Training Module

On

Participatory Administration And Collective Decision-making

(A Distant Learning Module)

ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING INSTITUTE KOLKATA

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TRAINING MODULE

ON

Participatory Administration
And
Collective Decision-making
(A Distant Learning Module)

DEVELOPED
By

DR. ARABINDA GHOSH

&

SRI PURNANANDA MUKHOPADHYAY

ATI, KOLKATA

CONSULTANTS
PROF. MOHIT BHATTACHARYA
PROF. SAILA GHOSH
SRI BUDDHADEB GHOSH
INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, KOLKATA

ADMINISTRATIVE TRAINING INSTITUTE
KOLKATA

Contents

Guidance for the Reader

Dear Reader,

This is self-learning material for field-level officers, particularly those who are engaged in the planning, implementation and evaluation of development programmes meant for the poor. Participation of the poor in all aspects of decision-making, in this context, is the central issue that runs through the entire discussion in these modules. The learning material is prepared in such a way that the learner - the field officer- can read it himself without help from any 'teacher'.

Hence, you can read it at any time of your choice - at home, in your office, alone or in a group. The material is produced in such a way that you will be able to relate the discussion to your work situation and raise questions and issues so that your performance on the job can be improved in the process. At the same time, the target group - the poor - would be benefiting as actual participants in the process of improving their living conditions with the help of the projects that are intended to bring about change in their life and livelihood.

<u>Four Modules</u>:

The material has been prepared in four modules as under:

Module 1: Concepts of Development and Participation.

Module 2: Participatory Institutions

Module 3: Participatory Method

Module 4: Collective Decision-Making.

Unit & Sub-Unit:

For the benefit of the reader, the running material of each Module has been sub-divided into convenient Units and Sub-Units. These Module-wise sub-divisions are presented below:

Module I: Concepts of Development and Participation

Unit 1: Understanding Development

Unit 2: Understanding Participation

Unit 3: Participatory Development

Module II: Participatory Institutions

Module III: Participatory Method

Module IV: Collective Decision Making

Unit 8:   Collective Decision-Making: Nature, Process and Motives

Unit 9:   Collective Decision-Making and Eradication of Poverty

How to read?

The material is so arranged that you should study Module I first, which introduces the main themes: "Development" and "Participation".

After studying Module I, you may take up Module II as the next reading material.

After studying Modules I and II, it is advisable to take up Module IV as a continuation of the earlier discussions. Module III can be studied at the end to get to know the different tools that can be used for participatory decision-making.

<u>Checking up Progress:</u>

There are check-up exercises given either at the end or in several places of a unit of a Module. This is to help the reader to check how much he has been able to cover and understand. You will thus able to find out for yourself the progress made so far in your studies. In addition to the check-up exercises, small

assignments have been given in some units. These assignments (termed as 'activity') will help you to apply the knowledge gained from reading the text in practical situation.

<u>Additional Readings:</u>

At the end of the volume, there is a suggested list of <u>Readings</u>. If you so desire, you may like to read some of these to add to your knowledge beyond what you have been able to gather from this self-instructional material.

Introduction to the Modules

Participatory development can be regarded as the latest phase of the long drawn-out development process in India. It is now universally acknowledged that development, to be meaningful to the people, must involve the people themselves. It is participation that gives meaning, authenticity and sustainability to development.

Against this background, the course material in this volume has been subdivided into four Modules. The first Module deals with the concepts of 'development' and 'participation'.

The second Module presents a discussion on the participatory institutions and about the role of development officials in promoting participation.

The third Module covers the participatory methods for application in field situations, including the techniques of participatory rural appraisal (PRA).

The fourth Module discusses the issues relating to collaborative decision making with special reference to its relevance in managing poverty alleviation programmes.

After studying these Modules, the field administrators should be able to organize his experience in the light of these discussions. These are expected to sensitise the administrator and motivate him/her to perform better in close association with the stakeholders – the people who are both actors and beneficiaries in local development experiment. A list of suggested readings on the subject is appended at the end of the volume.

MODULE I

CONCEPTS OF DEVELOPMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Unit 1   *Understanding Development*

Unit 2   *Understanding Participation*

Unit 3   *Participatory Development*

Unit 1

Understanding Development

Objectives:

After studying this unit you will be able to

- State the meaning of development;
- State the growth centric approach and its limitations;
- Identify the emergence of new issues in development;
- Explain the failure of conventional corrective measures;
- Describe how development planning can be reoriented.

Structure:

1.1   Introduction

1.2   Meaning of Development

1.3   Growth Centric Model of Development

    1.3.1   Features

    1.3.2   Problems

1.4   Emergence of New Issues

    1.4.1   Gender and Development

    1.4.2   Environment and Development

1.5   Failure of Conventional Corrective Measures

1.6   Rethinking Development Planning

    1.6.1   Human Development

    1.6.2   Sustainable Development

1.7   Check your progress

1.8   Let us sum up

1.1 Introduction

In this section we will try to give you an outline of the stages of development thinking and development policies over the last fifty years. We started planning for development with a very narrow economistic focus. Now it is being emphasized that development gets a meaning only when it is defined in human development terms. The canvas of development has been stretched much wider to include gender and environmental issues and the emphasis of development has shifted towards improving the quality of life. Sustainability, participation and empowerment are being visualized as essential preconditions of development. The content of democracy, not just its form, is also getting greater attention in development literature. In this unit we will explore these issues and their interconnections.

1.2 Meaning of Development

Everything changes with time. Change is the law of nature. When we see some pattern in the changes whether in the biological world or in the social world of human beings we call it evolution. Evolution generally leads from simple to more complex forms of organisms and organizations. Let us take two more words – growth and development. As you know change can swing both ways. It can be negative and it can be positive. When it is negative we call it decay. When it is positive we call it growth. But this growth always refers to quantitative increase. Development on the other hand has a qualitative meaning.

Development cannot be conceived of without this qualitative dimension. But somehow we have systematically overlooked this during the whole process of our planning for development.

1.3 Growth Centric model of Development

1.3.1 Features

Way back in the 1950s when we started the exercise of development planning, development was equated with economic growth. The dominant thinking was that developed West provides the model and

somehow we must endeavour to achieve their life styles. The measurement of development was done accordingly. So we had identified per capita consumption of power, amount of inanimate sources of power, degree of urbanization, amount of per capita income and consumption, etc., as the main indices of development. The path of achieving this development was also derived from western experience.

The main emphasis was on capital formation and investment. The main thrust was on setting up of big industries, large dams, giant power projects, fertilizer plants, machine tool industries and so on. These were capital intensive and technology oriented demanding experts to run them. State was considered to be the main engine of development and the administrative wing its driver. Planning was centralized with a group of experts at the top who took unto themselves the responsibility of preparing the blue prints often helped by external experts to determine the direction of development of the country. It was generally assumed that the people bound by their age-old attitudes, behaviour and ways of life have nothing to contribute in this nationwide development exercise. In fact they are to be delivered from tradition, if they had to be developed or modernized. They do not have even the capability to articulate properly their needs, not to speak of identifying how their situation could be improved. Soon a model emerged in which planners planned and formulated projects and administrators implemented them with little participation of the people at any stage. The whole effort was directed towards quick growth of the Gross Domestic Product and National Income. The key word was production. So far as consumption and distribution were concerned it was assumed that they would take care of themselves. The effects of development will first touch the top layer of the society, the elite section of the population, and slowly trickle down to the lower tiers and enhance their consumption power. Thus the fruits of development will be distributed among the population, if not equally, at least acceptably. The development planners pinned their faith in this top-down approach in which the poor and the disadvantaged were treated not as actors but as targets of development.

1.3.2 Problems

But the fruits of development did not trickle down raising the standard of living of the poor and their consumption and saving did not increase. On the other hand whatever development took place remained restricted at the top layers of the rich and the middle class in the urban areas. Moreover, the overemphasis on the economic aspect took the attention away from social sector developments such as literacy and primary education, primary health care facilities, child mortality, removal of preventable diseases and last but not the least creation of rural employment. The anomalies that had been created persist even now. The shortcomings of our elitist social policy are amply exemplified by the fact that in spite of our achievements in such areas as nuclear and space technology, information technology and the development of an industrial

base, people still suffer from malnutrition and die of starvation even though the country has a very large surplus food stock.

The after-effects of the development strategy came to be felt from around the late 1960s, and by the 1970s the limitations that had been created in the process of two decades of the growth centric model of development became very clear. Let us summaries the major problems.

Limitations of the growth-centric model of development

- It led to disproportionate concentration of benefits among the rich and the more vocal section.

- During the initial decades of planning the whole emphasis was on industry. Agriculture was somewhat neglected. As a consequence there was a severe food crisis in the late '60s and early '70s. To offset this we had to take up the Green Revolution strategy. This has led to food sufficiency. But in the absence a determined effort to initiate land reforms a rich class of rural gentry has emerged without any betterment of the rural poor.

- The whole emphasis of planning was on the organized sector of the economy. There was no concerted policy to tackle rural problems. So the development of rural areas was much less than in urban areas. One glaring example of this lop-sided growth is typified by the fact that even after fifty years of planning we have not been able to provide safe drinking water throughout the countryside.

- Another consequence of our growth strategy has led to the creation of regional imbalances. By this we mean that some regions have grown faster than others because of uneven distribution of developmental inputs.

- Further, this growth centric development strategy failed to make any impact on the level of living of a large section of our people. This will be evident from the percentage of people living below the poverty line.

Table :1
Percentage of People below the Poverty line (1977-78)

State	Urban	Rural
Andhra Pradesh	43.55	38.11
Bihar	48.76	63.25
Gujrat	40.02	41.76
Haryana	36.57	27.73
Karnataka	50.36	48.18
Kerala	55.62	51.48

There were other problems as well. The development policies also created inter and intra-generational disparity. *Intra-generational disparity* refers to the differences of opportunities of development experienced by individuals of the same generation. For example one can compare the opportunity of education including higher and professional education of male children of high castes in urban areas with the lack of education, even primary education, of the children particularly girl children of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in rural areas. The uneven distribution of opportunities condemns these children's right at the childhood stage to accept the life of a lowly paid job of unskilled or low-skilled labour with all its implications.

So far as the *inter-generational imbalances* are concerned a couple of examples would clarify what we are trying to say. Think of this situation. When our policy makers whether at the centre or in the states go for public borrowing from the national market or from international agencies or foreign donors what does it actually mean? It means that the children who are just born or are going to be born will start their lives with a huge amount of debt burden on their heads. And if it comes to a situation where servicing of the debt or paying interest for the debt will mean further borrowing, does it not mean that we are putting the next generation into a situation of perpetual debt and dependence? Is it moral? And all this is because of this generation's selfish eagerness to maintain its own standard of living or its keenness to pursue a particular path of development. Again, the environmentalists are pointing out that we are wantonly exploiting our natural resources, of which there is only a limited stock. So overexploitation of natural resources by the present generation means leaving for the posterity a depleted and exhausted store of natural resources.

1.4   Emergence of New Issues

1.4.1   Gender and Development

Critics of the present strategy of development points out further that it has neglected the women. As per the laws of nature women should constitute about half of the population. So the fruits of development

should be equally distributed between the two sexes. But in actual life it has not been so. Development has generally bypassed the female section of our population. According to an estimate made by women activists it has been found that the women consisting of about half of the world population produces two thirds of the world's wealth but enjoys only one third of it. If we consider India separately the picture may be even worse. Not only that, from your own experience you must have observed that at times of familial distress, natural calamity or national disaster the burden falls much more heavily on the womenfolk than on men. In India because of familial, social and cultural compulsions our women are both suppressed and exploited. They suffer from ill health, malnutrition, low birth weight, infant mortality and lack of equal share of domestic resources and social opportunities. Many of them are also denied the opportunity of going school. The female literacy rates as recorded in the 2001 census bring it out very clearly.

Table: 2
Literacy Rates (2001)

State	Female	Male
Andhra Pradesh	51.17	70.85
Bihar	33.57	60.32
Gujrat	58.60	80.50
Haryana	56.31	79.25
Karnataka	57.45	76.29
Kerala	87.86	94.20
Madhya Pradesh	50.28	76.80
Maharastra	67.51	86.27
Orissa	50.97	75.95
Punjab	63.55	75.63
Rajasthan	44.34	76.46
Tamilnadu	64.55	82.33
Uttar Pradesh	42.98	70.23
West Bengal	60.22	77.58
India	54.16	75.85

Gender disparity is also reflected in the low female-male ratio. As per the 2001 census, there are only 933 female per 1000 male. This means that there is lesser number of women in India than men per one

thousand persons. The situation has gone against the women during the 20th century. This is reflected in Figure-1.

Fig: 1 Sex Ratio in India
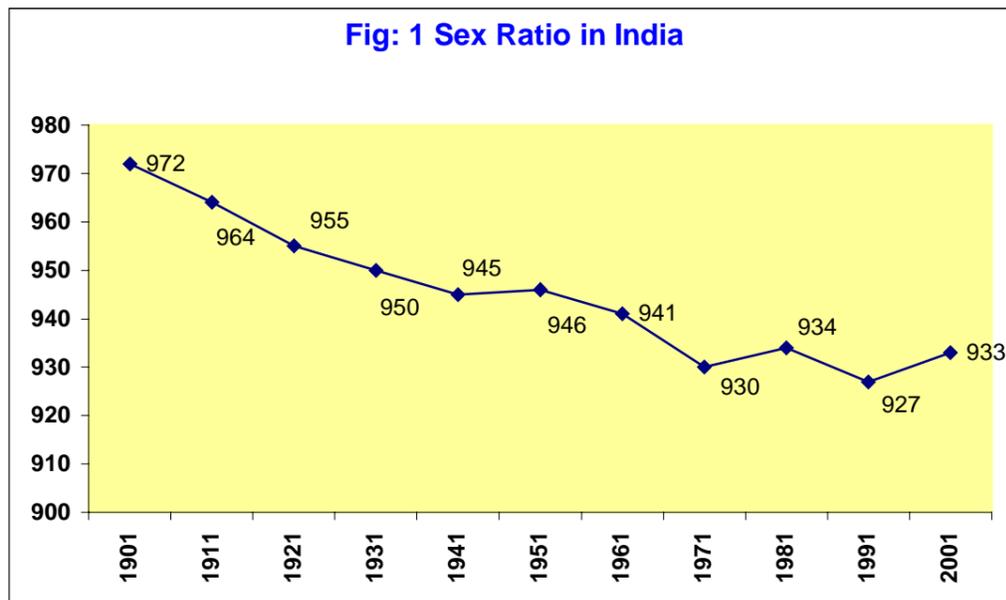
Our social policy has generally been gender blind. Gender inequality is reflected in various ways in our society. Among these mention may be made of the following.

- **Mortality inequality -** Empirical evidence has shown that the chances of survival of a girl child are much lower than that of the male. This is because of continuous neglect of girl children in our society.

- **Natality inequality -** The arrival of a girl child is seen in our society as a matter of misfortune. So every effort is made to avoid it. This has now turned into high-tech sex-selective abortion even among a section of urban elite.

- **Basic facility inequality** – This is reflected in the discrimination of distribution of opportunities by the family as well as society towards girl children in terms of basic education, basic health and basic amenities.

- **Special opportunity inequality** – Girls are also discriminated in higher education and professional training.

- **Professional inequality** – This means that in terms of employment and profession as well as in the sharing of responsibilities in public life the claims of women are bye-passed. Even reservation of one-third of the seats in the panchayat has failed to attain its objectives since in many places the women are treated as proxy candidates for the men.

- **Ownership inequality** – This highlights the fact that the women's claims over the family wealth are generally overlooked.

- **Household inequality** – This points out to the basic inequalities in gender relations within the household. There is always unequal sharing of resources, knowledge and information within the family between the male and female members.

- **Wage inequality** – For similar work female workers generally get lower wages than their male counterpart.

1.4.2 Environment and Development

Our development policy has affected the natural environment adversely. But the general thinking in this respect is that too much concern for environment goes against development. But it has to be realized that in our country irreparable damage is being continuously inflicted on local-environment. Not only in urban areas, but in areas where big industries, mines and thermal power plants are located, the neighbourhood areas are being polluted by harmful smokes and effluents polluting both the air and water including the water of our major rivers. This is affecting the life of the people and all the biological organisms using them. It has also been pointed out that due to over utilization of chemical fertilizers and insecticides the topsoil is being increasingly degraded and nature's biological cycle destroyed. Add to this the harmful effects of mono crop cultivation, destruction of forest covers, elimination of local varieties of plants and seeds and general breakdown of ecological balance. While this is a concern for all, the price being paid by the poor is already disproportionately high. For example, because of wanton exploitation of underground water, the proportion of harmful chemicals in water like arsenic and fluoride has increased. People using such water have been exposed to arsenic poisoning. In many cases development has been found to be actually more damaging than non-development. When big dams are constructed, new industries or power projects are set up or plants for extraction of minerals are erected they not only damage the natural balance, but more importantly they oust the local inhabitants. Most of these people come from the scheduled caste and scheduled tribes categories. They are displaced not only from their hearth and home but also from

their age-old occupation. Whatever skills they had acquired for their sustenance suddenly become useless and without much education and training they are unable to switchover to new skills required to sustain themselves in the new environment. They silently suffer without any compensation worth the name and without acquiring adequate skills for resettlement. Environmentalists in India point out that their number during the last few decades has already crossed 8 crores.

Given all these problems, it would be suicidal to continue with such a strategy of development.

1.5   Failure of Conventional Corrective measures

By the 1980's it was clear to everyone that the western vision of development was faulty. It not only failed to help us realize our goals, but created several structural, social and political problems. Moreover, it seemed to have worsened the conditions of the vast number of our population constituting the bottom layer of the society. Our public policy was therefore reoriented, the key words of which were growth with redistribution. Since then a series of schemes have been introduced. Starting with target area and target group programmes, integrated rural development programmes, food for work and JRY schemes, we have now schemes like Swarnajayanti Swarojgar Yojana, Indira Abash Yojana, Mahila Swarojgar Yojana and even pension schemes for the rural aged. Facing persistent criticisms against centralized planning we have now decentralized it up to the state level and after the introduction of the three tier panchayats, provisions have been made for further decentralization of power up to the local level. There is no doubt that decentralization is a positive step forward. It brings the government closer to the people. But more than the form what is more important is the content of decentralization. And here we find that those who hold power are very reluctant to part with power. So on the one hand, despite the constitutional provisions, state governments have not gone for much devolution of power to the local governments – the panchayats and municipal bodies. The central government, even now, is the chief formulator of the rural development and poverty eradication schemes and also the chief fund supplier. What needs to be noted here is that decentralization creates a local government structure, which provides a platform for peoples' participation, but by itself it does not ensure it. Moreover our structure of governance, which retains much of its colonial hangover, is such that it resists both participation of the people and answerability to it. As a consequence it becomes irresponsible and wasteful. It grows both in terms of size and power on public funds in the name of managing it. In fact one disheartened prime minister had made a public statement that out of every rupee spent for the poor only thirteen paise actually reach them.

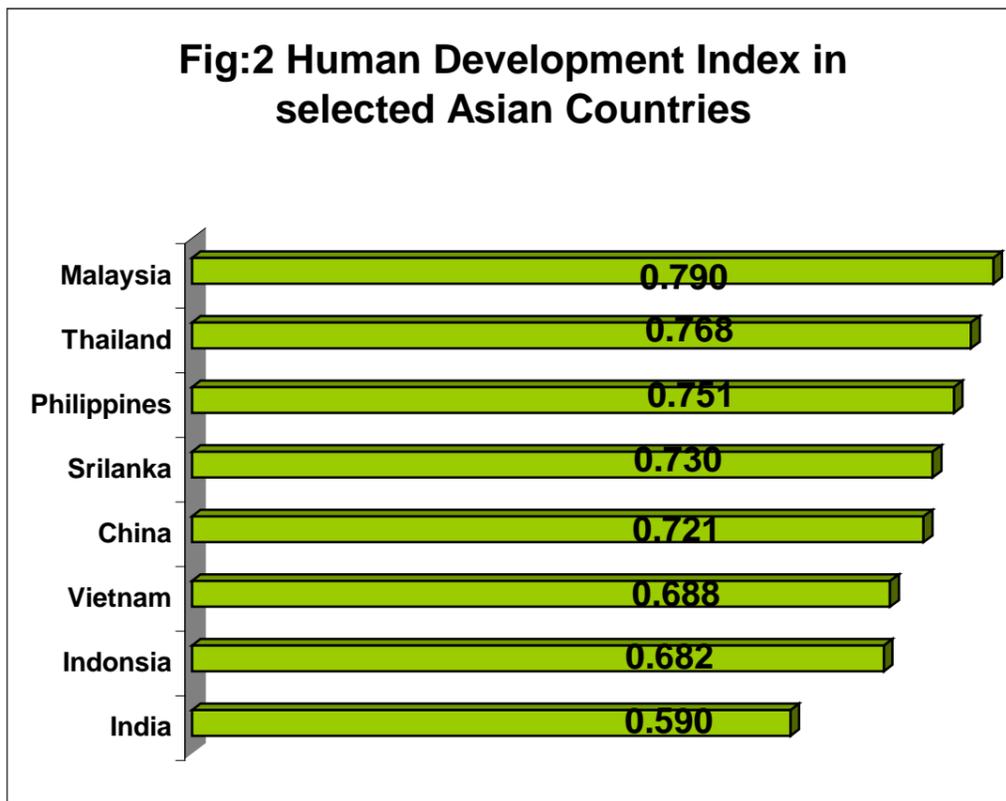## 1.6   Rethinking Development Planning

It is therefore time that we admit that 'development from above' in real life actually comes to mean deprivation for below. People at the grass roots level become increasingly marginalized. We therefore need a new definition of development and a new model of planning the main thrust of which should be *to put the last first*. That means that one should start development planning from and with those people who so far have been treated as objects. In other words, the rural poor will have to be involved in all stages of development works and these development works will have to be conceived locally with the participation of the local people. What is needed is to allow and encourage them to voice their needs and preferences. But then what should be the nature of this development? Should it be capital intensive and technology oriented? Obviously not. It should try to focus on the improvement of the quality of life, on capability building.

We believe that it is a basic mistake to understand development as just economic development. Development is not merely generation of income. It is not only increase in the production or consumption of goods. Development should lead to freedom and capacity to exercise choices and options. It should mean enhancement of quality of life. It should also mean greater awareness and competence to take part in public affairs.
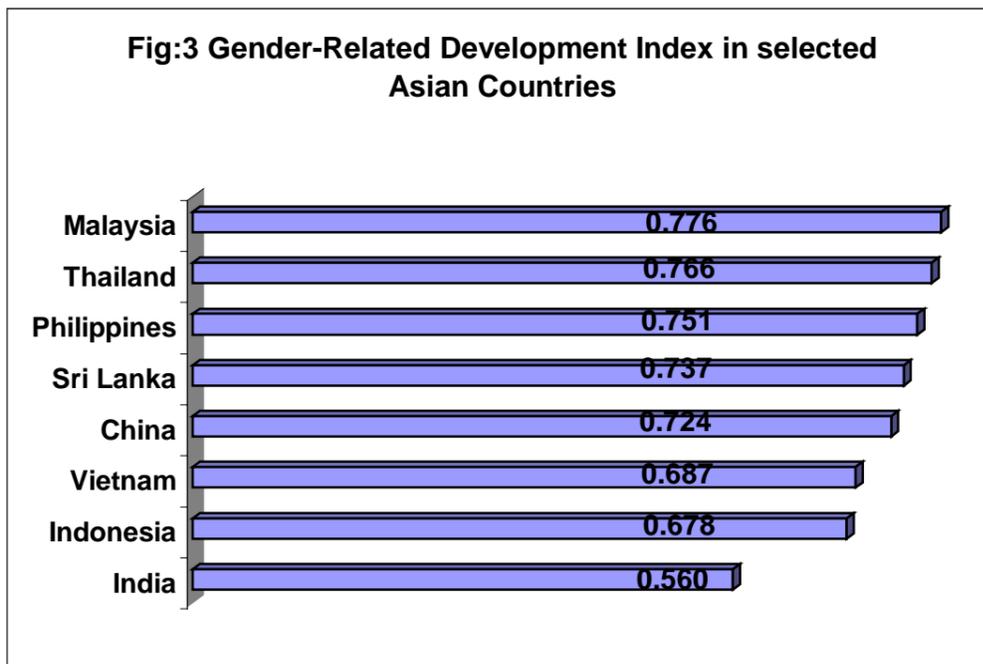
1.6.1 Human Development

Thus the thrust of development should not be restricted to economic development only. Development initiatives should also emphasize those aspects, which enhance the quality of life and expand capabilities of all people. Hence the crucial role of such areas of development as (a) basic education, (b) primary health care and sanitation, (c) mother and childcare, (d) elimination of gender disparity and empowerment. In all these areas our records are quite poor.

