Compendium of Training Resources for Capacity Building of Panchayati Raj Institutions
(Short Version)

प्रज्वलितो ज्ञानमयः प्रदीपः
Light the Lamp of Knowledge

SIRD
State Institute of Rural Development
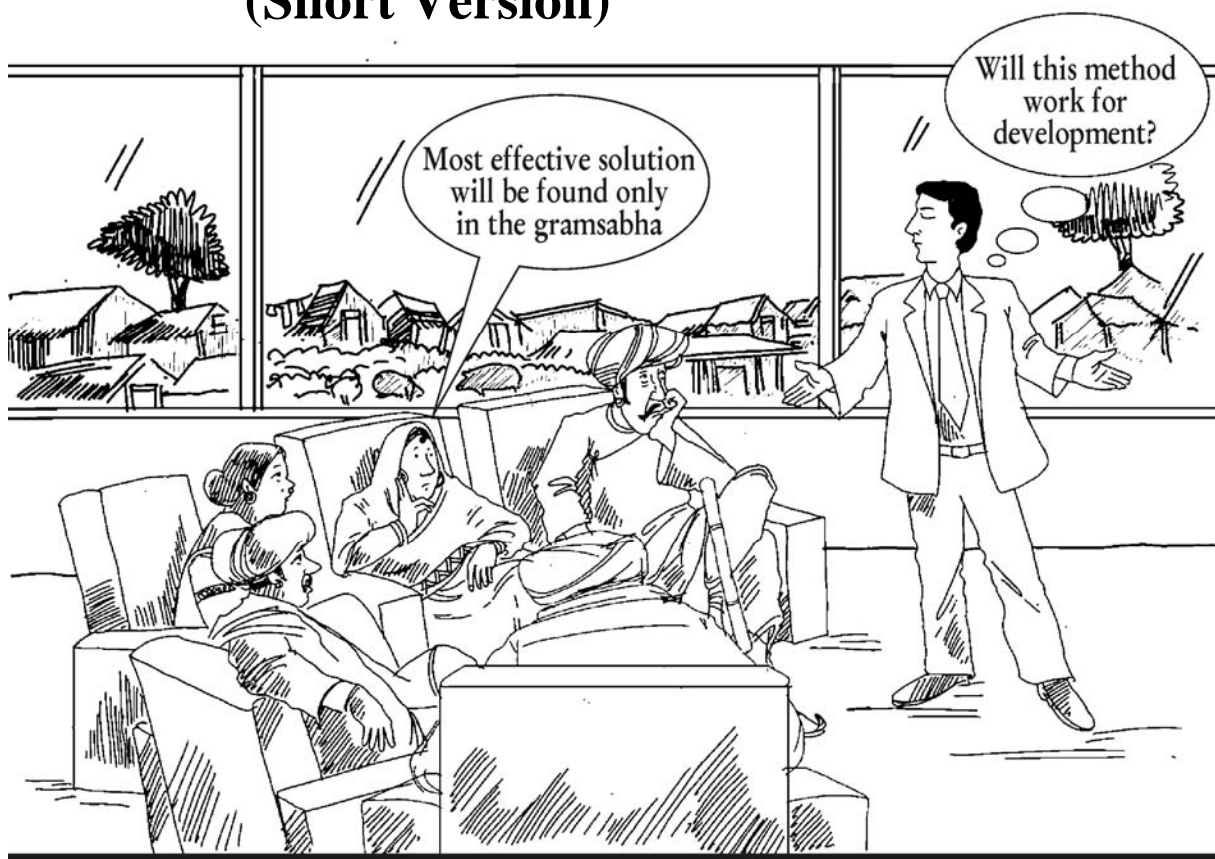
Forward

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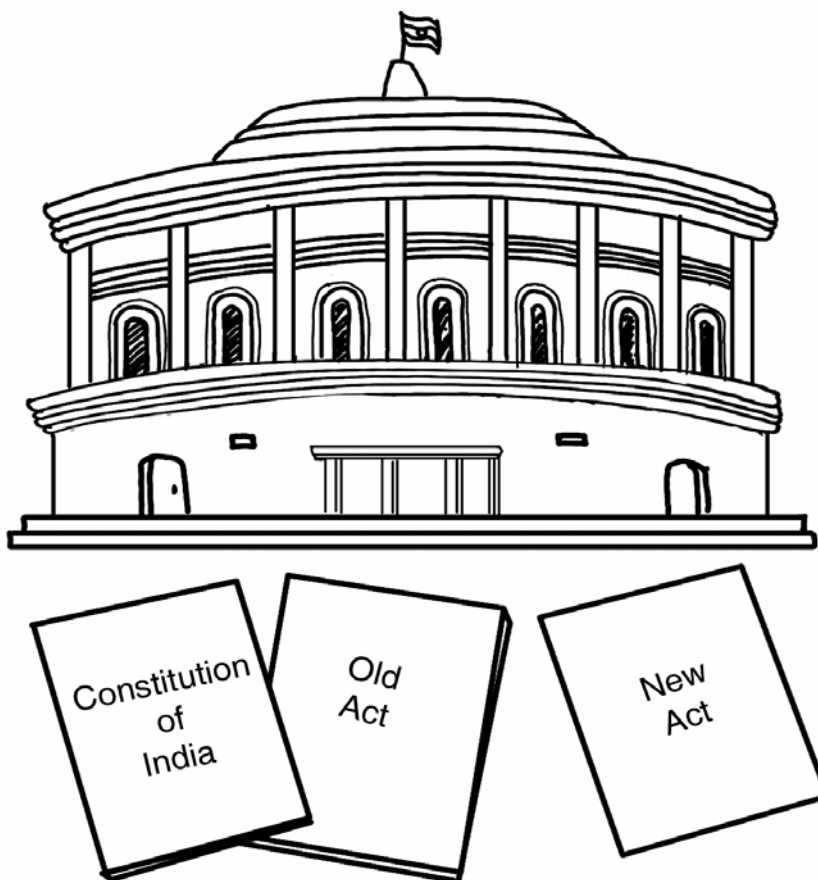
It gives a sense of satisfaction and achievement when one sees how the PRIs can effectively implement democratic decentralization governance with people's participation, particularly with the leadership with women, SCs, STs and other vulnerable section in planning and management of local development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

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

Contents

. PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN INDIA - AN OVERVIEW

[1]Local governance system is in practice from ancient period. It is mentioned in RIGVEDA, Evidences suggest that self-governing village bodies called 'sabhas' existed. With the passage of time, these bodies became panchayats (council of five persons). The word "panchayat" is derived from two Sanskrit words - *Panch* and *Ayat*. *Panch* means group of five people and *Ayat* means place where these five people used to sit for resolving the village issues. Panchayats were functional institutions of grassroots governance in almost every village. The Village Panchayat or elected council had executive and judicial powers. 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. The autonomy of panchayats gradually declined during the Mughal and colonial rules. British rulers were mainly interested in the creation of 'controlled' local bodies that could help them in their trading interests by collecting taxes for them.

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

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landmark in the evolution of colonial policy towards local government. The real benchmark of government policy on decentralisation can be attributed to Lord Ripon. His resolution recognized two aspects of local government: administrative efficiency and political education. The Ripon Resolution focused on towns and provided for local bodies consisting of a large majority of elected non-official members and presided over by a non-official chairperson. This resolution met with resistance from colonial administrators. There was no effort on administrative reform for rural governance and thus, decentralization process in rural areas remained neglected.

For the first time, the importance of panchayat at the village level was recognised by The Royal Commission in the year 1907. The commission recommended that attempt should be made to constitute and develop village panchayats for the administration of local village affairs in association with local people. 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.

In spite of recommendation of various committees, a hierarchical administrative structure based on supervision and control evolved. The administrator became the focal point of rural governance.

Status of Panchayati Raj Institutions after Independence
The Indian National Congress from the 1920s to 1947, emphasized the issue of all-India Swaraj, and organized movements for Independence under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. There was no consensus among the top leaders regarding the status and role to be assigned to the institution 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 either at the national or state level to implement it.

Since the adoption of the Constitution, Panchayat Raj Institutions have travelled from the non-justiciable part of the Constitution to one where, through a separate amendment a new status has been provided to them. Several committees were constituted during this period by various authorities to advise the Centre on different aspects of decentralization for establishing the Panchayati Raj Institution as a unit of local governance at the village level. The details of the various committees are as mentioned below.

Balwantrai Mehta Committee (1957) - The Balwantrai Mehta Committee was setup to study the Community Development Projects. The philosophy underlying the report was to move the decision making centres closer to the people. The main recommendation of the committee were as

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

K. Santhanam Committee (1963) - The K. Santhanam Committee was formed to look into PRI finance. This committee recommended that panchayats should have the powers to levy tax and advocated for setting up a Panchayati Raj Finance Corporation to look after the financial resources of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

Ashok Mehta Committee (1978) - A high-level committee was appointed under the chairmanship of Ashok Mehta to examine and suggest measures to strengthen PRIs. As per the recommendation of the committee, the district should be the viable administrative unit for planning, co-ordination and resource allocation as well as providing technical expertise. PRIs should be two tier systems with mandal panchayat at the base and Jilla Panchayat at the top. The committee suggested that representations of SC and ST in the election of PRI should be based on their population and tenure of the panchayata should be four years.

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

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

All these various suggestions and recommendations and means of strengthening PRIs were considered while formulating the new Constitutional Amendment Act to strengthened Panchayati Raj Institution.

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

- The Gram Sabha or village assembly has been recognized as the foundation of the Panchayati Raj System.
- Three tier structure for Panchayati Raj Institutions has been introduced at village, Taluka and Jilla levels.
- All the seats in a panchayat at every level are to be filled by elections from respective territorial constituencies.

- One third of the seats for women will be reserved in all the tiers
- Reservation for SCs and STs has to be provided at all levels in proportion to their population in the panchayats.
- A State Election Commission has to be constituted in every State and UT for smooth election of PRIs and ULBs.
- A State Finance Commission in every State/UT has to be formed every five years to suggest measures to strengthen finances of PRIs.
- The District Planning Committee (DPC) in every district has been accorded constitutional status to promote bottom up planning.
- Indicative list of 29 functions have been entrusted to panchayats through Eleventh Schedule for effective role in planning and implementation of related works.

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

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

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]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.

Gujarat became a separate state on May 1, 1960. However, the primary tier i.e., the garm panchayats continued to be guided by the provisions of the 1958 Act. The state government appointed a committee under the chairmanship of the then Home Minister, Rasiklal Parikh to give recommendation for

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

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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.

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.

Meanwhile, at the central level the issue of rural Local Self Government was kept alive by constituting committees to review and make suggestions to improve the status of Local Governing Institutions. These committees made important suggestions from time to time. 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.

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 $1/3^{rd}$ 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.

Extension of Panchayati Raj Act to the Schedule Areas

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

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

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

Powers of Gram Panchayats
- Planning and management of water bodies
- Enforce prohibition and regulate or restrict the sale and consumption of any intoxicant

- Ownership of minor forest produce
- Exercise control over institutions and functionaries in all social sectors
- Exercise control over money lending to the scheduled tribes

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

Powers of Jilla Panchayat

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

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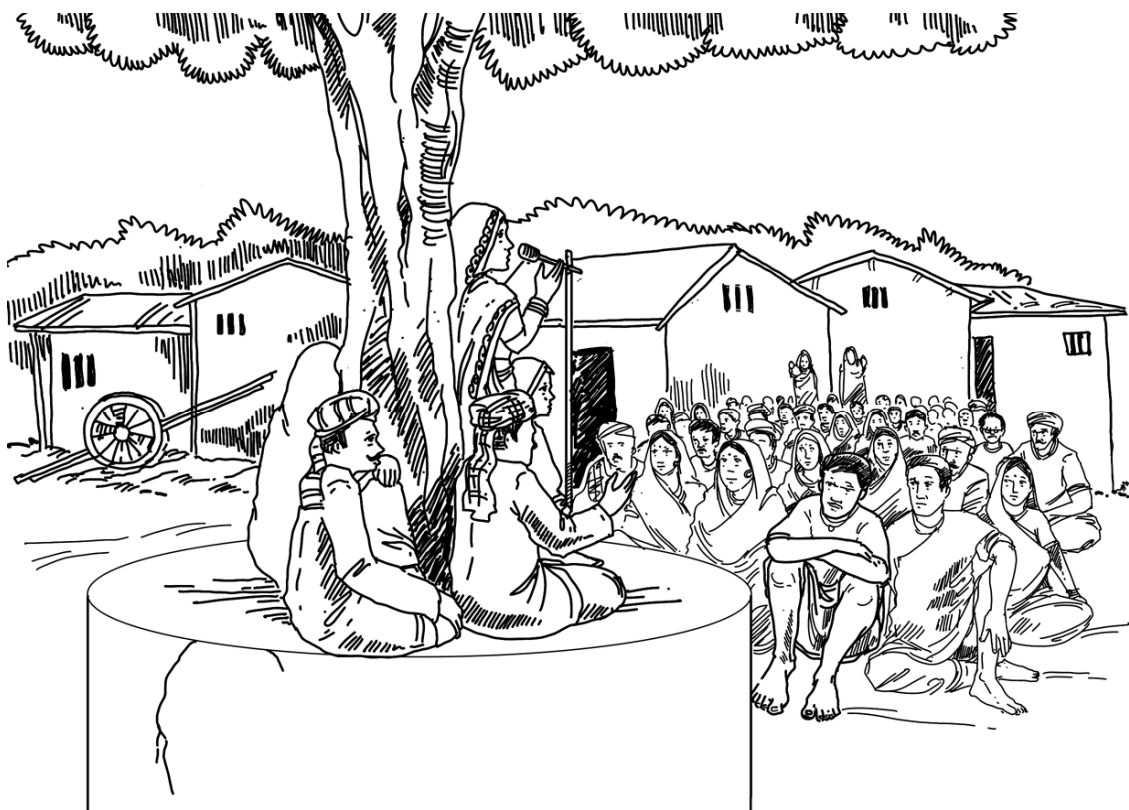
[3]Decentralization and people's participation are especially important in the context of participatory governance. It is based on the principle that decisions should be taken by the people and acts as an influencing force for enabling people to acquire control over decisions that influence their lives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

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.)

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

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the Human Development Report 1993, decentralization has been fairly successful in encouraging people participation, bringing accountability and transparency among the officials and in the system. It can help in mobilizing resources and promote equitable growth by bringing the poor in mainstream development. India is currently considered the world leader in creating space for political decentralization. All the government policies and programmes in India are focused more on creating space for people participations in each and every aspect of its implementations.

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

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

Articles 243, 243A to O were added as parts of newly inserted Part IX of the Constitution. The Amendment introduced across the board three-tier system of the PRIs at village, Block and District levels. The electorate at *Gram Panchayat* level is called the *Gram Sabha* which elects the representatives to *Gram Panchayat* by way of direct election. Further, Article 243D provides for reservation of seats at all levels for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and women. While the reservation for the SCs/STs is as per their actual proportion in population of the concerned area, it is provided that not less than one-third of the total seats in all the tiers will be reserved for women. Reservation also has to be made for the offices of the Chairpersons at all the three tiers. 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 laws may lay down the procedure to be followed, as well as the limits of such taxes/levies. The State governments may also assign to the *Panchayats* various taxes and duties collected by it. The State governments are required to appoint a State Finance Commission to review the financial position of the PRIs and make recommendations with regard to the distribution of net proceeds of taxes between the States and the PRIs, assignment of certain taxes exclusively to the PRIs and the grants-in-aid.

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

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

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 goverment must be rganized, capable and willing to receive and utilize the power and authority responsibly for the socio-economic development of the people. Without civic will and capability, the functions transferred through decentralization will not be carried out effectively and the resources transferred will be wasted.

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
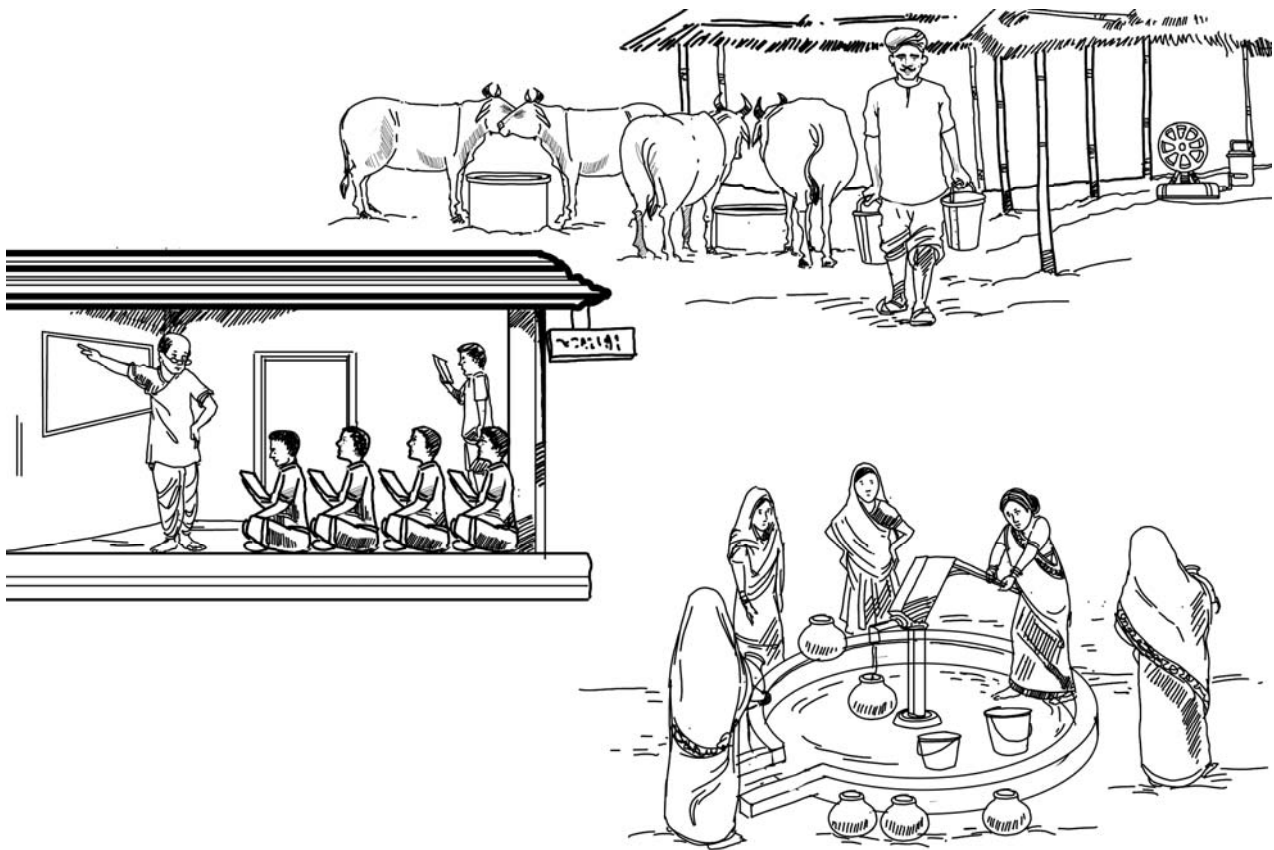
[4]73rd Amendment in the Indian Constitution has paved the way for the Panchayati Raj Institution to function as the unit of Local Governance. This Amendment has given status of constitutional entity to Panchayati Raj Institutions. According to the 73rd Amendment, Panchayats have to be given powers and responsibilities so that they could plan for economic development and social justice. Primarily 29 subjects have been listed in the Eleventh schedule of the constitution on which panchayats could make decisions. .

