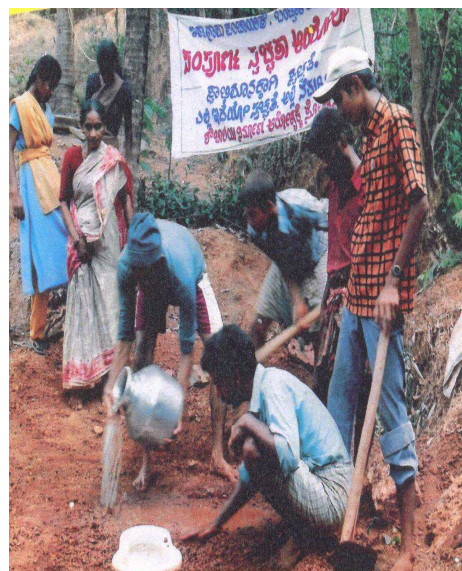


# Towards Good Governance

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## An Action Guide for Local Self Governments



Centre for Budget and Policy Studies

Year : 2013

Sponsor : Global Development Network

Publisher : Centre for Budget and Policy Studies  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor "Maitri Bhavan"  
(Above United Lodge of Theosophists )  
#4, M.N.Krishna Rao Road, Basavanagudi  
Bangalore -560004

Telephone: +91-80-65907402

Fax: +91-80-26560734

Website: [www.cbps.in](http://www.cbps.in)

# **Towards Good Governance**

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## **An Action Guide for Local Self Governments**



**Centre for Budget and Policy Studies**



## Acknowledgements

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The Action Guide has been prepared with a view to help the local governments to improve governance. In preparing the Guide, many reference notes have been sourced from documents and websites of government. The sources have all been acknowledged.

We thank Global Development Network for funding the preparation of this Action Guide.

We are grateful to Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India for allowing us to use some of the case studies that were documented by CBPS as part of this Action Guide.

We thank Dr. Jyotsna Jha for her guidance and our colleagues in CBPS who had taken the trouble of going through the draft and commenting on it.

**October 2013**

**Centre for Budget & Policy Studies  
Bangalore**

**Shobha S. Veigas  
Srinivas Alamuru**



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The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts 1992 brought historic changes in the federal structure of the Indian polity by mandating a move towards decentralization. These amendments to the Indian Constitution brought a third level of government which is nearest to the governed. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment envisages a three-tier local government system of a) Zilla Parishad at district level b) Panchayat Samiti between the village and the district (mostly at the block level) and c) Gram Panchayat at the village level. The 74<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment provides for Municipalities for urban areas at three levels a) Nagar Panchayats for areas in transition from a rural area to urban area b) Municipal Councils for smaller urban areas and c) Municipal Corporations for larger urban areas.

The principle objective of introducing the third level of government was to increase participation of people at the grass roots both in the formulation as well as implementation of plans for their own development. Accordingly, 29 and 18 functions have been proposed to be transferred to local governments in the rural area and urban area respectively. Also the Amendments provide reservation of one third of the seats to women and also for the disadvantage social groups, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Local Governments are expected to provide basic services to the citizens, and also implement many development and welfare programs. Local governments are expected to be transparent and accountable as they are directly answerable to people. In order to be able to perform the functions devolved to local governments, there is a need for a sense of ownership and capacity to carry out the difficult responsibilities. However, while working with representatives of local government, it was seen that most of them do not have a clear idea of their role and responsibilities as elected representatives. They look upon and look up to governments at the state or central level as the real governments. They lack knowledge and awareness about the existence and importance of their own powers and responsibilities. There is also a sense of dissatisfaction and constant complaints about the lack of resources for effective implementation of the programs.

Continuous capacity building in terms of upgrading of knowledge, skills and attitudes of elected representatives is critical to the overall approach to the developmental effort. Besides, the elected representatives also require motivation to reach people and utilize opportunities to use local resources in the overall interest of their area. There is a need for the local elected representatives (as their counterparts in the state and the centre) to be sensitized to the rights of the people so that they appreciate their own role as facilitators and enablers rather than as lords and masters of the governed.

A move towards good governance is possible only when the elected representatives of local governments are able to think differently, understand the rights of people and think out of the box for finding solutions for many problems facing them. This action guide, which looks at local governance from the perspective of rights, is aimed at building the capacities of the

elected representatives local governments as also the government functionaries and the civil society to help promote good governance.

The purpose of the action guide is thus to help participants to understand the broader role of elected representatives in ensuring the rights of the people. It aims at enabling participants focus on addressing specific areas through fulfillment and protection of rights. It intends to provide information on the rights as well as responsibilities that would pave the way for effective functioning of the local self governments.

### Who can use this Guide?

Although the guide is mainly focused on elected representatives to understand the various issues around governance from the rights perspective, it could be used for building capacity of not only the elected representatives of local governments but also the officials as also members of civil society.

### Approach

The guide aims to

- explain rights of citizens
- define rights in the context of the relevant legislation
- look at issues relating to both government and governance
- look at issues relating to people and government

The guide uses a participative approach to ensure easy understanding. It includes various activities that can be adopted to be use for different audiences.

- Each topic is broken into several parts
- To get participants to carry out exercises with or without any facilitation
- Involve the learners / participants through participatory methods consisting of brainstorming, small group discussions, open house discussions, role play etc.

The content of guide is designed in way that the participants can choose individual topics even if they do not want all the information in the guide. Notes are provided on the concepts and issues related to a particular issues. Each topic provides the following information.

- Brief introduction of the topic
- Purpose - What the facilitator hopes to achieve by the end of the session.
- Suggested Method - Methods suggested for group/individual activities including step-by-step instructions on how to facilitate the sessions and implement activities
- Notes - This section will provide added information on the topic, these notes could be used as handouts in trainings

### Guidelines for conducting activities

- As a first step to use this Action Guide, it needs to be translated into local language.
- While the Action Guide can also be used for self study, it is recommended that it is used for a class room based activity as interaction with others is important for the learning process.
- The training based on Action Guide should be handled by an experienced trainer who is a skillful moderator / facilitator. The moderator should facilitate discussion by posing questions, encouraging everyone to participate, summing up the discussion at suitable intervals and so on.
- In case there are members who are not literate, the activities should be carried out by reading out the questions or by ensuring that there is someone in the group who can read and write. If there are exercises which should be done in an individual manner facilitator need to decide which method suits the group.
- It is not necessary that all ten modules be used in one training session. Depending upon the context, audience and availability of time, these can be used individually or in different combinations. It has been so prepared that it is easy to photo copy the hand-outs for group / individual exercises. The reading material could also be photo copied and provided to participants before / after each session.

At the end of the Action Guide are given four cases studies that CBPS was privileged to document for Ministry of Panchayati Raj which show case the extraordinary achievements of panchayats in mobilizing public support and resources to bring about positive changes under challenging circumstances. These provide inspiring examples of leadership on part of elected representatives and officials that the facilitator can use as part of instruction.

## 1: Government, Governance and Good Governance

---

Government refers to the act or manner of governing and the system by which a State is governed. Thus when we refer to the State Government or the Central Government, we mean the ministries comprising officials at different levels performing various duties under the rules framed for the purpose. In some contexts, it could also include the legislative and judicial branches as also other constitutional authorities.

Governance on the other hand is the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources. In a democracy like ours, the government exercises enormous power vested in it by the people. It decides on policies, translates them into reality through public expenditure, and enforces a framework of laws to regulate the activities of private sector, media, non-governmental organizations and civil society in general. The effectiveness of government in delivering public services is critical for the overall wellbeing of the people. The other important aspects of governance are competent political leadership which works for the welfare of the people and access to inexpensive, fair and speedy system of justice.

<sup>1</sup>The quality of governance has been the focus of governments and multi-lateral / donor agencies across the world. This has led to many of them defining qualitative standards of governance in the form of characteristics or principles that 'governance' ought to reflect for it to be good or ideal. Some of the basic governance principles or attributes include the following:

- Accountability – both horizontal and vertical
- Transparency
- Equity
- Performance (effectiveness and efficiency)
- Participation / voice
- Rule of Law and respect for rights
- Lack of arbitrariness
- Ethics and integrity
- Predictability

Decentralized government empowers the people at grass roots by entrusting them with direct role in supervising the quality of many public services delivered by the government – particularly in health, education, water, sanitation, food supplies, etc. Local self government brings about greater accountability of the elected representatives to the governed. However, this is possible when the elected representatives engage more actively in the

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<sup>1</sup> State of Governance – A framework for assessment – Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India

decision making process and become more responsive and alive to the needs of the people – particularly their rights and entitlements.

The local governments generally see themselves as implementers of the schemes according to specific guidelines laid down by higher levels of government. Their time and efforts are generally consumed in interpretation and compliance with the guidelines rather than understanding and addressing the needs of the people. A highly critical element of good governance is recognition and protection of rights. It is necessary for not only elected representatives and the officials but also the citizens themselves to recognize that they have 'right' to basic services that meet standards in terms of time and quality. Understanding citizens' rights is thus imperative for good governance. This guide makes an attempt to strengthening of local governments by building their capacities by sensitizing the elected representatives, CSOs and the citizens about the 'rights'.

## Activity 1.1 Understanding Government

---

The system of government in different countries of the world may be different in form and content as there are various types of political systems in vogue, but the basic objective of all governments is to provide better and more efficient public services to all sections of the population so that their hopes and aspirations are met.

This activity would help the participants to understand the concept of government. Participants should be encouraged to discuss and contribute their own understanding of government.

### Suggested Method

There are various ways this activity can be facilitated. (1) The facilitator can conduct a brainstorming activity by posing some questions (see Hand-out 1.1) to the participants and making a note of the points on a white board flip chart; (2) This could be organized as an individual activity where the participants reflect on the topic themselves and later the facilitator draws them into a discussion and sums up the major points; or (3) After the participants had reflected individually on the subject, they can be divided into groups for discussing the topic. The Facilitator may choose any one of the methods.

Please reflect on the following:

- a. What does government mean to you? What would happen if there were no government?
- b. In your experience who represents the government? Think of some individuals / offices that represent the government in your village.
- c. Can you identify officers of local government from state government in your village / Taluk? Are there any differences in the functions they perform? Why is there such a difference?
- d. Can you think of some examples of your local government working in coordination with the state government?

## Notes 1.1: Government: levels, differences and relations

---

In India, the Constitution provides for a Parliamentary form of government which is federal in structure with certain unitary features. The President is head of the State while the Prime Minister is the Head of the Government. At the central level, the two legislative houses are the council of the states (Rajya Sabha) to which members are elected indirectly by an electoral college of state representatives; and the House of the People (Lok Sabha) whose members are directly elected by the people. The government is formed by the party or a coalition of parties having majority in Lok Sabha. The Council of Ministers is thus collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha. The President exercises her/his functions in accordance with advice rendered by the Prime Minister as head of the government. The real executive power is thus vested in the Council of Ministers with the Prime Minister as its head.

Every state<sup>2</sup> has a Legislative Assembly. Certain States have an Upper House also called Legislative Council. There is a Governor for each state who is appointed by the President. Governor is the Head of the State and the executive power of the State is vested in him/her. The Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister as its head advises the Governor in the discharge of the executive functions. As at the center, the party or a coalition of parties having majority in the legislature (Legislative Assembly) form the government, which therefore, is collectively responsible to the Legislative Assembly of the State.

As mentioned in the Introduction, the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts 1992 brought historic changes in the federal structure of the Indian Government by mandating a move towards decentralization. These amendments to the Indian Constitution brought a third tier of government. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment provides for a three-tier local government system of a) Zilla Parishad at district level b) Panchayat Samiti between the village and the district (mostly at the block level) and c) Gram Panchayat at the village level. The 74<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment provides for Municipalities for urban areas at three levels a) Nagar Panchayats for areas in transition from a rural area to urban area b) Municipal Councils for smaller urban areas and c) Municipal Corporations for larger urban areas.

### Distribution of powers between governments

The legislative powers are distributed between the centre and the states and listed in the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution. The residuary powers vest in the Parliament. The Articles 245 to 263 of the Indian Constitution lay down the relations between the Union and the States. While the Parliament may make laws for the whole or any part of the territory of India, the Legislature of a State may make laws for the whole or any part of the State. The

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<sup>2</sup> The centrally administered territories are called Union Territories. They do not have their own elected governments and are ruled by the Union Government directly through an administrator – Lieutenant Governor. Delhi and Puducherry have been granted partial statehood and have their own elected legislatures.



subjects that deal with the nation as a whole or require uniformity across the country such as defense, national security, external affairs, communication, currency, banking and insurance, inter-state river and river valleys, inter-state trade and commerce, major industries, development and regulation of oilfields come under the Union's control. Whereas those that can be locally determined or controlled such as public order, police, prisons, local communication, land, agriculture, public health, local government, mines are under the State control. There are subject where the centre and the states have concurrent jurisdiction to legislate - known as concurrent lists e.g. criminal law and criminal procedure, preventive detention, education, forests, inland shipping and navigation, factories, boilers, electricity, newspapers, books and printing presses, weights and measures and price control.

The primary objective of introducing the third tier of government is to increase participation of people at the grass roots both in the formulation as well as implementation of plans for their own development. Accordingly, 29 and 18 functions have been proposed to be transferred to local governments in the rural area and urban area respectively.

| Sl. No | Rural  | Urban  |
|--------|--|--|
| 1.     | Agriculture, including agricultural extension  | Urban planning including town planning.  |
| 2.     | Land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation | Regulation of land-use and construction of buildings   |
| 3.     | Minor irrigation, water management and watershed development                               | Planning for economic and social development   |
| 4.     | Animal husbandry, dairying and poultry   | Roads and bridges  |
| 5.     | Fisheries  | Water supply for domestic, industrial and commercial purposes  |
| 6.     | Social forestry and farm forestry  | Public health, sanitation conservancy and solid waste management   |
| 7.     | Minor forest produce   | Fire services  |
| 8.     | Small scale industries, including food processing industries                               | Urban forestry, protection of the environment and promotion of ecological aspects.                         |
| 9.     | Khadi, village and cottage industries  | Safeguarding the interests of weaker sections of society, including the handicapped and mentally retarded. |
| 10.    | Rural housing  | Slum improvement and up gradation.   |
| 11.    | Drinking water   | Urban poverty alleviation.   |
| 12.    | Fuel and fodder  | Provision of urban amenities and facilities such as parks, gardens, playgrounds                            |
| 13.    | Roads, culverts, bridges, ferries, waterways and other means of                            | Promotion of cultural, educational and aesthetic aspects   |

|     |   |   |
|-----|---|---|
|     | communication   |   |
| 14. | Rural electrification, including distribution of electricity  | Burials and burial grounds; cremations, cremation grounds and electric crematoriums         |
| 15. | Non-conventional energy sources   | Cattle pounds; prevention of cruelty to animals   |
| 16. | Poverty alleviation programme   | Vital statistics including registration of births and deaths                                |
| 17. | Education, including primary and secondary schools  | Public amenities including street lighting, parking lots, bus stops and public conveniences |
| 18. | Technical training and vocational education   | Regulation of slaughter houses and tanneries  |
| 19. | Adult and non-formal education  |   |
| 20. | Libraries   |   |
| 21. | Cultural activities   |   |
| 22. | Markets and fairs   |   |
| 23. | Health and sanitation, including hospitals, primary health centres and dispensaries                 |   |
| 24. | Family welfare  |   |
| 25. | Women and child development   |   |
| 26. | Social welfare, including welfare of the handicapped and mentally retarded                          |   |
| 27. | Welfare of the weaker sections, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes |   |
| 28. | Public distribution system  |   |
| 29. | Maintenance of community assets."   |   |

## Activity 1.2 Local Governments

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From the Activity 1.1 participants would have understood broad concept of government, various levels of government and differences and relations between the levels of the government. The purpose of the above activities was to bring the participants to understand the broad framework of government. There is a third component in this framework that is very important to understand, that is, the role of the local government. The purpose of the activity is to enable the participants to understand the concept of local governments by encouraging them to express their views on local government, functions of local self governments and so on.

### Suggested Method

In the beginning the facilitator can brainstorm on the understanding of local government and later the participants can be divided into small groups wherein they could carry out the activity through role play. The groups (group can comprise of 6 to 8 participants) could be asked to enact on their understanding and experience of local government.

- Ask participant about their understanding of local government in terms of elections to various positions by people; key stakeholders of local government; role of various stakeholders; functions it discharges; and their own interface with it as a citizen consuming certain services (e.g. drinking water, public places, street lighting, revenue records, etc.), as a tax payer, and so on;
- Write down their responses on the white board or on the flip chart;
- Ask participants to form small groups consist of 6 to 8 depending upon the size of the group (may be 4 groups you can form for this exercise) and ask participants to discuss their experience of local government;
- Ask them to role play their experience of local government; The following topics could be given to each group to role play to know how much they know about the local government . Each role play could be given 15 minutes.
  - Group 1: Local government meeting and issues discussed
  - Group 2 : Role of citizens in local government
  - Group 3: Functions of local government with which they are familiar
  - Group 4: Role of president, vice president, members and secretary

Summarize after each role play their understanding of local government.

## 2. Understanding Rights and Rule of Law

---

To understand rights, it is important to understand the concept of State. The basic principle of democracy is that the people are sovereign; but, for practical considerations have a smaller body of their representatives to manage the affairs of the government on their behalf. The State which comprises the elected representatives and a body of permanent officials is vested with certain powers legally – for instance to enforce public order, to secure the country against external aggression or internal subversion, punish criminal acts, etc. The citizens' rights set limits on the powers of the State as the latter circumscribe citizens' rights. To illustrate, the state's power to prosecute an individual for alleged criminal act is limited by the individual's right to free and fair trial. Similarly, citizens' right to form associations or their right to free speech may be restricted by the State in the interest of national security. Constitution thus simultaneously recognizes the rights of people – their right to vote, to freedoms, and so on. The fundamental rights provided in the Constitution are enforceable in court of law. Thus a citizen who is denied the any of the fundamental rights can move the court for remedy.

Rights may be grouped under different categories such as the political / democratic rights (viz. right to vote, freedom of speech and expression, etc.); human rights (example, personal freedoms such as freedom to practice any religion, freedom of movement within the country, protection against unlawful detention, etc.); social rights (right to equality, freedom from discrimination in any form, etc.) and economic rights (right to own property and right to work). Increasingly, the governments across the world are recognizing the importance of education, access to clean water and sanitation, nutrition and basic health care as being vitally important for all round development of an individual. Some of these are now being guaranteed as 'rights' to citizens. Latest of the rights to be provided under the Constitution is the **right to education** which has been included in the Constitution as follows: *'The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine'*. Right to work had been included earlier in the Constitution to provide citizens enforceable entitlement to 100 days work in a year. Similarly, Food Security Act ensures minimum nutrition to all people through supply of food grains at subsidized prices.

The other important aspect of a democratic state is the rule of law. Rule of law is 'principle of governance in which all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to laws that are publicly promulgated, equally enforced and independently adjudicated, and which are consistent with international human rights norms and standards. It requires, as well, measures to ensure adherence to the principles of supremacy of law, equality before the law, accountability to the law, fairness in the application of the law, separation of powers, participation in decision-making, legal

certainty, avoidance of arbitrariness and procedural and legal transparency'.<sup>3</sup> In simple and practical terms, rule of law implies that no individual, how so ever important or eminent, is above the law of the land. As a corollary, it follows that all individuals irrespective of their social or economic status stand equal before law, that is, law applies to them equally.

