that increase in income did not assure equitable distribution of the surplus and did not in any way improve the standard of living. 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.

Poverty Alleviation Schemes

No	Scheme	Sub-scheme	Focus/ objective/s	Target group/ region/ area
1.	**Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY)**		Setting up micro-enterprise in rural areas to uplift BPL families above the poverty line by providing income generating assets through bank credit and government subsidy.	BPL families identified and approved by the gram sabha
2.	**National Social Assistance Programme (NSAP)**	National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)	Extend financial assistance to old persons having little or no regular means of subsistence	Any destitute applicant (male or female) 65 years or above.
		National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)	To households living below the poverty line in case of death of the primary bread earner	To BPL families in case of death of primary bread earner
		National Maternity Benefit Scheme	To pregnant women of BPL households up to first two live births.	To pregnant women of BPL families up to first two live

		(NMBS)		births, 19 years of age and above
3.	**The National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS)**		Guarantees 100 days of employment in a financial year, to be given on demand, within 15 days of application after obtaining the job card	Any rural household whose adult members are willing to do unskilled manual work.
4.	**Housing and infrastructure Development Programme**	Indira Awaas Yojana	To provide grant for construction of houses	Members of SC/ST, and also to non-SC/ST rural poor BPL families
		Sardar Patel Awas Yojana	To provide grant for construction of houses	Landless agricultural labourers and village artisan living below poverty line in rural areas of the Gujarat
		Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)	To provide connectivity by way of an all-weather road in rural areas	Unconnected rural areas with population of more than 500 persons
		Gokul Gram Yojana	To provide certain basic amenities to all the villages in an uninformed manner in a disciplined time-frame	in Gujarat
5.	**Wastel and Development**	Integrated Wasteland Development Project (IWDP) Scheme	An integrated wastelands development based on village/micro watershed plans with the aim of creating rural employment besides enhancing the contents of people's participation in the wastelands development programmes at all stages	For all regions
		Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP)	To minimise 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.	For all drought prone regions
		Desert Development Programme (DDP)	To mitigate the adverse effects of desertification and adverse climatic conditions on crops, human and livestock population, combating desertification; restore ecological balance and tackle the special problems faced by those areas constantly affected by severe drought	The programme was started both in the desert areas of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh

		Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)	To restore the ecological balance by harnessing, conserving and developing degraded natural resources such as soil, vegetative cover and water.	For all regions
6.	**Water and Sanitation**	Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC)	To bring about an improvement in the general quality of life in the rural areas by generating demand for sanitation facilities through awareness creation and health education	For all regions
		Swajaldhara	Provide access to safe drinking water to all rural habitations through ommunity-based rural drinking water supply	For all regions
7.	**Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)**		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	For all areas, children between 0-6 years
8.	**Food and Public Distribution**	Annapurna Scheme	To provide food security to those senior citizens who through eligible have remained uncovered under the National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAPS)	For all regions
		Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY	Contemplates identification of one crore poorest of the poor families from amongst the BPL families covered under targeted public distribution system (TPDS) and providing them food grains at a highly subsidised rate	For all regions
		Mid - Day Meal Scheme (MDMS)	To give a boost to universalisation of primary education by increasing enrolment, retention and attendance, and simultaneously impacting upon nutritional status	For all regions

			of students in primary classes	
9.	**National Project on Biogas Development (NIPBD)**		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	For rural areas
10.	**Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/Fitting of AIDS/ Appliances (ADIP) Scheme**		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.	For all regions

Q5. What is the 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.

10. ROLE OF PANCHAYATS IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

[10]Q1. What is the role of Panchayati Raj institute in DRR.

Gujarat DM Act has created the provision of village disaster management committee as a mandatory institution for DRR. Panchayats shall activate a village disaster management committee to initiate action on DRR. It will enable creation of village level plans for mitigation and prevention under various developmental programmes. 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. 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.

Q2. What is Hazard assessment?

The 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

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characteristics of hazards, specifically, the hazard force, warning sings and signals forewarning, speed of onset, frequency, period of occurrence an duration

Q3. What is Vulnerability assessment?

Vulnerability is a set of prevailing condition which adversely affects the community's ability to prevent, mitigate or prepare for respond to the hazard event. Vulnerability is unsafe conditions and degree of vulnerability is in relation to ideal safe condition.

Q4. What is Capacity assessment?

Capacities are categorized as prevention, mitigation, survivability and readiness majors. Capacities 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, and 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.

Q5. How to analyze the risk?

Disaster risk is viewed as (hazard X vulnerability) divided by Capacity The community needs to analyze the disaster risk specific to different disasters and examine which elements are under what kind of risk. The disaster risk analysis provides a great deal of understanding to design and develop risk reduction strategies. The extent of disaster risk is determined by the force of the hazard and the extent of vulnerability.

Q6. What are the key hindrances for involvement of PRI?

There are few hindrances for involvement of PRI in DRR that need to be addressed

People in general lack confidence in performance of Panchayats there for competency and credibility of village panchayat is questionable in planning and implementation. Panchayats are not looking DRR plan as integral part of development plan. No budgetary allocations either from government or panchayat is made for this purpose .Limited capacity building initiatives for promotion of CBDRR with special focus on building the capacity of Panchayat. Gram Sabhas are not very active and responsive.

Q7. Why community involvement is important in DRR?

Community participation leads to promotion of awareness about their risk and vulnerability. Community has batter understanding on the impact of different disasters. People feel encouraged to use their experience and resources. Speedy action on the plan is possible when community is involved .Community also feels empowered to build linkages outside for resource mobilization. Community confidence is increased which leads to self sufficiency and provides an opportunity for local level leadership development.

Q8. When was the Disaster Management act formed?

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

Q9. What are the key features of the act?

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.

Q10. How to integrate the DRR plan with the development plan?

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, and 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.

11. ROLE OF PANCHAYATS IN NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

[11]Q1. What are the natural resources and how are they useful to the rural livelihood?
Rural livelihood is primarily depended on the agriculture, animal husbandry and related activities which are based on land, water, soil and plants, which are the key natural resources for their sustenance. Productivity of these resources is very important for the success of agriculture and farming system

Q2. What are the key issues in Natural Resource Management?
At present natural resources like water, land and forest are overuse and in degraded conditions.