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

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 as mentioned in Sections

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99, 130 and 154 for gram pancahayats, Taluka Panchayts and Zilla panchayats respectively. These are known as Schedules I, II and III. The functions that have been entrusted to Gram Panchayat, Taluka Panchayats and Jilla Panchayat through Schedule I, II and III are briefly mentioned below:

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

Public health and Hygiene
The responsibility of the Gram panchayats with regard to public health and hygiene is to keep the village clean and abide by hygienic practices to protect health and keep diseases at bay. All necessary arrangements should also be taken care to ensure that communicable diseases do not recur.
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Spread of Education and Culture
It is the responsibility of the gram panchayats to setup gymnasiums, play grounds, community centers, and auditoriums for display and promotion of art and culture. Priority should also be given on welfare of women and youth as well as to setup libraries for benefit of the villagers. Gram panchayat should promote and encourage of good/moral practices to discourage bad practices such as alcoholism, bribery and gambling in the panchayats. Subsequently, Gram panchayats has to take outmost care for upliftment of backward sections of the society and abolishment of untouchability from the panchayat. Establishment of schools, construction and maintenance of school-buildings and provide necessary equipment for promotion of primary education. Pre-primary schools, nurseries should also be set up by the gram panchayat along with child welfare.

Impetus to Community Development
Community development is one of the core functions of the Gram panchayat. The role of the gram panchayat is to encourage and provides assistance to cooperative activities. Promote the voluntary workforce at the panchayat level to help in the community works and proved assistance to the community as and when natural calamity occurs.

Social Development
Gram panchayats is to keep vigil for eradication of social evils like untouchability and to ensure an equal status for men and women. It has to organise various activates such as education events or IEC to eradicate superstition, social evil and promotion of secularism in the panchayat.

Water Supply and Maintenance
It is the role of the gram panchayat to supply good quality water for use at home and for drinking purposes of cattle and domestic animals in affordable price.

Promotion of village industry and livelihood
The responsibility of the gram panchayats is to promote village and cottage industries for generating livelihood option for the people reside in the panchayats.

Infrastructural Facilities, Construction of Public Buildings and Maintenance
Buildings, public road, drainage pipeline, ponds, public infrastructure and other developmental purposes that are necessary for use in community should be constructed and

maintenance of the same should be ensured by the panchayats. Specify terms and conditions has to develop for maintenance and to regulate the use of Panchayat buildings, cattle grazing grounds, forest tracts, ponds and wells used for irrigation purposes.

Improvements in farming practices
All possible measures should be adopted by the gram panchayats to bring improvement in the farming practices and Setting up of warehouses to facilitate storage of food grains. Cooperative farming should be encouraged.Proper water supply should be ensured by taking up micro-irrigation projects and erect small water-storage tanks within the farm lands.

Animal Husbandry
All necessary measures should be adopted for improvement and increase of cattle stock and effort to be made to encourage to dairy farming.

Administration and Maintenance
Gram panchayat has to take punitive action against the owners of the cattle and dogs that are found loitering. Setting up and administering cattle and dog pounds. Dilapidated buildings and constructions that could pose a danger to the public safety should be secured or even demolished.

Maintenance and administration of cremation and burial grounds is the responsibility of the gram panchayats as well as disposal of animal carcasses in a quick and hygienic fashion. Adequate measures should be taken for upkeep of infrastructure to protect life and property in any incident from fire. Ensure adequate safety and security of all Panchayat buildings and its properties. All forms of encroachments should be removed by gram panchayats from public roads, open plots. All financial activities of the panchayat 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. Marriages, births and deaths rgistation should be done in the panchayats.

Function of Taluka Panchayat (Schedule II)

Sanitation and Health
Role of the Taluka panchayat with regard to sanitation and health is to control small pox, other epidemics, generating awareness on importance of family planning and expansion & maintenance of health services. Providing facilities for pure drinking water and supervision of dispensaries, pharmacies, maternity home and primary health center is lying with taluka panchayat. Facilitating community awareness programme on methods for preservation of health and sanitation in the jurisdiction of taluka panchayat

Communication
Construction and maintenance of village link road and providing necessary assistance for construction and maintenance of village approach road is the responsibility of taluka panchayat

Spreading Education and Culture
Spreading education and culture is one of the important functions entrusted to Taluka Panchayat through Gujarat Panchayat Act -1993. The activities that need to be facilitated by taluka panchayat under this head are as mentioned below

- 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
- Establishing and maintaining information centers, community educational centers and recreation centers
- Establishing institutions for rendering social services such as youth clubs, women's clubs and farmer associations and encouraging any such institutions if already established
- Establishing village defence corps
- Encouraging physical and cultural activities
- Establishing voluntary health associations
- Training gram-sevaks and utilizing their services
- Training gram-laxmis and gram-sevikas and utilizing their services
- Promoting children activities
- Providing hostel facilities for SC , ST and OBC student
- Proganda for prohibition of and against drug addiction

Community Development

The major thrust of the community development programme is to plan for increased employment opportunity by coordinating with village institution at the Taluka level. The activities that need to be facilitated by the Taluka panchayaat under community development are as motioned below

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

Agriculture, including extension of agriculture

Following activities are entrusted to taluka panchayat for promotion of Agriculture in its jurisdiction

- 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.

In the spare of Rural Housing

In the spare of rural housing, taluka Panchayat has the responsibility to develop village site with the cooperaton of local people to plan for rural hosing

Animal Husbandry

Following activities has to be facilitate by taluka panchayats with regard to Animal Husbandry

- Improve cattle breed by introduction of Stud bulls by castration of stray bullocks, establishment & maintaining artificial insemination centers and controlling and checking of infectious disease by sating up a first aid centre and veterinary dispensary
- Introducing improved grass and cattle field and its warehouse a

Village and Small scale Industry

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

Promotion of Cooperatives

Taluka panchayat is to encourage cooperative institutions in the economic and social field.

Providing Relief During Natural Calamities

It is the responsibility of the taluka panchayat to provide relief in case of floods, fires epidemics and other natural calamities on small and large scale

Administrative Responsibilities

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

Functions of Zila Panchayts

Zila panchayts has to perform the following functions:

General Functions

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

Agriculture and exextension of agriculture is included
- Popularising use of improved agricultural implements, improved agricultural practices to increase agricultural production.
- Opening and managing agricultural seed farms and commercial farms;
- Conducting agricultural fairs & exhibitions;
- Preparing and executing plans for integrated extension of agriculture and horticulture

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

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

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

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

Rural housing
- Integrated management of execution of rural housing programmes in the district;
- Assisting the Gram Panchayats and the Taluka panchayats in coordinating, supervising and maintaining distribution of building sites within its jurisdiction;

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

Roads, buildings, bridges - culverts, waterways and other means of communication
- Overall planning for roads except national and state highways, and bridges & culverts, getting them constructed and making provision for their maintenance

- Preparing a comprehensive plan for link roads to markets, educational and health centres, getting them constructed and providing for their maintenance

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

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

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

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

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

5. PANCHAYAT FINANCE
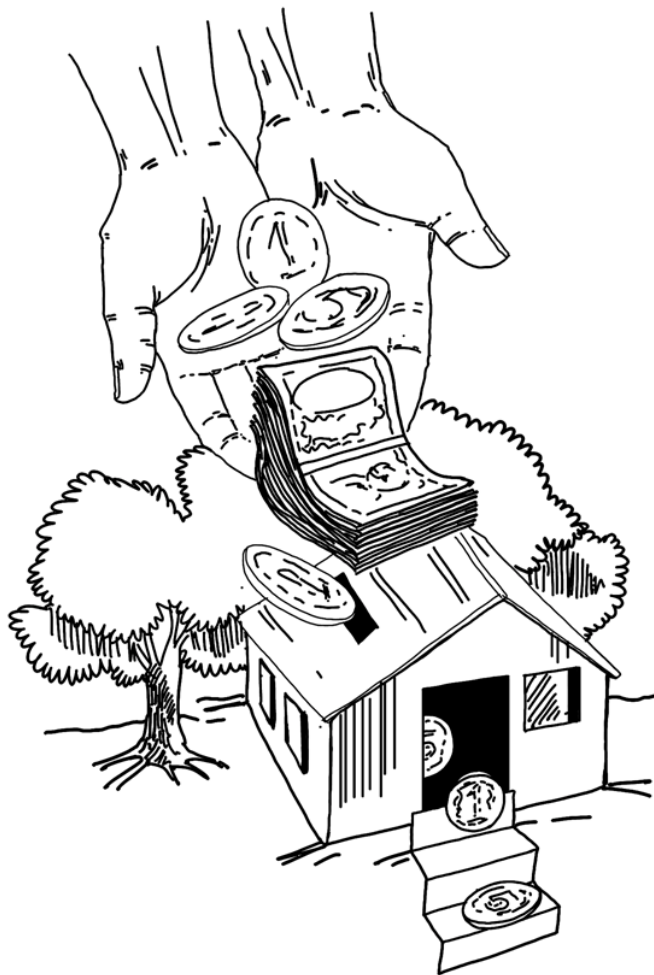
[5]As per Article 240 G, states have to transfer powers and responsibilities to enable panchayats to function as institutions of local governance. Panchayats have to plan and implement schemes for economic development and social justice especially on 29 subjects listed in the 11th Schedule of the Constitution. Under article 243 H, States may authorize the PRIs to levy and collect certain duties and fees and may assign to them the revenues of certain state level taxes. Grants in aid may also be provided to them. Thus, financial powers with panchayats are at the discretion of concerned state legislatures and sources of revenue differ from state to state. However, own resources of PRIs only meet a part of their requirements.

1. Sources of Funds for Panchayats

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

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

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

Table 1: Sources of Own Revenue of PRIs in Gujarat

Source: Alok (2006)

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.

Devolution and Grants - Major portion of the revenue of PRIs comes from intergovernmental transfers from the Union and State governments in the form of devolution, tied and untied grants and centrally sponsored schemes. Grants-in-aid are provided to fill the revenue gap of the local bodies so that they can meet the expenditure on basic functions. These can be (i) conditional or specific grants meant for specific purpose like some schemes or projects and (ii) general purpose grants or block grants based on some criteria or formula meant for additional resources with no conditions attached. Grants are also classified as statuary or non-statuary. Statuary grants are compulsory transfers that may be in lieu of abolition of withdrawal of certain taxes such as octroi. Gujarat has devolved 15 functions and the corresponding funds for them to the PRIs.

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.

Own revenues are merely 9% of total expenditures (per capita). PRIs continue to depend heavily on the upper tiers of government for their expenditures.[6]

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

Table 2: Share of own revenue in total expenditure of PRIs
Source: Alok (2006)

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[6] The State of Panchayats2007-08: An Independent Assessment by IRMA, Anand

Resources and Expenditure of PRIs according to Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993

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

Own resources
- Taxes and fees – Some taxes are collected and retained by panchayats as their revenue while others are collected on behalf of the state government. State government then redistributes them to the panchayats based on the average collection of the past three years. 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 including income from remunerative enterprises and contribution from the public. Under section 202, 50% received from the collection of royalty is given to the district panchayat.

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

2. State Finance Commissions (SFCs) and Panchayat Finances

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.

Gujarat Finance Commissions

The First Gujarat Finance Commission was constituted on 15th Sep'94 and submitted its report in 1998. Out of 63 recommendations, 42 were fully accepted, 8 were partially accepted while 13 recommendations were rejected. It had recommended devolution of Rs293 crore.

SFC primarily recommended that gram panchayats be mandated to levy property tax, water tax and conservancy tax; land revenue distribution to be based on the average of last three years; reconstitution of Panchayat Finance Board having an independent status and a share of professional tax to be given to panchayats. SFC has recommended grants-in-aid on roads, non-agriculture land assessment and agriculture to non-agriculture conversion tax.

Second Gujarat Finance Commission was constituted on 19th Nov'2003 and submitted its report in June 2006 for the period 2005-06 to 2009-10. The report is still under consideration. Third Finance Commission has not been constituted.

3. Funding under Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF)

In Gujarat there are six districts under BRGF – Banaskantha, Dangs, Dahod, Narmada, Panchmahal and Sabarkantha. BRGF has two funding windows, (i) A capacity building fund of Rs250 crore per annum primarily to build capacity in planning, implementation, monitoring, accounting and improving accountability and transparency and (ii) Untied grant of Rs3,500 crore. 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 under Bharat Nirman on which BRGF could focus, at the option of the Panchayats, 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

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

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

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.

4. Good Practices in Panchayat Finance

Some states allow outsourcing especially in technical matters and mandate to raise resources through borrowings. Madhya Pradesh has transferred the rights of extraction of minerals. Quantum of untied and programmatic schematic funds that reaches each panchayat is high in states like Himachal Pradesh and Kerala (20 to 30%). At the beginning of the 9th five year plan, Kerala has provided substantial untied funds for local prioritisation and local resource allocation to identified priority areas. Kerala is the only state in which three SFCs have submitted their reports and almost all of their recommendations have been adopted. The first SFC recommended integrating 17 small specific purpose grants into a broader general purpose grant and also in streamlining the determination and transfer of the share of state taxes, making it fully formula-based and non-discretionary. The 2nd SFC suggested sharing of

state's own tax revenue instead of sharing specific state taxes. 3.5% was fixed as general purpose grant while 5.5% as maintenance grant. The 3rd SFC fixed the base year's grant equivalent to the recommendations of the 2nd SFC and suggested 10% annual increases for the five year period. This has improved predictability as the SFC has indicated Local Government wise share for each year over the five year period under the three streams of General Purpose Fund, Maintenance Fund and Development Fund. Kerala has also been able to consolidate CSS in some cases leading to welcome increase in untied grants.

5. Issues in Panchayat Finance and Way Forward

Non-availability of consistent financial data
There is a five year lag in availability of consistent financial data at the state level. Financial data is not available separately for each tier of panchayat. Details of expenditure and functional classification are not available. Lack of coordination between different departments makes compilation of data difficult.

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

Nature of transfer of Funds to PRIs
Decision for providing a window for PRIs within the state budget was made to reduce the transaction numbers and nodes so that the cost of transaction could be reduced and efficiency ensured. However, State continues to transfer funds through the line departments through routine project or scheme line items to the Rural Development Department, DRDAs or to the Commissioner of Panchayati Raj. Then they are transferred to the Zilla Panchayats for transmission to the lower tiers.

Possibilities of 'own revenue'
There is possibility to increase own revenue. The obligatory tax handles have to be seriously implemented along with the floor rates prescribed in a mandatory manner. Apart from granting greater taxation powers to the PRIs, newer innovative sources could be thought of. Non-revenue sources like user fees etc also have to be rationalised and properly tapped. It is necessary to take measures to tighten tax administration for better compliance of existing taxes.

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

Strengthening SFCs
Will of the State Governments is required to make efforts to enhance the credibility and acceptability of the SFCs. Seriousness is required in consideration of SFC reports and the next steps for implementation and filing of ATR. Efforts are required for synchronisation of

SFCs with CFC. SFCs also have to critically examine the functional domain of the local bodies as envisaged in the 11th Schedule and the resource generation potential of PRIs. SFC recommendations regarding process improvements as mentioned below need to be heeded.

- Establishment of a local development fund/ incentive fund/ common purpose fund
- Local body should be allowed to levy taxes and service charges on all Government properties (including the properties of Public Sector Undertakings of the Central and State Governments, Boards, Corporations).
- Appointment of Tariff Commission to streamline the existing rates, taxes etc; Tax Valuation Committee to listen to the objections of the tax payer regarding Property Tax Assessment
- Mandatory provision of vigilance committee.
- Finance Commission Cell should function in the Finance Department of the State government after the expiry of the SFC's term to review the implementation of the recommendations of the SFC; A statuary authority may be entrusted with the review of implementation of recommendations of the SFCs.