It is important for the elected representatives to understand the framework of rights and the rule of law so that they appreciate their role as impartial facilitators or enablers rather than as benefactors. On their part, citizens (and civil society) would benefit from understanding their rights and entitlements by holding the (local) governments to account. Realization of rights creates an environment which enables the citizens to develop their full potential and to lead productive lives. Political rights become meaningless if the citizens are unable to realize their social and economic rights.

## **Know your Fundamental Rights**

---

### **Article    *Right to Equality***

- 14.        Equality before law.
- 15.        Prohibition of discrimination on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.
- 16.        Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment.
- 17.        Abolition of Untouchability
- 18.        Abolition of titles

### ***Right to Freedom***

- 19.        Protection of certain rights regarding freedom of speech, etc.
- 20.        Protection in respect of conviction for offences
- 21.        Protection of life and personal liberty.
- 21A.      Right to education
- 22.        Protection against arrest and detention in certain cases.
- 23.        Prohibition of traffic in human beings and forced labour.
- 24.        Prohibition of employment of children in factories, etc.

### ***Right to Freedom of Religion***

- 25.        Freedom of conscience and free profession, practice and propagation of religion.
- 26.        Freedom to manage religious affairs.
- 27.        Freedom as to payment of taxes for promotion of any particular religion.
- 28.        Freedom as to attendance at religious instruction or religious worship in certain educational institutions.

---

<sup>3</sup> *Report of the Secretary-General, UN on the Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict and Post-Conflict Societies*

### ***Cultural and Educational Rights***

- 29. Protection of interests of minorities.
- 30. Right of minorities to establish and administer educational institutions.

### ***Right to Constitutional Remedies***

- 32. Remedies for enforcement of rights conferred by this Part.
- 34. Restriction on rights conferred by this Part while martial law is in force in any area.

No right is absolute or unconditional. There is always an exchange between one person's rights vis-à-vis the rights of the other. One person's right to free expression is limited by the other person's right to protection against slander. The State has obligation to protect the rights of all individuals and in that sense acts as an arbiter.

### **You can access your rights if**

- You are aware of your rights
- You understand the full scope of your rights
- You exercise your rights
- Mobilize other individuals if needed and fight for your rights

## **Activity 2.1 Are rights truly exercised in everyday life?**

---

The Constitution guarantees every individual the fundamental rights but are all individuals able to exercise these rights in everyday life? If no, what are the reasons that hamper the realization of the rights? It is important for all individuals to reflect on their rights and why in some situations their rights are abused or violated. The purpose of this exercise is to enable individuals to reflect on their rights and whether they are able to exercise their rights in everyday life. Through sharing of experiences participants get a complete understanding of rights and the issues hindering or preventing them from exercising their rights.

### **Suggested Methods**

The exercise (hand-out 2.1) can be carried out on an individual basis or in buzz groups

List out some of the rights you are able to exercise without any hindrance in your everyday life:

The rights I enjoy are:

- a. -----
- b. -----
- c. -----
- d. -----
- e. -----

List out the rights you are unable to exercise or find it difficult to exercise in your daily life.

- a. ....
- b. ....
- c. ....
- d. ....
- e. ....

What or who is the cause of your inability or difficulty in exercising the rights (family, community, law enforcement agencies, dominant culture, social pressure, economic compulsion or role expectations)



### 3. Right to Participate

---

The most fundamental aspect of good governance is giving voice to citizens by encouraging their **participation** in elections, and in decision making process in the local government and otherwise be involved in holding to account those entrusted with the responsibility of implementing government policies and schemes. It is time to reflect on the need to take part in the government. There are several ways where the citizens can make their voices heard in the governance. For example, participate in the ward/village meetings which are organized by the local self governments.

Democracy ensures that every eligible individual has a right to participate in electing the government. Free and fair electoral process is fundamental to effective democracy. By participation in elections people affirm their faith in the democratic governance. It is the first step and the most important step in ensuring that government reflects the voice and will of the people. In practice, however, there are many difficulties in translating the ideal of democracy into reality. Despite best efforts of Election Commission and others, elections are not always fair. Besides poor quality of candidates, elections are often fought on narrow considerations of caste, community and other affiliations.

It is important to note that participation does not end with casting one's vote, continuous vigilance is needed to hold the elected government to account. Citizens need to make their voice heard to make sure that provision of public services is efficient, equitable, inclusive and transparent.

This is all the more important in the local government where the citizens and elected representatives can interact more closely. Local governments are the closest channel of providing services to people wherein people can immediately approach the local government for resolution of any issue; citizens also have the right to monitor the functioning and even question the local governments.

Thus a sense of accountability and trust needs to exist between people and the local government. How can the local government gain trust and involve the local citizens in a constructive way? How can they be accountable to people?

### Activity 3.1: Right to participation

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Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his/her country, directly or through freely chosen representatives. One of the means of participation is through using right to vote. This activity is useful to reflect on one's own experiences of choosing a government. This would help one analyze whether an individual is able to take her/his decision and actually participate in the process of forming the government; and to understand the importance of participating in the government's decision making process.

#### Suggested Method

The facilitator can divide the group into smaller groups for discussions and debate on this topic. Small group discussions will help the participants to reflect on both the uniformity and the differences in their experiences. It would be best to get individuals to do this exercise (Hand-out 3.1) by themselves first and later form small groups for discussion.

Please reflect on the questions given in Box 3.1 and if you are an elected representative, also on questions in Box 3.2. Make sure you make a brief note after you spend some time in self reflection.

**Box 3.1**

1. Have you ever used your voting right? If yes, was your choice of candidate / party influenced by any of the following?
  - Family
  - Friends
  - Political Parties
  - Others (specify)
  - None (its solely your decision)
2. Did you check the background of the candidate in terms of capacity to serve people, bring changes in the lives of the people by providing basic amenities, etc.?
3. Why did you vote? Or, if you did not vote, why you did not vote?
4. Please list the different kinds of election you can take part in?

If you an elected representative reflect on the following questions too:

**Box 3.2**

1. Did you of your own choice decide to be an elected representative of the local government?
2. If not, was your representation determined by someone else such as
  - Family
  - Party decision
  - Others
3. Do you have previous experience of contesting election or being elected representative?

### Notes 3.1: Right to Vote – How much do you know?

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The Article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights explains: *‘The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret ballot or by equivalent free voting procedure’.*

In a democracy, the ultimate power rests with the people who elect their representatives through ballot. Citizens can thus influence the policies of the governments through exercising their voting rights. They can decide within given range of choice the candidate and the political party that addresses his concerns. Ultimately the quality of governance be it at the national, state or local level depends on the extent and quality of participation by the citizens in electoral process.

While the right to vote or voice is considered the very basis for human development, this is denied to millions of individuals around the world who lived under totalitarian regimes. In our country, while right to vote is available to all individuals above 18 years of age, its exercise is often restricted by various factors including lack of awareness, perverse inducements, and outright obstruction or threats. Thus empowering citizens by creating awareness becomes important for good governance.

#### Why should you vote?

India is the largest democracy in the world. The right to vote and exercising this right effectively is the very essence of democracy. Citizens can shape the destiny of the country by exercising this right responsibly as the representatives who they elect will run the government and take decisions that affect all the citizens. If the citizen can make an informed choice and vote for a good candidate, they would contribute towards good governance.

#### Who can vote?

All citizens of India who are 18 years of age or above as on 1st January of the year for which the electoral roll is prepared are entitled to be registered as a voter in the constituency where they ordinarily reside. Only persons who are of unsound mind and have been declared so by a competent court or disqualified due to criminal charges, ‘corrupt practices’ or offences relating to elections are not entitled to be registered in the electoral rolls<sup>4</sup>.

#### In which elections can you vote?

As a citizen of India, you can vote in the following elections:

- General elections to elect Members of Lok Sabha;

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<sup>4</sup> Ref: <http://eci.nic.in> Handbook for Electoral Registration Officers

- State elections to elect Member of Legislative Assembly
- Local body elections (Rural) or Municipal Corporation elections (in cities) - to elect representative.

Additionally, if you are residing at Bihar, Jammu and Kashmir, Karnataka, Maharashtra or Uttar Pradesh and are eligible to be in the Teacher's Constituency or Graduate Constituency, you can also vote in Legislative Council elections, to elect the Member of Legislative Council<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Ref: <http://eci.nic.in> Handbook for Electoral Registration Officers

### Activity 3.2 People's participation in local governance – various approaches

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Local government becomes more responsive when there is an active participation from people in the decision making process and if they are involved in monitoring its activities. There are various ways in which people can participate in the local government. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments have made provisions for the participation of people irrespective of the differences in caste and gender. The purpose of this activity is to:

- Enable understanding of the various ways in which people can participate in the local government; and
- Enhance understanding of citizens' role in ensuring effectiveness and efficiency of services provided by the local government

This activity could use role play to understand the importance of Gram Sabha / Ward Sabha. Group could be divided in smaller groups. Encourage group members to read the notes before preparing a outline for role play. Ask participants to role play on the basis of notes where they follow all the norms of the gram sabha / ward sabha.

Some of the scenarios for the role play are as below:

- Discussion in the gram sabha about a proposal to increase property tax.
- Discussion in Ward Sabha about the priorities for expenditure to be reflected in budget.
- The process of Jamabandi or social Audit related to MNREGA in gram sabha.

## Notes 3.2: Ward Sabha & Gram Sabha

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### Gram Sabha

Article 243 of the Constitution defines Gram Sabha as a body consisting of persons registered in the electoral rolls relating to a village within the area of Panchayat. According to Article 243A a Gram Sabha may exercise such powers and perform such functions at the village level as the Legislature of a State may, by law, provide.

Gram Sabha is not only an institution articulating the needs and aspirations of the community but also a method of mobilizing community participation. While gram sabhas check against abuse of powers by the Panchayat, they can assist the very same Panchayats to implement development programmes. Gram sabhas are supposed to act as watchdogs to protect community interests and common property resources.

### The norms for Gram Sabha

- The Gram Sabha shall meet at least once in six months: A Special meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be convened if a request is made by not less than ten percent of the members of the Gram Sabha with items of agenda specified in such request and there shall be a minimum three months period between two special meetings of the Gram Sabha.
- The quorum for the meeting of a Gram Sabha shall be not less than one tenth of the total number of members of the Gram Sabha, or hundred members, whichever is less. As far as may be, at least ten members from each Ward Sabha within the Panchayat area shall attend the meeting and not less than thirty percent of the members attending the Gram Sabha shall be women. As far as may be the persons belonging to the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes shall be represented in proportion to their population in the Gram Sabha.
- The Gram Sabha shall in its ordinary meeting or a special meeting convened for the purpose, discuss the budgetary provisions, the details of plan outlay and the subject wise allocation of funds and also the details of the estimate and cost of materials of the works executed or proposed to be executed in the Panchayat area.
- The annual statement of accounts of the proceeding financial year, the last audit note and replies thereto and the panchayat jamabandi report and action taken thereto shall be placed by the Gram Panchayat for the consideration of the Gram Sabha in its meeting. The views, recommendations or suggestions of the Gram Sabha shall be communicated to the Gram Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat shall give due consideration to the views, recommendations and suggestions of the Gram Sabha.

- The procedure for convening and conducting the meeting of the Gram Sabha shall be such as may be prescribed.
- Every meeting of a Gram Sabha shall be presided over by the Adhyaksha of the concerned Gram Panchayat and in his absence by the Upadhyaksha and in the absence of both Adhyaksha and Upadhyaksha, by any member of the Gram Panchayat nominated by it.
- The officers of the Gram Panchayat shall attend the meetings of the Gram Sabha as may be required by the Adhyaksha and an officer specifically nominated by the Gram Panchayat as convener of the Gram Sabha meeting shall assist in convening and conducting its meetings and recording its decisions in a minute book and also in taking follow up action thereon.
- The Gram Sabha may constitute sub-committees consisting of not less than ten members of whom not less than half shall be women, for in-depth discussion on issues and programmes for effective implementation of decisions of the Gram Sabha and in furtherance of exercise of powers and discharge of functions of Gram Sabha.
- All resolutions in respect of any issue in the meetings of the Gram Sabha shall be passed by the majority of the members present and voting

Various states have made their state Panchayat Raj Act based on provisions under the Constitution. It is important for you to go through the State Act and know what the Act says. For example did you know that in Karnataka the following powers have been given for the ward sabha and gram sabha under Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act 1993?

### **The powers of Gram Sabha**

- consider and approve the annual plan prepared by the Gram Panchayat
- generate proposals and determine the priority of all schemes and development programmes to be implemented in the Panchayat area by the Zilla Panchayat or Taluk Panchayat after considering the recommendations and suggestions of the Ward Sabhas through the Gram Panchayat
- identify and select the most eligible persons from the Panchayat area for beneficiary oriented schemes on the basis of criteria fixed by the Gram Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat, Zilla Panchayat or the Government and to prepare list of beneficiaries in the order of priority after considering the priority lists of individual beneficiaries sent by the Ward Sabhas. Such list shall be binding on the concerned Gram Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat, Zilla Panchayat or the Government, as the case may be
- disseminate information on development and welfare programmes and to render assistance in effective implementation of development schemes by providing facilities locally available and to provide feedback on the performance of the same;



- e. render assistance to the Gram Panchayat in collection and compilation of details required, formulation of development plans, collection of essential socio-economic data and canvassing participation in health, literacy and similar development campaigns;
- f. get information from the officers of the Gram Panchayat as to the services they will render and the works they propose to do in the succeeding period of six months after the meeting of the Gram Sabha;
- g. get information from the Gram Panchayat on the rationale of every decision of the Gram Panchayat concerning the Panchayat area;
- h. get information from the Gram Panchayat on the follow up action taken on the decisions of the Gram Sabha
- i. provide and mobilize voluntary labour and contributions in cash and kind for development works and to supervise such development works through volunteer teams;
- j. resort to persuasion of Gram Sabha members to pay taxes and repay loans to the Gram Panchayat;
- k. decide, after considering the suggestions of the ward sabhas the location of street lights, street or community water taps, Public wells, Public sanitation units, irrigation facilities and such other Public amenity schemes and to identify the deficiencies in them and after considering the suggestions of the ward sabhas to suggest the remedial measures and to report the satisfactory completion of the works;
- l. impart awareness on matters of public interest such as cleanliness, preservation of environment and prevention of pollution;
- m. assist employees of the Gram Panchayat in sanitation arrangements in the Panchayat area and to render voluntary service in the removal of garbage;
- n. promote the programme of adult education within the Panchayat area;
- o. assist the activities of school betterment sanghas, Anganawadi, Mahilasamaja, Youth associations, self help groups, women activities in the Panchayat area;
- p. assist the activities of public health centres in the panchayat area, especially in disease prevention and family welfare population control and control of cattle diseases and create arrangement to quickly report the incidence of epidemics and natural calamities;
- q. promote communal harmony and unity among various groups of people in the Panchayat area and to arrange cultural festivals literary activities and sports meets to give expression to the talents of the people of the locality;

- r. conserve and maintain public properties such as Gomala, tanks, tank beds, ground water, grazing grounds of the cattle, mines etc., within the limits of the Gram Panchayats;
- s. take action to prevent discrimination on the basis of caste, religion and sex etc., and to direct the Gram Panchayaths to not to grant license to shops vending liquor or narcotic drugs or place of gambling or any other activities prejudicial to public interest;
- t. identify the child laborers if any, present within the limits of the Gram Panchayaths and to take action to rehabilitate them and to assist in implementation of the legal action specified by the Central and State Governments; and
- u. exercise such other powers or discharge such other functions as may be prescribed

### **Ward Sabha**

The objective of the Area/Ward sabha meetings is to ensure peoples participation in municipal governance and to represent peoples` voice in the decision making process of the municipality. Some of the responsibilities of the Area/Ward Sabha are:

- Provide suggestions and comments in the public consultation with regard to budget of the local government
- Identify the eligible beneficiaries under government sponsored welfare schemes on the basis of already fixed criteria
- Identify deficiencies in the services provided by municipality
- Suggest locations of street lights, public taps, public conveniences etc
- Cooperate with Ward Committee in maintenance of sanitation
- Impart awareness on matters of public interest like literacy, health care, environmental issues and pollutions etc

The Area/Ward Sabha should have certain rights to obtain information

- Of the services rendered or work taken up in the next three or six months from the officials concerned
- Of the action taken by the Ward committee on the proposal sent by it and the decision making process

### **The norms for Ward Sabha**

- To meet once in six months
- The quorum for the meeting of a Ward Sabha shall be not less than one tenth of the total number of members of the Ward Sabha

- Not less than thirty percent of the voters attending the Ward Sabha shall be women. As far as may be the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes shall be represented in proportion to their population in the Ward Sabha.”
- The procedure for convening and conducting the meetings of the Ward Sabha shall be such as may be prescribed.
- Every meeting of a Ward Sabha shall be presided over by the member of the Gram Panchayat elected from the area of the concerned Ward Sabha and in his absence by any other member of the Gram Panchayat nominated by it.
- All resolutions in respect of any issue in the meeting of the Ward Sabha shall be passed by a majority of the members present and voting.

### **Powers of Ward Sabha**

- a. generate proposals and determine the priority of schemes and development programmes to be implemented in the area of the Ward Sabha and forward the same to place it before the Gram Sabha for inclusion in Gram Panchayat development plan
- b. identify the most eligible persons from the area of Ward Sabha for beneficiary oriented schemes on the basis of criteria fixed and prepare list of eligible beneficiaries in the order of priority and forward the same to the Gram Panchayat for inclusion in its development plan
- c. verify the eligibility of persons getting various kinds of welfare assistance from Government such as pensions and subsidies
- d. get information from the officers of the Gram Panchayat as to the services they will render and the works they propose to do in the succeeding period of six months after the meeting of the Ward Sabha;
- e. get information from the Gram Panchayat on the rational of every decision of the Gram Panchayat concerning the area of the Ward Sabha
- f. get information from the Gram Panchayat on the follow up action taken on the decisions of the Ward Sabha
- g. provide and mobilize voluntary labour and contributions in cash and kind for development work and supervise such development works through volunteer teams
- h. make efforts to ensure that the members of Ward Sabha pay taxes and repay loans to the Gram Panchayat
- i. suggest the location of streetlights, street or community water taps, public wells, public sanitation units, irrigation facilities and such other public amenity schemes within the area of the Ward Sabha;

- j. identify the deficiencies in the water supply and street lighting arrangements in the area of Ward Sabha and suggest remedial measures;
- k. impart awareness on matters of public interest such as cleanliness, preservation of the environment and prevention of pollution;
- l. assist the employees of the Gram Panchayat in sanitation arrangements in the area of Ward Sabha and render voluntary service in the removal of garbage;
- m. promote programme of adult education within the area of Ward Sabha;
- n. assist the activities of public health centers in the area of Ward Sabha especially in disease prevention and family welfare and to create arrangements to quickly report the incidence of epidemics and natural calamities;
- o. promote harmony and unity among various groups of people in the area of the Ward Sabha and to arrange cultural festivals and sports meets to give expression to the talents of the people of the locality;
- p. exercise such other powers and discharge such other functions as may be prescribed.

