



MSW-009
Community Organization
Management for
Community Development

Block

1

CONCEPTS OF COMMUNITY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

UNIT 1

Concepts of Community and Community Work	5
---	----------

UNIT 2

Urban Communities	19
--------------------------	-----------

UNIT 3

Profile of Rural Communities	35
-------------------------------------	-----------

UNIT 4

Tribal Communities	48
---------------------------	-----------

UNIT 5

Community Development Programmes and Accountability	62
--	-----------

Expert Committee

Prof. Surendra Singh (Late)
Former Vice Chancellor
Kashi Vidhyapeeth, Varanasi

Prof. Thomas Kalam
St. John's Medical College
Bangalore

Dr. Mukul Srivastava
Dr. B. R. Ambedkar
University, Agra

Dr. Jyoti Kakkar
Jamia Millia Islamia
New Delhi

Prof. Gracious Thomas
IGNOU, New Delhi

Prof. Sanjai Bhatt
University of Delhi
Delhi

Dr. Joseph Xavier
Indian Social Institute
Bangalore

Dr. Usha John
Loyala College
Trivandrum

Dr. Ranjana Sehgal
Indore School of Social
Work, Indore

Prof. Anjali Gandhi
Jamia Millia Islamia
New Delhi

Dr. Leena Mehta
M.S. University
Vadodara

Prof. Archana Dassi
Jamia Millia Islamia
New Delhi

Dr. Beena Antony
University of Delhi
Delhi

Expert Committee (Revision)

Prof. Gracious Thomas
School of Social Work
IGNOU, New Delhi

Dr. D.K. Lal Das
R.M. College
Hyderabad

Prof. P.K. Ghosh
Department of Social Work
Visva Bharti University
Shantiniketan

Prof. C.P. Singh
Department of Social Work
Kurukshetra University

Mr. Joselyn Lobo
Roshni Nilaya
Mangalore

Prof. Ranjana Sehgal
Indore School of Social Work
Indore

Dr. Asiya Nasreen
Department of Social Work
Jamia Millia Islamia University
Delhi

Dr. Bishnu Mohan Dash
B.R. Ambedkar College
Delhi University

Dr. Rose Nembiakkim
School of Social Work
IGNOU, New Delhi

Dr. Saumya
School of Social Work
IGNOU, New Delhi

Dr. G. Mahesh
School of Social Work
IGNOU, New Delhi

Dr. N. Ramya
School of Social Work
IGNOU, New Delhi

COURSE PREPARATION TEAM

Unit Writer
Dr. A. Malathi

Block Editor
Prof. K.K. Jacob
Udaipur

**Course Editor &
Programme Coordinator**
Prof. Gracious Thomas

COURSE PREPARATION TEAM (Revision)

Unit Writer
Dr. A. Malathi

Course Editor
Prof. Neera Agnimitra
Delhi University, Delhi

Programme Coordinator
Dr. Saumya

Print Production

Mr. Kulwant Singh
Assistant Registrar (Publication)
School of Social Work

April, 2020 (Revised)

© Indira Gandhi National Open University, 2009

ISBN: 978-81-266-4020-1

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced in any form, by mimeograph or any other means, without permission in writing from the copyright holder.

Further information on the Indira Gandhi National Open University courses may be obtained from the University's office at Maidan Garhi, New Delhi-110 068 or the official website of IGNOU at www.ignou.ac.in

Printed and published on behalf of Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi by Director, School of Social Work, IGNOU.

Lasertypesetted at Tessa Media & Computers, C-206,7 A.F.E-II, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-25

COURSE INTRODUCTION

Community has been a central focus of social work practice since its inception. Communities are one of the many social systems that touch people's lives and shape their individual and group identities. As a student of social work, you must have knowledge of the basic concepts pertaining community organization management for community development. In this course on 'Community Organization Management for Community Development' there are four blocks.

Block 1 deals with the concept of community and community development. In this block we also discuss about the meaning, nature and characteristics features of urban, rural and tribal communities, place of community work within social work practice and community development programmes in rural, tribal and urban areas. This Block will also give you an understanding of the concept of accountability and its importance in community development work.

Block 2 is on community organization for community development. Apart from explaining the values, purpose and assumptions underlying community organization this block also outline the philosophy and history of community organization in the USA, UK and India. In this block we also discuss about similarities, differences and relationship between community organization and other methods of social work. The block also discusses about models of community organization, concept and dimensions of power and the relevance of power in community organization practice as well as impact of globalization on contemporary communities and community practice.

Block 3 deals with social action for community development. Apart from discussing concept, history, scope and relevance of social action, this block also deals with various models of social action, strategies and tactics in social action, values, ethics and principles of social action.

Block 4 is on social administration. In this block we discuss about concept, history, nature, scope, functions and principles of social welfare administration. Types and characteristics of social welfare organization have also been discussed under this block. Social Welfare administration is the execution of the programmes, schemes and projects meant to achieve the goals delineated in the social policy.

The discussion and deliberation in this course is very important for social work students because we have covered several important topics that are needed for a social work student in the field of social work. Although all these topics require much more discussion, due to the limitations prescribed for a course, we have to cut short the length of the course material by making a presentation of the basics.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION

This Block has 5 units which will talk about different aspects of community.

In the **first unit** you will have an understanding of communities, its characteristics, and how a community is relevant in social work practice. The **second unit** deals with urban communities. You will learn about the meaning of urban community, historical development of urban areas, spread and characteristics of urban communities, spatial segregation and specific urban communities.