Conclusion

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

6. Panchayat Planning and Budget
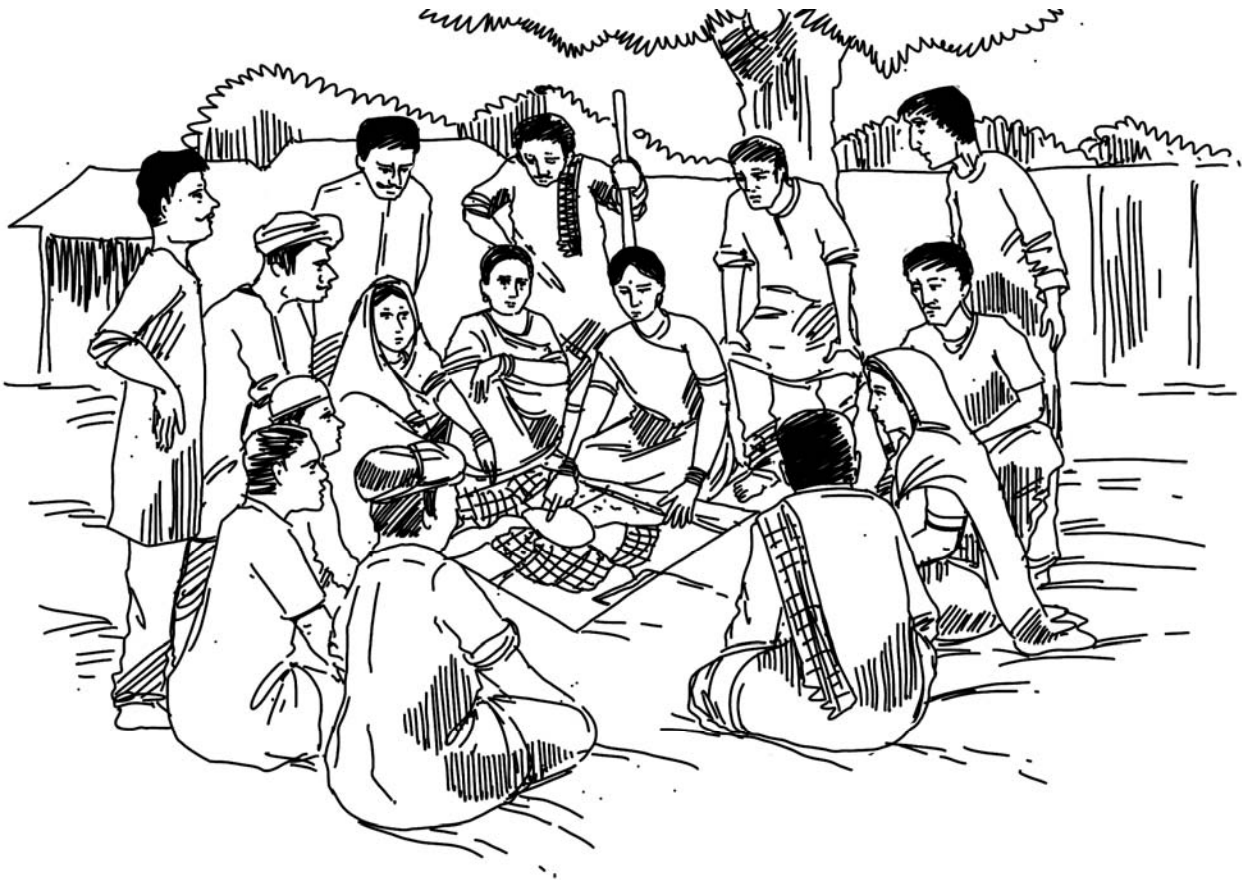
[7]Planning is the conscious designing of the most feasible course of action to achieve a certain target. It involves the optimum utilization of existing resources. It includes setting goals and objectives, situation analysis, identification of problems and making an action plan with detailed strategies and programmes. Planning implies harmonization of resources – internal and external, financial and human with the needs. When planning is done at the local level it can be harmonized with local needs.

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

1. History of Decentralised Planning in India
First Five Year Plan (1951-56) recognized the need for decentralized planning and divided the planning exercise into national, state, district and local community levels. Second Five

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Year Plan introduced elements like establishment of the District Development Council, village plans and people's participation in planning. However, operational aspects were not spelt out and there was lack of an enabling framework.

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.

2. Decentralised Planning and District Planning Committees

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.

3. Recent Efforts for Decentralised Planning

An Expert Group for Planning at the Grassroots Level (chaired by V. Ramachandran - May'05) laid out detailed guidelines for the district level planning process and the role of DPCs therein. Accepting their recommendations, Planning Commission in Aug'06 issued detailed guidelines according to which a summary of the district plans were to be presented as part of the state's Eleventh Five year plan and annual plan. It was suggested that the sum total of the outlay of the districts plan in a state may be around 40% of the gross state plan outlay.

Recent Initiatives at a Glance

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

GOI has taken steps like linking the provision of central assistance under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), MGNREGA and BRGF on availability of district plans. These plans will put together resources from various existing schemes and channelise them to panchayats on the basis of the district plan.

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

Provisions related to Planning and Budget in Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993

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

Budgetary processes in local bodies

State Acts and rules contain elaborate provisions for preparation and approval of budgets in PRIs and ULBs. Budgets are prepared primarily to comply with statutory requirements, are incremental and are not generally used as tool for financial control, long term planning and effective management decision making.

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.

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3. Best Practices 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

4. Issues in Panchayat Planning and Way Forward

The concept of development planning from below has not taken root. Attentions may be paid to the issues mentioned below to institutionalize the process.

4.1 Database, institutional mechanism, devolution

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

Carving out an autonomous jurisdiction of PRIs on the basis of activity mapping and ensuring flow of untied funds are necessary pre-conditions for institutionalizing local level planning. Political commitment is required for the same. As pointed by an expert groups set up by the Planning Commission in Oct'05, line departments have a tendency to create stand-alone committees or groupings of stakeholders to oversee implementation, certify completion, monitoring, maintain assets created, distribute benefits etc. While this augments social capital and deepens democracy, they should not be looked upon as substitutes for panchayats. These groups could be conceived as sub-systems drawing their powers and resources from panchayats, performing specific tasks that are delegated to them.

4.2 Viable framework for preparing local plans

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

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

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.

4.3 Strengthening DPCs

The status of DPCs in most states is less than satisfactory. DPCs have not been able to effectively enable rural-urban linkages. Coordinated planning is not taking place. Inter-sector coordination was not realised.

Some steps that could be taken for strengthening DPCs and the district planning process (as per study by PRIA in Nov'09)

- Adequate financial support, permanent office and secretariat
- Capacity building of members on the role and functions of DPC and on the tenets of integrated planning for social and economic development.
- A campaign approach can be adopted for orienting people towards participatory planning. Alongside the local bodies also need to be trained and equipped to implement the decentralised plans so prepared.
- The Rural and Urban Local Bodies also need to be oriented to adopt an integrated approach to planning. While preparation of annual plans they have to keep in mind the medium and long-term vision and goals for the district.

5. Conclusion

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.

Decentralised planning can succeed only if grassroots participation is ensured. At the same time it is also necessary to give adequate thought to process of plan preparation, mechanism for monitoring and evaluation and mid-course correction. In this context, carving out an autonomous jurisdiction of PRIs on the basis of an activity mapping and ensuring flow of untied funds are necessary pre-conditions for institutionalising local level planning. State plans should be made only after consolidation of district plans. Efforts to harmonize area plans made by DPCs and state level sectoral plans present a challenge and require dedicated efforts and strengthening of the planning machinery at all levels. Restructuring of the state budget is required where provisions for PRIs are made in lump sum and routed directly to the district panchayats on the passing of the budget.

A strong system of decentralised planning through elected local bodies coupled with a vigilant civil society will successfully take the planning process, growth and development nearer to the people.

7. PANCHAYAT ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT
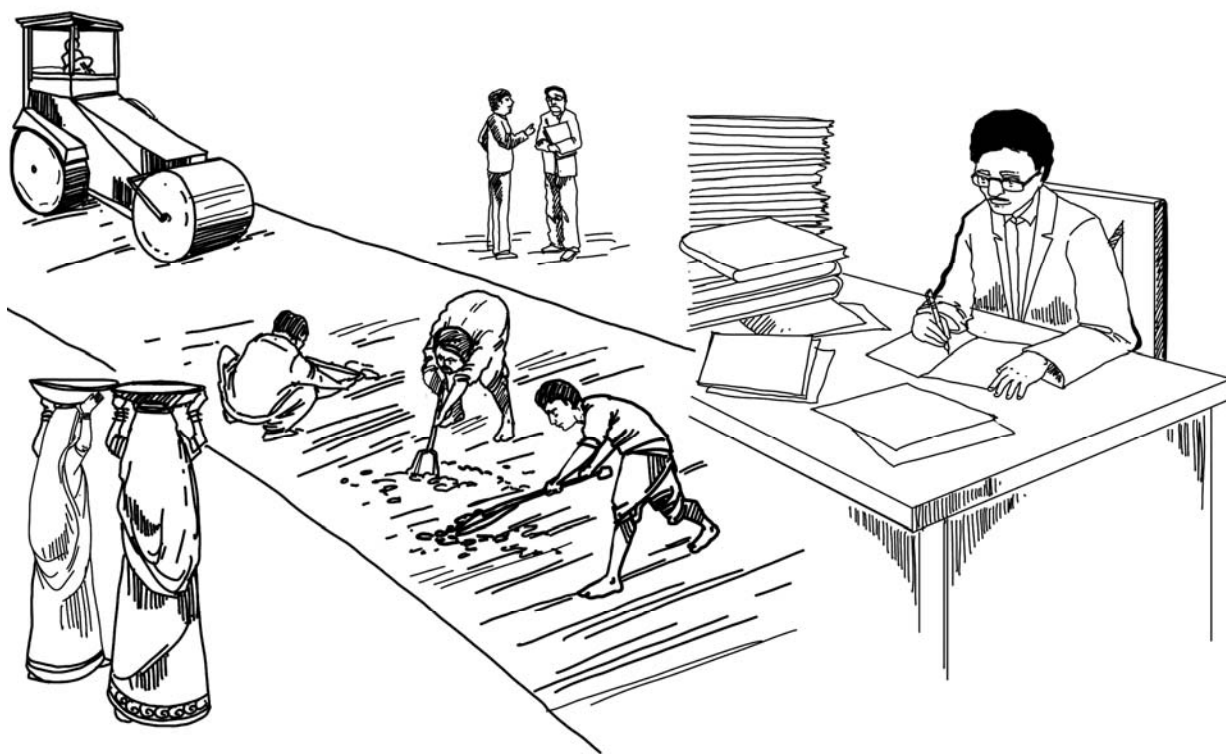
[8]PRIs handle large number of schemes and funds from different sources and accountability is thus of paramount importance. Financial accountability considers (i) whether the resources have been utilized according to legal requirements and (ii) whether they have been utilized efficiently. This requires 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.

PRI Accounts
There is a lack of standardized accounting practices and book-keeping among the local governments in the country. Evaluation of the accounting system in PRIs by Comptroller and Accountant General (C&AG) has revealed the following aspects:

a. Weak budgeting and budgetary control – expenditure is incurred without budget or in excess of budget and budget proposals are not approved by PRIs or gramsabha.

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

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

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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.

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

EFC also recommended outsourcing the upkeep of accounts where the panchayats did not have trained staff. It recommended earmarking an amount of half percent of total expenditure incurred by the panchayats for audit purpose and an average of Rs4,000 per panchayat per annum to meet the expenditure on maintenance of accounts on contract basis.

EFC recommended developing a computerized database on finances at the district, state and central government levels and linking through V-SAT. States spent only Rs93 crore on this account out of the outlay of Rs200 crore. Rs113 crore (23%) was utilized out of an outlay of Rs483 crore for maintenance of accounts.

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

commonly used items of expenditure were standardized. Activities in the 11th Schedule of the Constitution (functions of panchayats) were listed. The formats showed funds transferred to the local bodies under various programmes and schemes. The accounts and the budget formats were synchronized with and linked to the classification in Union and State Government accounts making it amenable to computerization, generation of all India level data and effective monitoring. The simplified formats and accounting procedures were finalized in 2006. In Gujarat, the C&AG formats are being implemented from March 2007.

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

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

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

PRI Audits
In Gujarat, Director, Local Fund Audit (DLFA) is the primary auditor of Local Bodies. Its staff works under the administrative control of the State Government. C&AG is the Examiner, Local Funds Accounts. It is expected to provide technical guidance on framing of audit plans, audit standards and guidelines besides conducting a percentage check of PRIs for audit assurance. Apart from legalistic concerns and adherence to rules and procedures, C&AG's audit provides the necessary assurance on achievement of programme objectives and efficiency in utilization of funds. Thus audit by DLFA and C&AG complement each other.

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

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Innovative Exercises regarding PRI Audits

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

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

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

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.

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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.

PRI Audit Provisions in Gujarat

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

Maintenance of Accounts and Audit of Works as per BRGF Guidelines

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

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

Way Forward

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

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

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

Objectives and Important features of the Scheme
BRGF is designed to redress 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

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

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.

This plan will integrate multiple programmes that are in operation in the district concerned and therefore address backwardness through a combination of resources that flow to the district. This will be done without giving any schematic overlay to BRGF that would be subversive of the principle of local prioritization in planning. Programmes identified for implementation under the Fund will be selected through people's participation, particularly through Gram and Ward Sabhas in rural areas and Area Sabhas and Ward Committees in the urban areas. Participatory plans will be prepared in each panchayat and municipality and would 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 would be consolidated into the district plan by the District Planning Committee. This would reflect all the financial resources available in the district, and ensure their optimal use, without delay, diversion, duplication and leakage.

Fund Allocation
The Programme has two components - 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 for the two components in the Budget of 2006-07. Out of this allocation, Rs1250 crore had been provided in the Demand for Grants of the Ministry of Finance for the Special Plans dealt with by the Planning Commission. The remaining Rs3750 crore had been placed at the disposal of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj for the District Component. The allocation of Rs3750 crore consists of two funding windows.

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

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

Criteria for distribution of Funds
The untied grant will be distributed among the districts in the following manner.
- Each district will receive a fixed minimum amount of Rs10 crore per annum.
- 50% balance allocation will be on the basis of share of the population of the district in the population of all the backward districts.
- 50% will be distributed on the basis of the share of the area of the district in the total area of all backward districts

Formula for inter-se allocation within the districts
Every state will indicate normative formula for BRGF funds to each panchayat and ULBs that will consider:
- The share of each local self government institution category (Panchayats and ULBs)
- Within the overall allocation made for each category, the norms governing the inter-se sharing of each panchayat and municipality concerned.

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

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

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

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

Planning Process
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.

Capacity Building

Effective implementation of BRGF will require 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 under BRGF for capacity building of panchayats. The allocation of fund for each state is calculated at the rate of Rs.1crore per BRGF district in that state.

Key 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

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.

Operationalisation of BRGF

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

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.

Purpose of Development Funds
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.

Proposals for use of development grants should give details of the following
- Criteria followed within the district for allocation of funds between the district, block and gram panchayat and ULBs, taking into account the visioning exercise and prioritization of development goals in the districts
- Steps taken by the State to equip PRIs and ULBs with substantive financial power in order to generate adequate resources, as also the own resources
- The details of development funds received in the district from various sources.

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.

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.

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

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

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

Ref: Programme Guidelines, Backward Regions Grant Fund

9. UNDERSTANDING ON POVERTY AND STRATEGIES FOR POVERTY ALLEVIATION

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

UNNATI

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

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

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

widespread injustice, driving certain sections of the population to starvation deaths. So one needs to stop and ask, development for whom and at what cost? Or what then is development all about?

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

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

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

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

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

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

1. Unequal Distribution of Assets and Income

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

2. Inequality of Human Capital

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

3. Inequality in Employment Opportunities

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

4. Unfavourable Exchange Entitlements for the Poor

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

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

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

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

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

Effective redistribution of land through proper implementation of land reforms is essential. However, this will not be enough as this needs to be backed by support so that surplus can be generated and be used for the benefit/ development of rural areas only. Along with land, the farmers will require additional support for greater productivity from land in order to produce a surplus: access to credit, to improved seeds and tools, and to new knowledge. The surplus thus generated could be used for diversification of the rural economy, like putting to use unused land for animal husbandry and forestry. Water and land conservation measures must be adopted to increase the productivity of the land, at the same time provide clean drinking water and electricity. Basic quality services of education and health need to be accessible, especially to the poor and marginalised sections. The surplus generated in rural areas must not be siphoned off for the development of urban areas or for the production of luxury goods and capital intensive production. Surpluses are extracted by the comparative pricing of primary products and manufactured goods as in recent times, due to globalisation, the prices of food are very high and the price of luxury items have witnessed a grave

downfall. Rural surplus is also extracted by the combination of regressive taxation and the allocation of government expenditure to services for urban areas rather than for rural areas. This requires a political will and policy advocacy on issues like emphasising on primary and technical education rather than advanced studies; giving preference to rural health than sophisticated hospitals in urban centres and focus on rural connectivity than the modern systems of transport like BRT and metro railway in cities.. For attacking the root causes of poverty, decision making power on activities that affect people's lives must be transferred through not only legal measures, but by enhancing their participation from the planning stage itself and in determining their priorities.

Strategies/ Approaches for Poverty Alleviation

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

Poverty Alleviation 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 (NMBS)	To pregnant women of BPL households up to first two live births.	To pregnant women of BPL families up to first two live 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	The programme was started both in the desert areas of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Haryana, Jammu & Kashmir and Himachal

			faced by those areas constantly affected by severe drought	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	Providing 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 of students in primary classes	For all regions
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	For rural areas

			toilets with biogas plants	
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

Role of Panchayats in Poverty Alleviation

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

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

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

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

Gram sabhas should be empowered to and take leadership in poverty alleviation programmes. All village development work should be undertaken by the village panchayats only under the overall guidance of the grams sabhas. Gram sabhas should employ a full time secretary to look after the village development programmes especially those dealing with poverty alleviation. Village panchayats are to be treated only as executive functionaries of the gram sabha. The gram sabhas have power to relieve the panchayat if the latter's work is found

unsatisfactory by the gram sabhas. All the states should empower their gram sabhas complete authority for planning and implementing poverty alleviation programmes and empowering them with authorities. All gram sabhas should conduct monthly meeting to consider planning and implementing. Programmes of poverty alleviation, especially the work of mobilising, organising, utilising human resources of the village in various commonly oriented programmes should be considered by the gram sabhas. This should help in the development of local initiative and responsibility on the part of local people especially the local leaders. Before starting any rural development programme relating to poverty alleviation, it should be obligatory to take the approval of the gram sabha before implementing the programme.

United Nations has declared 1997-2006 as the first UN decade for the eradication of poverty. There is growing concern in poverty eradication among various international forums. Poverty is the most deep rooted, complex and critical concern especially for the world countries. One of the major challenges facing the human society is poverty eradication. Government and Non-Government organisations in various countries have adopted various strategies, mechanisms and instruments to fight poverty.

10. ROLE OF PANCHAYATS IN DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

[11]Every year in India on an average 4350 persons lose lives and 30 million are affected in natural disasters. In addition, 1.4 million hectare cropped land is affected and 2.36 million houses are damaged. It is estimated that 2% of GDP of the country is directly lost every year due to disasters. The impact of unprecedented and frequent disasters led the disaster management practitioners and policy makers to rethinking on the appropriateness of the disaster management structures and functions. It has also been articulated that until the vulnerability are reduced during normal time, just post disaster response can not address the human miseries and reduce the disaster risks. At the policy level it was articulated that pre-disaster mitigation and preparedness need to be the focus to control the damage and reduce loss of developmental gains. It was also recognized that managing disaster required multi dimensional, multi- disciplinary and multi sectoral approach. This learning has led to a paradigm shift from relief centric approach to proactive approach of Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction a combination of prevention, mitigation and preparedness.Strengthening and building resilience at the community level is an important area along with building institutional capacity. Panchayati Raj Institutions of all the three levels Village –Taluka and district can play can play an effective role to promote disaster risk reduction strategies.

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Disaster Management Structure and Functions in Gujarat

The Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) created soon after the Gujarat earth quake has taken many initiatives in strengthening a sound DM structure with Emergency Operation Centers at the district level with state of the art equipments to take up search and rescue. It has one of the best Incident Command System to respond to any emergencies.