**Source:** The Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act, 1993

### Notes 3.3: Accountability Mechanisms - Social Audit

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Accountability of government departments is normally ensured through the audit by the Comptroller and Auditor General, who submits the audit reports to the Legislature. A committee of legislature (the Public Accounts Committee) examines the reports, calls for explanations for lapses, and makes its recommendations for remedial measures to be taken by the government. Although this system of accountability is still relevant, increasingly the implementation of government's schemes and programs is sought to be monitored directly by the people with a stake in them. In order to ensure effectiveness of government's increased outlay on welfare programs, there is need for such public expenditure to be subjected to scrutiny by the stakeholders. The social audit also brings about greater transparency in the implementation due to its emphasis on public hearings and public disclosure of important records (muster rolls, for example) and information (of beneficiaries).

*However, social audit arrangements have mostly been ineffective because there is no legal provision for punitive action. States should enact legislation to facilitate social audit by the Gram Sabha.*

The *Gram Sabha* should have the mandate to inspect all public documents related to budget allocations, list of beneficiaries, assistance under each scheme, muster rolls, bills, vouchers, accounts, etc., for scrutiny; examine annual statements of accounts and audit reports; discuss the report on the local administration of the preceding year; review local development for the year or any new activity program; establish accountability of functionaries found guilty of violating established norms/rules; suggest measures for promoting transparency in identifying, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating relevant local development programs; and ensure opportunity for rural poor to voice their concerns while participating in social audit meetings.

At present in India, NREG Act has made social audit for all the activities under the scheme mandatory. The key norms of conducting social audit under NREGS are followed:

- The Social Audit shall be held at least once in every six months and announcement of Social Audit to be made at 30 days in advance.
- For each Social Audit by the Gram Sabha, the Gram Sabha will elect from itself a Social Audit Committee of workers who have worked in current/previous works under NREGA of the same Gram Panchayats and not less than one third members of Social Audit Committee shall be women.
- The Committee will verify all documents and information.

- The Social Audit Committee shall read out its findings publicly in the gram sabha. Any person may submit any information to the social audit committee deemed relevant
- The Programme Officer shall ensure that all relevant documents, including complete files of the works or copies of them, of works of Implementing Agencies for the jurisdiction of that Gram Panchayat shall be available for inspection at the Gram Panchayat.
- The Gram Panchayat shall present all necessary information and documents at least 15 days in advance to the Social Audit Committee and shall notify in writing all the Public Representatives and also concerned staff implementing the NREGA well in advance to ensure that they are kept informed about the process and are present at the Social Audit.
- The action taken report relating to the previous Social Audit shall be read out at the beginning of each Social Audit.
- The Minutes shall be recorded by Secretary and signed before and after the completion of the Social Audit by all participants. Any dissent/ objections shall be addressed and recorded in the minutes.
- The Social Audit shall be open to public participation. Any outside individual person apart from the Gram Sabha shall be allowed to attend the Social Audit as observers without intervening the proceedings of the Social Audit.
- All Action Taken Reports shall be filed within a month of convening of the Social Audit and all findings related to Contravention of the Act shall be treated as complaint and enquiry shall be conducted for any dispute in findings.
- Any Fund Deviations shall follow with an Action against the concerned person and fund recovery shall be expedited.
- While certifying accounts of the NREGS the Government Auditor shall take cognisance of any complaint, regarding financial irregularities or misappropriations, raised through a Social Audit before certifying the accounts.

Source: <http://nrega.nic.in>

### Activity 3.3 - How transparent is your local government?

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As an elected representative you have certain responsibility to be accountable to citizens. People have the right to participate in Gram Sabha/Area Sabha/Ward Sabha. There are many issues related to education, health, sanitation, water, employment, livelihood, etc. around your area which are supposed to be discussed in Gram Sabha/Area Sabha/Ward Sabha. In all these matters, the local government has to follow certain norms and thereby bring transparency and accountability in decisions making process.

The purpose of this exercise is to enable elected representative to reflect on their roles in bringing transparency in the governance by ensuring peoples participation in the governance. If the participants are members of civil society or government functionaries, this would sensitize them to the needs for transparency and accountability. Going through the following checklist participants get a complete understanding of the norms of Gram Sabha / Area Sabha / Ward Sabha and thereby ensure the next course of action.

| #   | Essentials   | Yes or No | If no, what are the reasons?<br>If yes how to make it more efficient |
|-----|--|-----------|--|
| 1.  | Are at least 2 Gram Sabha meetings conducted in a year?  |           |  |
| 2.  | Is quorum for the meeting of a Gram Sabha (of not less than one tenth of the total number of members) ensured?   |           |  |
| 3.  | Is it ensured that not less than thirty percent of the members who attend the Gram Sabha are women?  |           |  |
| 4.  | Are the following documents submitted in the Gram Sabha?<br>1. Annual statement of accounts of the proceeding financial year<br>2. The last audit note and replies<br>3. Panchayat jamabandi report and action taken<br>4. Other (specify) |           |  |
| 5.  | Does the president of the Panchayat attend the gram sabha meetings?  |           |  |
| 6.  | Does the secretary attend the gram sabha meeting?  |           |  |
| 7.  | Are sub committees of GS members formed based on the issues/programs?  |           |  |
| 8.  | Is it ensured that 50 percent of subcommittee members are women?   |           |  |
| 9.  | Is the representation of SC/STs ensured?   |           |  |
| 10. | Do gram sabha members have a say in selecting the eligible beneficiaries?  |           |  |
| 11. | Is information on development and welfare programs circulated to all stakeholders?   |           |  |



### Ward Sabha

| Sl.No | Essentials   | Yes or No | If not what is your next action<br>If yes how to make it more efficient |
|-------|--|-----------|---|
| 1.    | Is the ward sabha conducted once in six months?  |           |   |
| 2.    | Is quorum of at least one tenth of the total members is ensured?   |           |   |
| 3.    | Is it ensured that minimum 30% of those attending ward sabha are women?  |           |   |
| 4.    | Is SC/ST representation in the ward sabha ensured?   |           |   |
| 5.    | Are proposals and priority of schemes in the area of ward sabha generated through consultation?  |           |   |
| 6.    | Is there a detailed discussion of development programs done in ward sabha?   |           |   |
| 7.    | Is an opportunity provided for the ward sabha members to choose the most eligible persons as beneficiaries and forward the same to gram panchayat? |           |   |
| 8.    | Is it ensured that the members of Ward Sabha pay taxes and repay loans to the Gram Panchayat?  |           |   |

### Social Audit

| Sl.No | Essentials   |  |
|-------|--|--|
| 1.    | How many social audits are held in a year?                           |  |
| 2.    | How many days in advance do you need to announce about social audit? |  |
| 3.    | Who elects social audit committee?                                   |  |
| 4.    | How many members are there in the committee?                         |  |

|     |  |  |
|-----|--|--|
| 5.  | What are the categories of representation?   |  |
| 6.  | What kind of documents/information are required to be provided for social audit?                   |  |
| 7.  | When do the committee generally get documents/ information?  |  |
| 8.  | Who anchors and facilitate social audit?   |  |
| 9.  | Who does the collation, door to door and physical verification?                                    |  |
| 10. | Who mobilizes people to come for the SA Gram Sabha?  |  |
| 11. | Who prepares and reads out the reports in the Gram Sabha?  |  |
| 12. | How do you ensure full, free and fair participation of the laborers in the Social Audit Gram Sabha |  |

### Think Out of the Box

As a citizen you have right to participate in Gram Sabha/Area Sabha/Ward Sabha. But you can also think beyond mere participation? There are many issues related to education, health, sanitation, water, employment, livelihood, etc. around your area. List out 10 things you can contribute to the development of your area.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

### Activity 3.4: Decision making in the Budget Process

As an elected member of the local government it is important to understand the need of participating in the budgetary processes of the local government. Under the Constitution, the State Government has devolved powers to Gram Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies to generate own revenues. Every gram panchayat and municipality prepares budget which is a statement of proposed expenditure and the expected revenue / receipts from which the expenditure will be met. The purpose of this activity is to make the participants understand the process of budget and there by create awareness of the importance of participating in the budget. This may be attempted through group work. Participants will learn about what is budget and how the budget is prepared at local government level.

The facilitator could organize a discussion centering on the following questions:

- What is participants' understanding of a budget?
- In what ways is a budget useful?
- How is the budget prepared at the local government level?
- Who prepares the budget in the local government? When is the budget supposed to be prepared? Who gives the consent? Who presents the budget? When is it considered as complete and final?
- What is the role of an elected representative in budgetary process?

The facilitator can use the household budget as an illustration to explain the elements of budget and their significance. Prepare a monthly budget (income and expenditure) of household of Mr. Sriram, a school teacher with two school going children. Involve participants to fill out the details of income and expenditure:

| Sources of income                       | Amount | Expenditure        | Amount |
|---|--------|--------------------|--------|
| Salary - self                           |        | Groceries          |        |
| Other income (say from rented property) |        | Milk               |        |
| Income of wife from tuitions            |        | Vegetables         |        |
|   |        | Rent for the house |        |
|   |        | School fees        |        |
|   |        |                    |        |
| Total                                   |        | Total              |        |

The facilitator can help participants understand the concept of deficit (when expenditure is in excess of income) and surplus (when income exceeds expenditure); how deficit is financed by debt or using savings; S/he can also explain the concepts of capital expenditure (when the benefits of expenditure extend for longer periods), such as purchase of a scooter, major

repairs to house, etc. and revenue expenditure which is about the expenditure on immediate consumption. Similarly, concepts of assets (scooter, house, etc.) and liabilities (loans, payments due) can also be explained. Draw a simple table for capital expenditure and revenue expenditure; and assets and liabilities. Note items which would fit under each of the columns.

### Notes 3.4: Budgetary Process in Gram Panchayat

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A government budget is a public document that outlines how the government proposes to collect and spend money. The proposals contained in a budget reflect the government's policy priorities and revenue targets. Budget is also a political statement wherein it expresses the objectives and aspirations of a government. It is also an important statutory process of the government

At the state level, each department submits its annual budgets to the finance department after consultation with the planning department in respect of plan schemes. The finance department, in consultation with the particular department and planning departments adds or removes any component that it may seem fit and then finalizes the budgets. Finally the finance department consolidates the budgets of all the departments of the state and this is presented in the state assembly which approves the budget<sup>6</sup>.

The Karnataka Panchayat Raj act 1993 under sections 256, 247 and 241 specifies that the Zilla Panchayat, Taluk panchayat and Gram Panchayat respectively have to prepare a budget and approve it in a meeting to be held between 1st of February and 10<sup>th</sup> of March every year.

The Finance, Audit and Planning Committee is responsible for the preparation of budget in the ZP and TP while it is the responsibility of Secretary in the case of Gram Panchayat.

The TPs are required to forward the budget to the ZP for approval before 25<sup>th</sup> March of every year. Similarly, the budget passed by the GP should be sent to the TP within the date fixed by the State Government.

The GP budget should be approved by the TP and certified by the Executive Officer (of the TP). If the TP feels that the GP budget is not in agreement with the provisions of the Act, it can be sent back to the GP for revision.

The Karnataka Panchayat Raj Act 1993 has also made provision for the revision of budget of Zilla Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat and Gram panchayat under the sections 257, 248 and 242 respectively.

The audit of the accounts of Zilla Panchayat and Taluk Panchayat are done by the office of Comptroller and Auditor General at the State level while that of the Gram panchayat is done by the Local Audit circle of the State Accounts Department.

The Act also stipulates that the Annual Accounts are to be passed by the ZP (Section 259) and the TP (section 250) within three months from the close of the financial year and forwarded to the Principal Accountant General for audit.

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<sup>6</sup> A detailed presentation on the budget process can be found on the CBPS website presentations section.

Similarly the Gram Panchayat also has to pass the annual accounts within three months of the close of financial year (section 244) and submit a copy to Zilla panchayat.

The budget has to be prepared in three parts viz., Revenue, Capital and Debt Deposit and Remittance Account at the ZP and TP. The Gram Panchayats are provided with the new formats for preparation of the budget during the year 2007 through implementation of the Gram Panchayats Budgeting and Accounting Rules 2006 with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2007.

The main columns in the gram panchayat budget sheet are:

- a. Actual of the previous financial year
- b. Estimates of the current year
- c. Revised estimates of the current year (sub divided into 3 columns comprising of the actual of 8 months and estimate of 4 months to arrive at the revised estimate )
- d. Estimates of the coming financial year

### **Role of Elected Representatives in the Budget Process**

- Make sure that all the above norms are followed in the budget preparation
- Ensure that they get a draft copy of the budget before the approval
- Prepare notes to discuss in the meeting before approving the budget
- Refer the budget before making any plan of action. Without the inclusion of an item in the budget and its approval no expenditure can be incurred for execution of any work

### **Budget Process in the urban local government**

The process of preparing the budget has been standardized and begins on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September every year, with the publication of Annual Performance Report for the previous year. This is to be followed by two rounds of public consultations in November and December with the discussion of the achievements of the previous year in November and the proposed (draft) budget in December.

The first round of public consultation is held in November after the publication of Annual Performance Report. This round will be a detailing session of the working of the local government in the previous year, explaining what was done and what was not done with reasons.

The second round of public consultations held in December discusses the draft budget with the public inviting suggestions and feedback on the same. Representatives of Resident Welfare Associations, Non-Governmental Organizations, trade and industry associations, prominent citizens and any other individual or groups are invited for public consultations. The consultations should be chaired by the President of the ULB, in his/her absence- the Vice President or in their absence Commissioner/Chief Officer.

The Municipal Commissioner/Chief Officer prepares detailed estimates for the coming financial year and presents it to the Standing Committee before the 15<sup>th</sup> of January. The process of estimating should use the BIDS format which is the Budget Information Details Sheet explaining the calculation of the estimates. There are 15 BIDS formats - for different head of revenues and expenditure.

This should be followed by discussions in the standing committee and finally approved by the council before the end of March.

Within two months of the end of the financial year the annual accounts have to be finalized and sent for the audit. The financial statements are audited by a chartered accountant and the statutory audit is done by the State Audit Department. Any deviation greater than 15 percent in the actual revenue/expenditure against the estimated should be properly explained by the commissioner/chief officer in the Annual Performance Report.

### **The Documents**

The budget document contains budget abstract (KMF 79) and followed by Revenue Account (Part I), Capital Account (Part II) and Extraordinary Account (Part III).

The Revenue Account has 2 parts Revenue Income and Revenue Expenditure. Revenue income includes all own revenues (property tax, water charges, various fees and fines), assigned revenue, salary grant, electricity grant, untied grants from State Government, interest on investments and cess collection charges. The Revenue Expenditure includes all salaries, council expenditure, honorarium to the president and members and all maintenance expenditure on the services provided by ULBs.

The Capital Account also has two parts capital revenue and capital expenditure. Capital revenue includes all the revenues which are deferred incomes from the grants for specific purposes, revenues from sale of assets and loans. Capital expenditure includes all the capital expenditure incurred in creation of assets.

Part 3 Extraordinary Account has 2 parts extraordinary revenue and extraordinary expenditure. Extraordinary revenue include transfers received to welfare funds and specified funds, grants and contribution for specific purposes which include the central finance commission grants, MLALADS, MPLADS, specific grants from state such as IDSMT, deposits, recoveries and cess collection. Extraordinary expenditure include expenditure under transfers to welfare funds, expenditure under grants for specific purposes, advances, refund of deposits, cess and other recoveries payable and investments.

(Source: Budget Analysis of Urban Local Self -Governments in Karnataka by Mr. B.V.Madhusudan, 2010)



### Notes 3.5    How citizens can impact the local government – A Success Story

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Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS) is an organization in rural Rajasthan. Formed in 1990 the organization works at the grassroots with the objective of changing lives of the rural poor by empowering them through constructive action. Two basic issues faced by the landless and the poor in the rural areas are issues of redistribution of land and minimum wages and MKSS had taken up these issues in the beginning years of its formation.

People living in Rajasthan often experience droughts and these times tend to be really difficult on people as they struggle for sources of livelihood. In these periods, men migrate in search of livelihood options and women stay back to tend to the families.

A famine relief site is basically work sites that are opened up by the government to provide employment for people. Building Roads, digging wells, de-silting ponds/lakes etc. are some of the jobs provided at the famine relief sites. Initially the laborers at the famine relief sites were not paid their full minimum wages and when they demanded to be paid minimum wages on public works, they were refused on the grounds that ‘they did not work.’ When the laborers questioned the authorities, they were told that there was no proof of them having worked as per the records maintained at the sites. The records in question were measurement books which were filled by the Junior Engineer. The laborers then demanded to see the records. At this point of time they were told very clearly and in no uncertain terms by the administrators that they could not see the records, because according to the Official Secrets Act (1923), a colonial legacy, all these records were state secrets and could not be shown to the public. This infuriated the laborers who said ‘till we get access to those records, we will always be told that we did not work and the administration can never be challenged on that account. If we are to prove that what they say is not true we need to get those records!’

It was at this point of time that the movement for the right to information began. People started demanding for records. They used various strategies like rallies, lobbying with government, street theatre, etc. to make people aware of the issue. When the initial phase of agitation began with a sit-in, the government of Rajasthan very reluctantly passed an order (after much pressure) whereby the people were given the right to inspect records and later to get certified photocopies. At the time of inspecting the records of a village council, MKSS found that there were many irregularities and malpractices. From this emerged the technique of the public hearing which has been used as a tool in uncovering and bringing to light many scams in development works.

Usually, in a public hearing the MKSS first obtains the records pertaining to the public works carried out by the Village Council in the last five years. Once the documents are accessed, the Sangathan then takes the records to each village where the work is said to have been

executed and then testimonies are sought from the villagers and the laborers who were employed on the site. The MKSS carries out site verifications with the laborers and villagers, and then on the day of the public hearing in front of the general assembly of the villagers the details are read out and testimonies sought. There is also the concept of having a panel of people who are invited to the public hearings, including lawyers, journalists, academicians and government officials. The panel is also allowed to cross-examine and seek clarifications, and with the administration present attempts are made to try and bring about corrective measures for the irregularities identified. The malpractices usually uncovered are purchase overbilling, sale overbilling, fake labor rolls, under payment of wages and in some cases ghost works (works that are there on record but do not exist).

In many cases it has been seen that the public hearing causes a rapid escalation in payments. People who haven't been paid for years and have been denied payment after repeated visits to the Sarpanch (elected village council representative), all of a sudden find themselves being paid overnight. What is more, in many cases the Sarpanch himself comes to the laborer and pays him, adding that now that the payment has been made there is no need for him/her to go and testify at the public hearing! There have also been cases where after the public hearing and embezzlement being proved the Sarpanch has promised and has indeed paid back the amount into the panchayat exchequer. Action has been initiated against officials who have been found to be in compliance with the act of embezzlement.

The public hearing has been a rather effective tool in bringing to light corrupt practices and in trying to address the whole issue of leakages that exist within the system. The strength also lies in the truth that emerges in front of the people and their willingness to testify against the person in power, who very often belongs to a higher caste and has a social standing that can be intimidating. The entire battle for rights and the fact that people, irrespective of gender, are willing to testify against those in power shows that there is great potential in the mode of public hearings and in the demand for a comprehensive law on the 'right to information'.

Source: <http://samarmagazine.org> & <http://www.mkssindia.org>

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### **Some questions for reflection – on the success story**

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- Who were the people most affected by the problem?
- What was the core issue?
- What were the strategies used to advocate with the government?
- What were the steps taken by MKSS to resolve the issue?

