CHAPTER 2

BUREAUCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT
Today, virtually all developing countries are engaged in extensive and intensive programmes and projects to bring about Socio-economic development. These continual efforts mean to fashion entire societies, and to improve condition and achievement in all sectors, agriculture and industry having regard to environment protection, education, health, urban and rural development, transport, communication and social welfare.

Infact, development has become the centre of politics of most developing countries. The major agency for development is the administrative machinery (in public administration it is called the bureaucracy). Applied to development, it is increasingly being reflected in public administration terminology as “Development administration” Through the application of this new enterprise, economic, social, political and even cultural change be fostered and guided.

The concept of ‘Development’ is used very often still it is not clearly defined. Development never will be and never can be, defined to universal satisfaction, states the Brandt Commission Report.

Michael Todaro described ‘Development’ as a multidimensional process involving changes in structure, attitudes and institutions as well as acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality and the eradication of absolute poverty. Development in the ultimate analysis is about improving the well-being of the people, which is often measured in terms of providing facilities and services that could give them a chance for a better life. Raising standard of living, improving education and health and opening out new and equal opportunities for a richer and varied life are all essential components of development. The essence of
development is to develop the human being and his environment in which he lives and works.

The word ‘Development’ previously would refer to improvement of quality of life. It was a process whereby the real per capita income of country would be increased over a period of time (Meier – 1984). The word ‘Development’ then mean economic growth. Experiences of planning based on this model were not positive. Standard of living remained stagnant or even deteriorated, while benefits of growth were appropriated largely by only top ten to twenty percent of the population. The unequal and discriminating strategy of development thus led to modification of the concept. ‘Development’ is a process with several dimensions and numerous interlinkages for the betterment of the people. Supreme Court of India (1993) in the case of Thomas Kocherry, explained the meaning of development. “Development is not for the sake of development but for the people, development does not mean increase of production alone but production has to coupled with distributive justice”. There is a need to reserve the resource base for the future generation. Development must be seen as both a means and an end, both a process and product. People are more valuable for what they are than for what they posses. So the integral development incorporates :-

a) Respect for the dignity of the person through a process of empowerment.

b) Preferential option for the poor, taking sides in order to reconcile the principle of justice.

c) Respect for creation the recognition that people are part of the community of creation and the cosmic order.

d) Building of community for overcoming the divisions in the society.

e) Commitment to liberation.

f) Collaboration with others.
OBJECTIVE OF DEVELOPMENT

a- Raising the availability and widening the distribution of basic life sustaining goods such as food, shelter, health and protection.

b- Raising the standard of living. This includes higher incomes, the provision of more jobs, better education.

c- Giving greater attention to cultural values, all of which will serve not only to enhance material well being, but also to generate individual and national self-esteem.

d- Expanding the range of economic and social choices to individuals, communities and nations by freeing them from seritude and dependency.

e- Transforming social structure, people’s attitudes and national institutions.

f- To ensure effective political and economic citizen’s participation in decision making. Because, people’s participation is an essential requisite in development.

CHALLENGES BEFORE OVERALL ‘DEVELOPMENT’

a) Challenge of population growth.

b) Challenge of economic growth and self-reliance.

c) Challenge of food self-sufficiency and agricultural productivity.

d) Challenge of poverty, unemployment and backwardness.

e) Challenge of industrial and tertiary development and modernization.
f) Challenge of balanced social and economic development and development of human resource.

g) Challenge of Social Justice and equality.

h) Challenge of Sustainable environment and development.

i) Challenge of good management.

j) Challenge of technological change.

k) Challenge of regional and international cooperation.

l) Challenge of fullest people’s participation in developmental process.

The new concept of ‘Development’ seeks to have paths of integrated or unified approach. Today, at this juncture, in order to illuminate the appropriate meaning of ‘Development’, it is very necessary to focus on related concept, such as, decentralization and development, people’s centred development or participatory development, NGO’s and development, socio-economic development and rural development etc.

DECENTRALIZATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Gandhiji advocated the creation of people’s power alongside the power of the state. He even preferred gram rajya to a centralized political state. Vinoba Bhave also spoke about the creation of people’s power. In line with these two great leaders, Jayaprakash Narayan, Popularly known as J.P., Propounded the theory of people’s power, through his concept of Total Revolution. He claimed that the Bihar movement which he spearheaded in the mid-70s (seventies) was a struggle
between “Chhatra Shakti (Student Power) and Jan Shakti (People’s Power) on the one hand and rajya Shakti (State Power) on the other”.

The concept of Total Revolution implies the creation of people’s power. According to the author of this concept J. P, people’s power means: “the restoration of all powers and authority to the masses. In every sphere, the people must have the final say and decide their own destiny. The creation of such a power is the task of the movement for Total Revolution^3. It is ultimately a struggle for power. The struggle is between the people’s on the one side, and the state machinery on the other.

According to J. P, ultimately the power should be with the masses. It should be controlled by the people for only then can the other aims of social life be achieved. In other words, he wants to give back to the people their power which has been transferred to, or usurped by the ruling elite in course of history. He is not interested in the capture of power but in the control of power by the people. He wants to create a situation in which the people can develop their own power and become the guardians of democracy. J. P even went to the extent of saying: “I am not aware of any instance in history in which a country was developed only by the efforts of the state without the massive participation of the people it is impossible for any nation to be built up“.

The view of Gandhiji, Vinoba Bhave and Jayaprakash Narayan have been clearly reiterated by the constitution of India, according to which, the citizens of India are the real proprietors of the nation and they have the power to decide its destiny. The preamble to the constitution says”, We, the people of India, having solemnly resolve to constitute India into a sovereign, socialist, secular and democratic – do hereby adopt, enact and give to ourselves this constitution”. In other words, the citizens are the final authority as far as the future of this country is concerned. They have all the powers and the authority to rule this country and take decision regarding direction in which it should move. The preamble acknowledges this ultimate, supreme and sovereign power of the people. In accordance with this
basic philosophy of the constitution, the creation of people’s power is one of the primary tasks of nation building. Infact only when the citizens of the land have a decisive say in the various policies and programmes related to development, and only when the interests of the masses are truly taken care of, can we claim that the process of nation – building has reached its climax. Hence, the need to promote constantly those processes that will increasingly enable the masses at the local level to have a decisive say in shaping the destiny of the nation.

Given the huge population of the country, on the one hand and the cultural, linguistic, religious and racial differences of the citizens, on the other, India needs a genuine and decentralized democratic pattern of life. Local self-government is part and parcel of this process of democratization and decentralization. There cannot be a true democracy if there is no local government. In fact, in a true democracy the strongest government should be the one which is at lowest level. The governments at the higher levels should increasingly enjoy lesser powers and as they go higher their role should be limited.

In other words, a genuine democracy implies a bottom-upwards pattern of power-sharing and not a top-downwards pattern, as is the case at present. In the bottom-upwards pattern the lowest authority has the responsibility for all that it can do on its own without the assistance of the higher ones. The higher ones come into the picture only in so far as their assistance is required and asked for by the lower ones. This is also known as the principle of subsidiarity. According to this principle, in matters that a lower body is capable of doing, and is willing to do, on its own, a higher body should not have any role. Moreover the higher bodies should enable the lower ones to take upon themselves as many or as much responsibilities as possible.

The constitution of India has, infact, clearly laid down that steps should be taken to bring about such a decentralized democratic structure in the nation, so that the power of the people can remain with them and that they can use their power to decide their own destiny. Thus Article 40 of the constitution which belongs to the
section on the Directive Principles of State Policy says. “The state shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self-government”. This provision is not something which was created or invented by the Founding Fathers of the constitution. It is based on the historical experience and practice of the people of India. For centuries, generations of Indians practiced different types of local self-government systems and most of these worked rather satisfactorily. Each local unit had its own code of conduct and everyone respected this code.

Gandhiji and Vinoba Bhave perceived the value of such a system and they became ardent advocates of this system of local self-government. They believed that through such a system the masses of the country would become the masters of their own destiny. The provision in the constitution for the introduction of the Panchayati Raj is aimed at that.

Jayaprakash Narayan, the Champion of Total Revolution for the creation of “People Powers” was of the view that “democracy in India must be built on the traditions of ancient India, the concept of dharma should be re-interpreted to suit contemporary needs, and the new polity must be founded on the principle of self-government, i.e., self-sufficient, Agro-Industrial, Urban-Rural, Local Communities”.

But unfortunately the decentralization and development of Indian society still remains a distant dream even after fifty years of independence. The Panchayati Raj system which was aimed at accelerating the process of decentralization and development at the village level did not take roots in most states. Surprisingly, the several Reports of committee and commissions, which came out one after another, did not result in adequate remedial measures. As a result, the responsibility for the development of villages still lies with the Ministry of Rural Development and the planning Commission of central government. More importantly, the majority of the people, who live in more than six lakhs villages, have hardly any sense of participation or involvement in the formulation and
implementation of the development programmes of their own villages. On the other hand, the hierarchically divided Indian Social system in the villages has been able to maintain, by and large intact, the barriers of caste, class, gender, religion etc.

What is the possible explanation for this situation? Since the framers of the Indian constitution deliberately placed the provision regarding the Panchayati Raj System in the section dealing with the Directive Principles of State Policy, it did not have the binding power on the state. As a result, the initiatives taken by the Central and State Governments to implement the Panchayati Raj System have remained partial and incomplete, without any legal obligation. Thus, the state and its apparatus did not lose anything for failing to make the Panchayati Raj System a reality. In other words, the Panchayati Raj System did not have a statutory status and remained a peripheral concerned of the rulers of this country.

At the practical level, the absence of the Panchayati Raj System often accelerated the centralization process and strengthened the concentration of power at the centre. The declining role of the people and the failure of the development process further strengthened the already existing tendencies of centralization in the system. Unfortunately, this unabated trend of centralization increased the difficulties for an effective governance, particularly in the mid eightees.

This led to the search for solutions to the crisis of centralization. Fortunately, the solution took shape in the form of a strong demand for decentralization, grassroots democracy and the strengthening of the democratic institutional structure at the village level. To begin with a few states took lead in formulating and implementing the Panchayati Raj System. Such initiatives also strengthened the case against increasing centralization and turned it into a major political issue. Within a few years, i.e. in the beginning of the nineties the demand took a concrete shape in the form of a Constitutional Amendment that provided the much needed statutory status to the Panchayati Raj Institutions. Thus, in April 1993 the 73\textsuperscript{rd} Constitutional Amendment defined the Panchayati Raj Institutions as
"Self-governing units at the village level" and made the practice of Panchayati Raj Institutions obligatory throughout the country.

The system of centralized planning is under attack in the new era of Liberalization and restructuring of the Indian economy. The role of the Government is being reviewed in the new perspective and efforts are being made to reduce its direct involvement in development activities. The Eighth Plan would like the Government to play the role of a facilitator by creating the right type of institutional infrastructure, particularly in rural areas. It seeks to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions and expand the role of voluntary agencies in Social tasks and Social mobilization. In the perspective of reorienting the role of the Government and reducing its direct involvement in social and economic activities, the Panchayati Raj Institutions are being seen as one of the agencies that can pick up such functions.

The fortunes of Panchayati Raj have possibly suffered because of the partial and instrumental way that they have been perceived by the national policy-makers. The objectives of the local institutions have been perceived more often within the functional perspective of fulfilling the national plan objectives and rarely within the broad framework of expanding and deepening democracy in the country. This uneven emphasis is not only the product of the perceptions of the governing elite but also the consequence of political changes in the country.

The plea to establish democratically elected local self-governments was a vital strategic element in the struggle for national independence. To Gandhiji, a "network of such rural organization (i.e., Panchayats) functioning in the villages without any connection with the government will be the true foundation of civil revolt." In a sense, the panchayats as instruments of man politics were intended to undermine the British authority in rural India and to become a vehicle to usher in an alternative philosophy of political and economic development. After independence, panchayats in the Gandhian perspective were located in his philosophy of restructuring the government and economic activities. They
provided substance to the concept and economic field and were seen as instruments of a democratic system of governance.

The economic philosophy of Gandhiji was closely interwined with his political proposals of restructuring the government. But when the Indian Constitution was being framed the Gandhian views were considered to be outside the realm of practical politics and hence these were not incorporated into it. While there was appreciation for the Gandhian faith in the village republics, the constitution was federal and parliamentary in structure, with a pronounced bias towards centralization. This bias got further accentuated over the years by a widely shared concern to make the nation strong both politically as well as economically. It made the individual and not the village as the basic unit of the political system. As a concession to the advocates of the Panchayati Raj, the Constitution include the following in its. Directive Principles of State Policy: “The state shall take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable them to function as units of self – government”. Thus, the Constitution itself, the idea of panchayats becoming building blocks for a new Indian policy was given up. The Panchayat system was not accepted as an alternative form of political and economic organization.

But Panchayati Raj was revived in another from after the recommendations of the Balwant Rai Mehta Committee were accepted. The Community Development Programme were introduced in 195. The organizational structure designed to implement it provided for the flow of power and control from the top to the bottom. The machinery which was devised to implement a programme of people’s mobilization and participation turned out to be a hierarchical bureaucratic organization. Communication and power flowed from the central level to the state level and variegated administration was established at three level of the district, the block and the village. There was a remarkable expansion in the local development bureaucracy that now consisted of block Development Officers, Extension Officers and village level workers. For the first time in modern Indian history, multiple bureaucratic cadres emerged at the block levels below the district. A bureaucratic
network with long lines of hierarchy and communication began to unfold itself. This network was to spread itself even more effectively as the years went by.

Early Scholarly evolutions of the Community Development Programmes found the inadequacy of the governmental machinery itself as a major obstacle to the success of the programme. Too much reliance on government did not help in generating people's participation. The benefits of the programme went to those sections of village society who were already somewhat better off than others. The Planning Commission appointed a study team in 1956 under the chairmanship of Balwant Rai Mehta to review the Community Development Programme in its entirety. From the recommendations of this team emerged the institutional setup of Panchayati Raj and by 1962 most states in the country had passed the necessary legislation to establish these institutions.

As far as the government was concerned, Panchayati Raj was introduced to elicit popular participation in Community Development Programme and to improve upon its implementation. This led to the strengthening of the view that the Panchayati Raj System was established to promote economic development indeed the Third Plan document suggested that the real test of Panchayati Raj “must be its practical effectiveness as agricultural extension agency”. In the view of policy planners, the perception of Panchayati Raj as units of administration and planning gained ground and the government sought support from these units to help it improve its implementation of national plan for development. Local participation was seen as an instrument for the effective implementation of national policies and gradually the view of Panchayats being units of democracy and self - governance receded to the background.

The five-year plans continued to emphasize the role of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in performing functions pertaining to development. The Ashok Mehta committee reinforced this view and looked upon Panchayati Raj as an instrument of local planning and a cost effective way of implementing national development programmes. This was in consonance with the development taking place in the
planning processes wherein decentralization was being emphasized and it was being argued that unless “planning is done from below we may not achieve the desired results” and purely bureaucratic solution without an intimate partnership with political leadership is not possible*.

During this period, when Panchayati Raj was established and then it lost its significance there was little commitment to the ideological underpinnings of decentralization. The continued reiteration by Jai Prakash Narain and the Sarvoday movement that the Panchayati Raj Institutions were essentially instruments of village government and democracy became peripheral to the national concerns for making development plans more effective. It was for this reason that while democratic decentralization was being introduced, bureaucratic institutions were also being established simultaneously at local level and were given resources to promote agricultural productivity. The new agricultural strategy was implemented through the bureaucracy and not through the democratically elected bodies.

In such a situation, the Panchayati Raj Institutions become encumbrances which the bureaucracy tolerated while implementing nationally directed programmes. Again, as the Panchayati Raj Institutions were perceived as instruments of plan implementation, politics was seen as inimical to their effectiveness. Unanimity in elections was construed as an indicator of village consensus and initially several State Governments offered prizes to those Panchayats which elected its leadership unanimously. Efforts to keep politics out was also supported by the Gandhians who emphasized that political parties should find other ways of serving people’s interests than by exploiting the Panchayati Raj Institutions for party ends.

Whatever be the concern about politicization, elections unleashed a process by which anyone could gain access to local decision-making. A system of indirect elections meant that vote bank were created with power brokers manipulating them. The state or the central leadership could solicit support from the Zilla Panchayat members who could assure votes from the village. The urge for
the candidates to go directly to the village to mobilize political support was weakened and in the process, the leadership lost touch with reality to a great extent. The group traditionally in power also began to realize the electoral significance of a large number of deprived sections of population consisting of poor, lower and backward class or castes. These deprived groups increasingly became aware of the importance of their vote and slowly generated a movement to assert their rights. However, little political revolution occurred. The evidence available showed that elections had in no way lessened the linkage of the traditional factors of caste and property with power and leadership.

The idealistic image of Panchayati Raj became, in the course of its functioning, blurred and even sullied. The image presented by the Gandhian followers was tarnished because it was apparent that the villages were not conflict-free but were riddled with group rivalry and factionalism. The Panchayati Raj System brought these into open and allowed the contesting groups to seek support from political parties or what was worse, even bureaucracy. The expectations of a consensual mode of operation at the local level were belied; the Panchayats merely provided the means and legitimacy to the dominant groups to remain in power. These who looked to the Panchayati Raj Institutions as effective instruments of development found to their dismay that the leaders, once embroiled in administrative and political intrigues and squabbles, become primarily interested in accumulating power and distributing patronage. As a result, attention was diverted from these bodies as more urgent national tasks of meeting the food crises, droughts and the economic exigencies induced by two was gained prominence during the sixties.

The neglect of the Panchayati Raj Institutions during the major part of the 1960 – 80 period meant that elections to those bodies were not held and little financial resources were made available to them to implement development programmes. This made the Panchayats ineffective bodies, with a leadership, which had been elected once but did not face the electorate again to continue in office. This did not however, lead to the suspension or abolition of these.
institutions but their continuation with old leaders but little activity. This allowed the local leaders to create political links with state level leaders in order to expand their influence to gain benefits for themselves their group or caste members the local leadership was interested in keeping their positions in the Panchayati Raj Institutions. The Congress Party was more interested in the vote banks thus created and was less interested in taking any action that would disturb them. Both the local and central leadership could gain mutual advantages in this arrangement. Several developments took place in the area of politics and planning after 1967. There was a growth of regional parties which initially formed governments in several states. Even though these governments did not remain in office for long and the Congress Party became dominant in the 70’s again, regional concerns began to be placed on the national agenda. The Centre-State relations began to emerge as key issues on the national scene. States openly began to argue that the centre had often acted in an over-bearing fashion and had not respected the autonomy of the states as provided for by the federal constitution and that the states were not consulted in deciding central action that affected their interests. The centralized development planning was criticized for neither reflecting the needs of the states nor allowing them sufficient initiative to highlight their needs.

Over the years the demand for restructuring Centre-State relations have assumed more strident forms which focus round issues of regional autonomy, decentralization and limits on the scope of central intervention in development planning. The Centre has responded by arguing that decentralization will delay and weaken development, accentuate the oppression of the weak, widen disparities and lead to waste of resources.

The demand for the autonomy of the states were strengthened by the growth of factionalism within the Congress Party and the way the economic development had taken place in the country. After the advent of Indira Gandhi, the Congress Party became more and more leader-centred and the power and influence of the state leadership was progressively curbed. One result was that the party was fractionalized and the regional leader-ship draw sustenance from local complaints.
against the centre. Leaders at the local level gained support by putting the responsibilities for the persistence of social and economic problems on the behavior and action of the centre.

These feelings had an objective basis. The process of economic development created several kinds of disparities. In spite of national planning, regional disparities grew and inequalities in the distribution of wealth and income widened. Certain states and regions were very poor and others were comparatively prosperous. Those that were poor demanded more resources, more central support and began to nurture the feeling that their economic deprivation was due to the unfair dealings of the centre. Politically such perceptions helped to accelerate cultural, communal or linguistic divisions within society and it was possible for some clever regional leaders to convert issues of economic deprivation into various demands pertaining to regional or ethnic identities.

The victory of the Janta Party in 1977 accelerated some of the political processes that had begun with the decline of the Congress Party and the emphasis on the new agricultural strategy which had led to an unequal development of the different regions. It marked the ascendance of a political coalition in which the supporters of the agrarian interests were senior partners. For the first time, they found powerful representation at the centre as well as in the states. The process of agricultural development saw the emergence of a new agricultural class of people who were independent producers, had benefited from the new strategy and had grown prosperous. This category overlapped with the category called the backward castes who were characterized as “bullock capitalists.” As a political group this category of rich peasants demanded greater resources to control the state and its economy. Strengthening the Panchayati Raj Institutions would provide it with the opportunity for greater power and control that could support it in its struggle to gain dominance at the state level.

The efforts at revitalizing the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the 1980’s must be seen in the perspective outlined above. While the centre looked at the issue of
decentralization and people’s participation from the point of view of providing correctives to the planning processes, the emerging agricultural interests and leadership wanted to strengthen the Panchayats to consolidate their power and shore up their claim of greater autonomy from the centre. But derived decentralization but were motivated differently.

The centre began its exercises to established guidelines for the gradual introduction of planning from below. In 1982, the Planning Commission brought out a Working Group Report on District Planning and laid considerable stress on people’s participation because it was considered necessary “to reduce the unequal distribution of power in the rural areas”. It went on the express dissatisfaction with the existing institutional arrangements of democratic decentralization for “they have fallen prey to power manipulation of the rural elite and have given rise to what may be called inner limits to public participation”.

In 1985, another Committee of the Planning Commission, setup to review the existing administrative arrangements for rural development and poverty alleviation programmes, submitted its report. This committee emphasized that various programmes of rural development would become realistic and meaningful only if people’s representatives were actively involved in the local level planning, design formulation and implementation of these schemes and in the selection of beneficiaries in the anti poverty and employment programmes. “In order that the felt need of the local people and the area are articulated for planning and priorities are effectively established and implemented, there is no better instrument to meet this need than the Panchayati Raj Institutions”.

The concern for decentralization was technical: it was the improvement of the planning process; it was to counter the allegation of too much planning from above. This impression is strengthened by the way Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi went about to study the responsiveness of district administration during 1988. In an effort to discuss the problems of district planning and Panchayati Raj, the Prime Minister met district collectors at a series of meetings arranged at Bhopal,
Hyderabad, Imphal, Jaipur and Coimbatore. In these meetings, the Prime Minister repeatedly emphasized the primacy of the District Collector in the district administrative system and as the embodiment of the Government at the local level.

Effective decentralization will be the key to effective local self-governance. Decentralization has to conceived as a total package of initiatives and policies that are meant to democratize the system for raising the social and economic capacities of the deprived and exploited sections of society. Specially in a vast country like India, the principle of decentralization should be promoted both in political and economic spheres. People ought to enjoy the right to participate in the decision-making process and for this there must be appropriate institutions at the grassroots level. In India, the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI’s) have emerged to serve this purpose.

The Panchayati Raj System has three main advantages: (a) the People will have a better understanding of what the government proposes to do, that is, the Panchayati Raj System is an instrument of self-education, (b) The participation of the people both in decision-making and implementation of development programmes helps to choose programmes which serve the felt needs of people improve the cost benefit analysis and bring about a radical social change, and (c) The involvement of the people in the programmes of economic and social activities increases the likelihood of proper maintenance of such activities.

The case for decentralizing the planning process rests on the premise that local problems (and their solutions) can be best understood by the people themselves who live in the locality and experience or are affected by these problems and issues. Hence, decentralization is necessary for achieving both economic growth and social justice.

Though the Panchayats have been conceived as democratic institutions at the micro level, from the time of India’s independence, in practice these institutions gradually lost their importance and become largely in significant
entities. During the decades prior to the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, in many states, even elections to these bodies were not held regularly. Hence, most institutions become moribund, except in some states like Maharashtra and Gujrat, where the Panchayati Raj Institutions did perform well. These bodies were enfeebled mainly because the politicians and the bureaucrats regarded these as rival centres of power and hence tended to adopt a step-motherly attitude towards these.

Several studies have brought out the major drawbacks in the functioning of the Panchayati Raj Institutions. These include the following shortcomings.

a- A very large number of elected leaders belonging to the upper class caste discriminated against the lower castes and the poor people.

b- The leadership at the block and village levels did not show enough awareness and capacity to give priority to development functions.

c- About two-third of the people who run Panchayats received no training which would have made them conversant with their duties and responsibilities.

d- The plan process at the Panchayat level did not adopt a scientific approach and

e- The bureaucratic response to change and development was not upto the expectations.

The working Group on District Planning did admit that the formal channel of participation through the Panchayati Raj Institutions, with a view to adhering to democratic principles, had not guaranteed the actual participation of the people in the running of the affairs at the local level.

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The Constitution (Seventy Third Amendment) Bill. 1991, was introduced in the Lok Sabha in September 1991 and was referred to a Joint Parliamentary Committee. On the basis of the report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, the Lok Sabha passed the Bill on December 2, 1992 and the Rajya Sabha passed the same on the following day. The following are some of the important features of the Constitution (Seventy Third Amendment) Act:

a- The Gram Sabha will be a body of all the adult members registered as voters in the Panchayat area;

b- There shall be a three-tier system of Panchayats, at the village level, at the intermediate level and at the district level. Smaller states with population below 20 lakhs will have the option to have or not to have the intermediate level of the Panchayat unit;

c- At all the three levels seats shall be filled by direct election. However, the chairpersons of the village Panchayats can be made members of the Panchayats of the intermediate level of the respective locality. In the same way, the chairpersons of the Panchayats off the intermediate level can be made members of the respective district level Panchayats. In addition, the members of Parliament (MPs), the Member of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) and the Member of Legislative Councils (MLCs) could also be Member of respective Panchayats at the intermediate level or at the district levels;

d- In all the Panchayats seats should be reserved for SCs and STs in proportion to their population and one-third of the total number of seats should be reserved for women. Among the seats reserved for the STs and SCs one-third should also be reserved for women.
Every Panchayat shall have a five-year term and elections to constitute new bodies shall be completed before the expiry of the term. In the event of dissolution, elections will be compulsorily held within six months. The reconstituted Panchayats will serve for the remaining period of the five-year term;

It will not be possible to dissolve the existing Panchayats of amending any Act before the expiry of its duration;

A person who is disqualified under any law for elections to the Legislature of the state will not be entitled to become a member of the Panchayat at any level;

Specific responsibilities will be entrusted to the Panchayats to prepare plans for the economic development and the promotion of Social Justice in respect of matters listed in schedule XI. For the implementation of development schemes the main responsibility will be entrusted to the Panchayats;

The Panchayats will receive adequate funds for carrying out their functions. Grants from the respective states Government will constitute an important source of funding but the state Governments are also expected to assign the revenue of certain taxes exclusively for the use of the Panchayats. In some cases, the Panchayats will also be permitted to collect and retain the revenue they raise.

It may be noted here that the 73rd Constitutional Amendment is not applicable to Jammu and Kashmir, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and certain scheduled areas of some states.

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992 on Panchayati Raj is a historical event in the evolution of our democratic decentralization. It will strengthen the roots of Indian Federalism and also contribute to better planning and
the implementation of the programmes for economic development and social justice. The enactment of the new legislations on Panchayati Raj in almost all the States and Union Territories by April 24, 1994 is a significant landmark in the history of Panchayati Raj movement.

In accordance with the provisions of the Constitution Amendment Act, now almost all states have constituted the Panchayats. To implement the developmental programmes and to involve people in the process, Panchayats have been constituted at the district, block and the village levels known as the Zila Parishad, Panchayat Samiti and the Gram Panchayat, respectively. They are the deliberative wings at the local level and the principal objective has been to institutionalize population participation in the development process. The nomenclature of the heads of the Panchayati Raj Institutions under the new dispensation will be: Sarpanch, Chairman and President at Gram Panchayats, Panchayat Samiti and Zila Prishads respectively. It is unlike Karnataka where all the chairpersons are called "Adhyakshas".

However, the idea of having different nomenclatures for the chairpersons at different levels will avoid the confusion in identifying the specific elected head.

**Gram Sabha** – is a basic unit democratic decentralized system. The 73rd Act has made the Gram Sabha a cornerstone of the Panchayati Raj system. The Gram Sabha in various States Act and rules has so many differences in its over all functioning, as membership, meetings, Quorum and power and functions etc.

The first difference in defining membership of the Gram Sabha is that where as in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and West Bengal, the Sabha is composed of all the voters on the electoral roll, in Rajasthan all adults residing in the area of the Gram are considered to be its members. The definition of the Gram Sabha as entire electorate, to whom all elected representatives in the local bodies, state legislature as well as Parliament are accountable, has value because it incorporates the traditional institution of the
Gram Sabha clearly into the overall structure of democracy. On the other hand, there is always the possibility of residents who are not listed in the electoral rolls, and the chances are that many of these would be the most marginalized persons who are disenfranchised for a variety of reasons, such people include seasonal migrants, nomads and destitutes. Therefore, there appears greater merit in the Rajasthan definition.

However, the much more significant difference relates to whether the Gram Sabha is considered coterminous with the Panchayat, revenue village, ward or settlement. In Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka the Gram Sabha is defined in relation to a revenue village, whereas in Maharashtra, West Bengal and Rajasthan the unit is much larger and coterminous with the village Panchayat. However, West Bengal also gives legal recognition to smaller units constituted at the level of the constituency called in Gram Sansad.

In a state like Kerala, the size of a Panchayat can range from 10,000 to 75,000 people. It is obvious that participatory democracy of the kind that is envisaged for a Gram Sabha would be impossible for a Panchayat. The Kerala Panchayati Raj Act, 1994, therefore, provides for the constitution of the Gram Sabhas separately for every ward (Constituency). The 1999 Amendment gives legal recognition to even smaller units called ‘ayalkutams’ or neighbourhood groups of around 50 households each.

In a recent amendment of 1999, the Madhya Pradesh Act restricts a Gram Sabha to a revenue or forest village comprised within the area of the Gram Panchayat. However, for Schedule V areas, both the Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat have been empowered to resolve that even a smaller unit of a hamlet or habitation be recognized as a separate Gram Sabha, and after due enquiry such resolution is binding on government. This is a very significant provision, because probably for the first time in any low, communities themselves have been given the power to define their membership and boundaries Gradually many states appear to be veering towards a consensus about the greater viability of smaller
face-to-face community units, whatever their name, for the exercise or direct democracy.

In most State Acts, apart from the president of the village Panchayat, a range of other authorities including the state government, the District Collector and the district and intermediate level Panchayats have been authorized to convene meeting of the Gram Sabha. In addition, in Madhya Pradesh, such meetings can be requisitioned by one-third of the total members of any Gram Sabha and in Kerala by ten percent 'with items of agenda specified in such request'.

In most states, the responsibility to fix the date, time and place of the Gram Sabha meeting is of the president of the Village Panchayat. In Andhra Pradesh, this responsibility vests with the secretary. In Karnataka, if the Gram Panchayat fails to convene the Gram Sabha as prescribed the Executive Officer shall be responsible to convene the Gram Sabha.

Many state Acts prescribe a minimum number of Gram Sabha meeting to be held in a year, ranging from one in the West Bengal (along with two of the constituency level Gram Sansad), two in Andhra Pradesh, Haryana, Maharashtra and Rajasthan and four in Kerala and Madhya Pradesh. The Karnataka Act prescribes that 'Subject to the general orders of the Government, the Gram Sabha shall meet from time to time but six months shall not intervene between any two meetings. Maharashtra has an interesting clause to disqualify village president who fails to convene the prescribed minimum number of Gram Sabhas.

Some state Acts or Rules prescribe the method by which members Gram Sabha are to be given notice of Gram Sabha meeting. In Madhya Pradesh, for instance, a format is prescribed in the rules, and publication of such notice is mandatory at least seven days in advance of a meeting, by affixing a copy of notice at conspicuous places in each village of the Gram Panchayat area and at the Gram Panchayat office, and by making an announcement by beat of drum in the Gram Panchayat areas. In Kerala, the rules go much further. They require that each house
hold located in the Gram Sabha be served written notice of each meeting for this, the elected ward member chairs a citizen’s committee, which is expected to visit each home in the Gram Sabha to personally serve notice and also verbally canvas attendance.