One of the important features 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. Special programmes are launched on preparation of district, taluka(block) and city level disaster management plans, popularly known as DDMP, TDMP and CDMP respectively. 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 are available in public domain.

Village Level Disaster Management Plans (VDMP)

As part of the Disaster Preparedness and response plan state has adopted a strategy of Community Based Disaster Preparedness. 'Communities' who know best of the resources at hands and are the first ones to respond to any of the disasters, their involvement in making the plan is very essential.

In this bottom-up approach adopted by DRM programme, first step is to develop a Village Disaster Management Plan with the active involvement of communities. This plan shall have (a) an introduction-back ground of the village location (b) village profile (c) Disaster Risk Assessment of the Village (d) Resources at hand to manage the disasters to come (e) contact details of the Disaster Task Force members at village levels. This plan is then annexed with village risk/vulnerability maps.

Taluka Level Disaster Management Plan (TDMP)

Compare to village level taluka is a bigger area and have complex risk situation. While preparing a Taluka Disaster Management Plan [TDMP] the data collected at village level is collated and on top of that the Line department data is added. TDMP includes Taluka related information, Risks and Preparedness against risks, responses at the time of disasters as well as Disaster Management and strategy during the disaster. It has to be updated periodically to improve on draw backs, errors and learn new lessons. Following is the out line of the information included in the plan (a) Introduction to the programme, (b) Taluka Profile,(c) Disaster Risk Assessment (d) Resource available (e) SOPs for TDMC and Taluka Line Departments (f) Contact details of TDMC .

District Level Disaster Management Plan (DDMP)

District Disaster Management Plan [DDMP] is a plan that is document that allows the district administration to prepare for, mitigate and respond to disasters effectively. At the district level the district administration is the focal point to manage any disaster or eventuality. The actual day –to day function of administering preparedness, response, and mitigation is the responsibility of the District Collector/ Magistrate/ Deputy Commissioner along with the DDMC and the DDMTs.

The district plan contains the objective of the plan, profile of the district, resource inventory equipment and human resource, preparedness and mitigation strategy and the standard

operating procedures for the District Disaster Management Committee and the Disaster Management Team.

DDMP and its Linkage with developmental plan is also important. As example, the mitigation strategy of the district plan can be linked to the Indira Awas Yogna to ensuring that all new houses that are built contain seismic safe features and the mason's building these houses are trained in seismic safe construction. The other examples are: flood and cyclone shelter to be constructed from the existing developmental programme, rising of the plat form of school building etc.

Importance of Community Participation in Preparation of plans
Since Community is the first respondent and has better understanding on the impact of different disasters it is important to encourage using their experience and resources. Speedy action on the plan is possible when community is involved as local level issues are resolved by people themselves .Community also feels empowered to build linkages outside for resource mobilization. Since it leads to a community owned process, the community confidence is increased which leads to self sufficiency and provides an opportunity for local level leadership development.

Hindering Factors to Community Participation
When the community has competing demands over the basic development sector like food security, health care services, disaster risk management assumes a low priority and people loose interest to talk about disaster in a normal time. Moreover, DRM/DRM is fairly new concepts with different meaning to different stakeholders. Adequate orientation on the issue can remove the basic barrier to participation. Currently most of the institutional approach including of the PRIs are emergency-focused, resulting in lack of organisational mechanisms for disaster risk management. There is a need to create a political will on capacity building on DRR.

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

Looking at the new approach of Community Based Disaster Risk Reduction, Gujarat State Disaster Management Authority (GSDMA) created under the Act has taken up initiatives to involve all three tiers of Panchayats in the planning process.

It is important that Panchayats play activate role in the planning process. 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. It needs to be remembered that all development programmes can be designed to reduce disaster risk with social justice which is the main objective of Panchayati Raj Institutions.

11. ROLE OF PANCHAYATS IN NATURAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

[12]Natural resource management refers to the management of natural resources such as land, water, soil, plants and animals, with a particular focus on how management affects the quality of life for both present and future generations. 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.

1. Status of Natural Resources in Gujarat

India's total cultivable area is 1,269,219 km² (56.78% of total land area), which is decreasing due to constant pressure from an ever-growing population and increased urbanization. India has a total water surface area of 314,40 km² and receives an average annual rainfall of 1,100 mm. Irrigation accounts for 92% of the water utilisation, and comprised 380 km² in 1974, and is expected to rise to 1,050 km² by 2025, with the balance accounted for by industrial and domestic consumers.

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Land

Gujarat is the seventh largest state in India with 19.60 hectares of land mass. In 1991, the per capita land available in Gujarat was 0.70 ha. The all India figure was 0.49 ha. Though Gujarat state is ranked fourth in terms of per capita income, its agricultural performance is poor. The performance has in it a story of degrading status of land and water resources that support agriculture. If Gujarat wishes to undertake sustainable development of its land and water resources, it will have to arrest over exploitation and degradation if not improve their status. It is generally believed that Gujarat and other semi-arid and arid regions in the country have large areas of uncultivated wastelands and they offer good scope for development. Improving the status of wastelands will add to the productivity of the area under cultivation and the income generating potential of the wastelands in itself would be augmented.

Besides the physical erosion of land, there is the erosion of community institutions as well. After Independence and the merger of princely states, the revenue departments in all states took over these common lands, relegating the panchayat and community management to the background. A degenerating effect of the shift in management and regulation was that most of the land became open access, further contributing to serious degradation of the uncultivated land. This generated a serious threat to the environment in general as also to privately owned and operated cultivated lands. Second, the open access status made management and regulation ineffective. Yet another important aspect is the dependence of the poor on Common Property Resources (CPR) for their livelihood.

In short, land use and land management in the last 50 years has undergone significant changes. A need was felt, therefore, to take an analytical overview about the size, status and use of uncultivated wastelands also known as common property land resources.

Forest

Gujarat has a total forest area of 19112.54 sq. km. The forests are unevenly distributed all over the state. The major forests are found along the eastern border of the state and the hilly portion of Saurashtra. The districts of Dang, Valsad, Surat and Junagadh are under deep forests cover.

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

Water

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

Panchmahals, Banaskantha, Mehsana, Gandhinagar and Ahmedabad districts of Gujarat. The scarcity in these areas is faced on account of erratic and scanty rainfall, high level of irrigation development and partly due to inherently saline.

Salinity Ingress in Coastal Areas

Problem of salinity ingress is being faced by Gujarat along Saurashtra and Kachchh coast for coastline of approximately 1125 kms. The problem is severe along Una - Madhavpur stretch of Saurashtra and Maliya – Lakhpat stretch of Kachchh Region. In these stretches in select tracts intensive agricultural development and exploitation of ground water and poor recharge from upland areas has resulted into sea eringress even up to 5 to 6 Km inland causing salinity. The phenomenon of salinity ingress has adversely affected the lives of people, both on agricultural front and drinking water front. Approximately 10.80 lac people of 534 villages are badly affected by salinity.700120 ha. of cultivable land has become useless and about 32750 nos. of wells have gone dry.

Livestock

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

Emerging Crisis of Agriculture

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

2. Watershed Development: An Integrated NRM Strategy

Ralegon Siddhi, Adgaon and Dharewadi in Maharashtra and many others have become inspiration in the area of micro-watershed development and a large number of initiatives and programmes have been inspired by their success. These interventions comprised of the creation of a series of earthen dams on the drainage line, the protection of degraded community and forest lands through plantations and 'social fencing' by the villagers themselves and the reclamation of wastelands through the cultivation of valuable tree species and grasses. Keeping all the experiences in account government of India has initiated different types of watershed programme in India.

Participatory Methods of Planning and Monitoring NRM

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

of the PRA movement. The set of tools and methods were evolved and use for the community participation in problem analysis, planning, Implementation, monitoring, impact assessment of the programmes. Methods were mainly related to space in which mapping and models were the developed, another was time in which problem can analyzed in the context of time, season, period ect. and last is relation in which co relation and comparison between two different set was important vann diagram (chapatti diagram) is one of frequently used method for the same.

Local communities have their own knowledge systems and a resultant body of local technical knowledge. They also have unique traditional institutions that have evolved to manage particular natural resources in a sustainable way. Unfortunately, this traditional knowledge is discounted by the modern educational system. In the process, many of these traditional institutions and technical practices are either getting extinct or are under tremendous pressure.

A different approach is needed to recognize, validate and diffuse grassroots innovations of farmers, artisans and local communities. A few NGOs and departments are trying to revive traditional institutions and practices that are still relevant today. There is also tremendous scope for harnessing the creativity of farmers by making them partners in the technology development process. Given the importance of starting developmental initiatives from what people already know, People's institutions play a significant role in facilitating inclusive, gender-sensitive development and ensuring that the resources are used in a sustainable manner. Agencies can pursue a policy of *positive discrimination* to ensure that the poorest of the poor are not denied access to the newly developed resources. Because building people's institutions and placing people at the centre of the development process are critical for success in all NRM initiatives.

Developing a NRM Treatment Plan
All NRM interventions need to place people in charge of the development process in order for outcomes to be sustainable. Building people's institutions is critical for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources and for the maintenance of common property assets, on which the poor rely the most for their livelihoods.
Treatment can be related to land, water or biomass. There are five broad groups of treatment, namely soil and water treatment, agronomic practices in agricultural land, Afforestation, pasture land development and treatments in saline lands. Whereas the purpose of soil and water structures is to check the erosion of soil and conserve water as well as soil moisture, the remaining treatments serve to conserve soil and water and, at the same time, make the land productive.

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

ii) Agronomic Practices
Certain agronomic practices help to conserve soil and moisture whereas faulty practices can actually lead to soil erosion and loss of valuable soil moisture. These practices are knowledge

intensive and do not need much investment. Farmers whose land has been treated within the watershed programme should be sensitized about these practices so that

iii) Afforestation
Afforestation includes the protection of natural forests and the creation of community and private forests on wastelands. On private lands, this could take the form of farm forestry or cultivation of tree crops such as dry land horticultural crops and bio-fuel crops. The choice of species in all afforestation programmes is of paramount importance if the people are to sustain interest over time. It has been seen that there are significant differences between the choices of the local communities versus the Forest Department.

iv) Pasture Land Development
Most Indian villages used to have common pasture lands called *gaucher*, traditionally managed by local village institutions. Over time, these village institutions have broken down. The village *panchayats* are technically in charge of these lands whereas the ownership rests with the Revenue Department. In practice, most of these lands are in a degraded condition or are encroached by powerful elite of the village and, hence, inaccessible to the common villager. Treatment of pasture lands becomes all the more important in arid and semi-arid areas, where animal husbandry forms either the main or subsidiary source of livelihood. During drought years, when crops fail, it is again animal husbandry that sustains the population. The treatment and the upgradation of pasture land is an integral and important component of watershed development. Yet, few organizations have actually been able to achieve success in this component of the programme.

v) Development of saline lands
Specialized NRM strategies are needed for lands with special problems, for instance, salt affected lands, laterite soils, acidic lands, waterlogged lands, desert lands, lands affected by mining and rocky lands. The most extensive of problem lands are salt-affected lands. These can be classified into two broad groups a) lands with *induced salinity* and b) lands with *inherent salinity*. Salinity can occur in coastal areas as well as in hinterlands.

3. Indispensable Role of Panchayati Raj Institutions
PRIs are seen not only as a means to implement projects but also as a process of empowerment and self-governance, leading to sustainable management of natural resources. PRIs have demonstrated superior results in virtually every aspect of livelihood augmentation, whether it is the management of small resources such as check-dams or the development of plans for treating an entire river basin.

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

12. RIGHT TO INFORMATION

[13]The Right to Information Act

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.

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. Citizens can request any information as defined from government departments, take copies of the requested documents, inspect documents, works and records, take certified samples of works, obtain information in the form of printouts, diskettes, floppies, tapes, video cassettes or in any other electronic mode or through printouts.

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

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

The process of Enactment of the RTI Act
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.

Process of Seeking Information
In each department, at least one officer has been designated as a Public Information Officer (PIOs). He/She accepts the request forms and provides information sought by the people. In addition, in each sub-district/divisional level there are Assistant Public Information Officers (APIOs) who receives requests for information and appeals against decisions of the PIOs, and then send them to the appropriate authorities.

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

Fee structure for Seeking Information under the RTI Act

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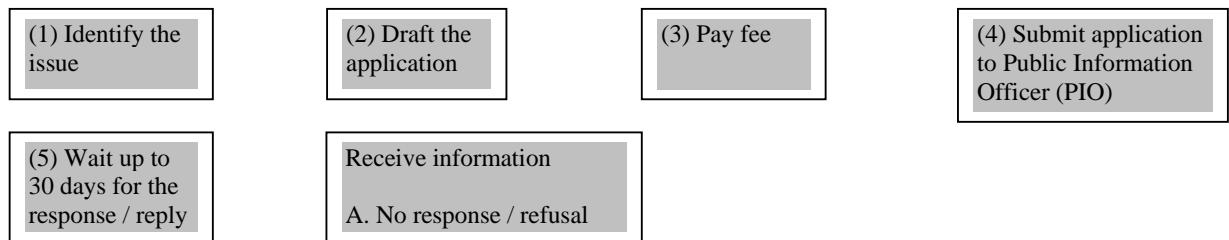
Fee Rule Chart

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

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

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

The PIO can deny information in some cases/matters. The various exemptions from disclosure of information are listed in Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005. If the sought information is in public interest then the exemptions enumerated in Section 8 of the RTI Act, 2005 can also be disclosed. Any information that cannot be denied to the parliament or legislative assembly cannot be denied to a common citizen. In case a person fails to get a response from the PIO within the prescribed period or is aggrieved by the response received, or misuses Section 8 of the Act, then he/she can file an appeal within 30 days with an officer superior in rank to the PIO (first appellate authority). If the appellant is not happy with the 1st appeal then he/she can file a 2nd appeal with the State Information Commission or the Central Information Commission within 60 days.

Application Process

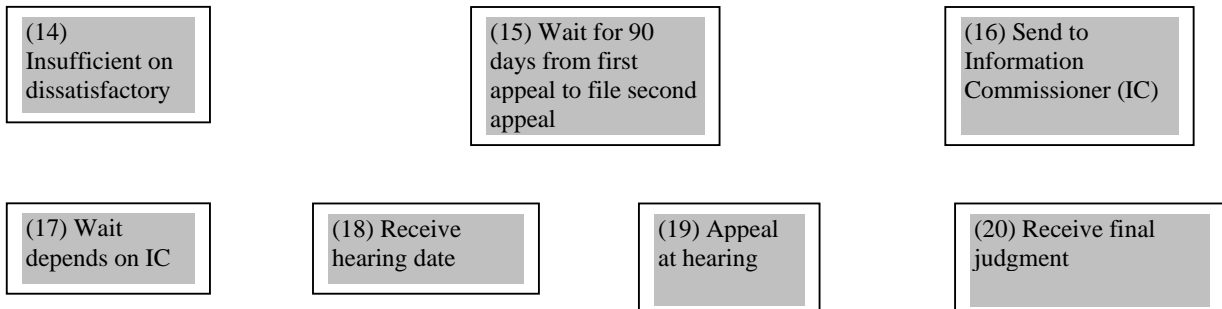| (1) Identify the issue	(2) Draft the application	(3) Pay fee	(4) Submit application to Public Information Officer (PIO)
(5) Wait up to 30 days for the response / reply	Receive information A. No response / refusal		

First Appeal should be made if the PIO has not replied to your application, has provided wrong/incomplete/confusing information has misinterpreted Section 8 to refuse the provision of information to you In the above mentioned situation, an appeal will have to be filed with the first appellate authority (an officer senior to the PIO appointed under the provisions of the Act) after 30 days from the date of submission of application but within 60 days of such submission. If you are not satisfied with the action taken on your first appeal then a second appeal will have to be filed with Central/State Information Commission.

Process for First Appeal

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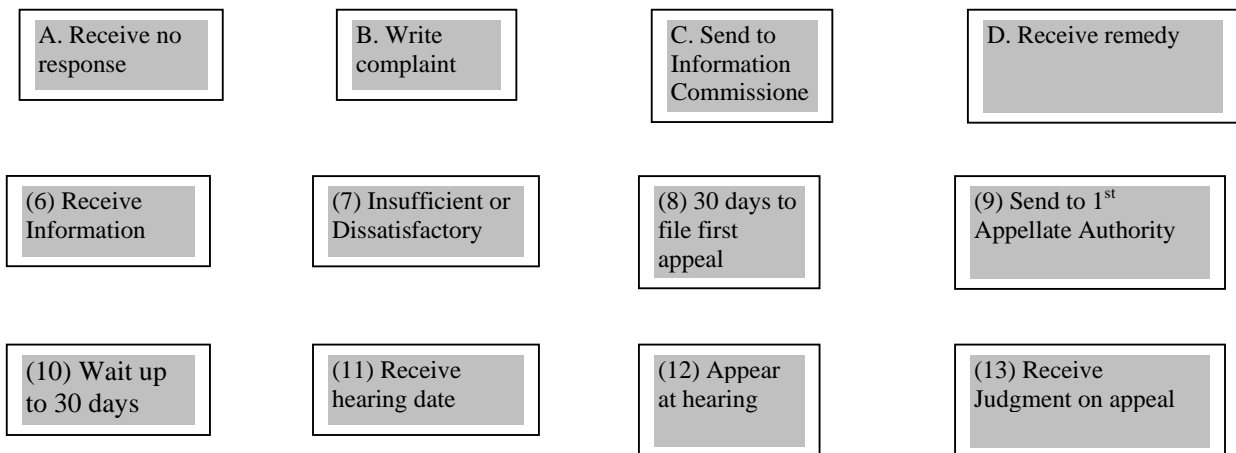
Process for Second Appeal

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

If a PIO fails to furnish the information asked for under the Act or fails to communicate the rejection order, within the time specified, the PIO will be liable to pay a penalty of Rs 250 per day for each day of delay, subject to a maximum of Rs 25,000. Refusal with or without reasons

may be ground for appeal or complaint. Further, information not provided in the times prescribed is to be provided free of charge.

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

Format for Application

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

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

Sir,

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

1. That I have deposited the requisite fee of Rs………….by way of Cash / banker cheque / Draft / Postal Order/ others…………………………………) favoring …………………………………………………………….dated …………………………
2. I need the photocopy of the documents and I had deposited the cost of the photocopy of Rs………… for …………….(Number of Pages)
or
3. I had deposited sum of Rs………….for the charges of CD. (strike out which ever is not applicable)
4. That I belong to Category of below Poverty Line (BPL): Yes / No (Strike whichever is not applicable). If yes, I am attaching the valid photocopy of the certificate. Yes / No
5. That I am 'Citizen' of India and I am asking the information as 'Citizen'.
6. I assure that I shall not allow/ cause to use/ pass/share/display/ or circulate the information received in any case and under any circumstances, with any person or in any manner which would be detrimental to the Unity and Sovereignty or against the Interest of India.