### Activity 3.5 - Right to Information

---

Right to Information Act, passed by the Indian Parliament, came into effect on the 12 October 2005. Since then citizens have been using the law in different parts of the country with varying degrees of success.

The purpose of this activity is to understand whether the elected representative/ citizens at the grass root levels are aware of the Right to Information Act.

This session could also be conducted in using brainstorming method or in buzz groups

Please take few moments in reflecting the question.

- What is RTI?
- What are the key features of this Act?
- Have you ever used RTI?
- Have you faced any problem where RTI could have helped you?

### Notes 3.6: Right to Information Act

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As discussed in the beginning of Section 2, rights protect citizens from arbitrary actions on part of the State. They also help citizens hold the government and its functionaries accountable and make the process of governance transparent. Right to information is one such right which aids citizens to minimize the arbitrary exercise of power and corruption, and to secure the government's accountability to the people. The right to information empowers people to exercise control over governance.

Right to Information laws have been enacted in the States of Tamil Nadu (1996), Goa (1997), Madhya Pradesh (1998), Rajasthan (2000), Maharashtra (2000), Karnataka (2000), Delhi (2001), Assam (2002), and Jammu and Kashmir (2003). A national Bill, was placed in Parliament in June 2000 and was passed as the Freedom of Information Act in 2002, but not notified. On protest that the national law was weak and ineffective, a revised right to information act was passed by the Indian Parliament in June 2005, which came into effect on the 12 October 2005.

The RTI Act includes the right to:

1. Inspect works, documents, and records.
2. Take notes, extracts or certified copies of documents or records.
3. Take certified samples of material.
4. Obtain information in form of printouts, diskettes, floppies, tapes, video cassettes or in any other electronic mode or through printouts.[S.2(j)]

The RTI Act and Rules encompass

- Defining a format for requisitioning information
- Stipulating a time period within which information must be provided namely 30 days. Forty eight hours for information concerning the life and liberty of a person. Five days shall be added to the above response time, in case the application for information is given to Assistant Public Information Officer.
- Prescribes the method of giving the information.
- Indicating the charges for applying. The principle is that charges should be minimum - more as a token.
- Exempting certain information in public interest
- Empowering citizens to ask for information and get photocopies of documents permissions, policies and decisions.

- Facilitating inspection of files and asking for samples.
- Mandating the appointment of Public Information Officers (PIO) at offices of public authorities.( within 120 days of enactment of Act-section 5)
- Empowering citizens to go ahead with an appeal to an Appellate Authority who would be an official in the same department, senior to the PIO, where information is not provided or wrongly refused.
- Providing for appealing before the State or Central Information Commission, which is an independent authority where citizen is not satisfied with the result from PIO.
- Prescribing penalty on the PIO for delay at a rate of Rs. 250 per day of delay, or for *mala fide* denial of information. (In case of information delayed, no charges for information are to be paid)

### Notes 3.7: CBPS` experience of using RTI

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In June 2009, an application was filed under RTI to the Directorate of Treasuries, Government of Karnataka seeking the district-wise and month-wise consolidated reports on revenues and expenditure as processed and sent to the Accountant General<sup>7</sup> for audit purposes for the years 2003-04 to 2008-09<sup>8</sup>. It was addressed to the Public Information Officer (PIO), Directorate of Treasuries, and Government of Karnataka. An application of request in duplicate for the Data along with the ten rupees postal order was given to the office of the Treasuries and an acknowledgement was sought on the duplicate copy.

RTI has a time stipulation of thirty days. The request was complied within thirty days. The response marked on 10 July 2009 was received. The concerned officer, the PIO, answered saying that they did not have the required data. They referred the application to the Accountant General's office and sent us a copy of the same.

CBPS filed a request with the Appellate Authority at the Treasuries Directorate on 25 July 2009. The AG office wrote in a letter dated 26 August 2009 stating that the department of treasuries is the owner of the data and the AG's office is not able to provide the data. No response was received from the treasury department in 45 days. Then CBPS filed an application duly filled and with enclosures to the Karnataka State Information Commission office on 1 October 2009. However, on the same day CBPS received a response from the Treasuries department suggesting that CBPS seek data from the sub- treasuries offices located all over the state.

In the mean time CBPS again requested the Directorate of Treasuries in the letter dated 2 November 2009 that the data is required for the work to be done as a part of consultancy assignment with the Expenditure Reforms Commission constituted by Government of Karnataka for which no reply was received.

A copy of the summons issued to the PIO, Directorate of Treasuries, by the Karnataka State Information Commission dated 4 December 2009 requesting CBPS to be present for a hearing before the Commission on the 19 of January 2010 was received. A copy of the letter from the treasury department written to the Accountant General's office dated 16 December was sent to CBPS who directed the Accountant General's office to provide the data. A copy of reply dated 26 December 2009 was sent to CBPS by the Accountant

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<sup>7</sup> Office of the Accountant General is the Authority to audit the State Government Accounts. They are part of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India which is located in all the States and comes under the jurisdiction of Government of India.

<sup>8</sup> Earlier during March 2009, an RTI was applied seeking the Receipts and Expenditure of Local governments for which the Directorate of Treasuries replied that they have accounts only of the funds channeled through treasury and not the own funds of the local Governments. They also mentioned that they compile the revenues and expenditure of the funds channeled through them at the District level and send it to Audit.

General's office to the directorate of treasuries reiterating their stand that they do not compile the data and the treasury department is the owner of the data.

During the first hearing on 19 January 2010, CBPS and the treasury department representative were present while the representative from the Accountant General's office was not present. Commission directed the Accountant General's office to provide the data and gave a date for second hearing on 26 March 2010. CBPS did not receive any communication either from Treasury Directorate or the Accountant General's office between the first and second hearing of the commission. On the second hearing the Commissioner realized that the Accountant General's office does not come under the purview of the Commission and the Accountant General's office need not respond to the Commission's order. Then a final order was passed directing the Directorate of Treasuries to give data in 45 days to CBPS. The Commission also directed that a copy of the data that would be made available to CBPS should also be submitted to the Commission, in order that further confusion and loopholes are avoided. (To ensure and check that same data is provided to the person requested and the Commission)

A letter from the Accountant General's office requesting CBPS to pay a fee of Rs. 50 and receive the data was received in the April 2010. Two visits to meet them to see the kind of data they are giving CBPS was not forthcoming. On payment of the requisite fee with a letter of request, and a Compact Disc containing the data was received on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2010.

The Treasury Directorate sent a letter and CD containing data on 25 May 2010. The data obtained from the Directorate of Treasuries as well as the Accountant General's office has treasury code which was not sought for and the treasury data was not in the format in which CBPS had requested.

**Outcome:**

Personal meeting with the Joint Director of Treasuries: CBPS went back to the treasury department to meet the Joint Director of Treasuries with the CD sent by them. CBPS explained the purpose of analysis and the kind of data they were seeking. He was very amicable and confessed that his department people did not understand the request properly and that he would provide the data and offered to help in the best way he can.

The positive aspect of this is that RTI has proved to be a fruitful way of getting the required information. Though replies are given at stipulated time, information is not obtained in the form and way in which it is sought.



## 4. Right to Equality

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Articles 12 to 35 of the Indian Constitution cover the Fundamental Rights of the citizen. The Articles which deal with equality are:

Article 14 : Equality before law and equal protection of law

Article 15: Prohibition of discrimination on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth.

Article 16 : Equality of opportunity in matters of public employment

Article 17 : Abolition of Untouchability

Article 18 : Abolition of titles. Military and academic distinctions are, however, exempted

## Activity 4.1 Reservation vs. Equality

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### Key mandatory Provisions at the level of local governments

- a. Mandatory reservation of seats at all levels for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to their share of the population;
- b. Mandatory reservation of one-third of all seats at all levels for women, with the reservation for women applying to the seats reserved for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe as well;
- c. Mandatory reservation for one-third of the positions of chairperson at all levels.

The main objective of the reservation system is to increase the social status of the underprivileged communities and enable them to take their rightful place in the society. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and the 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments provide reservations to scheduled castes/scheduled tribes and women; these provisions were introduced with intent to uplift the status of SC/STs and women. However, there are many challenges and constraints faced by them in performing their roles in public life. In many cases they are used as dummy candidates where they lack effective voice in any of the matters. On the other hand there is much anecdotal evidence to suggest that women and SC/ ST candidates have displayed equal decision making capabilities at the local government level.

If the participants are not elected representatives but members of civil society, this activity should attempt at bringing a positive attitude towards the persons from reserved categories. If the members are elected representatives but do not belong to the reserved categories, the purpose should again be to instill a positive attitude towards persons from these categories. If the participant belongs to the reserved category, then the activity should help in empowering him/her with knowledge about prevalent stereotypes and prejudices so they can work towards dispelling them.

The participants will reflect on their attitudes towards reservation either through group work or debate and look at the concept in a more positive light paving towards change in the attitude.

### Suggested Method

Debating sessions could be conducted to encourage participants to express their opinions openly about reservation. This would definitely bring their opinions and attitudes about reservations towards women and schedule castes and tribes to the fore. The Facilitator needs to handle the debate cautiously to avoid the discussions from getting too heated or personal. To conduct the debate the group could be divided in several ways-

Men and women could be divided into separate groups and men could be asked to speak on 'contribution of reservations to the economic development and social justice.' Or the women could be asked to speak for reservation and the men could oppose it. Mixed groups

comprising both men and women could debate for and against reservations. Groups could debate the role of reservations for weaker sections in bringing about changes in social and economic development and social justice at the grass root levels.

The facilitator needs to observe the attitudes of the participants during the debate and steer the discussion in a positive direction with respect to reservations and not strengthen existing prejudices.

Ask participants to list out various attitudes and stereotypes which are expressed during the debate, such as:

- women lack knowledge required for handling offices of President / Vice President;
- women are not capable understanding the complexities of policy making, planning, etc.
- SC/ST members do not understand what is happening in the local government;
- women are not good administrators;
- it needs men to manage the complex affairs of administration; and
- SC/STs are fit to do only low skilled jobs.




A small exercise can help participants to reflect their own attitudes towards women and socially disadvantaged sections.

|  | Yes or no | How will I change this attitude? |
|--|-----------|----------------------------------|
| Do I believe women are less capable?   |           |                                  |
| Do I encourage the family member of mine or others to attend the meetings?   |           |                                  |
| Do I allow my family member/s to take decisions with regard to Panchayat / municipality work?  |           |                                  |
| Do I make it difficult for other members to express their views in the meeting either by cutting them short or not allowing them to speak? |           |                                  |
| Do I find it difficult to express myself in meetings? Do I find others cutting me short while I speak? What is my response then?           |           |                                  |
| Do I listen to other members without any bias and consider their opinions and support them?  |           |                                  |
| Have I shared my knowledge and information with other members to enable them to grow in the political arena?                               |           |                                  |
| Have I ensured all members to sit in the meeting without any discrimination?   |           |                                  |
| Do I sit next to women / men members without any hesitation?   |           |                                  |
| Do I ensure that all members eat or drink in the same kind of glasses or plates?   |           |                                  |

## Activity 4.2-Factors affecting the performance of the weaker sections

It is easy to say that performance of women and the SC / ST members in the local government is not on par. But they face several prejudices which hinder their performance. The following activity will help the participants reflect on the various factors influencing the performance of women and weaker sections in the local government.

List out the various reasons for limited opportunities for women and scheduled caste / scheduled tribes have in executing their rights in the local government

| For Women   | Constraints | For Scheduled caste and Scheduled Tribes | Constraints |
|---|-------------|--|-------------|
| Educational   |             | Educational                              |             |
|  Social<br> Family<br> Community |             | Social                                   |             |
| Cultural  |             | Cultural                                 |             |
| Political   |             | Political                                |             |
| Stigma and discrimination   |             | Stigma and discrimination                |             |
| Any other   |             | Any other                                |             |

## Notes 4.2: Challenges faced by the women and weaker sections of society

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Women and the SC/ST have always been kept away from the decision making processes whether it is within the community or the society at large. They have been denied access to education and other opportunities for several centuries; the reservations have given these communities an opportunity for their inclusion in the political process and the resulting empowerment is expected to extend this into other domains. But there are many factors that force them to withdraw from being active members in the decision making process.

Members of SC/ST categories had to go through a great deal of struggle to attain an equal status in the society and the government. They had to break barriers of illiteracy, seclusion, oppression etc. to make themselves visible. Many of them are still striving for fulfillment of basic needs of food, clothing and shelter and still have a long way to go to make themselves noticed despite reservations provided to them at all levels. Both these communities have the challenge of emerging as active members in their own right and not stay as mere proxy candidates. Power structures prevalent for centuries have to be broken. Reservation should provide opportunities for women and SC/ST members to get involved in the decision making process and thereby bring social, economic, political and cultural change among them.

### Women

Gender equality and empowerment of women is recognized worldwide as a key factor for human development. It is absolutely necessary that women, who comprise nearly half the society in terms of numbers, are productive members of the society taking their rightful place in participating in all decisions that affect them. However, in reality they are discriminated practically in all aspects be it access to education, healthcare or nutrition and even matters of compensation. Women in both socio-economic and political levels have been considered as inferior to men in Indian Society. The Constitution of India assures equality of men and women. The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> constitutional amendments mandate reservation of 33% of seats for women among elected representatives at the level of local government. In reality many states have more than 33% women in the local governments due to the reservation for women, SC and ST. States like Bihar have provided 50 percent reservation for women in Panchayat.

There are several factors limit women to actively engage in the political sphere. The stereotypical attitudes towards women that they need to be at home attending to chores of a home maker restrict their engagement in public affairs. Moreover contesting the election itself is decided either by the husband or by other men in the family or by a political party. After they become the elected representatives, though there is an inclination to contribute to the development, once again they face the challenges of facing the more assertive male members. The power equations between man and woman that exist within the confines of

the house get reflected in public life as well forcing the woman to take a more subdued and subordinate position compared to men. The fact that women lack exposure to politics makes them inexperienced in exercising political responsibilities. Lack of literacy or low literacy levels lead to low confidence and prevent them from actively participating in the decision making. On the other hand there are several inspiring examples in India of women being the change agents in a variety of areas. These women show that if an opportunity is given they can perform as well or even better than men.

### **Scheduled Castes**

The Scheduled Castes are notified in a separate schedule of the Constitution of India, called the Constitution (Scheduled Castes) Order, 1950. There are around 971 castes notified as scheduled castes in the Constitution. The members of scheduled caste remained at the bottom of the social hierarchy thus they have been socially discriminated and exploited. Traditionally these castes are kept away from the social, economic, political mainstream. They were socially excluded and not allowed interaction with upper castes. They were not allowed into the temples and denied religious rituals. When it comes to economic status, they were linked with 'impure' occupations and exclusively dependent for their survival on the high castes.

Article 46 in the Indian Constitution, mentions that 'the State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation'. Though the Constitution has made some specific provisions to provide social justice for the people belonging to these castes, at the societal level they still face several kinds of discrimination which is deep rooted in the Indian society. Reservation for scheduled caste in the local government to politically empower them has not made a significant change as the electoral process is still controlled by vested interests. As per 2001 census, the literacy rate among the scheduled castes is only 45.20%. Under these circumstances it is natural for them to suffer from low self confidence and stay away from the social mainstream.

### **Scheduled Tribes**

Article 366 (25) defined scheduled tribes as 'such tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes for the purposes of this constitution'. There are around 622 tribes that are recognized under the constitution. These indigenous people are spread across the country mainly in forest and hilly regions.

Tribes in India mainly face discrimination due to their geographical isolation and thereby suffer from extreme social and economic backwardness. The literacy rate among scheduled tribes is much lower than scheduled caste. As per the 2001 census the literacy rate among the scheduled tribes is only 38.41 percent which much lower than that of Scheduled Caste

(45.20%). Many of the economic grievances of the tribal's are linked to land rights. Government takes over the forest land; the mainstay of tribal's existence, for various development purposes such as building dam, mining and locating manufacturing industry. Tribes are displaced from their lands in the name of development and they are not suitably rehabilitated.



### Activity 4.3 Equality within the local government

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Ensuring an equal status through reservations is the first step in empowering women and SC/ST communities. They will attain equality only when their constraints and challenges are understood by the elected members as well as the citizens. This understanding can lead to empowerment of these communities.

It is a great challenge to involve all the members in the decision making process with in the local government. This can be accomplished if narrow political interests are set aside and the development of the area / town / village is prioritized. To realize the vision of equal status everybody needs to make space for views of the members elected through reservations. Their views and opinions need to be respected and considered and this can happen only when there is change in the attitude by discarding age-old stereotypes of women and SC/ST communities.

The purpose of the activity is to reflect on one's attitude and behavior towards women and SC/STs. The participants could be asked to reflect on their attitudes and respond to the questions/statements made.

The following hand out could be given to all the participants; and ask them to reflect and respond honestly. Later the responses can be analyzed by gender and social background of the participants. It should be evident that women and members of SC and ST would show a more diffident attitude. Facilitator can then discuss the strategies for them to overcome the hesitation and also draw other participants to find out how they would help them become equal members in the group.

| Indicators  | Yes or no | How will I change my behavior? |
|---|-----------|--------------------------------|
| Am I an assertive decision maker at home?   |           |                                |
| Am I an active participant in the local government?   |           |                                |
| Am I assertive in taking decisions at local government?   |           |                                |
| Do I monitor the work of the local government in my area?   |           |                                |
| Do I confidently discuss with people about the issues in my area their possible solutions to it?  |           |                                |
| Do I attend all the local government meetings?  |           |                                |
| Do I prepare myself for the meeting?  |           |                                |
| Do I make it a point to read and understand the resolutions after the meeting?  |           |                                |
| Do I take a lead in conducting Gram Sabhas/ward sabhas in my area?  |           |                                |
| Do I rely on my family member for all the decision making and work in my area?  |           |                                |
| Do I take time to and visit houses of all the sections of people in my area out of social concern without any vested or political interest? |           |                                |
| Do I update myself periodically and refer to documents like budget, audit reports, from my local government?                                |           |                                |
| Do I agree to speak in public functions?  |           |                                |

### Activity 4.4 Ensuring equality

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While ensuring the equality within the government, it is also important to ensure equality in governance too. All the citizens have equal right to receive public services. It is the duty of the local government in providing services must ensure that nobody is discriminated against on grounds of gender, caste or community. This session would lead participants to reflect on what way they can ensure equality.

This activity could be conducted in two ways; the participants could be requested to reflect on the statements individually. They could be divided into small groups – mixed groups of men (not belonging to the weaker sections), women and members of weaker sections

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>While you plan construction of a road in your village, you would consider constructing it</b> | <p>For a particular dominant community in the village</p> <p>In front of your house</p> <p>For access by all the villagers</p>                               |
| <b>While providing drinking water in your village/town you will ensure</b>                       | <p>Access to all without discrimination</p> <p>Easily accessible to all in the context of distance</p>   |
| <b>While planning street lights in the village ,you would</b>                                    | <p>Take care of only few lanes of the area</p> <p>Take care all the lanes without any discrimination</p> <p>Consider putting it up only on the main road</p> |
| <b>While providing the houses you could consider</b>   | <p>Giving it to families who do not have houses-Real beneficiaries</p> <p>Giving it to your relatives/friends/ people belonging to your caste</p>            |
| <b>While carrying out repair works in your area, you would</b>                                   | <p>Give equal priority to all</p> <p>Delay the work pertaining to the areas of to some communities</p>   |
| <b>List out other public services and analyze whether they would ensure equality</b>             |  |

## 5. Right to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation

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Good health is important for overall wellbeing and development of an individual and to realize his/her full potential. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health in the preamble to its Constitution as ‘a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity’. It further states that ‘the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is *one of the fundamental rights of every human being* without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition’. Thus, access to not only good and affordable health care but also other conditions affecting one’s health such as availability of safe drinking water and sanitation are considered a matter of citizens’ right.