The **third unit**: “Profile of Rural Communities” elaborates on different aspects of rural communities. You would come to know about the meaning of rural community, diversity of rural communities, rural, social and economic structure and policies and practices in rural community.

The **fourth unit**: “Tribal Communities” talks about yet another type of community, i.e. tribal community. After going through this unit, you will know what a tribe is, what are the demographic features of a tribal community and their social and economic structure. You will also be able to distinguish between denotified and nomadic tribes, and some of the major concerns of tribal communities.

The **fifth unit** is on “Community Development Programmes and Accountability”. It deals with the various community development programmes and the concept of accountability. You will get to know about the history of community development programmes and programmes targeting rural, tribal and urban areas.

THE PEOPLE'S
UNIVERSITY

UNIT 1 CONCEPTS OF COMMUNITY AND COMMUNITY WORK

**A. Malathi*

Contents

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Definitions
- 1.3 Understanding Community
- 1.4 Characteristics of a Community
- 1.5 Place of Community Work within Social Work Practice
- 1.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.7 Further Readings and References

1.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit will help you to understand the concept of community. Communities exist everywhere. It is important for social workers to understand communities as they are the background against which social work practice takes place. Secondly this unit focuses attention on community work and its various dimensions. Thus by the study of this unit you will be able to

- understand the nature of communities;
- able to define communities both from social work and sociological perspectives; and
- understand the meaning, origins and scope of community work.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Community has been a central focus of social work practice since its inception. Communities are one of the many social systems that touch peoples' lives and shape their individual and group identities. People are born in social contexts, they grow, mature and learn about and form perceptions of social structures. They also develop individual and group identities through associations that connect them to life-long community experiences.

Community provides the context and setting for social work at all levels of intervention. For social workers engaged in direct practice at the micro level there is need to understand the macro environment in which their client groups live and work, how the resources are made available to them and how community dynamics affect individual behavior. For macro level social workers whose practice is focused on programme planning and administration, Community is central to their work. It is also the target or vehicle for change where interventions are designed to address broader social problems that affect a large group of people.

The term community originated from a latin word MUNUS-CUM, which literally means “to give unto each other”. This symbolizes the concept and idea that denotes a community and community life. A community is essentially a collectivity of people with marked shared elements, which construes to them a “sense of collectivity”. These shared elements may include a territorial/geographical space; an element of togetherness or bonding and a sense of exclusiveness/demarcation from other communities; a broad homogeneity in terms of social, cultural, economic, regional/linguistic commonality; a stock of social capital for the constituents to draw from; and a sense of identity and “we” feeling.

1.2 DEFINITIONS

Community is a set of descriptions of what is implied. It is essentially a subjective experience which defies objective definition. It is felt and experienced rather than measured and defined. People experience communities differently. Boundaries of a community may be physical or tangible, as they configure on a map or as an administrative area. However, some boundaries may be symbolic, in that they may exist in the minds of the beholders, and therefore people feel a “sense of belonging” to the community.

The definition of community is linked to its construct. It is useful to look at it from a historical perspective as well as from the geographical and ideological backgrounds in which it evolved.

Maciver and Page state that “a community is wherever the members of any group, small or large, live together in such a way that they share, not this or that particular interest, but the basic condition of common life, we call such a group a community”.

Robert Bellah defines community as “a group of people who are socially interdependent, who participate together in discussion and decision making, and who share certain practices that both define the community and are nurtured by it.”

According to Foundation for Community Encouragement “A community is a group of two or more people who have been able to accept and transcend their differences regardless of the diversity of their backgrounds (social, spiritual, educational, ethnic, economic, political, etc.). This enables them to communicate effectively and openly and to work together toward goals identified as being for their common good.”

Bryon Munon (1968) defines “A community is a relatively self-sufficient population, residing in a limited geographic area, bound together by feelings of unity and interdependency.”

C. Farrington and E Pine define a community as a “ group of people lined by a communications structure supporting discussion and collective action.”

Random House Unabridged Dictionary has many meanings on the term community. The meanings that are closest to social worker’s profession are as follows.

- 1) Social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage.
- 2) A social, religious, occupational, or other group sharing common characteristics or interests and perceived or perceiving itself as distinct in some respect from the larger society within which it exists, example the business community; the community of scholars.
- 3) Community, hamlet, village, town, city are terms for groups of people living in somewhat close association, and usually under common rules. Community is a general term, and town is often loosely applied. A commonly accepted set of connotations envisages hamlet as a small group, village as a somewhat larger one, town still larger, and city as very large. Size is, however, not the true basis of differentiation, but properly sets off only hamlet. Incorporation, or the absence of it, and the type of government determine the classification of the others.

Simpson iterates that “a community is not simply economic, nor simply political, nor simply territorial, nor simply visceral. Nor is it all these special elements added together. Ultimately, it is a complex of conditional emotions which the individual feels towards the surrounding world and his fellows”.

In addition to these there is also a concept of **Virtual Community**

A virtual community, e-community or online community is a group of people that primarily interact via communication media such as newsletters, telephone, email or instant messages rather than face to face, for social, professional, educational or other purposes. If the mechanism is a computer network, it is called an online community. Virtual and online communities have also become a supplemental form of communication between people who know each other primarily in real life. Many means are used in social software separately or in combination, including text-based chatrooms and forums that use voice, videotext or avatars. Significant socio-technical change may have resulted from the proliferation of such Internet-based social networks.