Land: The Gujarat state has no shortage of land; with 1.96 crore hectares and seventh largest state in India. There are problem of soil erosion, desertification, degradation in the community land resources and cultivable lands besides the physical erosion of land; there is the erosion of institutions as well. There are very few community mechanisms to protect and develop land productivity in the state.

Water: 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

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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

Forest: As compared to the norm of about 30 per cent forest cover for Gujarat 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. In short, Gujarat has experienced an overall declining trend in forests, which are supposed to play a critical role in protecting and stabilizing its environment and ecology

Q3. What is Natural Resources Management?
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. Improving the status of natural resources will add to the productivity of the area under cultivation and the income generating potential of the natural resources in itself would be augmented.

Q4. What kind of treatment will require for natural resource management?
Treatment can be related to land, water and biomass. There are four broad groups of treatment are as follows:

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.

Agronomic practices in agricultural land: 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.

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.

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. 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. Fodder development, plantation and soil and moisture conservation activities can be done and social fencing is necessary for the protection of the pasture land.

Q5. What is the importance of community participation for NRM?
People's institutions play a significant role in facilitating inclusive, gender-sensitive development and ensuring that the resources are used in a sustainable manner. 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. Building people's institutions and placing people at the centre of the development process are critical for success in all NRM initiatives

Q6. How Panchyats can lead in sustainable NRM?
Panchayats 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. 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.

12. RIGHT TO INFORMATION

[12]Q1. What is the Right to Information Act 2005?

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.

Q2. What are the salient features of the RTI Act 2005?

- The RTI Act equips any ordinary citizen with the power to find out the status of all public works, including the expenditure incurred from any department of the state/ central government..
- 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

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(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 through notice boards, public announcements, media broadcasts and the internet.
- 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.

Q3. How was the RTI Act enacted?

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. 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.

Q4. Who is the designated authority to accept the RTI applications?

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. 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.

Q5. How can one seek information under the RTI Act?

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.

Q6. What is the fee structure for seeking information under the RTI Act?

Government	Application Fee	Additional Fee	Mode of Payment
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

Q7. What should I do if information is not furnished within the stipulated timeframe?

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.

Q8. Can certain categories of information be denied to the citizen?

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.

Q9. What should one do if no response is received for the RTI application within the stipulated timeframe?

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.

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.

Q10. What is the penalty clause if the PIO fails to provide information within the specified time limit?

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. Refusal with or without reasons
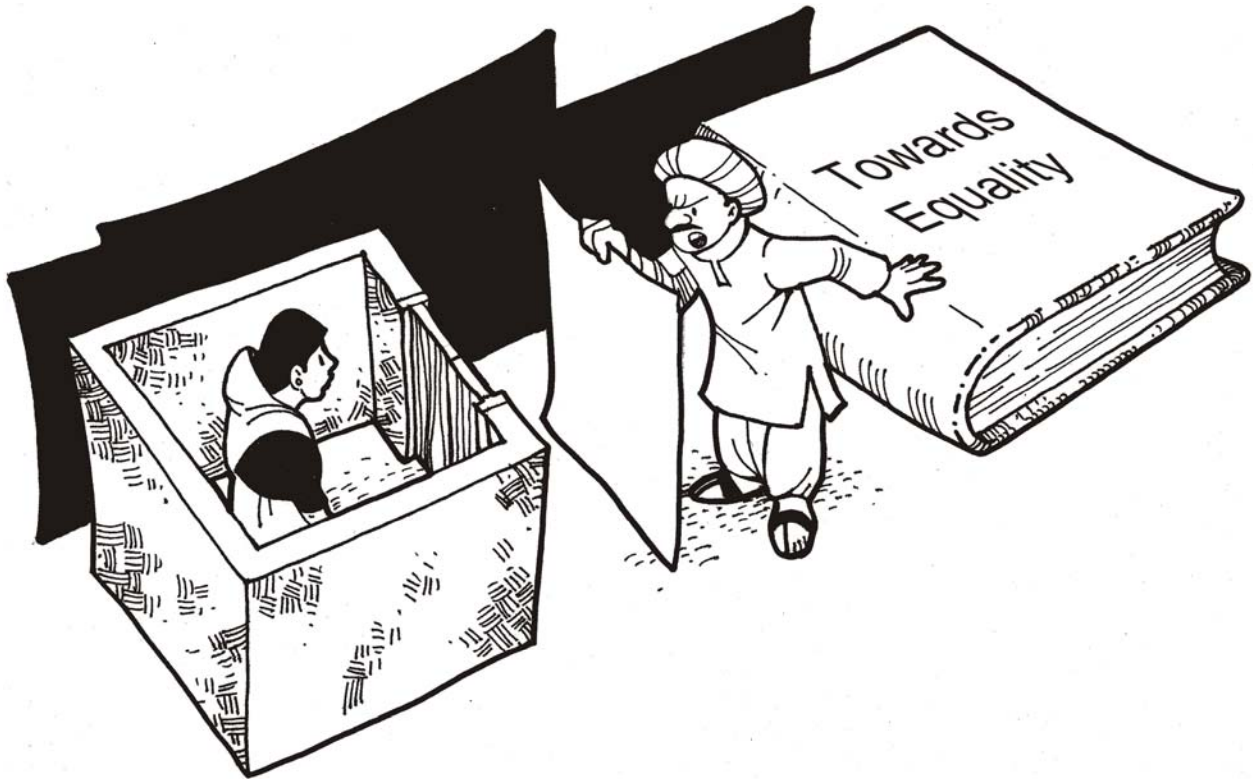
may be ground for appeal or complaint. Further, information not provided in the times prescribed is to be provided free of charge.

Q11. Is there a format for filing an application for seeking information?
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:

<div style="border:1px solid black">

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:

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13. Human Development

Human development focuses on the capabilities and choices that people have to be and become what they want to be. Efforts for promoting human development leads to higher productivity – by building a healthy, educated and productive labour force. While on the one hand, human development focuses on meeting basic needs and on the other in improving the quality of human life. It primarily focuses on 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 needed for a decent standard of living.

Q2. What are the components of human development?

i. **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 the similar opportunities the result will be the same.

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ii. 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 existing must not be sustained.

iii. Productivity: To enable people perform to their maximum potential requires investing in and building their capacities and skills and promote 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.

iv. 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.

Q4. What is sustainable human development?

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 and not just a few, without destroying or impacting the natural resources. It is a process through which all policies 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.