The latest and most ambitious attempt to analyse the comparative status of socio-economic development in both developing and developed nations comprehensively and systematically has been undertaken by UNDP through construction of Human Development Index (HDI). The HDI attempts to rank all countries on a scale of 0 (lowest human development) to 1 (highest human development) based on three goals or end products of development; longevity as measured by life expectancy at birth, knowledge as measured by a weighted average of adult literacy (two-thirds) and mean years of schooling (one-third) and standard of living as measured by real per capital income adjusted for the differing purchasing power parity (PPP) of each country's currency to reflect cost of living and for the

assumption of rapidly diminishing marginal utility of income above average world income levels. Figure 2 provides the present scenario of human development of a few Asian countries.

Fig:2 Human Development Index in selected Asian Countries

Country	HDI
Malaysia	0.790
Thailand	0.768
Philippines	0.751
Srilanka	0.730
China	0.721
Vietnam	0.688
Indonsia	0.682
India	0.590

It may be mentioned that the HDI assesses only average achievements; it masks gender differences in human development. To reveal these differences the gender-related development index (GDI) has been introduced. GDI captures inequalities in achievement between women and men.

The gender related development index (GDI) of India and other selected developing countries of Asia are shown in figure 3.

Fig:3 Gender-Related Development Index in selected Asian Countries

Country	Index
Malaysia	0.776
Thailand	0.766
Philippines	0.751
Sri Lanka	0.737
China	0.724
Vietnam	0.687
Indonesia	0.678
India	0.560

It is evident that all the areas mentioned above require local level planning and people's intensive participation. It is also a process of democratisation. We know that in our country there is a wide disparity between democratic institutions and democratic practice. We have made the people habituated in a culture in which a small elite group take the decisions for all, be they the social, economic, political, representative or bureaucratic. This is not real democracy. Empowerment and participation are the key elements of democracy. They are both means and ends. They have their own value because they give substance to the meaning of freedom. They have also very important instrumental value in so far as they enhance to a great extent the quality of decisions, particularly developmental decisions, which affect the poor people directly. They also go a long way to ensure transparency and accountability, which are ultimately the major means of restraining and eliminating corrupt practices, which are so much prevalent in our public life. These are some of the indices of human development.

1.6.2 Sustainable Development

The conventional development planning is not sustainable in the long run. Here we use the term sustainability in a variety of senses. First it is not sustainable economically. We have to convince ourselves that the world has only finite resources. We do not have either the means or the resources to emulate the life styles of the so-called developed west. It is not desirable either. We may have enough for our need provided we check the rate of our population growth. But we do not have enough for our greed. As it is, the natural balance is already overstrained. Any further tinkering with it may lead to disaster. This brings us to the environmental agenda straightaway about which we will discuss presently. But what we want to highlight at this stage is that the economistic approach towards development is also not socially sustainable because it tends to lead to a polarization between the haves and the have nots, as we have seen above. It leads to disaffection, withdrawal and social tensions, which in its turn leads to many undesirable social as well as political consequences. A situation of long denial of what are legitimately due lead to prolonged social instability. So a proper approach towards developmental planning should be to work out a strategy of development, which would be both socially as well as environmentally sustainable.

The concept of sustainable development came into currency in connection with the save environment programme. It received a central attention in the development dialogue since the 1970s and has received wide acceptance. The theme is 'think globally and act locally', which means that it is only through local actions that we can reverse the trend of increasing deterioration of the environment. In fact most of the environmental action programmes are locality based, whether it is that of soil conservation, preservation of bio-diversity, forest management, preservation of waterbodies or wetland conservation. Furthermore, it has been asserted that the rural poor and local communities are far more concerned than the urban elites about the need of preservation of the environment because its deterioration affects them directly. But they are unable to do anything because they have been kept out of the process of decision making. Also, it needs to be added that by living close to nature for generations they have developed their own insights and mechanisms for the preservation of nature. These remain totally unused in the conventional mode of centralized planning. What difference does it make when people are directly involved has been proved again and again in numerous cases relating to water harvesting, forest management and similar other programmes. Such participations have remained restricted to specific projects devised by the government or funding agencies. It is now necessary to change this pattern. What is being expected is that the people should be actively involved in different stays of planning and implementation. Participation of the people is now being considered as the basic requirement of development efforts. In the next unit, we, therefore, take up in different issues relating to participation.

1.7   Check your progress

What do you understand by growth centric model of development?

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What are the problems of growth centric model of development?

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What is the nature of relation between gender and development?

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Why development needs to take note of environmental issues?

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What is human development?

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What is sustainable development?

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Why is it necessary to rethink development planning?

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1.8　　　　Let us sum up

From this unit you have learnt the different meanings of development and how development thinking has changed over time. You have also seen how the economistic growth model of planning has changed over time and how such issue as human development, environment and sustainability have come to be considered as core areas of concern in development planning.

UNIT 2

Understanding Participation

Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

i) Explain the meaning forms and advantages of participation

ii) Identity the pre-conditions of participation

iii) Discuss participation in different phases of a project cycle including the process of bottom-up development process

Structure:

2.1   Introduction

2.2   Meaning of participation

      2.2.1   Conventional Meaning

      2.2.2   Operational Meaning

      2.2.3   Stakeholders

2.3   Forms of Participation

2.4   Advantages of Participation

2.5   Preconditions of Participation

2.6   Participation in Different Phases of a Project Cycle

2.7   Top Down to Bottom up Approach

2.8   Evidences of people's knowledge and skill

2.9   Let us Sum up

2.10   Check your Progress

2.1   Introduction

In the previous unit, you have been introduced to the concept of 'development'. Traditionally, development has been conceptualised in economic terms. Now it is being defined in human terms with participation of people as a crucial factor. Formerly, the emphasis was on the production of goods and services. Now the emphasis has shifted to human agency and enhancement of human capability. Development is being understood as empowerment, as the enhancement of human capability to intervene in policy and decision –making in the public sphere. Participation in developmental decision-making is being viewed both as a matter of right as well as a step towards democratisation. With the passage of the Constitution 73rd and the 74th Amendments in 1992 we in our country have also taken some major steps towards ensuring people's participation in development. It is against this background that proper clarification; understanding and internalisation of the concepts of participation and development have become so much crucial.

2.2   **Meaning of Participation**

2.2.1. Conventional Meaning

If you have been in the administration for a sufficiently long period of time, you must have seen that participation is usually interpreted as people

(i) Contributing cash or free labour for developmental schemes sponsored by government, or (ii) identifying would-be beneficiaries of developmental projects, or (iii) offering some suggestions in respect of some programmes. Cash or in-kind services are recommended as ways to create a sense of ownership on the part of the poor. It is also an obvious way to cover part of the project cost. This usually takes place at the implementation stage. People do not have the right to participate either in the planning stage or in the stage of project formulation. Their participation at the implementation stage is also not real. They are not called upon to monitor, review or evaluate the scheme. Then what is participation?

2.2.2. Operational Meaning

Participation can be interpreted in various ways. It may be viewed as a matter of *right*. This means all policy and decision-making in the public sphere and all expenditure incurred must have an in-built and direct system of public participation. It may also be considered as an essential part of the *process of*

democratisation. This means all administrative decisions and actions must be subjected to public control and scrutiny. Participation may also be viewed as *empowerment.* In other words it means enabling the people to influence public policy and to take decisions in matters concerning them. For some, participation is the *essential feature of freedom and human development.* It is also one of the conditions. This means participation is both the *means and the end of development* because it enhances the capabilities of human beings and helps them take control of their own lives.

All these meanings are valuable to us. But we still need to define participation in more concrete terms, because as a practicing administrator you will have to put the participative principles into practice. *For our purpose, we define participation as a process through which the stakeholders in a project or activity influence and share control over decisions, which affect their lives.* If development means capacity building of the poor so that they can voice their choices and exercise their options, which are essential conditions of democracy and freedom, then participation becomes an inherent component of development. But participation is also necessary for very practical reasons. You must have noticed that much of the effort going into 'development' is not always producing the desired results. So far as distribution of resources and benefits are concerned, the record is often discouraging. Development programmes have not been able to change the living conditions of the poor in most cases. They have then favoured the rich. Why this is so? There has been is a general belief that the poor illiterate villagers are incapable to think and organize themselves for their development. They have neither the required knowledge nor the capacity. So it has to be sponsored and directed from outside by experts and implemented through the government agencies. Under this system there is little scope for involvement of the rural people in the planning process. It has generally been assumed that decisions in this respect are the sole preserve of the government officials and the elected representatives. Now it is being realized that one of the major reasons of the development activities not providing the desired results is non-involvement of people.

2.2.3   Stakeholders

Stakeholders are those who are affected by the outcome – negatively or positively, or, those who can affect the outcome of a proposed scheme. You may well ask why do we use the word stakeholder in the context of participation? Let us explain. By popular participation we usually mean participation of the poor and the disadvantaged, either defined in terms of wealth, education and social status, or ethnicity and gender, or even in terms of physical incapacity. They are in most cases the intended beneficiaries. They are invariably the voiceless in the development process and in general are the major stakeholders. But all of

them may not be the direct stakeholders. Take the case of any water supply project in the arid parts of Rajas than. If you have observed the life of the poor in the villages, you must have noticed that management of water in the household family is generally a woman's job. It is the women who collect water against all kinds of odds and allocate it among alternative uses, viz. drinking, cooking, washing, cleaning, feeding the domestic animals, and so on. But everyone in the family use water. So in this particular project of water supply, women among the poor households are the primary stakeholders and others are secondary stakeholders. There are other kinds of stakeholders as well. They include individuals and parties or even institutions that are likely to be affected directly and indirectly. Stakeholders also include the community based organizations (CBO), the non-government organizations (NGO), and even the local government and representative organizations in a significant way because they are also participants in the development initiatives. (On the role of the CBOs or NGOs, see Unit 5). The government departments are also the stakeholders of a different kind.

2.3   Forms of Participation

You must have noted above that there are various modes of participation. At one extreme we have an absolutely ***non-participatory*** mode. Here the whole institutional arrangement is such that there is little scope for participation of the people. Here the state is the only actor and the whole process of development is driven from a state centre. Power and decision-making is centralized and the responsibility of formulating and managing development programmes rests on the bureaucracy. There is little transparency and hardly any accountability to the people.

Next comes the ***manipulative*** mode. Here participation is encouraged only in a very limited manner, mostly to reduce cost through raising of resources from the people.

The third mode is called ***incremental***. Here the situation is ambivalent. In some cases people are consulted in planning and implementation but not as a general matter of policy. Here the bureaucratic control is still there, but at the same time the value of participation is recognized. But this recognition does not lead to any institutional change. The type of participation that we are trying to promote however is of a very different nature. It has to be real both in forms as well as in content. Let us take an example. When you take part in the election to choose your candidate either for the Loksabha or the Vidhan Sabha or for the Panchayat you are participating in the process of government formation. But once you have selected your representative your role ends. Henceforth your representatives will take decisions on your behalf. Once the

government is formed, it becomes the legitimate authority. So basically you act as an instrument of legitimation. The decision making process remains distant, removed from you and is closed. The formation of the panchayat does not materially change the situation. Because of the nature of government and the structure of administration that we have in our country, which were basically created and shaped during the colonial days, there is no direct link between the people and the panchayats on the one hand and the administration on the other at the local level. Over and above, you must have noted that the power of the panchayats is limited and they have little material and financial power. They mostly act as agents of higher levels of government and implement central or state government projects. As a result, people have become increasingly sceptical about them because they cannot relate with them. Even the local level schemes are also designed at the top without any reference to the locality in which they are to be implemented. *The type of participation that we are trying to promote on the other hand is very different from this. To distinguish it from instrumental participation we shall call it* **developmental participation**. In the former the people are the targets of development. In the latter however they are the real actors. The former treats the beneficiaries as passive. The latter on the other hand treats them as agents. The former dis-empowers. The latter empowers. In the latter mode the goal is not just the successful implementation of schemes, but also the enhancement of the capability of the people in a progressive manner. As such *involving the user group or setting of beneficiary committees, although useful, still falls far short of the participative mode, which we are trying to promote. In the ideal participative mode of development there is no power differential between the donor and the receiver, between the administrator, the representatives of the people and the people themselves who can freely come forward to air their choices and preferences. It provides the means for joint learning and action.* Participation to be meaningful must lead to joint production of knowledge and strategy of action. Participation to be really effective must create a situation in which cooperative decision- making is possible.

2.4   Advantages of Participation

We have already enumerated some of the advantages of participation. In this section we will discuss them farther together with the objectives and the processes of participation. First let us take up the objectives of participation. *The major objective of participation is to involve the people in planning, project formulation, implementation, monitoring and review of local level developmental initiatives.* Once the process starts, it leads to involvement of local people, which in turn facilitates the process of social acceptance. When development projects are thrust from outside they in most cases remain non-integrated with the local social system. People do not develop a sense of ownership about them. It is because of this that we find that when a tube well goes out of order people do not come forward to mobilize their resources

to repair it but wait for the concerned department to do the job. On the other hand, *when people are involved, they take direct initiative for the operation, maintenance and repair of a facility, which benefits them. Thus participation leads to the building of beneficiary capability.* Again, as we have seen above *participation means sharing of information not just about needs and deficiencies but also about possible means of solution.* This brings an additional resource of local knowledge and expertise, which leads to better planning. The advantages of the participative mode get clearer at the implementation stage. First, *it facilitates mobilization of local resources in a significant manner because of the sense of collective ownership that is generated.* These resources may be of various natures – material, human or financial. These may also come as local level experiences and expertise, which are particularly relevant in disaster management programmes. Involving the people at the implementation stage also ensures direct and regular monitoring of the project, which ensures timely completion. Thus *the possibility of time and cost overrun is minimized.* After the project is completed people tend to take initiatives to develop ways and means for operation and maintenance of the new facility. When the people participate in the implementation stage usually the possibility of leakage is minimized in comparison to departmental or agency runs projects. As such *it ensures maintenance of quality. The process also tends to eliminate what is known as 'contractor raj' with all its problems. Last but not the least it ensures transparency and accountability,* because the project work is always under the critical gaze of the local stakeholders. *Participation makes a right balance between technical and local expertise.* It is only the local people who can finally say whether the technologies and methods being followed are sufficiently effective and efficient. They can also provide proper feedback for mid-stream corrections, if necessary.

Participation also creates a condition of looking forward and backward. It is a process by which the participants relate an ideal future vision with the realities of today and list the key events and factors where interventions are necessary as per their priorities.

2.5 Preconditions of Participation

It is obvious that the major precondition for creating an enabling environment for participation would be to remove these obstacles. Apart from these some other steps are required to be taken.

- First and foremost among them is a proper environment. We feel, that the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendments have created this environment. But this to be really effective would need enabling legislations by the state governments in accordance with article 243G and Article 243W where two lists have been provided identifying areas where powers can be devolved to the local self governing bodies. The Constitution has also called for involving the gramsabha or people's assemblies in planning of development projects.

- Apart from the legal provision, processual and procedural reforms are necessary by which development comes out of the straitjacket and truncated developmental approach, which prevails now and which puts the departmental priorities above people's perceptions. Hierarchically arranged departmentalism makes local level integration of functions all the more difficult.

Obviously these are beyond your ambit of powers. And it would also be wrong to expect that all these changes would come out all of sudden and change the scenario within a short time. A changeover from a top-down to bottom-up approach will necessarily have to go through several obstacles and many meandering courses. But we need not be afraid of that as long as the objective is held sincerely.

On your part what is necessary, and for which you are solely responsible, is a change of attitude on your part. You will have to take a new approach in handling developmental projects. You will have to reorient your understanding of development as a process of empowering the people by enthusing and helping them to participate as active agents in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and review of the development projects. Only then as a responsible administrator you would be fulfilling your duty.

However, at the end of the day, participation would not be meaningful unless resources are transferred to the appropriate level. By resources here we mean financial and administrative resources. As you know, at present, panchayats get very little unattached funds. The funds, which they can spend, are almost without exception pre-allocated against identified projects. To really enthuse the people to plan for them, we have to place our confidence on them and as a first step unattached funds will have to be made available to them. The appropriate unit for this is the gram panchayat. It is at this level that participative panning can be really effective. But the starting point will have to be the gram sabha.

At the gram sabha level appropriate field level administrative functionaries should actively associate in the participative planning process and help the people to develop their plans. They can provide necessary information and expertise, which are vitally needed for local level planning. The different departments should collaborate with the people and with one another to help them formulate blue prints of integrated plans and project designs. The administrators must also be willing to involve the people in the implementation and monitoring of the project. Only then participation would be meaningful. In the next unit (Unit 3), the operational aspects of participative planning and development are discussed to explain the relationship between 'development' and 'participation' in practical field situation.

2.6   Participation in Different Phases of a Project Cycle

Participation to be really effective has to be concurrent with all the different phases of the project cycle. If you analyse these phases you will be able to immediately identify the limitations of the present mode of participation. *Very broadly, a project cycle has four identifiable phases. These are (i) identification or formulation of a project, (ii) planning or preparation of the project, or project design, (iii) implementation of the project and (iv) evaluation.* It would be instructive to examine the level of participation, as it exists now in each of the phases of the project cycle. Generally, it is only at the implementation stage that people's participation is sought for cash contribution or in-kind services. Sometimes some participative steps are taken in project design. Examples are micro-watershed projects. But these are more exceptions than the rule. However identification and formulation stage is mostly beyond the participative ambit. Least participation is in the evaluation stage. There is almost no popular involvement in monitoring the progress of the project. This is because administration responsible for the project is never answerable to the people. They are answerable to the government, more specifically to the department. Moreover, you must have noted that at present there is no system of impact evaluation, particularly the long-term impact. These are mostly done by outside agencies to which the implementing agencies are not at all answerable. *In the non-participatory form of development therefore accountability is one of the major problems.* To whom would the project managers be accountable? To the department, to the government as a whole, to the funding agencies, or to the people? To you the answer should be obvious. *You must understand that participation to be really meaningful and effective should run all through the major phases of the project cycle* – from identification through design and implementation to evaluation. But often identification of projects depends on earlier policy framework or information collected mechanically. Ideally, therefore, the poor should also be consulted and involved in the formulation of a project or in the formulation of policies regarding local development.

2.7   Top Down to Bottom up Approach

It should be clear to you by now that *participation demands that you place yourself inside the local social system in which you are working. It means that you work in a way, which creates a willingness among the different types of stakeholders to work jointly in planning and implementing development programmes.* On your part it will need a changeover from the 'external expert' role to a 'participative role'. To be more specific, the characteristics of the participative approach demand that you as a field level functionary follow a strategy along with other government officials so that the stakeholders, particularly the primary ones, can influence and share control over all the decisions that are taken concerning them. *This*

approach stands in sharp contrast to the role you have been taking so far in which the administrative functionaries stand outside the local system in which they are working. Sometimes you as an administrator do collect information and opinion from the different groups of stakeholders, using the information provided by them as inputs for reports or feedback to the higher authorities. While this, by itself, is a welcome step, this is very far from the type of participation that we are talking about. There is no doubt that consultation and listening are essential prerequisites of participation, but what is still more important is learning about the local situation from the people. Under the present system, there is a general assumption that presenting the people with a plan or a project design or information is good enough for ensuring social change. That it is not good enough unless the people are involved has been proved time and again by the family planning programme in many states in India. According to official statistics the numerical targets of various types of contraception has been achieved without any material change in the behaviour pattern of the population. Development experience has shown that when external experts alone acquire, analyse and process information social development as desired, does not usually take place. On the other hand, *participatory development generates a durable form of social learning and commitment. In the participative mode the stakeholders internalise both the purpose as well as the means of a jointly developed strategy of development planning and implementation. This leaves a long lasting and stable impact on the people and the social system.* The social learning, which is generated through *the process of participation usually, leads to a collective endeavour towards problem solving. This in its turn leads to social invention* in which the participants, with the help of external actors, creatively assess and employ their own knowledge and practice for tackling their problems as identified by themselves. The stakeholders also invent the new practices and institutionalised arrangements they are willing to adopt. In the process they individually and collectively develop insight and understanding of the new behaviour required to attain the objectives determined collectively. *Having all stakeholders' work, learn and invent together reduces the risk of failures. Moreover,* when people willingly participate the possibilities and opportunities that come naturally to them and on which they can creatively build upon are often missed by outsiders even if they are experts. *The commitment on the part of the people also increases substantially.* This is so because through the participatory process people can make commitments on the basis of concrete and internalised information. *If the process, which produces a project or a development plan, is participatory from the start it creates a network of support and commitment as well as a sense of ownership, which remain unattainable in any non-participatory mode.*

2.8   **Evidences of People's knowledge and Skill**

People are not as dumb and ignorant as they are made to be. Field researchers and non-government and voluntary agencies engaged in development projects have come out with evidences of success stories showing that common people have ideas and skills as well as a rich storehouse of local knowledge which are essential components of local level planning. Even ordinary villagers have rich resources, both material and human, to contribute to the development process. They can significantly contribute to the implementation of the projects. There are also evidences of a few successfully implemented departmental schemes where the field level administrators showed initiative to directly involve the people. The joint forest management project at Arabari in West Bengal is one such evidence. The Arabari experience (See box) has greatly contributed in the realization that without people's participation development remains an empty dream. The International Funding Agencies like the World Bank, UNDP and UNICEF, as well as bi-lateral and multilateral funding agencies like DFID, are nowadays insisting on peoples' participation in development projects. In fact the Human Development Report published by UNDP commented as early as in 1992 that, "Peoples' participation is becoming the central issue of our times". After the Constitutional 73rd and 74th Amendments, the Governments, both in the Centre and in the states, are showing interest in participative development. The Universal Primary Education programme of the Government of India is an instance to the point. Emphasis is placed on locally rooted, participatory micro development organizations with scope for involving voluntary and non-governmental organizations. In our country the micro-watershed projects have put a lot of emphasis on local level participation. Participation in these cases is seen as a socially vibrant grassroots process whereby people identify the development activities as their own.

2.9   Let us Sum up

After reading this unit you should have a clearer understanding of (a) what is meant by participation in the context of development, (b) under what circumstances participation becomes really meaningful and effective, (c) what are its advantages and (d) its preconditions. You should also have some preliminary ideas about your role in promoting participation.

2.10   Check your progress

What do we normally understand by participation? Why it is not true participation?

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How many definitions of participation you get in the text? What are they?

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What do we mean by stakeholders? What are the advantages of using the concept?

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What is a project cycle? Why is participation important in all its phases?

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What are the advantages of participation?

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What are the different forms of participation? Which type of participation do we have now generally? Which type of participation we should try to promote?

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What are the pre-conditions of participation?

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Activity

Can you recall any situation in which people had participated in a development project? If so, analyses the nature of this participation in the light of the knowledge you have grained from the text.