Most state Acts prescribe a quorum for the conduct of the Gram Sabha meeting. In Kerala, the quorum was prescribed earlier in terms of numbers, and a minimum attendance of 50 members was mandatory. A recent 1999 amendment lays down the quorum as one-tenth of the total membership of Gram Sabha. No quorum is prescribed in Andhra Pradesh. In West Bengal, the quorum is one-twentieth of the Gram Sabha membership. Madhya Pradesh prescribes the highest quorum, at one-third, with the progressive additional provision requiring that at least one-third of those participating must be Women. This provision is of special interest as it makes mandatory the proportional participation by disadvantaged group. A 1999 amendment in Kerala provides the innovation for this not by prescribing a quorum within quorum. Instead, it has prescribed that in the area of Gram Sabha where the number of members of Scheduled Tribes among the members of that Gram Sabha is not less than 50, such members of Scheduled Tribes shall be deemed to constitute a sub-committee of the Gram Sabha, and it shall have all the powers, functions, rights and responsibilities of the Gram Sabha so far as the development matters of the Scheduled Tribes in that area are concerned’.

All state Acts or Rules that prescribe a quorum require no quorum when the Gram Sabha is reconvened. This is an obvious and extremely serious loophole which facilitates the ready bypassing of the Gram Sabha by Panchayat representatives or officials. The Madhya Pradesh rules have one redeeming clause that no new item can be discussed in a Gram Sabha meeting which has been recommend because of the failure to muster the prescribed quorum.

With the exception of Madhya Pradesh and that also only with reference to Schedule V areas, all states prescribe that Gram Sabha meetings must be presided
over by the president, or in her or his absence, by the Vice-President of the village Panchayat. In the absence of both, Maharashtra and Rajasthan provide for the election by the Gram Sabha members of a president for the meeting from any member of the Panchayat who is present, whereas Madhya Pradesh allows the secretary of the Sabha to preside.

For Gram Sabhas in Schedule V areas, the relevant rules in Madhya Pradesh prescribe that these must be presided over by a person from the Scheduled Tribes who is elected for this purpose by the Gram Sabha, but who is not an elected member of the village Panchayat. The Gram Sabha is theoretically expected to hold the village Panchayat accountable and the parallel that is often employed is that the village Panchayat is like the cabinet and the Gram Sabha like the legislature. If this is indeed the objective, then this model of the Gram Sabha being presided over by a person who is not a member of the Panchayat is eminently worthy of emulation.

The Secretary of the Gram Sabha in almost all states is necessarily the secretary of the village Panchayat. This may prove to be an unrealistic requirement now that in many states the village Panchayat may contain a large number of Gram Sabhas. If meetings of the Gram Sabha are to be held frequently, or on the same day, it may not be possible for the secretary of the Panchayat to attend all Gram Sabha meetings. The 1999 Kerala Amendment has attempted to resolve this problem by empowering the Panchayat Secretary to nominate other village level officials as secretaries of constituent Gram Sabha. For the still smaller units of neighbourhood committees, these are authorized to elect honorary non-official secretaries. The model of voluntary honorary non-official secretaries elected by Gram Sabhas needs to be considered by all states that have provided for many Gram Sabhas in one Panchayat.

In all states, decisions in the Gram Sabha are to be taken by the majority of members present and voting. In some states, there is an explicitly espousal of consensus as the preferred mode of arriving at decisions in the Gram Sabha, but
even here it is laid down that in the event of failure to arrive at consensus, voting would be resorted to Madhya Pradesh explicitly provides that such voting would be show of hands in all cases except while exercising the right to recall.

The secretary of Gram Sabha is responsible for faithfully recording the decisions of Gram Sabha. In Madhya Pradesh, the minutes are confirmed by the person presiding over the Gram Sabha meeting. On the other hand, in Kerala the minutes have to we read out just before the conclusion of the Gram Sabha meeting and approved by the Gram Sabha members in the meeting itself.

A survey of various states Acts indicates certain common features. Firstly, most state Acts have made provision in one way or the other for what is some what intelligently described as the ‘Watch-dog’ responsibility of the village assembly, to supervise and monitor the functioning of the village Panchayat and government functionaries. In fact, states like Bihar, Goa, Manipur etc. have mandated the setting up of vigilance committees specially for this purpose. In most states, the Gram Sabha are empowered to examine annual statements of accounts and audit reports. Kerala makes the power of enforcing transparency and accountability more clear by provisions for scrutiny of all ongoing and completed works, confirming the eligibility of beneficiaries and knowing the logic of each and every decision taken by the Gram Panchayat on the Gram Sabha area’.

The second almost universal set of powers of the Gram Sabha accorded by various state governments through laws, rules or executive instructions, is the power to approve plans and select schemes, beneficiaries and locations. This requirement arises at least partly out of the insistence by the Government of India in recent years that all works and beneficiaries for schemes sponsored by the Ministry of Rural Development must be approved by the Gram Sabha.

Apart from these two major and significant powers of acting as a ‘watch-dog’ of the working of the village Panchayat, and of facilitating peoples participation in development decision-making, many state Acts contain general
exhortations. These do not add in any way to the ‘powers’ of the Gram Sabha, but are more in the nature of expected duties of functions, which do not actually require legal sanction.

There are a few exceptions of some significant additional powers being legislated for Gram Sabhas in some states. For instance, Andhra Pradesh, Goa and Orissa have given the Gram Sabha the very important fiscal power to identify and recommend areas for additional taxation and revenue generation. The 1999 Amendment of Madhya Pradesh goes further than any piece of legislation so far in empowering non-tribal Gram Sabhas. It has attempted to equip all Gram Sabha as in the state with a wide range of powers of kind that the central Act, the Provisions of Panchayats (Extension to Schedule Areas) 1996, had boldly and creatively provided for Gram Sabhas only in Schedule V areas. These include the following powers:

i) to exercise control over institutions and functionaries in social sectors transferred to or appointed by the gram Panchayat (such as primary school teachers and health workers, primary school and sub-health centres);

ii) to manage natural resources including land, water, forests and minerals within the area of the village in accordance with provisions of the constitution and other relevant laws for the time being in force;

iii) to advice the gram Panchayat in the regulation and use of minor water bodies and awarding minor mineral leases:

iv) power to impose prohibition;

v) power to be consulted before land acquisition;

vi) the right to recall elected members of the village Panchayat after they complete half their term (incidentally, this power goes even beyond the Schedule V Act).
The Provisions of Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas), Act 1996 provides for powers to the Gram Sabha for the resolution of disputes according to tradition and custom, but this vital power of the adjudication of justice has not been operationalised by any state legislature. Nor has this power been extended to Gram Sabhas in non-scheduled areas.

**GRAM SABHA AND DEVELOPMENT PLANNING**

Whereas most state governments have passed laws or instructions giving the Gram Sabha power of planning development works at the village level, rarely has this extended beyond the approval of beneficiaries. Procedural lacunae and absence of political and administrative will have ensured that even these instructions are frequently breached.

The shining contrast to this countrywide experience is that of the government and people of Kerala and Bengal. What most galvanised the Gram Sabhas was the historic decision of the state government Kerala to earmark 35 – 40 percent of the state plan outlay as united funds for projects planned by the local bodies of this a much as 70 percent was earmarked for the village Panchayat.

Identification of the felt needs of the people became the first step in the decentralised planning exercise. It was accomplished by convening the Gram Sabhas and ensuring maximum participation of people, especially Women and other disadvantaged sections of the society in order to discuss local development problems. In the urban areas ward conventions were organised for the purpose. As part of the effort to ensure maximum participation, the Gram Sabhas were convened on holidays; squads of volunteers visited households and explained the programme; preparatory meetings of mass organisations were held; and an active propaganda campaign using posters, advertisements and involving all branches of the media were resorted to. It is estimated that ground 3 million persons
participated in these Gram Sabhas / ward conventions and of the participants about 27 percent were women.

The discussions in the Gram Sabhas were organised in groups of 25 to 50 members, one for each development sector, one group for SC/ST development and one for women's development. Given the large size of Gram Sabhas in state, the organization of sector – wise group discussions made it possible for a large number of people to participate in the deliberations in a meaningful manner. Around one lakh resource persons at the local level were mobilised and given training to act as facilitators in the discussion groups. A semi-structured questionnaire was also distributed to help the flow of discussion.

The major gains in the success of the special Gram Sabha meetings were:

1- The felt needs, priorities and development perceptions of the people in every locality were listed.

2- A general awareness was created among various sections of people regarding the decentralization programme, and

3- The basic organizational structure of the campaign was laid:

The needs assessment collected from the Gram Sabha was the raw material used by the gram Panchayat to prepare projects that adhered to the technical standards and norms of the District Planning Board. The kinds of priorities that Gram Sabhas have selected are instructive. To take only one example, programmes related to public health (health care, drinking water and nutrition) have received as much as 12.34 percent of the funds allocated to people's plan in the state. In several gram panchayats Gram Sabhas have chose to strengthen the supplementary nutrition programme for pre – school children with daily inputs of milk and eggs at considerable expense.
What is relevant to note here is that even in a state like Kerala in which the unit of a village is something of an administrative fiction and where there is no strong village assembly tradition, it is possible for large numbers of members of Gram Sabhas to come together and function collectively for the achievement of their major mandate, with energy, responsibility and shared purpose. What is required first is that the powers of the Gram Sabha be real and substantial (in this case the major chunk of state resources which were placed at the disposal of the Gram Sabha made all the difference). The imaginative methodologies for mass mobilisation and huge volunteer effort were also crucial to the signal success in energising Gram Sabhas for development planning in Kerala.

In reality Kerala has made a unique experiment in the field of democratic decentralization on by involving elected local bodies in the state’s planning process. It was a mammoth exercise as the concept was new to everybody and not only participation of thousands of Panchayat leaders and millions of people had to be ensured but also bureaucrats had to be reoriented.

In the field of Democratic Decentralization, the most important factor is Kerala’s success is their land reforms movement. The land reforms laws were successfully implemented because they were backed by a powerful peasant movement. This political conviction has given rise to a fascinating and unique experiment in social mobilization for decentralization, namely the people’s campaign for Decentralized planning.

In 1996,35-40 percent of the outlay of the State’s Ninth Five Year Plan was earmarked for the local bodies. By deciding to devolve 35-40 percent of plan funds to the local bodies, the state government ensured that almost every development activity that could be planned locally would, if transferred to local bodies, be planned locally and implemented more efficiently. During 1997-98, it worked out to be Rs 1,025 crore. It may noted that plan devolution to local bodies till a year back had not exceeded 20-30 crores per annum.
75 percent of the devolution was in terms of grant-in-aid and the rest in the form of schemes sponsored by the state government, with the latter component to be phased out over time. In the rest of India, the financial devolution took mainly the form of schemes and grant-in-aid component was confined to a relatively small amount of the so-called united funds. In short, the nature of devolution in Kerala was such that it gave maximum autonomy to the local bodies in drawing up their development programmes.

The ultimate aim of decentralization has to be to give opportunity for as much direct participation of people in daily governance as possible. The development administration at the grass roots level demands day to day involvement of the elected representatives. At the same time, the officials, experts and voluntary activists at the local level also have their own role. The elected representative, as the co-ordinator of the local development activities, should recognise the legitimate role of others, particularly the officials, and develop a partnership based on mutual respect.

In Kerala the People’s campaign for the Decentralized Planning was formally inaugurated on 17 August 1996, the first day of Malayalam year. The campaign was organised in a phased manner with clearly defined objectives for each phase. The planning process itself consisted of six phases extending over a year followed by the phase of plan implementation.

**Phase - I - Gram Sabha:** The first step in drawing up a local development plan was to identify the felt needs of the people. The local development problems were to be identified by the people of every locality in their grama sabha’s and ward sabhas. A grama sabha, it may be noted, is the assembly of all voters in an electoral ward. Given the relatively larger size of gram panchayats in Kerala, special guidelines had to be framed for organizing the Gram Sabhas effectively. The most important guideline was to hold group wise discussions in each Gram Sabhas
according to various development sectors. In addition sectoral groups, there was also to be a group each for SCs/STs and women’s development. But for brief inaugural and valedictory sessions, all the deliberations of the Gram Sabhas in these groups of 25 – 50 participants focused on local needs. The organization of group discussions made it possible for a maximum number of people to participate in focused deliberations. Around one lakh resource persons at the local level were given training to act as facilitators in the discussion groups. A semi-structured questionnaire was also distributed to help the flow of discussions. People were encouraged not to limits themselves to listing of developmental problem but to search for their causes and remedies, drawing from past experiences of their own. Through wide publicity and propaganda, using not only the print media but also music and folk arts, every effort was made to increase participation of the people in the Gram Sabhas. It is estimated that nearly 3 million person participated in these meetings, a fifth of them being women. At least one representative from around one-fourth to one third of the house holds in Kerala must have participated in the Gram Sabhas. The success of the Gram Sabhas created a general awareness among the people about the decentralization programme, and local level developmental needs were systematically listed.

**Phase - II - Development Seminars**: After the identification of felt needs in the Gram Sabhas, the next step in the planning process was to make an objective assessment of the natural and human resources of the locality. A series of participatory studies were undertaken in every gram Panchayat and municipality, the most important of which were the following:

**Collection of Secondary Data**: No attempt was made to collect primary data because of time constraint. Instead, the relevant secondary data available in various registers and records at the local level offices of different line departments were identified and collected in a common data format drawn up for the whole state.
Study of Local Geography and Natural Resources: A rapid appraisal of natural resources was undertaken, using transept walk technique. Eco-zones in every Panchayat were identified by first demarcating the area into various zones on the basis of land form and then identifying the soil, water and vegetation characteristics in each zone. An environmental appraisal of each Eco-zone was also attempted in many Panchayats.

Review of Ongoing Schemes: Each department was to prepare a sectoral report on the ongoing schemes and make them available to the Panchayats and municipalities. However, most departments did not take the task seriously and this was to have serious implications for the spill-over projects of the departments in subject areas transferred to the local bodies. As a result, very few of them found place in the plans of the local bodies.

Survey of Local History: A short local history was prepared by every local body, mostly drawing from oral testimonies and local records. Participatory techniques such as history time line was also encouraged.

Consolidation of Gram Sabha Reports: Reports of Gram Sabha discussion, including lists of problems identified, were consolidated for each development sector in a Panchayat.

Development Seminars were organized in every gram Panchayat and municipality to discuss the above reports. It had been estimated that more than three lakh persons, consisting of representatives from Gram Sabhas, elected representatives, local leaders of political parties, line department officials, local expert etc., participated in the development seminars. Discussions at the development seminars were also organized in small subject wise groups which came up with recommendations as to the projects to be drawn up. A task force was elected by each group to prepare the final project.
Phase - III: Task Forces: On an average, 12 task forces were constituted in each local body to cover various development sectors. As many as 12,000 task forces were trained at the village level alone with a participation of at least 1-2 lakhs persons. The task forces prepared around one lakh projects for consideration of Panchayats / municipalities. The task of project preparation demanded participation of officials and technically qualified people in large numbers.

Accordingly, special efforts were made to ensure participation of officials and local level experts. While the chairperson of the task force was an elected representative, an officer from the concerned line department was made its convenor.

Phase - IV: Annual Plan Finalization: With the presentation of the annual state budget by the end of the march, the plan allocation to each local body was announced. Of a total state plan outlay of Rs. 28,550 millions for 1996-97, Rs. 10,250 million (nearly 36 percent) was earmarked for the local bodies. This allocation had two components: (1) State sponsored schemes costing a total of Rs. 2,760 million, i.e., schemes which are prepared by the departments but implemented through the local bodies and (2) Grant-in-aid of Rs. 749 crore. The grant-in-aid has three parts. (1) Rs. 39 crore for tribal sub-plan, (2) Rs. 194 crore for special component plan for Scheduled Castes and (3) Rs 516 crore for general sectors.

Plan funds under each of the above heads were developed between urban and rural local bodies on the basis of population. As for the rural local bodies, the total general sector allocation was distributed between gram Panchayats in the ratio of 70 : 15 : 15. For the special component plan of Rs 176.41 crore, a share of 20 percent was fixed for the higher tiers. With respect to tribal sub-plans 60 percent was allocated to district Panchayat, and gram Panchayats and block Panchayats received 20 percent each. Within each tire, the allotment was made
entirely on the basis of population of each local body. The principle of taking population as the sole criteria has drawn widespread criticism on grounds of equity, as between local bodies some were lagging in development or had to cover larger geographical areas than others. Forty to fifty percent of the plan allocation to the rural local bodies was to be invested in productive sectors and 30 to 40 percent in the social sectors. A maximum of 30 percent of the plan allocation might be spent on roads and other public works including energy. In the fourth phases projects prepared by the task forces were prioritised and incorporated into the plan documents of the Panchayats and municipalities.

Phase - V : Annual Plan of Higher Tiers :

After gram panchayats had drafted their plans, block and district panchayats started preparing their annual plans. This sequential ordering of the processes was made in order to ensure that plans of various tiers were integrated and plans of the higher tiers did not duplicate, but complement those of the lower tiers.

Emphasis was laid on the importance of integrating the different centrally – sponsored poverty alleviation programmes being implemented through the community development blocks with block panchayats plans. There was a strong resistance to this move from both the bureaucracy and elected representatives. This was partly due to genuine problems arising from the existence of separate guidelines for the centrally sponsored programmes, but the main reason was the fear that their decision – making powers would be curtailed and encroached upon.

Block panchayats and district panchayats also organized seminars to discuss their draft plans.

Because of delay in the preparation of the gram panchayat plans, the integration of plans of different tiers could not be undertaken effectively. As a
result there were many instances of duplication of planned activities and also critical gaps between various tiers.

A 300-page Handbook on project preparation was printed. It provided detailed explanation of project proposal formats along with methods of financial analysis. It also included a brief overview of the development perspective for each sector and discussed special problems of woman as well as the weaker sections and intricacies of institutional finance.

**Phase - VI : Plan Appraisal :**

A sample review of the projects prepared by the local bodies revealed that a significant proportion of them had to be modified to ensure their technical soundness and viability before they were approved for implementation. Realising that the District Planning Committees did not have the technical manpower or infrastructure to undertake a proper scrutiny of these projects, a major improvisation in the original programme of the people’s campaign was called for. The concept Voluntary Technical Corps (VTC) emerged to meet the need. Retired technical experts and professionals were encouraged to enroll themselves as volunteers to appraise the projects and plans of the local bodies. Such a volunteer expert was committed to spending at least one a week for giving technical assistance to panchayats. More than 4,000 technical experts were enrolled in the VTC. Orientation programmes were organized for these experts.

Expert committees were formed at block, municipal and corporation levels, drawing from the VTC members and certain mandatory categories of officers. Each Expert Committee had a non-official as its chairperson and the block Panchayat secretary or an officer from the Town Planning Development as its convenor. The Expert Committees were, on the one hand, an advisory arm of the District Planning Committees, helping the latter to appraise the plans and projects
and, on the other hand, a body to render technical assistance to the local bodies the Expert Committees had no right whatsoever to change the priorities set by the local bodies. In course of time, the Expert Committees were also given the power of approval of technical sanctions and a role in plan implementation such as approval of revised estimates, setting disputes about measurements, inspection of all works and verification as well as approval of performance/completion reports of works within certain financial limits.

Training Programme

The experience of the people’s campaign has underlined the vital importance of detailed preparation and training in ensuring the success of local level planning. Seven rounds of training at the state level, four rounds at the district and block levels and two rounds at the panchayat and municipality levels were organized. The number and composition of participants in the training programme varied one round to another. Participants in the training programme may be divided into four board groups. Elected members, officials, resource persons and non-official experts. There were 14,173 elected representatives in the different tiers of local bodies. Nearly three fourth of them had been elected for the first time. Employees directly under the local bodies numbered around 20,000. Besides, there were 40,000 employees who were being transferred to the local bodies but for practical purpose they continued to be under the administrative control and direction of line departments. There was an urgent need for reorienting these officials on how to function within a decentralized democratic setup and shoulder local level planning responsibilities instead of merely carrying out instructions from above. Every round of training started with a discussion of philosophy of decentralization in general, and participatory planning in particular and, as a background, the development crisis in Kerala problems of SC/ST development and gender concern constituted a constant theme in every round.
Annual Plan

The most remarkable feature of the first annual plan of the local bodies (i.e., for 1997 – 98) was the conscious attempt to mobilize additional local resources. The total grant – in – aid to the local bodies was Rs 7,490 million. But the total outlay of the plans of the local bodies exceeded Rs 17,500 million. This was made possible by (1) integrating state – and centrally – sponsored schemes with the local plans, (2) drawing upon the non-plan surplus from the own fund of the gram panchayats, and (3) mobilizing additional local resources from financial institutions and beneficiaries.

There was not sufficient conscious effort to coordinate the cooperative movement and the local planning process during the campaign’s first year. This weakness will have to be rectified so that panchayats and co – operatives work at tandem for village reconstruction. Another major limitation on the first year planning process was that there was very little synchronization of the normal budgeting process of the local bodies and the preparation of their annual plans. Reform of the budgetory procedures of the local bodies with a view to ensuring that all new development works are mandatorily made part of the annual plan assumes importance in this context. During 1997 – 98, a number of new developmental works continued to be carried out by the local bodies out side the plan as either sponsored schemes or their own non-plan schemes. This situation raises the scope for multiple systems of implementation and tends to undermine the transparent and participative system that is sought to be ushered in by the plan decentralization.

The priorities set by the local bodies are also significantly at variance with the past investment pattern in the state plans. Local bodies have given much higher allocation for animal husbandry, housing, drinking water and sanitation.

Contrary to the fears commonly expressed there has been no excessive investment in roads and bridges. Even though up to 30 percent of the grant – in –
aid could have been utilised for the road sector as per the guidelines issued, the allocation has been only 18.9 percent. The productive sectors received nearly 34 percent of the plan outlay.

There has been no diversion of grant – in –aid allotted for the special component plan (SCP) for scheduled castes and Sub – plan for the Scheduled Tribes (TSP). Instead, projects in excess of the grant – in –aid have been prepared by many of the local bodies drawing from their own surplus funds and general sector grant-in-aid. The emphasis in the SCP and TSP has been on housing and other individual beneficiary – oriented programmes which have less scope for misuse.

**Gender Issues :**

Gender issues had been given a special emphasis in the Campaign. Special instructions were given to ensure greater participation of women. Also, Gender and Development was an important theme in the training programmes. In the cost-benefit assessment of projects, a gender impact statement was made mandatory. Moreover, local bodies were advised to set apart 10 percent of the plan funds for projects directly targeting women. Almost all the local bodies did prepare special projects for women. However, in no district the target of 10 percent could be met. On an average, 6.68 percent of the state grant-in-aid was set apart for special programmes for women. A study of these projects also revealed that most of them were in the tradition mould of projects such as kitchen gardening, backyard poultry, garment making, etc. There was also significant scope for an overall improvement of Women’s participation in the planning process.

To rectify the imbalance in the gender composition of the resource persons, more elected women representatives were inducted as resource persons. The guidelines with respect to women’s participation and Women Component Plan (WCP) were elaborated and strengthened. A provision of 10 percent of the grant-in-aid in the local plan for the WCP was made mandatory. The gender impact
statements were also to be strictly scrutinised during the appraisal stage by recruiting more women experts in the Voluntary Technical Corps (VTC)\textsuperscript{18}.

An overall analysis of the condition of decentralization and people's campaign for the Ninth Plan the state has entered into an era of a new development culture. With this campaign, for the first time in the history of our country there has been a process of genuine planning process from below. The campaign has also successfully contributed towards strengthening people's unity in development action and has generated a new development consciousness in the state. They have certainly set a foot the democratic process, which has proved through the ages to be one of the most vigorous catalytic agents of both socio-economic and political revolutions.

In another side over decentralization and development that the West Bengal experiment with Panchayati Raj Institutions presents also a model and a path which could be usefully emulated. At a time when the Panchayati Raj Institutions in most parts of India have been relatively unsuccessful, due to bureaucratic control, political interference of State Governments, inadequate resources, elite domination and total isolation from the people, the West Bengal experiment with Panchayati Raj initiated in 1978, under the new left Front Government has attracted wide attention of scholars, Indian and foreign, who saw in this alternative West Bengal strategy a "grand design" for social transformation and the precursor of a new social order. The new Left Front Government, with the CPI (M) as its dominant partner, with its Marxist ideology, conducted a massive party based election for twenty five million eligible voters in the villages to elect 56,000 Panchayat functionaries in 30,000 rural constituencies for 15 Zilla Parishads, 324 Panchayat Samitis and 3,242 Gram Panchayats under the West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1973. This Act had been passed during the Chief Ministership of Siddhartha Shankar Ray, but remained in hibernation for inexplicable reasons. It goes to the credit of the Left Front Government that Panchayat elections have been held regularly since then at five year intervals.

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The Front won the 1978 elections hands down, and during the next three years of Left Front Government rejuvenated the Panchayat System and entrusted these institutions with comprehensive responsibilities and endowed them with considerable resources. It brought the rural population and the state administration closer to each other, applied the techniques and mechanisms of participatory democracy and helped in heralding a fundamental and durable change in West Bengal. This remarkable record within three years led even the worst critics of Left Front government to concede that the new government might be able to bring about a genuine reform of the local government on at least one state while working within the constraints of the prevailing social and political structure. Foreign based relief organizations praised the role of the new Panchayats in organizing and conducting relief and reconstruction programmes after the devastating floods in 1978 and 1980 and the severe drought in 1979, which tested the extreme limit the capacity of the newly elected leadership. It also established the fact that the local leadership had initiative, organizational ability and management qualities. During the about last twenty years of its working Panchayati Raj in West Bengal has been able to carve out a crucial role for itself in the process of economic development and social change. This has become possible due to four distinct but inter-related factors: (i) administrative decentralization; (ii) decentralization of political power; (iii) participatory democracy at grass roots level, and (iv) the role of the local self-government institutions in comprehensive rural development through Operation Barga and land reforms. The main focus of the West Bengal Government’s policy regarding Panchayati Raj has been three-folds namely; (a) acceleration of organizational development; (b) development of human resource; and (c) effective implementation of various rural development programmes, including the central and state-sponsored comprehensive integrated rural development programmes through the three tiers of the panchayat bodies.

In order to develop and efficient and responsive administration, it recruited local and rural youth, ("sons of the soil") to the newly created posts of assistants and Gram Panchayat secretaries and placed the Gram Sevaks (village level Public
Servants) under their disposal. It also made the services of government bureaucracy available to the Panchayat Samitis and the Zilla Parishads. These functionaries could easily communicate with the peasants and cultivators and rural people in general in their own language and idiom for educating them, providing information and creating awareness of their own needs as well as the government's programmes and policies. The cumulative effects of all these actions was the exposure to field problems, response to the challenges, development of initiative and innovative capacity. Massive training programmes were organized by the Department of Panchayat and community Development for imparting knowledge, skill and motivation to the newly appointed field workers. Emphasis on financial management, resource management and programme management became the ground rules for the successful management of the Panchayati Raj Institutions. The Zilla Parishad was vested with the intra-institutional leadership for managing, rural development programmes.  

The empowerment of the people, democratic decentralization and participatory management processes are the main planks of the three-tier Panchayati Raj System in West Bengal. After the Panchayat elections in 1993 and subsequent elections to the Gram Panchayats in Darjeeling Hill Areas, there are at present 3325 Gram Panchayats, 340 Panchayat Samitis and 17 Zilla Parishads, including one Mahakuma Parishad for Silliguri subdivision of Darjeeling district. Each Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti has ten “sthayee samitis” (Standing Committees) which among themselves cover the whole gamut of rural development, matters related to public importance and felt needs of the rural people. The local district and block level officials are associated with these sthayee samitis so as to ensure effective interaction between elected representatives and Government officials. This has generally resulted in a coordinated approach to planning and implementation of different programmes.

The ten sthayee Samiti at the Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti level are:

(i) Finance, Establishment, Development and Planning,
(ii) Forest and Land Reforms,

(iii) Agriculture, Irrigation and Cooperation,

(iv) Public Works and Transport,

(v) Public health and Environment,

(vi) Education, Culture, Information and Sports,

(vii) Cottage and small Scale Industries, Relief and social Welfare,

(viii) Fisheries and Animal Resources Development,

(ix) Food supplies,

(x) Power and Non-conventional Energy sources.

Besides, a Samannay Samiti (Coordination Committee), headed by the Chairperson of the Zilla Parishad or the Panchayat Samiti, as the case may be, coordinates the functions between a standing committee and the panchayat body and also amongst the different standing committees and monitors the functioning of the lower tiers of the panchayat bodies. Important amendments to the 1973 Act have been made to ensure conformity with the provisions of the 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts. The 1993 elections were held on the basis of these amended provisions. Before the 73rd Amendment Act came into force, the state had amended the relevant Panchayat Act in 1992 itself to make provision for reservation of one third of the seats for women as well as the SC/ST Population. The panchayat Act was further amended in 1994 and 1995 so as to conform to the relevant provisions of the constitution. The net impact of these amendments has been positive and beneficial in as much as procedural problems could now be overcome, efficient administration made available, financial resources transferred, so these institutions, could become self – propelling units of a participatory democracy. In fact, the
people's participation in decision-making, grass roots planning and programme-implementation has been supposedly the moving spirit and the motive force behind the successful development efforts in west Bengal.

The 1992 Amendment to the West Bengal Panchayat Act has also provided for the creation of a new body at the village level, called “Gram Sabha”, meaning a village assembly, a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to a village comprised within the area of a Panchayat at the village level. Thus for, the amended West Bengal Panchayat Act, is in conformity with the central legislation. But it has, in fact, gone further: it has also created a new and unique body called “Gram Samsad” meaning a village Council, to perform a wide variety of functions such as identifying anti-poverty programme beneficiaries and mobilizing mass participation. A meeting of the Gram Samsad, consisting of the electors of a Gram Panchayat constituency, has to be convened twice a year, in May and November, in which the Gram Panchayat will present a report of the work it has done and its plan for the future. Besides, a meeting of the Gram Sabha, a bigger body, has to be convened once a year, in December, in order to prepare, consider and recommend the annual statement of accounts of the Gram Panchayats, the administrative report of the development programmes of the Gram Panchayats in the previous and the current financial years, programmes of adult education and family welfare, and proposals for new taxation or the enhancement of existing taxes.

It undertakes laudable functions such as the identification of beneficiaries for poverty alleviation programmes, mobilization of public resources in cash, kind or labour, promotion of social harmony in the village, and assistance in the implementation of developmental schemes in its area. Further, the project/schemes identified for the Gram Panchayats on the basis of Gram Panchayat Resource Inventory (GPRI) have to be placed before the Gram Sabha in order to ascertain whether the relevance of the project/Scheme are in accordance with the felt needs of the people. The Gram Sabha also decides on the priorities of the projects/Schemes according to the requirements of the village community so as to
match them with the available funds. It identifies the families below the poverty line and the beneficiaries for support due to old age or some handicap, etc. and prepares a list of families for coverage under various programmes such as Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Training of Rural Youth for self-employment (TRYSEM), Development of women and Children of Rural Areas (DWCRA), Million Wells Scheme (MWS), Indra Awas Yojna (IAY), etc. In consultation with the Gram Sabha, the Gram Panchayats prepare five-year perspective plans as well as annual action plans for each village.

It is, therefore, quite obvious that under the new dispensation, different sections of society, including the youth, the non-governmental organization (NGOs), and other village level institutions would have greater opportunity in participating in local level projects/schemes. They would also be able to take part in activities, which are now very broad-based, and cover the whole gamut of socio-economics tasks assigned to the local bodies under the new Eleventh Schedule of the constitution, which was inserted by the 73rd 'Amendment Act'. The new bodies of Gram Sabha and Gram Samsad are intended to make the Panchayats more democratic, responsive and accountable, and to ensure transparency in their functioning. If properly organized and successfully conducted, the meetings of these two bodies can go a long way in enhancing the credibility of the Panchayat Institutions as genuine and effective vehicles and facilitators for rural development and social charge. The would probably become the “Sentinel” on the “qui vive”, to use a legal phrase and watchdogs of the basic rights of millions of rural people to participate in the decision-making and planning process. These bodies can be looked upon as vibrant instrument for facilitating and strengthening the process of people’s participation and involvement in the development process.