Q5. How to measure human development?

The human development Index (HDI) is an effort 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.

Q6. What is the status of human development 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. India is classified as belonging to the group of 'medium human development' countries. .In 2004 out of 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.

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. 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 indicates 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.

Q7. What are the Millennium Development Goals?

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. 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. 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.

Q8. How human development can be promoted in our region/ district/ state/ country?

A society is considered to be developed when it makes efforts to include the 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. 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 differences 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. 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. 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 needs to be converted into equitable distribution of resources, improving the human development indicators and environmental sustainability.

Development actors at the grassroots, could focus their activities in ensuring that vulnerable groups get 100 days of employment per year under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005, have access to toilets in their dwellings, drinking water and sanitation through safe disposal and recycling of solid liquid waste, electricity, and road connectivity to nearest sub-divisional town. The education of children especially the girl child may be promoted by emphasising on enrolment and retention of children in schools, create an enabling environment for children to study by ensuring the presence of motivated, committed and regular teachers. The life expectancy may be improved by enabling access to health services for maternal and child health which may lead to reducing infant and maternal mortality. The nutritional status of children may be enhanced through anganwadis and mid-day meal scheme. Registration of birth and death, marriage and pregnancy, universal coverage of vaccines and promote delayed marriages not less than 18 – 20 years. This is only a beginning and may take several decades to make headway in achieving human development among and within countries.

14. WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

[14]Q1. Why do women need to be empowered?

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 through sayings, folklore and symbols that men and women are expected to wear. 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.

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As a result of the unequal power that men and women have, women are not only deprived of some of the basic access to physical resources like land, water and forests; they also have limited access to information, knowledge and skills; their access to money and decision making is even more limited.

Women need to be empowered so that the socially constructed gender differences can be reduced and they can realise their right to equality and dignity.

Q2. What are the different spheres in which women face inequalities?
- Women are more prone to dying early owing to female infanticide and less importance given to their own health, nutrition,
- Male children are preferred and female children are often aborted. Hence there are more men than women and even among children 0-6 years old, this difference exists.
- Women have less access to education and learning or less opportunity to enhance their talents and skills. Even women who have access to basic facilities and primary education may not be allowed to pursue higher education or opt for certain kinds of professional courses that are considered men's domain.
- Women find it more difficult to get certain kinds of jobs or to advance at the same rate as men.
- Women do not have the same rights of inheritance or ownership as men.
- Within a family, arrangements can be quite unequal in terms of sharing the burden of housework and child care. Men are expected to work outside the home and women can do so only if they can do it along with their household duties.

Q3. What does women empowerment mean?
Women's empowerment 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.

Q4. What led to the focus on women empowerment?
In 1979 the UN General Assembly adopted 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.

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.

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.

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.

Q5. What are the pre-requisites for women's empowerment?
- Both men and women need to be aware of the gender inequalities, must be ready to change their way of thinking and act to change the existing imbalances.
- It requires that women become conscious of their beliefs, aware of the gender inequalities and how these affect their lives, recognise their strengths and feel the need to change their position in society.
- The process of empowerment must begin with the individual but needs to happen at the collective level since a single person cannot challenge a dominant system.
- In addition to a change in the way women think about their position, they must also individually and collectively initiate small changes like encouraging girls to go to school, altering conventional gender division of labour, participating in decision making at home and community, forming self help groups, seeking information and challenging the inequalities that they face.
- Men need to provide space to the women and create equal opportunities for them and eliminate all forms of violence.
- Empowerment requires moving from a position of dependence and helplessness to one of self assertion and confidence to demand justice.

Q6. How do we know that there is gender inequality in Gujarat?
Gender inequality can be gauged from social indicators of development of a state/nation. Although Gujarat is considered an economically progressive state, the social indicators show that women do not enjoy an equal status with men. This is clear from the following:
   a. Differing literacy rates: 58.6% for women and 80.5% for men
   b. Gross enrolment rate for children in 6-14 age group: 94 for boys and 78 for girls.
   c. Dropout rate for girls is higher than boys at all levels of education, the highest difference being at the elementary school level where it is 14.02 for girls as compared to 9.97 for boys.
   d. Male-female sex ratio: 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.
   e. Gujarat has 27.2 per cent of currently married women with age at marriage below 18 years.
   f. 55.3% women suffer from anaemia as compared to 22.2 % men.

g. Infant Mortality Rate is 82 for girls as compared to 74 for boys and higher for girls in rural areas as compared to urban areas - 64 and 38 respectively in 2005.
h. Female work participation rate is 28.03% as compared to 55.02% for men. 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.
i. 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 either emotional, physical or sexual violence.
j. 12% of BPL households are women headed and 14% are houseless.

Q7. What are some of the steps taken by the Government of Gujarat to promote women's empowerment?
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.

Q8. What are the strategies that can be used to empower women at the local level?
For women's empowerment at the local level, two key strategies are normally used:
a. ***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.

b. ***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.

Q9. What measures can elected representatives take to promote equality among men and women?
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. Local elected representatives can do gender planning and help make gender sensitive plans. For doing so, they need to:

a. collect accurate sex disaggregated data on the benefits that women and men are receiving from the village development plans and expenses incurred
b. Involve women in the planning process to know what their needs are and include these in the plans
c. Take into account the differing needs of women based on their caste, class, religion, age, marital status etc.
d. Equip women to regularly meet and discuss their needs and issues; local self help groups can be strengthened to provide such spaces to women and potential women leaders can be identified and trained to do gender analysis and planning

e. 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.

For gender planning and gender sensitive implementation of schemes and plans, it is equally important to make budgets and track expenditure from a gender perspective. This is called gender budgeting.

Q10. How can gender planning at the local level benefit women?
Gender planning can be done for improving the immediate condition and ultimately the position of women in society:
  A. Interventions aimed at improving water and sanitation, employment, health and education facilities can help alleviate the daily drudgery faced by women.
  B. 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.

Q11. What are the specific measures through which gender planning can promote women's empowerment?
Gender planning can be done for improving the condition as well as status of women. It is important that the differing needs of women based on their caste, class, religion, age, marital status etc. are taken into account. Some examples of gender planning in different sectors are as follows:

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.

Health: Provisions for obtaining nutrition supplements and de-worming at the PHC level can be made; iron supplements can be made available locally to reduce anaemia; special health needs of women who are mentally or physically disabled can be focussed on so as to make provisions for their access to health services.