Virtual communities represent newer forms of human association. These could include “communities of interest”, which could be goal oriented; frequently temporary groupings; which are usually characterized by relatively minimal cohesion. However, they have the potential to bring together people, who could not otherwise meet due to distance, accessibility or stigma (eq. gay/lesbian groups). They also possess the potential to unite voices of those often unheard or ignored, and create opportunities for wider citizen participation in public policy debates and decision making process.

It is possible for virtual networks to be created and used by geographically and interest bound communities for social uplift and collective action. One example is the case of *village blogs* created by villagers in Goa to tackle the powerful mining lobby. Or the many online groups that initiate and sustain activism for victims of violence like for Nirbhaya gangrape case or those that protect wildlife like the Greenpeace promoted online community striving for the protection of the Olive Ridley turtles on the Orissa coastline.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Define community in your own words.

.....

.....

.....

.....

1.3 UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY

Communities come in an infinite number of shapes, social arrangements, population and compositions. Relationships that form the basis of communal life and the shared perceptions and common interests of its members are the glue that bonds the community into a coherent unit. Moreover these social relationships and shared perceptions transcend time, structure and location. Some communities are relational in nature and are based on shared beliefs values or interests. Such communities are not tied to a single location or physical structure.

In understanding communities Social work draws from both sociological and practitioner's insights, shaped by the growth of profession in trying out the community organization as method of social work practice.

Community Construct: Sociological Insights

The Construct of community has been associated with the German sociologist Ferdinand Tonnies in the late 1800s. He considered the relationships characterizing communities and accordingly came up with two variants one named as *Gemeinschaft* and the other *Gesselschaft*.

The *Gemeinschaft* communities are based on natural personal, informal face to face social relationships, where individuals are accepted for who they are, and not what they have done. People are recognized and accepted for their innate qualities. This sort of human relationship is reflected in families, small groups and traditional communities.

Gesselschaft communities are characterized by rational self-interest and are more contrived in nature. They place greater emphasis on specialized segmented social interactions. The interests of the individual supersede the interests of the group. Utilitarian goals as well as contractual agreements dominate interactions between individuals. There is division of labor and social control is more formalized, based on laws and rules with formal sanctions enforced when laws are violated.

This is particularly attributed to the rise of industrial capitalism in Europe and the United States at the end of the 19th century which was bringing about major transformations in the nature of human relationships.

It is however true that both forms of community life form the current reality of Indian Society and one cannot be attributed a higher/superior value than the other. These need to be viewed as different forms of human association that are

present in the rural, urban and tribal communities. It is best to view them as ends of a continuum of human interaction wherein communities are grounded in both informal personal relationships and in the formal institutional structures that are part of contemporary life.

Given the complex and multifaceted nature of communities no single conceptual framework provides an adequate theoretical foundation for understanding community

Further two other aspects besides the above are useful to understand communities. Community is seen as **a) shared physical space or geographic community and b) community based on shared interest or identity or functional community.**

Community as Bounded by Geographical Space

Brueggemann (2006) contends that community needs to be embodied to have existence, meaning that it requires a physical space that symbolizes the community for its members and for those who are not part of the community. Bounded is referred to as location based community. The boundaries of this community are often established with a recognized authority such as the Panchayat, the Mohalla, the Municipal government, zoning commission etc. Community may also be embodied in a physical structure, such as a panchayat ghar, a chaupal, a temple, a mosque, a church, a satsang, a choir group, or a recreation club etc. these are also known as geographical communities- that is communities are located in a particular space and locality such as communities in Okhla, Harinagar, Ambedkar Nagar etc.

Communities of Interest

This refers to Communities where the membership is based not on shared physical space but on shared interests or characteristics that unite members and provide the basis for one's personal identity. Things like race ethnicity, religion culture, social class professional affiliation and sexual orientation often form the basis of communities of interest. Because such communities are based on identity and interest members carry the community with them. For example one can refer to the caste Mahapanchayats that are a way to foster community identity and to protect community interest. Similarly communities can be formed of alumni associations and old boys/girls associations. There could be communities based on professional interests such as that of artists, professional associations such as the Engineers of India, Indian Medical Association, Traders Associations, Industrial associations etc. There can also be linguistic, religious and cultural associations. Say the Karnatic Music group, the West Bengal Mountaineering association etc or even the positive people's network, fish workers forum, the dalit writers association, the schizophrenic association of India, the Association of Professional Social Workers in India etc. Sometimes they are also referred to as functional communities. Thus community workers sometimes work with functional communities such as the child labour, the sex workers and so on.

Communities of interest sometimes overlap with locality based communities as when a residential area contains a high proportion of people whose personal identity is tied to one or more specific interest groups, such as the slum and shack dwellers associations, Mahila Milan in Mumbai etc. Most people in

urban areas belong to more than one community, with varying degrees of identification of interest and engagement. These multiple community affiliations can be thought of as one's personal community network, representing various locality-based and interest based communities that connect the individual to others and to broader society. It is to be understood that the individual is located across various groups, in a range of formal and informal helping/hindering systems in the community. These provide important tools for the location of the individual in a social context for developing more realistic interventions plans that connect the various levels of human interaction, micro to macro.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Reflect on the sociological understanding of a community. Illustrate with examples from your own region.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Community Construct: Social Work Perspective

In addition to the above understanding of communities Kirst-Ashma(2008) suggests that community theories can be thought of as a series of lenses that focus on different aspects of community each highlighting different dimensions of the community, its dynamics and the ways it impacts the lives of its members. Three frameworks are said to be useful to look at a community from a **social work practitioner's perspective**. These are:

- a) as a social system,
- b) as an ecological system, and
- c) as a center for power and conflict.