Health is closely interlinked with water and sanitation. As per 2008 data, in India 12% of the total population still lacks proper drinking water sources and only 31 % of the total population has access to sanitation facilities

Is there any relationship between water and sanitation on the one hand and health on the other? Is the right to health also interrelated with other rights such as right to livelihood, right to employment, etc. What other factors influence health? What is the role of families, medical practitioners and the government in ensuring health for all.

The lack of access to and availability of clean water and sanitation has had devastating effects on many aspects of daily life. It is true that providing drinking water to a large population in India is a huge challenge. Our country is also characterized by heterogeneity in level of awareness, socio-economic development, education, practices and rituals which add to the complexity of providing water.

The health burden of poor water quality is enormous. It is estimated that around 37.7 million Indians are affected by waterborne diseases; annually 1.5 million children are estimated to die of diarrhea alone and 73 million working days are lost due to waterborne disease each year. The resulting economic burden is estimated at \$600 million a year. The problem of chemical contamination is also prevalent in India; 195,813 habitations in the country are affected by poor water quality. The major chemical contaminants are fluoride and arsenic. Iron is also emerging as a major problem with many habitations showing excess iron in the water samples.

The provision of clean drinking water has been given priority in the Constitution of India, with Article 47 conferring the duty of improving public health standards to the State. The government has undertaken various programmes since independence to provide safe drinking water to the rural masses. Till the 10th plan, an estimated total of Rs.1,105 billion has been spent on providing safe drinking water. One would argue that the expenditure is huge but it is also true that despite such expenditure, lack of safe and secure drinking water continues to be a major hurdle and a national economic burden.

On one hand the pressures of development is changing the distribution of water in the country, access to adequate water has been cited as the primary factor responsible for limiting development. The average availability of water is reducing steadily with the growing population and it is estimated that by 2020 India will become a water stressed nation. Groundwater is the major source of water in our country with 85% of the population dependent on it.

The 2001 Census reported that only 68.2 per cent of households in India have access to safe drinking water. According to latest estimates, 94 per cent of the rural population and 91 per cent of the people living in urban areas have access to safe drinking water. Data available with the Department of Drinking Water Supply shows that of the 1.42 million rural habitations in the country, 1.27 million are fully covered (FC), 0.13 million are partially covered (PC) and 15,917 are not covered (NC). However, coverage refers to installed capacity, and not average actual supply over a sustained period or the quality of water being supplied which is the most essential part.

Source: Water Aid ([www.wateraid.org](http://www.wateraid.org))

## Activity 5.1 Understanding the Local Condition

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According to WHO and UNICEF report safe drinking water, sanitation and good hygiene are fundamental to health, survival, growth and development. However, these basic necessities are still a luxury for many of the world's poor. Over 1.1 billion do not have access to treated drinking water, while 2.6 billion lack basic sanitation. Safe drinking water and basic sanitation are so obviously essential to health that they risk being taken for granted. Efforts to prevent death from diarrhea or to reduce the burden of such diseases as Ascaris, Guinea Worm, Hookworm, Schistosomiasis, etc. risk failure unless people have access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. Lack of basic sanitation indirectly inhibits the learning abilities of millions of school-aged children who are infested with intestinal worms transmitted through inadequate sanitation facilities and poor hygiene.

It is important to know the water and sanitation facilities in the villages/towns in order to understand the health situation in your working area.

The purpose of this session is to enhance the understanding of the elected representatives regarding the significance of water and sanitation and their role pertaining to this. Water and sanitation being closely associated with health, it is necessary to address this at the local level where a majority of the health related services such as providing safe drinking water and proper sanitation are provided.

In the training session the participants should be divided into smaller groups.

- Ask the participants to draw an area (can represent a village or a town) map the lanes and houses (a rough sketch needed, no need for accuracy); then to indicate the various water sources available in their area (lakes, bore wells, river, etc) and the approximate distance from the houses and the drinking water sources. Discuss who in the household fetches water and why that particular individual does the chore?
- Ask them to list out the purposes for which each of those water sources are used by the people and mark the quality of the water on each of the resources with grades such as very good, good, poor, etc
- In the same map ask them to indicate the various sanitation facilities (like drainages, toilets, etc.) and mark these sanitations on scales as maintained well, used well, unhygienic, not in use, etc. Discuss issues about availability of toilets and their use.
- Ask participants to list out the health problems due to poor sanitation conditions.

## Activity 5.2 Role of local government in providing safe drinking water and sanitation

In India, the primary responsibility for providing drinking water and sanitation facilities lies with the state governments. With the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments, the states have the authority to give the responsibility of local supply of water to Panchayats Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Urban Local Bodies (ULBs). Thus providing access to improved drinking water and sanitation is one of the mandatory functions of local government. Local government is the primary source for the people to approach when there is a problem in safe drinking water.

The purpose of this activity is to enable participants to understand the role of local government in providing improved drinking water as well as sanitation.

The maps drawn in the earlier activity can be utilized for this activity too.

Ask the participants to look at the maps they have drawn.

Looking at the map ask them to list out the possible solutions to address the issues in their village/town immediately.

|                                     | How do you ensure |            |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|------------|
|                                     | Water             | Sanitation |
| Availability                        |                   |            |
| Quality                             |                   |            |
| Physical accessibility              |                   |            |
| Affordability                       |                   |            |
| Non discrimination in accessibility |                   |            |

Once this activity is completed ask the elected representatives brainstorm on the following questions

- How they can generate revenue out of water?
- By how much can they increase the revenue in their coming budget (check do they have the data of households who have the water connection)?



## 6. Right to Food Security

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### The National Food Security Act, 2013

The National Food Security Bill (also **Right to Food Bill**), 2013 was passed by the parliament in September 2013 and it became The National Food Security Act, 2013 (No. 20 OF 2013)

The National Food Security Act, 2013 aims to provide food and nutritional security in human life cycle approach, by ensuring access to adequate quantity of quality food at affordable prices to people to live a life with dignity

### The salient features of the Act

- a. Depending upon economic status of the State, the Act covers up to 75 percent of the rural population and up to 50 percent of the urban population
- b. It classifies the eligible households into two categories i.e. priority households and Antodaya Anna Yojana families
- c. Antodaya Anna Yojana families will continue to get 35 kg of food grains per month but at highly subsidized prices of Rs. 3, Rs. 2 and Rs. 1 per kg. for rice, wheat and coarse grains respectively. Each member of priority households will get 5 kg of food grains at the same rates (section 3, schedule 1)
- d. It entitles about two third of our 1.2 billion population to subsidized food grains under the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS)

### Who is Responsible for what?

- Section 22: The Central Government shall, for ensuring the regular supply of food grains to persons belonging to eligible households, allocate from the central pool the required quantity of food grains to the State Governments under the Targeted Public Distribution System, as per the entitlements under section 3 and at prices specified in Schedule I.
- Section 23: In case of short supply of food grains from the central pool to a State, the Central Government shall provide funds to the extent of short supply to the State Government for meeting obligations under Chapter II in such manner as may be prescribed by the Central Government
- Section 24: The State Government shall be responsible for implementation and monitoring of the schemes of various Ministries and Departments of the Central Government in accordance with guidelines issued by the Central Government for each scheme, and their own schemes, for ensuring food security to the targeted beneficiaries in their State.
- State Government to prepare guidelines and to identify priority households.

- Section 25 (1) - The local authorities shall be responsible for the proper implementation of this Act in their respective areas.
- Section 25 (2) - Without prejudice to sub-section (1), the State Government may assign, by notification, additional responsibilities for implementation of the Targeted Public Distribution System to the local authority.

### **Food Security Allowance**

Section 8 : In case of non-supply of the entitled quantities of food grains or meals to entitled persons under Chapter II, such persons shall be entitled to receive such food security allowance from the concerned State Government to be paid to each person, within such time and manner as may be prescribed by the Central Government.

### **Women Empowerment**

Section 13. (1) The eldest woman who is not less than eighteen years of age, in every eligible household, shall be head of the household for the purpose of issue of ration cards.

Section 13. (2) Where a household at any time does not have a woman or a woman of eighteen years of age or above, but has a female member below the age of eighteen years, then, the eldest male member of the household shall be the head of the household for the purpose of issue of ration card and the female member, on attaining the age of eighteen years, shall become the head of the household for such ration cards in place of such male member.

### **Ensuring Accountability and Transparency**

Section 27: All targeted Public Distribution System (PDS) related records shall be placed in the public domain and kept open for inspection to the public, in such manner as may be prescribed by the state government

Section 28. (1) Every local authority, or any other authority or body, as may be authorised by the State Government, shall conduct or cause to be conducted, periodic social audits on the functioning of fair price shops, Targeted Public Distribution System and other welfare schemes, and cause to publicise its findings and take necessary action, in such manner as may be prescribed by the State Government.<sup>9</sup>

### **Various Schemes to ensure food security in India**

- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREG)
- National Programme Nutritional support to Primary Education ( MDM)
- SC/ST/OBC Hostels
- Integrated Child Development Scheme

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<sup>9</sup> Ref: The National Food Security Act 2013 No.20 OF 2013

- National Benefit Maternity Scheme for BPL pregnant women
- National Old Age Pension Scheme
- Annapurna Scheme
- Antyodaya Anna Yojana
- National Family Benefit Scheme and Public Distribution Scheme for BPL & APL families.

### Activity 6.1 Strategies for improving food security

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Being a member of the local government can you think 10 strategies to improve food security in your area keeping all individuals in mind, with a special focus on women and children?

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....
4. ....
5. ....
6. ....
7. ....
8. ....
9. ....
10. ....

Note: Implementation is as important as planning.

## 7. Right to Health

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Good health is a fundamental prerequisite for an individual to realize his/her complete potential. It is important to be free of disease for one to participate in any economic activity. Poor health not only deprives one of livelihood, it also imposes a financial burden on the individual and family in terms of medical expenses. Good health is important for socio economic development and improved quality of life. It is, therefore, the duty of the government to ensure that all citizens are provided with primary health care and affordable tertiary treatment. Although there is no constitutional guarantee for health, it is implicit in a democracy that people, particularly the poor and disadvantaged, are provided basic and affordable health care if not as a right on their part but as an obligation on part of the state.

### National Rural Health Mission

Some noteworthy facts about the state of public health in India are given below:

- Public health expenditure in India has declined from 1.3 percent of GDP in 1990 to 0.9 percent of GDP in 1999. The Union Budgetary allocation for health is 1.3 percent while the State's budgetary allocation is 5.5 percent.
- Union Government contribution to public health expenditure is 15 percent while States contribution about 85 percent
- Lack of integration of sanitation, hygiene, nutrition and drinking water issues.
- Curative services favor the non-poor: for every Re.1 spent on the poorest 20 percent population, Rs.3 is spent on the richest quintile.
- Only 10 percent Indians have some form of health insurance, mostly inadequate.
- Hospitalized Indians spend on an average 58 percent of their total annual expenditure.
- Over 40 percent of hospitalized Indians borrow heavily or sell assets to cover expenses.
- Over 25 percent of hospitalized Indians fall below poverty line because of hospital expenses.

(Source – NRHM website)

Some important indicators of rural health infrastructure are as per Rural Health Statistics 2010 are given below:

**Average Rural Population (2001) covered by:**

|                         | Norms        | Present Status |
|-------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Sub centre              | 3000-5000    | 5049           |
| Primary Health Centre   | 20000-30000  | 31364          |
| Community Health Centre | 80000-120000 | 163725         |

**Average rural area (sq km) covered by:**

|                         | Present Status |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Sub centre              | 21.20          |
| Primary Health Centre   | 131.72         |
| Community Health Centre | 687.61         |

**Average radial distance (KMs) covered by:**

|                         | Present Status |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Sub centre              | 2.60           |
| Primary Health Centre   | 6.47           |
| Community Health Centre | 14.79          |

**Average number of villages covered by:**

|                         | Present Status |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Sub centre              | 4              |
| Primary Health Centre   | 27             |
| Community Health Centre | 141            |

(Source: Public Health Statistics 2010)

Recognizing the importance of health in the overall scheme of social and economic development of the country, the central government has formulated the National Rural Health Mission (2005 -2012) with the aim to improve the availability of and access to quality health care by people, especially for those residing in rural areas, the poor, women and children.

**The goals of NRHM are:**

- Reduction in Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)
- Universal access to public health services such as women's health, child health, water, sanitation & hygiene, immunization, and nutrition.
- Prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases, including locally endemic diseases.
- Access to integrated comprehensive primary healthcare.
- Population stabilization, gender and demographic balance.
- Revitalization of local health traditions and mainstream AYUSH.
- Promotion of healthy life styles.

### Activity 7.1 Dealing with gaps in health resources

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From the introductory session covering the above, the participants would realize the importance of adequate resources for ensuring quality health care. Poor availability of doctors, nurses or ASHA workers either due to absenteeism or vacancies does negatively impact health care.

In this activity, the participants should be encouraged to consider the position of availability of different resources within their area and work out some practical solutions:

Please examine the availability of different health resources in your area and discuss some solutions to resolve the shortages, if any. Note: Participants may not know the exact sanctioned numbers of resources. Preferably these may be gathered beforehand and supplied; in the absence of exact particulars, they could use approximate numbers based on their knowledge. The idea is to get them to discuss the actions they would take to remedy the gaps in resources.

| Health Resources                                  | Total sanctioned number | The present status in number | Gap | What is the action you would like to take |
|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----|---|
| No. of doctors in the PHC                         |                         |                              |     |   |
| No. of Nurses in the PHC                          |                         |                              |     |   |
| No. of ANMs under your PHC                        |                         |                              |     |   |
| No. of ASHA Workers under PHC                     |                         |                              |     |   |
| No. of lab technicians in the PHC                 |                         |                              |     |   |
| No. Janani Suraksha Kits (JSY) in the PHC         |                         |                              |     |   |
| No. of labour wards/room in the hospital          |                         |                              |     |   |
| No. Ayush doctor in the PHC                       |                         |                              |     |   |
| No. of Anganwadi workers around the area of a PHC |                         |                              |     |   |



## Activity 7.2 Reality check against NRHM benchmarks

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NRHM lays down certain benchmarks for performance and public health service delivery. The participants can be asked to check the situation in their locality against these benchmarks, which are:

- Availability of trained community level worker at village level, with a drug kit for generic ailments.
- Health Day at anganwadi level on a fixed day/month for provision of immunization, ante/post natal checkups and services related to mother & child healthcare, including nutrition.
- Availability of generic drugs for common ailments at Sub-centre and hospital level.
- Good hospital care through assured availability of doctors, drugs and quality services at PHC/CHC level.
- Improved access to Universal Immunization through induction of auto disabled syringes, alternate vaccine delivery and improved mobilization services under the program.
- Improved facilities for institutional delivery through provision of referral, transport, escort and improved hospital care subsidized under the Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) for the Below Poverty Line families
- Availability of assured healthcare at reduced financial risk through pilots of Community Health Insurance under the Mission.
- Provision of household toilets.
- Improved outreach services through mobile medical unit at district level.

### Activity 7.3 Role of local government in NRHM implementation

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Are you aware of the role the local government is expected to play in making the National Mission on Rural Health successful?

List out the role of local government in making the NRHM successful:

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## Notes 7.1 Role of local government in NRHM implementation

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The NRHM Mission envisages the following roles for PRIs:

- a. States to indicate in their MoUs the commitment for devolution of funds, functionaries and programmes for health to PRIs.
- b. The District Health Mission to be led by the Zila Parishad. The DHM will control, guide and manage all public health institutions in the district, sub-centres, PHCs and CHCs.
- c. ASHAs would be selected by and be accountable to the Village Panchayat.
- d. The Village Health Committee of the Panchayat would prepare the Village Health Plan, and promote inter sectoral integration. Each sub-centre will have at its disposal an untied fund for local action of Rs. 10,000 per annum. This Fund will be deposited in a joint bank Account of the ANM & Sarpanch and operated by the ANM, in consultation with the Village Health Committee.
- e. PRI involvement in Rogi Kalyan Samitis for good hospital management.
- f. Provision of training to members of PRIs.
- g. Making available health related databases to *all stakeholders*, including Panchayats at all levels.

## Activity 7.4 Health Facility Mapping

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As discussed earlier, health includes safe drinking water, adequate sanitation, food and nutrition, health related information and gender equality. Through some of the exercises you have reflected on the issues related to safe drinking water, sanitation, food and nutrition. In this context it is also imperative to discuss the importance of health amenities. It is the duty of the state to provide sufficient facilities which should be of good quality, easily available and physically accessible.

By drawing the health facility mapping participants learn to understand the strengths and gaps of health facilities in their area.

This activity would elicit better results if done in a group. If there are participants from the same local government area or from the same block the group needs to be divided in such a way that the participants obtain maximum information about their areas and blocks.

- Draw a map of your local government area (include all villages /wards) (or if a map is already available, it could be provided to them)
- List out all the health facilities in your local government area including private and government (PHC, Sub Centre, hospitals, clinics, medical shops, etc.)
- Indicate the health facilities people use the most.
- Find out the reasons for certain facilities being used more.
- Indicate other health facilities outside your local government area that villagers access.
- Mark the distance from your local area to the facilities outside your area.
- Discuss the transport facilities available to reach these facilities.

In the activity participants need to discuss and debate the reasons for preferences for certain facilities. What is lacking in the system, what are the loopholes and how this situation can be improved are important topics for discussion.

It is also important to note that every local government area may not have hospitals with all facilities. In these situations, what kinds of transport facilities are made available to people to reach the hospitals especially in cases of emergencies? Availability of services is one aspect of health, however whether people are able to access (physical access) these services is a topic to ponder on.

## Notes 7.2: Health Insurance for the Poor

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Rashtriya Swasthya Bheema Yojana is a scheme introduced by Government of India. RSBY is a centrally sponsored scheme introduced in 2005, which the Central and State governments are implementing it together. This scheme provides health insurance coverage for Below Poverty Line (BPL) families.

The main objectives of the scheme are:

- Protect the BPL families from high medical expenditure; and
- To ensure that BPL families can access both private and public medical facilities for coverage of Rs 30,000 for 5 family members up to one year.

The main benefits of this scheme are:

- Only BPL families identified by the Central Government (2002 BPL list) are eligible under the scheme. All BPL families are not eligible.
- The Health Insurance is available for all BPL members within the state on a voluntary basis. An enrolment fee of Rs 30 is charged for registration.
- Coverage of up to Rs 30,000 for up to 5 member family is the main benefit of the scheme for 1 year.
- There are 780 types of surgeries covered under the scheme.
- The card can be used across the country in any RSBY hospitals.
- The BPL family can go to the private and the public hospitals to claim the benefits. The beneficiary can get the benefit anywhere in India, as long as the hospital comes under the RSBY scheme.
- The scheme has a split card facility where families living in different parts of the country can get copies of the cards from the government and use the benefits.
- The scheme has created a smart card system to track the family and patient history. These smart cards are available with the family after registration
- Complaints can be made to the regulator i.e. Insurance Regulatory Development Authority (IRDA) in case of denial of services.