Employment: 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 and women with disabilities; women get access to common property resources and receive support for joint ventures.

**Q12. What is gender budgeting and what should elected representatives do for it?**
Budgets are the most important tool for converting policies and programmes into action. 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.

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: (eg. attendance of girls and boys in primary, upper primary and higher education)

b. assess the outreach of programmes and projects to men and women (eg. number of women and men accessing primary health services)

c. assess the impact of policies and programmes (eg. wages earned by men and women for the same work)

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

15. SOCIAL JUSTICE
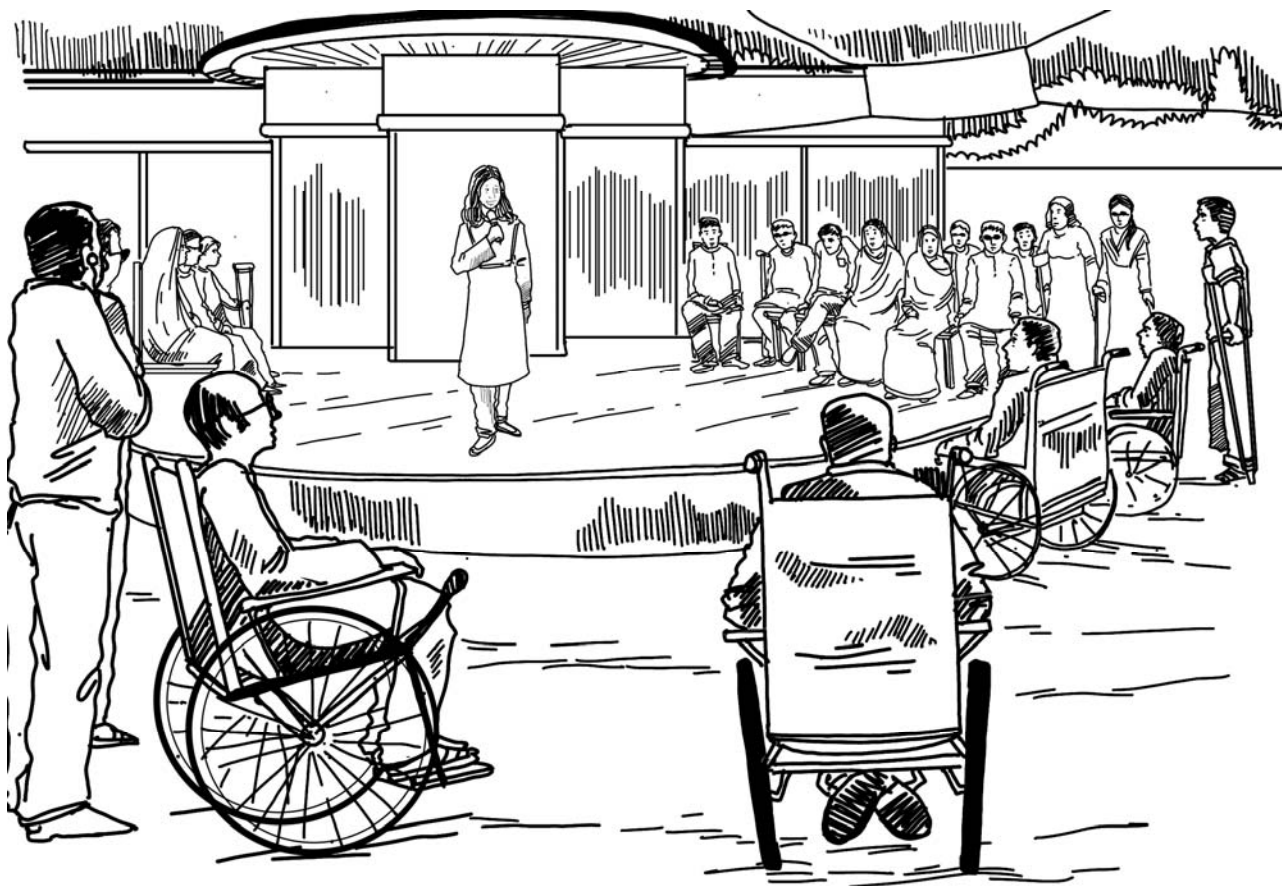
[15]Q1. What is Social Justice and it is for whom?

Social Justice is concerned with ensuring and protection of basic civil rights to the vulnerable people whose rights are infringed by the vested interest and dominant groups.

Vulnerable group and social exclusion are linked. SC, ST, Widow, Persons with Disability, Street Children, and Persons affected with HIV-AIDS, sex workers, uncared elderly are vulnerable groups does not recognize their presence (invisible) when they struggle to make themselves visible they are stigmatized or given the status of criminalized community.

Q2. What is social exclusion and discrimination?

Discrimination is the actual behaviour of one person towards another person which involves excluding or restricting the other person from due opportunities.

When the vulnerable community try to exercise their due rights, against the age old practice of discrimination they face violence and abuse by the dominant groups.

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Even today it is found that when dalit community takes the marriage process on horse back, there are dominant communities, who do not allow them to pan the procession in front of their inhabitation. Untouchability is the widest and most inhuman form of social justice. Many widows are not allowed to take part in the social and religious functions.

Even today , 400 lac dalits are banded Labourers, 10 lac dalits are involved in manual scavenging and about 85% of cases of atrocities are registered under other provisions.

Q3. Is their any Constitutional and Legal Provision to promote social justice?
The constitution of India guarantees all its citizen social justice irrespective of caste, class, gender and religions.

In 1998 a Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment was created to proactively work on elimination of all forms of violence, prejudice on the vulnerable groups, particularly SC, Persons with Disability, elderly etc.

The "Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribe" (Prevention of Atrocities) Act 1989 is a provision for fair trial on cases of atrocities.

Gujarat Panchayat Raj Act has provision of social justice committee at all the three levels to oversee that the SC and ST are not excluded from the development initiatives and they live in an environment of self dignity and respect.

Q4. Is their any legal provision to ensure inclusion of women and disables in the development?
There are several acts and policies related to women, person with disabilities, children and senior citizens and old age people. The most important acts are Dowry prohibition Act 1961, Protection of Women from Domestic violence Act 2005, National commission for women Act to ensure equity and empowerment of women and People with Disability.
The People with Disability (PWD) Act, 1995 recognises the seven categories (Blindness, Low Vision, Leprosy, Hearing Impairment, Locomotors Disability, Mental Retardation, and Mental Illness)   of disability for providing equal opportunities, protecting the rights and ensuring full participation of persons with disabilities.