Let us discuss each of the above.

- a) **Community as a Social System:** General systems theory is used by social workers to understand many of the phenomenon they encounter in social reality. A system is viewed as being composed of multiple interacting components that relate to one another in an orderly, functional manner. Moreover systems are embedded within larger systems, thus providing a framework for understanding the connection between different levels of the systems. For example an individual might be viewed as one element within a family or kinship group, the kinship group exists within a community, the community within a stagnation or society, thus a system perspective provides a useful framework for understanding the structure of community and the processes that tie the structural elements together.

This assumes that the community is composed of a set of subsystems that perform specialized functions that meet the needs of the entire community. The actions of those subsystems are seen as coordinated and integrated in ways that benefit the community as a whole.

Five major functions are said to be associated with the various social units and systems within a community. These are production- distribution, consumption, socialization, social control, social participation and mutual support.

Social workers need to critically examine how the sub systems meet or fail to meet the needs of their client groups. Tools that could be used here are community assessment, which can identify the community needs as well as community strengths. These also need to be understood with respect to global systems that impact and impinge on these functions. These global effects could be related to the way globalization, privatization and the dismantling of the social safety net impact on the lives and livelihoods of communities.

- b) **Community as an Ecological System:** In this community is seen as having close interrelationship with the environment in a symbiotic manner. There are regular exchange relationships that occur between the various parts of the community where each part gives and receives in symbiotic relationships with others in the system. There is a definite interdependence between various parts so that equilibrium is achieved. It brings into what is known as geo-cultural perspective where in the spatial features (land use patterns and distribution of services) of a specific location interact with the community- its population characteristics (such as size, density, diversity) and technology (production of goods and services, transportation, communication etc) The physical features play a significant role in community life and determine the patterns of interaction. The location of specific groups vis a vis the location of resources (water, land, road) is determined by the social dynamics of the community. Thus lower caste communities are often located away from important and central places in the village community. Thus important territorial boundaries are not only physical in quality but also social and psychological that represents the social hierarchy.

This perspective also enables the social workers to understand the community structures emergence through **dynamic processes** of **a) competition** (competition between various groups for common pool resources) and **b) dominance** (dominance of a particular group or caste in determining service delivery and access to services) **c) centralization** (concentration of resources both economic and social in the hands of particular groups –clustering of these in one area- say the Panchayat and Mahila Mandal or temple location as seat of power and important decisions pertaining to the community in of power), **d) concentration** (location of specific groups – ghettoisation because of affinal and kinship bonds, or regional and linguistic bonds- such as the Bihari colony, Bengali colony or the Madrasi area -location of specific groups in the urban areas) **e) succession** (the process where in there is population movement as part of a natural process where in the migrants often move to less desirable areas- moving up once situations are favourable or when they could afford better places) and **f) segregation** (where in even when they could move to new areas they cannot because of antipathy by other groups- the sub groups function as isolated communities- say Seelampur Jhuggi clusters in the North east of Delhi.

Such features can be explored over time by using the Geographical Information systems in the spatial distribution, concentration of resources and amenities juxtaposed with the location of communities. These enable us to understand the relationship between the physical and social environment of the community. Further the social structure of the community as it evolves over time and the correctives needed become immediately visible and also suggest the type of interventions that could be carried out.

- c) **Community as a Seat of Power and Conflict:** The perspective goes beyond the social systems perspective that sees community as constituting of subsystems that have their functional role cut out for them. The conflicts of interests and disagreements as well as domination are not emphasized. In the ecological system even though there is acknowledgment of power processes of domination, concentration and centralization, there is not much thought provided on how to deal with the differences and the inequitable distribution of resources. How can social workers work to bring about changes in the community to enable those with less power to better meet their needs.

The perspective of community as a centre for power and conflict considers power and politics as central to our understanding of community. It assumes that conflict and change are central attributes of most communities. Community Decision-making is not merely seen as rational planning, collaboration and coordination but also as involving confrontation and negotiation.

Communities are seen as arenas where competing groups are constantly engaged in conflict over power and the control of scarce resources. Some groups often based on social class, caste, religious, linguistic and regional affiliations dominate over other groups. There is a constant process of negotiation and confrontation to fulfill the basic needs by those who are involved. Sometimes the conflict is resolved in favour of the marginalized, aided by the institutional presence of law, judiciary and administration and at other times the institutions take an opposite stand, and conflict is resolved in favour of the powerful. This perspective enables Social workers to understand the community power structures, the way decisions are made to favour or condemn groups, the way conflict positions are taken and perpetuated and the role that change agents should play in strengthening the capacities of those lower in hierarchy to change the situation. Such issues are very well evident in urban, rural and tribal areas where the communities are denied access to resources on their social origins or economic situation or political affiliation. Caste and communal riots are an extreme form of those conflict positions.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Discuss briefly the three perspective used by social work practitioner's in understanding a community.

.....
.....

- 2) How do you understand community power structures? Illustrate with examples from your region.

.....

.....

.....

.....

1.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF A COMMUNITY

Community is a group of individuals having shared space, values and practices. They are seen to be integrated in a network of relationships that foster commonness and spirit of togetherness. Communities are seen to be homogenous entities with a degree of relationship that is seen to be the very essence of community.