Signature of the Applicant
Dated:

Operational Structure of the RTI Act

The Chief Information Commissioner (CIC), set up as a separate appellate authority, is the head of all the information officers. At the state level the State Information Commission will be selected by the State Government through a Gazette notification. It will have one State Chief Information Commissioner (SCIC) and not more than 10 State Information Commissioners (SICs) to be appointed by the Governor. One or more existing officers in every government department have been designated as the Public Information Officer (PIO). These PIOs act as nodal officers and the respective applications are filed under them. It is the duty of the PIOs to collect information requests from various departments and provide information. In addition several officers have been appointed Assistant Public Information Officers (APIOs) who accept applications and forward them to the right PIO.

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13. HUMAN DEVELOPMENT
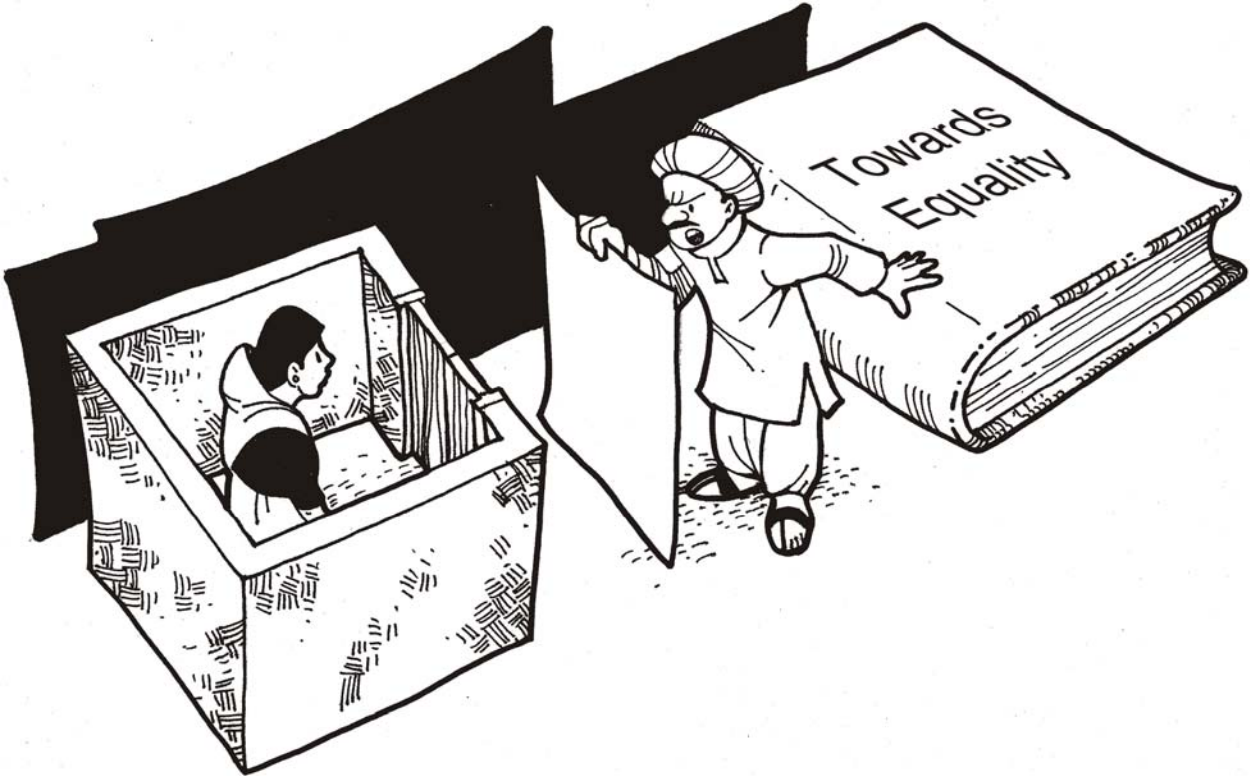
[14]The Meaning of Human Development

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.

Difference Between Human Development and Economic Development

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

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

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.

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.

Concept of 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.

Measuring 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.

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.

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.

Promoting Human Development at the Grassroots
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 and 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

[15]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.

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.

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

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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.

Inequalities Women Face
- 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.

Understanding Women Empowerment
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.

Measures taken for women empowerment globally, nationally and locally
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.

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

Two other significant laws that were passed to address discrimination against women were the Preconception and Prenatal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of sex selection) Act (PCPNDT) (2003) to check discrimination against girls even before they are born and the Protection from Domestic Violence Act (2005) to assure victims of domestic violence, freedom from fear of eviction or physical harm in their paternal and matrimonial homes and friendship relationship and to have access to family resources for adequate maintenance.

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 feticide, rape, dowry, sexual harassment and domestic violence.

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.

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.

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.

Strategies 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.

Measures elected representatives can adopt to promote gender equality

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.

Gender Planning and Women Empowerment
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.

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

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

relations in homes and in public spaces. They will need to handle such conflicts and deal with them maturely.

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/tricycles to girls/girls with disabilities, 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; women get access to common property resources and receive support for joint ventures.

Gender Budgeting and Role of Elected Representatives
Budgets are the most important tool for converting policies and programmes into action. Gender budgets are a means to ensure that there is gender awareness in all policies and budgets of all government agencies and allocating budgets based on the differing needs of men and women. 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.

Taking an example from education, some states have introduced free education for girls to reduce the existing gender gap. Similarly, schemes for transportation of women in emergency situations have been introduced to ensure safe institutional deliveries. Setting up of support centres for women in distress and facing violence is yet another example of gender budgeting.

For gender budgeting, collection of sex disaggregated data is the first and foremost requirement as it will help to:

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

- Number of anaemic boys and girls

- Number of boys and girls being immunised

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

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

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

- Number of women and men accessing primary health services

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

- Number of men and women covered under medical insurance

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

c. Assess the impact of policies and programmes

- Number of women and men in main and marginal workforce

- Wages earned by men and women for the same work

- Subsidies availed by men and women in a specific sector

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

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

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

15. SOCIAL JUSTICE
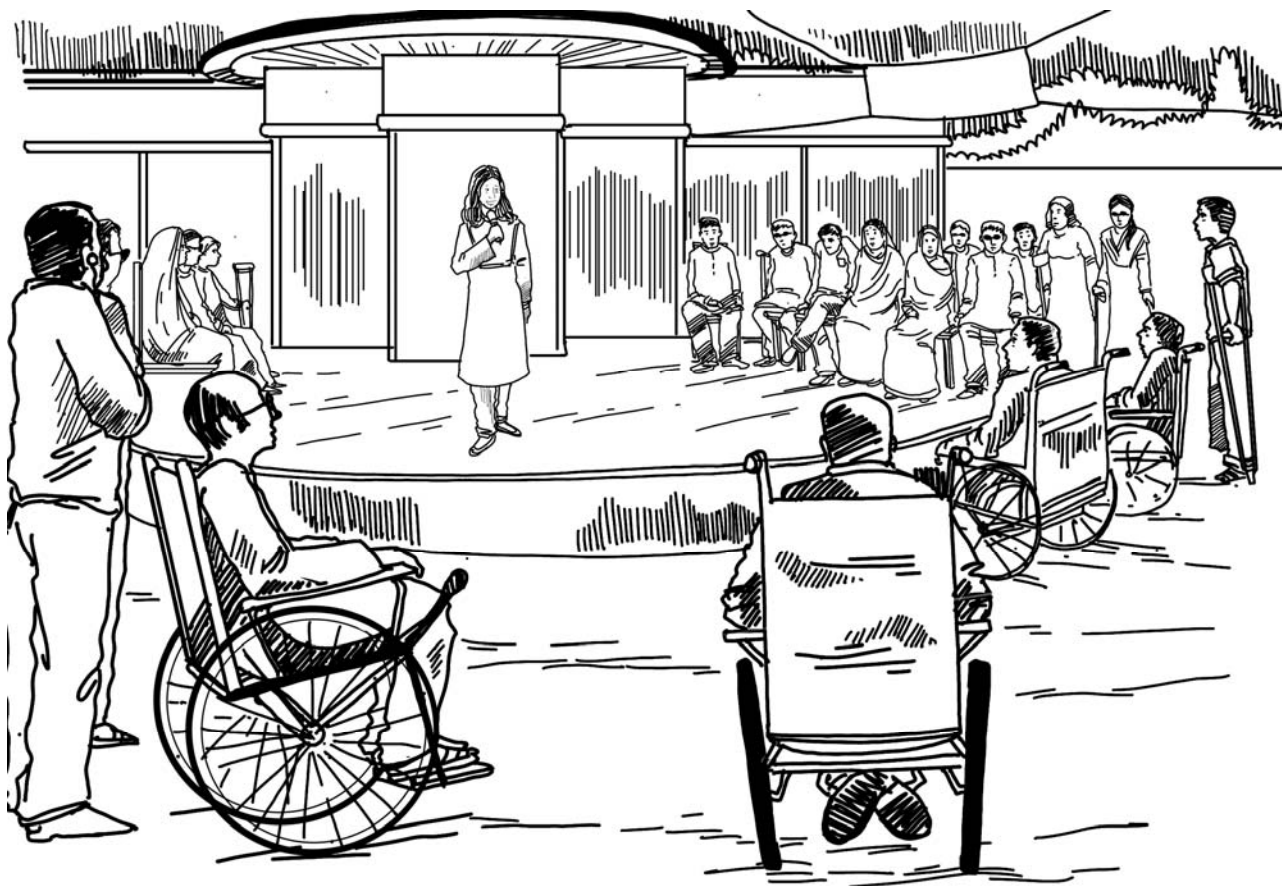
[16]A general definition of social justice is hard to arrive at and even harder to implement. In essence, social justice is concerned with ensuring and protection of basic civil rights to the vulnerable people whose rights are infringed by vested interest and dominant groups. The concept of social justice is a revolutionary concept which provides meaning and significance to life and makes the rule of law dynamic. When the society seeks to meet the challenge of socio-economic inequality, a democratic governance system evokes its legislative power to protect social justice without crating any harm.

The word social is to clearly distinguish Social Justice from the concept of Justice as applied in the law- state-administered systems, which label certain behavior as unacceptable and enforce a formal mechanism of control, which has potential to produce results that transforms social power structure in favour of the week and vulnerable. Social Justice derives its authority from the codes of morality prevailing in each culture.

Issue of Discrimination, Marginalization, Atrocities and Exclusion in India
Social exclusion is a universal phenomenon which has existed over time and space. However, in India, social exclusion has been predominantly used in understanding caste based discrimination. There are various forms of social exclusion experienced by the Dalits in

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different spheres. The code of conduct that deprives them of these rights- Manusmriti- was written three thousand years back. The dalits experience the agony of social exclusion very deeply in social, economic and political spheres. There are instance where Dalits are not permitted to draw water from common wells and hand pumps; separate utensils are used to serve them in tea and food stalls, they are not allowed entry into the temples and Dalit children are made to sit at the back of the classroom. The situation is even worse in rural areas where the majority of the population and Dalits reside. The constitution of India grants Dalits certain privileges that include reservations in education, government jobs, and government bodies; and protection against caste based discrimination.

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

According to UNICEF and Human Rights Watch, caste discrimination affects an estimated 250 million people worldwide. Currently, there are an estimated 160 million Dalits or "untouchables" in India. According to Indian government statistics, an estimated one million Dalits or "untouchables" are manual scavengers, cleaning latrines and sewers by hand and clearing away dead animals. The majority of human scavengers suffer from respiratory diseases, with 23% suffering trachoma, leading to blindness. Dalit women have been stripped naked by mobs and paraded around in public to humiliate Dalits who dared to demand their due rights and entitlements, even for expressing desire to conduct marriages or other festivals as any other citizen do.

Case 1.
The village of Khairlanji near Nagpur is an unremarkable settlement of brick huts and cement houses. Less than 200 families live here. There was always a gaping silence in this village, even before 29 September 2006 when an upper caste mob, according to eyewitnesses, paraded a mother and her 17-year-old daughter naked, raped and killed them. Two other members of the family, brothers aged 19 and 21 also were murdered. Their bodies were dumped in a canal. Thirty-eight men have been arrested and they are being held under police custody. The gruesome incident occurred 780 km from Mumbai. Why this happened is a mystery that readily resolves itself depending on who you are talking to. A mob broke down the frail door of a house that is nothing more than a heap of loose bricks without the adhesion of mortar. The mob was armed with bicycle chains, axes and bullock cart pokers. Surekha and 17-year-old Priyanka, a 12th standard topper, were paraded naked through the village. According to eye-witnesses, one of them was even strapped to a bullock cart.

Dalits and Social injustice
India's caste system assigns individuals a certain hierarchical status according to Hindu beliefs. Traditionally, there are four principal castes (divided into many sub-categories) the Brahmins (teachers, scholars and priests), the Kshatriyas (kings and warriors), the Vaishyas (agriculturists and traders), and Shudras (artisans, service providers, laborers). Approximately three-quarters of the Dalit workforce are in the agricultural sector of the economy. A majority of the country's forty million people who are bonded laborers are Dalits. These jobs rarely provide enough income for Dalits to feed their families or to send their children to school. As a result, many Dalits are impoverished, uneducated, and illiterate.

If compared to states like Punjab, Himachal Pradesh or West Bengal where Dalits constitute more than 20 per cent of the population, Gujarat counts a fairly low proportion of Dalits. According to the 2001 Census, there are approximately 3.6 million members of Scheduled Castes in Gujarat, which represents 7.1% of the state's total population. More than 80 per cent of the Dalits in Gujarat are daily labourers, the majority of which are in the agricultural sector. Half of the SC population is landless or owns less than one acre of land, which forces them to work on dominant castes' land in order to survive.

Even with all of the reported progress, the state continues to remain deeply divided over caste and religious boundaries. Among the four major religions practiced in Gujarat – Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, and Christianity – there is an established hierarchical social structure comprised of a number of different dominant and scheduled castes. Hinduism is the dominant religion in the state, practiced by over 80% of the population. The dominant Hindu castes in Gujarat are the Brahmins, Patels (Leua, Kadva), Darbars (Kshatriya), Koli Patels, Ahirs, and Mers. The Scheduled Castes (SC) or the Dalits make up 7.1% of the total population and are made up of the Vankars, Chamars, Garodas, Mahyavanshis, Senva, Turi Barots, Dangasiyas, Nadiyas, Hadis, and Valmikis.

The government of Gujarat has implemented certain policies designed to uplift those belonging to the Scheduled Castes into higher positions. The most prominent is the reservation system, where certain seats in the government are set aside only for Dalits. In Gujarat, 7% of seats in the government and education sectors are reserved for Dalits (as opposed to 14% set aside on the national level). This amounts to 2 of the 26 Members of Parliament (MP) and 13 of the 182 Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLA) currently held by members of the SC. There are also established reservation systems in place at the district, block, and village levels throughout the state.

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

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

According to a UN press report two third of married Indian women are victims of domestic violence. Seventy percent of married Indian women between the ages of fifteen and forty nine were proven victims of ugly incidences like rape, beating, forced or coerced sex and

each incident of domestic violence leads to the loss of seven working days for a woman in a country like India.

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

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

Initiatives of Government
In the year 1985-86, the erstwhile Ministry of Welfare was bifurcated into the Department of Women and Child Development and the Department of Welfare. Subsequently, the name of the Ministry was changed to the Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment in May, 1998. Further, in October, 1999, the Tribal Development Division had moved out to form a separate Ministry of Tribal Affairs. In January, 2007, the Minorities Division along with Wakf Unit have been moved out of the Ministry and formed as a separate Ministry and the Child Development Division has gone to the Ministry of Women & Child Development.

The Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment is entrusted with the empowerment of the Scheduled Castes Other Backward Classes Persons with Disabilities and Senior Citizens and Victims of Substance Abuse and marginalized sections of the society. The Ministry has been implementing various programmes/schemes for social, educational and economic development of the target groups. As a result there has been considerable improvement in the welfare of these groups.

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

1. Scheduled Castes Welfare

- The Protection of Civil Rights(PCR) Act, 1955
- The Protection of Civil Rights(PCR) Rules, 1977

Based on the recommendations of the Committee, this Act was comprehensively amended in 1976 and its name was changed to "The Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955". The amended Act came into force from 19th November 1976. Under this Act, the preaching and practice of 'Untouchability' or the enforcement of any disability arising there from and for matters connected therewith, was made cognizable and non-compoundable offence and the terms of imprisonment were enhanced. The State Governments have been empowered to impose collective fines on the inhabitants of any area found committing and abetting the commission of untouchability offences. This Act, along with the Rules framed thereunder, lays down elaborate procedure for ensuring protection of the victims of such practices by providing for special courts, special prosecution, fixing period for investigation, etc.

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989 Indian Parliament passed another law called **"Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989".** The Rules under the Act were framed in 1995 to prevent commission of atrocities against members of the Schedules Castes and Tribes, to provide for special courts for the trial of such offences and for the relief and rehabilitation of the victims of such offences and for matters connected there with or incidental there to.

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

Other then this 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, Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, The commission for protection of Child Rights Act 2005 and Maintenance Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007.

Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities

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

The PWD Act, 1995 recognises the seven categories (Blindness, Low Vision, Leprosy, Hearing Impairment, Locomotors Disability, Mental Retardation, Mental Illness) of disability for providing equal opportunities, protecting the rights and ensuring full participation of persons with disabilities. The PWD Act seeks to empower disabled persons to be part of the mainstream. It is comprehensive and encompasses provisions for the prevention of disability, promoting education, employment, affirmative action, non-discrimination, research and manpower development, recognition of institutions for persons with disabilities and monitoring the implementation machinery.

PRI and Social Justice Mechanism

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment has in 1992 entered the elements of participation, decentralization and open democracy in Indian politics. The Amendment has made Panchayats constitutional entities by giving them legal, administrative and implementation powers as also the status of 3rd level government.

According to the Gujarat Panchayat Act 1993 it is mandatory for every Panchayat to set up Social Justice Committees (SJC). These Committees are statutory bodies meant to ensure the participation of weaker sections of society such as women, dalits and tribals in the decision-making process of the Gram Panchayat. The elected members of the Panchayat nominate adult representatives belonging to these communities to the SJC in every village. The Panchayat has a duty to undertake the implementation of these projects upon receiving sanction from the administration. During the three decades since the passing of the Panchayat Act, these committees have at best remained inactive or at worst exist only on paper. In hundreds of villages these committees just do not exist at all.