Q5. What Panchayats can do to ensure social justice?
Social Justice Committees of Panchayat 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.

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.

Panchayats should make sure that the vulnerable section of the society should be benefited from all the development and welfare schemes and programmes and self respect and dignity of these groups should be protected to bring the social justice in the society.

16. MICRO LEVEL PLANNING

[16]Q1. What approaches to planning have been followed in India over 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. 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

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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.

Q2. What is meant by 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.

Q3. What is the 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.

Q4. Describe 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.

Q5. What aspects should be taken into consideration 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 IN DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES

[17]Q1. Why is convergence of development programmes important?
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.

However, at present plans are based on various schemes. If the scheme wise plan is implemented it is not necessary that the final product will be useful for the community or as per their requirement. It is important therefore to decide first as to what the requirement of the Panchayat and the community are and prepare a consolidated plan. Once a plan is prepared and the objectives are clear the resources can come from different sources. Through convergence investments under existing schemes can be brought together and utilized to achieve the objective.

For example if the objective or the requirement is aforestation then the Panchayat can mobilize the saplings from the forest department, the land clearing and plantation can be done through NREGS and again if there is need for trenches to build for protection it can be taken

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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.

up through the NREGS. The final product created will be as per the requirement of the community.

Again if the objective is providing safe housing for the poor and if the Panchayat land identified for this is in a low lying area then by just building a house it will not lead to achievement of the objective. To make the housing safe the panchayat can develop the land by filing it through NREGS, build the house under the housing scheme (IAY) and provide electricity under the Kutir Jyoti. Thus by using resources from various schemes the objective of providing safe housing for the poor can be achieved.

Convergence of different development programmes will thus enable better planning and effective investment in rural areas.

Q2. How can convergence be achieved?
One of the mechanisms for convergence is through planning. 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.

Another way of convergence is to bring convergence through a major flagship programmes. The major flagship programmes for local area development are NREGA, 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.

Q3. How is Gujarat working on convergence through NREGS?
Gujarat has been working on the convergence model since 2003 and had taken up some pilot projects. With the implementation of NREGA in 2005 the convergence model was given an impetus. Gujarat also has made attempts to attain convergence through NREGS. 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 NREGA funds with funds available with PRIs from other sources from central and State Governments funds can also be dovetailed with NREGA funds for the construction of durable community assets/works permissible under NREGA

Q4. How is convergence in BRGF planned?
Convergence is planned in BRGF through constitution of District Planning Committee (DPC) which has been proposed in Article 243ZD of the 74th CAA. 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. It is believed that planning from below can ensure convergence of programmes and plans. As part of this framework a fund flow mechanism has also been detailed for convergence. All funds through central and state schemes 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. 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.

Q5. List some issues in achieving convergence
Some of the issues in convergence are:
(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. 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. 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 also general feeling that convergence can happen better and is feasible at the state level as compared to the district level.

(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

[18]Q1. What is Monitoring?

Monitoring is tracking the progress of an on-going activity against planned tasks. It is a continuous assessment of project implementation in terms of inputs, work schedule and targeted output in relation to project plans, resources utilization, infrastructure and services provided and use of these infrastructure and services by project beneficiaries.

Q2. How is Monitoring helpful to project implementation?

Monitoring enables implementers to identify and reinforce positive project results, strengths and successes on one hand and on the other hand it alerts managers to actual and potential project weaknesses, problems and shortcomings before it is too late so that they can take corrective measures.

Q3. What is Evaluation?

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 to achieve the project goal in terms of appropriateness of products and service the project intend to provide and the intended change. Evaluations does not only see 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 and group strengthening.

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Q4. Explain the following terms in the context of Monitoring and Evaluation of a project- (i) **Impact Assessment (ii) Sustainability (iii) Relevance (iv) Output and Outcome and (v) Indicators.**

(i) Impact Assessment is the positive or negative changes both direct and indirect that happens in the area as a result of the project.

(ii) Sustainability is the extent to which the implementing organization will continue to pursue the objectives after project assistance is over.

(iii) Relevance is 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.

(iv) Output is a short term result where as outcome is long term result and may or may not be sustainable. Output is immediate effect and outcome is impact.

(v) Indicators are used to track what is being done and how the use of resources and the project activities affect the lives of people. Indicators are measures of inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes and impacts of development projects or programmes.

Q5. What methods can be used for information collection for project monitoring?
Data collected as a part of the implementing process, registers used to capture various project data and field notes are useful for monitoring. Formal surveys can be used to collect standardized information on a project from a selected sample of people or households. Baseline information can be developed to track progress on certain issues like school enrolment, maternal and child mortality. On projects like land development, a-forestation, de-siltation a photo documentation of 'before' picture will be very useful. Rapid appraisal methods can be used to gather the views and feedback of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders and provides rapid information for management for decision-making. It also provides qualitative understanding of changes due to the project through interactions with various stakeholders.

Q6. What are the two approaches to Monitoring and Evaluation?
There are two approaches to monitoring and evaluation conventional approach and participatory approach.

Q7. What are the key differences between conventional and participatory evaluation approaches?
Conventional evaluation is done by external experts, to make judgment of the project on whether to continue funding, with a set of pre determined indicators which looks at cost and benefits and done usually at the end or on completion of the project.

Participatory evaluation is undertaken by community members and project staff to empower local people to take control of the project and take corrective action if required. Community prepares its own indicators of success. Simple methods are used and all information collected is open for sharing. Since such monitoring can be done at regular intervals there is scope form improvement in programme implementation.

Q8. What is participatory Monitoring and Evaluation?

Participatory monitoring and evaluation provides for active involvement of those with a stake in the program/project. Participatory monitoring provides an ongoing picture of the project that allows determining whether activities are progressing as per the planning or not through interaction with the stakeholders.

Participatory evaluations involves insiders to identify evaluation questions and in gathering information to 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.

Q9. How is participatory monitoring and evaluation being used to build accountability?

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.