Community can be seen to have the following characteristics:

- 1) **Human Scale:** Communities have individuals engaging in face-to-face interactions. They are in that sense primary groups who are in direct contact with one another. People know each other and in this sense are in control of the range of interactions they are engaged in. Social structures are sufficiently small and people are able to own and control them.
- 2) **Identity and Belonging:** There is feeling of belonging and acceptance of each other as well as security. Thus one feels a part of the community or a member of a community. Membership involves acceptance by others, allegiance or loyalty to the aims of the group concerned. This sense of belonging is significant and positively regarded. Community can become the person's self concept. Identity also plays a role in the person not only feeling a sense of belongingness to one community but a sense of difference from the other groups. Institutions within community and shared practices also play a role in identity formation and foster a sense of belonging. It also means that people can face a change in the sense of belonging to changing institutions. These can be seen to erode the togetherness within a community.
- 3) **Obligations:** The belongingness carries with it certain sense of rights and responsibilities. There is a mutuality of trust and reciprocity involved firstly in maintaining community life in terms of participating in the collective activities of community, sharing and interacting with others. Participating in community events with adherence to customs and traditions are ordained by collective will of the members.
- 4) **Gemeinschaft:** This implies that the people have a wide variety of roles in which they interact with each other. These interactions are not contractual but are obligatory. These are important for self-enhancement of individuals as well as for fostering the use of a range of talents and abilities for the benefit of others and the community as a whole.

- 5) **Culture:** A community has a specific culture that is reproduced and continuously being shaped by the members of the community, through its social structures, economic systems and power relations. A culture in that sense is all encompassing and all embracing the way of life of a group of people.

1.5 PLACE OF COMMUNITY WORK WITHIN SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

While many of the community work aspects are looked after by traditional institutions within Indian society, there are causes of concern related to the inequality and injustice that are located within the social structure. The norms and values governing Indian society enable Community welfare and self-help as binding, though these are confined to their particular social groups.

The development of the community work as a method of intervention may be viewed from two perspectives. One from its relationship to the history of social work as a profession and the other from the variety of community intervention methods that have been pursued by various professions as well as non-professional citizen groups

Historical Perspective

However in terms of professional community work practice and its place among the methods of social work practice, we need to trace the history of social work profession in America and Great Britain.

Social work in the 19th century was often conceived in terms of a much broader setting than casework. The settlement movement and charity organization society movements formed the context for the development of social work as a profession and from its genesis community practice has been an essential constituent.

Reform movements to change the situation of the distressed were at the heart of community development and organizing efforts. In the settlement houses in America and in the charity organization societies with which the social work profession began had the reform element as core.

In America for example, the settlement movement was initially focused on the educational and recreational needs of the communities served, and later expanded into many other activities such as housing and legal advice. Work with young people was also developed through clubs and other forms of what might now be called 'group work'.

Rapid developments of community chests and planning councils in the 1920s and the 1930s paved the way to conceptualize community organization practice and social planning in particular. Focus was on improvements of health and welfare programs and the balancing of community needs and resources.

Also there was a call for a move from more centralized, elitist and expert ridden to one that is localized and existing at various levels as well as participatory that recognizes the importance of citizenry. There is also the aspect that community organization processes contain technical skills and knowledge as well as the social goals and the value stance.

Community organization emerged in two traditions in England- one with the community worker taking the place of the churches in their role of moral

alleviation. Community work is seen to be an attempt to respond to moral confusion because of the erosion of religious faith in the middle of last century; second with the view that the degradation of the poor is a consequence rather than the cause of their poverty.

Community organization as a method of social work emerged in Great Britain with a growing dissatisfaction of Casework as a method of social work practice.

The reasons can be seen as follows:

- a) The deficiencies of case work, as a method of social work seems to be one major force in the development of community organization.
- b) Increasing knowledge and understanding of the nature of informal caring systems and other forms of voluntary action in their society and the potential for interweaving statutory services with such systems;
- c) The influence of the pioneers in community based teams and the evidence that their work offers alternative methods;
- d) The impact of cut-backs in local government spending which have compelled the serious consideration of alternative;
- e) Political changes on both right and left which for different reasons have favoured the introduction of policies of decentralization. On the right these tend to be founded on policies of self-help and local responsibility. On the left they are likely to derive from local socialism that seeks to revitalize relations between representatives and electorate founded on the local delivery and control of services.

The term *community work* itself was coined by a study group founded in 1968 as the *Gulbenkian Foundation*. They saw community work as consisting of three interrelated forms of activity – community development, community organization and social planning.

Initially community work was supportive of traditional methods of social work practice such as group work and case work but the developments in the understanding of societies as well as the growing body of knowledge related to practice interventions with communities meant that community work became an important method by itself.

Purposes of Intervention

The purposes of Community work vary with the issues of each community that are the focus. Developed industrial countries have seen the post world war II period. The diversity of purpose of community organization has reflected the complex character of societies with their many groupings and the basic differences among them in their conditions, status, needs and orientation towards maintenance or change of existing institutions. The purposes of community organization are therefore said to be not uniform but as the reflection of diverse purposes of groups, organizations and movements.

Indian society is multi cultural and represents a diverse reality that had seen practice of community interventions stemming from various social, religious and political movements. These did consider a change in the social reality and a better life for the marginalized howsoever paternalistic they may have been. The diversity of groups, populations with diverse geo-cultural positions and livelihoods brings with it diverse needs that are more commonly concentrated

towards economic improvement. Community efforts in India have been fostering these efforts to improve the lot of the down trodden, the powerless in rural, urban and tribal locations. These efforts have been at the beginning of the century holistic and encompassing all round improvement in the life and living of people in health, education, livelihoods and political empowerment.