However, in order that the process of empowerment initiated by the 1992 legislation can achieve the desired result, such participation and involvement must be sought to be maximized. Activating and motivating the rural people will need efforts for awareness-generation on the part of the Panchayat leadership at the granroots level as well as the party functionaries and change-agents,
communicators and professional trainers, and more importantly, the non-governmental organization.

It has to be admitted that with the functioning of the Gram Sabha and the Gram Samsad, and the formation of the District Council in West Bengal, the Panchayats in the state have become responsive and effective vehicles for identification and resolution of local problems, for ensuring social justice and for improving the quality of life of the people.

A lot of responsibility has now developed on the Gram Sabha to play a major role in the planning and implementation of developmental programmes at the village level through large scale participation. The 1992 Amendment Act has come at a very critical moment for the West Bengal Panchayats; it has instilled a new life in these institutions and their leadership, has encouraged a flurry of activities, and has created a positive mood of buoyancy and high expectations. Academics and trainers at the State Institute of Panchayat and Rural Development (SIPRD), Kalyani, in the District of Nadia, as well as district level functionaries have been busy providing training and instructions to the elected Panchayat leadership, officials and the village people, so that the best use could be made of the process of empowerment initiated by the 73rd Amendment.

However the Panchayati Raj Institutions need to be strengthened in order to ensure democratic governance at the lower levels. However, decentralization would be effective only when the states are serious about it. Otherwise, what emerges would be only a phoney decentralization. It has been rightly observed.

Whatever the framework in which the states would like to operate, decentralization without political will and the cooperation of the bureaucracy to share power with the lower tiers of the administration is no good.

The centre the states and the local bodies should genuinely believe in decentralization. To quote an authority on rural development: "Panchayats as decentralized units can be sustained only if they are part of a wider philosophy and
drive for democratic decentralization across the board, i.e., starting from the centre it self.23.

The following are some of the preconditions for the success of the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

a- The State Government should setup special organizations devoted to rural planning, to train the elected members and officials of the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the techniques of economic planning;

b- Steps should be taken to ensure the administrative neutrality of Panchayat Raj Officers with regard to policy - decisions at the level of the Panchayats;

c- The concept of “Party less Democracy” is relevant in the context of Panchayati Raj and this needs to be studies seriously;

d- There is a need for a separate district development officer to look after the development administration of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, along with administrative and technical personnel and financial resources.

Measures to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions should include the following :-

a- The devolution of powers and functions should be carries out successfully;

b- There is a need to integrate the DRDA with the Panchayati Raj Institutions. The DRDAs have not been brought the Zilla Parishads despite government orders. This could be counter productive as the duplication of administrative machinery could result in a conflict of interests;

c- A National consensus between the Political Parties is essential in order to take appropriate steps that will strengthen the Panchayats;
d- There is a need to constitute district level planning committees so that the Panchayati Raj bodies can have a say in getting local plans included in the district;

e- Inter-tier linkages between the three tiers of the Panchayati Raj Institutions are necessary; and

f- The Panchayati Samiti should be considered a unit of planning.

The Panchayati Raj Institutions should enjoy financial autonomy and hence, the more provision of adequate funds is not enough. We have to remove controls and supervision by the State Government over the decisions of the Panchayati Raj Institutions involving financial commitments relating to budget, taxation, expenditure, contracts, staff appointments, disposal of assets, etc. of course, the Panchayats alone are responsible for their decisions and failures.

The Panchayati Raj Institutions must levy and collect their own taxes and manage their resources. However, most revenue sources under the control of the local governments are inelastic in nature and hence they will find it a challenging task to meet the growing expenditure commitments. Through a judicious allocation of tax sharing and a generous and selective grants-in-aid, the state finance commission has to ensure vertical fiscal equity.

Agencies like the DRDA should be abolished. Their functions, staff and resources should be handed over to the elected Zilla Parishads. The resources at the disposal of these agencies should be pooled together into a unified and united fund and made available to the Panchayats. The state finance commissions have to play a vital role in this regard.

The Panchayati Raj Institutions should think in terms of attaining their own resources on the following line:
Better exploitation of the fiscal domain (including user charges) granted to the Panchayats under legislation presently in force;

Expansion of their fiscal domain beyond what is presently legislated, in directions presently untapped by any level of the government;

Expansion of their fiscal domain to include taxes presently levied at the state level, through a re-assignment of powers of levy from the State Government to the Panchayats, either individually or concurrently;

Higher shares of presently shareable state taxes; and

Moving the presently non-shareable state taxes into the shareable class where the limit for this would be a flat sharing of the aggregate state revenues among local bodies.

It is said that unless the Panchayati Raj Institutions are able to generate at least one half of the funds required, their autonomy would suffer. It is also suggested that unless the local governments have at least the power to determine the rates of taxes assigned to them, these do not pass the test of local taxes.

The constitution (73rd Amendment) Act contains some provisions regarding the finances of the Panchayati Raj Institutions and these provisions need to be put into practice by the State Governments. These are:

Authorize a Panchayat to levy, collect and appropriate such taxes, duties, tolls and fees in accordance with such procedure and subject to such limits;

Assign to a Panchayat such taxes, duties tolls and fees levied and collected by the State Government for such purposes and subject to such conditions and limits;

Provide for making such grants-in-aid to the Panchayats from the consolidated fund; and
d- Provide for the constitution of such funds for creating all moneys received, respectively, by or on behalf of the Panchayats and also for the withdrawal of such money therefore, as may be specified in the law.

It is suggested that there should be an independent authority to carry out the social audit of the funds and programmes earmarked for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes and to ensure the realization of the intended objective.

The Panchayati Raj Institutions should not operate pre-conceived schemes passed on to them with funds from the state or central Governments. On the other hand, they should design their own schemes in the larger interests of the people of their area. Moreover, the Panchayats and the State Government machinery should not be in loggerheads. All should accept that the Panchayati Raj System is a reality and it has emerged in order to serve a good purpose. For genuine decentralization and self-government the Panchayati Raj Institutions, co-operatives and the voluntary agencies must work not only in harmony but also in collaboration with one another. Above all, there must be a strong political will in sufficient measure among the state and central political leaders to strengthen the Panchayati Raj Institutions by providing these with real power and autonomy.

After all above discussion, it is clear that Democratic Decentralization is a comprehensive and major political reform and, therefore, can be implemented only as a part of a political agenda. If the numerous micro-level experiments, theoretical discourses or movements for further decentralization efforts are to become universal and sustainable, they would have to be a part of a political strategy.

Decentralization creates a basic organizational framework within which mass initiatives for development can be unleashed and a broad spectrum of development experiments carried out. Local self-government has emerged as an automatic choice for institutionalizing the new democratic initiatives. In fact, it constitutes the fulcrum around which the new development strategy revolves.
PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT

"Participatory Development" is a limited developmental notion and could be defined as the partaking of a maximum of concerned social and political actors in identifying, designing, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating development activities including control and decision making over the allocation of financial resources. Participation is associated with empowerment, because individuals and social groups required the abilities to assert themselves and to gain negotiating powers, in particular under privileged groups. In its broader political sense, "Participatory Development" relates to a democratization process in societies with respect to the consolidation of civil society, respect for human rights and good governance. As such, "Participatory Development" is not only a concept, but an ideal state of affairs and the means for achieving such a state. It is a development tool as well as a goal of development.

"Participatory Development" should not automatically be associated with a specific class or group of people. In this sense, it is important to distinguish "Participatory Development" from the two often synonymously used terms "people’s participation" and popular participation". "Participatory Development" provides for a more abstract and dynamic notion than "people’s participation" and "popular participation" “Participatory Development” is more widely used in conceptual discussions. "People’s participation” is also a catchphrase is current development language, in particular among NGO s. There is an elusive character to the term ‘people’. In the context of ‘people’s participation’, the people referred to are usually the targeted beneficiaries. Definitions of ‘people’s participation’ often suggest that people constitute a homogeneous development group rather than emphasising their role as citizens with social and political rights who have different options to participate in political and development processes. Prem N. Sharma and Mohan P. Wagley argued that “People’s participation is viewed as a dynamic group process in which all members of a group contribute to the attainment of common objectives, share the benefits accruing from group
activities, exchange information and experience of common interest, and follow the rules, regulations and other decisions made by the group. Need for people’s participation is articulated in terms of efficiency and / or cost-effectiveness, equity in distribution of benefits, sustainability and empowerment of the people"30.

People is used as a slightly more general and abstract word than "beneficiaries" pretending to give a methodology or implementation strategy a wider conceptional notion. Participation then means the involvement of "our beneficiaries", or "our people" in the implementation process or, to a much lesser extent, in the decision making process and monitoring or evaluation of activities. Such attitudes often reflect a patron-client relationship between the development agency (Governmental or non-governmental) and the targeted beneficiaries.

In this context, "people’s participation" would not involve considerations on political and administrative structures. In a different political context, the term "people" suggests romantic political visions and bears ideological associations.

‘Popular Participation’ is also synonymously used with participatory development. Many development activists use it when referring to decision-making rather than mere involvement of project beneficiaries in the implementation of development programmes. The term ‘popular’ to some extent, is associated with a notion of class by suggesting a unity (of political and economic interests) of the people against the King, the rulers or the leaders. ‘Popular Participation’ does not specifically refer to development and to development of societies. It also does not (as participatory development does) specifically relate to the process character of development and to the transition of societies. Nevertheless, it is also frequently used in development language.

“Popular participation” focuses on the excluded groups. The World Bank, consciously avoiding the political arena, refers to ‘Popular Participation’ as “Participation of the poor and others who are disadvantaged in terms of wealth, education ethnicity or gender. It seemed obvious to us to focus on the participation
of these poor and disadvantaged groups because, although often the intended beneficiaries, they are usually without voice in the developmental process.\textsuperscript{31}

Recognizing that the poor are not the only actors in World Bank Development Project, the Bank prefers to write and speak about ‘stakeholder participation’ including ‘borrowers’ (elected officials, line agency staff, local government officials), indirectly affected groups (NGOs, private sector organizations) and ‘the Bank’ (their own staff and shareholders).

Stiefel and Wolfe conclude that, “The central issue of Popular Participation has to do with power, exercised by some people over the people, and by some classes over other classes.”\textsuperscript{32}

“Participatory Development” refers to a process character. Gerald W. Fry and Galen R. Martin stress the ‘process character’ in their definition of development.

“Process leading to a higher quality of life for a given population. Development involves both the determination of goals and the means of achieving these ends.”\textsuperscript{33}

The emphasis on the process character implies dynamic structure and transition of society. David C. Korten also stresses that ‘Development’ should be considered as a ‘client’ and ‘process’ oriented approach. S. N. Mishra points out that “Development” is not a mere economic term as “growth”, but encompasses social and political development. Development refers to qualitative and structural changes. The meaning of “Development” has a technical-instrumental as well as a historical-analytical dimension. This study works with a pragmatic definition of “Development”, it considers “Development” as a process of improving the living standard, referring to economical, political, ecological, social, cultural and psychological aspects. “Participation” as further elaborated in this chapter also has different meanings and is used in a political, social, administrative and technical context. The term “people” has the most general connotation. People as human
beings, as a group of friends enemies or project beneficiaries: inhabitants of a village, city or a country, in a political context the terms is synonymously used with masses or in connection with nation and democracy.

In international development language, "Participatory Development", has become a fashionable catchword, a plastic word. Given the elusive character of "Participatory Development", many development administrators and researchers avoided elaborating on the definition of conceptual framework. Definitions would have limited the scope of interpretation and would have invited for political judgement.

John M. Cohen and Norman T. Uphoff stated that, "It (Participatory Development) appears more fruitful and proper to regard participation as a descriptive term denoting the involvement of a significant number of persons in situations or actions which enhance their well-being e.g. their income, security or self-esteem".

Since that late 1980's, Participatory Development has become increasingly associated with a paradigm change, in development theory, Participatory Development favours a bottom-up instead of a top-down approach, acknowledges perceptions of local people instead of following expert opinions and abandons paternalistic intervention processes.

The paradigm change was also put in a wider political context, bringing about grassroots democracy by empowering local communities through their involvement in decision-making processes.

"Participation" has not only different meanings, but also different forms. Participation may be constructive or obstructive with regard to the achievement of conceived objectives, it may occur 'within the system', 'outside the system' or 'against the system'. A distinction should be made between direct and indirect modes of participation. In the latter case, representatives act on behalf of people. These representatives may be elected, may be nominated, may be selected or
appointed by governments or boards of trustees, or may simply represent qua authority.

Forms of participation also vary in respect of differences in cultures, traditions, values and institutional structures. The UNDP Human Development Report 1993, incorporating views of different nations and cultures, makes a general distinction between.

a- household participation,

b- economic participation,

c- social and cultural participation (right to culture), and

d- political participation (individually and collectively)³⁸.

Participation has for a long time emphasized the link between economic development and participation: a nation’s level of political participation co-varies with its level of economic development. It was also presumed that a traditional society which lacks appropriate institutional structures, is non-participant while modern society³⁹.

When development policy makers, administrators and researchers discovered “Participatory Development”, they pointed out structural constraints of traditional and formal participation of the poorest and developed alternative models to involve them in the implementation of development facts.

Development managers focused on non-conventional participation models outside the framework of established institutional structures.

However, Participatory Development has been described in the context of the related theories of democratic decentralization, good governance the civil
society debate, the respect of human rights and sustainable development. Participatory Development constitutes a crucial element of a wider universal theory of development, which evolved from the 1990s onwards.

‘Participation’ and ‘Participatory Development’ have already appeared for the first time in the development jargon from the 1950s onwards when failures of development projects designed by outside experts were attributed to the exclusion of the target population in the project management. “Participatory Development”, however, was not discussed in its broader institutional and political dimension until the early 1990s.

In the early 1970s, the ideas of social justice gained momentum in the international development discourse and in development strategies. The World Bank, under President Robert McNamara, USAID and the ILO put greater emphasis on the so called ‘soft sectors’ such as health care, sanitation, education and food. The increasing interest in community based development concepts and participation issues was in practice undermined by the dominant role of the bureaucracy in development management.

In December 1989, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)s Development Assistance Committee (DCA) released a “Policy Statement on Development Co-operation in the 1990s”, which set the basis for increasing the emphasis on Participatory Development among most donor agencies. In addition to sustainable development and concern for the environment, the DAC identified participatory development as the key issue for the development agenda of the 1990s. The report stated that stimulating productive energies of people, encouraging broader participation of all people in productive processes, and a more equitable sharing of their benefits, should become central elements in development co-operation.

Sourcebook” in February 1996⁴¹. This work documents the World Bank’s strategy that “project stakeholders” should increasingly “share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them⁴².

The aid allocation policy of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development also reflects the trend of changing attitudes towards development and participation, and at the same time, seeks for better justification of development assistance. The Ministry introduced political conditionality in its aid allocation from 1992 onwards and formulated five criteria;

a- respect for human rights;

b- popular participation in the political process;

c- guaranteeing certainty in law;

d- a market friendly approach to economic development; and

e- the orientation of state activity towards improving the welfare of the poor⁴³.

“Participatory Development” in the current development discourse in not regarded as another competing theory in the ideological realm of development theories, but it constitutes a crucial element of a wider universal theory of development which revolved from the 1990s onwards.

Barbara Topper points out that never in history has such programmatic agreement existed on normative goals and strategies of development⁴⁴. Rainer Tetzlaff agrees with Baroara Topper and rejects the common opinion of “the great disenchantment of international development theory⁴⁵.

Today, in a World increasingly connected through business, information, and communication networks, governments have indeed lost room to manoeuvre to pursue nationalistic development models driven by ideological ideas or nationalistic economic programmes.
The dominant development theory in the 1990s is based on political participation, human rights, free competition of ideas, political programmes, goods and services in a market driven economy, checks and balances of executive, legislative and judicial powers and the acknowledgement of the important role of civil society forces. The conceptual evolution of Participatory Development is interlinked with the evolution of related development concepts and strategies, democratic decentralisation, good governance, strengthening of civil society, universal concepts of human rights and sustainable development. The DAC of the OEDC recognises the interlinkages between Participatory Development, good governance, human rights and sustainable development. “It has become increasingly apparent that there is a vital connection between open, democratic and accountable systems of governance and respect of human rights and the ability to achieve sustained economic and social development”.

The Report of the Aid Study Committee of Japan International Cooperation Agency recognises similar conceptual patterns of Participatory Development.

“Development within a developing society aims, we believe, at building into society the mechanism that will ultimately permit self-reliant growth without foreign assistance, at sustaining stable growth patterns for economic development in harmony with the environment. For this to be possible, the central focus of development, is not necessarily to boost production of material goods: instead it should be to foster and enhance people’s capability to have a role in their society’s development. To this end, people should be willingly involved in a wide range of development activities, as agents and beneficiaries of development. It is this participation that is important.”

So in this case, ‘sustainable’ and ‘participatory’ development concepts, which should ideally hold a mutual interdependence proved in fact to be diametrically opposed. What was deemed to be ‘sustainable’ eliminated the possibility of local participation. It therefore appears useful to examine related
development concepts and to problematise congruencies and incongruencies with the concept of Participatory Development.

Participatory Development and good governance has become a central element in international development discourse and communication from 1990 onwards. Its conceptual convergence with Participatory Development is the subject of many research and study documents, in particular of donor agencies. The World Bank, which consciously avoids speaking about 'government', was the main agency to stress 'governance' in the context of structural adjustment policies. David G. Williams pointed out that "it has become apparent to many within the bank that reorienting macroeconomic policies is not enough to ensure rapid development. This is a crucial reason for the rise of the idea of good governance".

In the first official publication on "Governance and Development" in 1992, the World Bank described governance as:

"The manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development. Good governance, for the World Bank is synonymous with sound development management."

In the same publication, Lewis T. Preston, the former President of the World Bank, explained the World Bank's interest in good governance as follows:

"Good governance is an essential complement to sound economic policies. Efficient and accountable management by the public sector and a predictable and transparent policy framework are critical to the efficiency of markets and governments, and hence to economic development."

Good governance mainly focuses on public sector management, a sound legislative framework, effective regulatory agencies, an efficient implementation machinery and a transparent decision making process. Activities to promote 'good governance' would typically consist of—
a- improving the financial management of public institutions and enterprises;

b- providing an enabling legislative framework for promoting private sector activities, e.g. improving laws governing property rights, bankruptcy, trade, and investments;

c- providing support for legal training and judiciary;

d- improving government statistical systems, monitoring and reporting;

e- promoting a pluralist institutional structure;

f- providing citizens with adequate access to information\textsuperscript{52}.

Paul Streeten elaborates on the importance of good governance for the efficient functioning of people-friendly markets. He argues that markets are neutral institutions, which can work for good or ill. He favours-opposite to the neo-classical approach of state-minimalism (laissez-faire)-a strong state intervention;

"Not only should government provide a legal framework and maintain law and order, including the enforcement of contracts, property rights, etc, and pursue the correct macro-economic policies with respect to exchange rates, interest rates, wage rates and trade policies in order to ensure high levels of employment without inflation and economic growth. It must also encourage competition by anti-monopoly and anti-restrictive practices legislation or by setting up competitive enterprises in the public sector, or by trade liberalisation or take over natural monopolies"\textsuperscript{53}.

"Good governance" has become another development catchphrase. In the international development discourse, it is often associated with decentralisation and devolving of powers to lower levels of governance.

Definitions of good governance should also encompass the relationship between government at various levels and civil society. In such a wider context,
good governance may indeed be considered as an important element in promoting Participatory Development. The Aid Study Committee of the Japan International co-operation Agency elaborates on the relationship between Participatory Development and good governance.

"Participatory Development" and good governance are related in the following way: Participatory Development with its central focus on raising the quality of participation by local societies and thus better achieving self-reliant and sustainable development and social justice, in one important form of people-oriented development. Good governance is the foundation of Participatory Development in as much as it provides the government functions needed to promote participation and create the environment in which participatory processes take place.

In developing democracies like India the realization of true democracy and attainment of national integration and socio-economic development which constitute the lofty objectives of development administration hinges upon the active participation and involvement of people in the affairs of the state. Citizen participation is the means of attainment of national goals and decentralization political and administrative is the means of promoting people’s participation and co-operation in democratic development. There exists a triangular relationship between decentralization, democracy and development.

Institution of local self-government signifying political decentralization are essential for development, for, they alone make popular participation in decision making effective and informed. Further achievement of social change and economic growth requires a spreading of efforts so that local communities and individuals can participate and bring under ideal conditions energy, enthusiasm and local initiative to the working out of local development activities. On the other hand it is only when people have control over decisions and their execution that administration can become responsible and responsive to people’s needs and aspirations – As the UN document specifies;
An important reason for decentralization is to develop more effective popular participation in local affairs including activities of central government that are carried out locally. Such participation only enhances the dignity of the individual and the sense of community at all levels, but also adds vitality to governmental programmes and provides a means for local control over them. It makes the programmes more responsive and better adapted to local needs. Moreover, through participation, members of the community may be induced to do more on their own initiative and make a fuller contribution to government programme.

Participation is an action-oriented term. If calls for drive, will and skill on the part of the participant citizen of group to be actively involved in the development activities. At the same time, participation differs from mobilization in that the latter involves an element of force or compulsion and gives no share to the citizen or the public to influence decision i.e., in determining plan priorities or allocation of resources or setting up of goals. In other words, the mobilization model like that of Karl Deutsche and others is based on the assumption that the people are incapable of articulating their needs and aspirations and that the task has to be left to the elite group in bureaucracy and politics. Vital decision concerning development goals, plan objectives and priorities, resource allocation and strategies of development would be determined by the elite group and the people would be simply expected to endorse the plans so drawn up by specialists and act as mere instruments for implementing the plans and realizing the set goals. The plans drawn up by the mobilisers will be imposed on the people for implementation as is done in non-democratic regimes. However, widespread participation is not peculiar to democracies. Even greater emphasis is placed upon mobilization of the public by the modern dictatorships both fascist and communist.

This participation of citizens in the development process is the heart beat and pulse rate of development administration. It is the *sinequanon* of democracy and development. The effectiveness of a political administrative system depends to a large extent upon the nature and extent of participation of the people in the
systemic functions. In other words, development of the system and of the people who are the constituents of the systems are vitally dependent upon the active participation of citizens in the development field. For, on the nature and level of participation depends the legitimacy of government laws, policies and decisions, the viability of development programmes and the efficiency, effectiveness and equity of development administration. Participation renders the speedy attainment of development goals possible by providing information useful to administrators in programme planning, implementation and evaluation, by giving incentive to client groups to cooperate with the administrator's efforts in which they themselves have participated and by urging the development personnel to become more adaptive and innovative so that they can respond to new social demands.

In the developmental context, public participation or cooperation means participation of citizens in the decision making process. For the purpose of this study, the concept of participation of citizens in development administration may be defined as participation of the public in general and the targeted public in particular in the developmental decision making process. The modern notion of development is one of citizen involvement in the decision making process. People's participation in the development process has two dimensions, viz. (a) administrative participation. (b) Political participation. The first involves the participation of the targeted public in the various stages of the decisional network viz. (a) formulation of development plans, programmes and projects. (b) implementation of such plans, programmes and projects and (c) evaluation of the attainment of the goals of the programmes. The second i.e., political participation, for this study means actions by citizens (farmers) to elect their rulers and to influence the decisions of governmental authorities by exercising their rights; (a) to vote, (b) to contest offices, (c) to associate and (d) to articulate their demands before government and administration. As Herbert McClosky, Sidney Verba and his associates believe democracies have evolved both by expanding the number of these political rights and the number of people who have the rights. This study
assumes that citizens can exert political influence to a reasonable degree through the full panoply of the political rights.

Apart from taxes and military service, as Laucas observes, the one benefit which the modern state may have available for sharing out among its citizens is participation in the process of decisions making. This is pre-eminently, though not exclusively constituted by the exercise of these political and civil rights. By the energetic exercise of these rights, the citizens may acquire political leadership, which becomes pivotal element for the development process.

For, among others, political leadership is crucial because it has greater control over force in society and over decision making. Thus for the present study, the concept, ‘political participation’ applies to the activities of ordinary citizens as well as political leaders aimed at influencing the governmental decisions. In operational terms it involves the energetic use of these four political rights. However, the exclusion of the right to strike, protest, demonstrate and revolt from the purview of political participation of this study is not to undermine the importance of the right to political participation, i.e. political development.

“A decision”, observes Herbert Simon, “is not an unitary event but the product of a complex social process generally extending over a considerable period of time. Decision making includes attention directing or intelligence processes that determine the actions of decision, processes for discovering and designing possible courses of action and processes for evolving alternatives and choosing among them”. While decision is a compound of ‘facts’ and ‘values’, decision making is a process involving three actions, viz. Intelligence, design and choice. For Peter Doucker the decisional process involves six steps, viz. (a) defining the problem, (b) analysing it, (c) developing alternative solution, (d) finding the best solution, and (e) finally making decisions effective by converting it into action.
The decision making process permeates the entire development process from determination of plan objectives and goals, plan priorities, formulation of development programmes and action programmes or projects to implementation of plans and programmes and their evaluation.

The participation of citizens i.e., the target group in each of these phases is essential for the attainment of plan objectives and goals on which depends the development of the groups concerned. Studies by M. Z. Ali, for instance, shows that planned efforts did not achieve the degree of success aimed at largely because farmers could not be associated in preparing their own plans and plans could not be drawn in accordance with their available resources and satisfaction of farm families. The participation of the target population in the decisional process is vital because as Haldipur observes, all decisions affect human beings as they are taken to enhance the quality of human life. Somebody is going to work it and some persons are going to be affected by it and therefore, it has to be participative and in this the citizen can not be left out as a bystander.

Sound decision making calls for supply of timely, adequate and relevant information at all stages of the process. During the intelligence phase, one needs to have information concerning the situation the symptoms of the problem, cause effect relationships and socio-economic and political aspects of the environment. During the design phase, when a large problem is broken into smaller manageable modules, information is needed regarding inter-linkages between various modules, important variables, constraints, assumptions and criteria for testing various alternatives.

During the choice phase, information is required regarding ecological factors. At this stage the decision-maker weights the rationality of the alternative solutions emerging out of the design phase against the ecological factors and makes the final choice. During the execution phase working plans for implementation incorporating a time schedule and requirement of various resources are adopted. The information required during the phase is used for
planning and organizing activities. In the final phase when control is exercised information is required for monitoring progress and to take effective "mid-course" correction measures to reach the targets in time. The mass media plays an important role in disseminating vital information to the participating public and inlisting their co-operation and involvement in the development programmes. In other words, media participation by the participating citizens is vital for their successful participation in development activities.

Participatory development is not only an approach or a goal but also a tool. Donor agencies, government institutions, NGO's and researchers refer to it as a strategy as well as a methodology. Guy Grant pointed out eight key characteristics of participatory development projects.

(a) significant involvement of those affected in project initiation, design, operation and evaluation;

(b) inclusion of those affected in project design mechanism for regular participation to guide administrative, productive and distributive elements of the project;

(c) larger external linkages of the project that are functional for those at the bottom;

(d) cultural feasibility and appropriateness;

(e) ecological soundness;

(f) potential of self-reliance and reduced further dependency;

(g) potential for self-sustainment after cessation of project and;

(h) enhancement of self-directed learning and avoidance of intellectual dependency."
Regarding 'those affected in project management', the term 'project beneficiaries' is still the most common in development language. The term fits into the charity idea of development assistance. However, it is seldom criticised by "progressive" development professionals who would otherwise reject the charity approach. The terms 'project stakeholders' (the new World Bank jargon) or 'project participants' better reflect a participatory character of project management.

Awareness has risen in development research and management that other "people" than only the primary target group benefit from development investments. Therefore, a crucial task consists of distinguishing between primary, secondary and possible even tertiary project participants. Primary participants may be defined as the ultimate target group (the farmers, the women in the village etc.); secondary participants may be defined as those involved in the direct implementation of the project (government departments, NGOs) and tertiary participants may include project consultants and the staff of the funding agencies.

Translative principles of participatory development into the practice of project management faces difficulties. The reason for this does not only lie in the lack of definitional significance of the concepts itself but can also be attributed to insufficient care and communication between partners when the project is still in its conceptual infancy. Project partners (donor agencies, government and non-governmental organisations, the target group) often have different opinion on matters such as the form and the extent of participation of the target group throughout the projects various stages. Such differences, however, are all too often overlooked. The formulation of overall conceptual project approaches usually reflects the development philosophy and the priorities of the donor agency.

The projects mirror international development concerns (deforestation, gender inequality, education, ecological awareness building, etc). Project partners and those who want to become project partners and receive funds would usually make an effort to incorporate the donor philosophy in the strategy of the project
proposal believing this would favour their case and increase their chances to enter into further negotiations. Taking into account the large number of proposals, the time consuming selection process and the political pressure to commit funds according to prior negotiated agreement between governments or donor agencies and recipient institutions, further communication between project partners is cut short, Lack of time and pressure to commit funds according to bilateral agreements between donor and recipient countries are primary concerns in the starting phase of many development projects. For other projects, actual emergency situations like natural and manmade disasters require immediate relief assistance. Such pressure seems to translate into a sense of urgency, which means differing opinions between partners receive precious little consideration, are not negotiated, and accordingly remain unsolved. Consultants who act as management and technical advisers as well as communication facilitators are also exposed to such constraints. A hastily drafted project begins to be implemented while the ignored tensions remain latent and become manifest in latest stages in the form of frustration over progress, questionable commitment and ultimately project failure.

The nature of the traditional project, approach also makes the translation of conceptual considerations into practice difficult. David C. Korten traces the problem back to the roots of the Positivistic Science approach to Newtonian Physics. The believe in knowable laws sharpened the technocratic character of the development project model and ignored the process and participation aspect in human development. Lars Johannsson with reference to the European Community point out that International donor institutions tend to regard projects as products which have to be sold to the target group instead of emphasising the service and sharing character of project co-operation.

"This is evident in the jargon. An European Community publication says straight-forwardly that a development project has come to an end when ‘the product’ has been made and ‘sold’ to the benefit of the target group."
Village realities might also disturb the conceptual consistence of development approaches. While Guy Grant mentions ecological soundness as one of the key characteristic of participatory development projects, village communities often prefer development activities which meet their short term needs (employment generation activities, deepening of wells, supply of hand pump) or projects of prestigious nature (e.g. the construction of a temple or a community hall). Mani Shanker Aiyar, Member of Parliament from Tamil Nadu in Southern India, reported that villagers of Mayiladuturai in his constituency in Tamil Nadu mentioned a footpath to the funeral ground and a shelter as their top development priorities.

Catchwords like ‘people’s participation’ or ‘community participation’ actually suggest unity of people or communal harmony among the targeted beneficiary group. However, it is often ignored that people of the target group have different development needs and priorities. Conflicts may actually occur among primary project participants, in particular in hierarchically organised and socially heterogeneous rural societies. Robert Chambers proposes to assess the powers and interests of different groups at the village level, how they converge or conflict, and how they will support or impede the achievement of a project’s objectives. He distinguishes between acceptability of projects among “rural elites” and “poorer rural people” and distribution of project benefits among them.

Participation was not a major issue in the context of the expert driven blueprint development approach which has for a long time dominated development management and has only gradually been reformed from the late 1970s onwards. Anders Rudquist described the characteristics of the blueprint approach as follows:

“According to the blueprint approach all important planning decisions are made at central or regional levels. They are based on quantitative data or estimations and planning (as well as implementation) follow a preconceived, fixed
time schedule. The targets of the plan are generally determined from the beginning of the planning process and expressed in numerical terms⁶⁹.

The classical type of blueprint development approach imposed a problem analysis on the target group derived mainly from large scale data analysis, quick country-side visits close to urban areas, and brief communication with the local male elites by high profile experts and government officials. Specific local realities were largely ignored. This did not encourage the 'targeted beneficiaries' to develop a sense of ownership and commitment for the project and made sustenance of the project difficulty almost impossible to achieve.

From the late 1970s onwards, a numbers of different methods and tools were developed and applied by donor agencies, NGO.s, trainers, and researchers to develop models of participatory project management, including planning, implementation, monitoring and evolution. The World Bank Participation Sourcebook provides an overview of ten different methods and tools which are grouped into four categories:

(a) Collaborative Decision making: Workshop – Based Methods;
(b) Collaborative Decision making: Community – Based Methods;
(c) Methods of Stakeholder Consultation;
(d) Methods for Social Analysis⁷⁰.