10. Which programmes/ projects in India have an inbuilt system of participatory monitoring?

Most national and state level programmes in India have an inbuilt system of participatory planning, implementation and monitoring built into it. The Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) which involve local people through social audit in the Gramsabha to ensure downward accountability are examples. The National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) has also developed a toolkit for monitoring the implementation of the mission. A set of indicators have been developed as part of the mission document.

19. SOCIAL AUDITS

[19]Q1. While audits are done very regularly, why Social Audit has been given so much importance?

Financial audit is the verification of financial transactions and compliance to the rules and guidelines by an external agency. It is upward accountability to establish correctness of procedure and use of resources for the set objective. Common people are not involved in the process for whom the programme is designed. The basic objective of a Social Accountability 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. Social Accountability allows people to enforce downward accountability and transparency, providing the ultimate users an opportunity to scrutinize development initiatives. It is very important that common people for whom the programme or the project is intended to benefit are empowered to ask questions about the targeting, effectiveness, outcome and impact of the programme. When common people question the implementing agency based on information it leads to accountability. It also helps increase people's awareness about their rights and entitlements, pave the way for participation and improves

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delivery of programme services. It has been experienced that poor delivery of programmes are improved through people themselves through accountability measures.

Q2. Usually people do not even participate in the Gram Sabha, how can common people participate in the social audit?

People do not participate in the gramsabha because most of the time such meetings are facilitated in a form and manner that people do not understand the purpose. They feel it is only few powerful persons who are involved in the decision making process. If people know that the meeting is called to seek feedback on the programmes meant for them and appropriate corrective action will be taken to improve the quality of the programme, they will start showing interest.

Social Audits of governance institutions and/or basic service providers like primary schools, primary health centers, fair price shops, relief and rehabilitation services calls for the involvement of citizens who are the primary stake holders. They need to be informed about all the decisions and programme transaction in a transparent and direct manner. It brings to fore a local people's forum to demand accountability. In the case of MGNREGA, Gram Sabha plays as a constitutional body for peoples' participation for accountability. Therefore, it is very important to create an empowered public forum to conduct social audit.

The basic requisite for facilitating Social Audit should be largely based on the following principles:
1. A people's forum like Gram Sabha should own the process and organize it;
2. It should be very simple so that people should able to facilitate it;
3. It should be non-threatening but at the same time empowering for the people; and
4. The outcome shall have a binding to redress grievances and make   corrective measures.

Q3. What the Gram Panchayat need to do to create an enabling environment for social audit?
As prescribed in MGNREGA guidelines in the gram panchayat village vigilance and monitoring committee (VVMC) must be constituted from among the poor, women, SC and ST who have been excluded historically. Inclusion of the poor and marginalized in the social audit will create a faith in the accountability process. All key project/scheme related information must be put in the public domain. Some of the critical information should be displayed which people can understand. Popularly it is called moving from the domain of Management Information System (MIS) to Janata Information System (JIS) so that people are enabled to understand and analyse their own data and information. Gram Panchyat shall involve an external independent facilitator to facilitate the process. As the panchayat is the implementing agency to demonstrate neutrality, it can also an independent jury to examine the grievances and make suggestions for grievance redressal. The entire mechanism should be told to the people so that a basic trust is developed to the social audit process.

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 might be possible through a large scale awareness campaign focused as well as demonstration by the implementing agency about the seriousness and commitment over the process. Public transparency and accountability has to be a policy of the implementing agency which needs to be backed by other support organisations involved in the programme. The issues identified in the social audit, must be redressed in a stipulated time frame. Without this people lose faith in the process.

Q4. What are the keysteps to be followed to conduct social audit?
There are primarily four steps in conducting social audit – (i) notification of social audit and creating a facilitating environment, (ii) data collection and data analysis, (iii) verification and scrutisation by the people and (iv) disclosure and gramsabha.

Notification: In the MGNREGA, office of the DPC issues notification for the Gram Sabha 30 days in advance. In this notification, Programme Officers are made responsible to finalize the dates and time of the Gram Sabhas of their respective blocks and the same information is also made available to all the Gram Panchayats as well as concerned office of the DPC. GPs are made responsible for organizing Gram Sabhas for Social Audits while the responsibility of conducting the audit should be vested in the VVMC. It is a group of 9 members of the local community to monitor the progress of works undertaken under MGNREGS. It has representation of women, SC/ST and the workers.

Data Collection: User-friendly forms and documents for collecting data with regard to the implementation of the programme is most important. The formats shall be such the villagers can fill the information on different components of the programme. Some of the important information about implementation needs to be displayed proactively. A format for proactive disclosure can be developed and the information can be painted on the wall of a public building so that people can read, check and scrutinize. In case of a disaster related programme, information on the list of people received support, types of support, actual value of those sevices against the estimated/budget value, can be displayed so that issues of targeting, cost of the support, reason of arriving the nature of support can be made public.

In MGNREGA the Committee (VVMC) is authorized to collect all the information related to sanctioning of the work, muster roll, work measurement, pay order and all other transactions. This data is analyzed presented to the people in a very simple format and seek people's feed back. What type of information has to be made available to the **S**ocial Audit Committee has to be proactively announced. Besides this, the project management shall provide all information that is demanded.

Verification and Scrutiny: Social Audit Committee will visit all completed works and judge the quality of work done by checking whether it complies with the specifications in the work order before the start the of work. The implementing agency should provide photographs of the site before and after the works. These photographs can help the Committee to assess the work completed at the various sites.

The photo copy of the records and their analysis should be displayed in the a public place or Panchayat office at least 15 days before the Social Audit Gram Sabha. Analyzed data of the Social Audit Committee will also be displayed at some other public places (village square) 'chauraha', 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 Gram Sabha so that people have the chance to read and understand it.

Social Audit Committee should conduct meetings with the project beneficiaries at project sites and falia/hamlet (locality) levels to generate awareness about the objective and key outcomes of the project. It will clarify the expectations and questions of people. This is a very important requirement for improving the participation of people in the Gram Sabha.

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 question in the Gram Sabha that is being held. The date, time and venue should also be communicated to the community very clearly so that they can be present.

Gram sabha: The day of the Gram Sabha should be marked by enthusiasm and interest among the community. There will be a banner proclaiming the importance of Gram Sabha. The day before the Gram Sabha there should be a meeting with Sarpanch, Panchayat members and Panchayat Secretary to finalise the proceeding and the sequence of facilitation of the Gram Sabha.