A major purpose of community work practice is concerned with improving the way in which social welfare services are organized and delivered with the targeted population being involved in the solutions to their problems hence their participation is a key. Participation and self-help are key concepts in community work.

Social Action as Part of Community Work

Here the objective is not specific and direct problem solving but the organization of a population to obtain resources and power that it did not have before. This may take form of bringing pressure upon existing social institutions, the development of new channels of representation whereby the voice of the groups previously excluded may be heard in the decision making process or the creation of new political and economic arrangements that will actually transfer resources to them.

It was the emphasis of enabler role for a community work practitioner that made it possible for it to find a place for community work within the general framework of professional social work. It also provided a formulation that was broad enough to unite community workers operating in many different settings and fields.

As an enabler, the community worker would help people to clarify their problems, identify their needs, and develop the capacity to deal with their own problems more effectively. The emphasis is clearly on skill in developing relationships

Community Development Approaches

Community development thus implies an ongoing process of dialogue, consciousness raising, education and action aimed at helping the people concerned to determine and develop their own version of community. No single right formula for what constitutes community and no single right way to develop it. Community Development is a much more complex process full of dilemmas and problems which require unique and creative solutions. Models of community work are thus valuable if they provide frameworks within which these problems and dilemmas can be understood and creative solutions derived.

Community programmes must be grounded in the real life experiences, sufferings and aspirations of the people as articulated by the people themselves, while at the same time these subjective experiences must be linked to an analysis of broader social economic and political structures which are the cause of people's oppression and disadvantage.

Consciousness raising has important implications for social worker and client groups relationship. In this the social worker is not in an expert of the situation but in a role of service as a resource and is answerable to them. This change in relationship between the professionals and the consumers of human services facilitates their empowerment rather than disempowerment.

Structures of domination and oppression have resulted in the legitimization of the wisdom of the dominant groups, while alternative wisdoms of the oppressed groups are unrecognized. An essential component of community development is not only to acknowledge the wisdom of the oppressed, and their right to define their own needs and aspirations in their own way, but to facilitate the expression of that wisdom within the wider society as an essential contribution to the welfare of the human race. Thus community development must incorporate strategies of consciousness raising and of ensuring that the voices of the oppressed are heard, acknowledged and valued. Social justice perspective also means that some who are disadvantaged will continue to be disadvantaged if seen in functional terms. Functional communities can be there at the expense of local communities, then it is to be discouraged and geographical communities be supported instead.

For this geographical communities represent preferred option for community development and community based services. Functional communities both of the elite and the powerless have to be recognized to exist and the latter encouraged and former discouraged.

Community based strategy involves giving central place to the initiative of ordinary people at grass-roots level, recognizing their voice and efforts in changing their social situation.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Trace the history of community work in Great Britain and America.
.....
.....
.....
.....
- 2) What according to you would be the elements of community work in India?
.....
.....
.....

1.6 LET US SUM UP

We have understood how communities are defined as bounded by place and interest. We have also seen the various characteristics of communities in their interactions, sense of identity and belonging, their mutual obligations and rights and the multifarious roles that individuals play within communities contributing to the social and economic life and the way this life is maintained and modified to carry within itself a sense of change as well as stability for human beings to survive and flourish. We have also understood the various ways in which communities are understood by social workers as social systems, ecological systems and zones of power and conflict.

We have also understood the nature of community practice its origins in Great Britain and America with the work with poor communities and settlement movement respectively. We have also understood how the nature of communities carries with it both traditional and modern features that make community practice in India different from what it has been in Britain and America.

1.7 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. Henderson Paul, Jones David and Thomas David N (Ed) 1980 *The boundaries of change in community work* Allen and Unwin, London.
2. Hadley Roger, Cooper Mike, Dale Peer & Stacy Graham.(1987) *A community Social Worker's handbook*. Tavistock Publications, London.
3. Bryon Munon (1968) *Changing Community Dimensions* Ohio State University Press, Columbus, OH accessed from <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~sg7/eng521spring02/communitydefinitions.html> on 14th August 2008.
4. Mizrahi Terry and Davis Larry E (2008) *Encyclopedia of Social Work Vol I* NASW Press & Oxford University Press New York.
5. C. Farrington and E Pine, "Community Memory: A Case Study in Community Communication." *Reinventing Technology, Rediscovering Community*. Greenwich, CT: Ablex, accessed from <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~sg7/eng521spring02/communitydefinitions.html> on 14th August 2008.
6. Robert Bellah et.a., *Habits of the Heart*. Berkeley: accessed from <http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~sg7/eng521spring02/communitydefinitions.html> on 14th August 2008.
7. Random House Unabridged Dictionary The dictionary meaning of a community (Dictionary.com Unabridged (v 1.1)) Based on the, © Random House, Inc. 20 accessed on 20th August 2008.