How can the family use the benefits:

- Families identified under the Central Govt. 2002 BPL lists have to register themselves for Rs 30.
- They get a smart card from the Insurance Company with their families details.
- The family needs to register itself with the hospital using the smart cards to get the benefits of the scheme.

- The scheme is designed such that there should be no money spent by the BPL families for hospital treatment.
- Only the hospitals specified can be used by the beneficiary. Hospitals are supposed to provide general ward and food facilities free of cost.
- Only the surgeries approved under the scheme can be used by the beneficiary and not all surgeries.
- The following year, the family has to re-register itself for the scheme again with Rs. 30.

## Activity 7.5 Ensuring Health – Your Responsibility

Health and sanitation, including hospitals, primary health centers and dispensaries are the mandatory functions of local government. Being a member of the community or the local government everyone has the responsibility to ensure health for oneself and others. Through this activity you will learn the prevailing situation in your area and what you could do improve the situation.

The purpose of this exercise is to enable the participants to learn strategies to improve health in their area. Although on the surface health issues look common all over but there will geographical differentials in every area. The reasons may vary from village to village. It is important for one to know that health issues have causes and effects and it is important to understand them.

In a training environment, the group can be divided into smaller groups to save time; presentations can then be made to the larger group.

| Check list to improve health status in your village/town                               |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| Indicators   | What is the present status in your village/town?<br>(This information may be collected in advance and provided to the participants) | What strategy would you adopt to ensure this happens? |
| Age at which girls and boys get married.   |   |   |
| Infant mortality rate  |   |   |
| Under 5 mortality rate   |   |   |
| Immunization of all one year old children in the local government area against measles |   |   |
| Institutional delivery for the pregnant women  |   |   |
| Maternal motility rate   |   |   |
| Treatment of TB patients   |   |   |
| Prevention of Malaria by   |   |   |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| proper environmental protection  |  |  |
| Comprehensive and correct knowledge about HIV/AIDS                         |  |  |
| Population with advanced HIV infection with access to antiretroviral drugs |  |  |
| Health Committee   |  |  |
| Attendance at health committee meetings                                    |  |  |
| Visit by health workers  |  |  |
| Any other  |  |  |



## 8. Right to Education

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As per the data published by 2011 the literacy rate of India 74.04% (office of the Registrar General & Census Commission). The data reveals that the literacy rate has improved sharply among females as compared to males. Several measures are taken by the governments (union and state) to improve the literacy rate in India. Despite the efforts, several million children are deprived of their right to education. Issues like child labour prevent children from enjoying their education rights.

Here are some statistics on Education in India -

- Less than half of India's children between the age 6 and 14 go to school
- A little over one-third of all children who enroll in grade one reach grade eight
- At least 35 million children aged 6 – 14 years do not attend school
- 53 percent of girls in the age group of 5 to 9 years are illiterate
- In India, only 53 percent of habitation has a primary school
- In India, only 20 percent of habitation has a secondary school
- On an average an upper primary school is 3 km away in 22 percent of areas under habitations

### Measures taken by the Government of India

**Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)** is Government of India's flagship program for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right.

SSA is being implemented in partnership with State Governments to cover the entire country and address the needs of 192 million children in 1.1 million habitations. The program seeks to open new schools in those habitations which do not have schooling facilities and strengthen existing school infrastructure through provision of additional class rooms, toilets, drinking water, maintenance grant and school improvement grants. Existing schools with inadequate teacher strength are provided with additional teachers, while the capacity of existing teachers is being strengthened by extensive training, grants for developing teaching-learning materials and strengthening of the academic support structure at a cluster, block and district level. SSA seeks to provide quality elementary education including life skills. SSA has a special focus on girl's education and children with special needs. SSA also seeks to provide computer education to bridge the digital divide.

In 2009, India passed Right to Education Act. Since SSA and RTE had a common aim of universalisation of education, the HRD Ministry has decided to amalgamate SSA with the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act. (Source: <http://ssa.nic.in>)

## Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act

India passed 'The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act' or 'Right to Education Act' in April, 2010. The salient features of the Right of Children for Free and Compulsory Education act are –

- Free and compulsory education to all children of India in the 6 to 14 age group;
- No child shall be held back, expelled, or required to pass a board examination until completion of elementary education; A child above six years of age who has not been admitted in any school or though admitted could not complete his or her elementary education, then, he or she shall be admitted in a class appropriate to his or her age; Provided that where a child is directly admitted in a class appropriate to his or her age, then, he or she shall, in order to be at par with others, have a right to receive special training, in such manner, and within such time limits, as may be prescribed: Provided further that a child so admitted to elementary education shall be entitled to free education till completion of elementary education even after fourteen years.
- Proof of age for admission: For the purposes of admission to elementary education. The age of a child shall be determined on the basis of the birth certificate issued in accordance with the provisions of the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act, 1856 or on the basis of such other document, as may be prescribed. No child shall be denied admission in a school for lack of age proof
- A child who completes elementary education shall be awarded a certificate;
- Calls for a fixed student-teacher ratio of 1:30 for class 1-V (1:40 when enrollment is >200), 1:35 for class VI-VIII;
- Provides for 25 percent reservation for economically disadvantaged communities in admission to Class One in all private schools; the entry level class must be LKG if the school has LKG
- Mandates improvement in quality of education such as there being no corporal punishment, Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation of child, , special assistance for those who require it and so on;
- School teachers will need adequate professional degree within five years or else will lose job;
- School infrastructure (where there is problem) to be improved in three years, else recognition cancelled;
- Financial burden will be shared between state and central government

## Activity 8.1 Is Education a privilege?

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Statistics give an overall picture of the literacy rate in the state which includes the adult literacy; although literacy rates are improving there is still a long way to go as 26 percent of the Indian population is still illiterate. It is the responsibility of the local government to ensure that every child has easy access to education.

The purpose of this activity is to enable participants to identify strategies enroll children in schools. It can be carried out on an Individual level or in a small group

- Roughly how many children between the ages of 6 and 14 do not go to school in your area?
- What are the measures you have taken to ensure these children to go to school?
- What efforts would you take to tackle the problems that keep them away from school so that even if they enroll they do not drop out midway?

## Activity 8.2: What do you know about RTE?

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What do you know about the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act or RTE?

The purpose of this activity is to understand whether the elected representative/ citizens at the grass root levels are aware of the Right to Education.

This session could also be conducted in buzz groups. Please take few moments in reflecting the question.

- Have you heard of Right to Education Act?
- When did the Act come in to existence in India?
- What according to you are the key features of this Act?

### Activity 8.3 Identify issues of schools in your area

Every school situation is unique in its nature depending upon the geographical, cultural, social, educational and political scenario of the area. It is important to map the issues before planning to resolve it. It is also important to look at the various reasons around an issue.

The purpose of the activity is to analyze the condition of the school in the area where the participants live. By doing this activity participants understand the real situation of the school in their area. This would help them to strategize better. This activity could be done by individuals on their own or in groups

| List out the issues of your school under these headings  |                                |
|--|--------------------------------|
| Issue  | Problem present in your school |
| School condition (building, overall condition)   |                                |
| School Facilities (related to class rooms, teaching aids, play ground, play items etc)   |                                |
| Hygiene factors (water and toilet facilities )   |                                |
| Issues related to the teaching staff:<br>Does the school maintain the prescribed Pupil to Teacher Ratio (PTR)?<br>Are they regular?<br>Is the quality of teaching satisfactory? ( is learning achievement appropriate for the age of the child especially for early primary years (grade 1-3): e.g. can they count....read... etc.<br>Also there is no punishment, and amount of homework given is reasonable, etc.) |                                |
| Student issues : absenteeism, drop outs etc  |                                |
| Family motivation: How many families lack motivation to send their children to schools?<br>How many children affected by family issues do not attend school? What are the other issues?  |                                |
| School Management Committee: Is it active?<br>Are you a member of the SMC? What are the problems in the SMC?   |                                |
| Mid Day Meal : Quality and monitoring issues   |                                |
| Any other issues   |                                |

## Notes 8.1: The role of School Management Committees in ensuring Right to Education

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A School Management Committee plays an important role in school governance to enhance the quality of education. By bringing together representatives encompassing various stakeholders it leads to better decision making. RTE is mandated representation in SMCs and their functions.

As per Section 21 of RTE Act

(1) A school shall constitute a School Management Committee consisting of the elected representatives of the local authority, parents or guardians of children admitted in such school and teachers:

- At least three-fourth of members of such Committee shall be parents or guardians
- Proportionate representation shall be given to the parents or guardians of children belonging to disadvantaged group and weaker section:
- Fifty per cent of Members of such Committee shall be women.

(2) The School Management Committee shall perform the following functions, namely:—

- *monitor the working of the school*
- *prepare and recommend school development plan;*
- *monitor the utilization of the grants received from the appropriate Government or local authority or any other source; and*
- *Perform such other functions as may be prescribed.*

As per Section 22 of RTE Act

- a. Every School Management Committee, constituted under sub-section (1) of section 21, shall prepare a School Development Plan, in such manner as may be prescribed.
- b. The School Development Plan prepared under sub-section (1) shall be the basis for the plans and grants to be made by the appropriate Government or local authority, as the case may be.

### Activity 8.4: Think out of Box

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Elected representatives often lament on the lack of funds with respect to implementation of programmes and schemes in an effective manner. A close look at this shows that there are issues beyond finances when it comes to implementation of programs. It is often seen that if the quality of service is ensured many people come forward to contribute either money and assist otherwise for further improving the quality of the service.

Here is an opportunity for you to think beyond the box.

Think of 5 creative/new things or activities you can do beyond the responsibilities provided by the Act. Be original and have fun with it. People might even do what you suggest.

## 9. Right to Work – towards a life with dignity

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According to a 2005 World Bank estimate, 41.6 percent of the total Indian population falls below the international poverty line of US\$ 1.25 a day. As per the Tendulkar Committee report, the percentage of the population below the poverty line in 2004-05 was 37.2 per cent. The percentage of poor in rural areas was estimated at 41.8 per cent and 25.7 per cent in urban areas.

The Indian Constitution refers to the right to work under the Directive Principles of State Policy. Article 39 urges the State to ensure that ‘the citizens, men and women equally, have the right to an adequate means to livelihood’, and that ‘there is equal pay for equal work for both men and women’. Further, Article 41 stresses that ‘the state, shall within the limits of its economic capacity and development, make effective provision for securing right to work...’

Right to work is closely related with other rights like right to life, right to food, etc. Although the numbers are overwhelming, providing gainful employment to unskilled poor in the unorganized sector is the need of the hour.

### Who is termed Poor in India?

Planning Commission in its affidavit to the Supreme Court claimed that those spending more than Rs 965 per month in urban India and Rs 781 in rural India will not be considered poor. It means that an urban dweller cannot be termed poor if his/her income exceeds Rs.32 per day; similarly a person living in rural India will not qualify to be considered poor if his/her income is Rs 26 a day. As a consequence, such individuals will not be eligible for the benefits extended by the government through various schemes meant for poor.



## Activity 9.1 Poverty: causes and remedies

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Work is defined as ‘a trade, profession or other means of livelihood’. Work is needed for a livelihood; work is the means through which a person earns enough money to meet the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter not only for herself but also of her family. Despite several measures being taken to ensure gainful employment in the urban and rural areas, people struggle to get even a day’s labour. People without work are simply left out of the economic activity in which a society necessarily engages. Work need not of course be only employment or engagement by the government or a private party. It could also be an individual working with his own assets to create value which he can exchange for a price in the market and thus make an earning.

The following activity will help you reflect on some important issues relating to work and livelihood.

Give yourself sometime to reflect on the points noted below and note down the points on a paper.

- Assume that you have no sources of income. What could have led you to such a situation? Who would you blame for this? What could remedy the situation - education, economic assets, etc.?
- What criteria would you use to define poor? Is income a good measure? What other measures could be used?
- According to you how many families in your area can be termed as poor?

## Activity 9.2 Identifying Gainful Employment for the poor in your area

---

It is important for every individual to have a source of income so that he / she may lead a life with dignity. Unemployment is one of the biggest challenges the country is facing especially in view of large population in working age. The scenario in villages is worrisome. Many in the rural areas are landless and depend on daily wages for their livelihood. When there is no work in their own villages, they migrate to other areas in search of work. They are most vulnerable to exploitative practices. Causes for unemployment are complex. Increasing expansion of service sector in a way excludes unskilled labour from the pale of employment.

Gainful employment is a tool for reduction in poverty. The concept of Self Helps Groups has been tried to provide credit and market outlets to encourage rural poor to organize themselves to engage in economically useful activities and support themselves. It is important that local government should actively analyse the local situation and develop strategies according to the local needs. To generate employment opportunities within the communities, the local government needs to be armed with information on the number of unemployed people in the area and the local resources that could generate employment opportunities.

Government has introduced several schemes to provide gainful employment to the unskilled in the rural as well as urban areas.

The purpose of this activity is to help participants appreciate the extent of this problem in the context of their own village / gram panchayat and reflect upon possible solutions to overcome it. Since the activity involves reflection, it can be done individually or in buzz groups

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From your knowledge of your village / GP,  
how many families do you think have no  
source of income for

- a) most part of the year?
- b) for six months or more?

---

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Do you think people needing work have information about work opportunities in your area? How can the flow of information be improved? |  |
|---|--|

What kind of opportunities can be created  
for employing the unskilled labour in your  
village / GP? (please see table below)

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**Identify the sources of generating income and thereby ensuring gainful employment to people**

| Sl.No       | List out the various sources of income that people in your area are engaged in | List out the information you need for this particular activity  | Materials required                  | Skills required                        | Time required to generate income                         | Amount required                                   | Kind of Market required | How many people can engage themselves in this work |
|-------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|--|--|---|-------------------------|--|
| For example | Vegetable selling  | List out the kind of vegetables grown in your village<br>The common vegetables people like and consume<br>Where do they get these vegetables<br>What is the distance between the consumers and the shop<br>What is the cost at which they sell the vegetables | Vegetables<br>Baskets<br>Push carts | Marketing skills<br>Good communication | Income is generated immediately as this is direct sales. | Depends on the scale you want to set up the shop. | Local                   |  |
| 1.          |  |   |                                     |  |  |   |                         |  |
| 2.          |  |   |                                     |  |  |   |                         |  |
| 3.          |  |   |                                     |  |  |   |                         |  |

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

### Activity 9.3 Wage Disparity

To control exploitation of unorganized labour, minimum wages have been fixed. Although the minimum wages have been fixed at Rs.115 per day with effect from April 1, 2011 the workers in the private and unorganized sectors are deprived of their right to get a fair wage. We see disparities in wages based on geographical location but the most startling of all the wage differences is between men and women. Gender based wage disparity is an ugly reality of the Indian economy. Although it has been debated on several platforms, no actual change has occurred at the ground level.

The purpose of this activity is to analyse the causes for gender differentials with regard to wages even when both men and women are performing the same job. You can understand the reasons for discrimination in wages through this activity.

Brainstorming method could bring out lot of arguments and debates in a large group. This could help the group members to reflect on their attitudes towards work done by men and women.

Stick the following chart on a flip chart and brainstorm by asking questions on each activity Affix ✓ or × mark based on the answers derived from the group.

| Various Jobs                       | Can a man perform this task? | Can a woman perform this task? | Reasons for difference in wage |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Agriculture</b>                 |                              |                                |                                |
| Planting                           |                              |                                |                                |
| Weeding                            |                              |                                |                                |
| Harvesting                         |                              |                                |                                |
| Cutting crops                      |                              |                                |                                |
| <b>Agriculture allied activity</b> |                              |                                |                                |
| Cattle rearing                     |                              |                                |                                |
| Milking Cows                       |                              |                                |                                |
| <b>Household activities</b>        |                              |                                |                                |

|   |  |  |  |
|---|--|--|--|
| Child rearing   |  |  |  |
| House hold chores<br>including cooking,<br>cleaning, washing<br>clothes |  |  | Discuss why there<br>would be no payment                         |
| Other household<br>chores   |  |  | Discuss why there<br>would be no payment<br>for household chores |
| <b>Construction</b>   |  |  |  |
| Roof work   |  |  |  |
| Cement work   |  |  |  |
| Road work   |  |  |  |
| <b>Mining</b>   |  |  |  |
| Stone breaking  |  |  |  |
| Stone crushing  |  |  |  |
| Removal and stacking<br>of rejected stones                              |  |  |  |

**Note:** This list could be modified based on the common jobs people usually undertaken in a particular geographical set up

## Notes 9.1 Minimum Wages Act, 1948

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The Minimum Wages Act, 1948 is based on Article 43 of the Constitution of India which states that 'the State shall endeavor to secure by suitable legislation or economic organisation or in any other way to all workers, agricultural, industrial or otherwise, work, a living wage (emphasis added) conditions of work ensuring a decent standard of life and full enjoyment of leisure and social and cultural opportunities'.

The Minimum Wages Act empowers the Government to fix minimum wages for employees working in specified employments. It provides for review and revision of minimum wages already fixed after suitable intervals not exceeding five years. Central Government is the appropriate agency in relation to any scheduled employment carried on by or under its authority or in railway administration or in relation to mines, oilfields or major ports or any corporation established under the Central Act. State governments are the appropriate agencies in relation to other scheduled employment. The Central Government is concerned to a limited extent with building and construction activities mostly carried on by Central Public Works Department, Ministry of Defense etc. and agricultural farms under the Ministries of Defense and Agriculture. Bulk of such employment fall in the state spheres and state governments are required to fix/revise wages and ensure their implementation in respect of scheduled employment within their spheres.

Enforcement of Minimum wages in Central sphere is secured through the Central Industrial Relations Machinery (CIRM). The Central Government has fixed Minimum Wages under the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 for 40 scheduled employments under the Central Sphere.

<http://labour.nic.in/clc/welcome.html>

## Notes 9.2 What is MGNREGA?

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Majority of Indian citizens almost 55 to 60 percent still live in rural India. Poor in rural India depend on wage labour for their survival. Urbanization has led to a rapidly increasing shift from agricultural labour to unskilled labour resulting in difficulties for providing employment in large numbers.

Any promise to provide work is empty unless there is an entitlement to work guaranteed under a legislation that can be enforced in a court of law. Any employment guarantee legislation is supposed to focus both on the urban and rural poor, but in India the EGA has made provisions to provide employment only to the rural poor. Although the need at the rural level is impelling, the question of why the urban poor have been left out remains unanswered.

The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is a job guarantee scheme enacted by legislation on August 25, 2005. It aims at enhancing the livelihood security of people in rural areas by guaranteeing hundred days of wage-employment in a financial year to a rural household whose adult members volunteer to do unskilled manual work.

Under this scheme any adult member of the rural household can obtain a job card by writing an application addressed to Gram Panchayat or Program officer at the block level and ask for a dated receipt of application. Within 15 days of submitting the application or from the day work is demanded, employment will be provided to the applicant.

The statutory minimum wage applicable to agriculture workers in the state is given as daily wages.