In India, NGOs with a large number of international contacts played a major role in promulgating "Participatory Rural Appraisal through organising of field workshops and training sessions, among them Mysore Resettlement and Development Agency (MYRADA), Aga Khan rural Support Programme (AKRSP) and Action Aid India".

Aga Khan Rural Support Programme describes its Participatory Rural Appraisal approach as follows:
“Participatory Rural Appraisal” is a methodological approach, which helps us to learn from villagers about the status of natural resources, the actual problems faced by communities and their needs.

The target group is collected at one place and the particular topic for discussion is introduced by an Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) (1) Worker. People start discussing among themselves and come up with a reasonable good analysis of different aspects of the topic. Since the target group participates actively, the information is quite reliable. Complicated village land use and water shed maps are prepared by villagers using these methods, and we have found these maps good and reliable tools in helping us to plan our activities. Our experience shows that people are involved from the beginning of the project they continue a positive involvement in the ensuring developmental activities. This process creates a feeling of ownership over the activity.

A general PRA gives an overall picture of villages, while Topical PRAs focus on specific programmes. In forestry using a Topical PRA with a Tree Matrix, we can identify species, which are desired by both men and women separately for plantation. Men demand more commercial species while women demand species useful for fuel, fodder, medicines and fruits. This has helped us to select species useful for both men and women.

Participatory Rural Appraisals, however, have also been applied and promoted by government development agencies.

A publication of the Forest Department / State Government of Haryana gives the experience of participatory microplanning.

“The guiding principle has been to attune to the needs and expectations of local user groups through a process of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)".
This requires long meeting and careful discussions with village people during various stages of micro planning, consensus building, implementation and management.

**Example**: Initially the village Panchayat passes a resolution for handing over an area to the project authorities for eco-rehabilitation and development through afforestation, grassland development and soil-conversation. To avoid hardship to livestock owners depending upon common grazing lands, small areas were taken for eco-rehabilitation with the consent of the village Panchayat even though it is often difficult for the project to effectively manage such areas dispersed in small pockets. This approach, has, however, helped the project in winning the confidence of the villagers.

In each of the villages, microplans have been prepared with the active participation of the community. These incorporate a village map, transects of land suitability, details of Sajra, species preference and a sketch map of the plantation sites. The community decides about the location and area of the common lands to be allotted for planting trees and seeding with grasses and legumes. They also suggest their preference ranking of species for planting.

So called "facilitators" are supposed to play a crucial role in carrying out the participatory rural appraisals. Their role consists of bridging differences in expectations and communication between project staff, villagers of different social and economic status, men and women. In some NGO projects, so called "extension volunteers" or "para - workers" have been entrusted with the task of facilitating the participation of the village community in development activities.

The recruitment and the commitment of such volunteers is often a major problem in village development work. In a hierarchically stratified society with strong gender inequality, it is particularly difficult for NGOs, and government organizations to identifying ‘neutral’ facilitators who care equally for the interest of the different castes and groups in the villages.
The participatory development debate has contributed to the expansion of the notion of ‘politics’ and ‘political participation’. The meaning of ‘politics’ is no longer confined to strategies and actions of major power players in society, but extends to initiatives of people which have grouped together on a voluntary, often spontaneous, basis for pursuing political and development objectives. In contrast to the political ambitions of traditional social forces, the goals of new social and development forces are in many cases of a rather private nature and turn more political only in the negotiation process with other state and civil society agents.

In many developing countries, ‘political participation was for a long time largely characterized by hierarchical leadership and ideological approaches. When the majority of developing countries started to adopt structural Adjustment Programmes under the auspices of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during the 1980s, mass demonstrations against the rise of prices and cut-off subsidies emerged as another major feature of political participation.

From the late 1980s onwards, the rise of new social movements in the developing countries have given people new outlets for participation in the political and development process of their society. In the context of the participatory development debate and the increasing conceptualization of the related issues of democratic decentralization, good governance, universal human rights and sustainable development, a fresh look has to be given to “political participation”. A redefinition of politics has taken place in the context of changing state-society relations.

Rajni Kothari gives some examples of how the range of politics has widened in India with the emergence of new social movements and the tremendous increase of private development initiatives.

“The environment the rights and the role of women, health, food and nutrition, education, shelter and housing. The dispensation of justice, communications and the dissemination of information, culture and life style, the
achievement of peace and disarmament none of these were considered to be subject matter for politics, at any rate not for domestic politics, and certainly not for mass politics in which ordinary people were involved. This has now changed"^75.

PARTICIPATORY RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural development and people’s participation should go together and both these components are highly essential for the integrity and the unity of the nation. In order to keep people united and feel responsible, involving indigenous people in developmental programmes framed for their own development is very much necessary. This not only helps to accelerate economic growth of the nation, out also to achieve balanced regional development, which alternatively checks the drift of rural population to cities in search of employment to a large extent.

“Peoples Participation” has become a standard rhetoric in India today. Different actors interpret it differently. One view is that participation means getting people to agree to and go along with a project which has already been designed for them, or to get support of a few leaders. This has been the approach in many development schemes that did not work. People did not identify themselves with the assets created such as the hand pumps or trees planted, nor did they undertake the responsibility of maintenance of assets. “I manage, you participate”, was the dominant underlying principle behind such projects. These tended to try to make people aware of their responsibility without giving them any authority to spend funds or to manage assets. People’s participation was then expressed not in a manner that would establish their rights over assets, land of its produce^76.

It is universally acknowledged that the goals or our socio-economic development are not achievable unless the citizens actively involve themselves in the preparation, implementation and follow up of the developmental plans and
programmes. Though this basic philosophy is highly accepted right from the days of planning, till today, the spirit of participation has not been realised. During the last two decades several new approaches like 'top-down planning', 'planning from below', 'bottom up planning', 'micro-level planning', 'resource-based planning', and 'multi-level planning' have been thought of in the context of involving the people in every phase of development. Participation in decision making has also received increased attention.

India is predominantly an agrarian society. As per the 1991 census, out of total population, 74 percent are inhabiting in around 5.67 lakh villages which are more or less categorised with high levels of illiteracy, ignorance, low level of quality of life and so on. Therefore, it is essential to concentrate more on rural development.

Lahiry, Amitabh argued that, if we compare the development of the nations, which achieved independence around or after the year 1947, some of the nations are far ahead of us in terms of socio-economic development. Rural development helps to liberate the energies of the rural people, especially the poor, so that they can realise their full potential and thus improve their capacity as well as commitments to development, organise and govern them selves towards the attainment of a higher quality of life for the individual and for the entire community.

The twin major objectives of rural development programme are accelerated economic growth with wider participation and most equitable distribution of its gains.

The Government of India was committed to formulate various plans on rural development, and did so during the plan periods by formulating strategies for future plans and allocating substantial amounts to attain faster rural development. This particular concept was given due importance in each and every Five Year Plan.
Planning and development policies for the eradication of poverty in rural India have started since the inception of the Five Year Plans. Though, importance of rural development was recognised in the earlier plans, it was only from the Sixth Plan onwards due emphasis was laid on rural development. And over a period more and more emphasis was laid in building rural India as real India. For the first time, need of people’s participation at the grass root level was felt essential in the seventh Five Year Plan, from there it went on the people’s self managed institutions in the Eight Five Year Plan with greater voice and choice.

During the Eight Five Year Plan (1992 – 97), the emphasis was on building up of rural infrastructure. Priority for all weather roads, particularly in tribal, hill and desert areas, minor irrigation works and water harvesting structure schemes for soil conservation and social forestry. Participation of people in programmes through Panchayati Raj Institutions, cooperatives and other self managed institutions, provision of short term employment through TRAP and DRY.

The Ninth Five Year Plan attempts to make a serious effort to raise the level of agricultural and rural incomes. The ultimate objective is to improve the living conditions of the poor and the various disadvantaged sections of the rural society. Priority is given to agriculture and rural development with a view to generating adequate productive employment and eradication of poverty. Ensuring food and nutritional security for all, particularly the vulnerable sections of the society. ensuring environmental sustainability of the development process through social mobilisation and participation of people at all levels, empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups such as schedule caste, schedule tribes and other backwards classes and minorities as agents of socio-economic change and development, promoting and developing people’s participatory institutions likes Panchayat Raj Institutions, cooperatives and self-help groups, are the other priorities.

Basing on the Five Year Plans the government framed and implemented various rural development programmes in our country from time to time to achieve
balanced development in the country. The following are the different kinds of programmes:

I. Community Development Programme (1952)

II. Intensive Agriculture Districts Programme (1960)

III. Intensive Agriculture Area Programme (1964)

IV. Small Farmers Development Agency.

V. Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labour.


VII. Accelerated rural Water Supply Programme (1972)

VIII. Desert Development Programme (1977)

IX. Command Area Development Programme (1974)

X. Tribal Area Programme

XI. Hill Area Programme.

XII. Integrated Rural Development Programme (1980).

XIII. Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment Programme (1979)

XIV. Crash Programme for Rural Employment.

XV. Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Programme.

XVI. Food for Work Programme (1977).

XVIII. Minimum Needs Programme.

XIX. 20-Point Programme.

XX. Western Ghats Development Programme.

XXI. Special Programme for the North – Eastern Region.

XXII. Special Incentive Programme for the Industrially Backward Areas.


XXIV. Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas.

XXV. Wage Employment Programme.

XXVI. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (1989).


XXVIII. Supply of Improved Tool Kits to Rural Artisans.

XXIX. Indira Awaas Yojna (1985).

XXX. Million Wells Scheme (1988).


XXXII. Ganga Kalyan Yojana (1997).


Many of the above said developmental Programmes were started at different times during the 70’s, 80’s and 90’s. Some of the Programmes were discontinued either because they have been replaced by other programmes or have been merged into new ones.
It has been long argued that people’s participation is essential for the success of Rural Development Programmes. People’s participation should be encouraged owing to the fact that people in villages know their needs better than government officials working at block, district and state levels. Non-involvement of people in the development programmes is also a great concern and challenge to Rural Development No Programme can be a success without the people.

Participation is not some process of involving every one and reducing all to a common denominator. Rather, it consists in evolving institutional structures from which diverse individuals with a sense of dignity and self-respect are to determine their own destinies. This ‘People Participation Perspective’, *inter alia* in its operational design will imply that most plan options, for the urban section be complimentary, supportive and reinforcing in character.78

Participation broadly is of three types. First: where people come forward on their own to participate without any external support and force. Second: where people participate because of some mandate and official endorsements. And Third: where people participate because it has been made compulsory and its violation may invite coercion. In a democratic country like ours, compulsory participation is not desirable. Between spontaneous and sponsored, the former is most suitable. This will sustain for longer period as well as establish the ideal cooperative and participatory situation.

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment has thrown up many new challenges to the rural local government, one of which is grassroots participation. The amendment has attempted to institutionalise people’s participation through a body, called gram sabha, which has earlier existed in some states, more in name than in action.

Gram Sabha literally means village meeting—a meeting of the villagers to discuss common problems they face in their village. In many ways, it is
comparable to the citizen forum - a forum of direct democracy in the ancient Greek City States.

Gram Sabha is an institution in the hands of the people to air their grievances and to watch functioning of the panchayats. It also offers the panchayats an opportunity to share their difficulties with the people who have elected them. It can go a long way in legitimising the authority of the panchayats, ensuring transparency of their activities, inculcating in the people respect for political institutions and respect for political leadership. It can, in the real sense, be the guide, friend and philosopher of the gram panchayat.

Gram Sabha can be an effective forum for mobilization of masses for community activities by enabling the people to get together under one umbrella and to interact on issues of mutual interest. In this way, it can work as a bulwark against casteism and communalism.

Gram Sabha is the best social unit in our new democratic institution. George Mathew rightly observes, "As the public spirited citizens and their collectivity is the key to social audit, members of the gram sabha, comprising all sections of the representative bodies, could raise issues of social concern and public interest and demand explanation". There are many success stories of gram sabha using the social audit for the good of the villages preventing misuse of resources and corruption.

The 73rd Amendment of the constitution recognises gram sabha as a statutory unit. It is defined as a body of persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to a village located within the area of a Panchayat. The gram sabha is the reservoir of people's power, an agent of development at Panchayat level, an embodiment of gram swaraj. It is the place where the Panchayats and the people have to stand in a face-to-face position. Gram Sabha brings the village community under one roof to collectively debate the issues concerning the gram.
West Bengal and Kerala have taken a step forward in the functioning of Gram Sabha.

In West Bengal a gram sansad is required to guide and advise the gram Panchayat in regard to the schemes for economic development and social justice undertaken or proposed to be undertaken in its area and may.

a- Identify or lay down principles for identification of schemes which are required to be taken up on priority basis for economic development of the village;

b- Identify or lay down principles for identification of beneficiaries for various poverty alleviation programmes;

c- Constitute one or more beneficiary committees consisting of not more than five persons. Who are not members of the gram panchayats;

d- Mobilise mass participation for community welfare programmes and programmes for adult education, family welfare and child welfare;

e- Promote solidarity and harmony among all sections of the people, irrespective of religion, faith, caste, creed or race; and

f- Record its objection to any action of the pradhan or any other member of the gram panchayat for failure to implement any other development scheme properly or without active participation of the people of the area.

The 73rd constitutional Amendment in 1993 for the first time created a statutory imperative for the establishment of legally empowered Gram Sabha or village assemblies in India, although such direct people’s participation in decision making and developmental process was integral to the Gandhian vision of Panchayati Raj even earlier.
Most status have statutorily empowered Gram Sabha for development planning and social audit.

After all to make participatory development more effective and meaningful, the following specific measures may yield desired results. In the first place, the panchayats, particularly in states like West Bengal, where the panchayats are political panchayats, the parties should come forward and play effective role. They should move from door-to-door before the meetings as they do before the elections. Second, in the meeting, the panchayat leadership should demonstrate patience and tolerance. They should listen to the constructive criticism of the people. Third, an atmosphere has to be created where the people would feel free to speak their problems. Fourth, sustained information dissemination of positive examples of the functioning of the gram sabha and gram panchayat need to be supported by the government at the state and national levels, in order to create positive climate for promoting opportunities for self-governance at the village levels. The press should focus on such meetings. Fifth, the government officials should be so reoriented as to be responsive to the people. Sixth, the advice and decisions of the gram sabha should be made binding on the gram panchayats. Seventh, as in West Bengal, the state Acts should make penal provision for the recalcitrant panchayats. the panchayats which fail to hold meetings of the gram sabha. Eighth, as the villagers are not used to participating in a situation like this and the village is not tuned to it, the synchronization of the meeting with the cultural Programmes in tune with the rhythm of the rural life might be helpful. Ninth, there is a need for generating motivation among the members. This can be attempted in two ways : first, by making them realise the usefulness of this meeting, second, by ensuring that the decisions of the meeting are carried out. Tenth while gram sabha is an institution for empowering the people, people need to be empowered through the spread of literacy and political education.

Apart from the specific measures suggested above, the following are a few suggestions aimed at securing effective people’s participation in development Programmes.
a- The rural development Programmes should be based on the felt needs of the people, in order to achieve greater people’s participation and sustainability in the development.

b- Motivate people to participate in rural development programmes by making them aware about the benefits they receive from these programmes.

c- People should be made aware of the importance of rural development in eradicating rural poverty and rural illiteracy.

d- Invite people for small focus group discussion prior to planning and implementation in order to consider their felt needs.

e- Consult different community leaders within the village to gain their confidence.

f- Identify problems faced by the people and give importance to eliminate them, keeping in view of their seriousness.

g- Greater amount of patience is required for the officers and field staff while dealing with people of different cultures, and social environment.

h- Officers and field staff in connection with people’s participation, should be technically sound and competent.

i- Do not leave the development Programmes halfway through, but pursue to the end by providing necessary technical and financial guidance.

j- Involve existing local voluntary organisations / NGOs in securing people’s participation for rural development since they are more experienced and exposed to rural minds.

k- Greater effort should be made by involving media such as radio, television, and newspapers by using local language.
1- Empower people to have a greater say and role in their own affairs at the grass root level.

m- Encourage participation of people in decision making planning formulating strategy, implementation, follow up, sharing the benefits of development and evaluation.

n- Extension Workers should be given incentives for motivating people to take part in participatory development etc.

**NGO s AND DEVELOPMENT**

In the last decade, there has been a great deal of interest in the voluntary sector and its possible role in development. The attention, which these relatively small interventions (a) in civil society have got, is symptomatic of the complexity of development problems, the political economy of development and the centrality of the concern of teaching out to the poor.

Voluntary Organizations (VOs), which is what, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) would like to call themselves are a relatively new phenomenon. Organizations today, whether voluntary or government, are an accepted fact of life. Individuals are surrounded by organizations from the day they are born to the day that they die. The term organizations is used in its true institutions as hospitals, schools, factories, offices, the armed forces and so on. In fact in modern society it is impossible to escape from the influence of organisations, of one type or another.

Generally, voluntary organisations and non-governmental organisations are treated as one and the same. This may not be so. All non-governmental organisations are not necessarily voluntary. Voluntary organisations are
spontaneous in their origin whereas non-governmental organisations may also be
government sponsored.

It may be useful to draw a distinction between voluntary organisations and
non-governmental organisations, whereas voluntary organisations are spontaneous
in their origin, non-governmental organisations may be sponsored by government.
Although agencies like All India Women’s Conference, Indian Council of child
welfare, etc. are voluntary, yet project implementing committees appointed by the
Central Social Welfare Board to run Welfare extension projects and committees
for running after-care homes appointed by the state governments, though
constituted primarily of voluntary workers are not voluntary organisations but are
known as non-governmental organisations, since these organisations do not come
into existence voluntarily but are sponsored and substantially funded by the
government. These organisations may not be able to arouse community’s popular
support, since they are not based on democratic foundations and should, therefore,
not be equated with voluntary organisations.

A unique feature of voluntary organisations is that it stimulates voluntary
action among the served community and progressively involves enlightened
individuals belonging to the served community in the higher echelons of its
decision-making machinery.

Voluntary organisations had been defined by different writers. Lord
Beveridge writes about the voluntary action and voluntary organisation that a
generation ago a voluntary worker was someone who gave unpaid service to a
good cause, and the group which was formed for working for that good cause
came to be known as a voluntary organisation. The group took its name in fact
from the outstanding characteristic of the workers upon whom it depended.

David Sills, a sociologist, writes that definitions of the term “voluntary
association”, differ widely but that they generally contain three elements. A
voluntary association is an organised group of persons:
(a) that is formed in order to further some common interest of its members;

(b) in which membership is voluntary in the sense that it is neither mandatory nor acquired through birth; and

(c) that exist independently of the state.

Sills defines voluntary organisations as a group of persons organised on the basis of voluntary membership without state control, for the furtherance of some common interests of its members. Despite overall minor distinctions between voluntary organisations and non-governmental organisation, both the terms are used in same meaning.

The choice of a strategy to be adopted by a non-governmental organisation, differ from organisation to organisation and depends on the ideology, motivation, capability of the organisation, experience of some non-governmental organisations may act as catalytic bodies operating externally to the rural communities; others may emerge from within the rural communities, serving as indigenous institutions. Most organisations in India like Ramkrishna Mission and Hindustan Talim Sangh belong to the former category. These organisations are usually set up by the well-wishers interested in rural development or by organizations of experts and educators. Such organizations may operate at the macro level covering the entire country or state, or at the micro-level covering a village or an area. The catalysts at the macro level may act as co-ordinating or may actively involve in delivering services directly to the rural population. For example, the association for voluntary agencies for rural development (AVARD) serves as a co-ordinating agency at the national level and there are institutions like CHETNA, which undertake co-ordinating work at the regional level.

Generally, non-governmental organizations follow four clear cut strategies, as pointed out by J.B. Singh. These are:

a Simple charity, supplementing welfarism of the state.
b. Encouraging people’s participation and in implementing programmes launched by the government for larger benefit of the community or village.

c. Involving people in programme planning, raising resources, implementing activities and sharing fruits of development.

d. Conscience instilling and organising people enabling them to demand and undertake planning and implementation of development programmes beneficial to them.

The NGO’s at present adopt a target group approach, but aim at self-reliance of the people they are serving. They want to dispel the propensity of depending development on the part of the beneficiaries. The NGO’s, once they have been able to assist a target group to become reasonably autonomous is their socio-economic status, move on to another target group still suffering from backwardness economic and social. This enables them to serve a large segment of the community.

The development of local leadership received new impetus because of the emphasis on the role of the “change agent” who was expected to act as a catalyst in the mobilization of local manpower and resources for bringing about development and social change.

NGO’s generally adopt a holistic approach to rural development and plan and organize their Programmes in such a way as to cover all aspects of rural life. But, of late, even major NGO’s have started specializing in certain services. May be, they are trying to provide the missing links in the long chain of rural reconstruction. Alternatively they might have felt that in view of the limited funds at their disposal, an element of specialization is inevitable and desirable.

Non-governmental organisations may also adopt different strategies for different concerns like finance, administration, implementation of programmes etc.
Based on the approaches they adopt and priority they give, non-governmental organisations have been classified into seven categories by J.B. Singh. This means that generally non-governmental organisations operate in seven distinct areas that are:

a- Charity: Giving food, clothing, medicine, alms, in cash and in kind, land, building, etc.

b- Welfare: providing facilities for education, health, drinking water, road communication, etc.

c- Relief: responding to call of duties during natural calamities like floods, drought, earthquakes, and man made calamities like refugee influx, ravanges of war, etc.

d- Rehabilitation: continuing and follow up of the work in areas struck by calamities and starting activities that are durable in nature.

e- Services: building up infrastructure in depressed backward areas.

f- Development of socio-economic environment around human beings.

g- Development of Human Beings: conscious raising, awakening, raising conscience, organizing, recording of priorities to suit social justice, redeeming the past and opening doors for opportunities to the oppressed and the exploited.

Non-governmental organization have been classified on a variety of bases. The size of the organization, the structure, the social functions, the sources of their support, the location, the characteristics of the members, the independence or dependence on outside control, and the beneficiary activities are the prime considerations for the classification of the non-governmental organizations.
Some writers have employed either structure or function as basis of classification. Sherwood Fix based his classification after examining 5000 associations upon the distinction between majoral, minoral and medial organizations. Majoral associations are those which serve the interest of the majority institutions of society, such as business, professional, scientific, educational, labour and agricultural associations. Minoral associations serve the interest of significant minority in the population, such as women's club, church organizations, hobby clubs and above all, ethnics. Medial organizations mediate between major segments or institutions in the society. For example a parent teacher associations mediates between the family and the school system.

David L. Sills developed a structural distinction between corporate type and federal type organizational structure and control in national organizations, while others have used other structural variable like accessibility or eligibility for membership as a basis for classification.

Non-governmental organizations have certain features and characteristics which distinguish them. Following are the few characteristics of a non-governmental organization.

a- It is the result of the voluntary effort, which though motivated by different factors, is spontaneous in nature.

b- It is an organization initiated and governed by its own members on democratic principles without any external control.

c- It is registered under an appropriate Act to give a corporate status to a group of individuals so that they get a legal personality and individual liability may give place to group liability.

d- It is a general body and a regularly constituted managing committees, representing all interest, men, women, professionals, public men, etc.
e- It has definite aims and objects and a programme in socio-economic of these objectives.

f- It is known and accepted by the community in which it is formed.

g- It has considerable autonomy and flexible planning and management of its programmes and services.

h- It has a sense of commitment to human development/welfare.

i- It undertakes people’s needs and help to solve their socio-economic problems.

j- It plans and implements its own programmes through its own voluntary and paid workers.

k- It raises its funds from the community.

l- It maintains its accounts and is accountable to people and the government so far as it receives grant.

Even though the above mentioned factors are the characteristics of a NGO the roots of the NGO’s are rooted in the virtues like human touch, dedication, flexibility, innovation, nearness to the community.

The main motivation behind NGO’s action is charity. It is more applicable to the Indian situation where charity is considered a religious duty. A healing human touch is rendered by the volunteers either in their personal capacity or through a non-official agency. The main characteristic of a non-governmental agency is “human touch”. Human touch is a quality which is innate in a human being and cannot be developed with any amount of training or incentive. Human touch, the hallmark of non-official agencies got eroded with the introduction of professionalism in social work, because, volunteerism and professionalism are the opposite poles.
The second characteristic of NGO’s action is dedication. The sense of dedication is more important to volunteers whether they work individually or through a non-governmental agency. Without any sense of commitment and dedication no NGO could meet its destiny.

A need of flexibility in the work style of non-governmental organization is next characteristics. This is possible because NGO’s are capable of their operational designs. This is necessary because the essence of non-governmental organizations is to be open and non-bureaucratic. Therefore, flexibility is a virtue of a non-governmental organization.

The fourth important characteristic / virtue of non-governmental organization is that it should be close to the community, having its roots in the community in which it is working. Therefore it has rightly been said that non-governmental organizations should think globally but act locally.

Non-governmental organisations should know the needs and problems of the community in which they are working. These organisations are not only familiar to such needs and problems but also sensitive to them. The non-governmental organisations, particularly at the community level are more close to the people than governmental organisation.

One of the virtues of the non-governmental organisations is innovation and self-reliance in their programmes and services. This is more often lacking in the governmental organisations. The history of non-governmental action depicts the needs and problems of the people are known and identified by the volunteers. The government has made an effort to join its hand with the non-governmental sectors. Innovation is of utmost importance in the NGO’s action.

The virtues discussed above are found to be lacking particularly in the national and international NGO’s since they are more bureaucratic than the governmental organizations. They employ professionals and get the work done.
They have become social service agents between the government and the community.

In a developing country like India, NGO's action is a three stage process. First, it is based on social conscience, which has been defined by Beveridge in his work, "Voluntary Action" as "the feeling of discomfort on the part of people in comfort about the people in discomfort". Second, voluntary action has emerged from social consciousness generated by organised interest groups of people who are committed to people-centred approach. Third, organisations of various target groups, particularly from among the weaker sections, have emerged. The membership of these groups or associations generally cuts across traditional boundaries of caste and occupational groups. There is the need for building up local initiative and leadership to take advantage of large number of rural development programmes currently in operation as well as the new ones to be launched.

To understand the relative roles of voluntary action and non-governmental organisations in the changing socio-political context in the country, it is necessary to know their connection. The expression "Voluntary action" is usually related to social change, a protest against prevailing system. It has an element of discontent in its expression. In contrast, non-governmental organisations are service oriented entities. They deal primarily with vulnerable groups of people. Even among non-governmental organisations one can discern two types, those that are social change oriented and those that confirm to the status quo. Even among the latter, some are development oriented and others continue to remain conventional. It is true that all non-governmental organisations have their origin involuntary action, but once the action gets institutionalized into constitution and bye-laws and governed by the board of management, the edge of social action gets gradually blunted and become conformist to the system.

NGO's action in the early twentieth century was a basement for the overall social reform and social welfare in the country. The focus of the social work
during this period was rather extended to promote a spirit of nationalism and a feeling of brotherhood among the people and train a band of men who would be prepared to give up everything and devote their entire life to service of the country in a missionary spirit. The approach of the voluntary activists was secular and it sought to solve the national and social problems on a rational basis. There was emphasis on improving the conditions of women, problems of untouchability, establishing co-operative enterprises and rendering relief work.

After independence NGO’s action changed in its approach and structure. The issues covered by the NGO’s activist during this period were also of different type. Even the parties involved in the NGO’s sector were different. After independence India was declared to be a “welfare state”. The government undertook welfare schemes and developmental works under various plans and policies. Besides, it has encouraged non-governmental organisations to undertake social welfare programmes under the grant-in-aid programme and setup autonomous bodies like Central Social Welfare Board, India Council of Social Welfare etc.

The decade that followed India’s independence marked a phenomenal increase in the number of non-governmental organisation in the country: they expended their activities to cover practically every field of social welfare and development. They not only undertook programmes with their own resources but also organised projects sponsored by the state.

Provisions of welfare services, since the beginning of the first plan has been a co-operative venture between the state and non-governmental organizations. The planner in India have all along emphasized the role of non-governmental organizations and have recognized services rendered by them in various fields. The First Plan Said: “A major responsibility for organizing activities in different fields of social welfare like the welfare of women and children, social education, community organizations, etc. falls naturally on non-governmental organizations. Any plan for social and economic generation should take into account the services rendered by these organizations and the state should give them maximum co-
Having recognized the importance of non-governmental organizations the government took concrete step to assist non-governmental agencies. During the period of the First five year plan, the central government established the Central Social Welfare Board in 1953 with the main object of assisting non-governmental organizations in organizing welfare programmes for women and children and for the physically handicapped. The Central Social Welfare Board in collaboration with the state Government, organized state Social Welfare Advisory Boards in each state and union territories.

With the establishment of the Central Social Welfare Board, the non-governmental organizations got an unprecedented support from the government on a systematic basis. It has so far given grants over ten crores of rupees and as many as 6,000 non-governmental organizations all over the country have benefited from its grant-in-aid programmes. The Board, besides given assistance to the already existing agencies, helped in establishing many new ones. It is reported that about 3,500 non-governmental organizations were started between 1951-60 and a majority of them (about 2,000) were established between 1954-55. Further, a study of the growth of non-governmental organizations reveals that among 6,000 organizations aided by the Board as many as 3,000 were started after the Board was setup. Very few organizations have been started after 1960 because the Board decided to continue its aid only to those organizations which had received its grants upto 1960 and not favour the idea of giving grants for starting new organizations of organizing welfare works.91

The growth and development of non-governmental organizations during the post-independence period was rather moulded by the government schemes meant for these non-governmental organizations. While the state sponsored programmes gave a great push to the work of non-governmental organizations, they also gave
rise to a feeling that they are making non-governmental organizations less dependent on community support. Since the sponsored programmes made provision for the staff, the efforts of welfare organization to mobilize volunteers to man their programmes got somewhat diluted. Further, the financial assistance given to non-governmental organizations based on the system of matching contributions made them more conscious of raising funds but not of raising volunteers. All this had a restrictive effect to some extent at least on the growth of non-governmental organizations in the true sense of the term.

Non-governmental organization's action in India, thus, is the product of social, ethical, economic, political, democratic, cultural and religious value and considerations. Its recorded history is round 150 years old. Today the number of non-governmental organizations working in different fields of social services, social welfare and rural development may be more than 25,000. If rural Mahila Mandals, youth clubs and other, small voluntary groups are added to this, the total number might exceed three lakhs. According to the information available with the Ministry of Rural Development, there were in the seventies around 60,000 Mahila Mandals, 90,000 youth clubs working in rural areas. The West Bengal, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan had the largest number of rural development agencies in the seventies, and benefited from it. This was primarily due to availability of grants-in aid from central Social Welfare Board and PADL (now CAPART) In addition, there may be more agencies which are unregulated, not receiving any grant, are in the nature of kinship group, based on mutual aid, self help, private and public trusts and ventures promoted by business houses.

NGO's action in India is of great historical importance, for it lit the spark for political, social, and economic freedom.

Non-governmental organizations have played a significant role in social welfare and development. One cannot imagine a society without voluntary action. A society without NGO's action is rather farce. The contribution of the NGO's in the field of welfare of the children, women, distressed and helpless is of
noteworthy. The aged, widows, orphans, run-aways etc. have been helped by these NGO s. In the field of education, co-operation, labour etc; the tremendous work has been done by the NGO s.

NGO’s social action has been advocated by our great leaders. Mahatma Gandhi, for instance, had vehemently supported collective social action in preference to the role of the state. Vinobha Bhave and Jaya Prakash Narayan had also endorsed these views. There has been a long history of community action and self help in India, and the values of compassion, concern for collective good and selfless action will be in evidence in future as well.

NGO’s have contributed a lot in the various fields of social welfare and development. NGO’s action itself is a spontaneous one. NGO’s action that has began with charity work like relief, social service etc. has now become an instrument for promotion of programmes and services coming under the broader field of social development. NGO’s social work, being social in nature and based on community needs in operation, is concerned with social services, social welfare and social development leading to human resource development.

The following are the field of social welfare and development in which the NGO’s have contributed their services.

Health, and medical services, leprosy control and rehabilitation, drug addiction, population education and family welfare, education, adult education, pre-school education, housing recreation, social welfare, disaster relief, welfare and development of children, welfare and development of youth, welfare and development of women, welfare of the aged and infirm, welfare of the handicapped, welfare of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, adoption, social defense, consumer protection, rural development and agriculture extension, environment, legal aid, and training. It is not possible to describe in detail the contribution of the various NGO’s in the fields mentioned above. However, an
an account of their contribution in brief may help to assess the role played by the
NGOs.

HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES

According to the Directory of voluntary Health Care Institutions published by the voluntary Health Association of India, 355 hospitals were working in India wherein Kerala tops the list, Tamil Nadu being second, followed by Andhra Pradesh in the NGO’s sector.

The Christian missionaries were the pioneers in bridging the gap between the rural and urban health services by way of setting up educational and health services in different parts of the country. Pre-independent India had a network of medical services with civil hospitals at every district headquarters. The organizations like Ramkrishana Mission, the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust established hospitals and small dispensaries both in rural and urban areas.

Educational and training institutes were also established not only by Christian missionaries but also by several other NGO’s. The names of medical Colleges located at Vellore (Tamil Nadu), Manipal (Karnatak), Wardha (Maharshta), Ferozepur and Ludhiana (Panjab), etc. are worth mentioning. In Maharashtra, Baba Amte’s Anandvan, the Hind Kustha Nivaran Sangh, Arole’s Jamkhed project on Comprehensive Rural Health etc. are of great importance.

The Indian Red Cross Society has also set up several hospitals, dispensaries and blood banks in different parts of the country. In addition, they have been organizing medical services as part of relief work.

The Indian Council of Social Welfare, Hyderabad Branch, setup in early fifties the Radium Institute which was later handed over to the government. The T. B. Association of Indian is yet another fine example of pioneering work of NGO’s which have been working for combating of tuberculosis. The child in Need Institute near Calcutta has been working in the field of malnutrition among women.
and children. The Kasturaba Medical Aid society is another organization working in the field of health.

Community health is yet another field where the NGO’s have contributed a great deal in developing alternative models for providing effective health care in many parts of the country. Some of these organizations have also been able to develop village based health cadres, educational materials and appropriate technology, thus attempting to fill the critical gaps that exist in the government health service.

EDUCATION

The NGO’s have played a distinct and effective role in building up education in general and pre-school and adult education in particular. NGO’s were pioneers in almost all components of education starting from the pre-school to higher education.

The foundation for higher education in rural areas was laid by the NGO’s of various type. With the initiative of the Union Ministry of education organizations like Mauni Vidyapeeth, Gargoti; Rural Institute, Amrawati (Maharashtra); Lok Bharati, Sanosara; Ramkrishna Vidyalaya, Coimbatore, (Tamil Nadu); Rajput College, Bijnaur, (U.P); Gandhigram Rural Institute, Madurai; Jamia Millia Islamia, Delhi etc. were engaged in rural higher education with assistance and recognition from the Ministry of Education.

Adult education is another area related to education where the NGO’s have had a great share of contribution. There are around 1,000 NGO’s aided under National Literacy Mission. These agencies have implemented several programmes such as adult literacy, social education, functional literacy, adult education etc.

Pre-school education which was never a part of the Indian traditional education system, was also taken up by the NGO’s sector. Some of the Christian
missionary organizations in the first half of the 20th century initiated work in this area.

Recently, population education has also been taken up by NGO's. The association for social Health in India (ASHI), the Bhartiya Grameen Mahila Sangh, the Young Women's Christian Association, Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Farmers Association of India etc. are some of the few organizations who have been doing their work in the family welfare and population education.

In the field of social welfare, also 15,000 NGO's are receiving grants-in-aid facility by Central Social Welfare Board.

Today NGO's working in the field of social welfare are not only restricted to the institutional services for woman and children, the handicapped and the aged, but they are now shifting to community based services, nutrition services, composite community development programme, medical social work, general medical aid, population education activities etc, are now covered by the NGO's sector.

The establishment of Central Social Welfare Board motivated number of NGO's to start some institutionalized services of destitute widows, deserted and poor women even by separating their children who were placed in children's institutions.

In south India several NGO's like Andhra Mahila Sabha, Rama Krishna Mission, Servants of India Society etc., established special schools for girls and women's homes to begin with. After Independence, maternity centers, craft centers for women, social education classes and balwadis were setup by the Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust. The community development programme helped in the promotion and strengthening of mahila mandals and youth clubs in the rural areas in order to enhance the participation of women in community development programme.
The oldest contribution of NGO's is the intervention in women's education. A large number of NGO's have established schools and colleges for girls. NGO's like Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Indore, SNDT group in Bombay, and persons like Maharshi Karva in Pune; Mr. Abdullah in Aligarh etc. have contributed in the fields of women's education. Condensed courses of training for women who were school drop-outs were started by several women's organizations in the 1960's with assistance of the Central Social Welfare Board.

The Central Social Welfare Board has promoted NGO's to started the family counseling centers at the district headquarters and such other towns by way of giving financial assistance for counseling service.

One of the biggest handicaps for women development is their low income. The programme of income-generation for women and consequently the families were take up by the Central Social Welfare Board in a big way through grants-in-aid to NGO's under their socio-economic programme. A large number of NGO's have received assistance from the Board for setting up income-generating projects. SEWA, Lijjat Papad, Indira Community Kitchens are some of the important projects which have helped women in self-employment and arranging grant and/or credit, for small income generating schemes.

Besides, the above mentioned programmes, the NGO's have also contributed considerable services for the development of women in the areas of adult education, pre-school education, health, housing, family welfare, nutrition, training and employment, income-generation activities, literacy and legal aid, adoption, drug addiction, residential care etc.

CHILD WELFARE

In the history of social welfare in India, NGO's have played a pioneering role in promoting child welfare programmes. A large number of NGO's were running orphanages and homes for the handicapped children before the
government initiated various programmes for children. Today NGO’s are not only providing institutional services but also extended their programmes to the non-institutional services such as health, education, nutrition, welfare and recreation.

With the sole object of mobilizing NGO’s activity in every state in favour of all aspects of children’s need, a national organization called Indian Council for Child Welfare was established in the year 1952. At present it has got to its credit more than twenty-five affiliated branches in all over India. It runs about 800 nutrition programme covering over 30,000 children under this programme.

In the 1980s the NGO’s intervention in the field of working and street children is another contribution for the welfare and development of the working, rag picking and street children. All over India a considerable number of NGO’s are working for street children. The Karnataka government has promoted NGO’s to start at least one night shelter for rag pickers and street children by way of giving financial assistance from the year 1990. There are around twenty five night shelters for rag pickers and street children in all over Karnataka, and all of them are run by the NGO’s.

NGO’s have been responsible for the organization of many child-welfare programmes. The government has enhanced its support to them by providing necessary funds. Their roles have not only been to promote participation of services, but also to increase awareness of the community in regard to child-care education.

WELFARE OF THE HANDICAPPED

The history of social welfare in the context of NGO’s action begins with welfare of the handicapped. The Friend in Need Society was the institution in Madras functioning since the middle of the nineteenth century. The credit goes to Ms. Mennie Sharp of Punjab who started the first school for blind in 1887. The first school for the deaf and mute was started in Mumbai in 1895. Around 8,000
institutions in India are working for the welfare of the disabled, out of where 800 are government run organizations and the rest are in the NGO's sector.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION

The intervention of NGO's in the protection of environment is of recent one by way of enhancing, awareness about environmental issue through seminars, workshops, publications, competitions etc. The NGO's also attempt practical studies and projects to carry out or demonstrate environmental protection and are involved in environmental activism. These organizations are also working for the prevention of water and air pollution which are the major planks of the national environmental policy.

The number of NGO's in India actively interested or involved in environmental issues today is much larger than any other third world country.

Recently, various NGO's have also spring up even at the grassroots level to assist the government and NGO's in matters of environmental protection and improvement.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

The intervention of NGO's in the field of rural development is of recent. The community development programmes started in India in 1952, though primarily an official programme, is a landmark in the history of NGO's contribution to rural development. Because, the youth clubs and mahila mandals were promoted to undertake the training programmes related to rural development programmes.

Following are the few NGO's actively involved in rural development.
Bhartiya Agro Industries Foundations (BAIF), Social Work Research Center. Ram Krishna Mission Ashram, Lokshiksha Parishad, Bhagavatulla Charitable Trust etc.

Association such as Bharat Krishak Samaj, Kasturba Gandhi National Memorial Trust, Bharatiya Grameen Mahila Sangh, Tonnage Club of India, Young Farmers Association, Association Of Voluntary Agencies For Rural Development, Action for Food Production, Bharat Sevak Samaj etc also have contributing their services to rural development.

The success of any development programme largely depends on the active participation of the people. Mere allocation of funds for development is not sufficient our experience on developmental planning has shown that developmental activities undertaken with active involvement of the people have a greater chance of success as compared to the development activities undertaken by the government where people become passive observers. In this respect NGO's play very crucial role in creating awareness, educating, motivation and enlightening the people for social transformation.

During the 1980s, the country has witnessed a tremendous proliferation and growth of NGO's focussing on rural developmental issues. Since then in the eradication of poverty, illiteracy, ill health and over all backwardness of the villagers, NGO's played a commendable role. They were instrumental in initiating, stimulating and accelerating the process of change in the tradition bound rural societies. They also created awareness among the people about the developmental programmes.

A developing society rapidly moving from tradition to modernity would experience a variety of social and economic tensions. A sensible NGO's working at the village level could help reduce these tensions. Because of close association with the local tradition, culture, custom and environment. These NGO's play an effective role in the modernization and transformation of rural societies.
Participatory culture of these organizations contribute for the success in rural development. the NGO's put more emphasis on people's involvement in decision making and implementation of any developmental programme. They try to reduce hierarchical distance between leaders and the people at village level.

The other advantage which makes the NGO's more successful in their effort is that they aim at strengthening nations of self-help and self-reliance through programme such as social forestry, water shed management, etc.

Most of the rural development programmes initiated by the Government have been failed due to the political interference and control. In this respect NGO's which are governed by dedicated persons without any outside interference or control play a crucial role.

It may be concluded that NGO's have a great role to play in the socio-economic transformation of rural people. They could give a helping hand to the government and other developmental agencies concerned with rural development. The success of these organizations depends on the financial assistance provided by the Government and other funding agencies.

**NGO's IN ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

The development of entrepreneurship has gained the status of a national movement not only for industrial development but also for its strength to solve the problem of unemployment and uplift of economically weaker sections of the society. The need for development of 'spirit of enterprise' among the target population is felt more during the recent years mainly due to the failure of the trickle down theory to percolate the development benefits to the masses. Consequently as a tool of bottom up mode of development several self employment and antipoverty programmes like PMRY, TRYSEM etc., clothed with minimum entrepreneurial qualities were introduced and executed through governmental agencies. The agencies showed their weaknesses in implementation.
The NGO's hitherto, engaged in their traditional areas of operation—health, sanitation, education, family, planning, environment protection etc., have grabbed this opportunity to entrepreneurise the lesser known target groups. The government agencies engaged in this activity started co-opting and collaborating with NGO's mainly due to the sheer magnitude of the operation and their inability to reach the lower rungs of the society.

The major NGO's in entrepreneurship development are National Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs (NAYE), World Assembly of Small and Medium Entrepreneurs (WASME), Xavier Institute for Social Studies (XISS), SEWA of Ahmedabad, 'Y' self employment of Calcutta, AWAKE (Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Karnataka), Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute (RUDSETIs) based in Karnataka.

In respect of entrepreneurship development the NGO's can be classified as under:

a) Primary level NGO's. These NGO's are mobilizing their own resources, operating internationally and taking up development activities themselves or through intermediate or grass root level. They include NGO's like ACTIONAID, OXFAM, Christian Children Fund etc.

b) Intermediate NGO's: These NGO's procure funds from various agencies, impart training, and conduct workshops for professional work force. They include NGO's like SEWA, AWAKE.

c) Grass-root level NGO's: These NGO's take up field actions by forming direct contact with the needy. They are usually small and may have funding problems as well. RUDSETIs, ANARDE Foundation, (Gujarat), Indian Institute of Youth Welfare (IIYW) of Maharashtra etc. are some of the grass root level NGO's.
Generally, the NGO’s supplement and assist governmental development activities. Yet there are many NGO’s operating independently with their own programmes relating to income generation, self employment and entrepreneurship. (they are regarded as initial, middle and terminal phases in the growth process of entrepreneurship development in the context of employment generation). Through ‘selective approach’ the NGO’s have concentrated their efforts on the development of micro entrepreneurship development in the informal sector rather than the more substantial formal sector businesses.

The trainee specific activities of NGO’s engaged in entrepreneurship development can be broadly classified into three:

a) Direct involvement in stimulation of entrepreneurship by conducting EDPs and skill development among the target groups, funded out of its resources or sponsored by others.

b) Provision of counseling and consultation services in project preparation, feasibility study, technical advise on the purchase of plant and machinery, tricks of trade etc., and to assist small entrepreneurship in promotion, growth and expansion needs of business units.

c) Provision of marketing (participation in exhibitions and trade fairs), assistance in securing finance (information gaps that exist about government schemes of self employment, subsidy, loan facilities etc.) incubation and networking facilities.

Even on several occasions they provide technical expertise, train development workers of other NGO’s engaged in this activity.

These NGO’s efforts weighed in terms of strengths in the context of entrepreneurship development have revealed the following. The NGO’s have an edge over others because of their strengths like:
a- The lean overheads and operating costs to reach the poor and needy.

b- Flexibility and responsiveness in operation to invent appropriate solution.

c- Nearness to client groups made them to be sensitive to community need.

d- Capacity for innovation and experimentation with new groups and untried development approach.

e- Stimulating and mobilising interest in the community.

f- Dependence on customer satisfaction.

g- Act as a test bed and sound board for government policies and programmes.

It may be concluded that during the past few decades efforts are on to produce entrepreneurs, the principal actors being the governmental and non-governmental agencies. The role of NGOs has assumed critical significance primarily at the grass root level. They have contracts with people and they respond to their needs effectively. A few NGOs in India have succeeded largely in imparting skills of income generation and micro-entrepreneurship development among the weaker sections of the society, women, tribals and others.

NGOs IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROGRAMMES

There is widespread agreement among development practitioners, government officials, and foreign donors that NGOs play an important role in helping to alleviate rural poverty in India. Complementary to that of government, both in terms of providing additional resources and in making government programmes more effective. This view has formed the basis for a sustained increase in the level of funding from government sources and official aid donors. It is also a view shared by many NGOs, although some see their role in terms of empowering the poor rather than in implementing development programmes.
In a country the size of India, with major differences between individual states and regions, NGOs are characterised by a rich diversity of approaches, traditions, and activities, rendering the task of generalisation problematic, if not impossible. They cover most areas of the country and their activities affect a significant proportion of the population living in poverty. A number of studies have identified a particular set of attributes with which they are associated, but there is relatively little information on their aggregate impact in alleviating poverty.

Estimates of the number of NGOs active in rural development in India range from less than 10,000 to several hundred thousand depending on the type of classification that is used. Nearly 20,000 organizations are registered with the Ministry of Home Affairs for foreign funding, although the list does not distinguish between religious organizations (such as mosques and temple management committees), commercial bodies, and voluntary agencies: only half of these fall into the NGO category. In addition, there are many others, which derive their financial support from internal sources, such as businesses and private donations. A realistic estimate of the number of NGO’s actively engaged in rural development in India would be in the 15 – 25,000 range, including local and regional branches of national organisations which operate as NGO’s in their own right.

Aggregate numbers reveal only part of the picture as there are significant variations in the number of NGOs in different states, with a marked concentration in the south of the country. For example, a directory produced by the Council for Advancement of People’s Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) in 1990 listed 470 NGOs in West Bengal and 373 in Tamil Nadu as compared to 77 in Madhya Pradesh and 11 in Jammu and Kashmir. To some extent these reflect differing patterns of poverty, but also historical factors (such as areas of Christian missionary influence or Gandhian activity) and the priorities of foreign donors. Some districts possess dense networks of NGOs which overlap and compete for clients, while in others there are hardly any NGOs active on the ground.
NGOs in India can be grouped into six categories according to their scale of operations and the location of their head office:

a- Large indigenous NGOs working in several states in different parts of the country;

b- Large indigenous NGOs working in most districts of one state.

c- Medium-sized indigenous NGOs working in a large number of villages in one or two districts of one state;

d- Small indigenous NGOs working in a group of villages in one locality (the most common type);

e- Large International NGOs with in-country representation providing and support to indigenous NGOs;

f- Small International NGOs working directly in one or two localities.

Comparatively few possess the staff or financial resources to work intensively at the state and national levels, although it is these organizations which are best known in government and donor circles. A number of the larger NGOs perform an intermediary role in channeling resources from donor agencies to small local NGOs, and are not generally involved in project implementation. Most International NGOs have no direct representation in the country and prefer to work through intermediaries, although several have regional offices.

NGOs are generally reluctant to divulge detailed accounts, but some of the larger national ones have budgets amounting to tens of millions of rupees. One survey reported fifty-four NGOs with annual turnovers in excess of Rs. 1 million, although this is probably an underestimate. The same survey found that nearly half the respondents had budgets below Rs. 250,000 which provides some support for the view that the majority of India NGOs are small scale and localized.
Recent estimates suggest that the amount of foreign funds coming into the country for use by NGOs each year is in the region of Rs 9 billion (US $ 520m), up from Rs. 5bn. In the mid-1980s. In quantitative terms, this is equivalent to approximately 20 percent of official aid flows, which stood at $ 24 bn. in 1991. A further Rs. 500–700m. is provided by the government. When individual and corporate donations are added in, an annual income figure of Rs. 10 bn. would seem a reasonable estimate of the total available resources, although this does not take into account unofficial payments or contributions in kind by project beneficiaries. This figure is double the government’s annual expenditure on IRDP, and 10 percent of its overall budget for poverty alleviation and service provision, which indicates that the resources mobilized by NGOs are important but essentially supplement those provided by the government.

The fundamental objective of NGO activity in rural India are poverty alleviation and the empowerment of the poor, primarily through small-scale development projects. Some NGOs have chosen to tackle the symptoms of poverty manifested in low educational standards, ill-health, poor sanitation and inferior housing by means of social welfare programmes. Others, NGOs have concentrated on enhancing the asset position and income-earning potential of the poor through land-improvement schemes, credit, and skills training. An alternative approach has been for NGOs to empower poor people to demand resources from the states or to challenges injustice and exploitation.

The foundations for the contemporary voluntary agency movement were created in the pre-Independence period, some of them associated with the social reform movements of the late nineteenth century, largely concerned with educational and cultural matters and only tangentially with the question of poverty. Christian missionary groups established a network of hospitals, schools, and welfare services for the poor in the first half of the twentieth century. A third tradition was the Gandhian approach, which combined social reform with village development activities.
The Christian and Gandhian approaches continued to predominate after Independence. In the early post-Independence period, disaster relief and food-for-work programmes came to be associated with Christian organizations in particular. Social welfare provided critical backup for public service provision in the 1950s and early 1960s, agencies steeped in Gandhian values emphasized village self-reliance and provided the foundation for development activities centered on small-scale agriculture and cottage industry. The integrated development approach became popular in the late 1960s and early 1970s, with NGOs combining health and education with economic programmes in pursuit of poverty alleviation. It was also at this time that funding from international NGOs began to make its mark.

During the latter half of the 1970s, a more radical trend emerged, with social action groups taking the view that poverty was a structural phenomenon which had to be tackled head-on through the active mobilization of the rural poor. They abjured violence but the thrust of their activities was confrontational, initiating struggle over issues such as land reform, wages, and bonded labour, while another dimension of their work rested on empowering the poor to demand efficient delivery of services from the state and pressing for the implementation of progressive components of government legislation. With liberal foreign funding, social action groups proliferated throughout the late 1970s and early 1980s, and established themselves as the dominant type of NGO in some states, notably Tamil Nadu and Bihar, in sharp contrast to the programme-focused approaches which had found favour from the 1960s. By the mid-1980s, however, their relatively limited economic achievements led to a questioning of the basic tenets of this approach. At the same time there was growing criticism of the lack of participation by the poor in the design and implementation of NGO integrated development programmes.

From the mid-1980s a further trend emerged within the NGO movement, emphasizing the importance of a professional approach based on sound management, planning and coordination. A parallel development was the creation of resources agencies which work directly with the poor but also provide support
services to other NGOs in the form of training, evaluation and documentation. These agencies are usually financed by core grants from foreign donors and payments for staff training from individual NGOs. Intermediary agencies responsible for channelling funds from foreign donors to small national NGOs in some cases also provide these types of services, for example, in assisting with evaluation.

In recent years there has been an element of convergence between these various approaches, with NGOs seeking to combine project-specific development work with active organization of the poor. Reflecting this greater uniformity, community organization is now treated, for the most part, as an essential prerequisite of the successful introduction and implementation of specific programmes. Similarly, most NGOs now recognize that organizational work among the poor cannot be sustained without material improvement derived from programme-specific activities.

Most NGOs work through groups, though with considerable variation in purpose and approach. Some, notably the Gandhian agencies, chose to work through existing village institutions (panchayats or gram sabhas). But these are in variably dominated by the rural elite, and most NGOs there fore prefer to form groups, which exclude the wealthier members of the village community. In some cases, caste or tribal affiliations constitute the basis for group formation, while others, particularly the social action groups, restrict their membership to the landless or marginal farmers. Another approach is to include all the poor, irrespective of caste or class. In some cases membership is defined by a common occupation, such as farming or fishing.

This diversity of approach has tended to make co-ordination. At the local level, these differences are sharpened by competition over areas of operational activity, specially where there are dense networks of NGO s with projects in the villages where they are already working, and their failure to perceive the need for or the potential benefits of sharing insights or resources with other organizations.
Rivalry over scarce government resources and official patronage also hinders coordination at the local level.

Nevertheless, some networks have been established at the state level to present a common front in negotiations with the government over legislation and policy formulation. Some NGOs have sought to form networks with specific advocacy objectives such as trying to encourage the government to introduce a guaranteed employment programme nationally. Other networks have been formed by foreign donors, although these can also have the effect of creating or widening divisions between groups of NGOs. More recently, there has been an initiative to establish an NGO network at the National Level. A number of the larger and more established NGOs formed the Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) in 1988 as a common platform; initially to exert pressure on the government to amend or revoke contentious items of legislation, but now with an expanded remit to provide resource materials and organize conferences on foreign funding and strategic issues of broader NGO concern. Co-ordination between NGOs remains relatively weak, however, and this result in a duplication of effort and limits their potential impact on a larger scale.

The bulk of Indian NGOs is funded by International NGOs. German and Dutch agencies account for the largest share, while British NGOs contribute about 5 percent of the total. Foreign funding agencies display a marked preference for projects, which centre on community development, incorporating a range of sector components, among them agriculture, credit, health and education. At the same time, they also tend to support activities that are popular in their own countries: women and environmental development were popular in the 1980’s with the result that some national NGOs have tailored their programmes accordingly. International NGOs work for the most part in collaboration with national NGOs, acting as a conduit for funds, and comparatively few are involved directly in project implementation.
Funding mechanism fall into four categories. The first is where the donor operates exclusively through an intermediary agency in India which is responsible for identifying suitable projects, liaising with partners, and monitoring and evaluating their activities. German and Dutch agencies generally work through established intermediary organizations or umbrella groupings; the second type is the consortia model favoured by the churches, where donor agencies pool their funds, usually in the form of block grants, which are then distributed by an intermediary agency. Caritas India performs this role for the catholic agencies and CASA (Churches, Auxiliary for Social Action) for the World Council of Churches.

The third approach is that favoured by Oxfam, save the children fund, and NOVB, all of which have in-country offices, staffed mainly by Indian Nationals, forming part of the parent organisation and performing a role similar to that of an intermediary agency. Oxfam tends to favour small agencies, viewing its project support as catalytic and aimed at encouraging innovative approaches. In each region it establishes priority sectors or identifies specific social groups for special consideration.

The fourth model does not involve an intermediary agency, and relations between donor and recipient operate on a one-to-one basis. Projects are submitted directly to the funding agency which processes the applications in its head office. The main form of contact with project partners is through periodic tours undertaken by desk offices of the agency concerned. Christian Aid, for example, channels most of its funds to Indian NGOs bilaterally.

As NGOs have grown in size and influence, their activities have brought them into closer contact with government, the implications of which have been the subject of extensive debate. A dominant consideration here is the increasing volume of programme funding from government sources.

The government has long recognized the positive NGOs contribution in the field of social welfare, and provided limited funds to support these activities, but it
has only been in the latter half of the 1980s that the NGO role in rural development has received explicit recognition. The Seventh Five Year Plan (1986 -- 90) marked a watershed. The world of NGOs was considered as complementary to that of government in offering the rural poor a range of choices and alternatives, at low cost and with greater participation. The plan document provided for an active NGO involvement in the planning process and Rs. 1.5 bn. were allocated from government funds for a wide range of anti-poverty and minimum needs programmes. A semi-autonomous body called the council for the Advancement of People’s Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) was created to administer these funds, which include a small proportion of bilateral aid. To be eligible for CARART funding, agencies have to be registered with the government for at least one year and working in rural areas.

However NGOs play a catalytic role in terms of enabling poor communities to define their own development priorities, and are innovative in their willingness to experiment with new ideas, but that their activities remain supplementary to those of government and in some cases duplicate existing services and programmes. Their record in alleviating poverty is uneven, although the study suggests that their performance is better than that of government.

The study of poverty alleviation programmes have contributed towards an overall improvement in the economic status of the rural poor, expressed in terms of higher incomes and greater security of employment. However, the conditions of the very poorest have not changed dramatically, since they were invariably beyond the reach of economic programmes. Benefits from poverty alleviation programmes tended to correspond to the initial asset - holdings of different groups of the poor reflecting the unequal structure of rural society, expressed in differential access to land, capital and resources. The studies indicate the NGO programmes generally achieved higher levels of success with people owning some land and fixed assets and living in relatively developed areas with readily accessible markets. Yet another such people were not from among the very poorest, the could not be classed as well-off; even in the Indian context, they remained poor in that they
generated little surplus beyond that necessary to cover their subsistence needs, and were for the most part among the bottom 40 percent of the population in material terms.

Since they work within the existing structure of rural society, NGO's promoting economic programmes cannot hope to bring about a more equal distribution of wealth and assets although they can improve the situation of the poor in relation to wealthier groups, or prevent the gap growing wider.

But, even if the returns to the poorest are low in comparison to the less poor, they can nevertheless be regarded as an achievement. And there were some exceptions. The landless did benefit when they received or invested in fixed assets, especially land. In so many programmes, surplus government land was used for prawn cultivation, resulting in considerable increases in income for former casual labourers. Redistributed land formed the basis for targeted investments in small-scale irrigation NGO, which raised crop production and in turn generated higher incomes and security of employment. The acquisition of income-generating assets (such as rickshaws, fishing craft and dairy cattle) through improved access to subsidized credit was found to be effective in several of the projects.

The poorest lost experienced marginal improvements through less direct means for example, loans provided by Rural Development Trust (RDT) in Andhra Pradesh enabled the landless to purchase raw materials and food in bulk, resulting in small net savings. The poorest also benefited indirectly through increased opportunities for employment brought about by more intensive cropping patterns or a higher share of increased production. Although the not-so-poor were prime beneficiaries in the four projects examined, these examples illustrate that some benefits also accrued to the poorest. NGOs recognize that women are among the poorest sections of rural society because of their domestic responsibilities in addition to searching for opportunities to increase household income. Several NGOs organized women into separate groups in recognition of the fact that needs were different and that they were unable to air their problems freely in the
presence of men. However, the case-studies showed that economic programmes tended not to cater explicitly for women, especially where they concentrated on enhancing the productivity of existing assets and the incremental income was often marginal.

The studies have shown that the impact of poverty alleviation projects also refers to broader criteria than the purely economic such as improved health and nutrition standards, better education, and increased mobility. Monetary benefits derived from NGO interventions may sometimes appear marginal, but for the poorest the fact that they no longer have to endure periods without food or now consume better food can represent a critical improvement. A further set of criteria, less amenable to quantification but nevertheless an important social dimension of poverty alleviation project impact, are captured in the notions of increased self-respect, improved quality of life, higher social status and reduced dependence. For the poor many of whom experience discrimination on the basis of caste, gender, and ethnicity (in the case of tribals), such qualitative improvements were found to be as important as material benefits.

Some were a direct consequence of enhanced economic status (such as self-reliance associated with material security and an independent source of income), while others stemmed from group participation and collective decision-making.

In the Indian rural context, the emphasis placed by NGOs on functional literacy and group cohesion is designed to improve the independence of the poor from dominant social groups and to protect the material gains they have made as a result of NGO interventions. In several of the projects the collective solidarity of the poor proved important in enabling them to stake their claim over redistributed land and to demand minimum wages in line with government legislation and better working conditions. The NGO has to play a mediating role in order to minimize conflict and to ensure that project participants have the rights of redress through the legal system and protection on the part of law-enforcement agencies. Nevertheless, it generally proved easier for the NGOs to work effectively when
dominant social groups were persuaded that an improvement in the material well-being of the poor would not threaten their own position, or when programmes were introduced for the benefit of the community as a whole.

The studies demonstrated that the successful implementation of economic programmes was contingent on the active participation of the intended beneficiaries in shaping programme content and design. Effective participation, usually through the group approach, also provided a stronger basis for self-reliance in the longer term.

NGOs in India have concentrated their energies on creating village-level groups or associations. Group formation has become something of a creed for Indian NGOs, with the aim of promoting collective solidarity (especially since the poor are usually denied effective representation in existing village-level institutions) and to ensure that benefits arising from development interventions are targeted more effectively.

NGOs interventions in Agriculture sector are designed to enhance the economic status of poor households by raising crop production through a range of activities, among them credit provision, technical advice on cropping patterns and inputs, small scale irrigation, storage facilities and marketing.

The studies indicated that the NGOs registered considerable success, with increases in output, crop diversification and an expansion in the cultivated area contributing to increased incomes. Nevertheless, it proved difficult to promote a sustained increase in output without a continued inflow of external resources, especially in semi-arid areas where recurrent drought is a major problem. The study of some NGOs functioning illustrate some of the difficulties of working in a drought prone environment. It demonstrates how NGO credit enabled poor farmers to purchase fertilizers and other input which raised productivity and hence household income, although output was heavily contingent on climate factors. Credit also encouraged poor farmers to take up cash-crop cultivation where the
returns are higher, although the risks are also greater when farmers invest more heavily in inputs.

The studies indicate that credit from NGO sources or loans from commercial banks facilitated by NGOs offer a number of specific advantages over non-institutional credit related to the terms and conditions attached to the loans which were often as important as the impact of the credit itself. The most important of these were ease of access, timeliness, lower interest, and reduced dependence on moneylenders, all of which result in decreased transaction costs and improved self-reliance.

The NGOs facilitate access to credit from the commercial banks by underwriting the loans, depositing collateral or opening up channels of communication between bankers and poor borrowers. One of the most important features of this activity is to improve the access of the poor to rural banking institutions and to heighten their understanding of banking procedures. From the point of view of the banks, the involvement of the NGO improves repayment levels and enables them to meet government lending targets.

In terms of sustainability, institutional credit offers longer-term security over NGO credit, as banks are a permanent part of the local socio-economic infrastructure whereas NGOs are only a temporary presence and there is no guarantee of programme continuity following their withdrawal. However, default is treated less sympathetically, and access to credit is still determined in the final instance by the willingness of local bank officials to lend to the poor. A further problem with bank credit is that the availability of subsidized loans (under the terms of government programmes) is a function of government policy, and polity shifts can adversely affect poor borrowers. These reflections lead to the conclusion that NGOs play a significant but essentially supplementary role in credit delivery alongside the official banking system, but that their role in facilitating access to credit and educating their clientele about banking procedures is likely to remain important for the immediate future.
There are many parts of India, is a shortage of land. For this reason NGO's have sought to promote new sources of income for the landless and marginal farmers to supplement or replace income from wage-labour and agricultural production, through the provision of credit, subsidized inputs, and skills training. Increasingly, NGO's have been accessing government resources under the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) and facilitating bank loans on behalf of their constituents. Income-generation programme promoted by NGO's broadly fall into three categories: enhancement of an existing activity (agriculture, fishing); creation of new sources of income and employment to replace an existing activity (rickshaw pulling, provisions shops, petty trading, repair services, etc.); or creation of new sources of income and employment to supplement an existing activity (dairing, animal husbandry, food processing, social forestry, basket-making, weaving etc). Many NGO income – generation programmes have fallen short of their objectives, either because the level of income they produce is very low, or because the benefits of these activities cannot be sustained without external assistance.