 A complaints/ suggestion/ box should be placed at the venue of the Gram Sabha. This would go a long way in motivating people who are not able to speak out to put their grievances/ concerns, s in writing. The box should also be emptied during the Gram Sabha meeting by a Social Audit Committee member and all issues read out and responded.

Representative of implementing agency or agencies should be present in the Gram Sabha.

Gram Sabha for Social Audit (Social Audit Forum) should be chaired by the president of the Social Audit Committee.

Gram Sabha should start by reviewing the progress (action taken) on the major issues rose in the last Social Audit Gram Sabha and the major decisions taken. 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.

Social Audit Committee should then present a report card of the implementation of the project i.e., they should present the information that has been analyzed, verified and presented.

The Social Audit Committee members may take the help of school teachers or other community member willing provide support to summaries the findings to presented in the Gram Sabha.

If any discrepancy is found during the verification it should be noted down and it should be responded immediately by concerned authority present in the Gram Sabha. If needed, it can be reported for further enquiry. This should be included in the final action taken report.

20. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

[20]Q1. What is leadership?

Leadership is a process by which a person influences others in an organisation to accomplish a mission, task, or objective by providing purpose, direction and motivation.

Q2. Who is a leader?

A Leader is one who has the ability to inspire and stimulate others to achieve defined worthwhile goals.

Q3. Are individuals born as leaders?

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Most individuals are not born as leaders. 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. Leadership does take skill and you can learn leadership skills.

Q4. What are the qualities of a good leader?
A good leader is one who is able to establish a high level of trust and credibility with bosses, peers, and subordinates and the ability to get things done through cooperation and influence. A good leader has ambition, initiative, is self-confidence and is accountable for his/her actions. He/she has a clear idea of where they are going and how they are going to get there and make people feel part of the company by encouraging them to have a say in every aspect of the work. A leader should have the ability to communicate his or her ideas, to the workforce who will turn these ideas into action.

Q5. What values does an effective leader need to possess?
An effective leader is one who is honest, motivated, is enthusiastic, is self confident, has knowledge of the work, is emotional stable, mature, puts emphasis on team work and has empathy to workers.

Q6. What do followers expect and admire in their leader?
Employees seek certain characteristics in a leader. Majority admire leaders who are honest, competent, forward-looking and inspiring.

Q7. What is leadership style?
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. As a leader you may find yourself using different leadership styles at different times.

Q8. What different leadership styles are commonly used?
There are many different ways of working with people. There are broadly four styles of leadership. They are:
  i.   Authoritarian or Autocratic Leader
  ii. Participative or Democratic Leader
  iii. Delegative or Consultative Leader
  iv. Laissez-Faire or Free Reign Leader
Good leaders use all four styles, with one of them normally dominate, bad leaders tend to stick with only one style.

Q9. What is Authoritarian/Autocratic Leadership?
This is a style in which a leader:
  • Rely on threats and punishment to influence employees;
  • Do not trust employees; and
  • Do not allow for employee input.

Q10. What is Participative/Democratic Leadership?
In this style typically the democratic leader:
  • Encourages employees to grow on the job;
  • Recognizes and encourages achievement;
  • Allows employees to establish goals.

Q11. Who is a Delegative/Consultative leader?

A delegative consultative leader is one who:

- Asks for ideas from people;
- Holds the final decision making authority.

A delegative /consultative 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.

Q12. Who is a 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.

Q13. What is situational leadership?

Situational leadership allows you to analyse the needs of the situation you're dealing with, and then adopt the most appropriate leadership style. A situational leader is one who can adopt different leadership styles depending on the situation.

21. MOTIVATION - PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE

[21]**Q1. What is Motivation?**
Motivation is basically having a clear distinction between getting employees to do something and getting employees to want to do something. A person's motivation is a combination of desire and energy directed towards achieving a goal.

Q2. What are the factors that motivate people?
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.

Q3. What factors indicate that employees are de-motivated?
The following factors indirectly determine indicate that there are 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.

Q4. What are some of the causes for non-performance?
There are generally four major causes of non performance:

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- The employee does not know how to perform the process correctly due to lack of skills, knowledge, or abilities.
- The problem is not employee related, but is caused by working conditions and bad processes
- Lack of resources or technology to perform the task.
- The employee knows how to perform, but does so incorrectly.

Q5. What are approaches to dealing with non-performance?
The two broad approaches to dealing with non performance are the stick approach and the carrot approach.

The stick approach deals with poor performers either by firing them from the job, transferring them to other department, demoting them, punishing them or cutting their pay. This approach not only fails in getting the desired results but all leaves the employees discontented and with low morale.

The carrot approach involves recognition and appreciation of the efforts, which results in improved work atmosphere, good quality of products and results in employee satisfaction.

Q6. List some tips to leaders to motivate employees
- Determine the levels and kinds of performance needed to achieve organizational goals.
- Ensure that both organizational and personal needs meet at a common point.
- Provide the group members the necessary training and skill building required to perform the task.
- Reward good work through gestures like a letter, certificate or a thank you note.
- Build a sense of ownership and personal interest by allowing employees to be part of the planning and problem solving process.
- Take care of your employees by empathizing and showing concern for them.
- Keep the communication channel open and transparent.
- Make their jobs challenging, exciting, and meaningful.

22. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

[22]Q1. What is the significance of effective communication in an organisation?
A. Effective 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.

Q2. What are the benefits of effective communication?
A. The benefits of effective communication practices are 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[23].

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[23] Hargie, G., Dickson, D. & Tourish, D. (2004), Communication Skills for Effective Management, pp. 5-9

Q3. What are the various patterns of communication followed in an organisation?

A. Managers at all levels engage in planning, organizing, leading and evaluating. For this they must communicate at five levels- upwards, downwards, across, outwards and self. In downward communication decisions are taken by management and imposed on subordinates, who are expected to obey orders. This often leads to a low morale amongst the employees. In upward communication manager asks for suggestions, gives adequate information and thereby ideas are shared. 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.

Q4. What is the role of active listening?

A. Active listening is a way of listening and responding to another person which results in mutual understanding. It 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, to avoid misunderstandings between people.

Q5. What are the various forms of communication?

A. There are four forms of communication: written communication, online communication, verbal/spoken communication and nonverbal communication.

Q6. When and how is written communication used?

A. Written communication should be used when the situation is formal, official, or long term. Letters are formal in tone and addressed to an individual 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.