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

16. MICRO LEVEL PLANNING

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

Various Approaches to Planning have been followed in India over a period of time

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

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

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[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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Meaning of Micro Planning

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

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

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

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

Participatory Rural Appraisal as an Approach to Micro Planning

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

Community Mapping

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

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

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

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

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

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

Ensuring Involvement of Different Opinions:

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

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

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

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

Important Points for Effective Planning Process

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Priorities of District Level Plannings

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

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

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

17. CONVERGENCE IN DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES AND PROGRAMMES

[18]Introduction

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

One of the strategies proposed by the eleventh plan for optimal results is convergence of resources. The key principle behind convergence is that a key programme is identified to

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

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

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

Process in Convergence
Though the issue of convergence seems difficult to tackle there are models and mechanisms of convergence available in the country and in various states. There have been attempts of preparing a framework for convergence under various centrally sponsored schemes. One of the mechanisms for convergence is through planning.

Participatory planning from the grassroots level by the local government can lead to a strong sense of ownership and lead to better results at the local level. However, currently planning has been done in different sectors to utilize resources available for the sector. There has been increased specialization and sector wise thrust in development and emphasis on sector specific planning using guidelines issued by line departments/ministries like District health plan, District education plan, District water and sanitation plan etc. Preparation of sector plan is leading to vertically integrated plans. In order to use resources efficiently and involve local governments actively vertical planning process needs to be transformed into horizontal planning process. This will enable local governments to work along with other planning entities to develop and integrated plan for the area. An attempt is being made to prepare district plans through district planning committees.

Central Ministries and state government departments are implementing various rural development programmes through a set of guidelines and by using separate set of administrative and institutional mechanisms. There is total compartmentalization of functions which are very often similar between agencies and departments such that several departments are engaged in identical activities under similar circumstances achieve dissimilar results. There is wastage of resources and there are delays in implementation of work and organizational functions. In order to facilitate the horizontal planning process at various levels of local government the present sector specific guidelines which are there in the various departments need to be modified to bring in uniformity in planning, sanctioning, release of funds, implementation and monitoring of the programmes.

Another way 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.

Convergence through NREGA
Convergence of inter- sectoral programme with NREGA will enable better planning and effective investment in rural areas. It was seen that NREGA had the potential to strengthen livelihood, create a resource base in terms of infrastructure at the local level, address poverty and strengthen democracy. Therefore it was important to identify linkage with other development initiatives and projects so that their combined energies and resources can be leveraged for overall development of the area. A convergence model was developed for convergence through NREGA. General frame work and broad principles for convergence has been outlined by Government of India in 2009. Convergence of the NREGA funds with funds from other sources can help in creating durable assets. The model considered programmes and schemes in which planning process and works are similar to NREGA. The guiding principle of this framework is that convergence has to be planned within the parameters of the NREGS. Only work permissible under the NREGA can be undertaken as part of convergence and the ratio of wage to material cost of 60: 40 and non involvement of contractors has to be maintained. NREGA funds should not be used as a substitute resource by different departments and agencies for their own activities. Under NREGS convergence is sought to be achieved in planning and in implementation of works.

For convergence in planning two sets of plans are to be prepared - an annual work plan of NREGA and a perspective plan for long term development plan for the district based on NREGA guidelines. The perspective plan will identify the needs and gaps in the district in all the sectors and the type of NREGA work that can be encouraged in the district. The department project plans are important and can be multi year plans. These department plans can be dovetailed in the NREGA perspective plan. The annual work plan of NREGA will list the shelf of projects recommended by the gram sabha. The annual work plan should be broadly based on the perspective plan and needs to be endorsed by the gram sabha.

Convergence through works can be affected through filling gaps through NREGA in similar works undertaken in schemes of departments, dovetailing inputs into a common project, providing value addition to NREGA work and providing technical support for ensuring quality in planning, selection and execution of NREGA work. Convergence has been proposed through water conservation/harvesting, drought proofing, minor and micro irrigation canals, renovation of traditional water bodies, horticulture, land development, flood control and protection work including drainage in water logged areas and rural connectivity.

Convergence in Gujarat 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. In Gujarat the main focus is to generate employment, create sustainable assets, upgrade rural infrastructure and multiply benefits of schemes. Convergence is planned with forest

department, roads and building department, irrigation department, line departments implementing water conservation, water harvesting and water resource programmes, tribal development and agriculture department. Convergence of the 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

With forest department the activities planned are roadside and pond side plantation, check dams, afforestation, social forestry, roads in the forest area and village drought proofing. Construction of internal roads and drainage, village to village roads, approach road to village and culverts on roads are planned in convergence with the roads and building department. The labour intensive part of the road which requires earth works and metal spreading can be taken under NREGA and the Bitumen spreading and rolling can be taken up under State Budget Funds. With the irrigation department water conservation and water harvesting, micro and minor irrigation works, renovation of traditional water bodies, desilting of ponds, drainage in water logged areas, check dams and flood control and protection works is planned to be taken up. All the mud work which engages labour is to be taken up under NREGS and material and infrastructure expenses from central and state programmes/schemes like repair, renovation and restoration of water bodies, accelerated irrigation benefits programme, flood control and river management works, dug well recharge scheme, groundwater management and regulation scheme. Convergence with tribal and agriculture department will be through works related to land development, providing irrigation including micro irrigation facility to tribal agriculturists, horticulture projects, cannel and channel digging, providing pipelines to the field of agriculturists and irrigation wells. The convergence is planned by using funds for construction work from NREGS and infrastructure expenses being booked under Swaranajayanti Gram Swaroozgar Yojana/Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (SGSY/RSVY).

The convergence model is being tried out in the many districts of Gujarat. Dangs and Dahod district convergence is sought in rain water harvesting, group irrigation wells, vermi compost, lift irrigation, better management of agricultural activities and capacity building. It is planned that due to convergence of the schemes ground water will be recharged. In Tapi district an initiative has been undertaken to provide door to door banking facility for the workers in taluka of Songadh with the support of State Bank of India and FINO. Panchamahal district has taken multilateral convergence initiatives. The initiative includes an elaborate strategy for implementation and impact assessment with each project convergence. The activities include a community irrigation, renovation of existing sources of irrigation, water conservation, pucca roads in remote tribal areas, rural malnutrition and enhancement of rural livelihood. Capacity building on better management of agricultural activities is planned through Krishi Vijyan Kendra (KVK) through technology support and demonstrations. In Kutch district all activities of the National Afforestation Programme (NAP) are to be converged with NREGA.

District Planning: A Mechanism for Convergence in BRGF
The Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) is a major shift in the approach from top down plans to participative plans prepared at the grassroot level. The objective of BRGF is to bridge critical gaps in local infrastructure and other development requirements that are not met through the existing inflows, to strengthen panchayats and municipalities through capacity building and facilitating planning, decision making, implementation and monitoring to reflect the local needs. Each panchayat and municipality will be treated as a planning unit. The planning process envisions people's participation through gram and ward sabhas in rural areas and through areas sabhas and ward committees in urban areas. Participatory plan will

be prepared in each panchayat and municipality in the district which will take into account the resources being spent in the area of the panchayat through sectoral plan, centrally sponsored schemes, NREGS, central and state finance commission and fund inflow on account of Bharat Nirman. The participatory plan prepared by the panchayats and municipalities would be consolidated at the district level. The plan would reflect all financial resources available in the district and ensure optimum use without delay, diversion, duplication and leakage.

The Article 243ZD of the 74th CAA proposed the constitution of the District Planning Committee (DPC). 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. In the entire scheme of thinking centrality was to be given to the panchayats. It was believed that planning from below can ensure convergence of programmes and plans.

A fund flow mechanism has also been detailed. 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. Panchayat implementing the sanctioned work will have to provide accounts and utilization certificate for funds released. Regular physical and financial audit of works will be carried out by professional listed in the panel of the state government.

To achieve converge in implementation of work a mechanism has been worked out at the panchayat level. All works will be implemented by panchayat and municipalities in accordance with the respective activity mapping exercise and money allocated for the works. All funds will be transferred to the municipalities and panchayats for implementation. However, in case the work is outside the domain of the panchayats and municipalities then the DPC will decide the department/agency for implementation and get the work executed with panchayats and municipalities having the power to monitor and supervise.

In Gujarat there are 6 districts under the BRGF – Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, Dahod, Panchmahals, Narmada and Dangs. The district plans have been prepared for all the six districts as per the guidelines. The district plans have been approved by the district panchayats body. Funds are being moblised from various central and state schemes along with the BRGF to bridge gaps in local infrastructure, provide improved quality services with the aim of poverty reduction.

Some Issues in Achieving Convergence
Convergence of development programmes and development initiatives has been an issue of concern among development administration in the states for a considerable length of time. Some of the issues in convergence are outlined below.

(i) Fear of Losing Control
Even though all guidelines stipulate inter programme coordination and convergence consultation between departments does not happen. There is always a reluctance to commit funds for projects planned by other departments. There is a fear of losing control over 'their' resources. This reluctance has to be removed to bring about convergence. All the related

departments at the state level have to arrive at a consensus which has to be passed to the district to initiate the process of convergence.

(ii) Absence of Institutional Platform

There is no institutional platform for convergence at present. The question most of often raised by department functionaries is how to monitor and ensure that the planned convergence takes place. This becomes difficult if resources are coming from outside the departments trying to seek convergence. A uniform monitoring and accounting system has to be maintained by various departments. Otherwise it can result in double recording of work. Appropriate mechanisms should be in place to ensure that the same work does not get recorded in different programmes. At present there is no mechanism to cross check records of various departments.

(iii) Facilitating Inter Department Coordination

There is no authority at present to ensure inter department coordination and resource pooling. There is need to notify a district level official for example district collector who is provided with the mandate and authority to accomplish convergence. There is also general feeling that convergence can happen better and is feasible at the state level as compared to the district level. Many convergences between departments may not be amenable to gram panchayat level convergence. A mix of approaches may have to be used.

(iv) Lack of Information on Funds

There are competing demands for funds particularly from departments that are less endowed and have no reciprocal dovetailing arrangements. Information on funds available is difficult to get. Committed funds under various sectors are either not known or there is a reluctance to provide the details. Without information on fund flows convergence exercise may not be feasible.

(v) Lack of Comprehensive Training Programme

At present there is no integrated or comprehensive training programme which happens. Training is compartmentalized and each department has its own training. This will not help in achieving convergence. Resources from the different departments need to be pooled in to design a holistic training programme which will equip functionaries with the necessary skill for achieving convergence.

18. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

[19]Large development initiatives across the world have been conceptualized and implemented through programme/projects. The Central and State sponsored programmes are developed with detailed guidelines for implementation. The programme/ projects require regular supervision and monitoring to ensure that the resources are utilized for the desired purpose and activities are carried out as per the plan and that the programme is moving in the right direction without any obstruction or risks to achieve its objectives.

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

2. 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; appropriateness of products and services the project intended to provide. Evaluation also looks into the intended changes and its continuity without additional project

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intervention (impact and sustainability). 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.

3. Key terms

Some of the key terms used in a monitoring and evaluation exercise are:

Impact Assessment: Positive or negative changes both direct and indirect that happen in the area as a result of the project.

Sustainability: The extent to which the implementing organization will continue to pursue the objectives after project assistance is over.

Relevance: The degree to which the rationale and objectives of the project are, or remain pertinent and significant in relation to the identified priority, needs and concerns.

Output and Outcome: There is clear distinction between the outcome and output. Output is a short term result where as outcome is long term result and may or may not be sustainable. Output is immediate effect and outcome is impact.

Stakeholders: People, groups or institutions that have a role and interest in the objectives and implementation of a programme or project. Stakeholders are community, interest groups, agencies or institutions who can directly or indirectly influence the project or are associated with the project.

Evaluator: The person who evaluates the project or programme is called evaluator. Evaluator can be external and internal. External evaluator is the person who is hired from outside project, whereas internal evaluator is directly associated with the project.

Tools

There are several tools and methods that are available for undertaking a monitoring and evaluation exercise. Over the years many of these tools have been tried and tested in monitoring and evaluation of projects and programmes in different contexts.

Indicators

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. If stakeholders are involved in defining the indicators then it is more likely to be used for management decision making. Performance indicators can help to set performance targets and assess progress towards achieving them. Problem can be identified to allow for corrective action.

Indicators can be quantitative and qualitative. Quantitative indicators are concerned with numbers or amount for example number of families received wage, number of children received immunization and qualitative indicators are concerned with description of participation, empowerment and attitude.

Objectively Verifiable Indicator (OVI): Indicators, whether quantitative or qualitative, must be objectively verifiable. In project management it is termed as OVI.

*Means of verification (MoV) and sources of verification (SoV:*Indicators should be identified at the outset of the project. One needs to have full understanding how and from where information can be collected on those indicators. This is called MoV and SoV.

4. Methods of Information Collection for Monitoring

For the purpose of monitoring, data must be collected as a part of the implementing process. The registers used to capture various project data, field notes, formats for collation are useful for monitoring. In evaluation the monitoring data can also be useful. There are various ways of collecting data. 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 process on issues of enrolment, maternal and child mortality for which a survey can be undertaken at the start of the project. Baseline information provides a point from which to measure change and to provide 'before' and 'after' picture. On projects like land development, a-forestation, de-siltation a photo documentation of 'before' picture will be very useful. In the absence of photographic facilities, the local people may be asked to draw (not artistic) the prevalent situation which can be used as a comparison. *Rapid appraisal* methods are quick, low-cost ways to gather the views and feedback of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders, in order to respond to decision-makers' needs for information. It helps in providing rapid information for management decision-making, especially at the project or program level. It provides qualitative understanding of changes due to the project through interactions with various stakeholders. Some of the ways to do a rapid assessment are interviewing key informants, focus group discussions/ interviews, community level meetings/ group interviews, direct observation, mini surveys and documenting case studies from the project/ programme area and target group. *Cost Benefit and cost effectiveness analysis* are tools for assessing if the cost of an activity can be justified by the outcomes and impact. Cost Benefit measures both input and output in monetary terms. Cost effectiveness measure inputs in monetary terms and outputs in non monetary quantitative terms.

5. Approaches: Conventional vs. Participatory

Over a period of time the approaches to monitoring and evaluation shifted from the control of project in hand of the management to the hands of the people for whom the project is designed or created. In popular parlance it is termed as a shift from Conventional Evaluation to Participatory Evaluation.

Narayan (1993)[20] offers a useful summary of the differences between conventional and participatory evaluation approaches.

	Conventional Evaluation	**Participatory Evaluation**
Why	Accountability, usually summary judgments about the project to determine if funding continues	To empower local people to initiate the process, to take control and take corrective action
Who	External experts	Community members, project staff, facilitator
What	Predetermined indicators of success, principally cost and production output	People identify their own indicators of success
How	Focus on "scientific objectivity" distancing of evaluators from other	Self evaluation; simple methods adapted to local culture; open immediate sharing of

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[20] Narayan Parker D (1993), Participatory Evaluation: Tools for Managing Change in Water and Sanitation, World Bank Technical Papers 207, Washington DC: World Bank.

	participants; uniform complex procedures; delayed limited access to results	results through local involvement in evaluation processes
When	Midterm and on completion	Any assessment for program improvement; merging of monitoring and evaluation, hence frequent small evaluations

6. Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation

Participation has become a critical concept in development sector. International donors, governments and civil society organisations are insisting on participatory approaches in assessing needs and in implementing programmes. Participation can be built into monitoring and evaluation of a program/project in the entire process starting from designing the tools for monitoring, setting the indicators, gathering and analyzing the data, identifying the gaps, in preparing report on the findings, listing recommendations, disseminating results and in preparing an action plan to improve program performance. Participatory monitoring and evaluation has been used for impact assessment, programme planning and management, organization/institution strengthening, in understanding stakeholder perspective and in building public accountability. 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. By interacting with the stakeholders the process allows for adjustments and modification in case the activities are not in the right directions.

Participatory evaluations improve program performance. Listening to and learning from program beneficiaries, field staff, and other stakeholders who know why a program is or is not working is critical to making improvements in the future. The more the insiders are involved in identifying evaluation questions and in gathering and analyzing data, the more likely that they will use the information to improve performance. Participatory evaluation empowers program providers and beneficiaries to act on the knowledge gained.

7. PM&E and Accountability

Conventionally PM&E was used by donor agencies and government institutions to hold programme recipients and beneficiaries accountable to the agreed goals and performance targets. In recent times PM&E is increasingly being used by project participants and local community to monitor and evaluate the performance of donors and government institutions. This kind of monitoring holds government accountable and assesses the extent to which public programmes meet the needs of the community. Social audit, community/citizen's monitoring of essential services, public hearings are some of the techniques used to monitor and evaluate development programme with stakeholder participation.

Most of the new generation development schemes have recognized the importance of participatory process in the entire project cycle i.e. in planning, implementation and monitoring. The governments have also to some extent accepted the need for building community participation in large scale development programmes. 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 AUDIT: SOME PRACTICAL GUIDELINES

[21]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 a continuous process of public vigilance and monitoring. Effective social accountability demands the presence of proactive disclosure based on a legal statutory mandate like Right to Information Act or Information Disclosure Act, decentralized decision making structure and community social facilitators. 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 delivery of programme services. It has been experienced that poor delivery of programmes are improved through people themselves through accountability measures.

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

Broadly, process of social accountability involves the following components: a) Availability of information / details of the financial and non-financial resources used by public agencies for development initiatives, b) Organizing the ultimate users / beneficiaries / people and, c) Scrutiny of the information by the end users. Success of social accountability depends on how the relevant project information is demystified and placed before people so that they derive meaning out of it to check compliance, appropriate targeting and relevance of the programme. Usually poor people do not ask questions on public programmes, hence they need to be encouraged and empowered to ask questions about the effectiveness of the programmes meant for them.   In this paper, the key lessons of the social audit practiced in the Mahata Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) are drawn to make a proposal for social accountability.

Social Audits in NGNREGA
As a part of social accountability in MGNREGA, social audit has been made mandatory. This is the first programme in India where social audit has been introduced. Social audit is new to the Indian development programmes. In the last four years it has generated diverse forms of practice as well as debate. In the recent past, there has been wide ranging social audit practices and discourse as a part of reforming governance and ensuring public accountability. Broadly there have been three types of practices in different parts of country.