Unit 3

Participatory Development

Objectives

After studying this unit you will be able to

i) Explain the meaning of participative planning

ii) State why participative planning is most effective at the local level

iii) Identity the sectors where participative planning are most meaningful

iv) Discuss some of the main issue in participative planning.

Structure:

3.7 Some major issue in participative planning

    3.7.1 Identification of stakeholder

    3.7.2 Conflict resolution

    3.7.3 Assessment of needs

    3.7.4 Information and communication

3.8 Let us Sum up

3.9 Check your progress

3.1   Introduction

In Unit 2 you have seen that people's problems are best addressed at local level with the participation of people. In Unit 1 you have noticed that development actually means development of the quality of life of the poor and the disadvantaged, and their empowerment and ability to participate in matters concerning their lives. Both these taken together lead us to change our development planning strategy from conventional centralised planning to decentralised, participative micro-level planning. In this unit we will discuss the major issues relating to this new kind of planning. We will try to clarify what is meant by micro-level and what are the sectors that can be tackled at this level. We will also focus on what role you can play as an administrator in promoting such participation and the specific measures you should take in this regard. But before all these we will first outline the main features of participative development planning and its advantages.

3.2 Characteristics of Participative Planning

The main characteristics of participative planning come out very clearly when we compare it with its opposite the conventional centralized planning. Table 1 summarizes the differences between the two. As you will find, most of these points have been discussed before. Some issues such as information and communication will be discussed as we proceed.

Table – 1

Differences between Conventional (Centralized)

Planning and Participative Planning

	Conventional Planning		Participative Planning
1	The emphasis is on production of goods and commodities	1	The emphasis is on human development.
2	The emphasis is on capital intensive, technology oriented and expert driven projects.	2	The emphasis is on harnessing human capabilities and improvement of quality of life.
3	The emphasis here is on macro-level intervention.	3	The emphasis here is on micro-level participation
4	Since the projects are big they are beyond the control of ordinary people	4	The projects are small and hence they can be formulated and managed by local people.
5	The general assumption is that development should first affect the top layer and then filter down to the lower levels.	5	No such assumption is made. On the other hand, it straightaway tries to the change the condition of the lower strata first.
6	Thoughts come from the top and decisions are made centrally. They are then imposed from above.	6	Thoughts originate at the grass roots and are then concretized into projects.

7	Government here is the sole actor, and administration the implementing agency.	7	People are the main actors, and administration, CBOs and NGOs are all partners and facilitators.
8	Too much dependence is placed on outsiders, especially on government functionaries.	8	Depends on people's initiatives. The driving force is self-reliance
9	It generates and perpetuates a distance between the developers and those who are to be developed. The developers are considered to be superior and the people to be developed inferior.	9	The attempt here is to break this barrier. The developers and those who are to be developed meet on the same ground.

10. There is little scope for people's participation, particularly participation of the lower strata.	10. Starts with people's participation, particularly that of the poor and the deprived section.
11. Decisions are taken on behalf of the people either by the politicians and the people's representatives or by experts and heads of government departments.	11. Development decisions are taken by the people themselves. To that extent it leads to democratisation of the society.
12. It takes a segmented and compartmentalized view of development. The development departments are more interested in boundary maintenance than in a cooperative enterprise to address people's problems. There is also very little scope for adjustment and flexibility.	12. Here the whole approach is holistic. Grounds are made at the field level for inter-departmental cooperation. It is a movement to open up the closed vision of governmental departmentalism so that their separate actions and interventions may converge around people's plans.
13. Here the state apparatus is not responsible to the people.	13. Here the state machinery is answerable to the people.
14. Since there is a great dependence on the contractors, there is always a danger of cost and time overrun as well as corruption.	14. Since it is a people's plan, they cooperate and keep a strict watch on the implementation of the project. As a consequence the possibility of corruption and cost and time overrun is minimized.
15. Here, there is an enforced uniformity of all schemes irrespective of the diversity of the target group, their habits, their culture, their level of development and their absorptive capacity.	15. It is time, space and group sensitive and based on mutual consultations. As such it can take care of variegated social needs.
16. It is oriented towards achievement of targets defined in most cases quantitatively.	16. It is oriented more towards impact and outcome of the interventions and hence evaluation standards are more qualitative.

3.3 Advantages of Participative Planning

Keeping the Table in mind we may focus our attention on four major issues. The first is the *ownership issue*. Participative planning creates condition in which the poor are not excluded from development planning. They can directly discuss their problems and options. It creates a development friendly atmosphere. When a small group of experts, who are basically outsiders and consider themselves, so, ask the people to commit themselves to a project, which others have designed, even in the best of circumstance they do not feel totally committed to the project. Nor are they sensitized about their individual and collective

responsibilities adequately. That is why so many problems are created in the operation and maintenance (O&M) of a facility in the post-completion stage. A sense of ownership is never created. In such circumstances even well intentioned and well thought-out projects may fail. Participative planning on the other hand creates a sense of ownership, which widens the support base leading to the creation of new institutions and mobilization of necessary resources.

This leads us to the second issue which we may call the *functional issue*. When participative principles are followed, the developer and the 'to be developed' become part of a joint exercise. This creates a new enthusiasm and a sense of attachment. Local interests create a stake in the project and provide it with a sense of purpose. As a consequence, and thanks to the ever- watchful eyes of the stakeholders, there is lesser corruption. The possibility of time and cost overrun is also minimized.

Again, the more the poor and the disadvantaged are able to take the advantage of participation, the more they are involved, and the more they become socially and politically conscious. They become increasingly aware of their empowerment and feel eager to change their condition. People begin to feel that it is their development. This creates a new enthusiasm among them. They then apply their creative mind and creative energy in development thinking and developmental tasks. We call this *capacity building*.

This in turn leads us to the last and final issue, namely the *issue of empowerment*. As the poor become more conscious about themselves and their power, the feeling of dependence on the government is reduced. A culture of indigenous solution of problems is created. People start taking initiatives directly outside of government and solve local problems with their own resources. They can also persuade the government in joining hands with them in projects identified by them. This is what we mean by self-reliance and empowerment at individual and community level. It reduces the culture of dependence on the governments, which have hijacked the people's world from them, as it were, in the name of development, fattening the bureaucracy and enriching the middle-men in the process. People have forgotten to think about themselves, because their thinking does not carry any weight at the official level. They have forgotten to act because they have been told that government will solve their problems.

We hope that participative development planning will re-energize the society. It will once again bring back a lost culture of communitarian initiative in solving local problems supplementing and improving official efforts. It is also expected to re-invigorate the civil social institutions, which have become moribund because of the overwhelming presence of government.

3.4   What does Local Level mean

We have said that participation is most needed at the local level where it is also most effective. But what does this local level mean in actual terms. Here we can take the Constitution's 73rd Amendment as our primary guide. Now it is obligatory to set up the three-tier panchayat system in all the states of India except in the Sixth schedule areas. The constituencies of the lowest tiers of these bodies that is the gram panchayat may be considered as the local level unit. For the urban areas we have the wards and the neighbourhood, which may be called local units. . To ensure the representation of the deprived, one third of the seats and the offices of chairpersons in the panchayat and urban bodies have been reserved for women. Besides, there are provisions of reservation of seats and offices of chairpersons for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes. It has also been laid down that all proposals relating to development are to be ratified by the *gram sabha* or the electorate of the panchayat bodies.

Gram Panchayat being the lowest tier of government in the rural areas, it is also the agency through which development works are to be carried out. Hence it is logical that grass roots planning should start here. That is also the mandate of the constitution.

But having representative governments at the local level does not ipso facto guarantee institutionalisation of participatory development. Participation should ideally promote direct representation of public interest. If you have worked at the panchayat level for a few years you must have realised that our democratic institutions generally and panchayat institutions particularly, though outwardly democratic, are yet to establish themselves as truly democratic bodies. There is a great disparity between the form and the content. Because of unequal distribution of power and resources, the panchayat bodies are often controlled by the influential people. The base of their power may be welth, size of landholding, membership of dominant ethnic, religious or caste groups or a combination of these. Sometimes they are the local political agents, particularly those who represent the party in power in the state. They often control and manipulate these bodies either to protect their own interests or the interests of a particular group including the political interests they represent. Candidates elected against the reserved quota are supposed to represent the interests of the deprived and the disadvantaged. But often they act as the 'front' candidates of the influential people. Claiming as the elected and therefore true representatives of the people, the panchayat members often demand that they are able to promote the interests of the people than the people themselves. In other words they may want the interests of the people to be represented through them and not directly by the people themselves. They suspect the people's agency, because in that case they will lose their power and influence. That in many places people are not showing enough enthusiasm about participation or are withdrawing from it is partly because of this phenomenon.

What you have to keep in mind all the time is the fact that representation of people's interests through others, even if they are elected, are far from direct representation of people's interests by themselves. Along with these you need to be conscious of the gender disparities that prevail in our society.

3.5   Sectors suitable for Local Level Planning

Let us now turn to the areas where participatory local level planning is likely to be most effective. We think that in Article 243G of the Constitution may be quite useful in this respect. It provides a list of subjects, which the state governments may hand over to the panchayats. A similar list has also been provided for urban bodies. Generally speaking, the areas which have a direct bearing on human development (See Unit 1) and which have been systematically neglected by conventional planning may be our starting points. The Community Convergent Action (CCA) approach to development, experimentally introduced in some blocks in West Bengal to promote micro-level participative planning, has identified seven areas for developmental intervention: education, health, women's development, social security, agriculture and irrigation, animal husbandry and pisciculture, rural crafts and industries and infrastructure. The goal of the CCA is not to treat these areas separately, but to integrate the separate sectoral schemes into a holistic plan for local development. This is one of its major departures from conventional planning.

A list of activities that was proposed to be addressed by the participative planning exercise under the aforesaid CCA framework is indicated in the Box below. The list is indicative and for your purpose, you may modify the list to suit your practical situation.

Micro-level Planning Sectors

- *Education*: Particularly primary and basic education, adult literacy and non-formal education, vocational education and training, local libraries.

- *Primary Health Care and Sanitation*: Eradication of preventable diseases, introduction of sanitary latrines, improvement of the primary health centres and coverage by health workers, development of awareness about health and preventable diseases, ensuring the availability of adequate potable drinking water.

- *Mother and Child Care*: Adequate care of would be mothers, prevention of motherhood before eighteen, prevention of quick and frequent pregnancy, reduction of child mortality at birth and afterwards, nutrition of mother and child, immunization programme for mothers and children.

- *Elimination of Gender Disparity*: Prevention of sex-selective termination of pregnancy, protection and care of the girl child, prevention of child marriages, prevention of atrocities against women, elimination of dowry system and

dowry death, elimination of disparities at home and outside in sharing of domestic resources and social opportunities, sexual abuse and violence.

- *Water Management*: Watershed development, protection and improvement of water bodies, management and distribution of surface and ground water resources and effective steps for their recharging, improvement and desilting of tanks, etc.

- *Irrigation*: Small and sustainable irrigation programmes and linking them up with watershed schemes and surface and ground water management schemes.

- *Forestry*: Protection of forests through joint management, social forestry, maintenance of bio-diversity.

- *Land*: Improvement of degraded and wasteland caused by regular/periodic or seasonal natural factors or human greed, protection and improvement of pastures and grazing land.

- *Infrastructure*: Improvement of the infrastructure needed for the overall development of the area.

- *Agriculture*: Improvement of agricultural practices with an eye to sustainability (not exclusive marketability) maintenance and improvement of local varieties of crops, crop rotation, prevention of over-exploitation of land and underground water, promotion of bio-fertilizers.

- *Rural Employment*: Improvement of rural crafts and industries and making them viable through improvement of skills and techniques, availability of credits and market. Also making provision for training in non-conventional jobs and services.

- *Other Gainful employment*: Animal husbandry, agriculture, pisciculture, medicinal plants and herbs, horticulture, sericulture, flowers and flowering plants and seeds, searing of wool, spinning and weaving, knitting and dress making, backyard gardens and vegetable cultivation etc.

- *Group Formation*: Promotion of women's self-help groups, small credit and finance societies, cooperative societies, etc.

While the above areas are fit for promotional intervention there are some organizations, which need to be protected also. You must remember that the poor have a life process of their own. We need to be sensitive about it. There are some institutions, which provide a support system for the poor. We can take the *dharmagolas* for example, which are prevalent in many parts of India even now. These are some forms of indigenous insurance system for the bad days. Such community-based organizations are very intimate to the

life of the poor and hence they need to be preserved and improved. Similarly, the poor of our country depend for their livelihood on the *common property resources* (CPR) to a certain extent even now. These resources do not come under the national accounting system and hence ignored in conventional approach towards planning. However, because of the development of modern industrial system the poor are being increasingly denied access to these. The nature and form of the CPR vary from place to place. Since poverty is not going to be eliminated for some time to come we need to take them into account in our approach towards planning for the poor.

3.6   The Role of the Administrator

You must be wondering at this stage what should be the role of the administrator in participative development planning. You may also be asking yourself how can participation be promoted from outside. Let us admit, promoting participation however is not going to be easy for you. An outsider bringing offers of participatory development may initially appear to be suspect not only to those who are likely to be affected adversely by it but also to he poor and the deprived. Prior experience with public officials, public agencies and public institutions has marked a very strong negative impression on their mind. As a consequence a wall of distrust has come to separate the people from the government. *This distance needs to be bridged.* It can be done through repeated communication and interaction. A relationship of trust has to be built patiently over a period of time. You have to be prepared for initial rejection in some cases also.

As a first step your role has to change from that of an administrator of development to its facilitator. In the conventional system government is the sole actor and you are an instrument of government's action. You are dictated by the need and compulsions of the department and government rules, not by the need of the situation. Your answerability is to the department and the government, not to the people. Now with our emphasis on *putting the last (that is the people) first* in development initiatives all this will have to change. You are no longer an instrument of government exclusively. You are an active agent for promotion of participation.

So far in your capacity as an administrator you have been external to the community in which you are located. Now it is necessary to take an internal stance, as if you are also one of the suffering people. This will help you to assess both their needs and deficiencies and understand the roles of different public institutions. You also come to be aware of the different community based organizations and the non-governmental organizations. You study their life process through different seasons and through the ups and downs. When you take an insider's stance a situation is created in which there is mutual exchange of

knowledge and information on equal terms. Thus your role does not remain restricted to the specific interventions around a particular development scheme. You take an active role in the larger process of social democratisation. The process builds confidence among the people and thus becomes empowering. Thus development, empowerment, democratisation and freedom all get linked up in a meaningful and operative manner. Most likely this will also influence the local government structure and force it to involve people in the panchayat in a more meaningful way. Thus the formal structure of democracy is likely to get a substantive content slowly. In this context however small your jurisdiction and power may be, that does not minimize the significance of the vital contribution you can make.

There is also another added advantage. If similar response comes from other departmental functionaries collectively you begin to take a holistic view and the ground is prepared for interdepartmental and inter-agency cooperation. Development is neither a one-shot game, nor is it a collection of discrete and bounded projects. It is a process of developing competencies of the poor and the disadvantaged. As such your role does not necessarily begin with a specific project nor does it end with it. You need to observe the whole project cycle from formulation through implementation to the stage of evaluation of the impact. When you do that you come to understand the effect of your intervention on the people. Again in participative development your loyalty also undergoes a change. So long your answerability was to your department almost exclusively. Now you are simultaneously answerable to the department as well as the people.

3.7   Some major issues in participative planning

3.7.1 Identification of stakeholders

In participative planning the first thing that is necessary is to be clear as to whose participation you are trying to promote. The answer obviously is that of the poor and the deprived-people below the poverty line, the backward groups and women. For participation in a specific project or a programme, identification of stakeholders is a must. This is because every project or programme has a specific thrust. Many of the existing programmes are indeed targeted towards specific groups. Take the Mahila Swarojgar Yojana for example. Here the target is to involve the able bodied and adult women among the poor. So they are the stakeholders. Similarly, in the programme of adult literacy, only the non-literate men and women in the age group fifteen and above would be the real stakeholders and not others. From operational point of view its utility lies in the fact that it helps us to conceptualize a situation in concrete terms. To identify, it is necessary to address certain questions. These are illustrated in the following box.

- Who might be affected positively or negatively by the programme? Who may remain indifferent? Who are going to be directly and indirectly affected?

- Who are the voiceless among them? For whom special efforts for ensuring participation are necessary? What would be the best approach to initiate them?

- Are there any representatives of those who are affected? If so, who are they? How can their help be obtained? Will their participation make the programme more effective?

- Are there any organizations or individuals who would be willing and able to support the programme? How can the participation of these agencies be ensured?

- Who are not likely to participate and why? From which quarters opposition may come? How can the opposition be neutralized?

- Can local resources be raised in support of the programme? What would be nature of these resources - land, funds, labour, expertise, other kinds of support, such as, organization, environment building, sensitization, consensus building and so on?

We do not overlook the fact that there is power difference in our society, more so in rural areas. So among the stakeholders also there would be power differential. This is likely to be reflected in their attitude towards the programme and the way of its implementation. There is every possibility that differences of opinion would come up. There may even be sharp polarization. It may be difficult and even impossible to reach consensus. You therefore need to know how to resolve, at least minimize the conflict.

3.7.2   Conflict resolution

Power differences among different groups of stakeholders may be minimized to a certain extent by participative techniques. So repeated consultation in small groups is required. These consultations must be in the open, and as far as possible in informal settings. You must remember consultation is most effective when the above conditions are fulfilled. There are also certain behavioural rules. All the individuals among the different groups of stakeholders must receive full credit for their contributions. The process of levelling of differences is facilitated when people are allowed to speak and when they are listened to quietly without interruption. Listening is particularly important on your part, because it convinces the speaker that she or he is being taken seriously. It may also provide new and vital information in relation to the project or the programme. When repeated consultation takes place, a sense of partnership or joint stake holding emerges.

Apart from listening, observation is also necessary. You must have noticed that the voiceless often expresses themselves symbolically, through their gestures signifying a variety of emotions - listlessness, boredom, disgust, sub-group consultation or withdrawal. These must be interpreted as non-verbal representation of interests and attitudes, often negative. Therefore these should be carefully studied and noted. Actions should be taken accordingly.

We have said before that in the participative approach the government is not to be treated as the only party in the development exercise. There are the community based organizations, non-government organizations, civil social institutions and public agencies such as banks and cooperatives. Participative approach implies both general as well as need based involvement of all these bodies also.

3.7.3   Assessment of needs

Let us now turn to assessment of needs. It should be wrong to think that all members of the community have the same needs. When resources are uneven distribution of needs cannot be uniform. In fact one man's needs is another man's luxury. Take the case of electricity. Outwardly it may appear that it is a universal and general need. But it is not. Does the availability of power in a village mean that people below the poverty line would be able to use it? Perhaps their urgent needs are availability of safe drinking water, or health centre or an integrated child development centre. So it is absolutely necessary to rank the needs hierarchically with priority given to the people who are most disadvantaged or more distressed. This can be done by asking the following questions.

3.7.4 Information and Communication

In the participatory approach the character of communication changes radically. In conventional planning messages flow from the top. The approach is diffusionist. Messages are designed by the planners. They are first received by the local elite and then disseminated among the masses. The inventor of the messages does not feel the need of collecting audience response and redesign the message (or the programme) accordingly. This is called vertical *one-way communication*. In participatory planning on the other hand people are not treated as targets, as an empty set with nothing to contribute. As such emphasis is given on direct *face to face two-way communication*. In participatory communication information moves all round - sideways, upwards and downwards - continuously in never ending spirals or loops. Again, in the conventional mode, communication is directed to achieve pre-established goals. In participatory communication it is *non-directive*. The goals themselves are subject to negotiation.

The participatory process should create a learning mood all around. It starts with the assumption that it is the local people who know the locality best - its people, its culture and the habitat. They have a rich fund of indigenous knowledge and experience. They know the environment, its flora and fauna, the quality of the land, the seasonal problems, its water resources and its possibilities. They know their neighbours intimately - their interests, attitudes and organizations. All these provide essential ingredients of local level planning. You can provide additional information about other alternatives, the facilities available and how they can be utilized. These two types of information should supplement each other. The local and the global should create a symbiosis. This demands communication to be conducted on equal terms and flow

of communication should be both ways in an uninterrupted fashion enriching both the sides. This is what is meant by *creation of a learning mood*. You may ask what does this learning mood produce.

When participatory techniques change the normal mood and facilitate shared learning, they lead to

● *Sharing of information freely and widely*

- Facilitating the inherent possibilities of collaboration among stakeholders
- Bringing forth consensus
- Setting up the stage of action planning and collaboration

Through the participatory process people make commitments on the basis of concrete local and internalised information. This brings us to another very important issue, namely *collection and use of information*. You must have noted that on any pretext government go all out to collect information. In most cases, the local block office and/or the Panchayat act as the instruments. But in most of the cases, the purposes of collecting information, its format or its final use are never collectively developed with the

people from whom information is being collected. The people are treated as objects and not subjects. In such a situation of non-involvement, people generally respond in a casual manner. That there are so many gaps and so many anomalies in official statistics is not all due to the callousness of the agents who collect them. It is also because of the indifference of the respondents. But the tragic part of the story is that, it is on the basis of such information that official planning is done, although every body knows about its limitation. You may take enumeration of BPL families for example, the shortcomings of which have been pointed out even by the Supreme Court. It is also to be noted that locally collected information are not available locally. They are centralized at the state or the central level. Had they been available locally people could have cross - checked them, challenged and rectified them.

It is absolutely essential that a variety of information should be kept in the community, particularly those relating to human development. The community should also be helped to build up its capacity to collect, analyse, review and continuously upgrade the data. This is essential for planning. It is also a means for development of self-awareness and reflection. The information also provides signals for intervention.

3.8   Let us sum up

In this unit you have learnt what is participative planning and what are its advantages. Since participative planning is to be done at local level we have discussed what we understand by local level and what are the areas in which local level planning becomes most meaningful. You have also learnt about your role in the planning process – how to identify stakeholders, how to assess needs, how to resolve crisis, how to change the process of collection and use of information and how to change the mode of communication.

3.9   Check your progress

How is participative planning different from conventional planning? (Sec.3.3)

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What are the advantages of participative planning? (Sec. 3.4)

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What does local level mean in the context of participative planning? (Sec. 3.4)

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What are the sectors in which local level planning is most suitable? (Sec. 3.5)

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What should be role of the administrator in local level participative development planning?

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How can you identify the stakeholders? (Sec. 3.7.1)

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How the need of the people are to be identified? (Sec. 3.7.2)

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Why conflicts arise in the planning process? How these conflicts may be minimized? (Sec. 3.7.2)

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What sort of changes need to be introduced in respect of information and communication in the participative mode of development activities? (Sec.3.7.8)

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MODULE II

PARTICIPATORY INSTITUTIONS

Unit 4   **Institution for Participation**

Unit 5   **Promoting Participation**

Unit 4

Institutions for Participation

Objectives:

After studying this unit you will be able to

- State what are institutions and what are civil society institutions;
- Explain why civil society institutions are necessary for facilitating participation;
- Identify different types of civil society institutions and explain new forms of state-society relations in a democracy;

- State the basic features of the 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendments;
- Explain how these Amendments facilitate participatory governance at the local level.