UNIT 2 URBAN COMMUNITIES

**A. Malathi*

Contents

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Meaning of Urban Community
- 2.3 Historical Development of Urban Areas
- 2.4 Urbanisation and Spread of Urban Communities
- 2.5 Characteristics of Urban Communities
- 2.6 Spatial Segregation
- 2.7 Specific Urban Communities
- 2.8 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.9 Further Readings and References

2.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you should be able to

- understand the meaning of what is urban and the terms used to define urban areas;
- explain the concept of urbanisation and describe the spread of urban communities;
- delineate the characteristic social and economic features of urban communities and their interrelationships;
- understand the two types of economies prevailing in the urban sector- formal and informal economy and their interlinkages as also urban poverty issues;
- understand specific urban communities such as refugee settlements and slums; and
- understand the variability of urban communities and its significance to community work practice.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

‘Urban’ communities have to be understood in their variability and heterogeneity. Cities have also to be understood to mean different things to different people. Stakeholders have different perceptions and the way these perceptions govern the city development has to be unraveled for community organized community development to take place. There is always a tension and conflict with multiple perceptions regarding development. The dominance of a particular perspective determines dimensions of the discourse of community development.

For us to understand urban communities we draw upon insights from sociology, economics, and public administration.. With regard to interventions we draw

upon insights derived from social work methods. One predominantly in use is the community organization method along with group work. Communities can be either defined as vulnerable or communities are looked at from strength's perspective. For social workers, the social justice perspective becomes the enabling perspective to look at urban communities, be it slums, elite class or displaced communities.

2.2 MEANING OF URBAN COMMUNITY

'Urban' means relating to or located in a city. It represents the characteristic of the city or city life. It has its roots in the Latin word *Urbnus*- the root *urb* means city.

Urban refers to the city or town. Several criteria such as demographic, ecological and socio-cultural attributes are used to identify an urban area. It is the size of the population and degree of complexity of organisation, which differentiates a village from a town, a town from a city or from a metropolis. The concentration of population, predominance of non-agricultural activities and better provision of social amenities including health and education infrastructure are important characteristics of urban areas. However there is a stark variation in the distribution and access to these among the various communities living in urban areas.

Sociological Understanding

Max Weber considers urban areas to be more evolved organizationally based on the principles of rationality with the presence of a market and a specialized class of traders. Other religious, political, economic technological and complex administrative structures found in a city complement the trade and commerce network. There is a predominance of industrial and service sectors. City is also characterized by heterogeneity, impersonality, anonymity etc.

Louis Wirth (1938) considers urban areas as relatively large, dense, permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals. Here secondary groups such as the corporation, voluntary associations, representative forms of government and mass media replace the primary group associations that are found in a village. Such relationships are also considered impersonal, segmental, superficial, transitory and often predatory in nature.

Robert Redfield in the 1940s proposed a folk –urban model in which he contrasted the image of city life with an image of the folk community (invariably rural). The latter is considered as small, sacred, highly personalistic, and homogeneous in contrast to the urban as invariably impersonal, heterogeneous, secular, and disorganizing.

Gideon Sjoberg (1960) divided the urban centres into two types, the pre-industrial city and the industrial city, which he distinguished on the basis of differences in the technological level. Pre-industrial cities are those without sophisticated machine technology, where human and animal labours form the basis for economic production. Industrial cities have a predominance of energy sources from fossil fuels and atomic power. The pre-industrial neighborhoods

were strongly integrated by personalistic ties of ethnicity and sectarian allegiance. They maintained strong family connections, and social disorganization was little in evidence. Industrial production was not yet the major concern.

Herbert Gans (1968) on the other hand considers these features to be the part of main city or inner city, but argues that the suburbanites pursue a different way of life, which is called quasi primary. The loss of kinship and primary community ties in the urban area is superseded by the emergence of neighborliness. Neighborhood ties are more intimate than professional and other secondary ties but more guarded than primary ties of kinship and extended family.

Census Definitions

As per the 1961 census, an area is considered urban if it meets the following criteria- 1) all places having a municipal corporation, municipality, notified area committee and cantonment board, 2) the places which satisfy the following criteria a) population not less than 5,000, b) Density of Population 1,000 persons per sq mile 9400 per sq km, c) seventy five percent of workers engaged in non-agricultural sector.

Census 2001 distinguishes between statutory towns and census towns:

Statutory towns are all places with a municipality, corporation, cantonment board or notified town areas committee etc so declared by a state law.

Whereas census towns are places which satisfy the following criteria of i) a minimum population of 5,000 ii) at least 75% of male working population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits and iii) density of population being at least 400 persons per sq.km.

Another term urban agglomeration is used to understand the urban spread and growth. It refers to a continuous urban spread constituting a town and its adjoining urban outgrowths, or two or more physical contiguous towns together and any adjoining urban outgrowths of such towns. Examples of outgrowth are railway colonies, university campuses, port areas, military camps etc that may have come near a statutory town or city but within the revenue limits of a village or villages contiguous to the town or city. As per census 2001, it was decided that the core town or at least one of the constituent towns of an urban agglomeration should necessarily be a statutory town and the total population of all the constituents should not be less than 20,000. With such basic criteria the urban agglomerations could be constituted in the following way

- i) a city or town with one or more contiguous outgrowths,
- ii) two or more adjoining towns with or without their outgrowths, and
- iii) a city and one or more adjoining towns with their outgrowths all of which form a continuous spread.

Urban communities live in urban areas. There is tremendous diversity and complexity that characterizes these communities. Urban community is a complex multi-group society.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What do you understand by an urban community?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) Critically discuss any two definitions of the term 'urban'.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.3 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF URBAN AREAS

Colonial Influences

While earlier cities developed because of their importance as trading centres, port towns, as pilgrimage places, the colonial history has changed all these and made their importance hinge on their ability to serve the colonial rulers for processing and marketing of raw material from hinterland and finished goods from the empires. The processing also meant establishment of factories notably the cotton mills for processing raw cotton aided by the development of railways with each of the trading centres. Industrialization has led to the rapid rise in urban populations, urban centres, and development of urban culture that was starkly different from the pre-colonial city development.