The first approach focuses on legislative framework of self regulation through pro-active disclosure in the Gram Sabha. The information bulletin boards at the work sites to provide information on involvement of labour and expenditure started from Kerala and being practiced in many States. Kerala has made significant progress in disclosing details of NREGA related information in the bulletin board. This is linked to their prior commitment to the peoples' planning process and proactive disclosure. Citizen interest and engagement is enhanced when they are provided relevant information about the development programmes. In many of the States there have been increase in peoples' participation in the Gram Sabha for beneficiary selection where local people discuss in a transparent manner. The Social Audit manual of Rajasthan provides step by step approach to conduct effective Social Audits. It also initiated the process of appointment of government officials, outsourcing the Local Audits at the Gram Panchayat level. This is expected to work as a necessary monitoring mechanism. In Andhra Pradesh an independent society has been constituted by the government to facilitate social audit. The Working Group on Transparency and Accountability under the MGNREGA Central Council is of the opinion that such a model is most effective to institutionalize social audit. In a recent report it was mentioned that the Andhra Pradesh social audit has identified Rs. 880 million of misappropriations which have been recovered through people's demand. The legislative framework provides an institutional framework to practice social accountability in a scale and in a transparent manner. Many State Governments are now formulating their own social audit manuals.

The second approach is a collaborative model between the local bodies and civil society organisations rooted in the values of partnership for consensus building and promoting accountability. The approach is centered on creating spaces for dialogue and collective assessment. However, this approach is in a nascent stage. The civil society organisations in many States have been approaching Panchayats and government officials to conduct social audit. These are primarily voluntary, but has enough scope to demonstrate new methodology.

The third model relates to challenging the corruption. The critical and distinctive factor of this model is the absence of the State agencies and the PRIs. The approach relies on the use of the Right to Information (RTI) to access public records. The primary forum is Jan Sunvai

(public hearing) which is used for community mobilisation for action on the issue of corruption. It is evident that such initiatives have developed road map for empowered engagement of common people to hold the service delivery institutions accountable.

The first model (proactive disclosure) has continued to remain as an officially approved procedure as it has the potential to scale up with the involvement of the network of government agencies at different levels. In the absence of empowered citizens to facilitate the process, often the powerful people obstruct the process without valuing or actively undermining the voices of the marginal people. The decisions are an outcome of 'coercive agreement' rather than 'consensual agreement'. In this model, the community participation is very weak, information is put in such a manner that people do not understand and any public questioning is highly discouraged. The institution conducting the Social Audit has internal resistance and the process lack public confidence. In such circumstances, the deprived groups are not able to marshal their strength to raise questions before the Gram Sabha. To avoid this the states like Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat have created an independent group of facilitators to support the village vigilance and monitoring committee for the social audit.

The overall purpose of social audit is to identify programme gaps by the people themselves under a forum of public scrutiny to ensure programme effectiveness and check leakage. However, in order to reach this stage, a step by step enabling mechanism need to be created so that the poor, the beneficiary, the workers, feel empowered to raise their voice in a free and fearless environment. There is a need for countering the environment which has resistance to Social Audit. The first step is establish the legitimacy of the process in the eyes of all the stakeholders. The process need to be viewed as objective, not aligned to any particular group and need to be robust in terms of its acceptance and redressal of issues. The process need to be framed under a legislative framework/government order/resolution. In addition to this, support mechanisms need to be created for participation of villagers in all stages of the social audit process.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has clear provisions to conduct social audit and it is the first programme in our country to which ensures downward accountability and transferred the rights to the people to exercise it as an entitlement. Provisions for social audit under MGNREGS are explained below.

Guidelines for Conducting Social Audit
Some of the key steps are mentioned below to conduct social audit.

People's Forum should Own the Process
Social Audit Forum/Committee/Gram Sabha is the mandated to undertake the process of Social Audits. All the members of the Social Audit Forum/Committee are selected by Gram Sabha having mandatory representation of women and the workers who have worked in current/previous work under MGNREGS of the same Gram Panchayats. The Gram Panchayat/implementing agency has the obligation to fully support and provide required help to the Social Audit Forum/Committee. Legitimacy of the people's forum created in a transparent manner form among the people for whom the programme is designed is critical. The implementing agency, in our case the agency implementing the disaster recovery or risk reduction programme shall be responsible to form a public forum as well as provide all project information and decisions to the forum for scrutiny. In MGNREGA it is termed as making Management Information System (MIS) into People's/Janata Information System (JIS).

Focus should be on the empowerment of people

Another important aspect is that the focus should be on the empowerment of people so that they are able to voice their concerns and problems. This primarily requires raising awareness of rights, entitlements and obligations under the scheme, specifically about the right to participate in a social audit. This might be possible through a large scale awareness campaign focused on these aspects as well as demonstration by the implementing agency about the seriousness and commitment over the process. Public transparency and accountability has to be a policy of the implementing agency which need 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.

Facilitating environment and strategies for Social Audits

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 services 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.

All relevant information need to be made accessible to the people. Public announcement of the social audit through area-specific traditional means like beating of drums, display of notices in common places needs to be undertaken one month in advance. However, proactive information sharing during the project progress on a regular basis can build people's faith on the social audit. Social audit shall not be a project end activity, it shall be done in a periodic interval. In case of MGNREGA an open work regime has been articulated where by allocation orders, work completion details, payments details are displayed at the worksites. In the social audit all information are read out aloud to ensure that illiterate people are also informed. If programmes are to be made transparent and accountable, people must be encouraged to monitor, question and identify loopholes in the execution of the programme meant for them. Questioning by people (Social Audit) ensures awareness building, participation and accountability. It enables the administrative machinery to take corrective action.

Notification for Social Audit

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 Social Audit Committee. SAC is a group of 9 members of the local community to monitor the progress of works undertaken under MGNREGS. It has representation of women, SC/ST and the workers. Social audit must be done in each village so that it is uniform across the project areas. It can not be done in a sample villages as holding the implementing agency accountable is a right of the people. Who shall be in-charge of the social audit needs be be clarified.

Activation of Social Audit Committee (SAC)

It is mandatory to form the Social Audit Committee at local level. It should have representation of women and SC/ST and project users. As social accountability is a new dimension of public programme management, in most of the cases it is observed that the SAC members are not active. Therefore, capacity building of the SAC shall be a part of the project activity. It shall not be left to the end of the project activity.

SAC members should be appraised about their roles and responsibility and their involvement in conducting Social Audit. The project staff are not eligible to hold Social Audit. In case the SAC members are illiterate, in such a situation, an educated person from the community who can truly represent the interest of the poor and marginalised can be nominated as Member Secretary of the committee. This person will also provide support in collecting data and to finalise the report of the findings to be read in the Gram Sabha. The minutes of this meeting should be sent to the top project management for corrective action.

Collection, Verification and Analysis of Data for Social Audits

In MGNREGA Social Audit Committee 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 mad available to the Social Audit Committee has to be proactively announced. Besides this, the project management shall provide all information that is demanded by the SAC.

The Social Audit Committee shall be enabled to analyse and verify all the information. All information should be presented in a simple way to the people as Janata Information System (JIS). The presentation of JIS provides the basis for scrutinisation. The Social Audit Committee can acquire the list of project beneficiaries and ask them about the quality of the programme, problems in availing those benefits, check the rate of the materials, examine the estimates and actual expenses etc. They should also note down any complaints made by the people. Some of the members of the Social Audit Committee should also visit the site to verify the quality of work undertaken. They should check whether daily materials register is kept at the worksite and whether it is verified. They should also report on whether measurement records are available for inspection.

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 SAC 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 'chaura', water stand points, provision store, primary school, outside anganwadi, cooperative milk society and at worksite/s), at least five days before the scheduled date of the 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.

Gramsabha for Social Audits
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.

All important documents related to the implementation of the project should be placed at the location of the Gram Sabha for the scrutiny of the people. Project staff along with one member from the Social Audit Committee should also sit with the documents for the scrutiny by the people at the location of the Gram Sabha to help them to find their find their information to the queries.

The analyzed data should also be written in enlarged and simple format and displayed at the site of the Gram Sabha.

Data regarding the work, sanctioned budget, approved works, families provided support, etc. should be displayed on charts at the venue 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.

Challenges in Institutionalizing the Process of Social Audits

Facilitating Social Audit requires great deal of effort and willingness at all levels. Social Audits if institutionalized can help build transparency and accountability. However, experience show that there are several challenges in institutionalizing the process. Some of them are outlined here.

Culture of Silence: In facilitating Social Audit, culture of silence is one of the important bottlenecks. People do not speak up even if they see something wrong is happening. This is because they are either not aware of appropriate forums or have developed a sense of apathy that there will be no change in existing situation. Also, most of the families directly affected are poor and from marginalized sections of society and fear to raise their voices as they are afraid of possible repercussions.

To deal with this challenge, the administration should ensure prompt action on issues raised during the Gram Sabha and the action taken should be communicated again to the people in the subsequent Gram Sabha. This will assure the people that their voices are heard. It will make the community remains engaged and raise their confidence to voice issues.

Low Participation in Gram Sabha: Low people's participation in Gram Sabha is another bottleneck. Style of facilitation, non-response to past resolutions, domination by powerful and lack of meaningful discussion are some of the causes why people think attending Gram Sabha is a waste of time.

Social Audit needs lots of facilitation and mobilization and hence involvement of local CSOs makes it more effective. As they are not associated with execution of works, it enhances the objectivity and credibility of the process. Also, as mentioned earlier, timely actions by competent authorities on findings has impact on Social Audit for next round. Since Social Audit is to be done in periodic intervals, timely actions on earlier Social Audit encourages people. In the contrary if this does not happen, people get disappointed and this will result in lack of participation in future.

Social Audit has spin-off benefits like increased awareness and participation. During process of data collection, verification and Gram Sabha mobilization, committee and volunteers interact with people personally and share the provisions of the project, their entitlements and procedures to get them. Interested households are encouraged to interact with project officials. This not only improves the quality of implementation of programme, it also facilitates involvement of people.

Social Audit has negative connotations and conflicting socio-economic interests: Social Audit evokes fear and resentment among the implementing agency. Also, rural Indian society is not homogenous and there are conflicting interests based on caste, class and gender lines. Process of Social Audit takes into account interests of weaker sections such as poor, dalits, women and minorities and empowers them. Hence powerful groups also resist such process.

To combat this challenge, if at initial stages, Social Audit is promoted more as learning process to inculcate culture of transparency and accountability rather than fault finding. Small but incremental success will boost the confidence and morale of people, specially poor and marginalized.

Unverifiable Records:

Many a times the implementing agency does not maintain up to date records. It hinders the transparency process. If at the beginning of the project the MIS and JIS are clearly defined it will not create problems in verification of records.

20. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

[22]Effective organizations do not exist without effective leaders. What you do and do not do as a leader is very important. If you do not take *initiative* to improve your community, and do not lead your people to *achieve* high standards of public service, your community as well as organization will not be very effective. *Leadership* is a key factor.

Concept of a Leader and 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.

A Leader is one who has the ability to inspire and stimulate others to achieve defined worthwhile goals. There are two important aspects of leadership (i) the people to be led, and (ii) the objective or a goal to be achieved.

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[22] 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.

It is true that chairmen and kings lead, but people who hold no leadership position also lead. At the same time you can find some people who have a leader's title and ought to lead. But they do not lead. In other words, you are not a leader because you wear the leader's hat. You are a leader only when you are getting things done through other people. Leadership therefore is something people do. Some people inherit leadership positions, such as kings, or heads of family business, others are elected to leadership positions for example, chairman, governor, etc. Chances are most of us were 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. If you can learn to swim or do math or play chess, you can learn leadership skills as well.

Although your position as a leader, manager or supervisor gives you the authority to accomplish certain tasks and objectives in the organization, this *power* does not make you a leader, it simply makes you the *boss.* Leadership makes people *want* to achieve high goals and objectives, while, on the other hand, bosses tell people to accomplish a task or objective.

Qualities and Values of a Good Leader
Leaders need to possess the right qualities and values. 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.

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.

3. What Followers Expect and Admire in their Leaders
Employees seek certain characteristics in a leader. Majority of us admire leaders who are **honest, competent, forward-looking and inspiring**. Here what we mean by honesty is a leader must practice what they preach. Promises must be kept, and the leader must have the confidence to follow their own beliefs. At the same time leader also needs to be competent enough to accomplish goals. Very often it happens that leaders enter their office with grand ideas, or to accomplish few things in a week's time. But as the time passes by they lose their interest and as a result, projects are not completed and the workers feel "let down" by their leaders. The next most frequently selected characteristic of good leaders is that of being **forward-looking**. This requires foresight, an ability to see the needs and wants of the future generations and an ability to motivate people to deliver these needs and wants. Next expected quality is **inspiration**. The leader's vision must be communicated throughout the organization. This communication must not only be informative but also inspirational.

4. Leadership Styles
Leadership style in general is the manner or an approach one adopts while leading, for example, a manner in which the leader directs, implements plans, or motivates people. As a leader you may find yourself using different leadership styles at different times. Sometimes, you may have to give orders to your team members while on other occasions you may ask for

their contributions through discussions. There are many different ways of working with people. There are 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.

i. Authoritarian/Autocratic Leadership
Under this style a leader:

- Rely on threats and punishment to influence employees;
- Do not trust employees; and
- Do not allow for employee input.

Authoritarian (autocratic) Leadership is one in which the manager retains as much power and decision-making authority as possible. Autocratic leader does not consult employees, rather tells them what is to be done and how it is to be done. It is more of a "Do as I say" approach. In this style motivation provided is in the form of rewards and punishments.

This style of leadership should be used rarely and only when employees respond to other styles or when new untrained employee does not know which task to perform or which procedures to follow to accomplish the given the task. The autocratic leadership style should not be used when employee becomes tense, fearful, or resentful and expect to have their opinions heard.

ii. Participative/Democratic Leadership
Typically the democratic leader:

- Encourages employees to grow on the job;
- Recognizes and encourages achievement;
- Allows employees to establish goals.

Democratic style is the most desired leadership style. The democratic leader keeps the employees informed about everything that affects their work, and consults them to determine what to do and how to do it. However, the leader maintains the final decision making authority. Many employees like the trust they receive and in return they respond with cooperation, team spirit, and high morale.

The democratic leadership style is most effective when the leader wants to keep employees informed about matters that affect them, share in decision making and problem solving, want to provide employees with opportunity to grow personally and have job satisfaction and want to encourage team building and participation. Democratic leadership should not be used when there is only limited time to achieve the task, when you cannot afford mistakes and when employees are not highly skilled have limited knowledge of the subject.

iii. Delegative/ consultative leader
Typically the delegative leader:

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

A delegative leader permits the employees to make the decision within the prescribed limits. Under such leadership style, employees assume responsibility for their work and for the success of their department.

Delegative leadership style is effective when employees are highly skilled, experienced, and educated; are highly motivated and are willing to accept manager's final decision. Delegative leadership style is not effective when employees are new and inexperienced

iv. Laissez-Faire/Free-Reign Leader
The Laissez-Faire leader exercises little control over the employees. In an organisation where the employees are skilled, experienced, capable and motivated, it is often best to give them authority and responsibility for work assigned to them, without participating or interfering in this process. By handing over ownership, a leader can empower his group to achieve their goals.

Laissez-Faire style is effective when employees are highly skilled, experienced, highly motivated, trustworthy and experienced. This style should not be used when it makes employees feel insecure at the unavailability of a leader.

5. 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. Situational leadership is classified according to the relative amount of **task and relationship behavior** the leader engages in. The **task/directive behavior** is the extent to which the leader spells out the duties and responsibilities (what to do, how to do, where to do and when to do) of an individual or group. It includes giving directions and setting goals and closely supervising their performance. On the other hand the **relationship/supportive behavior** is the extent to which the leader engages in two-way or multi-way communication. It includes such activities as listening, providing support encouraging staff and facilitating their involvement in problem solving and decision making.

6. Summing Up
The basis of good leadership is honorable character and selfless service to your organization and community. In your employees' eyes, your leadership is everything you do that effects the organization and community's objectives and their well being.
Leaders take actions that:

- Have a positive, unifying effect (help establish vision, values, and beliefs).
- Lead to the accomplishment of goals (help set goals and create an empowering environment in which others can succeed in the work and activities).
- Enhance personal development and organizational productivity (remove obstacles and assist followers to use their power)

Outstanding leadership requires much more than people being really good at their jobs. It requires innovative thinking; it requires people making positive and inspiring impacts; and it requires them to be able to motivate others. What is needed is an ability to think and act 'out of the box'.

21. Motivation - People and Performance

[23]Leaders motivate people to move toward a goal with a set of values. A person's motivation is a combination of desire and energy directed towards achieving a goal. Motivation is basically having a clear distinction between getting employees to do something and getting employees to *want* to do something. Not every employee is motivated by the same thing; hence understanding what motivates your team members is the key to effective and efficient performance.

Factors that Motivate People
People have basic needs which motivate specific behaviour that would result in fulfillment of the need. To the extent that the behaviour is successful, the person is rewarded in the sense that the need is satisfied. The reward also informs the person that the behaviour was appropriate and can be used again in the future.

It is generally assumed that pay is the primary motivator. While it is true to some extent but it is not always about money. 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.

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Employees and De-motivation

Employees can also be de-motivated. Identifying employee actions which show that they are de-motivated is also important for leaders. The following factors indirectly determine moral or motivational problems:

- High absenteeism
- High turnover rates
- Increase in number of accidents
- Excessive breakage or waste
- Unusually high number of complaints or grievances received from employee.

Dealing with Non Performance

Dealing with an employee who is not performing his/her work duties well is an action which all organizations do. Some of the performance problems may be result of low morale, low motivational level, unclear goals and performance expectations. There are generally four major causes of non performance:

- 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, bad processes, etc.
- Lack of resources or technology to perform the task.
- The employee knows how to perform, but does so incorrectly.

Approaches to Dealing with Non Performance

The two broad approaches to dealing with non performance is the stick approach and the carrot approach.

The most common approach while dealing with low performers is either to fire them from their jobs, or transfer them to some other department thinking they will perform well or cut their pay or demote them. This approach is called stick approach. However such approach not only fails in getting the desired results but all leaves the employees discontented and with low morale.

In contrast to the stick approach is the carrot approach. This approach involves recognition and appreciation of the efforts, which results in improved work atmosphere, good quality of products and results in employee satisfaction.

Tips to Leaders to Motivate Employees

Some tips that leaders can use to motivate employees are

- Determine what levels and kinds of performance are needed to achieve organizational goals.
- Combine organizational needs with the needs of your people and ensure that both needs meet at a common point.
- Leaders should give group members the necessary training and encouragement to be confident that they can perform the required task.
- Rewarding good work through small gesture like a letter, certificate or a thank you note can be powerful motivators.