Structure:

4.1 Introduction

4.2 What is an institution?

4.3 Typology of Institutions

4.4 What is Civil Society?

4.5 Check your progress I

4.6 Civil Society Institutions and Participation

4.7 Activity I

4.8 Different types of civil society institutions

    4.8.1 Non-government organizations (NGO)

    4.8.2 Community based organizations (CBO)

4.9 Distinction between Civil Society Institutions and Political Organizations

4.10 Check your progress II

4.11 Activity II

4.12 Participatory Governance at local Level

    4.12.1 Basic features of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments

    4.12.2 Government by the people: the goal of participatory governance

4.13 Role of Gram Sabha

4.14 Check your progress III

4.15 Activity III

4.16 Role of NGO/CBO in development administration

4.19 Let us sum up

4.1   Introduction

In Unit 2, you have learnt what is meant by participation. In Unit 3, the integral relationship between participation and development has been explained. You must have noticed that participation is basically activities of individuals in public sphere. When we talk of participation, we mean participation in public activity. Activities of private life can be conducted within the spheres of family or friendship. But for conducting activities, in which many people other than those of one's family members have a stake, separate kinds of institutions or forums are necessary. In this unit, we shall focus on institutions or forums, which facilitate participation.

4.2   What is an institution?

The term institution is used in two ways. Sometimes, it is used as a social entity embodying a set of rules or conventions or normative obligations, which are obeyed by people of a given society. Such social rules may or may not have legal status, but people shape their behaviour, establish relations and even form their expectations in terms of these rules and obligations. They become norms governing the pattern of

individual or collective behaviour. Through a long evolutionary process they acquire legitimacy. Examples of such institution are: the institutions of family, marriage system, caste system etc. In each case, certain rules are observed or obligations discharged or relations established in terms of a definite pattern. *When a particular social behaviour becomes a custom and acquires the character of a predictable pattern it is called a social institution.*

The term institution is also used as a synonym for an organisation or association. Unlike the social institution referred to above, organizations or associations have a structure and a set of rules, formal or informal, governing their activities. They are consciously created by individuals. Individuals create organizations or associations for the purpose of attaining certain common objectives shared by their members. Organizations provide the forum of public action by private individuals. *For our purpose, institution will be understood as organization.* Hence in this module the terms 'institution' and 'organization' will be used interchangeably.

4.3   Typology of Organisation

Organizations operate broadly in three sectors, namely, government, business and voluntary sectors. They may be distinguished from one another in terms of (a) the nature of resources they use to carry out their activities and (b) the nature of ownership by means of which access to resources is obtained.

Every organization needs resources to carry out its functions. For government, the most important resource is its coercive power. It is through the use of this power that government can tax people, throw a law-breaker to jail, and redistribute wealth by such measures as land reform, making positive discrimination, such as, reservation of jobs for SC/ST people. The coercive power is the unique characteristic of government. No other institution possesses this resource. Who in the government are entitled to exercise this power? No doubt, bureaucracy is seen to exercise the coercive power of the government? But real powers lie with the holders of political office. It is the political executive, who controls the bureaucracy. Hence the coercive power of the government rests with the holders of political offices. In a democracy they are elected by the people. Theoretically, therefore, power ultimately resides with the people. In practice, however, power of people gets reduced to electing the persons who will hold political offices. Once elected, they are entitled to use the coercive power of the state for the term of their office. The question as to whether they would misuse the power or use it for the good of the people is determined by the extent to which the political executives remain accountable to the people.

In business, organizations obtain resources by the sale or exchange of goods and services they produce or provide. The objective of such organizations is to earn profit. Profit is distributed to the owners (or shareholders who are owners of corporate establishments) and/or reinvested in business. Ownership of such organizations belongs to one or a few or a large number of shareholders. Workers of such organisation sell their labour power in exchange of wage.

Lastly, there are organizations in the voluntary sector. As the name implies, such organizations are created and maintained by people who voluntarily create or join such organizations to pursue common objectives. There are several characteristics, which differentiate the Voluntary Organisation (V.O.) from an organization in the Government and business sectors. Firstly, these organizations are open. Barriers to entry are almost non-existent, in contrast to the entry in government organisation where one needs political power or business organisation where economic power is needed to make an entry. On the other hand,an individual or a group of like minded persons may create a voluntary organisation or can either join and or to be part in the activities of an organisation if they share the objectives. Mutual benefit of members may be the objective of such organisation. The organisation may also try to meet a social need out of a social commitment shared by the members. What is needed for being a member of a V.O. is a commitment to its objective. Secondly, voluntary action is not driven by the profit motive or by the expectation to gain political power through it. Even in cases where a V. O.'s objectives are to provide economic benefits to the members (for example, self-help groups or co-operative societies) complete equality exists in the sharing of benefits. Thus, typical resources of a voluntary organisation exist in the commitments of its members to its objectives and the energy spent by the members in the activities of the organization. The V. O.'s may have internal rules to determine individual responsibilities and accountabilities of the members, but such rules are formulated democratically and cannot be imposed on the members contrary to their wishes.

The distinctive characteristics of these three-types of institutions are shown in tabular form in table 1.

Table 1

Typology of Institutions

Sector	Critical resource necessary for sustenance	Who can access critical resource	Barrier to entry
Government	Coercive Power of the state	Political Executives	Political Power
Business	Economic. Exchange of goods and service	Owners/Managers/Share holders	Economic Power
Voluntary	Commitment to objectives.	All who shares the objectives.	Practically no barrier to entry exists.

Adapted from David C Korten (1995).

4.4 What is Civil Society?

Civil Society is the sphere of public activity of private individuals. In a democracy, the individuals have the right to engage themselves in such public activities, as expressing opinion as also taking concrete action in the persuit public welfare are inherent rights of citizens. The organizations in the *voluntary sector* act as the media for conducting public or collective activities to pursue the common objectives of their members. The ensemble of such associations or organizations is what is known as civil society. In other words, civil society is the social space for collective action and stands between the individuals or the family units and the state. The state is represented by the institutions of government or legislature or judiciary. The institutions in the business sector principally run on the impersonal rules of the market. The voluntary organisation or associations occupy the social space that is left by the government institutions and the business organizations. They facilitate the process of forming communities by individuals. Thus, they are distinct from the institution of private life like family or friendship. They are also separate from the state institutions or business organizations. The institutions of civil society are non-profit organizations. They also do not seek political power to gain control over state machinery.

4.5   **Check your progress I**

Give example of social institution.

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Give examples of organisation.

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State the basic characteristics of institutions in the government sector, business sector and voluntary sector.

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What is civil society? What are civil society institutions?

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4.6   **Civil Society Institutions and Participation**

Participation, as you have noted, means participation of individuals in public activity. This involves voluntary action on the part of the individuals. None can enforce, by law or otherwise, individuals to participate in public activity. Hence, the initiative to participate has to come from the individuals. But having the desire or the initiative to participate is not enough. Participation cannot take place in a vacuum. It requires forums or platforms to enable individuals to participate. *The institutions of civil society are such forums.* People may have different objectives to participate in public activities, as distinguished from purely private activities. Some may strongly feel the necessity of keeping the village ponds clean. Some others may be concerned about the devastation caused to life and property of the villagers by floods every year. Still others feel that something should be done to stop the practice of alcohol drinking among the factory workers of an urban slum. A group of women may think that they should unite together to form a thrift and credit group. There are numerous fields of such public action ranging from keeping a small village pond clean to

such big issue like forcing the government to stop construction of dams in Narmada Valley. Accordingly, there is scope and necessity of various organisation and forum in the voluntary sector. The more such participation facilitating institutions/forum come into existence, the brighter will be the prospect of peoples' participation in public activities. Conversely the absence of such facilitating institutions/forum restricts the scope of participation. To the extent such scope is restricted the civil society gets weakened. And to the extent the civil society remains weak, the possibilities of undertaking public activities by the private individuals get reduced. To sum up, numerous organisations or associations in the voluntary sector are a necessary condition for strengthening civil society, which in turn facilitate participation of individuals in public activity.

4.7 Activity I

Identify civil society institutions, if any, functioning in your area. What are the activities of such institutions?

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In what ways they can be involved in the developmental work you are doing?

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4.8 Different types of civil society institutions

In the context of our country, we may identify several types of civil society institutions having much relevance for economic and social sector development in rural or urban areas.

4.8.1 Non-government organizations (NGOs)

The term 'NGO' embraces a wide variety of organisations. These are non-profit organisations and work in various fields. Some of them are found to work in fields of elementary education, primary health care, women's empowerment, thrift and credit, environmental protection, agricultural extension, cottage industry so on and so forth. Some NGOs are self reliant in the generation of their resources; others depend upon funds of government or external donors to carry out their functions. NGOs have flexibility in decision-making and have the capability to achieve innovations. Hence, they may play a useful role in development.

4.8.2 Community based organization (CBO)

These are small associations of people created to pursue a common objective for the benefit of their members. Small in size, every member of such an institution has a stake in it. CBOs are also NGOs, but the former have a unique feature, which distinguishes it from the latter. The CBOs are institutions based typically on membership and they exist exclusively to serve their members. Leaders of such organisations remain directly accountable to their members. Because of this feature, such institution remains small in size. They are mostly informal bodies. Sharing of benefits arising out of the activities of the organisation gives them a sense of belonging. Certain common types of CBOs, which are found both in our rural and urban areas are as under.

SELF-HELP GROUPS (SHGs): Generally a group of women - around 20-25 in number form such groups. Most common activity of such groups is thrift and credit. The members of such groups have the compulsion to save a small portion of their earnings. Their saving is deposited with the group and kept in groups' account in the bank. Members deposit savings on daily basis or weekly basis or monthly basis. At times of need, credit is given to the members from the joint fund. Government has scheme to supplement the group fund with subsidies. Apart from thrift and credit activity, SHGs may be formed to run micro-enterprises. Successfully run SHGs empower the members immensely, as their ability to undertake economic and social activities expands.

USRES' GROUPS*:* Operation and maintenance (O&M) of many public assets are often undertaken by the users of such assets. Thus there may be users' Association for maintenance of a drinking water facility or for the management of irrigation tube wells. All members using such assets become members of such groups. All of them have a stake in the assets. Once formed, such groups formulate their internal rules for the management of operation and management Quite often, fees are charged for meeting operation and maintenance expenses. Such fee are paid by the members voluntarily Users' groups have proved to be very useful in community maintenance of public assets.

YOUTH CLUB: Youth clubs are organisations of the young people. In most cases, Youth Clubs exist to serve the recreational needs of the young people. Organisation of indoor or outdoor games is their major activity. But, they also get involved in various social works, such as, running literacy centres, organizing relief for flood victims, conducting community festivals/melas etc.

MAHILA MANDAL/ SAMITI: These are good platforms for women to take part in public actions. Such organizations serve a social need of women to interact with the women outside their families. They also provide forums of women to participate in various developmental activities, such as, literacy, being aware of social problems, participation in skill upgradation programmes etc.

BENEFICIARY COMMITTEES: The beneficiary committees are also CBOs, but with slight difference. Here also, the beneficiaries of the activities belong to the local community, but their hold over the activities of the committee members remain rather weak. The committee members act on behalf of the beneficiaries. Unless the beneficiaries are vigilant, the committee members may find scope to misuse their power.

JOINT FOREST MANAGEMENT GROUP: Forest property belongs to the government. Protection of the property from theft, unauthorized felling of trees and trespass as well as maintenance of new plantation were posing problems to the government. The local community around the forest has a stake in it, as they collect branches, twigs and other minor forest produce from the same. So long as, forest management was totally controlled centrally through the bureaucracy, protection of forest property remained a problematic area. Even local communities' right to collect minor forest produce was sometimes misused. A few years ago, the Forest Department came up with the idea of enlisting people's participation in the management of forest. For this purpose, Joint Forest Management (JFM) Groups were established with membership drawn from the local community. They are given substantial responsibility in managing forests. In exchange of the same, a part of the income from the forest property is allowed to be shared by the group members. With active participation of local people, JFM groups have demonstrated better result in managing forest.

COOPERATIVE SOCIETIES : *Cooperative Society is one of the oldest forms of voluntary organization. Such Societies may be large, medium or small in size. Cooperative*

Societies may pursue diverse kinds of objectives in economic or social fields. Such societies are distinct from other kinds of voluntary organisation in one respect. Their mode of functioning is controlled by the different State Acts relating to the cooperatives.

Their functioning including financial audit is controlled or monitored by the State Government. In many states of India, Cooperatives have proved to be very successful and viable people's organizations.

4.9 **Distinction between Civil Society Institutions and Political Organizations**

It will be noted that in our discussion on CSI, we have not included the political parties or their front organizations, even though, they can claim to be people's organizations for collective action. Major reason for this is that political parties seek to capture State power, and hence, their activities hardly concern issues other than those in which the institutions of government sector are involved. The voluntary organizations/Associations have nothing to do with the State power. Trade Unions, when they are de linked from the political parties, may be a part of the civil society. But, in most cases, trade unions are integral parts of the political parties. It was noted earlier that neither the State (Government Sector) nor the market (Business sector) covers the entire social space for collective action. The space thus left is the civil society, which is occupied by the institutions in the voluntary sector. There may be occasions when individuals belonging to different political parties and subscribing to different political ideologies may work together with a civil society institution to fulfil an objective valued by them. (For example, organizing relief for flood victims, or plantation of trees on barren lands, so on and so forth).

This is not to say that the CSIs do not involve themselves in matters concerning politics. To the extent politics consists in activities affecting power relations in society (power distribution in terms of class, caste or gender), public action initiated by some types of CSIs may be termed as political activity. When a voluntary organization struggles for abolishing the system of bonded labour or payment of minimum wage to the agricultural laborers, or women's empowerment, it is engaging itself in a political task. A CSI may also involve itself in direct confrontation with the government, as is being done now by *Narmda Bachao Andolon*.

In all such instances the public activities are in the nature of political activity and might or might not have been taken up by the political parties. Even when a CSI engages itself in similar type of political activity, it cannot be equated with a political party, because it does

not seek to capture the state power. It only wants to register its voice in order to influence public decision. This shows that the range of public action even in the sphere, which can be termed 'political', is immense and the political parties or their front organizations alone cannot cover the entirety of it.

Narmada Bachao Andolan

The Narmada is India's largest westward—flowing river. It is also the side of a very large development project, which envisages the construction of thirty large and hundreds of small dams along its length. Two of the longest proposed dams are Sardar Sarobar and Narmada Sagar. They are under construction. Between them the dams will displace three lakh people, most of who are poor peasants of the tribal communities and will cause immense ecological damage through the inundation of forest.

The Narmada Bachao Andolan is a people's movement that raised dissenting voice against such development projects. The movement started in mid 1980's when Medha Patkar, a social activist, moved to the Narmada Valley and alerted the poor tribals to the consequences of the large dams. Patkar was the most important catalyst for the movement that still continues. It has succeeded in generating a national debate, which has encapsulated the 'conflict between two opposing styles of development : one massively destructive of people and environment. The other consisting of replicable small-scale activities harmoniously integrated with both local communities and nature'.

The achievements of the Narmada Bachao Andolan include.

- Exit of the World Bank from Sardar Sarobar project in 1993.

4.10   Check your progress II

Distinguish between NGOs and CBOs:

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Distinguish between civil society institutions and political parties:

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4.11 Activity II

Make a list of CBOs functioning in your area. In what ways they can contribute towards the development programme in which you are involved?

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4.12.1   *Basic features of the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments*

Since the introduction of panchayati raj in the fifties of the last century, participative local development has been an accepted national policy. Yet, there have been many impediments to participatory development in reality. It came to be realized that to institutionalise participatory development, constitutional recognition of local government is an imperative necessity. The 73rd and 74th Constitution Amendments fulfilled this need. These Amendments, which came into effect in 1993, seek to send a signal of altering radically the institutional structure of governance. Some of the provisions of these Amendments are mandatory in nature, and some others are indicative. In order to understand properly the letter as well as the 'sprit' of these Amendments, both the mandatory and indicative provisions have to be read together to discern their important features. These features are indicated below.

- The Constitution declares that panchayats at three level – village, intermediate and district – and the municipalities are ' Institutions of self government'. This means that these institutions are governments at their respective levels. After independence democratically elected governments have existed in India at two levels – Union and State. At the district and sub district levels, governance is carried out by the bureaucracy of the State. The State bureaucracy is not accountable to people's representatives at the local level. *By giving the status of government to the panchayat and municipalities, the Constitution, in effect, sought to create democratically elected government at the third level, that is, at the district and sub district levels.* When functions and resources are devolved to the panchayats to enable them to function as government of the local area, the field level bureaucracy will automatically remain accountable to them in respect of those devolved functions.

- Being government at the local levels, devolution of functions and power to the panchayat and municipalities is necessary. The Constitution incorporate lists of functions to be devolved to the panchayats and municipalities in Schedules 11 and 12 respectively. It is also intended that the local governments at the third level would enjoy autonomy in discharging functions devolved to them. That is to say, in respect of the functions and powers devolved to them, panchayats will have full freedom to determine their plan of action.

- The Amendments intended that the local level government institutions should be broad based and participative. That is why they took two major steps. First mandatory provisions were

made for reservation of seats and of the offices of Chairpersons in the panchayats and municipalities were made for the marginalised and dis empowered groups of people, namely, women and people belonging to SC/ST communities. (One-third seats of members and offices of chairpersons in all the three tiers of panchayat will be reserved for women. Similarly the seats and the offices of chairpersons will be reserved for the members of the SC/ST communities in proportion to their size in population.) The other major step was to give constitutional status to Gram Sabha – an assembly of all adult persons of a Gram Panchayat. Similarly provisions were made for setting up Ward Committees in big cities. It was also intended by the Constitution that appropriate powers should be given to the Gram Sabha/Ward Committee.

- The Constitution gives the mandate that area specific plans should be prepared and implemented at the level of each panchayat and municipality to achieve 'economic development and social justice'. This means that the local plans of panchayats and municipalities should not only aim at economic growth but also ensure equitable distribution of the fruits of the growth. In other words, the benefits of development should also reach the poor, women and other socially depressed people. If that is the objective, such people should have a say in the process of preparation and implementation of the development plans of panchayats and municipalities. Hence participation, particularly of those who are economically or socially deprived, should be a key feature in the preparation of local level development plans.

4.12.2   *Enriching the practice of democracy*

Thus the 73rd and 74th Amendments seek to enrich the practice of democracy by introducing decentralization in governance and providing opportunity to participate in local level governance. These two-fold objectives are sought to be realized;

- By providing democratic governments at the local level;

- Making them broad-based representative institutions;

- Devolving functions and power to them and

- Involving the community in local level governance.

The basic principle of the Constitutional Amendments is participation. *The amendments seek to introduce people's participation in governance at the level of local areas.* This is a radical idea, indeed.

4.12.3 Government by the people the goal of participatory governance

The focus of both rural and urban local governments is, as envisaged under the Constitution Amendments, on development. Through the empowerment of local governments and by mandating them to include all sections of people in their decision making process, the Constitution seeks to enlist people's participation in governance, in so far as it relates to development. This signals a unique transformation in conceptualising governance. Governance has been traditionally conceived even in a democratic country as being the business of political executives and the bureaucrats who are supposed to work *for the people.* Even though there are in-built checks and balances in democracy to control misuse of the power of the elected representatives and bureaucracy, people remained, by and large, alienated from the government institutions. The concept of government *by the people* remained unrealised in representative democracy. (The classical definition of democracy envisages 'a government of the people, for the people and by the people'). The alienation of people from government is sought to be removed under the new dispensation. If the spirit of the Constitution Amendment is realized, people will be entitled and encouraged to take part in the decision making of the local government in developmental matters. Thus the Constitution Amendments hold the promise of introducing participatory governance at the local level. This would be a bold step towards realizing the concept of government *by the people.*

4.13   Role of Gram Sabha

Gram Sabha is a unique forum where people can practice direct democracy in respect of matters devolved upon the gram panchayat. While in all other government institutions, people can interact with the government through their elected representatives or bureaucracy, in gram panchayats people can directly contribute in their decision making process through

If Gram Sabha is made effective, it can play useful role in two ways. First, it can hold the local panchayat accountable by demanding information and criticizing, if necessary, their actions or policies. Second, it can contribute significantly in local development. Such role is not limited to only planning of development programmes, but embraces implementation, monitoring and evaluation of such programmes. Several states – for example, Kerala, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh - are trying to give such role to the Gram Sabha. In some sectors, such as primary education, water supply and health care, already, the local communities in many areas have been sharing the burden of running alternative schools, maintaining tube wells, arranging immunization programme with support from the panchayat or the state government. These are encouraging signs of realization of the principle of participatory governance. If the gram sabhas are encouraged to take up such roles, they may play a significant role in local development. In other words, the pace of local development can get accelerated, if there is local democracy permitting, enabling and encouraging people to participate in the developmental functions of government. Hence the crucial importance of gram sabha in local development.

Ward Committees of Municipalities are not as broad based as gram sabhas are. But a lot can be achieved in enlisting people's participation if the municipal administration is decentralized and Ward Committees are given responsibilities for discharging functions directly relevant to the people of the Ward.

4.14   Check your progress III

What are the basic features of the 73rd and 74th Constitution amendments?

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What do you mean by participatory governance? In what way panchayats can contribute towards realizing the objectives of participatory governance at the local level?

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State the two-fold role of gram sabha. In what way gram sabha may play a useful role in local level development?

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4.15   Activity III

Attend meetings of gram sabha in more than one place. Ascertain whether they are effective instruments for making panchayats accountable and responsive? If not, why not? Also ascertain whether the gram sabhas are playing useful role in development. If not, why not?

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Development is a process in which people themselves play the role of agents of change. In other words, development is the outcome of activities undertaken by the people themselves. To express the same thing in a different way, people cannot be developed; they can develop themselves. The role of government in development can, therefore, be only that of a facilitator. When people take the initiative of developing themselves, activities necessary to be performed do not remain confined in the private sphere of individuals. Many of such activities have to be conducted in the public sphere. To enable such public activities to be performed by private individuals, large number of people's organizations in the voluntary sector becomes necessary. Accordingly, NGOs and CBOs have a crucial role to play in development. Since Government is the most important actor in facilitating the process of development, the voluntary institutions have to interact closely with the government

institutions. Such interaction may be collaborative in nature. In such case, NGOs and CBOs may supplement the effort of the government institutions. In certain cases, interaction may be one of adversarial nature, if the facilitating role of government does not come up to the expectations of people. Both the processes enrich the practice of democracy, which alone can ensure that the development process remains on the right track. Gram sabhas also will become more effective, if people are exposed to public activities for development through their active participation in NGOs and CBOs.

4.17   New forms of state-society relations

As you will notice in the following figure, at the top there is the institution of the state and at one end there is the institution of family or individual household. The institution of family is small and takes care of private interests of the citizens. State on the other hand is vast and

looks after larger range of interests of the citizens. In between the two, there are the civil society institutions. These institutions can cast their influence both on the state and on the individual household. In fact, it is through the deliberations and interactions of the institutions in this sphere that much of the state policies can be shaped. This is what we may call public sphere where in an ideal situation a continuous process of debates, deliberations and mobilization of opinions and ideas can take place. In true democracy, the state has to recognize and take due notice of this public sphere, so that a meaningful and rewarding relationship grows between the state and the society.