An important conclusion is that new off-farm income generation activities are more likely to succeed when project participants have been involved in the process of identification and selection. A greater sense of ownership and commitment comes as a consequence of groups discussing the merits and drawbacks of new activities, which in turn provides a necessary but not sufficient condition of programme success. This leads to the conclusion that when new activities are introduced by the NGO without proper consultation they are susceptible to failure, although benefits can result in the short term from top-down interventions.

A second finding is that sensitivity to market opportunities is integral to the success of income-generation programmes. Proximity to market towns, and the quality of local communications and local infrastructural facilities, are all crucial determinants of programme success. Obviously it proved more difficult for NGOs to create new sources of income and employment in villages where demand for
services is low and transportation difficult, although there were exceptions to this, as in the case of prawn cultivation, promoted by some NGOs, where high prices and local conditions rendered it economically viable, despite the remote setting. Similarly, the general level of economic development is a further determinant of the potential for new sources of income and employment the level of effective demand for goods and services in a less developed region is invariably lower than in more prosperous areas with a more intensive level of economic activity.

A third consideration is the level of technical expertise required for a new economic activity. From the perspective of the beneficiary, the ability to master a new skill is an important determinant of programme success. Where training is inadequate or the technology too complex, the risk of failure is greater. A related observation is that programmes which enhance an existing activity rather than introducing a completely new one stand a greater chance of success in terms of impact and sustainability.

Individuals vary in their capacity to take up and sustain new income-generation activities. The capacity of the poor to adapt to new activities was found to depend not only on skills training but also on confidence building and functional literacy to enable them to compete effectively in the market place.

The most elusive group in this respect are women from the poorest households for whom the prospects of developing new skills and sources of household income are restricted by their class and gender. Small-scale income-generation schemes for women generally focused on handicraft production and skills training. Women's income-generation programmes had in several cases been tagged on to projects with broader objectives and had accordingly suffered from poor planning and implementation. In several cases, small-scale enterprises for women had foundered on the lack of local demand for the goods they produced and problems of transportation when the markets were further afield. Women were often forced to compete with established businesses run by men who had ready access to marketing networks and the necessary technical expertise. The
evaluations found that income realized on these activities was often quite marginal and at best provided supplementary income rather than secure sources of employment.

Only in programmes seeking to promote new sources of income and employment, or those where women had access to productive assets, were the concerns of women addressed more directly. In some cases these were confined to training initiatives, where women were provided with new skills but with uncertain employment prospects. In other programmes, the income-generating potential of new activities was limited, particularly where they provided a supplementary income, the classic examples being dairying and calf-rearing. The overriding impression is therefore that women's needs were not fully addressed by the NGOs, programmes designed for women formed a peripheral part of their overall concerns, and where they were included, they emphasized traditional types of work characterized by uncertainty and low remuneration.

A final point in this regard is that income-generation and poverty alleviation schemes by their very nature involve risk and experimentation, and a certain level of enterprise failure is to be expected. At the same time, this should not detract from the fact that the costs of failure are high, not only in terms of the material losses incurred by the poor, but also because they undermine the willingness of people to experiment with new activities. Unfortunately, the lessons of failed schemes are rarely absorbed by other NGOs, largely because the experience tends not to be recorded and shared. This points to the need for improved co-ordination and information sharing, and for assistance to help NGOs develop their technical and managerial capabilities in order to maximize their impact and improve the quality of their interventions.

**SOCIO – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

In India, the need for planning and development was realized even before independence. As early as in 1944, the National Planning Committee visualized
the need for economic development Bombay Plan in the same year stressed the necessity of balanced economy through rapid industrialization. People’s Plan drafted by M. N. Roy advanced the case of agriculture development and centralized planning for smooth and comprehensive development. With these basic ideas the country embarked upon the planned development. The Planning Commission was established in 1950 with the basic functions to formulate the development plans, identify plan priorities and determination of machinery for the successful implementation of development programmes. The First Five year Plan was launched in 1951. The Ninth five year plan (1997 – 2002) is on the verge of completion and tenth five year plan is in the process of formulation.

Since the very inception of planning in the country, the avowed aims have been to accelerate economic and social development, alleviate poverty and unemployment, raise the standard of living and quality of life; and build a just, equitable and egalitarian society. The chief goal of all this is to provide full opportunity for the development of every individual and each part of the country.

The foremost achievement of independent India is that the country evolved a democratic planning agency that stood the test of time. In order to achieve the avowed aims and goals planning strategies and development programmes were adjusted to the need of time and situation. The First Plan (1951 – 56) placed highest priority on agriculture including major irrigation schemes and power generation for solving food problems of the country. The Second Plan (1956 – 61) gave top priority to heavy industries and building of a sound base for comprehensive development whereas the Third Plan (1961 – 66) accorded equal priority to agricultural and industrial development.

During the planning era not only democracy and democratic planning established deep roots inside but also country made a great stride in socio-economic development. India is now third great country in the world in technical personnel and Sixth in Gross Domestic Product. In five planning decades food production increased by three times, industrial production by five times, cement by
thirteen times, electricity generation by thirty-five times, aluminum by sixty-four times, petroleum by more than hundred times and annual plan outlay by one hundred sixty times. Similarly, hospital beds were up by five times and school enrolments by four times. In the country literacy rate was doubled and life expectancy increased 1.5 times. The birth and death rates also came down.

Economic growth was the chief concern of development in the initial stages. Economists led in theory formulation and policy prescription. They equated development with “economic growth” and measured it in terms of Gross National Product (GDP). It was though, greater the cake, larger would be the share and welfare of the people. Thus, economic growth and economic efficiency were considered pivotal to all dimensions of development. Later it was discovered that high Gross National Product (GDP) was no guarantee for the all round development.

Sociologists postulated that social development was a prerequisite for economic development. They brought forth the importance of social structure, and socio-economic behaviour of the people of the area that have positive or negative impact on the development. The great sociologist Max Weber discerned that the Protestant reforms of sixteenth and seventeenth century generated a spirit of rational scientific enquiry that formed the basis for all capitalist development. The absence of such scientific spirit in other parts of the world was responsible for their failure to develop capitalism. Volume of sociological literature stressed that economic development was not only hampered but also rendered fruitless in absence of social development, which was truly the ultimate goal of any societal transformation. They also underlined the importance of institutional and structural changes as agents of economic growth.

Spectacular and dramatic developments in national economics, resources, technologies, and communications and information systems have brought about significant and appreciable transformation in societies, all over the world. All these have, however, not resulted in the materialization of the dream of human well
being as a product of development efforts. Amidst an unprecedented rate of economic growth, social improvements are found to be lagging. While higher economic growth induced prosperity, it has also been accompanied by persistent poverty, human deprivation and social backwardness. Concededly, economic development has not been accompanied by sustainable improvements in social well being. Many of the developed and developing countries face disjunction between economic growth and social progress. There has, therefore, been a vigorous critique of development policies and programmes, which have proved to be incapable of ushering in an era of sustainable human-centred development. Economic development, globally speaking, has fuelled the market forces which favour the strong and deprive the weak. The idea a single-minded pursuit to economic development would bring about a desirable transformation in society, or would automatically result in establishing a better social order has proved to be an illusion.

The problem that most of the countries face today is not that of lack of economic development but that of a problem of distored development. Distored development has occurred primarily because economic growth has not been accompanied by concomitant improvements in social development. The proponents of social development, therefore, argue that economic growth which has been benefited only a segment of society is meaningless.

The cost of shortsighted economic rationality and an aggressive pursuit of progress viewed exclusively in material terms has been the pivotal point of modern critiques of development initiatives. The predominant perception is that economic trends and policies – including the globalization of economic factors and decisions – are currently unfavourable to social conditions of many people in most societies. The perception of a global social crisis at the fag end of the twentieth century has heightened the disbelief in the primary of economic growth model of development. The questioning of the basic orientations of economic policies, approaches and strategies, has become more and more vociferous, since the perception of impending social crisis has caused world-wide alarm. Behind the causes of the
crisis lay the fact that during past decades investments in development efforts have produced limited results to avert the increasing socio-economic inequity and inequality both within and amongst nations. Under such conditions there is little chance for sustainable development to succeed. These and several other postulates of economic development critique have provided the world with an unique opportunity of restructuring national and international economic development strategies to focus on people – centred development.

The idea that economic policies should be so fine-tuned to meet the broader social objectives added a new dimension to the development discourse. The policy responses to planning for economic growth relented to increased pressure of scholarly analyses that recognized the specificity of social development and a favourable economic climate are essential, but are not sufficient conditions for the development of society as a whole. And further, the traditional indicators of economic development are not a sufficient measure of sustainable human development.

The consensus that emerged favoured the seminal significance of social considerations as part of economic decision-making. In the same vien it was also accepted that social policies should similarly respond to economic objectives, and social programmes should contribute to useful structural changes and to overall development of society.

This, however, did not mean the subordination of economic policy to the imperatives of social policy. It only meant that in the economization of the system, other efforts of social transformation are not to be put on the backburner. In the acceptance of the criticality and cruciality of social development, there prevailed a world-view that development should be human-centred and broadly based, offering equal opportunities to all men and women to participate fully and freely in economic, social, cultural and political activities. To accomplish this vision of development, it was affirmed that the strategies of development should focus on societies and not just on economics, for economic development, without
corresponding social development creates severe imbalance between economic propriety and social well being. The affirmation implied that growth is an insufficient basis for promoting social well being, since growth and equality are more often incompatible objectives.

In view of the limitations and dissatisfactions with economic dimensions of development characterizing early development planning, economists like Gunnar Myrdal argued for a redefinition of development that took social factors into account. Myrdal emphasized the concept of unified socio-economic development and urged upon governments to plan their economics to include social policies that enhance people's welfare and take steps to redistribute income and wealth. Similarly, the World Bank and UNDP emphasized the importance of social issue in economic planning. The tendency to appreciate non-economic dimensions of development became more prominent when several other economists argued that development has to be inspired by the populaces of well known social development philosophies.

After the 1970s, many development economists viewed development simply as an economic fact. For instance, Todaro, an economist asserted that development in its essence must represent the entire gamut of change by which an entire social system is tuned to meeting the basic needs of the people and altering such conditions of life that are widely perceived as dehumanizing similarly, many development sociologists emphasized that development is not merely an economic activity but involves reorganization of the entire society at a higher level, higher not only in material terms but also in terms of human values. The sociologists view of development found support in diverse documents which explained the purpose of development in terms of providing increased opportunities to all people for a better life. The ultimate purpose of development, according to a UN document is to bring about a more equitable distribution of income and wealth for promoting social justices, alleviating poverty, maximizing productive employment, and expanding and improving facilities for education, health, nutrition, housing and social welfare for the deprived and disadvantaged individuals, groups and
communities. These objectives, the document said, are both the determining factors and the results of development, and hence be viewed as integrated parts of a dynamic development.

True that too many critiques of economic development made the notion of social development acceptable, the predominant position of economic development model remained unchanged until 1990s. By and large, development continued to be viewed, primarily in economic terms. This was evident from the dominant economic concerns underlying development paradigms, development planning strategies and measures of development performance. Social concerns remained, at best of marginal importance. The realization that high income societies could be socially underdeveloped societies made little difference to the prevailing economic conception of development. Since the term “development” had acquired a strong economic connotation, it continued to be viewed as the only viable paradigm of development and growth. Overstress on the economic dimensions of development continued at the cost of non-economic dimensions of development. It was all too evident that socio-cultural dimensions of development remained largely a missing dimension in much of the development thought. The scenario seems to be somewhat different after the World Summit for Social Development, which reaffirmed that the idea of economic development cannot solve the critical social problems facing humanity. The Social Development Summit at Copenhagen in 1995 crystallized the world-view on social development, with governments assessing to accord social development and human well being the highest priority both now and into the twenty-first century. The Summit recognized that social development is central to the needs and aspirations of the people throughout the world, and to the responsibility of the government and all sectors of civil society. The Summit affirmed that the most productive policies and investments are those which empower people to maximize their capacities, resources and opportunities. The Heads of the states and governments committed themselves to a political, ethical and spiritual vision for social development based on human dignity, equality, respect, mutual
responsibility and co-operation. They gave high priority to policies and actions for the promotion of social progress and for the betterment of human condition. To this end, they created a framework for action to:

a- place people at the centre of development and economy at the service of human needs;

b- integrate economic and social policies to make them mutually supportive;

c- recognize that sound and broad based economic policies are a necessary foundation to achieve sustained social development;

d- promote a more just distribution of income and access to resources through equity and equality of opportunity for people at all levels; and

e- recognize that empowering people to strengthen their own capacities is the main objective of development and its principal resources.

The specific commitments made to translate this vision of social progress and development referred to creating an enabling economic, political, social, cultural, and legal environment that would help people to achieve social development. Actions were recommended to create framework of sustained economic growth and sustainable development, which *inter-alia* would eradicate poverty, enhance productive employment and foster social integration. The Summit underlined the urgency of the need to address the persisting social problems, especially those arising out of poverty, unemployment and social exclusion. It shared the conviction that social development and social justice are crucial preconditions for the achievement and maintenance of peace and security.

The Summit proposed a renewed conception of social development and made the world understand its great significance. It provided an opportunity for rethinking on developmental goals and strategies amenable and conducive to the promotion of social well being. The political commitment of heads of states and
governments to implement the recommendations of the Summit was its biggest achievement. The Summit formulated a new social development agenda based on the principle that people are at the centre of development and economic policies and social programmes require placing the human person at the centre of all thinking and all decisions. The Summit decisively underscored the point that promotion of social development is fundamental to the life and future of any society. On the one hand development can contribute to solving social and economic problems, and on the other and above all it is required to release social forces essential for ensuring a harmonious development of societies for the benefit of all. It stressed the humanization of economic planning activities with social policies and programmes. The perception to link expansion of social services with overriding need for economic development was widely favoured. While accepting the notion of 'balanced' or 'unified' economic development, the summit recommended the integration of economic and social components of development. The Summit averred that purposeful linking of social policies and programmes to an overall strategy of economic development is central to the notion of social development, especially in the context of Third World development.

Like 'development' 'social development' too has several connotations and is often used very broadly to refer to improvements in human well being. It is also used to refer to development that is not strictly economic or market driven. It includes improvements in the quantity and equality of public social services, such as education, health, sanitation, access to clean water and other goods and services that are to be provided to all people by public institutions. Commenting on the ambiguity in the usage of the terms, Gore observed that the meaning of the term is not clear. The term has been interpreted to mean economic growth with social justice, eradication of poverty and minimization of economic inequalities, emphasis on human resource development, and development of social services which are inclusive of welfare services but extended also to cover health, education, housing, rehabilitation, etc.
Apart from varied interpretations given to the term social development, most of the available definitions of social development emphasize the idea that social development is a process. Midgley cites two conceptions of social development to illustrate that ‘process’ is central to all definitions of social development. For example, UNDP viewed social development as a process of widening people’s choice to decide what they should have, be and do to ensure their own livelihood. Paiva viewed social development as a process of enhancing the capacity of individuals to work for their own as well as for their society’s welfare. Midgley’s own definition views social development as “a process of planned social change designed to promote the well being of the population as a whole in conjunction with dynamic process of economic development.

In social work circles, where the term social development has gained considerable popularity, many definitions have been attempted. Salima Omar defined social development as a process concerned with achieving an integrated, balanced and unified social and economic development of society that gives expression to the value of human dignity, equality and social justice. This and several other definitions of social development being currently used in social work circles are too broad, idealistic and unclear about practical matters.

The international agencies and social science academics use the term to refer to social initiatives within the context of economic development in the developing countries. They usually define social development as a progressive process which results in a steady improvement in social conditions. A look at the documents released through the UN agencies reveals that most of these tend to view social development both as a process and an approach for promoting the level of ‘social well being’. Though, again not defined, social well being is an umbrella concept encompassing equity, social justice and security, together with social cohesion, respect for human rights, non-discrimination and participation and empowerment of the impoverished people. In its literal sense social well being refers to the ability of every human being to satisfy his or her basic needs and to
achieve a satisfactory quality of life within an environment of equity, social justice and human dignity. Social well being is also designated to enable each individual to improve his ability to control his destiny by means of activities in the economic, social, cultural and political fields and to participate in the choices and decisions concerning society. Social well being, many people aver, is the ultimate aim of social development, and the consideration of it can bring the ‘human’ back to the development planning. It is further argued that human well being cannot be regarded as a by product solely of economic growth, and hence, human well being ensured through public welfare services and equitable distribution of resources and opportunities of growth are essential for the success of economic planning.

A journey through the relevant development literature reveals that many of the prevailing conceptualizations of social development are too broad to be of much use for development planners. The trouble is that neither the social development Summit, nor its proponents have been able to come up with an acceptable explanation of the concept. The confusion becomes more confounding when policy documents use such terms as ‘human development’, ‘human face to development’, ‘sustainable human development’, etc. as synonyms of social development. While the conceptual confusion remain more or less intact, working definitions of the term social development are being proposed. For example India’s Country Report to the Social Development Summit describes social development as “a multi-dimensional effort meaning literacy, education and good health, and all that goes to make good health possible, like food and nutrition security, drinking water, easy availability of medical and health care facilities (both preventive and curative), and full and productive employment. It means life in security under which the individual lives in a manner that suits him, while at the same time not infringing on other people’s rights. Social development obviously also means living in economic security fostered by rapid national economic development accompanied by distributive justice. Social development presupposes the evolution of both the individual and the society in a manner that the happiness of both is ensured”.

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A look at the position papers of several other countries submitted to the World Summit on Social Development reveals that elaborations on the concept of social development make liberal use of the terms and phrases like ‘social progress’, ‘planned and programmed efforts of peaceful social transformation’, elimination of discrimination, exploitation and oppression of the socially and economically marginalized sections of society; sharing of the benefits of development both by the resources and unresource sections of society; enhancement of the quality of human life especially of the poor and disadvantaged, improvements in human well being’, improvements in the quality and quality of public social services, focus on society and not on economy, ‘creation of equal opportunities for all to participate fully and freely in economic social, cultural and political activities’, people are the ends and not means of progress and development’, etc. How far this verbiage on social development carries the conviction of the Heads of the states and governments that gathered in Copenhagen, is apparently the brother of several social development support centres. But one thing is certain that the aforesaid objectives of an idealized version of social development will remain rooted in rhetoric in the absence of robust economic growth. Therefore, any conception of social development as a district dimension of development, independent and separate from economic paradigms of developments, has no takers amongst such economists and development planners whose opinions and views indeed matter in national planning processes. It is in this backdrop that the nexus between economic and social dimensions of development has to be examined.

Social development as a process and an approach to social well being is not an independent and autonomous concept. And further, social development strategies are not mutually exclusive, but can be integrated to achieve social development goals in conjunction with the dynamic process of economic development. It is in this context of interdependence and strong nexus, that social and economic development should be addressed together, since neither can be achieved in an isolation from each other. The declaration of the Social
Development Summit clearly underscores this inseparable and mutually reinforcing relationship. It is rightly said that social development is a necessary foundation for sustainable economic development and conversely, broad based and sustained economic development is a prerequisite for social development. Based on the experiences of economic growth in the developing countries, the Summit recognized that while economic growth is the prerequisite and foundation of social development, social development requires much more that economic development and should be seen as the goal and intended result of economic growth. Material prosperity is necessary for social development, but is far from being sufficient. In a World Bank document, Birdsall\textsuperscript{166} asserted that investment in social development is good economics. Expert opinions favour this idea and come round the view that social values and humanitarian goals must inform and direct the necessary ends and means of economic development. The development think tanks, throughout the world, now recognize the inseparability of social and economic development and increasingly argue that social development cannot take place without economic development, and economic development is meaningless if it is not accompanied by improvements in social welfare services for the population as a whole. To be successful, economic development should mean an increased well being of the whole society and not for a small segment of the rich, resourceful and property owning class. Alternatively, the most distinctive feature of social development is its nexus with economic development. And, in that backdrop, social development explicitly seeks to integrate social and economic processes, viewing both elements as supportive to each other. Having highlighted the mutually reinforcing relationship between social and economic development, this discussion considers the question as to whether the goals of both are different. Here again there are differences. Many of the proponents of economic growth model of development cling to the view that economic development in the newly developing countries must precede and not succeed social development, for, economic development would enable such countries to bring about social development. They argue that social development occurs naturally as a result of economic growth. Furthermore, they argue that there is hardly any contradiction
between the goals of economic and social development, since both aim at ‘progress’ and ‘dynamic social change’. Material progress, they say, leads to extinction of human misery and thereby to improvements in the quality of human life.

The proponents of social development, on the contrary, refute some of the basic assumptions regarding the percolation of economic development effects to promotion of social development. The argument advanced is that economic development parameters of development paradigm in the developed as well as in developing countries have resulted in the creation of “island of prosperity in the midst of an ocean of poverty. The growth, in terms of material prosperity, has made ‘man’ an economic being, blunting his social sensitivities, freezing his finer instincts and emotions, converting him into a self-centred, selfish and self-seeking person oblivious of his social obligations to help all those who are run down in the race of development and whose lives are characterized by fear, insecurity, want, death, disease and despair. The trickle-down effects of economic growth hardly reach the mass of pauperized persons. Had that been so, the developed western nations may not be having a substantial proportion of their population living in poverty.

The awesome and often astonishing implications of an exclusivist growth model, with many disastrous social consequences, dissuade the social development theorists from buying the dream sold by establishment economists. They contend that social development, though related to economic development stipulates different goals. The goals of social development, they say, require continuous efforts of reducing and eventually eliminating the major sources of social distress. In specific terms, social development goals aim at:

a- Promotion of social progress and betterment of human condition based on human dignity, equality, respect, mutual responsibility and cooperation.
b- Placement of people at the centre of development and the economy at the service of human needs.

c- Integration of economic and social policies to make them mutually supportive.

d- Recognizing that sound and broad-based economic policies are necessary foundation to achieve sustainable social development.

e- Promotion of a just distribution of income and access to resources through equity and equality of opportunity at all levels.

f- Strengthening of civil society and enabling people to achieve satisfaction of basic needs and to realize their dignity, safety and creativity.

g- Empowering people to strengthen own capacities.

The central characteristics of social development revolve round (a) the needs and aspirations of all people; (b) their empowerment to maximize their capacities, resources and opportunities; (c) enhancement of people's rights, resources and potentialities to enable them to lead satisfying lives and contribute to the well being of their families, their communities and to their society at large; (d) a fair distribution of the benefits of development; (e) facilitation of structural changes; (f) the promotion of a development perspective in social welfare.

In the context of these goals and characteristics, the policy imperatives of social development emphasize the following:

a- Social development is essential to achievement of human centred economic development.

b- The interlocking goals of social development and economic development are necessary to achieve fundamental objectives of sustainable human development.
c- Integration of social development goals into micro and macro development policies.

d- Action to enhance sustainable human development should concentrate on the needs of such people who are most severely disadvantaged or vulnerable.

e- Ensuring that all citizens have reasonable access to education, work opportunities, land and financial resources in order to facilitate self-development.

f- Ensuring that all citizens have access to a reasonable level of food, water, shelter, clothing, health services and other welfare services.

g- An finally, the establishment of a human, egalitarian and democratic society where the state remains constantly concerned with issues of human welfare and remains committed to ensuring human well being in both the material and non material sense.

A determined actualization of these policy imperatives requires formulation and implementation of such strategies and approaches, which have interdisciplinary focus and draw upon the insights of political economy which suggest the forging of strong linkages between social and economic development goals. In more specific terms the strategies require the active involvement of the state and the civil society in the implementation of pro-poor policies of social and economic development.

Agriculture is one of the most important base of socio-economic development in developing countries. In these countries non-agricultural sector is very small and is largely concerned with processing of agricultural products and meeting the requirements of agricultural inputs as well as people engaged in agriculture. Therefore, in such areas development of agriculture is essential to accelerate the overall process of socio-economic development.

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Agriculture is a way of life, a tradition, which, for centuries, has shaped the thought, the outlook, the culture and the economic life of the people of India. Agriculture, therefore, is and will continue to be central to all strategies for planned socio-economic development of the country. Rapid growth of agriculture is essential not only to achieve self-reliance at national level but also for household food security and to bring about equity in distribution of income and wealth resulting in rapid reduction in poverty levels.

Indian agriculture has, since independence, made rapid strides. In taking the annual food grains production from 51 million tonnes of the early fifties to 206 million tonnes at the turn of the century, it has contributed significantly in achieving self-sufficiency in food and in avoiding food shortages in our country. The pattern of growth of agriculture has, however, brought in its wake, uneven development, across regions and crops as also across different sections of farming community and is characterized by low level of productivity and degradation of natural resources in some areas. Capital inadequacy, lack of infra-structural support and demand side constraints such as controls on movement, storage and sale of agricultural products, etc, have continued to affect the economic viability of agriculture sector. Consequently, the growth of agriculture has also tended to slacken during the nineties.

Agriculture has also become a relatively unrewarding profession due to generally unfavourable price regime and low value addition, causing abandoning of farming and increasing migration from rural areas. The situation is likely to be exacerbated further in the wake of integration of agriculture trade in the global system, unless immediate corrective measures are taken. Over 200 million Indian farmers and farm workers have been the backbone of India’s agricultural. Despite having achieved national food security the well being of the farming community continues to be a matter of grave concern for the planers and policy makers in the country. The establishment of an agrarian economy which ensures food and nutrition to India’s billion people, raw materials for its expanding industrial base and surpluses for exports, and a fair and equitable reward system for the farming
community for the services they provide to the society, will be the mainstay of reforms in the agricultural sector.

The National Policy on Agriculture seeks to actualise the vast untapped growth potential of Indian agriculture, strengthen rural infra-structure to support faster agricultural development, promote value addition, accelerate the growth of agro business, create employment in rural areas, secure a fair standard of living for the farmers and agricultural workers and their families, discourage migration to urban areas and face the challenges arising out of economic liberalization and globalization. Over the next two decades, it aims to attain:

a) A growth rate in excess of 4 percent per annum in the agriculture sector;

b) Growth that is based on efficient use of resources and conserves our soil, water and bio-diversity;

c) Growth with equity, i.e., growth which is widespread across regions and farmers;

d) Growth that is demand driven and caters to domestic markets and maximizes benefits from exports of agricultural products in the face of the challenges arising from economic liberalization and globalization;

e) Growth that is sustainable technologically, environmentally and economically.

The policy will seek to promote technically sound, economically viable, environmentally non-degrading, and socially acceptable use of country's natural resources-land, water and gentle endowment to promote sustainable development of agriculture.

Indian agriculture is characterized by predominance of small and marginal farmers. Institutional reforms will be so pursued as to channelize their energies for achieving greater productivity and production.
The approach to rural development and land reforms will focus on the following areas:

a) Consolidation of holding all over the country on the pattern of north western states;

b) Redistribution of ceiling surplus lands and waste lands among the landless farmers, unemployed youth with initial start up capital;

c) Tenancy reforms to recognize the rights of the tenants and share croppers;

d) Development of lease markets for increasing the size of the holding by making legal provision for giving private lands on lease for cultivation and agri-business;

e) Updating and improvement of land records, computerization and issue of land pass books to the farmers; and

f) Recognition of women's right in land.

The rural poor will be increasingly involved in the implementation of land reforms with the help of Panchayati Raj Institutions, voluntary groups, social activists and community leaders.

Private sector participation will be promoted through contract farmer and land leasing arrangement to allow accelerated technology transfer, capital inflow and assured markets for crop production, especially of oilseeds, cotton and horticulture crops.

Progressive institutionalisation of rural and farm credit will be continued for providing timely and adequate credit to farmers. The rural credit institutions will be geared to promote savings, investments and risk management. Particular attention will be paid to removal of distortions in the priority sector lending by commercial banks for agriculture and rural sectors. Special measures will be taken for revamping of cooperatives to remove the institutional and financial weakness and evolving simplified procedure for sanction and disbursement of agriculture
credit. The endeavour will be to ensure distribution equity in the disbursement of credit. Microcredit will be promoted as an effective tool for alleviating poverty. Self help group-bank linkage system suited to Indian rural sector, will be developed as a supplementary mechanism for bringing the rural poor into the informal banking system, thereby improving bank outreach and the credit flows to the poor in an effective and sustainable manner.

The basic support to agriculture has been provided by the cooperative sector assiduously built over the years. The Government will provide active support for the promotion of co-operative form of enterprise and ensure greater autonomy and operational freedom to them to improve their functioning. The thrust will be on:

a) Structural reforms for promoting greater efficiency and viability by freeing them from excessive bureaucratic control and political interference;

b) Creation of infrastructure and human resource development;

c) Improvement in financial viability and organisational sustainability of cooperatives;

d) Democratization of management and increased professionalism in their operations; and

e) Creating a viable interface with other grass root organizations.

The legislative and regulatory framework will be appropriately amended and strengthened to achieve these objectives.

Despite technological and economic advancements, the condition of farmers continues to be unstable due to natural calamities and price fluctuations. National Agriculture Insurance Scheme covering all farmers and all crops throughout the country with built in provision for insulating farmers from financial distress caused by natural disasters and making agriculture financially viable will be made more farmer specific and effective. Endeavour will be made to provide a package insurance policy for the farmers right from sowing of the crops to post-harvest operations, including market fluctuations in prices of agricultural produce.
In order to reduce risk in agriculture and impart greater resilience to Indian agriculture against drought and floods, efforts will be made for achieving greater flood proofing of flood prone agriculture and drought proofing of rainfed agriculture for protecting the farmers from vagaries of nature. For this purpose, contingency agriculture planning, development of drought and flood resistant crop varieties, watershed development programmes, drought prone areas and desert development programmes and rural infrastructure development programmes will receive particular attention.

The central Government will continue to discharge its responsibility to ensure remunerative prices for agricultural produce through announcement of minimum support prices policy for major agricultural commodities. The food, nutrition and other domestic and exports requirements of the country will be kept in view while determining the support prices of different commodities. The price structure and trade mechanism will be continuously reviewed to ensure a favourable economic environment for the agriculture sector and to bring about at equitable balance between the rural and the urban incomes. The methodology used by the Commission on Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) in arriving at estimates of costs of production will be periodically reviewed. The price structure of both inputs and outputs will be monitored to ensure higher returns to the farmers and bring about cost effectiveness throughout the economy. Domestic market prices will be closely monitored to prevent distress sales by the farmers. Public and cooperative agencies undertaking marketing operations will be strengthened.

The Government will enlarge the coverage of future markets to minimise the wide fluctuations in commodity prices as also for hedging their risks. The endeavour will be to cover all important agricultural products under future trading in course of time.

Effective implementation of policy initiatives will call for comprehensive reforms in the management of agriculture by the central and the state governments. The Central Government will supplement/ complement the state government's efforts through regionally differentiated work plans, comprising crop/ area/ target
group specific interventions, formulated in an interactive mode and implemented in a spirit of partnership with the states. The central government will move away from schematic approach to macro-management mode and assume a role of advocacy, articulation and facilitation to help the states in their efforts towards achieving accelerated agriculture development. The database for the agriculture sector will be strengthened to ensure greater reliability of estimates and forecasting which will help in the process of planning and policy making. Efforts will be made to significantly improve and harness latest remote sensing and information technology to capture data, collate it, add value and disseminate it to appropriate destinations for managing the risk and in accelerating the growth process. The objectives will be to engage in a meaningful continuous dialogue with the external environment in the changing scenario and to have on-line and real time system of 'Agriculture on line' capacity to analyse the signals emanating from the farms and the markets for the benefit of the farmers.

The Government of India trust that this statement of National Agriculture Policy will receive the fullest support of all sections of the people and lead to sustainable development of agriculture, create gainful employment on a self-sustaining basis in rural areas, raise standards of living for the farming communities, preserve environment and serve as a vehicle for building a resurgent national economy.

Like agriculture development, industrial development is another component of economic development. It has profound impact on economy, society and habitat; provides more goods and services to consumption basket; generates more jobs; and creates sound base for the development of tertiary sector of the economy. Apart from this, the industrial development is the real propulsive force in the process of development.