Q7. How is online communication effectively used?

A. 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.

Q8. How is verbal / spoken communication used effectively?

A. Verbal / Spoken communication is found useful in 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 where people can clarify doubts (if any) by asking questions that very moment.

Q9. What does non verbal communication include?
A. Nonverbal messages include images, actions and behavior used to communicate. Images include photographs, films, charts, tables, graphs, and video. The effective communicator maintains eye contact with the people to whom he/she is communicating.

Q10. What are the different communication channels existing in an organisation? How can they be used effectively?
A. Organisational communication network is made up of two types of channels which are interrelated and interdependent, that is, formal and informal channels. These determine the nature of message flow in an organization. The formal channel is officially prescribed path for flow of communication between the various positions in the organisations. 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. This is more active during high organisational excitement such as policy changes, automation, computerisation or personnel changes. The management can take suitable action to minimize its effects.

Q11. What are the different kinds of communication behaviour? Explain them.
A. There are four different types of communication behaviour - Aggressive, Passive, Avoidance and Assertive. **Aggressive behaviour** offends or isolates someone else's rights, **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 and **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 as it involves clear and steady communication, standing up for your rights and beliefs, whilst looking for ways to resolve possible problems.

Q12. What are the barriers to communication found in an organisation?
A. 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 including staff shortages, staffs located in different buildings or sites
- Organisational structure can lead to inefficient or inappropriate information system if the communication channel is unclear.
- Attitudinal barriers like poor management, lack of consultation with employees, personality conflicts which can result in people delaying or refusing to communicate.
- 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 can prevent people from understanding the message.
- Insufficient knowledge of the subject
- If the sender chooses an inappropriate channel of communication, communication may fail.
- Long communication chain can lead to errors leading to the message getting distorted
- Emotional Distractions 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. This may lead to misinterpretation.
- 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.

23. TEAM BUILDING

[24]Q1. What do you mean by a team?
A team is a group organized to work together to accomplish a set of objectives that cannot be achieved effectively by individuals.

Q2. What is team work?
Teamwork is the ability to work together towards a common vision. Organizations build teams with people of complementary skills to work towards achieving the objectives and goals.

Q3. What are the characteristics of a good team?
A good team has sense of purpose and clear about the task, each member know what to do, each member feels responsible for performance, norms of working together are set, authority and decision making lines are clear, conflict is dealt openly, there is open and honest communication, each members unique qualities are appreciated, there is a climate of trust and success is shared equally

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[24] 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.

Q4. What are the different stages of team development?
Team building is done in stages. Understanding the stages of development of the team is the key to successful team management. Most commonly understood 5 stages are – Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing and Adjourning.

Q5. When can problems arise in a team?
Problems can arise due to dysfunctions in a team. This can be due to absence of trust, fear of conflict, lack of commitment, avoidance of accountability and inattention to results.

Q6. What is the role of a team leader?
The role of a team leader is to
   (i)   Help the team identify its purpose.
   (ii) Set the scope and boundaries so that the team is focused on the target and to reach the goal quickly.
   (iii) Show your belief in the team concept through your words and action.
   (iv) Define your role as a leader and let the team know your role.
   (v)   Be a supporter and support the team when it experiences obstacles and road blocks
   (vi) Be a facilitator and provide guidance to the team to help them succeed and to develop themselves towards greater future achievement at the same time.
   (vii) Communicate to your team members effectively.

Q7. What are the qualities of a leader in a team?
Team leader needs to have the following qualities:
   - 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

[25]Q1. What is Saakshar Bharat Mission?

The Saakshar Bharat, mission launched by The Prime Minister under Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India (GOI), on the International Literacy Day, 8th September, 2009 to impart functional literacy to non-literates in the age group of 15-35 years in a time bound manner, this mission came into operation from 1-10-2009. The mission will be in operation till 31.3.2012. Within next 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 mission will cover 121 Talukas of 13 districts the districts will be Dahod, Banaskantha, Panch Mahal, Dang, Narmada, Patan, Surendranagar, Kutchh, Sabarkantha, Bhavnagar, Amreli, Junagadh, and Jamnagar, where the adult female literacy rate is below 50% as per 2001 census

Q2. What are the purposes of Saakshar Bharat Mission?
The overall 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 right perspective for adult education. It aims to further promote and strengthen Adult Education, specially of women, by extending

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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 (equivalency to formal education), vocational education (skill development), physical and emotional development, practical arts, applied science, sports, and recreation.

Q3. What are the key activities of the mission and what will be the institutional linkage with the gram Panchyats?

The key activities will be to establish 1.70 lakh Lok Shiksha Kendras (Adult Education Centers) in Gram Panchayats of the districts covered under the programme. It will subsume the already sanctioned Continuing Education Centers (CECs) in a particular district. Well equipped multiple functional Lok Shikha Kendras (Adult Education Centres [AEC]) 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 having the population of 5000. An additional AEC may be set up if the population of Gram Panchayat is more than 5000. The adult education centre 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 be at least a matriculatel.

A Panchyat Lok Shiksha Samiti will be formed of approximate 13 members at gram panchayat level, Panchayat president (Sarpanch) will be the chairperson of the committee. Major task of the committee will management of the Lok Shikshan Kendra and planning, implementation and monitoring of the activities at the panchayat level

Q4. Whom does the Mission target?

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 limited to, women. Schedules Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) Minorities, other disadvantaged groups and adolescents in rural areas in low literacy States will be other focused groups. For each focused group and area, there will be a specific target and for each target, an explicit approach and strategy.

Q5. What is the role of PRIs in this?

The Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) are the main implementing agency at the district, block and gram panchayat levels, with the State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA) and the communities at the village level as valued stakeholders .Activities and responsibilities have been delineated up 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 will include 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 all the gram panchayts in the block and add

their own activity budget to it. The District Implementing Agency will ensemble all the block plans and add their own

Q6. How NGOs and private sector can contribute to this mission

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. In the urban areas, the programme may be handled through Jan Shikshan Sansthans, State Resource Centres, NGOs, social groups and any other institution 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.

Q7. What are the key aspects for the success of the mission?

a) 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 etc.

b) 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.

c) The Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) play key role in planning, implementing and monitoring of the mission, especially at the Gram Panchayat level, the programme 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 a due say and role in the planning and implementation of the programme

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