Private Sphere   Public Sphere

State

Family Business Organisation Civil Society Institutions Individual Citizens
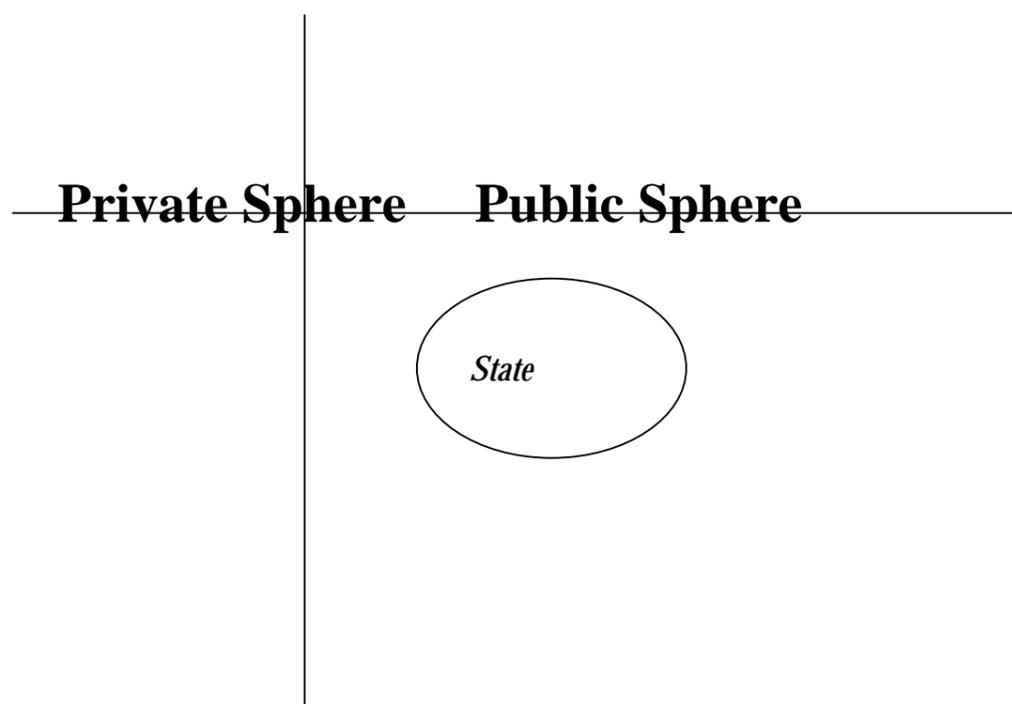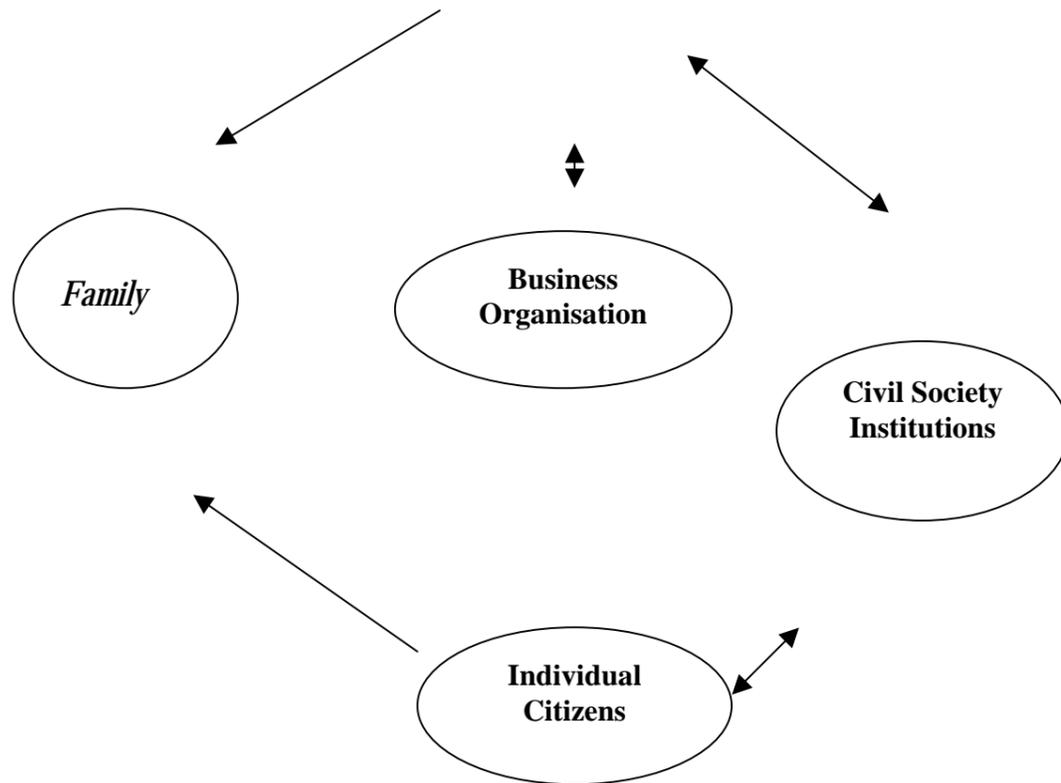
(See John Friedman, 1996.)

Thus the civil society has to be conceived as an active partner with the state in ensuring to each citizen the right to development. This, of course, demands of citizens a very active role. In democracy citizens' responsibility does not end with casting their individual votes. They must

involve themselves directly in sharing the burden of providing goods and services relevant for their own development. With such involvement of the citizens, development initiatives have to be conceived within a relationship between the state, civil society organizations and the individual households.

4.18   Check your progress IV

Explain how the NGO and CBOs can play a crucial role in development.

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4.19   Let us sum up

In this unit, an attempt has been made to understand the role of civil society institutions in facilitating participation. The role of these agencies in development has also been highlighted and the emerging form of state-society relationship has been indicated. Besides, the opportunities created by the 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments in introducing participatory governance at the local level have been explained. If the agencies of the State Government have to play the role of catalysts of the development process, they have to support and encourage the institutions of civil society, the forum of gram sabha and the institutions of local government. Facilitating the growth of such institutions/ forums and enhancing their capacity becomes a part of the task of a state institutions engaged in development activities. Various issues connected with them have to be understood. These issues will be discussed in the next unit.

Unit 5

Promoting Participation

Objectives

After studying this unit you will be able to

i) Identify the various obstacles to participation;

ii) Explain the nature of participation in various stages of a project;

iii) Distinguish between low level participation and high level participation;

iv) Explain the role of a development official in promoting and strengthening the CBOs and the forum of gram sabha;

v) State the steps involved in comprehensive development planning for the local area in participatory manner;

vi) Identify the indicators for evaluation of participation.

Structure:

5.1   Introduction

5.2   Obstacles of participation

5.2.1   Caste barriers

5.2.2   Class barriers

5.1 Introduction

You have gathered fair idea about the crucial role of participation in development. In Unit 4, you have seen how participation can take concrete form through various civil society institutions, panchayats and gram sabha. In participatory development, the development officials have to play the roles of a catalyst and a facilitator. They have to encourage people to take more active part in development programmes. In

other words, the officials have to promote participation. In this context, facilitating the growth of civil society institutions, enhancing their capacity and supporting the institutions of local self government and the forum of gram sabha become a task of the development officials. In order to discharge this new task, you have to know what are the obstacles to participation. Besides, it is necessary to have clear ideas about the different stages of a project during which participation can take place in the practical world and varied types of low or high levels participation that one may come across. An understanding of the specific role a development official may play in promoting participation is also necessary. The Constitution mandates the panchayats and municipalities to prepare holistic development plans for the local areas in participatory manner. As development official, it is appropriate that you assist them in the preparation of such plans. For this you should have a broad idea about the steps involved in such planning process. All these issues are discussed in this unit. Lastly, you will also find in this unit a table identifying the indicators of measuring in concrete terms the extent of participation in development.

5.2   Obstacles to participation

It was explained in unit 4 that participation requires participation-facilitating institutions. The voluntary organization (NGOs and CBOs) are such institutions. Under the Panchayati Raj Acts of different states, there are provisions for creating the forum of gram sabha. The gram sabha also provides a platform of participation. But there are some constraints in the growth of viable voluntary organizations. Similarly, participation in gram Sabha is also fraught with many constraints. Nature of these constraints is discussed below.

5.1.1 *Caste barriers:*

In many states of India, caste plays a major role in social relations. The spectacle of domination of upper caste over the lower caste people is too well known to be repeated. Even though, many of the oppressed castes are beginning to assert themselves, people belonging to the lowest castes, particularly the scheduled castes and the tribal people, are still at the receiving end. Since they do not possess social power, traditionally they remain excluded from the forums of public action. Even in the forum of gram sabha where they have legal right to participate, their voices remain unheard. Such caste barrier poses a serious constraint in united action for a public cause in which a local community may have a common interest. Hence, in a development programme where everyone may have a stake (for example, improvement of a school), you may find it difficult to ensure joint participation of high and low caste people.

5.1.2   Class barriers

People are unequal not only socially, but also economically. The division between the rich and the poor is a crucial element of the ills associated with social inequality. In economic matters, mutual interests of the rich and the poor may be contradictory to each other. It may therefore become difficult for the poor to participate in a collective activity together with the rich. Because of their economic strength the rich have greater opportunity for influencing public decisions. The poor are deprived of this opportunity, since generally they do not have effective institutions of their own from where they can make their voices heard and in other public institutions or forums they do not find access in equal footing with the affluent people. The situation may alter if the poor are united in their own civil society institution (such as, self-help group, labour cooperative society etc.) to participate in public action. Such institutions can be effective if the poor are prepared to engage in public activity from such institutions. But poverty itself acts as a de-motivator for the poor to spend their time and energy in public action. Gram Sabha, for example, provides an opportunity to the poor to influence public decisions taken by the local panchayat. But, seldom they utilize this opportunity. Major reason for this is their lack of belief in the utility of participation in such institution. They feel powerless to influence public decisions, because they have the experience of being neglected by the society. Their non-participation in the forum of gram Sabha, where the entire local community is supposed to come together for taking collective decisions on local development, is a sign of their silent protest against the neglect shown to them.

5.2.3   Gender inequality

Our Society is unequal not only in terms of caste and class, but also in terms of gender. In a male dominated society, women suffer form many kinds of discrimination. Women's participation in public activity, in particular, is discouraged and opposed. In traditional thinking women's domain is confined to the inner world (that is, the family), public activities being the exclusive concern of the male. Even though the reservation provisions introduced by the 73rd constitution amendments have brought many women in the leadership position of panchayati raj institutions, numerous instances can be shown where elected women representatives of panchayats have been subjected to harassment. Participation of women in gram sabha has also been negligible due to negative social attitude towards women's involvement in public activities. However, it is also true that given adequate opportunity and encouragement, women can assert themselves, and make useful contribution in the development of the community. Several facts confirm such optimism.

First, greater number of women panchayat leaders have been seen to be acting independently and confidently after the second panchayat elections, signifying their increasing political empowerment facilitated by the reservation of seats for them. Secondly, in many states, women have come forward to form and run efficient self-help groups from where they have launched public actions for the benefit of the members of the groups.

5.2.4   *Lack of motivation*

For a long time people of our country have been subjected to centralized governance under which decisions that affect their lives are taken at levels which are inaccessible to them. They feel powerless while dealing with an institution of the state. They seem to believe that their participation, even where solicited, is not going to create any impact upon the holders of the state power. Hence, they do not feel motivated to participate in government programmes. They cannot be blamed for this, because our governance is traditionally non-participative.

5.2.5   *Lack of capacity*

The civil society institutions have the potentiality to empower those sections of the community, which remain at the margin of the power structure of the society. Included among them are the poor, the low caste people and women. The CSIs of these marginalized people provide opportunity to their members to participate in public action for their own benefit. But, such institutions have to be created and then managed properly for the benefit of their members. All this requires new kind of skills not generally available with people who have no experience of engagement in public activity. Lack of capacity in managing institutions is therefore another constraint in the growth of the CSIs, particularly those of the marginalized people.

5.2.6   *Political constraints*

One of the roles played by the political parties is to mobilize people around certain issues. While, such actions can draw people out of the boundary of their families and bring them into the realm of public activity, the political parties of our country do not necessarily empower the common people. Political parties by their nature are centralized organizations, leader-oriented and have interest mostly in macro level

issues, and not in micro problems of a community. Their mission is to change the society from above. Micro space at the local level does not generally exist in their scheme of things. The scope of participation of the masses in political matters is typically restricted to voting for a party or joining a political programme priority for which is determined from above. The policies and activities of political parties may work against participation in two ways. In certain cases polarization on the basis of loyalty to political parties create obstacles to the formation of strong civil society. Secondly, there are some political parties who are strongly opposed to decentralization. Since decentralization is a pre-condition of participation, political parties biased towards centralization act against participatory governance. Conversely, in certain cases movements launched from the civil society can acquire enough political power to change state policy.

5.3   Participation in different stages of a development project

5.3.1   Phases of a project

Every development project goes through four phases, namely identification or formulation of project, designing or planning for the   project, implementation and monitoring, evaluation.   Ideally, participation of the primary stakeholders, that is to say the persons who would benefit from the project, is necessary at every stage of the project.

Identification	→	Design	→	Impleme	→	Evaluation
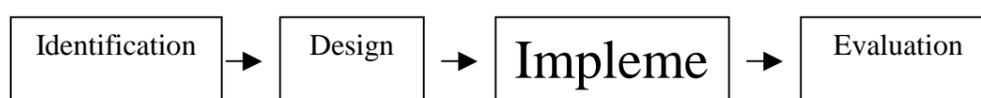
5.3.2   Identification phase

A development project is supposed to address the needs of the target groups. Hence, the needs have to be understood not from above, but by close interaction with the local community. Besides, success of a project depends upon proper appreciation of the social and economic conditions of the locality where it will be implemented. Discussion with the targeted beneficiaries helps the process of appreciation of the local conditions. When a project is formulated in collaboration with people, they get involved in it and develop a sense of 'ownership' of the project. This is most important for sustainability of the project. Last but not least, when development officials formulate a project in close consultation with the beneficiaries, a relationship of trust between them is established. This makes the task of the former easier. For all these reasons it is necessary to involve the primary stakeholders from the phase of formulation or identification of a project.

Real involvement of people in the formulation phase of a project presupposes decentralization of development decisions. This is possible in two types of situation. First, if development functions and adequate financial resources are devolved to the local government institutions, they will have power to formulate schemes or projects in the manner they deem fit. Second, in respect of the projects implemented directly by the state government, the field level officials may be given discretionary power to identify schemes or projects to suit the local conditions, subject to the general guidelines provided by the government. In most cases, however, the local government institutions or the local level officials are asked to implement straitjacket schemes, giving little scope of flexibility. Even in such cases, the stakeholders need be consulted in the formulation phase, in order to enlist their support and involvement in the scheme and to introduce such changes in them as are necessary to suit the local conditions within the constraints of the guidelines of the government.

5.3.3   Design Phase

In this phase, planning is done to implement the project or scheme selected at the identification phase. It is rewarding to consult the stakeholders at this stage also, since clear understanding of the opportunities and constraints for the success of the project is necessary before designing it. This is not to say that decisions on purely technical matters – for example design of a bridge or preparing an estimate for construction of a road – have to be taken in consultation with the stakeholders. But, even on purely technical matters where specialized knowledge is required, consultation with the community can become rewarding. Local wisdom and knowledge generated through ages can be an extremely important input for identifying certain crucial parameters of technical design. Examples are: knowledge of the local eco-system, characteristics of land, seasonal character of a local rivulet, local use of village woodlot etc. Besides, a project even through technically sound, may have an adverse effect upon the social and cultural life of the community. This may remain unknown to a technical officer. If people are consulted before he takes up his technical exercise, he will come to known about it enabling him to make necessary changes in the technical design. If the technical compulsions and the local sentiments cannot be reconciled, further joint discussions may be held to arrive at the final design. Such interactions facilitate the process of social acceptance of a development project.

5.3.4   Implementation and monitoring

Monitoring of a project during the Implementation phase is a task that should preferably be done jointly by the project implementers and the stakeholders. There are instances where implementation responsibility is given to the committee of beneficiaries, the project implementers overseeing the functions of fund distribution, quality control, administrative coordination etc. Even when the beneficiaries cannot be directly involved in implementation, they can be involved in monitoring the progress of a project. For this purpose the development official who implements the project must share with the beneficiaries all information about the project: project design, expected benefits, estimates, quantity and quality of materials to be used, award of contract, progress of work in physical and financial terms so on and so forth. Suggestions or criticism emanating from the beneficiaries need to be taken into account seriously for undertaking mid-term corrections of the project.

5.3.5   *Evaluation*

Monitoring is carried out during the implementation of a project, while evaluation is conducted after the project is completed. Purposes of evaluation are varied. Some illustrations are given below.

- Whether the project has been completed on time?

- Whether the final cost of the project has exceeded the estimate? If so why?

- Whether the physical specifications as detailed in the design have been adhered to?

- Whether the benefits to be derived from the project match with the projection?

- Whether participatory approach was followed in all the stages of the project? If not, what stood in the way.

In sum, the purpose of evaluation is three fold: (a) to demand accountability from the project implementers; (b) to provide input for formulation of the future project taking lessons from the completed one; (c) to take corrective actions by expanding, if possible, the scope of the project further to optimize

benefits. Methods of participatory monitoring and evaluation of development programmes are discussed in Unit 7.

5.4   **Levels of participation**

In terms of its nature and intensity, participation may take place at various levels: from the low level of mere information sharing to the high level of collaboration and partnership.

5.4.4   Information sharing

At the lowest level, participation may consist in just sharing of information about a project with the stakeholders. Here the latter have no hand in influencing decisions on the formulation or implementation of a project. They are only informed about these with the object of enlisting their support.

5.4.2   Consultation

Consultation is a better form of participation than mere information sharing. In the top-down approach of development administration, even consultation can have restricted scope, because the project or the scheme is handed down from above. Only minor changes in implementing the project are permissible. But in cases where the field level functionaries have certain discretion, consultation with the stakeholders can provide valuable inputs for the success of the project.

5.4.5   Shared decision making

When the project implementers 'consult' the stakeholders, they proceed with the assumption that decisions will be taken by them, consultation being a method of collecting inputs for decision making. There is another way of managing a project where the primary stakeholders are involved in joint planning and decision making in all or in some phases of the project cycle: Identification, design, implementation / monitoring and evaluation. Here all the decisions become joint responsibility of the project implementers and the stakeholders. Such shared decision making is possible if development planning and administration are decentralized through the local government institutions and they encourage participatory process in making development decisions.

5.4.6 *Collaboration and partnership*

The highest from of participation is one where the stakeholders themselves take the initiative of development and seeks state support for it. Here, the citizens automatically take full responsibility of a programme in which the state institutions participate. This is possible in a situation where there exits strong civil society institutions. Such favourable situation will not be normally present, especially in undeveloped rural areas. But, if in some place strong community based organizations are in existence, the development officials may explore the possibilities of entering into a partnership with them to integrate government schemes with the programmes of such organizations. This will definitely add a new dimension to our development experience. With support from the local panchayat, such collaborative programmes can be designed and implemented.

5.5   Role of development officials in promoting participating

5.5.4 *Promoting and supporting NGOs / CBOs*

Since the target group participation is essential for the success of development programmes, the development officials have to play a positive role in supporting NGOs/CBOs. The civil society of our country is weak. Strong and viable voluntary organizations do not exist in large number. Even if there are such organizations, participation of the poor, the low caste people or women remains low. Hence, the government officials themselves have to play a catalytic role in strengthening civil society institutions. In certain cases where NGO presence is not significant, they may have to take a promotional role in forming

CBOs of the poor people like self help groups, users' groups, village education committees, cooperatives etc.

They also have to involve the CBOs and NGOs in social sector as well as economic sector development. There are several areas where their involvement can bring about rewarding results: universalizing elementary education, primary health care, family welfare, sanitation, operation and maintenance of tubewell and small irrigation infrastructure, thrift and credit programme, micro enterprise so on and so forth. Opportunities are many and varied, indeed, once people actively participate in development programmes.

It is not enough to promote and/or to involve the CBOs/NGOs in the development programmes. Mention was made earlier about the lack of capacity of the civil society institutions as a major obstacle for their involvement in public action. It is necessary to take up human resources development activities for the members of the civil society institutions, so that the managerial capacity such institutions is enhanced. This service needs to be provided by the state, because for various reasons voluntary sector remains under developed.

Thus in order to make development programmes participative, the development officials have a responsibility to promote appropriate CBOs, involve CBOs or NGOs in development programmes, and, if necessary to build capacity of these institutions. This may appear quite unconventional and unusual for government officials to work for the growth and sustenance of non-governmental organizations. In fact, under the top down development process, this is not necessary. But, for the officials engaged in bottom-up development programme this is an unavoidable task. This is not easy. As noted in section 5.2, there are many obstacles in the growth and sustainability of civil society institutions. The CBOs of the poor, particularly, are vulnerable, as they remained excluded from the social power structure for quite a long period and do not have much experience in public action. Yet, poverty alleviation programme will suffer, unless these marginalized people are empowered through their own organizations.

5.5.5   *Strengthening gram Sabha*

Gram Sabha is a unique forum where every person of the village has the right to demand accountability of the panchayat, articulate his or her aspirations and offer constructive suggestions for

solving pressing problems of the local community. This is an ideal forum for discussions and collective decision making with no barriers to entry for anyone.

The potentiality of the institution, which facilitates participation in local governance, has not yet been properly explored. In most states, they remain practically unutilized. Meetings are not convened regularly, or, even when convened, people are not encouraged to attend. Women or other sections of marginalized people are not encouraged to articulate their views and complaints.

The development officials, particularly those working at the grass roots level should take interest in the gram sabha meetings. There are several ways by which the development officials may contribute in making the institution of gram sabha effective.

- They should maintain close liaison with the gram panchayats and try to motivate them to convene gram sabha meetings regularly. They may also advise them to give proper publicity of the meeting to ensure attendance of the villagers in large number. Particular attention has to be given to ensure attendance of the women and other marginalized people.

- The officials may try to attend as many gram sabha meetings as possible. With the permission of the Chairperson, they may explain their schemes/programmes in such meetings and encourage discussion on them. Gram sabha meetings may act as a bridge for communication between the officials and the common villagers.

- In the states where decentralized planning has been introduced, the development officials may act as the resource persons in the gram sabha meetings to facilitate constructive discussions on the formulation of development plans and programmes.

- By using PRA tools (see unit 6), the development officials may motivate and empower the women and other non-articulate villagers to join the process of collective decision-making.

5.6 Participatory local level planning

It is probable that in the initial stage, participatory approach may have to be restricted to specific projects or programmes. But our goal is to move forward towards a participative and comprehensive local level planning spread over all the human development sectors in an integrated and holistic manner. This will require a much more detailed exercise for which further sensitization and training are required. But we may mention here some of the primary steps that need to be taken if you want to go for such planning.

- As a first step you will have to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the existing policies, plans and programmes as they are being implemented in the concerned locality. The deficiencies of the existing service and delivery systems are also to be taken into account. The whole exercise should be conducted in a manner so as to ensure that the stakeholders participate in conducting the analysis and diagnosis of the problems in a collaborative manner.

- The second step is need assessment. It means stakeholders set their objective collectively.

- Stakeholders then decide in broad outlines the priorities. They also decide the mechanisms for tackling the problems. At this stage they also allocate the institutional and individual responsibilities. In other words, the stakeholders formulate a strategy in collaboration and commit themselves to share responsibilities.

- They also collaboratively develop project or programme specifications and finalise the blue prints of individual projects and their sequences.

- Decisions are also taken in respect of technologies to be adopted and identity the source(s) from which they may be available - internal or external,

- Then the budget is drawn up identifying the quantum of resources that may be available from government and other external resources, and how much resources have to be raised internally, that is from the community itself.

- Simultaneously arrangements are made for monitoring individual programmes and projects throughout the different stages of their implementation. This is to ensure that the qualities of the projects and programmes are maintained and there is no cost or time overrun.

- Towards all these ends, the stakeholders set up working groups and joint committees involving the NGOs and the CBOS.

- They also form maintenance committees for the post implementation stage in the same way.

Finally, they take initiative to evaluate the impact, if necessary, by taking the help of external agencies. The terms of evaluation are to be decided jointly ensuring that the results are made available to them.