- Allow your employees to be part of the planning and problem solving process. This will build a sense of ownership and employees will take personal interest in seeing the plan succeed.
- Taking care of your employees by empathizing with them and showing concern for them.
- Keep the communication channel open and transparent as it helps in achieving the goals efficiently and quickly.
- Make their jobs challenging, exciting, and meaningful: People need meaningful work, even if it is tiring and unpleasant; they need to know that it is important and necessary for the survival of the organization.

Summing Up

Employee motivation affects productivity, and part of a leader's job is to channel motivation towards the accomplishment of organisational goals. Employees are motivated by interesting work, challenge and increasing responsibility. These intrinsic factors clubbed with extrinsic rewards (salary) answers their deep-stated need for growth and achievement.

22. EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

[24]Good communication ensures individuals know what is expected of them, that the appropriate person receives the correct information and that there is coordination within the organisation. In general terms communication is exchange of information and sharing ideas. However the exchange of information and ideas is complete if the person, to whom the message is meant for, understands it in the same sense in which the sender of the message wants him/her to understand. Greater understanding ensures that employees' actions and efforts will proceed in the direction of accomplishment goals.

1. Benefits of effective communication
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[25].

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

2. Patterns of Communication

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.

3. Active Listening

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.

4. Forms of Communication

There are four forms of communication:

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

(ii) Online Communication: Electronic mail (e-mail) is a quick way to send a message to one or more people. However few points to be considered while communicating through emails are:

- Make sure that your access password is protected;
- Use proper structure & layout;
- Be careful with formatting;
- Use a meaningful subject;
- Do not write in capital letters as it indicates that you are angry;
- Read the email before you send it;
- Save a copy of your email.

(iii) Verbal or Spoken Communication: This includes informal staff meetings, planned conferences, and mass meetings. In oral communication care should be taken that there is clarity in voice and delivery of message. Oral communication results in speedy transfer of message where people can clarify doubts (if any) by asking questions that very moment. Moreover it has a motivating effect as well can result in high morale and a feeling of being heard.

(iv) Nonverbal Communication: Nonverbal messages include images, actions and behaviors used to communicate. Images include photographs, film, charts, tables, graphs, and video. The effective communicator maintains eye contact with the people to whom he/she is communicating.

5. Communication Channels

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.

6. Communication Behavior

There are four different types of communication behavior- Aggressive, Passive, Avoidance and Assertive

- **Aggressive behaviour** offends or isolates someone else's rights. It is a showing, perhaps both physically and verbally, of anger or dominance.
- **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.
- **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.

7. Barriers to Effective Communication

No matter how good the communication system in an organisation is, unfortunately barriers can and do often occur. Recognizing barriers to effective communication is a first step in improving communication style. Barriers to effective communication include:

- Physical barriers 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.

8. Summing up

Clear communication is not easy. The method, context, structure, language, knowledge and an understanding of the needs of the recipients to whom the information is being transmitted are vital in understanding the importance of communication in the organisation. Without proper and clear communication, no organisation can survive.

23. TEAM BUILDING

[26]A team is a group organized to work together to accomplish a set of objectives that cannot be achieved effectively by individuals. 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. Teams are formed when a combination of skills, knowledge and expertise are required to undertake a particular task and a single individual may not have such a combination. Teams play a very vital role in organizations.

1.   Characteristics of a Good Team
The following are the characteristics of a good team:
- The team members have a sense of **purpose** and are clear about the task to be accomplished and are committed to achieving it.
- **Priorities** are **clear** and each member know what need to done next, when to do and who should do it to achieve the goal.
- Members know their **roles** and are **clear** about how to manage their own work processes and have a clearly designated work in getting the overall task done.
- **All** team members feel **responsible** for the performance of the team.
- **Authority and decision-making** lines are clearly **understood**. Team members encourage others in the decision-making process as well.

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- **Conflict** is **dealt with openly** and is considered important to decision-making and personal growth.
- Members feel that their unique **personal traits** are **appreciated** and well utilized.
- **Norms** for working together are **set** and seen as standards for every one in the groups.
- **Success** of the team is **shared** equally and proudly by all the members.
- **Opportunities** for feedback and **updating skills** are provided and taken advantage of by team members.
- An atmosphere in which personal feelings, opinions, thoughts, and perceptions about problems and conditions are **openly shared** by members.
- Members believe in high communication and there by create a climate of **trust and open and honest communication**. Each team member respects and is tolerant to individual differences.

2. 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.

1. Team Formation is when the members assemble and acquaint with other and assess their roles in the team.
2. The second stage is when the individuals starts to work on the plan. This introduces competitions and conflicts. This is a stage when interpersonal and communication issues dominate and flare up and confrontation can take place. The leader has to work to bring the team together and strengthen it as members learn to accept and resolve their differences.
3. In the third stage after the conflicts are resolved there is a feeling of cohesiveness and team feels a sense of unity and identity. Team members knowing their strengths and weaknesses and try to achieve common goals and improve performance by leveraging the complementary skills of their other team members. They feel confident in delegating their work and responsibilities.
4. Stage four is where a perfect group identity is created. The teams have been together for quite some time and therefore there are higher chances of improved and efficient productivity. The performance is at the peak due to high motivation.
5. The fifth stage of adjourning, involves completing the task and breaking up the team.

A successful team leader understands the different stages of the group formation and development. He manages the team effectively by moderating his team managerial styles according to the stage of development in which the team is passing through.

3. Problems in a Team

A team can face problems. 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.

4. Leading Teams – How to get Teams Going

As a leader of a team to get your team going you need to

(i) Help the team identify its purpose as people work effectively when they understand the goal they have to achieve.

(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. The role should be to lead not to work or make all decisions.

(v) Be a supporter and support the team when it experiences obstacles and road blocks by removing those roadblocks, find additional resources, and generally provide support.

(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. Poor communication can lead to conflict among team members and lack of direction for the team.

5. Qualities of a Leader in a Team

Team members look for following qualities in their leader:

- commitment to people as well as task
- desire to support and serve the team
- enthusiasm, energy, inspiration and sufficient expertise.
- willingness to shoulder responsibility rather than delegating the entire workload to the team members
- ability to make the team come together to achieve the goals and objectives

24. SAAKSHAR BHARAT MISSION

[27]There are drop-outs from school, or those who never went to school due to economic conditions, or those from weaker sections who work for a living as unorganized labour, including child-labour, or the SC/ST categories who have continued ignored for one or the other reasons, and of course, a large population of women in rural and even urban families, who have not been accounted/ counted in surveys, including the Censuses, due to callousness of authorities as well as of the women's families. No wonder female literacy is much poorer than male literacy, in India. Dedicated 'one-time' identification, at grass-roots level, to list all the illiterate persons should be the first step of a meaningful basic literacy program.

To impart functional literacy to non-literates in the age group of 15-35 years in a time bound manner, the National Literacy Mission (NLM) was launched in 1988 and it continued through Ninth and Tenth Five Year Plans. Despite significant accomplishments of the Mission, illiteracy continues to be an area of national concern. Though precise number of non- literates at this stage is not available and will be known only after 2011 census, 2001 census had revealed that there were still 259.52 million illiterate adults (in the age group of 15 +) in the country. Wide gender, social and regional disparities in literacy also continue to persist. Adult education is therefore indispensable as it supplements the efforts to enhance and sustain literacy levels through formal education.

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The Prime Minister launched Saakshar Bharat, a centrally sponsored scheme of Department of School Education and Literacy (DSEL), Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India (GOI), on the International Literacy Day, 8th September, 2009. 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 is in this background that Saakshar Bharat has been devised as the new variant of National Literacy Mission. Saakshar Bharat will cover all adults in the age group of 15 and beyond though its primary focus will be on women. Jan Shiksha Kendras (Adult Education Centres - AECs), will be set up to coordinate and manage all programmes, within their territorial jurisdiction. State Government, as against the districts in the earlier versions, and Panchyati Raj institutions, along with communities, will be valued stakeholders. Vigorous monitoring and valuation systems will be installed. Last, but not the least, budgetary support has been enhanced substantially.

About the Mission

Saakshar Bharat mission came into operation from 1-10-2009. The mission will be in operation till 31.3.2012, unless decided otherwise by the Government of India. Literacy programme will have timeframe of 18 months. Equivalency, Vocational and Continuing Education Programme will run uninterruptedly from the date of sanction till 31-03-2012. 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 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

Key components of the Mission

- The programmes under the Mission will strive to impart functional literacy to illiterate adults in the age group of fifteen and beyond;
- To ensure equity and inclusiveness, and achieve overall objectives of reducing gender gap in literacy levels and minimize social disparities nearly 60 out of 70 million targeted beneficiaries, that is 85% of the total target, will be women and nearly 50% of the target group will comprise of SCs/STs and minorities (Muslims). This would redress the gender, social and regional disparities in literacy.

- Since illiteracy is far more widespread in rural areas, as compared to urban areas, the programme will concentrate on rural areas, especially in the districts that have low (50% and below) female literacy rate besides 33 left wing extremist affected districts.

- District, Block and Gram Panchayats have been given key role in planning, implementing and monitoring of the programme. The mission will be implemented through Gram Panchayat at the grass roots level and by other Panchayati Raj Institutions at the district and sub-district level.

- State Government will be equally involved at overall monitoring at the State level. NLMA will be the national implementing agency at the apex level.

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.

Geographical Area Coverage

Another goal of the Mission is to minimize inter and intra regional/state disparities. Inter state disparities range between 33% and 88%. Intra state disparities are equally stunning. To minimize regional disparities, the programme, in its first phase, that is during the 11th Plan period (31-03-2012) will remain confined to districts with adult female literacy rate of 50% or less as per 2001 Census.

Rural and other Special Areas

According to 2001 Census, 84% of Indians non-literates live in rural India. Since illiteracy is far more widespread in rural areas as compared to urban India, and for the reason that urban areas are better endowed with educational infrastructure leading to better access to opportunities, the Mission would concentrate on and deploy public resources in rural areas.

Strategy for Urban Areas

In the urban areas, Mission objectives may be achieved innovatively, using new actors. The programme may be handled through Jan Shikshan Sansthans, State Resource Centres, NGOs, social groups and any other 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.

Financing and budget

A total financial outlay for "Saakshar Bharat" during the last 3 years of XI Plan period is Rs. 6502.70 crores, out of which the Central share will be Rs. 4993.02 crore. The share of funding between Central and State Government is in the ratio of 75:25 and in the case of North-Eastern States including Sikkim in the ratio of 90:10, respectively. The allocation of funds to the States will be based on adult female illiterate population in the districts covered under the programme in various States.

Operational framework

To implement the programme, 1.70 lakh Lok Shiksha Kendras (Adult Education Centers) will be established in Gram Panchayats of the districts covered under the programme. It will subsume the already sanctioned Continuing Education Centers (CECs) in a particular district. Existing CECs and the nodal CECs in the districts not covered under the programme will have to be closed down, unless the Government of States wishes to run them at their own cost through Public Private Partnership or otherwise. Gram Panchyats may as well be given this

offer. Specific approval of NLMA will be required to continue an existing CEC under this programme. 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 matriculate

The Lok Shiksha Kendra will be the operational arm of the mission at the grass root level and responsible for delivering the entire range of activities under the Mission including, Literacy, Basic Education, Vocational Education and continuing education within their territorial jurisdiction. Two Preraks may be engaged on payment of honorarium to discharge administrative and academic tasks. Preraks will also be assigned teaching responsibilities. Together with volunteer teachers they will constitute the resource group in a village. Since the Kendras will not have buildings of their own, Panchyats and concerned line departments may be obligated to allow the centers to function from the Panchyat Ghars, schools, aganwadi centers etc. Gradually funds may be made available for construction of such centers.

A Lok Shiksha Kendra will act as a centre for registration of learners for all teaching learning activities in their jurisdiction; Nerve center for literacy campaign including identification of the learners and volunteers, batching and matching of the learners with suitable Volunteers as well as their training, providing literacy kits to learners and volunteers, keeping track of the progress made by each learner-volunteer group; Nodal centre for mass mobilization

Management Structure

- The programme will be implemented in Mission mode. Institutional framework, right from the national up to the state, district, block and gram Panchyat, will be set up involving the state government, district administration and Panchyati Raj institutions. Adequate representation of women in these structures, especially in decision-making roles will have to be ensured.

- The National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA), an autonomous wing of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, will be the Nodal Agency at the national level. It would be responsible for the overall planning and management of the scheme, including release of funds to States/Voluntary Agencies, mobilization of resources, procurement, mass campaigns, maintenance of national database on illiteracy and adult education, publicity, facilitate techno-pedagogical support, research, monitoring and evaluation, etc.

- To assist NLMA in the discharge of its mandate, a National Resource Group (NRG) will be set to render technical and managerial support to the Mission through NLMA.
- At the State level, the State Literacy Mission Authority (SLMA), would be responsible for preparation, implementation and monitoring of the programmes.

- The State Plan will be an ensemble of district Plans. Based on the Mission Strategy and Guidelines, SLMA would facilitate preparation of the District AE Plans through intensive discussion and guidance, to reflect the variety in programme types and innovation in

implementation methods in relation to local specific situations, within the overall framework of national guidelines.

- The SLMA will also be responsible for disbursal of funds, along with the State government share, to the district implementing agency, monitoring and review of the progress of the scheme in the State, collection of Utilisation Certificates (UCs) from the districts and submission of a consolidated UC to NLMA. It would also be responsible for capacity building, field appraisals and pedagogic support and act as State Resource Group for the programme in the state

- At the district level district administration or Zilla Parishads (ZP) may be made responsible for the implementation of the programme. A special committee and District Resource Group will have to be constituted to function under the aegis of ZP. Gram Panchyats, along with communities, will be the implementing Agency at the operational level, that is, all villages within a GP.

Suggestive Management Structure

At Gram Panchayat Level:
A Panchyat Lok Shiksha Samiti will be formed of approximate 13 members, Panchayat president (Sarpanch) will be the chairperson of the committee and vice chairperson will be selected among the committee members
Members (50% women)
Women elected representatives of the Panchayat - 2
Head Master/Teacher from the local school chosen by the Panchayat - 1
Representatives of the community (with proportionate representation from
SCs/STs/ Minorities) - 3
Member Secretary of the Education Committee – 1
(Mahila Mandal/SHG Member - 1
User Group – 2
Social Activists – 1
Literates/Opinion Makers (Sr. Govt. Employee/Doctor) - 1
Member Secretary: Senior Prerak - 1
Secretariat - Two full time contractual employees (Senior Prerak and Prerak)

Major task of the committee will management of the Lok Shikshan Kendra

1. Identification of non-literate women and voluntary teachers in the gram Panchayat
2. Sourcing, storing and supply of teaching-learning material and making them available to enlisted teachers
3. Micro planning at gram panchayat level and supervision of literacy Classes
4. Logistical support for National level Test/Learners Assessment
5. Payment of honorarium to literacy educators
6. Evaluation
7. Claim to be made for award of Panchayat Mahila Shakshrata Puraskar award after achieving 100% female literacy
8. Setting up Lok Shiksha Kendra for continuing education with funds from Panchayat and award money.

Block Level: Block Lok Shiksha Samiti
Composition
Chairperson - President of the Block Panchayat
Members - All Women elected Representatives of the Block Panchayat
College/School teachers
Representatives of the community, NGO, etc
Member Secretary - BDO
Secretariat – Up to two full time contractual employees
Tasks –
1. Preparation of Block Panchayat-level Literacy Plan
2. Supervision of literacy classes
3. Coordination between Gram Panchayats and District level agency
4. Monitoring of the programme at block level

District Level: Zilla Lok Shiksha Samiti
Composition
Chairperson - District Panchayat President
Members –
District Collector: Coordinator
Selected Block and Gram Panchayat Presidents (of which at least 50% women) ,District Heads of selected departments ,NGO representatives Educationist and Social Workers, Directors of JSS
Member Secretary – CEO, Zilla Panchayat
Secretariat - A full time officer of the Samiti will hold no other additional charge. State Government will provide a minimum supporting staff to manage the affairs of the Samiti. Besides, Samiti may engage maximum up to 5 contractual employees.

Tasks
1. Planning of district level campaign for literacy
2. Communication of strategy to all Gram Panchayat heads
3. Undertaking mass mobilization and environment building activities.
4. Organisation of Mahila Saksharata orientation at sub-district levels and through district-wise gram sabha meetings
5. Creating the work chart and role definitions for participating agencies such as learners, teachers, evaluators, panchayats
6. reparing the annual district calendar
7. Organising supply of teaching-learning material to panchayats
8. Supervising teaching-learning
9. Organising complementary action through SHGs and NREGA groups
10. Planning and implementing common testing/evaluation on 1st week of September each year (to begin on Sept. 1st 2010)
11. Payment of honorarium and award of Panchayat Mahila Saksharata Puraskar
12. Setting up Lok Shiksha Kendra for continuing education through convergence of funds
13. Placing all relevant information in the public domain on the programme

Role of Panchayats

The 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.

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. The role of National Literacy Mission Authority and State Literacy Mission Authority will be that of catalytic agencies, facilitators and resources providers.

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 activity budget and submit it to SLMA. SLMA will aggregate all district plans add their own state activity and budget to it NLMA. The state plan will thus be an ensemble of all district plans plus SLMA.s own activity budget. The National Literacy Mission Authority will appraise each State Plan and issue administrative and financial sanction based on which funds (Central Government share) will be released to SLMA.

Role of NGO and private sector

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.

Adult education in India has always been predominantly a government responsibility with some degree of involvement of NGOs. In contrast to very prominent collaboration in the case of formal school system, the contribution of private and corporate sector in adult education has been miniscule. Private and corporate sector can play a momentous role in promoting objectives of the Mission. As in the case of NGOs, institutions in private sector that have the urge, inclination and commitment to adult education programmes, may be encouraged to undertake any activity for which they could be provided grant-in-aid at the approved cost norms. Selection of such agencies will be the responsibility of the SLMA or the sub-state implementation agency as decided by the SLMA. However, NLMA may select any agency to assist it in any aspect of the Mission. NLMA is authorized to develop Public Private Partnerships and other models of partnership to generate funds and also to obtain donations.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Objective performance parameters will be prescribed for each agency involved in implementation of the scheme. A web based Management Information System (MIS) will be put in place for real time monitoring, which would be critical for optimising the outreach and impact of the programmes. NLMA, SLMA and District bodies will review the progress at

their respective levels. Names and progress of each learner will be placed in the public domain. Monitoring will not be uni-directional but a two way communication process. Feedback as to what is happening on the ground will be received through appropriate channels and correctives will be sent back to the ground level through the same channels.

Reference:
1. Guidelines Saakshar Bharat, Ministry of Human Resource Development

Publication

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