<http://www.nrega.net>



### Notes 9.3 Labour legislations influencing wages in the informal sector in India

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| Labor Legislation   | Types of Intervention  |
|---|--|
| The Minimum Wages Act, 1948                               | To provide minimum compensation for work. Workers in scheduled employment to be paid minimum wage  |
| The Trade Unions Act, 1926                                | To enable workers of a number of small units to form unions, who can bargain wages and other conditions of work?   |
| The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947                         | To enable unions to raise industrial disputes on wages and the conciliation machinery to intervene.  |
| The Equal Remunerations Act, 1976                         | Assure equal wage to women for same or similar work.   |
| The Payment of Wages Act, 1936                            | To regulate the manner of payment of wages and their realization in case of non-payment.   |
| The Contract Labours (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970 | The contractor is required to pay wages and in case of failure on the part of the contractor to pay wages either in part or in full, the Principal Employer is liable to pay the same. |

**Source:** Das, K.S. (1998), *Wage policy issues in the informal sector*, The Indian Journal of Labour Economics, V 41(4), p 896.

## 10. Social Issues - Child Marriage

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Despite the rising age at marriage and laws prohibiting early marriages in India (Child Marriage Restraint Act of 1929 and its amendment in 1978), a large percentage of girls still get married at a young age. In contrast, only a few young males are married in adolescence.

In India, every third adolescent girl in the age group of 15-19 is married and every second married adolescent girl has given birth to a child (National Family Health Survey-II). The NFHS-II also showed that one-fourth of the young girls in the age group of 20-24 years were married before the age of 15, and one-tenth were married even before they were 13.

Rajasthan having the lowest median age at marriage which is the lowest age of marriage in the world. This tradition of early marriage is deeply ingrained in culture, which has an adverse effect on girls' lives. About more than 15 percent of the girls in the state are married even before they are 10. The phenomenon of early marriage is highly related to the schooling of girls especially when they are in the 10-14 age groups.

### Practice of early marriages in India: Reasons and Consequences

Despite several efforts, the eradication of early marriages is hindered by several factors. In India, marriage is an alliance between two families rather than a bond between two individuals. The whole practice is influenced by several socio economic factors.

**Gender Bias:** The traditional roles of men and women are cast in stone in some Indian families especially in rural India. Women are seen as vehicles for procreation and men as bread winners. Hence the faster the girl marries the quicker she can carry out of her role to beget sons for the family to continue the male hierarchy and legacy.

Reared for the purpose of procreation always in the confines of the kitchen, a girl has no say even in her maternal home; her voice is curtailed even further when she is married. The decision to get her married is taken without her consent. The decision is taken generally by the head of the family rather than the individual who is going to getting married. In fact marrying her off early seems like a natural progression and it is seen as a favor where both the girl's own family and her in-laws believe they are protecting her and are saviors of her virginity.

**Poverty:** For families in poverty, marrying a daughter early means lower dowry. Since girls have always been looked upon as a burden, early marriage means one less mouth to feed. Any investment in girls be it in the form of education or financial investment, is seen as a lost investment because the girl goes to another family.

**Lack of knowledge on the consequences of early marriage:** Early marriages usually have adverse effects on the health and development of adolescent girls, since a young girl has little

ability to negotiate sexual activity, especially if she is married to an older man. Lack of knowledge also leads to high infant mortality and maternal mortality especially in India

These are few reasons for you to refer. Reflect on the other reasons of child marriages in your area.

### **Health consequences of early marriages?**

Early marriage causes several health related consequences.

In a country like India there is a large percentage of illiterate population who is unaware of health related consequences in general. As a result there is high percentage of infant mortality and maternal mortality in India.

A number of studies have shown a comparatively higher infant mortality rate of children born to adolescent mothers. It is seen that infants born to adolescent mothers have a greater likelihood of having low birth-weight than the others. This is mainly associated with poor maternal nutrition, reinforcing that adolescents are unready for childbirth.

Early marriages resulting in early onset of child bearing is associated with high fertility. Thus, early pregnancy leads to larger families, with serious consequences on the health and well being of the mother and her children, and also the population growth of the nation.

Another severe consequence of early marriage is that mental health of young girls is seriously affected. In India early marriage and cultural constraints on female roles have been associated with depression.

### **The Relationship between Early Marriage and HIV**

A disturbing and dangerous trend is seen. It is seen that in Societies in which child marriage takes place have higher rates of early sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS. Girls who marry (as both virgins and non-virgins) face a distinctly elevated HIV risk within marriages, due to the changes in sexual behavior, the inability of women to negotiate protection, and the irrelevance of available protective measures. For a young married girl, marriage is often representative of a shift from a protected state of virginity (or infrequent sexual encounters) to a state of unprotected and frequent sexual intercourse. The pursuit of pregnancy, which girls strive for to bring themselves status within the family, reinforces these patterns, and discourages condom use (Bruce, 2007).

In fact, protection is often simply not an option as known mechanisms—abstinence, partner change/reduction, condom use, mutually monogamous sex, etc. all require negotiation and participation of both partners in order to be protective (Clark, Bruce & Dude, 2006, p. 82).

Furthermore, young, married girls are particularly unequipped to negotiate protection, even if they desire to. This failure to negotiate reflects many factors, including the age (and resultantly, power discrepancy) between them and their husband, their likelihood of being deprived of formal education and general social roles that inform how a wife should act (Clark, Bruce & Dude, 2006,). (<http://cis.uchicago.edu>)

## Activity 10.1      Factors influencing early marriages

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From your experience reflect on the following factors and how they influence early marriages in your area:

- Attitude towards girls
- Poverty
- Lack of awareness
- Family vs. community pressures
- Dowry
- Myths

What steps would you take to stop child marriages in your area? List 5 steps.

## 11. Expenditure Tracking

Several Schemes are introduced by Union and State for various development programs. You need to know the various schemes which are implemented in your district. Here are some of the examples of Centrally Sponsored Schemes which may help you to give an idea of how you can track the finances of the district. This may not be possible for you to do it in a training set up. You can visit your district offices and get this information.

### Know your Finances of the district

|     | Name of the Scheme  | How much money comes for your district | How much money has spent in the last year | Unspent money |
|-----|---|--|---|---------------|
| 1.  | National Urban Health Mission                                       |  |   |               |
| 2.  | National Rural Health Mission                                       |  |   |               |
| 3.  | Promotion of Ayush  |  |   |               |
| 4.  | Public Private Partnership for setting up of specialty clinics/IPDs |  |   |               |
| 5.  | State AIDS Control Program  |  |   |               |
| 6.  | Low Cost Sanitation   |  |   |               |
| 7.  | Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan   |  |   |               |
| 8.  | Mid Day Meal  |  |   |               |
| 9.  | Adult Education and Skill development Scheme                        |  |   |               |
| 10. | Merit Scholarship   |  |   |               |
| 11. | Incentive for the girl child for secondary education                |  |   |               |
| 12. | Vocationalisation of education                                      |  |   |               |
| 13. | Rashtiya Swasthya Bima Yojana                                       |  |   |               |
| 14. | National Rural Employment Guarantee scheme                          |  |   |               |
| 15. | Rural Housing   |  |   |               |
| 16. | Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana                                 |  |   |               |
| 17. | Bio Fuels   |  |   |               |
| 18. | Integrated Watershed  |  |   |               |

|     |                                      |  |  |  |
|-----|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|
|     | Management Programme                 |  |  |  |
| 19. | Hostels for ST girls and boys        |  |  |  |
| 20. | For empowerment of adolescent        |  |  |  |
| 21. | ICDS project                         |  |  |  |
| 22. | National Service Scheme              |  |  |  |
| 23. | Sports                               |  |  |  |
| 24. | Food Security                        |  |  |  |
| 25. | Horticulture                         |  |  |  |
| 26. | Micro Irrigation                     |  |  |  |
| 27. | Seeds                                |  |  |  |
| 28. | Livestock health and disease control |  |  |  |
| 29. | Diary development                    |  |  |  |
| 30. | Fodder development                   |  |  |  |
| 31. | Welfare of fishermen                 |  |  |  |
| 32. | Development of Inland fisheries      |  |  |  |
| 33. | Afforestation                        |  |  |  |

## Case Studies

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### **a. Reducing the high financial burden due to the electricity bill – Madamakki GP, Udupi District, Karnataka**

The Gram Panchayat provided free public water supply through the public taps for these clustered houses since 1998. Since this involved pumping water through the day, the GP was burdened with a heavy expenditure on electricity. In the year 2006-07, the GP in its Gram Sabha sought opinion from the people with regard to its proposal of levying tax for the usage of public taps. But the people did not agree with this proposal. Thus, the proposal of levying tax on the public tap water users was dropped in the Gram Sabha, and also in the general meeting of the GP.

In June 2010, the new elected body took charge of Madamakki Gram Panchayat and the newly recruited PDO also joined around the same time. The outstanding bill of electricity was around Rs. 6.64 lakh and this was overdue. The electricity bill amount was being deducted from the statutory fund and this was the reason that GP was not getting the full amount. Every year the GP was getting electricity bill of over Rs. 1.5 lakh. The reason was mainly because of running the six pumps for long hours to provide the free water supply to the people through the public taps. The PDO and the panchayat members discussed that this would be a continuous burden for the GP and thus right action needed to be taken at the right time. Thus, they evolved three strategies to address these issues without hampering the pro people development initiatives.

- Repay the outstanding electricity bill
- To provide individual water supply connection and charge water tax for the same
- Create a pool of donors and thus ensure resource mobilization and peoples participation

#### **Step 1: Repay outstanding Electricity Bill**

As a first step, the GP representatives and the staff, with the initiative of the PDO, decided to repay the electricity bill step by step. Since the burden was heavy, they decided to reduce it as early as possible. Thus, they came up with the strategy of utilizing the untied fund and the own sources of GP. As a result, in 2011-12, they first paid the heavy amount of around Rs. 4 lakh (see Table below). By February 2013, they brought down the due electricity bill to nil.



| Table 1 |         |                 |                           |                        |                  |         |
|---------|---------|-----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------|
| Sl. No  | Year    | Opening Balance | Bill for the Current Year | Total Bill Outstanding | Bill Amount Paid | Balance |
| 1       | 2009-10 | 444072          | 231310                    | 675382                 | 166495           | 508887  |
| 2       | 2010-11 | 508887          | 155898                    | 664785                 | 260000           | 404785  |
| 3       | 2011-12 | 404785          | 95436                     | 500221                 | 413058           | 87163   |
| 4       | 2012-13 | 87163           | 99169                     | 186332                 | 186332           | 0       |

During the entire period, in every meeting, the members and the PDO along with the panchayat staff held detailed discussions. There was a good amount of understanding and cooperation between the PDO and the elected members with regard to freeing the Panchayat from the heavy electricity amount that was due to be paid. The fact that there was no disagreement from any of the members helped the GP to succeed. To sustain this process, they decided to implement the second step of providing individual water connections to the people, levy tax for the same and thus manage the payment of electricity bill through the income gained from the water tax.

### Step 2: Provide individual water connections

The panchayat members and the PDO discussed and debated the causes for heavy electricity bill. They recognized that this was mainly due to the public water supply through the public taps. They had 6 motor pumps that used to run all the time. There was also heavy mismanagement of water e.g. not closing the tap after filling the water. Sometimes, the taps were left open while the water was not being pumped through the motors. Thus, when the water was pumped, it used to flow out simply from the opened taps.

After thus unraveling the issue, the PDO and the panchayat members decided to provide individual water connections instead of providing water from the public taps. This was to control the wastage of water and overuse of electricity. To this effect, they framed a bye-law in a meeting (held on 20 October 2010). All the members unanimously agreed to the proposal of providing individual water connections to the people. They decided to disconnect all the public taps on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. A notice was put up in all the public places informing the people that the GP is stopping public tap water supply from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. They also put up a notice through which the people were requested to opt for individual water connections by paying Rs.300, as a deposit to the GP. The notice also had conditions like, payment of Rs. 50 for a minimum usage of up to 6000 litres of water, using the water meter with ISI mark, etc. Since the GP members had good rapport with the public, they could persuade them to choose individual connections over public taps. As a result, people started requesting the GP for individual connections. As decided, the GP had disconnected all the public taps within the GP area on 31 December 2010 excepting those in SC & ST colonies.

Some people did object to this and argued that it was the responsibility of the panchayat to provide free water supply. The PDO presented documentary evidence to show the outstanding electricity bills and explained how the GP was burdened with the heavy electricity bill due to free water supply. Most of the people, who were depending on the public water supply agreed to take individual connections. But they suggested that the panchayat should not force all the people to go in for individual water connections as some people will opt to use their own wells. They also suggested that the tax for individual water connection needs to be reduced.

At the same time, the GP had to address the needs of people belonging to the underprivileged sections like the SCs and STs. The elected body with the help of PDO and the panchayat staff decided to provide individual connections, wherever possible, through the *25% fund reserved for the welfare of the SC and ST communities*. Utilizing this fund, the GP provided individual water connections to 8 SC families and 5 ST families. In other areas, the GP has retained the public taps and in some places the people use their own well water. This is due to geographical of this area, where the houses are scattered.

### **Step 3: Concept of Streetlight Donation and Adoption**

The GP had 26 street light poles, in 5 areas of the two villages of Madamakki and Shedimane. Since the area faced heavy rain (the area is 10 km from Agumbe, which experiences one of the highest rainfall in the country), heavy lightning and thunder is very common. As a result, the bulbs in the street light poles used to get fused very frequently. Also, there was no system in place for switching on and switching off the streetlights. Neither was this monitored properly. A person who was near to the switch board was entrusted with this task with the confidence that he will take responsibility to switch on and switch off the street lights on time. But this was not practically happening in the village. To address the issue of incurring heavy cost for the bulbs (sodium lights) and in order enable the people to take responsibility for their streets, the GP designed a concept wherein the village people would donate the street lights and they would own the streetlights and be responsible for them. This idea was accepted well by the youth groups, Bhajan Mandals, Milk federations etc. The groups belonging to the particular areas took responsibility and collected money from local donors and installed CFL streetlights in all the five areas.

### **The Impact of the intervention**

- As a result of using these above strategies, the GP could enjoy the following impacts:
- Resulted in lessening the financial burden of the GP, due to reduced electricity bill from Rs.1.5 lakh to Rs.95000 in the year 2011-12.

- Resulted in reduced wastage of water which in turn lead to reduced number of hours for which water had to be pumped and instances of pump breakdown and the cost of repairing them.
- Availability of water to all the beneficiaries irrespective of the season improved and correspondingly the complaints from the people have got reduced considerably.
- Regular and predictable timings of water supply has helped women to take up employment on a regular basis.
- Annual electricity bill is paid fully from income generated from individual water connections.
- Due to the ownership built, the village person, who gets up first, moves to the switch board and switches off the lights. Similarly, the first person who passes by the street light in the evening switches on the light. This has created a sense of responsibility among the village people.
- The GPs decision to shift from sodium lights to CFL lights has also resulted in reduced amount of electricity bill, thus resulting in reduced financial burden.

#### **b. Dealing with outstanding electricity bill – Koppa Taluk, Chikmagalur District, Karnataka**

One of the major issues facing the by the GPs of Koppa taluk panchayat was the huge outstanding electricity bill, just like other GPs in the country. It was observed that a scientific process of billing was not adopted by the distribution company i.e. MESCOM. The bills were being sent in a haphazard way and very often, interest at the rate of 12 percent was being added on the outstanding bills. The basis for billed amount was not clear as the streetlights had no meters. The ZP used to deduct the electricity bill amount from the statutory funds of the GPs. As a result some times, the GPs were not receiving any funds. When the current Executive Officer of Koppa TP took over in September 2009, he observed that the outstanding amount from 22 GPs was around Rs. 22.21 lakh. He was concerned about the interest amount on outstanding bills being paid by the GPs. He decided to resolve this issue immediately by taking some action.

As a first step, the executive officer discussed the issue in the TP general body meeting and later invited the GP presidents and the secretaries for a discussion. He facilitated the discussions to enable the GP presidents to understand how they were burdened with the electricity bill and mainly how huge amounts of money were spent on interest. He suggested that if they could save the interest money, they can pay the salary of the panchayat water men. The GP presidents got convinced with this and decided to pay back the outstanding electricity bills.

The GP presidents, held discussions on this issue in their respective GP general bodies and decided to clear the outstanding amount by using the amount of the third development grant installment. The grant installment amount was Rs. 120000 per gram panchayat. As a result, by February 2012, all the GPs became free from the outstanding electricity bill.

In the meantime, the TP was also thinking about sustainability and wanted to establish a scientific process for measuring electricity usage in all the GPs. The TP asked MESCOM to furnish the basis on which electricity charges were being levied. MESCOM tried to avoid giving any explanations. The TP in the beginning threatened that they will not pay the amount until they get proper bills. Also, they demanded metering of the streetlights. Several rounds of correspondence and meetings were held between the TP and MESCOM for two years. Even though, it was long, the TP did not get discouraged. Because of the TP's efforts, MESCOM finally yielded to install meters for the streetlights in all the GPs of the taluk. This is the first of its kind in the state of Karnataka. At present all the GPs in this TP, get electricity bill based on meter reading (that contains RR number).

The responsibility for covering the water supply electricity costs, was handed over to the village water and sanitation committees. The committee decided to raise the water taxes and ensured regular water supply and covered the electricity costs for supplying water.

Koppa Taluk Panchayat has enjoyed remarkable achievements in terms of its management systems as well as implementing the schemes effectively. One of the remarkable achievements is the metering of streetlights, which can, as a development model, be a great learning for the state and the entire country. Convergence between two departments is not a common practice in most of the blocks/state. This particular taluk panchayat has continuously practiced convergence meetings between the departments. The TP (especially the EO) also believes that it is not enough if the convergence meeting happen only between the departments. But more important than this is that such convergence has to be sustained at the grass root level and this must be measured through quantitative and qualitative indicators. For this, there needs to be immense coordination and cooperation between the TP, the departments, the GP and the public. This was made possible by Koppa Taluk Panchayat, through the hard efforts of the Taluk Panchayat elected members, the Executive Officer, the PDOs and the GP members. Such stories of successful decentralized governance increase our hopes in true democracy, the objective of which is 'development through real people's participation'.

**Coordination between the elected TP and GP members** There is personal rapport between the TP and the GP elected members. The main reason for this is the GP members frequently visit the TP and thereby the TP members and the EO have personal rapport with the members. The second aspect, which is also the strength of Koppa TP is that all the taluk level trainings for the GP members (including presidents, vice presidents and PDOs) are held in the TP training hall. While the trainings are targeted at the presidents of GP, the TP makes sure that the PDOs too attend

these trainings. The Executive Officer and the TP president, make sure that they spend some time with the participants attending the training. This has enhanced the relationship between the TP and GP members and if any issue arises at the GP level, the TP will pitch in and resolve the issues. At the same time, the implementation of various schemes is undertaken smoothly, since the TP ensures that the scheme reaches the target beneficiaries. The PDOs have also built good rapport with the public. The Executive Officer believes that this kind of coordination is important, at all the levels. He also believes that a dictatorial leadership does not help in bringing about good result, especially when someone is involved in public service.

**Commitment of the Executive Officer** The Executive Officer, Mr. Thippesh an engineering graduate had joined the Public Works Department (PWD), as an Assistant Executive Engineer (civil). In 2009, Mr. Thippesh was transferred to Koppa Taluk Panchayat. With the help of his previous TP work experience, he improvised his ideas and shared them with the TP members. The executive officer is highly regarded by the TP members because of his commitment and innovative ideas. Because of his encouraging support, the record room of the TP was re-organized, where he facilitated the team to complete the work without any hindrances. He brought in the idea of conducting monthly bill collectors meetings, PDO meetings, enabling the PDOs to attend the KDP meeting, streamlining the Gram sabhas and ensuring that officials attend the Gram sabhas etc. He also orients the PDOs, as and when required. The PDOs have good respect for him and they consult him frequently.