5.7   Evaluating participation

At the end it would be fair to admit that the changeover from the present mode to a participatory mode is not going to be easy. It is also not being claimed that introduction of participatory local level planning is going to change the condition of the people overnight. But there is no doubt it will eliminate many of the present shortcomings and anomalies. It will also make the process of development much more humane. At this stage it is not possible to visualize all the problems that are likely to be faced in the process of transition. But a determined effort has to be made, and made now. The process might be slow but the goal is clear. The participatory process may have to go through several phases. To help you understand the phases and check the progress of participatory movement we are providing a table where the degree of participation has been classified in four categories - restricted, fair, good and excellent against six indicators, viz. assessment of needs, peoples' organization, resource mobilization, management, monitoring and evaluation, decentralization of government decision making and institutional support. By referring to

the table you can find out at what stage you are at present and in which direction you have to move. It provides an excellent tool for evaluation of participation.

Table 1

An Analytic Framework for Evaluation of the

Nature and Quality of Participation

Indicator	Restricted	Fair	Good	Excellent
Needs assessment action choice	Done by outsiders without people's involvement	Done by outsiders, but discussed with people whose interests are considered	Assessment is done by the people; the outsiders help in analysis and choice	Assessment is done by the local people (the community); analysis and action choice are also done even without the help of the outsiders
People's Organization	None or imposed, not empowered; not active	Initially imposed, but acquire power and competence with time and become active subsequently	Local organization is representative in character and responsible to members; otherwise active and somewhat empowered but still needs assistance from outside	Local organization is not only representative and responsible, but also self reliant and does not depend much on external resources.
Leadership	Comes from outside agency –	Comes from outside agency	Joint leadership initiative comes	Local organization takes

	government or NGO or international agency without any local support structure.	with support from local organization	both from outside agency and local organization.	the leadership; outside agency provides only a supportive role
Resource Mobilization	No initiative taken by local people to raise resources. Outside agency provides the resource. Local people do not have any control over the spending.	Local people raise some resources, but mostly it comes from outside agency. No control of local people over spending by outside agency	Local people raise substantial resources, but still dependent on external agency. There is effective control over spending by external agency	Depends mainly on internal resource. Even if external agency provides some fund over expenditure is maintained by local agency.
Management	External agency government or NGO manages with some involvement of local organization	Local organization manages, but closely supervised by external agency	Local organization manages with some guidance from external agency	Local organization assumes full responsibilities of management
Monitoring and Evaluation	Information collected from local people by external agency, but the local community does not get any feedback; neither they can use it.	Monitoring and evaluation done by external agency but people are kept informed of the results.	Monitoring and evaluation jointly by the local and the external agency	Monitoring and evaluation done by the local organization and feedback given to the people.

Decentralizati on of governmental decision making	Top down tied founding with very little discretionary power given to local bureaucracy	Top down tied funding, but some discretion given to local self-governing bodies. However local organization is not involved.	Devolution of power to local government with untied funding. The local government collaborates with the local organization in decision making	Substantial powers, functions and resources given to local government. Local government functions in partnership with local organization
Institutional support	Centralized government. Projects implemented by the officials. There is no transparency.	The line department officials work with the support of local government. Bureaucracy is not responsible to local government. Their command structure is top down	The local government controls the local bureaucracy. The community organization gets the support of local government.	Strong coordination exists between local government and local community organization. The local officials act as facilitators and as consultants of local organization.

(Adapted from Taal Housainou, UNICEF)

5.8   Check your progress

i)   What are the obstacles to participation? (Section 5.2)

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ii)   Why the poor, low caste people and women feel reluctant to participate in public
      action? (Section 5.2)

      ……………………………………………………………………………………

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iii) What are the different stages of a project? Do you think that stake bolder participation is possible in
      every stage? If not, why not? (Section 5.3)

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iv)   What is low level participation? What is the highest form of participation? What are the features of
      participation between the low level and the highest level? (Section 5.4)

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v)   What can be done to promote and strengthen the CBOs? (Section 5.5.1)

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……………………………………………………………………………………

vi) How can you play a useful role in making gram sabha effective? (Section 5.5.2)

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vii) What are the steps involved in preparing holistic or comprehensive development plan for the local area in participatory manner? (Section 5.6)

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viii) What are the indicators by which you can evaluate people's participation in development? (Section 5.7, Table 1)

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5.9   Activity

You may have seen some development programmes with people's participation. Evaluate them in terms of table 1.

5.10   Let us sum up

You now know what are obstacles to participation. You have to be careful about them, if you desire to introduce participatory element in development. You have also gathered a broad idea about different levels of participation in different stages of a project. The role of the development officials in promoting and strengthening CBOs and gram sabha is also clear to you. You have acquired some ideas about the major steps involved in participatory development planning in local area. Last but not least, you now have a tool to evaluate or measure participation. Accordingly, it is hoped you will now be in a better position to function as a facilitator in participatory development programme. However, to function effectively in a participatory environment, you will need some tools. An acquaintance with such participatory tools and modalities will be provided in Units 6 and 7.

MODULE-III

PARTICIPATORY METHODS

Unit 6 **Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)**

Unit 7 **Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation**

PARTICIPATORY RURAL APPRAISAL (PRA)

Objectives:

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

I)   State the various participatory methods

II)   Explain the participatory rural appraisal method

III)   Apply the participatory rural appraisal method in
       real life

Structure:

6.1   Introduction

In Unit 2 we introduced you to the necessity of promoting people's participation in development. It is now clear to you that people's participation in the development process is both an essential input in development as well as a means of empowering the people. This unit deals with the various participatory methods and their application in the development process.

6.2   Participatory Methods: - An Overview

If you are an official say of the animal resource development department, you are to develop a plan for generating income and employment in your area through better and efficient use of animal resources.   You shall have to collect the basic information in this regard. Based on these basic information and application of your knowledge, and taking into account the resources available under various development schemes, you may develop a plan. Your ultimate objective is to build the capacity of the people and make the development programme sustainable. But the question is how will you collect the necessary information. What will be the procedure for taking decisions regarding selection of scheme and beneficiaries? How will you monitor the programme? All these questions arise because your ultimate objective is to ensure people's participation and empowerment.

There are various participatory methods, which have been used over the last few decades. Some of these are: the Beneficiary Assessment Method (BA), SARAR and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). BA is a systematic investigation of the perceptions of the beneficiaries and other stakeholders. SARAR stands for five attributes, namely – self-esteem, associative strength, resourcefulness, action planning and responsibility for follow through, which are considered to be critically important for achieving full and committed participation in development programmes. PRA has evolved from Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRP), which is a process of appraisal, analysis and action by local people themselves. To emphasize on the learning part some time the word PLA, which means Participative Learning and Action, is used. However PRA is the most commonly used word. It is also the method, which is mostly used to encourage and ensure people's participation. Here we will explain this method in adequate detail so that you can use it in practice.

6.3   Participatory Rural Appraisal

PRA can be described as a method that enables people to express and analyze the realities of their lives and conditions, to plan what action to take, and to monitor and evaluate the results. PRA emphasizes on the process, which empower local people whereas its predecessor RRA was mainly used as a means for outsiders to gather information.

You are aware that now the objective of the development activities is not only to deliver goods and services to the people but also to develop capabilities. In this PRA plays a significant role. This is a method of collaborative decision-making and it is community-based. There are five key principles that form the basis of any PRA activity.

- *Participation:* PRA relies heavily on participation by the communities. This method is designed to enable local people to be involved, not only as sources of information, but as partners in gathering and analyzing the information.

- *Flexibility*: You can select a technique or a combination of techniques based on the size and skill of the PRA team, the resources available, and the nature and location of work.

- *Teamwork:* Generally, a PRA is best conducted by local people in which your role is that of an initiator and facilitator. You should ensure significant representation of women and downtrodden people.

- *Optimal information:* To be efficient in terms of both time and money, PRA work intends to gather just enough information to make the necessary recommendations and decisions.

- *Reliability*: PRA generated data are not always conducive to statistical analysis due to their qualitative nature and relatively small sample size. But generated from the people themselves it has its in-built support to ensure validity and reliability of the findings.

Activity

Distinguish between conventional methods and participatory methods in setting goals, designing plan and implementation of development programmes.

6.4   PRA Techniques

PRA offers a basket of techniques from which you can select one or a combination of them, as are appropriate to your development activity. The central part of any PRA is semi-structured interviewing. While sensitive topics can be better addressed in interviews with individuals, other topics of more general concern are amenable to focused group discussions and community meetings.

During these interviews and discussions, several diagrammatic techniques are frequently used to stimulate debate and find out the results. Many of these visuals are not drawn on paper but on the ground with sticks stones, seeds and other local material and then transferred to paper for a permanent record. Some of the key PRA techniques are:

- Mapping techniques

- Ranking exercises

- Trend analysis

Visual-based techniques are important tools for enhancing a shared understanding between government officials and the people. These are likely to hide important differences of opinion and perspective when drawn in group settings. They, therefore, need to be complemented by other techniques, such as careful interviewing and observation, to crosscheck and supplement the results of diagramming.

6.5   Mapping Techniques

Mapping exercises as used in a PRA activity will not only provide you with information about the physical characteristics surrounding the community, but can also reveal much about the socio-economic conditions and how the participants perceive their community. The maps are usually drawn by a group of villagers either on the ground using stick or chalk or on a large sheet of paper. The exercise often attracts much attention and generates useful debate among the mapmakers and the onlookers. The final map is then recorded by the PRA team to use in subsequent discussions.

You can develop various thematic maps depending on the focus of your activity.

- Social Maps illustrate the individual households that make up the community. Different symbols can be used to show particular characteristics of the households - relative wealth, resources used, and social standing.
- Census Maps provide information about all units - be it about individual or household. This is used to put together easily quantifiable information received from the participants. The household information like – number of adults (men and women), number of children (boys

and girls), education, literacy, employment, resource ownership health problems etc. can be recorded using this method.

Another type of mapping exercise is an institutional map, sometimes called Venn or chapati diagrams. Institutional maps are visual representations of the different groups and organizations within a community using the available institutions and their relationships and importance for decision-making. You can use this technique either as part of a group discussion, to generate a consensus view about the community's social infrastructure, or can be undertaken by individuals to illustrate the different perspectives of, for instance, men versus women.

6.5.1 Social Mapping

Here you have been given some general guidelines for applying the Participatory Rural Appraisal Method. Any development program is a deliberate intervention in a given situation defined by space and time. So, as a first step, it is necessary to undertake an exercise of physical and social mapping of the given area where a program/project is being introduced. We know what a physical map is. Let us now see what is a social map and how it can be developed as required through the participation of the people living in a given area.

A Social Map is a visual representation of a residential area containing relevant social information. It gives the physical boundaries of a given area, the settlement pattern, physical infrastructure, social, cultural and religious institutions and similar other information. Such a map is to be drawn first on the ground with the direct participation of the local residents and then transferred on paper with appropriate legends and colors. This technique may be used at the earliest stage of your interaction with the community. Mapping generates a lot of enthusiasm among local people and acts as a good icebreaker.

Steps:

- Select an open space where a map can be drawn on the ground.

- Ask the local people to prepare the map of their settlement that can help others to have a visual picture of their locality.

- Ask the group to show all the features of the settlement that they can think of, such as, rivers, hills, roads, tanks, bamboo groves, forests, wells, schools, health centres, clubs, temples, and so on. The clusters of huts, buildings and residential places are also to be noted and marked on the map.

- Labels and symbols are to be used to identify different facilities, features and infrastructure.

- Allow the participants to select the symbols.

- Any additional information that the facilitator wants to be included in the map should be introduced only at the end, after the group has finished preparing the map, and after consultation with the group.

- Once the map is ready, you may ask questions about the findings as required.

6.5.2   Transect Walks

A transect is a structured walk through the locality identified by you. This walk is best carried out with a group of people who live there and know the area well.   These local people should act as guide in the walk showing and discussing all the features that exist within the area. Transect walk will be very effective if the social map of the area has already been prepared. This will help verification of the social map. It also helps the facilitator to focus on some key areas or issues.

Focus Points

- Once the features such as hats (market place) or the schools or club are identified   the facilitator may visit these places for maximum interaction with different segments of the population.

- During the transect walk the facilitator is directly exposed to the physical and topographical features which may open up discussion on various subjects for development intervention, such as water conservation, change in land use or crop rotation pattern.

- It may help in locating the settlements of socially and economically deprived/background people. Direct interaction with them would help him/her to identify their special problems calling for attention.

6.5.3   Census Mapping

Census means collecting information about all units - be it about individual or household. Census mapping is used to put together easily quantifiable information received from the participants. The household information like – number of adults (men and women), number of children (boys and girls), education, literacy, employment, resource ownership health problems etc. can be recorded using this method. For such a census either the social map or cards may be used.

Steps:

- Start with a discussion on the need to put together some quantitative information about the locality (e.g. determination of number of children in the age group 5 to 13 for whom education needs to be arranged)

- Decide whether the census will be carried out using cards or the social map.

- Ask the group to first prepare the household list. The number or the name of one representative for each household should be written on the card or on the household depicted on the map. This makes it easy to identify the household for reference.

- The group decides which variables to select. You as facilitator can give an example of human population to start with, but for each indicator (that is subject), quantified information is recorded on the card or in the house on the map.

- At the end, ask the group to aggregate the information for all the variables preferable in tables. Some simple analysis can also be carried out with the same group.

- Allow the participants to select the other variables. In case you have any specific issue in mind, which has not been included by the group, it can be introduced at the end, after the group has finished its work.

Venn Diagrams

Venn Diagrams help in understanding the roles the different institutions play in a community, their mutual relationships, and the relative importance they play in people's lives. These are also known as Chapati Diagrams because of the circular paper cut-outs used in this analysis. The whole exercise is directed to understand how the people perceive these institutions vis-à-vis their own lives. This method is best effective when the respondents interact within a group. It is expected that a lot of discussion and debate may follow. The facilitator without trying to stop the debate should try to help them to come to a conclusion.

Steps:
- First you can prepare a large circular paper, which represents the community. Smaller circles of various sizes should also be kept handy. These small circles would represent different institutions.
- The size of the circle represents the importance of an institution to the community. (The bigger the shape the more important is the institution).

- The proximity to or distance of an institution from the community is denoted by the closeness or distance of the circle representing the institution from the centre of the main circle (representing the community).
- Institutions placed inside the main circle are institutions the people feel close to.
- The circles touching or overlapping each other show a close link between them.
- Similarly distance between circles represents absence of links between them.

6.6   Ranking Exercises

There are two types of ranking techniques commonly used in participatory appraisal: *problem and preference ranking (which are also separately indicated sometimes) and wealth ranking.*

6.6.1   *Problem and preference ranking*

You can use several different techniques to elicit local people's perceptions of the most important problems they face. One simple method is to ask participants to list five or so main problems. This could be a general question, or one focused on a particular problem area. Then ask them to rank these problems in order of importance.

A more systematic technique called pair-wise ranking uses cards to represent the different problems. The facilitator shows the "problem cards" two at a time, each time asking, "Which is the bigger problem?" As the participants make the comparisons, the results are recorded in a matrix. Matrix is basically a table in which different values may be put against different criteria. Counting the number of times that each problem "won" over the others and arranging them in appropriate order obtain the final result.

Similar to problem ranking, preference ranking involves participants assessing different items or options, using criteria that they themselves identify. A common form of preference ranking uses a matrix with items/options along the horizontal axis and the elicited criteria along the vertical axis. This technique works well as an introductory exercise in a group discussion as it can reveal interesting differences among group members. You can explore these discrepancies later during the discussion or subsequent interviews with individuals. Gender differences are particularly worth exploring, as men and women often have quite different preferences and criteria for those preferences.

6.6.2   *Ranking and Scoring*

This technique is most useful in analysing people's preferences in the decision-making process. You may use ranking and scoring in any situation where different choices are to be weighed against different options. The method brings out the criteria on the basis of which a particular group of respondents evaluate the options available and how their choices and preferences are made.

STEPS

- Start with a discussion of the problem or issue or event.

- Once the participants have mentioned some of the options available, ask them to prepare a list of all the possible options. This list can be prepared on the ground using chalk, by using symbols or by writing on slips of paper, which are placed on the ground. It is also possible to use large sheets of paper for preparing the visual, which can only be used by the literate-respondents.

Once the list is ready, ask the participants to select the most preferred option. This can be ranked one. The next most preferred option could be ranked two, and so on till the list is exhausted. Your role as facilitator is important here in initiating the discussion and in explaining the technique. Once the participants start doing the analysis, it is best for the facilitator to be an observer and not to interfere with the analysis.

Once the ranking is complete, ask the participants to explain the reasons for their preferences.

6.6.3   Matrix ranking and scoring

Often it is necessary to analyse the options on the basis of multiple criteria. In such situations you may use the matrix scoring or ranking method as a most effective tool.

Steps

- A matrix can be prepared on the ground or on a sheet of paper

- In the cells along the top, (that is the horizontal or x-axis), place the different criteria (one in each cell). Along the vertical or y-axis on the left-hand side place each option - one in each cell.

- Each option on the list is evaluated against all the criteria in the matrix. This can be done by using scoring or ranking methods. Counters with pre-identified or given values may be used to fill up each of the cells in the matrix.

- It is important to remember that the scores for the options should not be added in order to arrive at the overall preference. This may be misleading as it assumes that all the criteria have equal weight.

- Even then, the matrix provides an overall view about the scale of preference of the people.

6.6.4   Pair-wise ranking

You can use this method in analysing different options and choices available under one topic by evaluating them, two at a time.

Steps

- The participants prepare a list of the different options they have under the selected topic.

- These are written on slips of paper and placed on the ground. Alternatively, a grid can be prepared on the ground using chalk or on a large sheet of paper.

- The participants are asked to consider the options two at a time and select the one that is more prevalent or more common. Similarly, they may be compared in terms of the difficulty in their use. Again there may be other factors to be considered. Each option is directly

compared with all the other options, one by one and so on till all the combinations are exhausted.

- The number of times an option is selected is the score that it gets. The higher the score the more preferred is the option.

6.6.5   Wealth ranking

Wealth ranking involves community members identifying and analysing the different wealth groups in a community. It enables evaluators to learn about the socio-economic stratification of project beneficiaries and local people's definitions and indicators of wealth.

The most common version of this technique involves a series of individuals or a focus group of community members, ranking the entire community. This may also be done for a particular section of the community if there are too many households to rank say more than 100 or if the participants are familiar with only their own neighbourhood. You can introduce the technique using local terms for wealth and poverty and encourage participants to first discuss how they define these terms and how they would describe a poor household or a rich household.

Wealth ranking has sometimes proved problematic in urban areas, where people tend to be less familiar with their neighbours than in rural settings. Furthermore, in some communities, relative wealth or poverty ranking is a very sensitive topic, and this technique may need to be conducted in a private setting to allow participants to talk freely. In some cases, you may have to avoid this technique altogether.

6.6.6   Well-being ranking

This exercise tries to capture how a community identifies social divisions among its members. It identifies different categories of households within the community and their relative standard of living.
Steps

There are two ways to approach this task. You can first start by asking the group to discuss the criteria on the basis of which they differentiate the households. It may be social. It may be economic. It may be both social and economic. You list them. Then you ask the group to use these criteria to decide in how many categories they would like to divide the households.   Then ask them to describe each of these

categories. They can then proceed with the ranking of all the households. In this approach you may ask them to rank straightway. Once this is completed you can ask the group to describe the criteria on the basis of which they differentiate the categories.

The social ranking may be used to classify the households on the map. Separate sheets may be used and the information recorded in tabular forms, with additional explanatory notes, if necessary.

6.7   Trend Analysis

Some of the visual-based techniques used to conduct community trend analysis are: seasonal calendars, trend analysis and daily activity charts.

6.7.1   Seasonal calendars

Seasonal calendars drawn by the local people are very useful means of generating information about seasonal trends within the community and identifying periods of stress and vulnerability. Best undertaken in the form of a group discussion (to help verify the information obtained), seasonal calendars are often drawn on the ground with the relative trends depicted using stones or seeds, as in a preference-ranking matrix. In other instances, simple line graphs can be drawn to show seasonal increases or decreases. A whole series of seasonal variables can be included in one calendar to give an overview of the situation throughout the year. These variables can include: rainfall, crop sequences, labour demand, availability of paid employment, out-migration, incidence of human diseases, expenditure levels, and so on. Important periods, such as festivals, can also be shown.

6.7.2   Seasonality Analysis

- This method is used to analyze the seasonal patterns of some aspects of life or activities, events or problems. There are some problems, which are cyclical in nature. Problems which have a cyclical pattern can be analyzed using this method, including availability of food, prevalence of diseases, indebtedness, relative prosperity, stress in livelihoods etc. as also rainfall, availability of water and so on.

- Ask the participants to decide how they would like to divide the year (months, seasons, quarters, etc.) in relation to their lives. Do not impose your calendar – there can be different forms of local calendars, which the people may be more familiar with.

- Develop the calendar on the ground using chalk, sticks, stones, or any other locally available material. This can also be prepared on large sheets of paper.

- Identify the items or problems with the help of the participants.

- The seasonal variations of the different items are depicted on the calendar, and then the results are compared.

- Once the visual is ready you can ask questions regarding the relationships between different variables and whether there are any other aspects of life that affect or are affected by this seasonality.

- This visual is then used to discuss problems and opportunities.

6.7.3   *Trend Analysis*

You may use trend analysis as a separate technique to understand people's perceptions and patterns of change regarding selected indicators and topics that are of concern to them. This is a useful tool to initiate the discussion with older people. But ensure that other sections of the people also enter into the discussion. To analyze their perception of changes taking place in their community and in their own lives the following steps may be taken.

Steps

- Start with a discussion on major changes that have taken place in the locality as perceived or identified by them.
- The group is to decide how far back in time they would like to go for this analysis. They should identify the year(s) or period when significant changes were witnessed.
- Ask the group to identify the areas in which they have witnessed theses changes. Then draw a diagram showing these changes of over the years. This can be shown by line drawings (like graphs).

- Discuss what prompted these changes. Which ones are considered positive and which are negative and why? Ask whether any of the negative changes can be reversed, and how?
- There is every possibility that there would be difference of opinion and debate. Do not interfere. But you may provide necessary information and draw attention to issues, which have not been discussed at the end, so that fresh discussion may be initiated.

6.7.4 Daily activity charts

Daily activity charts are useful as a way for community members to show graphically how they spend their day. The diagrams also make it easy to compare the daily activities of different groups of people, such as women versus men, employed versus unemployed, married women versus widows.

In the same way as a seasonal calendar shows the busiest times of the year, a daily activity chart can show the busiest times of the day and can, therefore, be useful in monitoring changes during the course of the of project.

6.8   Problems relating to PRA

PRA is now a widely acknowledged and practiced method for participative, people - centric development. It is, however, not a solution to all the problems of development. Apart from that in introducing PRA you may face quite a few problems. Here we mention some of these problems.

- The problem of not reaching everyone, especially women, landless.

- A non-literate person can prepare a map on the ground with no names or writing. He/she can transfer the map on the wall for presentation but then some-one else can add the names etc, and during presentation the non-literate may be sidelined or squeezed out. The rich and the influential may take over and the poor may be left out.

- You should always keep in mind that PRA is not an end in itself. It is a process to bring in surface the problem of the people by the people themselves. It is not the end. You should use these methods at different stages of development process to make your development programme participatory and effective.

- It gives voice to the voiceless and enables them to articulate their own problem and encourage them to own development as their self managed activity. It will turn them from passive beneficiary to the active development makers. The process creates a lot of enthusiasm. You have to ensure that this enthusiasm does not lead to apathy because of lack of concrete action on the ground.

- As development is complex, and multi-dimensional, before going for conducting PRA you are to ensure convergence of different functionaries for the development of the area.

- While conducting PRA your aim should always be to prepare an action plan based on PRA. If you fail to develop and follow it up, people will withdraw from the development process.

6.9 **Practical personal tips**

We have so far discussed mapping techniques, ranking exercises and trend analysis in Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA).

Now we will provide some practical tips so that you can use the PRA techniques in a proper manner.