In India, agriculture is the bottom base of the economy which is also contingent upon industrial development. Most of the agricultural inputs and demands for agricultural products come from industrial development. The development experiences of present fast developing and highly develop countries
of the world show that industrial development is a lever for the comprehensive economic development. In other words industrial development is switch action for the overall development.

The traditional orthodox economic reasoning, is that agriculture and other primary activities are subject to diminishing return i.e. produce per unit decreases with the increase of inputs. But industry is destined to have increasing returns. Apart from this economic logic for industrial development. Industrialization enhances and strengthens man's capabilities and reduces vulnerability of economy from natural calamities. It increases the scope of human choice and reduces his dependence on the nature.

The Industrial development accelerates rational and scientific outlook among the people. A few scholars are of the view that industrial development along with urbanization is synonym of development. All the advanced and the developed countries of the world were far ahead in industrial development. Marx, in his famous passage in the introduction to Capital, observed: "the country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future".

In India where population is increasing rapidly, unemployment is rampant, demographic profile of workforce is imbalanced and regional disparities in development are high, industrial development has additional significance. Here industrial development is essential for the provision of employment, diversion of population pressure from agricultural land, diversification of economy and restoration of structural balance in economic development. The area poorly endowed and less destined for agricultural development may opt for industrial development. This world reduce the increasing malaise of inequality and regional disparities in the process of development.

The industrial development is not merely industrial growth. It is a more comprehensive concept. But most of the scholars took industrial development as industrial growth. Pathak measured industrial growth in India adopting indicators
of registered factories, production, and capital employment in registered factories, value added by manufacturing and electricity generated. His concern was mainly the analysis of industrial growth. But the inclusion of electricity generation which is seldom considered as manufacturing industry distorted the conceptual base in selection of indicators.

In order to obtain a structural change industrialization, a sustained rate of growth of industrial investment, yielding a sustained and sizeable rate of growth of industrial output and of employment was planned, both in the public and the private sectors and without forgetting the decentralized industrial sector. A clear and explicit policy framework was created in terms of industrial policy resolutions in 1948 and 1956, and many subsequent changes which were time and again announced in the form of policy statements. In order to achieve specific targets with respect to private sector industry in the large, medium, small and cottage sectors, the process of planning industrial development through medium term and annual plans was supplemented by a complex range of tools, like industrial licensing, controls, regulations and battery of promotional measures extending from finance to technology to provision of technical and managerial education and training.

The assumption of direct-industrial tasks and responsibilities through the agency of public enterprises was, among other things, designed to provided the state with an opportunity to correct the imbalance in the industrial structure, which evolved during the colonial era. It was also intended to impart an adequate growth-dynamic, capable of generating forces which can carry on the process of industrial expansion without much external stimuli or intervention. This necessitated installing such new capacities which can provide domestically for the backward and forward linkage i.e. domestic availability of most of the major and critical inputs of intermediate and capital goods and also generally finding a domestic market, either in the sphere of consumption or in that of investment, for the bulk of the industrial output. Such a balanced growth approach, however, was not based on autarkic, closed door policies. It was planned that the initial capital equipment,
technology and number of intermediate goods were either continually or temporarily to be imported. Similarly, it was planned to make conscious efforts to benefit from our latent and long term comparative advantage in order to change the structure of our export away from the traditional primary sector predominance to non-traditional, manufacturing sector exports. In one word, the policy objective was self-reliance, and not isolation. It was from this perspective that the import substituting, heavy and basic capital goods and machinery manufacturing priority of the Indian strategy of industrialization was adopted. This is not to say that this scheme of priorities and pattern of industrialization was not based on national aspiration for economic independence, more particularly on the part of the emerging class of national capitalists to acquire greater strength and better bargaining position vis-à-vis ex-colonial, international capital. By banning the import of industrial consumer goods and providing tariff protection for most of the other industrial goods in a regime quantitative import restriction, an era of unprecedented investment and growth opportunities was initiated for the Indian industrial capitalist class.

Thus, public sector infrastructure and industrial investment, setting up of heavy and basic capital goods and machinery manufacturing industries establishment of whole range of import-substituting, tariff wall jumping industries became the hallmark of Indian industrialization. Since the colonial industrialisation was heavily regionally concentrated, the new policies sought greater industrial dispersal as a conscious corrective.

However, the employment implications of such an import-substituting process of industrialization were now here neat either the needs of structural transformation, nor were they found capable of gradually absorbing our huge backlog of unemployment and lift up their low productivity levels. For this, and a number of other reasons related to the impact of Gandhi's ideas on policy of protecting and promoting small and cottage industries, including greater ancillarization, became integral parts of the strategy of industrial development adopted since the 50.
Industry has registered significant growth during the last five decades in some important respects. Industries have consistently grown relatively faster than the rate of GDP and also that of agriculture. As a result, the share of industry contributing over one-fourth of the total output, though it gainfully absorbs less than 12-13 per cent of the work force and in the latter, the contribution of village and small industries is preponderant. However, contrary to the planned expectations and historical antecedents, it is the tertiary sector which has now become the largest contributor to GDP.

The main plank of development strategy of Small Scale Industries (SSIs) in India is built around a system of institutional support mechanism and structure of incentives.

Successive Industrial Policy Resolutions of the Government of India and various plan documents have enunciated the broad objectives behind development of village and SSIs in India, these are:-

(a) Creation of employment (with particular emphasis on self-employment);
(b) Growth of output ensuring regular supply of goods and services through use of local skills and resources;
(c) Diffusion of entrepreneurship through mobilization of hitherto untapped entrepreneurial talents;
(d) Growth and regional dispersal of industries to promote regional balance; and
(e) To counter the growth of monopoly and foster a techno-efficient balance in the growth of large and small-scale industries.

Accordingly, the definition in terms of investment limit, in essence meant that scarce capital be deployed in the economy to achieve maximum diffusion of entrepreneurship and ownership of capital.
The national economy of India has entered into the phase of economic liberalisation in 1991 and a separate policy exclusively for SSI sector was announced.

As a sequel to the new policy initiative, a number of administrative reforms have been introduced. Licensing restriction in production in small-scale sector has been removed, locational restrictions have been reduced to minimum, industry related services have been brought within the fold of small-scale development programme, registration procedure has been simplified, steps have been taken to transform the enforcement of labour laws for SSIs from a regime of regulation to an era of self-discipline and voluntary compliance, environment clearance procedure for SSIs have been rationalized and simplified, and major procedural simplifications in the administration of the excise tax regime.

India started its process of integration with the global economy in July, 1991. The government has pushed through far-reaching economic and structural reforms in all sectors of economic policy. The thrust of these measures has been to make the Indian economy internationally competitive. The liberalized policy of the government has thrown open most of the industrial sector to the large and giant multinational companies. The liberalized policy has posted certain challenges as well as opportunities to the small-scale sector. The challenge have come in the form of competition, reduced protection in the form of lower tariff, lack of attraction for moving into backward areas, limited access to banks fund and relative higher rate of interest. On the other hand, opportunities have come in the form of better technology, availability of variety of raw materials and components, impetus to quality, efficiency and opportunity to restructure / diversify.

As a result of consistent policy support, Small Scale Industries sector in India, today, turns out about 7,500 items in various categories, like food products, footwear and wearing apparel, wood and wood products, paper and paper products, leather products, rubber products, chemical and chemical products, non metallic mineral products, basic metal industries, metal products, machinery and transport equipment. This sector accounts from 35 percent of the output of the
manufacturing sector and about 30 percent of the direct export. Its contribution to employment is next only to agriculture.

The process of socio-economic development in India is analyzed in the present chapter in the context of overall development in India during post-independence period.

The development in India has been a mixed story of hopes and despairs. The stable and deep rooted democracy, adequate food supply for the burgeoning population, diversification of economic base were a few spectacular achievements. Contrary to it, rampant regional disparities and structural inequality, mass illiteracy and poverty, and over-centralization of planning process remained a great malaise. The cherished goal of socialistic pattern of society did not succeed to the expected and anticipated extent.

A journey through these writings makes one feel like getting bagful of mixed stuff of hope and despair, of delight and disappointment, and of accomplishments and failures. On all indicators of socio-economic development there is not much to cheer. Social policy documents make rhetorical noise in big, bold and beautiful words. The commitment to promote socio-economic development through planned programmes of development sounds excellent in a variety of government documents (including the country paper for Social Development Summit); it, however, does not fit well with ground level conditions with regard to poverty eradication, employment generation and promotion of social integration. The three pivotal themes of Social Development Summit.

Our poverty scenario is distressing, to say the least. We still have too many poor despite a gradual reduction is extremely demoralizing despite the implementation of a large number of anti-poverty programmes being operated for years to wipe out the scourge of rural and urban poverty. Official claims notwithstanding, a substantial segment of our population (approximately 40%) is not able to satisfy its basic human needs. The situation regarding unemployment is no better. While millions of jobs have been created in the past five decades of
development, million are still unemployed or under-employed. The scenario of 'jobless-growth', following economic liberalization has shaken the people's faith in all such claims which promise maximization of productive employment through a liberalized economic regimen. The problem of social exclusion is too evident from its daily manifestations in national life. Caste, communal and ethnic tensions and conflicts threaten the old Indian myth of unity in diversity.

Despite accelerated economic growth in recent years, our human development index compares very unfavorably with many developing countries, much similar in size, resources and potentials. In all sectors of social development be it education, health, housing, sanitation and water supply- our performance is far from satisfactory. After fifty years of independence, we still have too many people who often go to their bed hungry, remain alive or die or malnutrition; have never been to any school, have contracted or died of simple, easily preventable and quickly curable diseases; have little or no access to modern medical facilities; have no means to afford an adequate shelter and have no stable jobs to ensure a reasonable standard of living for themselves, as also for their families. For all these people 'development' has little meaning. The development we see around us in big cities in terms of wide roads, high rise buildings, starred hotels, foreign-made cars, luxurious apartments and bungalows, markets and shopping malls full of fancy and expensive consumer goods, gala public functions and noisy private parties in five-star hotels, frequent foreign jaunts of high-flying people; latest marvel of telecommunication technology in hands and houses of sahibs and membranes-makes sense only for a miniscule minority of our population. While 10 to 20 percent people live in prosperity, a staggering 80 percent lives under conditions of grinding poverty. It this is what we means by development in a democratic society wedded to attainment of such goals as equity, equality, human dignity and justice-social, economic and political- only, God can forgive us for being foolish. In a nutshell, we had 'development' of a very peculiar kind-a development which helped the privileged few and hurt the pauperised millions. The distortions of development call for a halt now, if the society is to be saved from further
degeneration. An accelerated pace of socio-economic development in these depressing days perhaps holds a flicker of hope.

The problems of distorted development are not far to seek in India where the charm between the rich and the poor has grown too wide. India has followed an economic growth model which has tended to exacerbate inequities. The benefits of development have been captured by the privileged few, both in rural and urban areas. The government has been too slow to recognize equity as an explicit objective of policy action owing to the politically charged nature of the issue. Under the impact of Structural Adjustment Programmes, economic reforms of the past few years have exacted huge social costs. To make things worse, adjustment policies are being implemented without sufficient sensitivity to social consequences. The retreat of the state from discharging its social obligations has complicated the already complex issues of social development. The centrality of human person in development has taken a backseat in the free interplay of market forces. The IMF and World Bank 'conditionalities' or structural adjustment policies have sharply reduced government intervention in the economy, curtailed social expenditures and limited social planning. As a result, the social initiatives which were adopted earlier have been impeded and, in some cases, discontinued.

This baffling backdrop warrants a serious introspection on how to foster a meaningful synthesis between social and economic strategies of development which may harmonize different viewpoints and accommodate different perspectives. Many insights are already available in the relevant recent literature on development and all of these need not be repeated here. However, the most important ones of these insights do need a mention. First, we need to have a clear vision on social development, beefed and buttressed by a strong commitment to actualize that vision. Second, we need to develop a frame for a well-conceived time bound programme of action. Third, we have to have an appropriate organizational base to ensure effective implementation of policies and programmes. Fourth, we need to establish a national agency to direct, facilitate and coordinate social development planning and action. Fifth, we have to explore...
options for financing social development at a higher rate than now. Sixth, and last of all, there is need for a strong political will to concretize the country's commitments made public at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen (1995). Such a commitment will be in conformity with the Declaration of the Summit, which says: "nothing short of a renewed and massive political will to invest in people and their well-being will achieve the objective of social development".

RURAL DEVELOPMENT

India is primarily rural in character and the term "rural" means an area characterized by non-urban style of living, occupational structure and settlement pattern. Rural is essentially agricultural, its settlement system consist of villages, socially it connotes greater inter-dependence among people, more deeply rooted community life and a slow moving rhythm of life built around nature and natural phenomena, and occupationally it is highly dependent on crop farming, animal enterprises, tree crops and related activities like plantation, agriculture, modern dairying, sheep rearing and host of others which require industrial organization but are agricultural in sense that they pertain to plant and animal life.

Rural areas in which nearly three-fourth of the country's population lives are characterized by poverty, low levels of productivity and lack of adequate basic minimum services to ensure a quality of life to the people compatible with their physical well-being.

The word "Rural Development" would essentially mean desired positive change in rural areas in its totality. Rural development in the context of the developing countries is essentially an attempt at improving the living conditions of the rural poor. During 1950s and early 1960s development policies in the third world centred on growth maximization. The poor were expected to gain from the 'trickle down of the benefits resulting from overall rapid growth. And within the framework of the 'modernization' approach development both as a process and an
end-result was considered dependent on a country's administrative capacity. Bureaucracy was therefore viewed as the instrument of development.

By late 1960s it was realised that the benefits of rapid growth were not ultimately reaching the target groups. It was also noticed that the impact of rapid growth widened the gap between the poor and the rich.

This called for a change in the concept and strategy for rural development. During early 1970s such terms as 'redistribution with growth' and 'growth with social justice' became very popular. The idea of people's participation in the process of development was also emphasized by scholars. The change of emphasis made rural development more broad-based. But the socio-economic structure that lie at the root of inequitable distribution of power and resources were not taken into serious consideration by the scholars.

In the Indian context, development means mostly rural development since most of the people live and seek employment in rural areas. The concept of what is known as rural development was born in the context of agriculture, and it remained, for a long time, conterminous with agricultural development in India. Rural development is an old theme, but has been evolving new contents and fresh concerns.

Rural development is not merely agricultural development but rural transformation as a whole which includes development of all facets of human resources like social, economic, cultural, spiritual etc. Agricultural development is a major part of rural development but that is not the total plan. Rural development is a wholistic concept rather than a sequential one. Thus, it is equally concerned with the development of infrastructure like roads, transport, power, insurance and banking, development of cottage industries, rural poverty, unemployment, encouraging traditional crafts and industries and providing modern education, health facilities and providing cheap but decent houses for the rural poor and deprived.
Rural Development is broader concept and is concerned with the total development of rural economy, which covers the maximum areas and maximum people. In other words it is a comprehensive concept embracing within its fold all aspect and facets of life in rural areas. As a concept it connotes overall development of rural areas with a view to improve the quality of life of rural people.

Mishra and Sunderam defines, rural development as not merely development of rural areas but also the development of quality of life of the rural masses into self-reliant and self-sustaining modern little communities. Rural development is, therefore development of rural areas in such a way that each component of rural life changes in a desired orientation.

Rural development signifies as improving the living standards of the subsistence population residing in rural areas. It requires that there should be efficient mobilization and allocation of resources so that the low-income population are able to avail all the welfare and productive facilities. It is to widely realized that unless the existing and potential resources lying in this sector are utilized in an optional manner. Ultimate aim of rural development can never be achieved. The process of rural development can be self-sustaining if development of appropriate skills ensures effective use of the existing resources, mobilization of additional financial and human resources for continued development of the subsistence sector. Rural development as a process must lead to improvement in agricultural productivity, rural incomes and rural welfare in terms of health, nutrition, education and other aspects of the quality of life of the rural poor.

Rural development is the main thrust of national development effort. It is advocated as a basic strategy for economic development. Copp has defined it as a process through collective efforts aimed at improving the well being and self-realization of rural people. One of the objectives of the rural developments to "widen people's range of choice". The effort should be towards preservation and improvement of the rural environment and rural development planning may be
conceived as the process of identifying the complex of factors which contributes to the development of the rural area.

According to World Bank, rural development "is a strategy designed to improve the economic and social life of a specific group of people, the rural poor". It involves extending the benefits of development to the poorest among those that seek a livelihood in the rural areas. The group includes small-scale farmers, tenants and the landless.

Todaro identifies three aspects of rural development. In his words: "it encompasses (a) improvement in levels of living including employment, education, health and nutrition, housing and variety of social services; (b) decreasing inequality in the distribution of rural incomes and in rural-urban imbalances in incomes and economic opportunities; (c) the capacity of rural sector to sustain and accelerate the pace of these improvements.

Rural development implies both economic betterment of people as well as greater social transformation. It encompasses a spectrum of activities and human mobilization to make people stand on their own feet and break away from all structural disabilities which chain them to condition in which they may live in. The need for having a separate development programme for the rural areas lies in their relative deprivation. The problem of development in India is synonymous with the problem of rural development as two-thirds of its population lives in rural areas.

According to Inayatullah, primary goals of rural development are:-
- raising agricultural and rural productivity
- raising community solidarity
- institutionalization of equality

Rural development is a comprehensive programme of activities which include agricultural growth, development of economic and social infrastructure, village planning, public health, education, functional literacy and communications etc. Rural development thus connotes overall development of rural areas with a view to improving the quality of life of rural people. It aims to integrate the growth of all the sectors of rural economy for increasing the purchasing power of the rural
poor and to provide them a better standard of living. It is a process which ensures higher income, larger employment, security of life and equity in social and economic hierarchies. The rural development approach emphasizes the total attack of all problems of rural areas and stresses the need to create change in the existing life styles, value orientation, attitudinal behaviour and the task base of the rural people. 

However, rural development does not mean urbanization of rural areas. The real thrust of development is that people living in the rural areas develop the Capacity to live well- a life pattern which keeps the, in good health, have adequate means to eat, to cloth, a reasonable shelter to live and access to various requisites of life which modern science and technology has made it possible to have, to enjoy life. This does not mean copying urban style of life but one evolved in the socio-eco-cultural milieu, which they have inherited.

Therefore, content of rural development will vary from area to area. Thus, rural development is a multidimensional process which includes the development of socio-economic conditions of the people living in rural areas, and ensure their participation in the process of development for complete utilization of physical and human resources for better living conditions. It extends the benefits of development to the weaker and poorer section of rural society. It also enhances both the capacity and capability of administrative and socio-economic development agencies and agricultural marketing units working in the rural areas.

Rural development has remained a priority item through successive five year plan though there have been shifts in emphasis over a period of time. It is a concept whose contents have been of great variation.

The Government of India was committed to formulate various plans on rural development, and did so during the plan periods by formulating strategies for future plans and allocating substantial amounts to attain faster rural development.
This particular concept was given due importance in each and every Five Year Plan.

Planning and development policies for the eradication of poverty in rural India have started since the inception of the Five Year Plans. Though, the importance of rural development was recognised in the earlier plans, it was only from the sixth plan onwards due emphasis was laid on rural development. And over a period more and more emphasis was laid in building rural India as real India. For the first time, need of peoples participation at the grass root level was felt essential in the Seventh Five Year Plan, from there it went on to people’s self managed institutions in the Eighth Five Year Plan with greater voice and choice.

During the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97), the emphasis was on building up of rural infrastructure. Priority for all weather roads, particularly in tribal, hill and desert areas, minor irrigation works and water harvesting structure schemes for soil conservation and social forestry. Participation of people in programmes through Panchayati Raj institutions, cooperatives and other self-managed institutions, provision of short term employment through TRAP and IRY.

The Ninth Five Year Plan attempts to make a serious effort to raise the level of agricultural and rural incomes. The ultimate objectives is to improve the living conditions of the poor and the various disadvantaged sections of the rural society. Priority is given to agriculture and rural development with a view to generating adequate productive employment and eradication of poverty, ensuring food and nutritional security for all, particularly the vulnerable sections of the society, ensuring environmental sustainability of the development process through social mobilization and participation of people at all levels, empowerment of women and socially disadvantaged groups such as scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and other backward classes and minorities as agents of socio-economic change and development, promoting and developing people’s participatory institutions like Panchayati Raj Institutions, cooperatives and self-help groups are the other priorities.
Basing on the Five Year Plans the government framed and implemented various rural development programmes in our country from time to time to achieve balanced development in the country. The following are the different kinds of programmes:

I. Community Development Programme CDP (1952).

II. Intensive Agriculture District Programme (1960).

III. Intensive Agriculture Area Programme (1964).

IV. Small Farmers Development Agency.

V. Marginal Farmers and Agricultural labour.


VII. Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (1972).

VIII. Desert Development Programme (1977).

IX. Command Area Development Programme (1974).

X. Tribal Area Programme.

XI. Hill Area Programme.

XII. Integrated Rural Development Programme (1980).

XIII. Training of Rural Youth for self-employment Programme (1979).

XIV. Crash Programme for Rural Employment.

XV. Pilot intensive Rural Employment Programme.

XVI. Food for Work Programme (1977).


XVIII. Minimum Needs Programme.
XIX. 20 Points Programme.

XX. Western Ghats Development Programme.

XXI. Special Programme for the North-Eastern Region.

XXII. Special Incentive Programme for the Industrially Backward Areas.


XXIV. Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas.

XXV. Wage Employment Programme.

XXVI. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (1989).


XXVIII. Supply of Improved Tool Kits to Rural Artisans.

XXIX. Indira Awaas Yojana (1985).

XXX. Million Wells Scheme (1988).


XXXII. Ganga Kalyan Yojana (1997).

XXXIII. Samporna Grameen Rozgar Yojana.

XXXIV. Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana.

XXXV. Shelter for all by 2007.

XXXVI. Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana.

XXXVII. Safe Drinking Water by 2004 for all villages.

XXXVIII. Total Sanitation Campaign.

XXXIX. New Watershed Development Projects.

XL. National Old Age Pension Scheme.
XLI. Annapurna Scheme.
XLII. National Maternity Benefit Scheme.
XLIII. National Family Benefit Scheme.
XLIV. Massive Food for Work Programme.
XLV. Computerized land Records for Employment of farmers.
XLVII. Raj Rajeshwari Mahila Kalyan Bima Yojana for Women.
XLVIII. Janashree Bima Yojana for Laboures.
XLIX. Khetihar Mazdoor Bima Yojana for Agriculture labourers.
L. Shiksha Sahyog Yojana.
LI. Corpus of Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) with NABARD.
LII. Kisan Credit Card.
LIII. Comprehensive Crop Insurance.

Many of the above said rural development programmes were started at different times during past five decades. Some of the programme were discontinued either because they have been replaced by other programmes or have been merged into new ones.

PANCHAYATI RAJ AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

It is true that during the last fifty years of Indian Republic, socio-economic transformation in our rural sector has been intended to be brought about through a substantial improvement in the living conditions of the rural people, particularly the rural poor. When the Indian constitution was drafted for the new Republic, Article 40 was inserted among the Directive Principles of State Policy, according to which the State Governments assumed responsibility for organizing village
Panchayats so that they could provide the basic needs of life to the rural populace as they were endowed with such powers and authority as was necessary to enable them to function as unit of self-Government.

As such, the Community Development Programme was launched on October 1952 with a view to revive and revitalize the social, political, economic and cultural life of the villagers with the help of active participation of rural people. Panchayati Raj or Local Self-government, is an exercise in decentralization of administrative authority. The Government appointed a Committee in 1977 under the chairmanship of Shri Ashok Mehta to review the functioning of the Panchayati Raj in India. The committee submitted its report in 1978. Among other things, the Committee recommended that the district should be the first point of decentralization. The dynamics of development require that a high level of technical expertise be made, available at the district level where planning of a more comprehensive and sophisticated kind can be undertaken, and concomitant administrative function can be discharged more fruitfully. Recommendations along the same lines were made by the G.V.K. Rao Committee in 1985 and the L.M. Singhvi Committee in 1986, as also at the Chief Minister’s Conference on Panchayats held in May 1989.

The L.M. Singhvi Committee wanted to vest Panchayati Raj with a constitutional status, saying that a separate chapter should be added in the constitution of India so as to make the identity and integrity of the Panchayati Raj Institutions reasonably and substantially inviolate. In response to the above suggestions, the Government incorporated with effect from April 24, 1993, the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution along with the Nagarpalika 74th Amendment (the state Assemblies were required to adopt this amendment in their respective Panchayati Raj Acts by April 25, 1994). The Constitution (73rd) Amendment proposed to add a new part relating to Panchayats in constitution to provide for among other things (i) Gram Sabha in a village or group of villages, (ii) direct election to all seats in Panchayats at the village and intermediate level, (iii) reservation of seats for scheduled caste and scheduled tribes in proportion to their
population for membership and office for chairpersons, (iv) reservation of not less than one-third of the seats for women, (v) fixing term of five years for Panchayats and holding elections within a period of six months in the event of super session of any panchayats, (vi) devolution by the state legislature of powers and responsibilities upon the panchayats with respect to the preparation of plan for economic development and social justice and for the implementation of development schemes, (viii) setting up of a finance commission within one year of the proposed amendment and thereafter every five years to review the finance of Panchayats and powers of state legislatures to make provision with respect to elections to panchayats under the superintendence, direction and control of the chief electoral officer of the state.

Thus, the 73rd Amendment has been an important mile stone in the process of rural development and decentralization of village administration. For more effective implementation of rural development programmes, integrated Rural Development Programme, introduced in 1979-80, and superficial resemblance to the community Development Programme of the fifties in the sense that both are committed to integrated development. But the single most prominent difference is that the IRDP was aimed at ameliorating the lot of the weaker groups in rural society—indeed, of all those below the poverty line, including small farmer, marginal farmers, rural artisans, agricultural and non-agricultural labourers. While, the C.D. programme was open ended and did not close its doors to anyone. The IRDP was available only to the rural poor. Yet it was much more comprehensive in its coverage, and marked an improvement on Small Farmers Development Agency (SDFA) and the Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Agency (MFAL).

The origin of IRDP dates back to 1975, when the Indian Science Congress decided to discuss a cross-disciplinary theme and selected "Science and Integrated Rural Development" for discussion at its next session in 1976. While addressing the session, Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India reminded the scientists of the Gandhian dictum, if village perish Indian-perishes too. She observed "our science should give itself a rural bias. Rural life should be so
enriched as to prevent the migration of people and resources from villages to town. Expedients worked out in countries where the agricultural population forms a small part of the work force cannot serve our country. There should be a greater attention to rural engineering. Rural electrification has made rapid progress but we have not yet succeeded in teaching villagers how to use power to advantage. Many farm implements lie idle for months owing to poor maintenance. She further pointed out that "our centres of science and higher technology should attach as much importance to man who takes science to the field as to him who publishes a thesis".

RURAL EMPLOYMENT AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Poverty alleviation efforts in India adopted several strategies. Employment generation programmes for rural development in rural areas through specific interventions is an important intervention. The first ever attempt at generating wage employment was the Rural Manpower Programme (RMP) launched in 1960-61 on a pilot basis. During the Fourth Five Year Plan, a Crash Scheme for Rural Employment (CSRE) was launched in 1971. These two schemes had limits focus and coverage and suffered from lack of planning and preponderance of building Kuccha roads. Most of the assets were non-durable in nature. 1972, another scheme, Pilot Intensive Rural Employment Programme (PIREP) was started in 1972 alongside CSRE. The Drought Prone Area Programme (DPAP) of 1970-71 and later, the Desert Development Programme (DDP) were also a part of employment generation strategy to begin with, before they become as Area Programmes. Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) and Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labour Scheme (MFAL) also addressed employment objectives. The year 1977 saw a more definite step with the launching of Food for Work Programme (FWP) as a new Plan Programme to augment the resources of state for maintenance of public work. These programmes could not make any significant dent as resources available were far below the committed level. Incorporating the lessons learnt in the past, the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP) was launched as a centrally sponsored programme form 1980. Three years later, Rural
landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEG) was launched in 1983. Both NREP and RLEG had achieved their physical and financial targets but failed to provide 100 days of employment to at least one member of Rural Landless family. The year 1989 saw the merger of NREP and RLEG into Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) with 80:20 cost sharing between the centre and the states. JRY had several components like funds sent directly to Panchayats, Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), Million Well Scheme (MWS), special allocation to backward Areas and innovative Employment Programme.

JRY was implemented throughout the country. This programme has since been converted into rural infrastructure programme with a new name Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY). Learning from the Employment Guarantee Scheme implemented in Maharashtra and from a similar scheme formulated in Tamil Nadu, Employment Assurance Scheme (EAS) was launched in 1983 to cover the 1752 backward blocks in 257 districts and expanded in phases to cover the whole country in 1996. EAS aimed at providing 100 days of employment to two members of poor family in a year. Brief details of achievement under various employment programmes are given in Table-1.

Various studies by Programme Evaluation organization, concurrent evaluation by the Ministry of Rural Development and the National Institute of Rural Development had shown that employment generation figures were overstated in official records and percentage utilization under these programmes in the last three years of the decade in 1999 is on the decline. Taking the official figures as correct, the number of jobs created worked out to 241 million (both JRY and EAS together). Further, since most of the works/assets taken up under these programme were not productive thereby meaning, the jobs are not sustainable and fresh injection, of resources on a continuing basis is needed. Compared to the projected increase in the 15 and above age group in the labour force at 10.5 million per annum between 1997 and 2002, the ability of wage employment programme to provide job is, at best, about 23 percent.
## Progress and Achievements Under Employments Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programmes</th>
<th>Objective in Brief</th>
<th>Target Area</th>
<th>Expenditure (in crores)</th>
<th>Employment Generated (million mandays)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RWP (1961-66)</td>
<td>To provide 100 days of employment to</td>
<td>Rural areas</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMP (1966-69)</td>
<td>About 2 million persons for five years by creating community assets</td>
<td>Where unemployment is acute</td>
<td>26.4</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSRE (1971-74)</td>
<td>To generate 2.5 lakh mandays of employment in each of selected districts by creating productive assets and prospective irrigation</td>
<td>350 district mostly SFDA, MFPA, DPAP, District</td>
<td>127 (89.0)</td>
<td>316 (199)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FFW (1977-80)</td>
<td>Providing gain full employment to the poor by creating rural infra structure and payment of part wages in food grains</td>
<td>In all the states and UTs</td>
<td>112 (7.10)</td>
<td>869 (61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NREP (1980-89)</td>
<td>Providing gain full employment to the poor by creating rural infra structure and payment of part wages in food grains</td>
<td>In all the States and UTs</td>
<td>4774 (1-10)</td>
<td>3253 (100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PIREP (1972-76)</td>
<td>Provide employment to 1000 persons in a year in a district and to one person in a family in which nobody was employed by creating economic and social assets</td>
<td>In 15 select Blocks</td>
<td>9 (36.0)</td>
<td>18 (—)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RLEGP (1983-89)</td>
<td>Provide 100 days of employment to every rural landless by creating durable assets.</td>
<td>In all states and UTs</td>
<td>2797 (78.0)</td>
<td>1417 (—)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IRY (1989-99)</td>
<td>Creation of additional gainful employment to rural poor, Creation of potential by strengthening rural infrastructure.</td>
<td>In all states and UTs</td>
<td>23991* (76.8)</td>
<td>6374* (97)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAS 1993 to till date</td>
<td>Providing 100 mandays of employment to 2 persons in a family who are in need of employment. Creation of economically productive assets.</td>
<td>In all states and UTs</td>
<td>4110* (75.5)</td>
<td>853*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figures in brackets are percentage achievement
* Upto December 1997.
Despite an expected reduction in the growth rate of population to 1.58 per cent per annum by the end of Ninth Plan, the labour force growth is likely to reach a peak level of 2.5 per cent. More worrisome feature is that the most active age group of 15-59 is likely to go up by 60 percent during the current Plan period while the labour participation rate (1993-94) in this group has declined substantially. Planning Commission projects that increase in absolute number of persons in labour force will peak in Tenth Plan period. Efforts are, therefore, required for creating conditions for absorption of the large number of workers in the Ninth Plan Period itself.