**Higher level of awareness among people** Last but not the least an aware and enlightened civil society ensures good participation of people in the ward and the Gram sabhas. If any kind of malpractice occurs or the construction quality is bad, they take the GP to task. Hence, GPs and other departments, make sure that they deliver quality work and services. In one of the Gram Sabha, during the field visit, it was observed that an engineer was taken to task by the people for sanctioning bills before confirming the availability of water in the newly constructed well. This exhibits the extent to which, people concerned regarding the quality of work that is executed by the GP and the departments.

#### **c. Accessing and enhancing resources through diverse means - Bearhatty GP, Coonoor Block, Nilgiris District**

The Bearhatty GP has successfully mobilised resources in various forms. While some of these are in the form of donations and individual contributions, others relate to generation of own source revenue through diverse means. What is remarkable here is the ability of the GP to identify the possibility of accessing some resource and then pursuing that with perseverance to secure that access. Given below are detail of some of these initiatives.

## Mobilising resources for schools

The GP has tried to take advantage of all possible routes to generate resource for local schools. Three important sources have been tapped for this purpose. One of those was the Badaga community persons living outside the Nilgiris. The president approached them for donations appealing to their sense of responsibility towards their home land and it worked well. The GP also houses several tea estates and therefore has the presence of affluent business families. The president has mobilised resources approaching these families. The third source has been the Army officers and their families as the GP also houses part of the Wellington Cantonment area. While in some cases the donations are received in cash, they are received in kind in others. Some of the results of these efforts were very much visible in the local schools:

**School Furniture:** All the three schools under the GP are equipped with child-friendly furniture. The government usually does not supply furniture to primary schools and sitting on the floor can be a little difficult in this area because of the cold climatic conditions. The funds for this initiative were raised from local donors and carry the names of the donors. The furniture is well-designed for small children and allows regroupings to suit child-friendly pedagogical practices.

**Uniforms:** The State government distributes three sets of uniforms per child. An additional set of uniform is purchased from the donations received through private donors by the GP. The GP collects the funds, purchases the uniforms centrally and then distributes among the school going children who attend the three government schools in the GP.

## Connecting with NGOs for funds and disaster relief

In addition, the GP also played active role in establishing links with NGOs and other institutions for fund raising purposes. The area experienced devastating floods a few years ago. The GP played an important role in raising funds through NGOs and other charitable institutions to provide relief to flood affected victims. Relief was distributed in the form of food, clothes and other materials. The GP has also been successful in generating funds for other aspects such as building toilets.

## Panchayat's own Tea Plantation

The GP owns six acres of tea-plantation area which until recently was poorly maintained. This had resulted in over growth of tea and other shrubs in the area, making it a haven for wild animals. Some parts had also been encroached upon by some villagers. In the past, the Panchayat had not shown much interest and therefore people had started viewing it as a land that no one owned. The GP president undertook several steps to first clear the dense overgrowth, remove weeds and reclaim the tea estate. Once the estate was ready for plantation, the GP started the process to lease it out. The estate has currently been leased out

at Rs. 31,000 per annum for a period of 3 years. This is the first such utilization of this land in the last 25 years.

### **Forest Land Revenue**

The Panchayat owned nine acres of forest land. Although it held the *patta* for this land the revenue generated used to go to the Revenue Department of the state government. This was despite the fact that GP was responsible for the maintenance of the land. The GP took the initiative to stake claim to the revenue from this land. To achieve this, it submitted three jamabandis with the Revenue Department and the local Tehsil Office. After a lot of running around and pursuing, it finally got the orders in 2011. The GP is now receiving the money generated through the minor forest produce and other revenue from this land. Although the revenue through this source is small, it is seen as a significant development from the perspective of gaining the GP's control over its own resources.

The Bearhatty Gram Panchayat's performance is highly dependent on the president's leadership skills and other attributes. The president's position is reserved for women and the reservation carries on for two terms in Tamil Nadu. This is her second term as president. The factors that have helped in good performance of the GP are twofold: (i) Personal attributes of the President and (ii) Policy and Institutional factors

### **Personal Attributes of the President**

Mrs. Devadass, President is highly educated and well-exposed. She has a Masters in Science (M. Sc.) in Child Development and Family Relationships. She was also conferred with an honorary doctorate by the International Tamil University, Maryland, USA in 2011. She was previously employed as a teacher in St. Hildas School in Ooty. She has also worked with differently-abled children. These experiences, according to her, gave her an opportunity to interact with the most marginalized, and developed a sense of social responsibility.

Being educated, she is highly confident and articulate, which helps her in the meetings with others, especially the District Collector or Army officers or the business community located in the Panchayat. She is able to articulate and argue, and therefore commands a lot of respect among officials. Being highly educated gives her an edge over many others who are not as educated.

The president comes from a family with a history of engagement in social and community activities. Her family's network facilitates her social enterprising skills in tapping new sources of donations and contributions. Most of the donors who have come forward are people who are known to her through her family, thereby making them more approachable and responsive to her requests. This has enhanced her performance as the President of the GP.

She is a highly motivated, social-work oriented and caring person. She appeared to have a genuine interest in the welfare of the community, which she channelizes through her role as the President of the Gram Panchayat.

### **Policy and Institutional factors**

#### Reservation for women works

In general, the feedback about the president being effective was linked to her being a woman; this included the officials that she deals with as well as the people belonging to the Panchayat. Women are perceived to be 'more honest, sincere and responsive'. In most cases, the officials attributed these features to the majority of women presidents that they are dealing with. It can be inferred that reservation for women seems to help not only for giving them an opportunity but also in terms of governance and performance of the Panchayat.

#### Two consecutive term reservation helps

Mrs. Devadass is currently serving her second term as President. She said that her re-election has made her much more confident and encouraged her to do more for the community. She is now much better acquainted with the issues that the Panchayat has, more aware of her duties and responsibilities, and more experienced in dealing with the official procedures and requirements. Therefore, it emerges that it helps to have the roaster for reservation continue for two terms in order to enable the candidates get a better grip of the role and improves their performance.

#### Awards help in motivating

Recognition and awards have indeed helped in raising the motivation level of the Panchayat members and president. The GP president shared that she was not aware of any award when she joined as president but was happy to receive them, and now looks forward to further recognition from diverse sources. Other ward members also demonstrated a sense of pride in having bagged those awards and it was clear that these have played a role in keeping the motivation level high. The awards also help in gaining respect among officials and others, and making them more responsive towards the GP's needs.

### **d. Successful Total Sanitation Campaign – Dakshina Kannada District, Karnataka**

Dakshina Kannada district attained the status of 'Open Defecation Free District' under the country wide 'Total Sanitation Campaign' with efforts by various stakeholders such as the elected representatives, officials, local youth clubs, NGOs, school children, teachers, anganwadi workers, media, SHGs, individuals, etc.



In the year 2000, Dakshina Kannada Zilla Panchayat, piloted the total sanitation program in the district, through central and state funds, in order to control and stop open defecation. But nothing much was achieved till 2005 except for the construction of 3500 toilets. On October 2, 2005, Total Sanitation Campaign was re-launched in the district. For the campaign, ZP undertook a survey to assess the sanitation status in the district. The survey findings revealed that 95010 families (61%) had no toilets. Out of these families, 25532 families were above the poverty line (APL).

As a first step, the ZP took initiative to build the capacities of the various stakeholders, who would be directly involved in the Total Sanitation Campaign. Accordingly, various trainings were conducted for the Zilla and Taluk (block) Panchayat members, GP presidents, GP secretaries, departmental officials at different levels, etc. Other than these stakeholders, school teachers, anganwadi workers, health workers, literacy animators, NGO representatives and SHG leaders were also trained.

While implementing the scheme, the district faced a major challenge and that was with respect to the norms of the scheme. As per the norms of the central government, only Rs. 1200 was to be provided to each BPL family to construct one toilet. In 2005, the minimum cost for constructing one toilet was around Rs.4000. This was because the district had hard laterite soil. As a result, the labor cost for digging the pits was high.

### Sanitation Policy

- Open defecation is banned in GP area. Compulsory use of toilets is mandatory. Offenders shall be punished.
- Use of toilets is mandatory in all schools and the anganwadis. Teachers must teach the importance of cleanliness to the students and enable them to adopt this as a routine habit.
- Ensure that all households have bathrooms and toilets. Ensure recycling of bath water (through its reuse in kitchen gardens), bifurcation of biodegradable and non biodegradable waste at source and transport only the remaining waste to the waste disposal system
- Mandatory proper waste disposal from public premises, hotels, restaurants, poultry farms, chicken & meat centers, etc.
- Discourage use of plastic and encourage use of cotton bags. Encourage and promote 'plastic free gram panchayats' by phasing out plastics;
- Shop owners encouraged to use paper bags rather than plastic bags, while packing consumables;
- Quarry owners should provide separate toilets for their work force and have safe waste disposal mechanisms; and
- Landlords should construct separate bathing and toilet facilities for their tenants.

In response to this challenge, Ira Gram Panchayat in Bantwal block came up with the idea of undertaking Shramadan. The secretary, members and the families, who knew the importance of toilets, took personal interest and mobilised a few people in the panchayat and dug the pits for the toilets in a ST colony. Some of the materials for the toilet construction were donated by the locals. The boys of 'Champion Cricketers' (a local cricket team) became the torch bearers for the Shramadan that was happening at late

hours in the night. Various youth groups, bhajan mandals, mahila mandals, students' federations, SHGs and students of a MSW college followed suit. Under TSC, wall writings were done on anganawadis, bus stops and government schools. A sanitation policy was drafted by this Gram panchayat and this was circulated to every household.

This became big news in the district that motivated various other gram panchayats in the taluk. The members of the Union of Secretaries came together and undertook Shramadan in the nights and dug pits for the toilet less families. This motivated other groups like the GP clerks, bill collectors, youth groups, literacy animators, SHG members, etc. to get involved in the Shramadan. Gram Panchayats like Manchi, Kurnad, Balekuni followed the model of Ira panchayat which later got adopted by most of the GPs in the taluk. Apart from Shramadan, donors provided materials for the construction of the toilets. In Golthamajal Gram Panchayat, through shramadan 110 toilets were constructed in one day. This became a record event in the district. The news about this taluk got spread to the other taluks. Various teams were formed to undertake shramadan for the Total Sanitation Campaign. Zilla Panchayat members undertook initiatives and in Hosangady GP of Belthangady taluk, formed village level Shramadan groups. With the help of shramadan and the donors, GPs were able to reach the targets of TSC. In all the GPs, there was a high level of people's participation in terms of shramadan and large donations were made.

Other steps undertaken by the Zilla Panchayat to reach the targets were:

- Identified and concentrated on the GPs that had lower targets;
- Held monthly meetings with the GP secretaries at the ZP level and discussed the progress made, issues faced and developed strategies to address the issues;
- Held monthly taluk level meetings with the GP Presidents, GP Secretaries, school heads, taluk level officials and the anganawadi workers. The Chief Executive Officer personally attended these meetings and took stock of the situation;
- Elected ZP, TP and GP members involved themselves intensely in the movement and they conducted GP meetings and ward meetings. They also held meetings with local NGOs, MSW colleges, SDMCs, health workers, teachers etc.
- Convergence meetings were held, where both the education department and the TSC implementers came together and resolved the issues pertaining to the toilets in schools.
- Formed ward wise committees to monitor the progress;
- Various taluk and district level departmental officials were appointed as nodal officers in each of the GPs to monitor the progress;

- The public was provided with the CEO's personal number so that they could directly call him and file their grievances;
- The ZP issued a list of 25 guidelines to all the GPs;
- Sanitation policy was adopted by all GPs in the district;
- Sanitation slogans were repeatedly raised in the school assemblies and on other occasions;
- Anganawadi teachers motivated all the SHG members to construct toilets in their homes;
- ZP motivated the banks to provide loans to individuals to construct toilets. As a result corporation bank came forward to provide loan in 4% interest;
- SCs and STs were covered under the 25% fund that is reserved for them in the GPs;
- Sri Khethra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (SKDRP- A NGO) provided Rs.500 as an incentive to their SHG members (who had toilets). At the same time, they instituted an award to federations of the SHGs. The criteria was that the SHG federation must achieve 100% sanitation among its SHG families;
- The media was facilitated to highlight the various achievements of the ZP and some of its model GPs. This motivated the other GPs to adopt the same strategies; and
- An action plan was developed to conduct IEC activities in 1075 wards belonging to 203 GPs of the ZP. IEC activities implemented were wall writings at Anganawadies, bus stops, government schools etc. Along with this street plays, Jatas and slogan raising was undertaken. The village people provided coffee/tea and snacks to the performing street play groups;

ZP reached the target of providing individual toilets to 60000 BPL families and 36000 APL families. It has also provided toilets to 1336 schools, 505 anganawadis and has constructed around 70 community toilets in the district. The strategies adopted by the Zilla Panchayat helped such achievement. High literacy rate was a contributing factor for successful awareness creation among the rural people.

In the district of Dakshina Kannada, the TSC was not implemented just as a scheme but as a mission or movement. This is similar to the literacy campaign that was carried out through the Total Literacy Campaign (by Mass Education Department) in 1990. Here, this district was the first one to initiate literacy movement in Karnataka. The lessons learnt were transferred to other districts later.

## Dakshina Kannada District – an example of good governance

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*Dakshina Kannada district holds the distinction of for being the first in many high impact development initiatives. It was the first district to pilot Total Literacy Campaign in Karnataka. It is also the first district to be declared as an ‘open defecation free district.’ An all round achievement as witnessed in Dakshina Kannada has been possible due to presence of many mutually reinforcing factors. Firstly, people in general and the elected representatives and officials in particular are public spirited and sensitive to developmental issues. This is borne out by the level of participation and discussions in the General Body meetings of the ZP. The commitment of elected representatives is exemplified by the efforts made by the vice president of Zilla Panchayat (Mr.Dharmendra Kumar) to make his native gram panchayat, Hosangady, a model GP as far as the implementation of Total Sanitation Campaign was concerned. He along with the GP members convinced the villagers, NGOs, youth groups, local clubs and SDMCs to join hands in TSC. Exchange of labour where in individuals from one household would go and construct toilet for their neighbors was encouraged. The efforts of the ZP member and the elected body of this GP yielded a Nirmal Puraskar Award for this GP.*

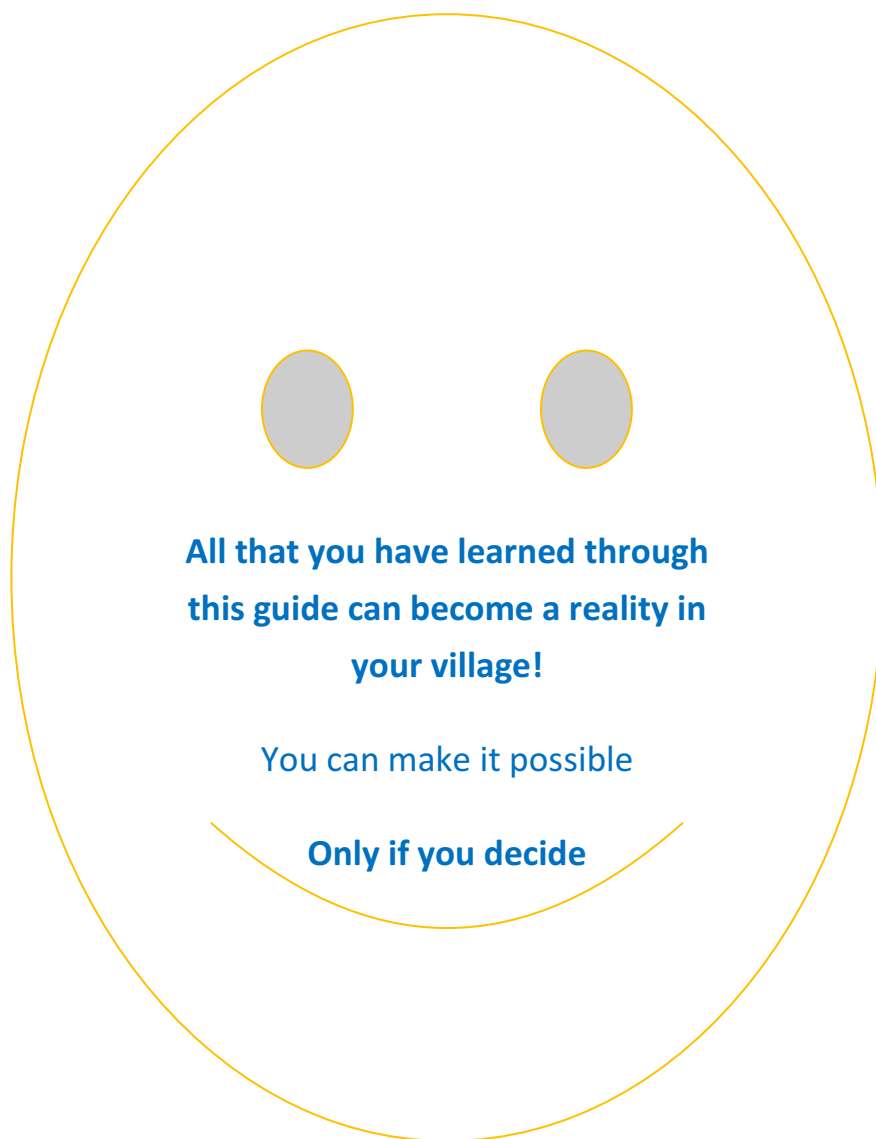
*The level of dedication on part of officials is also noteworthy. For example, the CEO of the ZP sent out motivational letters to all the students who had failed in the tenth standard examination and to all the school teachers belonging to the schools where the results were poor. Further the officials regularly undertook field visits to monitor developmental work and in providing on-the-spot technical guidance.*

*The local youth groups, bhajan mandals, SHGs, milk federations and associations of traders possess a strong sense of social responsibility and are actively involved in the functioning of panchayat, school, anganawadi, etc. It is very common for them to donate in cash and kind to the schools and anganwadis, and for any development works undertaken by the gram panchayat. These acts of charity are duly recognized in the village which creates a sense of pride and belonging in them.*

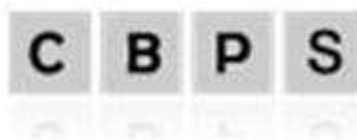
*The NGOs in the district are also involved actively in community development. Especially NGOs like Jana Shikshana Trust have been able to retain the volunteers who had worked for the literacy campaign in 1990. Shree Kshethra Dharmasthala Rural Development Project (SKDRD) is active and provides micro finance to the SHGs for construction of toilets.*

*There are several donors in the district. Interestingly, it is not only the rich, who donate for development work. Even the middle class, lower middle class and the poor such as beedi rollers from the village make contributions to the schools and anganwadis. Several contractors and builders donate substantial amounts for the school and anganwadi development and for the works of Gram Panchayat.*

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## **Centre for Budget and Policy Studies**

Maitri Bhavan, Number 4, M.N.Krishna Rao Road,  
Basavangudi, Bangalore – 560004, INDIA  
[Landmark: United Lodge of Theosophists building]

Ph: +91 80 2656 0735, +91 80 6590 7402

Fax: +91 80 2656 0734

Email: [info@cbps.in](mailto:info@cbps.in)