PRACTICAL PERSONAL TIPS

•LOOK, LISTEN AND LEARN •FACILITATE •DO NOT DOMINATE •DO NOT INTERRUPT	• WHEN PEOPLE ARE MAPPING, M0DELLING OR DIAGRAMMING, LET THEM GET ON WITH IT • WHEN PEOPLE ARE THINKING OR DISCUSSING BEFORE REPLYING, GIVE THEM TIME TO THINK OR DISCUSS

EMBRACE ERROR. WE ALL MAKE MISTAKES AND DO THINGS BADLY SOMETIMES. NEVER MIND. DON'T HIDE IT. SHARE IT. WHEN THINGS GO WRONG, IT IS A CHANCE TO LEARN	ASK YOURSELF – WHO IS BEING MET AND HEARD, AND WHAT IS BEING SEEN, AND WHERE AND WHY; AND WHO IS *NOT* BEING MET AND HEARD, AND WHAT IS *NOT* BEING SEEN, AND WHERE AND WHY?
RELAX DON'T RUSH ALLOW UNPLANNED TIME TO WALK AND WANDER	MEET PEOPLE WHEN IT SUITS THEM, AND WHEN THEY CAN BE AT EASE, NOT WHEN IT SUITS YOU. THIS APPLIES EVEN MORE STRONGLY FOR WOMEN THAN FOR MEN

AROUND	

PROBE, INTERVIEW ON THE BASIS OF THE MAP OR THE DIAGRAM. ASK ABOUT WHAT YOU SEE. NOTICE, INVESTIGATE DIVERSITY, DIFFERENCE, THE UNEXPECTED. ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS	USE THE SIX HELPERS WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY AND HOW?

SHOW INTEREST AND ENTHUSIAM IN LEARNING FROM PEOPLE
ALLOW MORE TIME THAN EXPECTED FOR TEAM INTERACTION AND FOR CHANGING THE AGENDA
ENJOY IT!
IT IS OFTEN INTERESTING, AND OFTEN FUN
BE NICE TO PEOPLE

6.10   **Learning from the Field**

Whenever an extension worker or some development official visit rural areas, in most cases the question that is asked is whether the official concerned has come with some schemes which involve grants or loans. Farmers do not care much for schemes that do not provide direct or indirect financial assistance.

To change such a mind-set is difficult but not impossible. We give bellow an illustration which proves the point.

The experience described here relates to an Action research project on the integrated development of selected villages in Ramgarh development block in Nainital district of Uttar Pradesh. As soon as this project was taken up, the *Gram Pradhan* (Village head) and other influential groups in the villages tried to find out the financial incentives guaranteed in the project. Coming close to the multi-disciplinary project team, however, they soon realized that there were no such direct benefits but indirect ones like mutual sharing of problems, knowledge and underlying potentials. Besides there was the scope for wider exposure through visit to agri-research and development organizations. Even events like *kisan melas* (farmers' fair) held in the villages during the four years of action research, seemed to them empty and not of much significance in comparison to the traditional loan or construction based development activities. This initial negative response from the influential in the villages discourage many.

But let us not forget that in the T & V system it was these people who were given a significant role in rural development. Our experience showed that the so called progressive and relatively affluent influential farmers are unable to truly represent the poor. But unfortunately, in most cases only their voice are heard.

The PRA on the other hand does not ignore the poorest of poor in the social system. PRA type enquiry was, therefore, chosen to find out the benchmark information on the villages selected for action research. It required a lot of efforts on the part of the project team to make poor people, particularly women, share their views on the problems of the villages. This was a challenging yet interesting task which brought out many facts which otherwise would never have been known to the workers involved in the project. For example, the farmers did not sow the improved grass seeds distributed among them by the government agencies as well as by the NGOs. This was because, first they were reluctant to grow grasses in the small land holding they had; secondly, they knew it for sure that the native grasses growing naturally along the crop fields, on the bunds etc. would suppress the unadapted exotic grasses. The Government of Uttar Pradesh as also the several NGOs had been spending millions of rupees for introduction of grasses and improved forages in this region but the outcome was frustrating at the ground level. The PRA enquiry revealed very clearly the limitations of the "improved" forage production strategies involving non-local grasses and forages.

Buffaloes are growing in sizable number in the hills of Uttar Pradesh though experts consider hill as unfavourable locale for buffaloes. The PRA enquiry in relevant the villages revealed that buffalo was a better alternative than the local cow or even cross-bred cattle because of the more fat content in buffalo milk, more manure production capability, ease in disposing off male calf for slaughter, and more milk production with locally available inputs. The restricted grazing areas (forests for example) are also the reasons for the farmers' preference for buffaloes vis-à-vis cows as buffaloes are essentially stall fed in hills. But the government agencies still consider buffalo as unsuitable for hills. Hence, there is no significant intervention for the promotion of buffaloes in this region. Yet the buffaloes are growing in number over cattle. The growing number of village dairy cooperatives in hills are yet another reason for the encouragement to buffalo rearing since dairy cooperatives pay for milk on the basis of fat content. The hill farmers are interested in replacing large number of cows with them to one or two buffaloes given the constraints faced by them in maintaining the cows. But the farmers still maintain one or two cows for religious purposes and cow bulls for draught power required in hill agriculture because buffalo bulls are not as efficient in this regards. These were the learning when farmer's active participation could be ensured through PRA types of enquiry. These learning should be transformed into action to win the confidence of farmers' and to make farmer participatory development a continuous process.

6.11   Let us sum up

In this unit we have discussed the PRA method in detail. You must have noted that the method has given rise to quite a few techniques of data collection and analysis. We have also pointed out that you need not use all the tools every time. The technique or techniques that are useful and manageable should be used. We have also warned you that PRA should not be used for its own sake or for collection of data and information only. It should always lead to action in the field. In other words PRA should lead to planning or development of a programme, its implementation as well as its monitoring.

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Unit 7

Monitoring and Evaluation

Objectives:

After studying this unit you will be able to:

i)   State the definition and purpose of monitoring

ii)   Explain participatory monitoring

iii)   State the method of participatory monitoring

iv)   Explain participatory evaluation

v)   State the meaning and objectives of evaluation

vi)   State the advantages of evaluation

vii)   Explain the method of participative evaluation

Structure:

7.1   Introduction

The two words monitoring and evaluation are normally used conjointly that is together. For the purpose of both is review. But there are differences between the two. In this unit we will define these concepts, show the differences between the two in terms of stages and objectives and describe how they can be done in a participative manner. First we take up the monitoring part and then we discuss evaluation.

7.2   Definition and Purpose of Monitoring

In plain words monitoring means keeping a watchful eye. It is an important management function directed towards ensuring the successful execution of a project work. It involves review of progress of work at regular intervals till its completion. It requires systematic and continuous collection of information about the progress of work and comparing them with the expected progress at different time periods. But it would be wrong to understand that monitoring is all about progress of work only. It is also about quality. Monitoring helps to identify the shortcomings and weaknesses of a programme and their causes. It provides the necessary signals to the planners for the necessity and the manner of intervention so that the pace and quality of an on-going project can be ensured. Monitoring is a continuous process of overseeing whether a (development) project/programme is being implemented as per plan. Monitoring starts with the beginning of the work relating to a project/programme and it ends with the completion of the same. In contrast, evaluation starts after the project/programme has been implemented. In other words, evaluation starts where monitoring ends. Monitoring helps us to assess the actual or potential problems in implementation. It has three major components - time, cost and quality. While the task of assessment of the first two are easily tackled, the third is rather complicated. And it is in this respect that the present system of monitoring is very much lacking. Without minimizing the contribution that people's participation can make in the first two it is in the third aspect that community participation is crucial.

7.3   Conventional System and Its Shortcomings

In the conventional system monitoring has quite a few shortcomings. Usually it is done departmentally and the developmental officers who have the requisite authority are far removed from the place of action or the project site. As a consequence monitoring is in most cases indifferent and ineffective. The people who witness the progress of work and are in a position to give a direct and informed feedback on a regular basis, not only about the progress of work, but more importantly about the quality, are never consulted. Neither they have the authority to intervene. Even the specifications of the work in terms of time, cost and quality are not shared with them, though they are supposed to be the beneficiaries. This leaves scope for both inefficiency and corruption. People as a consequence do not get the benefit of the development expenditure made for them. The development interventions though meant for them are actually beyond their grasp. It creates and fosters the 'contractor raj' with all its vices. If people are to reap the benefit of development programme, it is absolutely necessary that they participate in monitoring the

projects/programmes being implemented for their benefit. For the monitoring process to be really effective it is necessary for the monitoring agency to have the right kind of information at the right time. It is also necessary to ensure the authenticity of the data and their quality. Proper monitoring demands purposive analysis of the data directed towards an action plan for timely intervention. Under the present system there are deficiencies in all these respects. As such, the objectives of monitoring namely, immediate identification of the slippage and introduction of corrective measures, are never realized. But even if all these faults in the present system were taken care of, still we would argue for participative monitoring. This is for the simple reason that the parameters of evaluation and its indicators may not be in keeping with people's preferences and aspirations. The set of present indicators may not serve people's interests. That apart, as we have argued again and again, the purpose of people's participation is not just to improve and sharpen the existing tools of development planning from formulation of project to implementation and beyond, but also to increase people's capabilities. Participation in monitoring empowers the people to intervene effectively at the right time. Participation is not merely about the quality of output or results. It is more about change in such things as individual, community and organizational capabilities. It is about removal of differential access to and control over developmental interventions. It is about redefining people's relationship with those who have power and authority.

7.4 Participatory Monitoring

The major thrusts of participatory monitoring are summarized in the following Table.

Indicator	Conventional Monitoring	Participatory Monitoring
1. Agency of Monitoring	1. Government Officials or aid givers.	1. Government officials aid givers and local people.
2. Role of beneficiaries	2.The role of beneficiaries is either nil or marginal. At most they provide only information.	2. Depending upon their capabilities the beneficiaries, either take control of the exercise or help the relevant agency.
3. Methodology	3. Tools and methods are determined by the development agencies exclusively.	3. Tools and methods are jointly formulated by the beneficiaries and the agencies concerned.
4. Measurement of success	4. Defined externally mostly in quantitative terms aimed at measuring output.	4. Local people determine the indicators which are both quantitative and qualitative in nature.
5. Degree of seriousness	5. Some what casual and routinised.	5. Degree of seriousness is very high because it is done by those who are really concerned.
6. Timing and frequency	6. Usually upon completion of sub-programmes or when the project/programme is half - way through.	6. More frequent, almost continuous, because things happen before the eyes of the people and people may immediately intervene when things tend to go wrong.
7. Accountability	7. Internal, limited to the department or the agency sponsoring the programme.	7. Accountability is both internal to the department or agency and external to the people.

7.5   Methods of Participatory Monitoring

Let us now discuss what methods you can use to promote participatory monitoring. A very simple answer to the question is that you can use the PRA tools here very profitably. For example, you can use PRA to collect information on the on-going development programmes/projects. The stakeholders, if properly enthused, will give you a clear picture of the problems and deficiencies. They may also suggest some remedial measures. You can also use the ranking techniques to find out what according to the stakeholders are the optimal solutions. But to get the best out of the PRA method certain other requirements need to be carefully understood. Let us explain the point.

So far as participatory monitoring is concerned you can think of two possible situations. In an ideal situation the stakeholders themselves with the support of administration, other experts and NGOs formulate the programme or the project. In such a situation the stakeholders have all the necessary information regarding it in every detail – the objectives for taking up the project/programme, the expected outcome, the target group of beneficiaries, specifications of the project/ programme, the money to be spent on it and the target date of completion. The PRA exercise done at the outset has ensured people's involvement and raised the level of their knowledge. They are now more confident about their strength because they have themselves participated in formulating the project. The differences in attitude among the different groups of the stakeholders have also to a certain extent been smoothened out. Here the ground is already prepared for participatory monitoring as well as evaluation. In fact these two functions tend to be continuation of participatory planning or programme/project formulation and implementation. Not much additional efforts are necessary here. Your role is to ensure that interests do not flag in the mid-way and remedial measures as suggested are taken without delay. In case the measures suggested by the target group cannot be taken you have only to explain the reasons thereof to the stakeholders.

However, most likely you would not get such an ideal situation at the present moment. In most cases, the programme or the project has been formulated by outsiders – the government or the aid giver. There is also little scope for participation at the stage of implementation. As we have seen, asking the people to contribute in cash or in kind including labour is not really participation in the true sense of the term. This is because the terms of participation are being dictated by outsiders. Can you promote participation in such a situation?

The answer to the question is 'yes'. The task may not be easy but you can do it. For this what you will have to do is to identify the stakeholders, explain the objectives to them and enthuse them to get involved. People will get involved when you explain to them the reasons why the project/programme has

been undertaken, what benefits are being expected out of it and who are the possible beneficiaries. But that is not all. Most importantly you will have to share all information relating to the project/programme with them. You will have to detail out the project/programme specifications, the name of the agencies and why and how they have been involved, the budget sanctioned and the time allotted. You will also have to tell them about the quality of the work being expected. You must remember that monitoring is not about money and time, but quality as well. For this the foremost requirement is information sharing frankly and in detail.

After that your task would be to try to work out a consensus regarding the parameters or indicators, which will guide the monitoring work including its periodicity. Actual work regarding collection of information will have to be distributed among the participants. Mode of organization of information and its analysis will also have to be worked out. Here it is necessary to remember that the indicators developed for monitoring in this manner, its frequency and the mode of analysis in the participatory manner may differ substantially from those of the outsider agency sponsoring the project.

Finally comes the question of using the results. Results of the monitoring exercise are to be shared with the people and retained by them for future use. They need also to be forwarded to the external agency for timely rectification. Since monitoring should ideally lead to quick and effective corrective measures, it is absolutely necessary to ensure that collection, organization and analysis of the field level data are done as quickly as possible so that they lead to identification of the necessary steps for improvement of the quality of work.

These are some of the requirements of effective participatory monitoring. You will get some additional hints from the last part of the following section (Sec 7.12) where we have discussed the methods of participatory evaluation.

7.6   Participative Evaluation

You must have noted by new that we have tried to emphasize again and again (See unit 2 and unit 5) that participation of the people in development to the really meaningful and effective must run through all the phases of a project cycle, viz, planning , formulation of a project or programme, its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Evaluation is the last phase of the project cycle. As a practicing administrator you must have noted that participation of the people is the least both in the monitoring as well as well as in the evaluation stage. Evaluation is done almost exclusively by agencies external to the local community. This needs to be changed. In this section we will discuss how this can be done. How a new process of

evaluation can be initiated. And how you can act as a facilitator of the process. But first let us try to define evaluation and state its objectives and advantages.

7.7 Meaning and Objectives

In plain words to evaluate means to take stock or to judge. Why do we need it? We need this to know whether a particular intervention, say a project or a programme, has been executed properly or, in other words, whether it has been done as per specifications. The specifics may be of a quantitative or a qualitative nature, whether it has been executed in time and within the budgetary provisions made.

Beyond these we may also like to know whether a particular intervention, project or programme after its execution has fulfilled the basic objectives for which it was formulated. Going a step further, we may also like to know the short and long form effects of the completed (or on-going) project over the community. Thus we may have three types of evaluation of a project or programme, namely

a) Evaluation of output

b) Evaluation of outcome, and

c) Evaluation of impact.

In a real life situation it may not always be possible to draw the line dividing them, but you must have a conceptual clarity in this respect.

7.8   Examples of different types of evaluation

Let us take two examples which are quite well known to you. The first is that of building a village road. At the beginning of the project the specifications had been clearly laid down - such as the length and

breadth of the road, the nature of the road (macadamized, brick laid or morum), the nature of skirting, number of culverts to be built, etc. There was also a specified time allocation made. In this case, evaluation will mean taking of stock of the completed work and judging it in terms of the quantitative and qualitative parameters of the work already decided and the time and money spent for the project.

Our second example is the mid-day meal programme for primary school going children. As you know providing mid-day meal to primary school children is not an end in itself. Its primary focus is to make the school more attractive to the children and their parents so that the children universally enroll in school and remain there till the attainment of a minimum level of learning. In this case evaluation involves a two-level operation. At one level you may take stock about the number of children being covered, number left out, the quantity and quality of the food served, whether the food was being served in time and in proper place, etc. At another level you may ask whether the scheme has been able to achieve its objective in terms of maximizing enrolment and minimizing drop out, etc. This we call evaluation of *outcome*. Going further, if you try to find out the short or long term effect of the programme on the children, the parents, the local community and the local self-governing bodies in terms of changing attitude towards literacy and education particularly and other aspects of human development indicators, you are entering into another plane of evaluation, which we may define as *impact evaluation.*

Keeping all these in mind we may now define evaluation as an activity which provides us information regarding (a) the performance of a project or a programme (b) its success in terms of objectives and (c) its relevance. As against monitoring of a project/programme, which is done while the same is being carried out, evaluation comes at the terminal point. Evaluation helps decision makers to assess various programmes in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, relevance and impact.

7.9   Advantages of evaluation

Evaluation is one of the most important components of management function. For, it gives an informed feedback about the nature of success or failure of a project and the reasons thereof so that the faults can be rectified and problems removed. All these are directed towards continuous improvement of the project starting from the formulation stage. It is for these reason that participative evaluation is all the more necessary because it provide the stakeholders' perspective - a perspective of the sufferer, witness of the execution of the project and its end user all rolled into one. Our experience shows that internal evaluation by government departments (or such statutory agencies, like the CAG) or by the external agencies carried out

without participation of the stakeholders invariably fails to ensure, far to speak of improving, the quality of development planning.

In more concrete terms participatory evaluation has the following qualities.

- It ensures economy, since it helps in the identification of points of leakage in execution.

- It creates efficiency in project planning and execution by providing field level data.

- The target of development is invariably the poor and the disadvantaged. So accountability ultimately lies to these people. Participative evaluation ensures the process by which the voice of the stakeholders gets precedence in the evaluation of development interventions.

- When people are called upon to evaluate, they begin to feel involved. They begin to feel that they are important. When they evaluate they come closer to the developmental activities and slowly a sense of ownership is generated.

- This sense of ownership in its turns goes a long way in ensuring the sustainability of projects/programmes. You are aware that many facilities, created by government often become dysfunctional very soon because of lack of proper upkeep. One of the main reasons for this is apathy of the local community towards these facilities. For, they do not consider them to be their own. On the other hand, when a sense of ownership is generated local maintenance and upkeep are ensured almost automatically. The local community often creates new norms and institutions for their proper use and maintenance.

- When people come to realize that they are effective players in developmental activities and their voice is being heard and development decisions are being taken to meet their pressing needs and preferences, they feel encouraged to play a more effective role in their development. This directly leads to the generation of new capabilities which in turn leads to empowerment.

7.10   Participative Evaluation and Evaluation of Participation

While working for the promotion of participation in evaluation, it is necessary for you to understand the difference between participative evaluation and evaluation of participation. Ideally once the first few steps have been taken for promotion of people's participation, it is expected that with time the nature and quality of participation will improve. It would be more meaningful and more effective. Evaluation of participation tries to assess this change so that effective steps can be taken for widening and deepening the scope of participation. We have discussed this in greater detail in unit 5.

7.11   Difference Between Conventional and Participatory Evaluation

The difference between conventional and participative evaluation may be summed up in the following manner.

- In conventional evaluation, the criteria of evaluation are determined by the governmental and the donor agencies. Hence the evaluation remains at a superficial level. At best it can measure the success of an action on the field in terms of input and output. This is a very mechanical form of evaluation. In contrast participative evaluation goes deeper.

- In conventional evaluation, there is little scope for introducing effective improvement because of lack of dependable and verifiable field level data. As such, project implementation goes through similar avoidable problems again and again. Participative evaluation on the other hand not only helps in the identification of the mistakes but their rectification also.

- Since conventional evaluation is external to the system, the criteria of evaluation are fixed and inflexible and as such are often unable to come to terms with the complexities of the reality. In the

participative evaluation, on the other hand, the criteria are flexible and are evolved jointly with the target group.

- In conventional evaluation, the task of evaluation is the sole preserve of the project manager. In participative management the evaluation is done in a collaborative manner.

7.12 Method of Participative Evaluation

Since you are already acquainted with the PRA technique you can use it for evaluation also. To help you apply the method on real life we explain here the sequential steps that you should take by taking a real life example. Let us suppose you have to evaluate the mid-day meal programme at a particular locality. How do you proceed?

Step 1

First identity the stakeholders or the persons who need to be involved in evaluation. In this case obviously the students and their parents are the primary stakeholders. But there are other groups also who need to be consulted. We may call them the secondary stakeholders. They are the teachers, persons who prepare and distribute food, the block and panchayat functionaries who arrange the supply of raw materials, etc. To ensure their participation you need first to meet them individually or in groups to persuade them to

participate in the exercise. As a strategy you may meet them separately in the first stage and then collectively to start the process of actual evaluation.

You must take care to meet the target group at their convenient time and place not as per your convenience.

Step 2

After identifying the stakeholders you explain the objectives of the exercise and explain what the participants can expect out of it. Here participants also articulate their points of view and indicate how they can contribute in the task.

Step 3

Along with it you discuss with the participants what should be the priorities of evaluation. You may have your ideas about it. Check them with the stakeholders.

Step 4

From this you can develop in a participative manner a list of indicators by which you should evaluate the programme. This is necessary because only after selecting the indicators you should be in a position to distribute the task of collection of information to different individuals and groups. In finalizing the list of indicators you need to keep the following things in mind.

a) The indicators must be precise, and not vague.

b) They should also be measurable. This measurement may be in quantitative terms, such as number of recipients per day and the amount of food provided. They may also be qualitative - such as whether the food is served hot or cold, whether dry or cooked food is served, whether the food is tasty or not, etc.

c) You must also make sure that the tasks distributed are realistic in the sense that it is possible for the participants to collect and provide reliable and usable information which can be analysed for getting a true picture of the situation.

d) You must also ensure that the tasks undertaken are within the capacity of the participants to attain. It is better not to try to be too ambitions.

e) Since the whole exercise is directed towards deriving a feed back on the programme for review and further improvement the whole exercise must be completed within a specified time determined through a process of consultation.

Step 5

At this stage (a) the indicators have been finalized and (b) the task components have been shared by the participants. Taking these two into consideration the method of information collection needs to be finalized. Your task should be to ensure that the participations have understood their responsibilities well. You need also to ensure that the time schedules are properly understood and accepted.

Step 6

This stage is the period of information collection. Depending upon what tasks have been allotted to you, your job would be to regularly monitor the process of work and solve any problem that may come. Since the participants are not used to such work you may have to help and encourage them to build their confidence.

Step 7

The next stage is that of analysis of data. It may so be that you are the only expert available in the locality to undertake the task. It may also be that there are experts available who might not have participated in data collection. Ideally you should try to harness all locally available resources for the exercise. But what must be done without fail is to ensure that both the data as well as the method of analysis are open and above board. Equally important is to share the results with the local community including the participants publicly.

Step 8

Discussion of the results would invariably lead to questions – what is to be done with the findings. Rather than taking the decision unilaterally you encourage them to offer suggestions. It is most likely that the suggestions would come not only as to how the information are to be shared but also as to what corrective measures are to be taken. Obviously, these would be valuable inputs for further planning.

Step 9

Finally you try to elicit the opinion of the participants about the method itself. Do they think it was useful? Do they think it was conducted properly? Do they think it should be done on a regular basis for all such developmental programme? Can they offer any suggestion as to how the method could be made more effective? And so on.

Finally we would like to add that initially you may not get the ideal situation for the perfect execution of a participatory evaluation exercise. Given the nature of constraints you may have to innovate on the field. This is welcome as long as you are tune to your objectives.

7.13   Let us Sum up

In this unit we have discussed the meanings and advantages of participative monitoring and evaluation. We have also explained how you can initiate the exercise of participative monitoring and evaluation. The steps you need to take in these respects have also been summarized.