In the coming years agriculture will continue to be the sector providing work opportunities at around 60 percent of labour force while non-farm sector, despite higher growth rate, may not be able to provide work opportunities more than the present level of about 40 percent. Though the Ninth Plan projects an employment growth of 2.44 percent, if past trends are any pointer, this may be difficult and the unemployment may be more than the projected seven million. The rate of unemployment since 1983 has remained almost constant at 1.86 per cent and keeping to unemployment contained at 1.66 per cent by the end of Ninth Plan, as projected, would call for major shifts in prioritization and thrust towards employment oriented growth. Public investment in infrastructure, particularly roads, land development, water harvesting and management, which promise productivity improvement and employment generation should receive utmost priority. Multi-sector investment i.e., agriculture, power, roads, irrigation etc; has to go up considerably. Major problem of rural unemployment arises from the high level of illiteracy (55.5 percent) among rural workers particularly, female workers (78.6 percent). In agricultural sector the level of illiteracy is far higher. This fact has an important bearing on the quality of employment. Consistency in employment can be ensured, and work opportunities can be enhanced only when skills are improved and therefore, education is an essential factor in improving the human capital. The situation in 1993-94 does not show very encouraging prospects. Efforts and resource allocation in human capital development have to be doubled Another area of concern is the gradual increase in the proportion of casual
labour from 23 percent in 1972-73 to almost 32 percent in 1993-94. This increase was mainly at the cost of self-employed. However, one heartening feature in the otherwise depressing scene is the rise in real wages of casual labourers between 1987-88 and 1993-94. Some argue that the implementation of massive wage employment programmes had its contribution in this respect. Nevertheless, even at the 1993-94 prices, the absolute wage level of Rs. 15 per day in rural areas and Rs. 22 in urban areas cannot afford a reasonable level of well being, let alone a reasonable level of social security to an average worker. The gender differentials in wage rate persist. Invisible under employment (some employed persons may still offer themselves for work as their income levels may not be sufficient) is also on the rise. The problem of under employment is seen more among usually employed females than males and in rural areas than urban areas.

Regional dimension of employment measured in terms of balance between labour force and work opportunities in the Ninth Plan indicate the likely worsening situation in Bihar, Kerala, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. These states face the prospect of an increase in labour force outpaces the increase in work opportunities. In fact, the unemployed situation in Bihar, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh as projected by the Planning Commission is likely to worsen in the Tenth Plan period calling for accelerated work opportunities in these states. The fact that three fourth of job increase in these states come from agriculture and attempts should be made towards reorientation of agricultural growth in these states.

While various efforts towards generating employment in agriculture, non-farm and industrial sectors had to be stepped up, it any be necessary, simultaneously, that the wage employment programmes are reoriented by giving regional focus to concentrate the available resources in the areas where unemployment is likely to continue in endemic proportion. In fact, this was the basic principle of EAS and IRY, but somehow got diluted over the years. Do we have the necessary political will is a big question because these programmes have to come to be recognized as rural infra-structural programmes in every state.
Secondly, without these scheme resources most state governments may not be able to maintain even quarter of the existing resource allocation for rural development. An estimate of resource requirement made by Planning Commission for wage employment programmes in the three most chronic states viz., Bihar, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh indicate an annual allocation of Rs. 4370 crores rising to 6931 crores by the end of Ninth Plan for these three states alone. At the 1998-99 level of allocation, these three states will have to be allocated nearly two thirds and more resources under the Wage Employment Programmes. If the demand of other states have to be met, the annual allocation may have to be anywhere in the range of Rs. 10,000 crores. By any means this is a gigantic task.

The signals available form our achievements in the poverty front offer some valuable lessons i.e., any strategy for improving the quality of employment on a sustained basis will have to have effective measures for raising agricultural productivity without compromising on the employment intensity of agriculture as an integral part. While employment increased by nearly two per cent during 1983-93, the incidence of poverty reduced by 8.51 percentage point, bringing down the absolute number of poor by 0.78 per cent during the same period. States like West Bengal, Bihar, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Orissa, Rajasthan and Gujrat had an employment generating growth during 1983-94. Thus strategies should, necessarily, include interventions to promote employment generating growth and increase in agricultural productivity. Evaluation studies of 18 Innovative Employment Programmes in the country indicated that, land based and productivity augmenting projects offers substantial sustained employment generation. These schemes emanated from the bottom. Therefore, a sense of ownership prevailed and the employment generation efficiency in these schemes was higher than JRY and EAS. While continuation of such project initiatives would have been ideal, somehow the provisions have been suspended since 1999-2000.

There are however, limits to growth in employment from agricultural sector even at high and diversified rate of growth. Technological advancement and
institutional changes may, in fact, result in shrinking of employment potential. We may have to capitalize on one encouraging signal emanating from rural non-farm sector. The share of rural work force in non-farm sector has seen a steady rise since 1978 and has registered a rate of employment growth of around five per cent between 1987-88 and 1993-94. With suitable promotion policies, particularly by strengthening the infrastructure, the employment generating capacity of non-farm sector can definitely be augmented.

Another major employment effort initiated by the Government is the individual oriented self-employment Programmes. Important among them are Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), (has since been restructured into Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana -SGSY), Training of Rural Youth in Self - Employment (TRYSEM), Supply of Improved Toolkits to Artisans (SITRA) and Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA), which have since been merged into Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana, SGSY. During the Eighth Plan a sum of Rs. 5551 crores were spent on these scheme covering about 14.5 million persons. Studies across the country had shown that achievement of self-employment objective of these schemes was less than 30 per cent and most of the activities were unlivable and unsustainable. Unless infrastructural bottlenecks, particularly technology and marketing aspects are taken seriously and addressed, urgently the potential of the schemes to make a dent in rural employment and thereby rural poverty cannot counted be high. However, great hopes have been laid on the SGSY, which has addressed several of the shortcoming of the past.

Women group under DWRCA and savings and thrift group have shown promise in the area of self-employment through mobilizing and operating micro-credit. The successful experience of SEWA in Gujrat, Podupulakshmi in Andhra Pradesh, IFAD assisted Magalir Thittam (Women Development) in Tamil Nadu and many NGO sponsored projects offer lessons for enhancing self-employment opportunities for women. Though SGSY has rightly given emphasis for this
approach, inadequate provisioning for awareness building may leave the targets unachievable in qualitative terms.

Streamlining the provisions to encourage community participation in public works will ensure productive investments and improvement the employment generation efficiency of both wage and self-employed schemes. Use of heavy machineries for earth work and land development under IRY and EAS is widely practiced across the states. Employment for rural labour is very minimal in these works. Strict adherence to stipulations are feasible only through community vigilance. Potential of the communities to contribute towards public works has not been fully taken advantage of for resource mobilization. Janmabhoomi in Andhra Pradesh, Namaku Naume (We for Ourselves) in Tamil Nadu, Apna Gaon Apna Kaam in Rajasthan and Gokul Gram in Gujrat have demonstrated, that raising resources from communities for public works is a feasible proposition, community based organizations, user groups beneficiary committees etc. will ensure qualitative achievement of programme objectives.

There is a school of thought that by strengthening road network and improving connectivity in rural areas, employment and income objectives of poverty alleviation efforts will be taken care automatically as market will facilitate the process. There is substantial evidence to support this argument. In this respect, the suggestion to embark more resources under the Wage Employment Programme, Rural Infrastructure Development Fund of NABARD, etc.

In sum, Ninth Plan period faces serious challenges in employment front. Innovative policy interventions, diversification, main-streaming rural traders and occupations into market economy and high priority to fill the infra-structural gaps, both physical and social are the need of the hour. Ensuring participation of local communities in planning and execution of these programmes and also mobilization of resources for local development are two areas that would need serious attention to improve the efficiency and spread of these programmes on a sustainable basis.
In view of the observed trend in employment over a long period of time, expansion of employment in agriculture sector largely depends on overall rate of growth of economy and specific measures through which decline in employment elasticity can be checked. Employment growth strategies in agriculture sector have largely to be in the nature of diversification both region wise and crop wise. Particular attention needs to be paid to the agriculturally background region. Stress on high values and labour intensive crops such as fruits, vegetables and other horticulture crops (Like floriculture, spices, medicinal and aromatic plants) is to be given both from the point of view of employment promotion and export possibilities. Employment potential in horticulture crops has been estimated to be much higher (3 to 5 times) than other agricultural crops. Rightly so, during Eight Plan it was given high priority. Agro-processing industries have good potential to boost agriculture production and thereby increase in employment and income levels. Though crop production has been the largest activity for employment generation in agriculture yet growth of employment has been sluggish. A number of crop oriented schemes started by the Department of Agriculture with a view to increasing production employment and income needs should be implemented vigorously throughout the country. Irrigation schemes particularly minor ones have highest employment potential. The studies conducted on the alternative sources of irrigation also suggest that irrigation through tube wells is efficient in terms of water delivery and is economical for high water input crops as compared to other alternative sources. Better water management and measures like land reforms particularly consolidation of holdings, security to tenants, development of wasteland, land reclamation are highly labour intensive activities. This will increase agricultural productivity as well as employment potential. Employment can also be promoted by devising appropriate post-harvest strategies to reduce wastage of agriculture produce, to eliminate exploitation of producers and consumers of farm output and to facilitate value addition through processing and packaging of farm products near the location of farm production.

The National commission on Agriculture (1976) had rightly visualized the problem more than two decades ago. According to the commission, agriculture
development by 2000 A. D. would absorb only a part of the labour force that is expected to be in the labour market by that time. It has been estimated that more than 50 million additional employment opportunities will have to be created between 1971 and 2000 A. D. in rural areas - outside the purview of agriculture sector - to keep the additional rural labour force within the rural areas.

It has been observed that allied sectors have a very good potential to provide subsidiary activities to supplement employment and income generation through agriculture. The scope for development for production and employment generation in these activities is limited by the markets for these products and by the infrastructure for distribution. Some successful experiment like operation flood; which revolutionized milk production and distribution, have generated employment in a large scale. Similar attempts are being made in the case of poultry through programmes like the National Egg Coordinating Committee.

Some of the related activities which have a large scope for employment generation like milk processing and packing, marketing and distribution of milk and poultry products have also been taken up. The initiative in all such schemes implemented in rural areas has, however, come from the urban areas.

Non-farm employment generation in the rural areas through non-farm activities is not new. Concern for the development of non-farm activities and the need to integrate it with the farm sector development in rural areas figured explicitly in the first five year plan. Since then various programmes like the village and small industries development programme, rural industries programmes, rural artisan development programmes, integrated rural development programmes, with emphasis on integrated development of rural industries, agri-business and services were formulated and implemented.

Despite the serious concern for rural industrialization from the beginning of the planning era, the achievements are not very satisfactory and rural non-farm employment generation has not been able to make a significant dent on rural development. This necessitated the transformation of agriculture from agriculture
based single sector rural economy into multisector rural economy inter-linked and interdependent with the complex urban economic situation.

In the field of non-farm employment generation in rural areas, more than creation of opportunities and skill training related jobs, there is a need to build up confidence among rural entrepreneurs and job seekers to face the complexities of a multisector economy.

RURAL ENTREPRENEUR AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Development of the economy in any form is the outcome of human activity. This activity in a man envisages three roles as an organizer, worker and as a user of goods produced. Of these, the role of man in organizing the factors of production is very important. Unless the skills and resources provided by the nature are fully transformed into efficient production units, the man's labour will remain largely unproductive and keeps his level of consumption low. These considerations focus the attention on the importance of entrepreneurship in the development of any nation.

Historical development brought several changes in the economic development programmes of our country. India is in a peculiar situation where poverty is not acute but a chronic malady even in the presence of abundant natural resources, prevalence of chronic unemployment, under employment, poor quality of human capital (because of mass illiteracy), inadequacy of skills to meet the social problems, superstitious social taboos, low level of technology, poor economic organisations are some of the maladies the country is facing. Absence of entrepreneurial class willing to take risks and to undertake new ventures is yet another reason for our slow economic development. The development of indigenous entrepreneurship especially among the rural population is imperative for a country embarking on socio-economic development programmes. Thus, the country is looking forward for more and more entrepreneurs to build a strong national economy.
The concept of entrepreneurship:-

Work becomes part and parcel of one's life. People involve themselves in some work or the other. Some work for others and some are self-employed. The people who work for themselves are called “Entrepreneurs”. The word entrepreneur is derived from French word “entreprendre” meaning “to undertake”. The entrepreneur is thus a person who organizes and manages an activity / organization, undertaking the risks for fulfilling some of his needs. His job involves the quality of boldness, courage, dynamism and risks taking in sufficient measure.

Entrepreneurship is a purposeful activity indulged in initiating, promoting and maintaining economic activities for the production and distribution of wealth. The individual as an entrepreneur is a critical factor in economic development and an integral part of socio-economic transformation. Therefore, the basic concept of entrepreneurship connotes an effectiveness, an urge to take risks in the face of uncertainties and intuition. However, emergence of an entrepreneur in the society depends closely upon the inter linked social, economic, cultural, religious and psychological variables.

Entrepreneurship as an economic activity emerges and functions in sociological and cultural setting. It could be conceived of as an individual's free-choice activity or a social group's occupation or profession. In India's context entrepreneurs hail either from communities which are traditionally endowed with entrepreneurial qualities or those from traditionally non-entrepreneurial groups. Further, entrepreneurship may result in either basic, partial or total transformation in the client community. The entrepreneur is this context is defined as one who could start a new activity or a new enterprise which is a deviation from his traditional family occupation or profession. Entrepreneurship can also be taught of as a creative activity. The entrepreneur is an innovator who introduces something new into the economy - a method of production not yet tested, a product with which consumers are not familiar, a new source of raw material, or a new market neither unexploited and the other similar innovations.
The inadequacy of entrepreneurial talents is an inhibiting factor to accelerate the process of development in our country. Most of the Asian countries have, of late, adopted a deliberate policy of promoting and encouraging small enterprises. In a developing country, like ours, the growing percentage of unemployment is causing harm and is leading to frustration among the youth. If a proper outlet is not available for the Latent energies of youth disastrous situation may result.

While entrepreneurship remained a term to describe the activities of a set of people for a long time, today it has assumed a wider and more dynamic significance. The purely economic implications have expanded to include socio-political entrepreneurship implies a recognition of values of individual liberty, innovativeness, risk-taking and independence. In a developing country like India, promotion of entrepreneurship also implies an acceptance of ideas of equalization, balanced development and elimination of disparities.

The phenomenon of entrepreneurial activity, like any other social movement, as it is not going to be the exclusive sphere of any particular stratum of people. Yet another significant event is the shift is the focus of entrepreneurial activity. Entrepreneurial activity heither to mostly confined to urban metropolitan areas, has began to spread to semi urban and even rural areas. Diffusion of entrepreneurship activity into similar towns or larger villages will certainly result in greater heterogeneity of entrepreneurial characteristics as well as the nature of entrepreneurial activity. Therefore, in the context of India, entrepreneurial activity in small towns and rural areas has, to a large extent, to be on a small scale, and depends on less sophisticated technology and most importantly depends on local material and human resources. The concept of entrepreneurship, therefore, must be conceived covering people like farmers, weaker sections, tribal community and women.

In recent years, the policy planners have been emphasising to stimulate the dormant entrepreneurial capabilities among wider segments of the society. Systematic and successful attempts made to develop entrepreneurs among diverse
segments of the society have dispelled the classical thinking - entrepreneurs are born and not made. Of late, the Conventional Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (CEDPs) are modified as self-employment stimulators to train the unconventional and lesser known target groups - youth (literate, illiterate), poor (urban or rural), women, and the other disadvantaged sections of the society. Hence entrepreneurship development is regarded as the quick and tested rout to establish small enterprises both in the manufacturing and service sectors.

Development of micro-entrepreneurship at the grass root level is perceived as a powerful medium to ameliorate several socio-economic problems such as reduction of poverty, balanced regional development, provision of goods and services appropriate to the local needs, redistribution of both income and opportunities in the community in general. The redistribution of wealth and opportunity lead to decentralization of economic power within the community. In recent years in most countries of the world especially in developing countries, self-employment has emerged as a major source of employment creation. It was in the nineties the slow growth of wages and employment in the modern industrial sector has directed attention to the promotion of self employment as a means of solving the problems of unemployment, underemployment and poverty. Even the periods of more favourable economic growth the creation of wage employment could not match with the increase in labour force. The promotion of self employment in rural and urban sectors is therefore an important part of overall employment strategy. In the period of structural adjustment programme there is an even greater need to rely on the promotion of self-employment. Thus it is time to convert job seekers into job providers, so as to generate further employment opportunities in rural setting to check migration to urban centres.

While developing rural entrepreneurship, the organization engaged in this developmental initiative may adopt:

a) Individual or selective approach, and / or

b) Group entrepreneurship approach/ total or systems approach.
Under the first category the trainees are selected through various psychological tests, imparted training and their needs are met through institutional support where as the second approach beings with the assessment of physio, psycho, social-cultural and economic aspects of the client community and may end up with the marketing of the products manufactured by the neo-entrepreneurs. In the rural context, individual based EDP approach becomes highly relevant where the motivation and familiarization process coupled with promise of bank credit and support by way of escort services could persuade rural youth with certain basic skills of 'hands on technology' to start small enterprises. The underlying assumption in the REDPs are:

a. Rural EDPs could motivate the trainees and instill in them confidence to start new enterprises;

b. The EDPs could provide the necessary opportunity guidance so that trainees start their enterprises producing marketable goods and services on a commercial level;

c. The trained persons are able to solve the problems of production, management and link-ages and stabilise their business;

d. The new entrepreneurs are able to avail the credit facilities from the banks and available support services from the existing development organizations, and

e. Finally the new enterprises are able to generate employment opportunities for their family members and others.

The following components have been identified as essential features of a rural EDP.

a. Proper selection of persons with a basic aptitude for new ventures;

b. A Comprehensive training module incorporating:

- Achievement motivation
• Opportunity identification and guidance

• Important knowledge of supporting organizations and schemes.

• Preparation of project reports.

• Inputs for management of resources viz. Men, material and money; and

• Lastly market perception, market intelligence and marketing of the products/services feasible in the area from where the trainees are drawn.

c. A Commitment from the training agency to oversee the results of their efforts by a systematic follow up for a minimum period of two years and to build up records of their experience in this context.

However, the number of training days training methodology and content differ from one training institution to another. Some may conduct awareness programmes of one or two days while others may engage themselves in full-fledged EDPs of 4 to 6 weeks and even more than six months.

EDUCATION AND TECHNOLOGY FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Education plays a pivotal role in enabling a society to adopt and accept technology quickly is the proven fact. Education helps rural population not so much because it provides them with more information but because it enhances their ability to learn from their experiences or that of others. In the context of technology for rural areas the concept of technological determinism and transfer of technology are equally important. However, in a country as vast as India, with varying levels of educational standards and academic excellence to absorb and adopt technology it will be a tall order to presume that technological determinism would be so strong to become a cause of social change.
The importance of literacy as a key factor in capability building, and in enhancing the quality of life of an individual has been long accepted. It would be pertinent to refer to what Aldous Huxley had said in this context: "Every man who knows how to read has to magnify himself, to multiply the way in which he exists, to make his life full, significant and interesting". Since literacy is basic to the understanding of the working of a host of social, economic and political institutions, even primary level education performs an important part, particularly in rural areas. One cannot enter the new communication and social order if one is not literate. "An illiterate person has hundreds of enemies-epidemics, hunger, disorder and humiliation", said the Soviet Government's statement on elimination of illiteracy in 1920. Illiteracy makes one a victim of false information and false consciousness. Therefore, the key to progress is education which alone can uplift a Society.

The lack of reading and writing skills drastically limits the expansion of a person's overall capacities and abilities. The learning project report to the club of Rome, the Human Gap, 1979 says: "Most people think of waste in physical terms, such as waste of resources, energy, or money. Indeed the global problematic has focused attention on the wasteful misuse of non-renewable physical resources. But another kind of waste has an even more serious impact on a number of global problems: the waste of human learning potential. In this context, waste can result not only from the misuse that relegates people to marginal positions, but also from lack of use or neglect of human capacities. Unacceptably large number of people find themselves excluded from all but the most rudimentary, informal opportunities to develop their learning processes. Illiteracy, both a symptom and a cause of the downward spiral of ignorance and poverty, epitomizes the waste of human learning potential."

A number of eminent economists, development thinkers and policy makers world wide have emphasized the role of literacy and education as being pivotal for progress of the society. Nobel laureate Amartya Sen et al in India: Economic Development and Social Opportunity says: "Literacy is a basic tool of self defence
in a society where social interaction often involves the written media. An illiterate person is that much less equipped to defend herself in court, to obtain a Bank loan, to enforce her inheritance rights, to take advantage of new technology, to complete for secure employment, to get on the right bus, to take part in political activity, in short to participate successfully in the modern economy and society. Similar things can be said about numeracy and other skill acquired in the process of basic education. The basic education is also a catalyst of social change”.

The elimination of ignorance, of illiteracy and of needless inequalities in opportunities (is) to be seen as objectives that are valued for their own sake. They expand our freedom to lead the lives we have reason to value, and these elementary capabilities are of importance on their own.

It is widely perceived that education is critical for economic and social development. It is crucial for building human capabilities and for opening opportunities. Without education development can neither be broad based nor sustained. Gray Becker in human capital 1993 says: Since human capital is embodied knowledge and skills and economic development depends on advances in technical and scientific knowledge, development presumably depends on the accumulation of human capital.

The contemporary society is characterised by the swift pace of change which affects our lives in diverse ways: rapid technological development, faster evolution and aggregation of knowledge, rising aspiration of the people toward a more fulfilling quality of life, increasing demand for qualified and trained manpower. Today, besides the integration of the individual into the social system, it is equally essential that he equips himself with knowledge and skills imperative for a globalized economy in the 21st century.

It is important that education must be relevant to the needs of modern societies and to the demands of global markets, and it must be available to all members of society. The East Asian experience shows that importance of basic and technical education in building a stock of valuable and relevant human capital.
Empirical evidence shows further that there is no industrial society today with an adult literacy rate of less than 80 percent. No illiterate society has ever become an industrial tiger of any stripe or colour.\textsuperscript{123}

In the idealistic system of society and Governance every person child, youth and adult should be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs. These needs comprise both essential learning tools (literacy oral expression and numeracy) and the basic learning content (knowledge, skills, values and attitudes) required by human being to be able to survive to develop their full capacities and to live and work in dignity. The education system should provide both a solid basis for future learning and essential skills for living a constructive life within society.

That literacy and education play a pivotal role in enabling a society to adopt and accept technology quickly has been proved in number of cases. A person with a higher educational level is more attuned to adopt technological innovations more quickly and easily. Education helps farmers not so much because it provides them with more information but because it enhances their ability to learn from their experience or that of others. Some examples are:

a) Basic education for all and relevant technical skills were by far the most important factor responsible for creating the East Asian miracle. It has been estimated that over 75 percent of the real wealth of East Asian Countries are their human and social capital.

b) In India a one-year increase in the average number of years of primary schooling of the work force would raise output by 23 percent.

In the context of technology for rural areas the concepts of technological determinism and transfer of technology are equally important. Technological determinism, according to Rogers, is the degree to which technology is main cause of social change in the society. The adherents to this concept consider technology as a prime mover which help shape a society. In a country as vast as India, with varying levels of educational standards and academic excellence to absorb and
adopt technologies, it will be a tall order to presume that technological
determinism would be so strong as to factor as a cause of social change. It could at
the most be one of the factors for such a change and that too not always beneficial.

For reaching out benefits of technology transfer to rural areas, the
Government of India in 1987 put five key technological missions in place so as to
employ suitable technology to promote development. These missions were on
telecommunications, immunization, drinking water, literacy and oilseeds
development. In 1989, the oilseeds mission achieved its target a year ahead of
schedule, and the drinking water mission covered 70,000 villages out of 100,000 it
was projected to cover by 1990. The telecom mission was established during 1989
to direct India's telecommunication revolution. The lessons learned in the process
of adopting technological innovations should not be lost sight of. Technological
innovations open up vast new possibilities. However, they are not instant miracles
but tools to be introduced and used only after careful consideration is given to all
possible resulting ramifications. Each has particular potential, yet none is isolated.
They are parts of a total system, which should be planned and shaped keeping in
mind the impact such a technology is likely to create on society. Technological
innovations can often have negative effects, both economic and social, and may
distort directions and priorities for overall developmental activities. We have also
seen as to how certain communication technologies (particularly television, video
and cable television), which were presented as technologies for rural development
offering choices of programmes have proved to be technologies largely for the
entertainment. The report of the International Commission for the study of
communication problems, had in 1978, agreed that "The promise of cable
television (multiple channels, multiple choices for the viewers) may have been
oversold in the early development period. Similarly, the communication planners
and scholars are once again revisiting the benefits of satellite and a new
communication technologies.

Therefore, let a caveat be entered: Introduction of new technologies,
particularly in rural areas, need to be planned with abundant caution, not only with
respect to the economic and social costs involved but also keeping in mind long term impact such a step is likely to create in the village society.

To conclude, if rural development is intended to be meaningful for the lives of India's villagers, then the existing socio-economic order in which the power base lies with the rural rich needs to be radically changed to a new order in which power balance will favour the rural poor. The recent developments in regard to biological technology in agriculture have made the small peasant agriculture potentially viable. Likewise, new institutional innovations in the field of research, price support, credit supply, water management and other inputs are going to have immense impact on the totality of Indian agrarian structure. In the ultimate analysis, land reforms would improve future prospects in relation to raising farm productivity, income and employment through the creation of new incentives and opportunities for increased work and investment in rural areas. The rural development is a collective task. There is an urgent need to pool all the resources at hand to complete this task. Over the year, enough experience has also been gathered. Past experience and foresight can help in planning for the future. There is a dire need to sensitize various grass-root agents involved in the process of rural development. They are also expected to get familiarize with the new guidelines of different rural development schemes. This will help them in giving concrete shape to the intentions of different schemes at the field level. The following words of Jawahar Lal Nehru should become the guiding philosophy for all:- "The ambition of the greatest man of our generation has been to wipe every tear from every eye. That may be beyond us, but as long as there are tears and suffering, so long our task will not be over".

The overall scenario that evolves now is that the bureaucracy is an integral part of the development process and has a significant role to play in this task. It would be a mistake if the importance of the bureaucracy (civil services) were not fully recognized by those involved in the development effort. More and more countries, especially developing ones, and the United Nations now attach too much importance to the civil service as a mechanism for nation building and socio-
economic progress. It is mainly through public organizations and their proper management that the goals and objectives of a developing country are carried out and achieved. The ideal bureaucracy provides the people with a clean and efficient administration. Using the term 'bureaucracy' as an instrument of change, Dey says: "when the major need of the society is creating a sense of 'nationhood' and national solidarity, the bureaucracy has to play, willy-nilly, what can be called an 'integrative' role, and not merely an 'instrumental' one"124.

Bhambri also subscribes to the view that the bureaucracy plays a decisive role in nation-building in modern societies and that on its performance capacity depends the success of failure of various programmes of socio-economic development125.

Today the bureaucracy has not only to cope merely with the problem of maintaining law and order providing some limited public services, and the collection of taxes for the government, but also to devote its energies and time to time bigger and more important tasks of implementing plans and programmes for the socio-economic development of the state. It has to be specifically involved in the mobilization of resources and their allocation to a great variety of developmental activities on a large scale. The functions of the state are not limited to the maintenance of peace and administration of justice but cover a very wide range of functions from the provision of education to the building up of infrastructure for socio-economic development. To a very large extent the functions which were previously handled by voluntary institutions and organizations are now considered to be the prime responsibility of the state. As such, the functions of government these days have grown not only in size, magnitude and importance but also in complexity. It is needless to assert that the bureaucracy is the only instrument, which ensures administrative continuity in a developing democracy like India where the political executive changes according to the preference of the voters. In fact by virtue of its security of tenure and because of its crucial place in the power structure, the bureaucracy maintains continuity in government. The bureaucracies, especially the higher level
bureaucracies, are the link between the successive ministries and the repository of the principles and practices which endure Chief Ministers and other ministers come and go. Explaining the role of the bureaucracy, Dharam Vira, former Governor of Haryana observes: "for ensuring the continuity and smooth running of the administration the civil services were the only constant factor while governments came and went according to the change in the fortune of the political parties."

The bureaucracy plays an important role in the development of a country, particularly in a country, which has recently moved on the path of socio-economic development. Earlier, the development was defined in terms of increase in Gross Domestic Product. But, of late it has been felt by the economists, planners and social scientists alike that increase in the GDP may not necessarily result in reducing the misery of common man. In this context, the case of Philippines, Indonesia, Brazil and Mexico can be cited, where, inspite of increase in Gross Domestic Product, the relatively poor sections of the society remained unaffected. Therefore, as initiated in Japan, the development is being, now measured in form of Gross National Welfare in place of Gross Domestic Product. This new concept of development, gives more emphasis on equal distribution specially with respect to poor section of society.

Immediately after independence, planning in India, mainly, aimed at the increasing rate of the Gross Domestic Product. As long as our objective was to increase the size of GDP, the bureaucratic organization was appropriate, but unfortunately it proved inadequate in changing context and composition of development. It was felt that the common man is left aside in the process of development. The need was, therefore felt to give opportunity for the involvement and participation of people in the process of development. Consequently more emphasis was placed on the development of the scheduled caste/scheduled tribes and other backward sections. Inspite of many constructive and healthy endeavors, the bureaucracy is blamed for the poor implementation of development programmes by certain sections.
It is also said that several honest and sincere civil servants were kept aside and the corrupt and inefficient ones were involved in the implementation of the development programmes. But it is due to the fact that the corrupt and inefficient bureaucrats forge similar nexus with political leaders and fulfil their own selfish interests at the cost of people's welfare. Its consequences for development are that the objectives of these programmes are not achieved within time and the cost of project keeps on increasing day by day. It is also to be said that the Indian bureaucracy has not been able so far to shed its colonial attributes. The centralized structure, lack of spirit of initiative and tendency to shirk responsibility etc. are some of the elements, which are not conducive to effective, prompt and timely implementation of these programmes. However, in the light of the above discussion, it can be concluded that there is a need of some improvement in bureaucratic organization. Which are as follows:

a- Decentralization: increased role of grass root level institutions:

One of the major structural changes that has been effected in recent years has been the passing of the 73rd and 74th constitution Amendment Acts, 1992 by which local-self governments, both rural and urban, have been given constitutional status. More powers and functions have been devolved on these bodies. This will not only help in right-sizing the bureaucracy but also make it more responsive and accountable as the people at the grass root level will act as real watchdog.

b- Depoliticisation and need to preserve bureaucratic neutrality:

It is fact that political pressures will continue to be exerted on the bureaucracy given the present state of Indian politics. However, it is upto the bureaucracy to withstand these pressures and evolve its own code of ethics. The bureaucracy must at all costs uphold the rule of law and the guiding philosophy of the constitution. Further, victimization of bureaucracy in terms of mass transfers and punishment posting must be strongly discouraged and suitable institutional mechanism to regulate the same be evolved.

c- An urgent need to uphold integrity:
It is said that the bureaucracy has become synonymous with corruption in the absence of any effective control mechanism. Though some efforts have been made to redress this issue in the past like the creation of office of Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), Lok Ayuktas etc. And now greater and more effective powers need to be entrusted to them and more such institutions viz. The Lokpal. In addition, the bureaucracy must urgently evolve its own code of discipline which should be legally enforceable to act as a deterrent.

d- Right of Information: A need for transparent administration:

According to transparency International's Report, India has a very poor record as far as government dealing are concerned. The people must have the right to be informed about the actions of the administration which have a significant bearing on their lives. This will help in keeping the administration on its toes, check corruption and ensure greater accountability some steps have been taken to empower people in states like Goa, Karnataka and MP, but this should be institutionalized at the national level.

e- Attitudinal change: the cure to most of the ills:

All efforts should be concentrated on reforming and making more effective, efficient and people's oriented. The bureaucracy would be nullified if the structural changes as outlined above are not accompanied by a corresponding change in the outlook and behaviour of the bureaucracy. Traditionality will have to give way to modernity. Arrogance should be replaced by politeness, aloofness by participation, inertia by action, secrecy by transparency, adhocism by professionalism and centralization of authority by decentralization.

Time has come for a strong message to be conveyed that administration is for the welfare of the people and not for public servants themselves. There has to be a change of attitude and public servants should realize that their efficiency will be measured only in term of public satisfaction.
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