7.14   Check your Progress

1. What do you understand by monitoring? How does monitoring differ from evaluation? (7.2)

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2. What are the shortcoming of the conventional system of monitoring? (7.3)

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3. How does participatory monitoring differ from conventional monitoring? (7.4)

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4. Can you effectively introduce participatory monitoring even if there was no people's

participation during the stage of formulation of a project? What are the steps you should take in such a situation? (7.5)

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5. What are the objectives of participatory evaluation? (7.7)

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6. What are the different types of evaluation? (7.8)

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7. What are the advantages of evaluation? (7.9)

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8. Have do you distinguish between participative
   evaluation and evaluation of participation? (7.10)

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9. How does conventional evaluation differ from

   participative evaluation? (7.11)

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10. Summarise the different step of participative evaluation? (7.12)

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MODULE IV

COLLECTIVE DECISION - MAKING

UNIT 8

Collective Decision-Making: Nature, Process And Motives

Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

    i.   Describe nature and types of Decision

    ii.   Explain the nature of collective decision-making

    iii.   State the Process of Collective Decision-making

    iv.   Describe the motives of Collective Decision-making

Structure:

8.1   Introduction

Here, the purpose is to discuss the nature of decision-making and point out the different types of decision-making. After studying this, you will be able to explain what is a decision and what are the different kinds of decisions that are taken in government organizations including panchayats and municipalities. The processes or the stages through which a decision has to pass should also be clear to you. You will be able to explain the motives of collective decision-making or the reasons why such decisions are taken.

8.2   Nature of decision

A decision is a commitment to action. It is a course of action that is proposed and executed. The need for a decision arises when there is a problem to be solved. Suppose, a village is suffering from acute water scarcity. There may be suggestions from many quarters. Old people may say that village tanks used to provide water; these are now derelict; or at many places, these have been filled up for other purposes. Village women may suggest that since they have to travel long distances to procure water, tube wells should be sunk as near as possible to their houses. To solve this problem, there may therefore, be many suggestions. As a result, old tanks may be desilted. New tanks may be excavated. Deep tube wells may be sunk etc. etc. May be, after some discussion, a decision is taken to desilt the tanks immediately. Such a decision is a choice among many possible options. A decision thus means a choice among alternatives. Again, for instance, a decision is taken to distribute poultry birds among a group of people living below the poverty line. Once it is decided to go ahead with this plan, action takes place in such a way that the target group, earlier fixed, actually receives the required number of poultry birds within a scheduled time. At block level or gram panchayat level, many such decisions are taken from time to time. We must note that a decision is not an empty statement that poultry birds will be distributed. It is a firm commitment. Once a decision is taken, it must be followed up in reality. That is, the decision to desilt tanks, or the decision to distribute poultry birds is actually put into practice. Tanks are desilted; poultry birds are distributed.

8.3   Types of Decisions

Decisions can be of two types:

- Rule-bound decisions, and

- Decisions for which no clear rules exist

In general, most decisions in a government organization are rule-based. Rules serve as guidelines for making choices. When rules exist, decision-making becomes easier. There are fixed rules and orders for almost anything. Who should be given the poultry birds or a milch cow: this is clearly laid down in government orders. So, when the decision has to be taken in this regard, one has simply to apply the relevant rules and do the distribution work accordingly. Rule-based decisions are easy to take. If you are taking the decision, you can tell others that you are depending on rules, and the decision is not your personal whim or fancy. Also, it is easy to convince others that rules do not permit any other option.

There are other kinds of decisions where clear rules do not exist to suggest what is to be done? For instance, in summer there is acute drinking water problem in a village. To meet the need of the villagers, tube wells that are out of order may be quickly repaired. New tube wells may have to be sunk at different locations. In the absence of clear rules about where to sink tube wells, decisions are taken on the basis of discussions with villagers and panchayat leaders. These types of decisions are usually taken on the basis of the knowledge and information provided by the villagers. Also, their support becomes necessary to reach a fairly unanimous decision and to implement it. Thus, this second kind of decision is not so much rule-based as consultation-based. By its very nature, it has to be more open and participative. In rural development, many a time this kind of decision has to be taken because of new demands and new situations, which are not always covered by rules. In these situations, you have to have an open mind; you should try to seek other people's help. People also should feel that they are being consulted; the decision is not imposed by you, it is arrived at on the basis of discussions and consultations.

Two points need to be noted here. One, the organization itself undergoes a dramatic change. It is no longer the job of a government organization or a gram panchayat alone. You have to include in your decision-making process others who are not formally part of your organization. Secondly, it is in this second kind of decision-making that the task itself compels collective decision-making. In the first kind of decision-making, which is basically rule-bound, you simply follow the rules, as laid down, to take a decision. In the second kind of decision-making, you extend the definition of your organization and involve others to reach a decision, which is a collective decision.

Check your progress I

What is a decision?

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What is a rule-based decision?

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What is the second type of decision-making?

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8.4   Collective Decision-making: An Overview

After you have read about the nature and types of decisions, you can now try to appreciate the nature of collective decision-making. In development administration, this type of decision is quite common. Since many people have to be consulted at different stages of a development activity, many minds get involved in such cases.

An organization like a panchayat or a municipality is a collective forum. Elected members, employees and the common people are all involved in the administration of these institutions at the local level. In such a situation, any decision that is taken at this level is bound to be a collective decision. You have understood, by now, under what circumstances, collective decisions are taken. In this section, you will get to know more about such decisions: their nature and process.

8.5   Nature of Collective Decision-making

Development' is by nature a creative activity. You create a new 'thing'. It can be a new road, or a new irrigation canal. Development also enhances human choices. When a new road is constructed, people

can move to different places. So, development creates new aspects, and at the same time improves the quality of human beings. In any case, development improves the overall quality of community life.

It should be clear by now that development activity, be it a new road construction or a school building or a dug well, need to be identified planned and executed. At each stage, decisions have to be taken, about which road and where? Where to locate the school or the dug well? These kinds of decisions are public decisions. It is not an individual family taking a decision whether there should be another room added to the already existing family home. When a decision has to be taken by a gram panchayat or any government organization, it involves many considerations. The interest of the entire village has to be taken into account. A decision by a public authority has to be taken in larger public interest. So, it has to be a collective decision. Many people have to be consulted. People should be informed about the proposed new activities. Their views should be elicited. There may be poorer localities whose special requirements should be taken into account. There may be women's group who would be having special problems of their own. There may be opponents, those who would be, at the first instances, objecting to a new proposal. So, as far as possible, views and opinions of different social groups should be considered before a decision is taken. By its very nature, because it has to serve wider public interest and it has to accommodate different groups and viewpoints, public decisions should ideally be collective decisions. Such decisions are also known as interactive decisions, as many persons, groups and views interact to reach a decision.

8.6   Process of Collective Decision-making

Collective decision-making is a group activity. A group of people interested in a "problem" (like irrigation water, electricity, health etc.) has to interact among themselves to appreciate the nature of the problem and then find out a solution. So, collective decision-making has to pass through a process that needs to be understood. In this section, the process is briefly discussed.

8.6.1   Identification of Stakeholders

As you have now understood, the need for collective decision-making is felt when there is a special problem (such as water scarcity) affecting the community at large. It is the requirement of collective life that impels collective decision-making. Some issues are of general nature affecting the whole community (e.g. water, roads etc.). Other issues may affect a group or a particular locality, or a family (not the entire village or town). Collective decision-making, in such instances, has to start with an understanding of the nature of the "collectivity". Is it the entire village community or a small target group or some families? This is how the "stakeholders" are identified. Stakeholders are those affected by the outcome, negatively or positively, or those who can affect the outcome of a proposed activity (say, a new school-building, or a dug well). Identifying the right stakeholders is the first step in the process of collective decision-making.

The following questions are important in identifying the right stakeholders:

(1)   Who might be affected by the proposed development project?

(2)   Who are the representatives of (1)?

(3)   Who is likely to mobilize public opinion for or against the project?

(4)   Whose participation will make the project more effective and useful?

(5)   Who are the "voiceless" in the community and are likely to be left out of the consultation process because of their marginal social existence (poor, women etc.)?

(6)   Who can contribute financial and technical resources?

(7)   Whose behaviour and attitude should change for the proposed activity to succeed?

There can be different stakeholders for different projects. For instance, for a child development project, the stakeholders may be the mothers and ICDS workers. In another project relating to fisher folks development, the stakeholders would be the fisher folks and the owners of tanks and ponds. The stakeholders will thus vary from project to project, depending on the nature of the project. These are *primary stakeholders.* There can be secondary stakeholders also, who help and guide from outside. Thus, the government officials, the donor agencies and outside experts will be vitally instructed in a development project. They can be considered as the *secondary stakeholders.*

8.6.2   Other Processes

Alongside this exercise of stakeholder identification, the following processes need to be gone through to ensure collective decision-making:

- *Information:* to circulate among the public as much information as possible about the proposed activity.

- *Consultation and advice:* to arrange discussion in different forms and forums to allow free and frank expression of the views and opinions of people.

- *Doubt removal:* to clarify issues and "problems" which 'sceptics' or opposition groups may raise; they need to be convinced, and not suppressed or ignored.

- *Levelling:* to ensure free and frank discussion, all participants should speak and their views need to be respected. The "voiceless" sections need to be encouraged to speak out and express their points of view.
- *Expert views:* to present 'technical' points of view for which experts (engineers, doctors etc.) need to be brought in to enlighten the participants about the technical aspects of work.

- *Political views:* to ensure participation of different political and pressure groups; their points of views should be heard, and in no way opposition views should be choked or disallowed.

- *Institutional forums:* To evolve methods and techniques to encourage and promote participation; institutional rules may be formulated accordingly. For instance, 'gram sabha' or ward committee is a forum, which is formally recognized to facilitate collective decision-making. This aspect is being discussed more fully in Module 2.

8.7   **Motives of Collective Decisions**

Interactive or collective decisions are inspired by five chief motives (or reasons why such decisions are taken and prove useful):

- *Creating Support:* By consulting people and groups, it is easy to get the support of local people for a proposed project; also, widespread consultations help minimize resistance from potential opposition and implementation becomes easier.

- *Improving Quality*: Citizen's involvement in decision-making helps mobilize local information, experiences and preferences. These inputs greatly improve the quality of decisions.

- *Ensuring Sustainability:* Collective decisions arrived at through discussions and consultations create a sense of belonging among the participants in the decision process. Anything that is created through this process a tube-well, or a school building becomes a community asset. The participating members see to it that such community assets are properly maintained and not misused by anybody. Thus, a new asset that is created lasts longer, and the members of the community take control of it and looks after its sustainability.

- *Improving local democracy:* Collective decision-making involves many minds and interests in decision-making. Different social groups, administrators and local leaders participate in decision-making. This helps social mixing of different groups. Also, the citizens and local administration come together in a spirit of union. Local democracy thus becomes more than mere rules and regulations. It takes the character of a lived experience, and creates a bond of affection between the citizens and local government (like a panchayat or a municipality). Representative democracy (based on occasional elections) is changed into participatory democracy (people taking part in frequent decision-processes). So, collective decision-making improves the quality of local democracy.

8.7.1 *Empowerment and capacity building*

The primary stakeholders of a development project (such as a school building or dug well project) will be empowered through project involvement. They will not be merely users or beneficiaries of a project. They are expected to develop the ability to influence and exercise control over development decisions and resources. In this way, the local community will be able to develop its own inner strength to run and maintain projects and meet future requirements, without depending over much on outsiders. Local level capacity building in effect means the ability of the local community to solve problems that affect their lives through a group process on a durable basis. Collective decision-making enhances the collective strength of the community in terms of its ability to face up to the different challenges at the local level.

BOX-1

In mid-1970s the draught in most part of south India resulted in open wells drying up and people had to search hard for water. As a response to this, the state government undertook drinking water programmes with the help of external financial aid. These programmes were meant to provide bore wells and hand pumps: this was a new technology for most of these villages. People were excluded from all the decision-making process. They did not know how to operate and maintain the new system. Inadequately trained hand pump mechanics and lack of information about proper operation and maintenance of hand pumps resulted in frequent breakdown of a large number of hand-pumps and the villages were back to their previous water problem.

8.3.7 Check your progress II

What do 'stakeholders' mean?

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Distinguish between primary and secondary stakeholders.

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Identify the process of collective decision-making.

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What are the chief motives of collective decision-making?

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8.8   Let us sum up

After reading this section, you should now be able to explain (a) what is collective decision-making; (b) what are the processes involved in such decision-making and (c) what are the motives inspiring collective decision-making. Now you should be able to appreciate the nature and importance of collective decision-making in development administration, and how such decisions are taken in real-life situations, when you have to successfully manage development activities.

Collective Decision-Making and Eradication of Poverty

Objectives

After studying this unit, you will be able to:

i.   Explain the necessity of collective decision-making in eradication of poverty

ii.   State the problems of collective decision-making

iii.   Describe the requirements of Collective Decision-making

iv.   State the management of anti poverty programmes

v.   Describe the steps to promote Collective Decision-making among the poor

Structure:

9.1   Introduction

9.2   Facilitating Collective decision-making: An overview

9.3   Problems of Collective decision-making

9.4   Requirements of Collective decision-making

9.5   Management of Anti-Poverty Programme: Nature and Need

9.6   Promoting Collective decision-making among the poor

9.7   Role of the administrator

9.8   Let Us Sum Up

        Check your progress I and II

9.1   Introduction

You have learnt that collective decision-making helps improve community life by involving the people in decision making. Collective decision-making is however more desired than actually practised. There are many problems involved in this form of decision-making. This section deals with these problems and suggests ways and means to develop a culture of collective decision-making.

9.2   Facilitating Collective Decision-making: An Overview

Collective decision-making is a group activity. Hence group formation and the involvement of group members are both crucial for such kind of decision-making. This organizational form breaks the harrier between a formal organization (e.g. a Panchayat) and the public or the citizens. The administrators belonging to the formal organization must have the attitude to interact with the public. Also, the public being a diverse group (poor, rich, minority, tribal people etc.) may not always come together to participation in the decision-making process. The administrator may also find it difficult to take everybody along and resolve conflicts among different groups. In a discussion of conflict decision-making, these real-life problems need to be taken into account, and ways and means to facilitate collective decision-making should be explored.

9.3   Problems of Collective decision-making

You have read that collective decision-making presupposes the existence and identification of a collectivity or group who are to get involved in decision-making.

First and foremost, it is not always easy to define the relevant group that has to be involved. There is a tendency in general to exclude, rather than include as many people as possible. This happens because of a variety of factors such as rich-poor distinction, caste-community divisions, powerful-powerless distinction and so on. Local situation may be such that a dominant group would rather not like the presence of 'opponents' or opposition parties in a forum.

Second, experts and administrators often think that they know everything. So, it is not necessary to listen to 'others'. It requires an open mind to look for knowledge everywhere, even in a common man.

Third, political divisions become, sometimes so sharp and acrimonious that people get divided and fail to come together.

Fourth, administration goes by rules and regulations. So, there is general reluctance on the part of administrators to innovate and receive new ideas, which seem to disturb their routine business.

Fifth, hierarchy in an organization attaches importance to authority rather than knowledge. So, many a time, what is found convenient is to decide on the basis of authority position rather than consultation among many actors including lower level functionaries and the people. This can be summed up as the organizational culture of a bureaucracy (as against democracy). In the mind of the administrator, there is a concealed definition of his/her organization. 'Others' are deemed to be outsiders. So, why consult them?

Sixth, collective Decision-making requires a lot of time and patience, which are always in short supply in government organizations. Initially, if an effort to consult people fails because of conflicts and misunderstandings, after that, there would be reluctance to try it again.

Seventh, also, resources (fund, personnel, materials are always scarce. There is often a feeling that if you consult many people, there may be too many demands. It will be practically impossible to satisfy everybody, given the limited resources at your disposal.

9.4   Requirements of Collective Decision-making

From what has been stated above, you can yourself think how can collective decision-making be encouraged and promoted. The requirements may be briefly summarized as under:

- *Creating public awareness:* through literacy movement, meetings, processions, pamphlets etc. (People should come to know that administration is not only *for them,* it is also *by them*).

- *Generating trust and co-operation among people:* in order that they can rise above petty considerations and social divisions that stand in the way of their unity. (This has been characterized as "Social Capital" generation in local communities: creating a culture of enduring trust and co-operation in the community.

- *Not to avoid sceptics and opposition groups,* but to involve them regularly in discussions and deliberations. Opposition should be considered as a resource, and new information and knowledge can come from them.

- *Not to present a ready-made blueprint:* to avoid the notion that the decision has already been taken, so why engage in consultation and discussion.

- *To accept the fact that solutions to complex problems can come from many minds:* Nobody has monopoly of knowledge. Ordinary people have their home-grown knowledge based on life experiences. This should be respected and listened to.

- *To work for capacity-building of institutions* in terms of training and re-training of administrators and people's representatives, reformulation of rules and regulations to do away with rigidities and enlist people's participation, and infrastructure updating to technically improve communication facilities and information-dissemination.

- To create a new administrative culture, acknowledging people's role in administration as active participants, de-emphasizing authority in organization to promote participative mode of working, and recognizing people's right to information about what goes on in administration (budget, fund position etc.).

- Expenditure on different projects etc.) and ridding administration of age-old 'secrecy' and 'confidentiality'; and

- To activate and regularize the working of participatory institutions such as gram sabha / samsad, ward committee, beneficiary committees and other user organizations.

Check your progress 1

What are the problems of collective decision-making?

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How can collective decision-making be encouraged and promoted?

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9.5   Management of Anti poverty programmes: Nature and Need

A major objective of development has been to create conditions so that the poor people can get out of the poverty trap. So far, development has been for them and not by them. They have remained mere beneficiaries and passive recipients of government schemes. Experience gained from the development field shows that development can be real if the poor would be able to actively participate in it. *Development should not be a gift from above; it has to be by the people themselves*. They must own development as the result of their own collective effort. As active participants in the processes of their development, they would be initiating, designing, implementing and evaluating the development projects, which, they think, can help improve their own living conditions.   State institutions, local government, voluntary agencies and outside experts will, surely enough help and advise them. But the original motive force and the activities that would have to be planned and implemented must have their source in poor people's collective thinking and efforts.

Collective decision-making is most needed, therefore, in the design, implementation and evaluation of anti poverty programmes. It should ideally be the decision/decisions by the poor people themselves. Development has to be people managed and not expert managed. The whole idea is that the poor people

themselves take charge of their destiny. Rather than depending on government or Panchayat or any NGO (who can help them from outside in specific instances), the people themselves get organized to bring about their own development. The reasons for poor people's collective decision-making in relation to local development are many. More important among these are:

Firstly, the poor people know their 'problems' be it asset-related (land, poultry birds, milch cow etc.), social services related (health, education etc) infrastructure related (electricity, roads etc.) or anything else. Outsider's suggestions may not reflect local reality, and there is every likelihood of imposition of 'standard' measures irrespective of their suitability for the local situation. As the saying goes, the wearer best knows where the shoe pinches, so, it is the poor who know what can be done to ameliorate their problems.

Secondly, the poor people are familiar with the local situation and with available local resources. Local knowledge and local resource - based 'development' is likely to be locally more useful, sustainable, and cost effective than any externally thought -of project that may not fit in with the local environment.

Thirdly, collective decision making, when regularly practiced, generates and reinforces group consciousness. The poor people gain in self-confidence, and their strength to face a problem unitedly grows steadily. Their bargaining power in relation to others (e.g. government, Panchayat, police etc.) greatly increases in this process. The practice of collective decision-making ultimately plays a transformative role. The poor steadily move from a state of 'voiceless ness' to 'voicefulness'.

9.6 Promoting collective decision-making among the poor

The concept of people managed development means that the poor people, first of all, must be organized to form a collectivity. Already there are many examples, in the field, of poor people's organizations such as a rural women's group, or a fisher folks' cooperative, and others. Such organizations are usually scheme or project based. These are not natural organizations whereby the poor people form their own organizations to work toward a common purpose. Government sponsored organizations are always bound by rules and regulations. These are in reality managed by outsiders (government officials), and people just participate in them. People's own organizations often need, at the outset, some external help. A field level government functionary (say, an officer of the cooperative department or the fisheries department.) may initially encourage the formation of an organization. Once the people realize that such an

organization would be of great help, they learn to organize themselves and later run the organizations without much of external help. Local leadership grows out of work experience.

Secondly, nothing succeeds like success. Once an organization, such as a Women's Thrift Society, runs successfully for sometime, it gathers momentum and through a learning process, matures into a durable organization. People at other places inquire about it and tries to replicate it in their situations.

Thirdly, as a corollary, poor people's organized effort depends, for its sustenance, as much on their own willingness and capability as on the supportive role of the government, the Panchayat institutions and even the NGOs. This calls for the convergence of efforts of many actors. For instance, the organizational strength of the poor people will increase considerably if there would be a concerted, well-integrated government policy to

a) Expand economic opportunities (land non-land occupation)

b) Facilitate empowerment (participation in political processes and decision making and removing social barriers of caste, illiteracy etc.), and

c) Reduce vulnerability (due to ill health, natural disasters like flood etc.).

Poor people's own efforts to improve their economic standard and overall quality of life should not be considered as something without any help from government and other public agencies. A complementarity has to be established between poor people's own efforts to develop themselves and the workings of various public agencies such as irrigation department, forest department, police department etc. The local level government officials have a major responsibility to act as a catalyst and an intermediary. This is necessary to ensure that convergence of efforts actually takes place, and different agencies move in concert to facilitate poor people's own grass roots level efforts to improve their living situation. It has to be remembered that people's own efforts have the effect of creating self reliant and democratic local communities. Also to the extent these efforts would succeed, these will supplement government efforts and greatly ease the burden on conventional public administration. It is common experience that administration tends to by-pass and neglect poor people's problems. The processes as described, if successful, will bring the administration close to

the poor and there will be healthy relationship between the two. In normal times, the administration tends to neglect the problems of the poor. And the poor people also tend to avoid the administration

9.7 Role of the Administrator

Rural poverty is often "under perceived," i.e. not properly understood by the administrator. You are also likely to have the same bias: not to be able to perceive the real conditions of the rural poor. This happens because of the following reasons:

One, the administrator, like you, is used to seeing roadside villages, not trying to go deep into areas where the poor live in remote places.

Two, the tendency is to look at projects only. People outside the projects are overlooked.

Three, the better off villagers come in contact with you, as a result the really poor and the women needing help and assistance are often not paid any attention.

Four, you are likely to avoid the bad times of the year, e.g. rainy season or draught so that in times of distress like draught or flood, you may not be going out to see at first hand the plight of the poor.

Five, you may be deliberately avoiding the poor for fear of giving offence. You might be thinking that the poor are numerous and nothing much can be done about them.

Six, your professional bias, depending on your specialization e.g. agriculture, engineering etc. may take you away from the real problems of the poor. Poverty is a complex phenomenon, which needs to be dealt with holistically. So, you have to shed all these biases and approach the problems of the poor with an open, unbiased and helpful attitude. It is possible to overcome these biases, if you are conscious of them. The administrator, who has to be on the side of the poor, must be aware of these biases and get over them to be really helpful to the poor.

Check your progress I1

Why poor people's collective efforts are necessary to improve their living conditions?

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How can collective decision making among the poor be encouraged and promoted?

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What is meant by 'convergence' of efforts to improve the condition of the poor?

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9.8   Let us sum up

After reading the entire module, you are now in a position to explain

(a)   What is a decision?

(b)   What are the different types of decisions that are taken by administrators?

(c)   What is collective decision making and what are its processes and
          motivations,

(d)   What is the importance of collective decision-making and how to encourage and promote it,

(e)   How collective decision making assumes special importance in dealing with anti poverty programmes, and what kinds of biases in administration stand in the way of anti-poverty programme management.

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