The cities were seen as commercial and trading zones for primary exports and manufactured imports. This continued even after the colonized countries became independent.

Postcolonial Influences

The neocolonial city represents city development that has taken place in third world countries with the capital from advanced industrial nations, creating enclaves of industrial production. The commodities produced in neocolonial cities generally are destined for export rather than for home consumption, except perhaps by a small home elite. There are urban factories and urban-resident wage labourers. There is a developing infrastructure of urban transport and communication by which these commodities and labourers are allocated. There is massive urban-ward migration from neighbouring rural areas. The neocolonial city has given rise to informal economy consists of urban services and products

provided by the neocolonial city's poorest denizens, the petty hawkers, the shoeshine boys, the household help, the rag pickers, and others who form a class of petty commodity producers and sellers.

It is useful to look at the concept of urbanization in understanding urban communities.

2.4 URBANISATION AND SPREAD OF URBAN COMMUNITIES

Meaning of Urbanisation

The concept of Urbanisation refers to the geographic concentration of population through movement and redistribution in large human settlements with non-agricultural activities. The concentration of population is in urban environments of varying size and form. Urbanisation is also seen as the diffusion of urban values, behaviour, organizations and institutions. Some of the interrelated characteristics of modern day urbanization are: 1) the rapid rate of urban growth and its effect on municipal governments; 2) the upsurge in rural impoverishment and release of large work force into the urban informal economy; 3) urban poverty and its effect on the urban economy; and, 4) the proliferation of slums and their vulnerability; 5) the impact of globalizing economy on urbanisation through policies and programmes that promote urban activity and urban spread.

Spread of Urban Communities

As per census 2001 742 million live in rural areas and 285 million in urban areas comprising of 72.2% and 27.8% of the population respectively. Delhi has the highest percentage of urban population (93%) and Himachal Pradesh has lowest (9.8%)

In 2001, India had 35 cities / urban areas with a population of more than one million people. In total, some 108 million Indians, or 10.5 per cent of the national population, live in the country's 35 largest cities. Mumbai (Bombay) with a population of more than 16 million is now the world's fourth-largest urban area followed by Kolkata (Calcutta) in fifth place.

Maharashtra has the largest share of urban population of the country (14.4%) followed by Uttar Pradesh (12.1%) and Tamil Nadu (9.5%) About half the urban population of the country lives in five states namely Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh.

In the 2001 census nine districts were considered as fully urbanized – these were New Delhi, Kolkata Mumbai(suburban) , Mumbai, Hyderabad, Chennai, Yanam and Mahe (Pondicherry) While in 1991 census there were 129 district that had 30% of its population living in urban areas, in 2001 it increased to 148.

Urban slum areas are home to more than 40 million Indians or 22.6 per cent of India's urban population. More than 600 Indian towns and cities incorporate slum areas. The largest slum population in cities with population of more than

one million) is found in Mumbai (48.9%) and the lowest in Patna (0.25%). As per the size of the population the 2001 census of India has grouped cities into six classes. These are given below:

Class	Population Size	No of Urban Agglomerates/Towns
Class I	1,00,000 and above	393
Class II	50,000 - 99,999	401
Class III	20,000 - 49,999	1,151
Class IV	10,000 - 19,999	1,344
Class V	5,000 - 9,999	888
Class VI	less than 5,000	191
Unclassified	10	
All Classes	4378	

Source: Office of the Registrar General of India (population totals for India and States for the Census of India -2001)

Check Your Progress 2

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Trace the history of any town or urban area depicting the major influences in its development.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) What is urbanisation? Discuss the nature of urbanisation in your region.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF URBAN COMMUNITIES

The characteristic features of urban communities relate to the economy, social structure, the political system, the cultural life and the spatial organization and their linkage and importance in contributing to the institutional and economic growth of the region and state in particular and the nation at large.

Social Aspects

Urban communities present a relatively greater heterogeneity and diversity, as compared to rural and tribal communities. A city has often been construed as a melting pot of people with diverse backgrounds and cultures, and a most favorable space for assimilation and amalgamation.

Secondary relations dominate such heterogeneous communities. Such contacts are likely to be more impersonal, segmental, transitory, utilitarian and contractual. The formal means of social control such as law, legislation, police, and court are needed in addition to the informal means for regulating the behavior of the people. There is mobility and openness. The social status is achieved than ascribed. Occupations are more specialized. There is widespread division of labour and specialization with plenty of opportunities for pursuing various occupations. Urban spaces bring together people from different corners. Distinctness is cherished, as because they are different, they are useful to one another.

The bonds of kinship, neighbourliness and the sentiments arising out of generations of living together are likely to be relatively weak in an aggregate, the members of which have such diverse origin and backgrounds. Urban communities place a bonus on individuals and individualization. People are more class-conscious and progressive and supposed to accept changes. They are also more exposed to the modern developments in the fields of science and technology. Despite these as enduring features of an urban community, we can find variations in the level and degree of specific features. Thus some communities may be more modern, even while living in the same area. Similarly in major human development indicators there may be variations within urban communities though sharing the same geographical space.

Caste and Class in Urban India

Caste affiliation, kinship ties continue in urban areas despite the modernizing and secularizing effects of urban living. However, there is a degree of emancipation from the deeply binding and almost choking personal and emotional control of the intimate primary groups. Social interaction among a variety of people tends to dilute the rigidity of caste lines but leads to a more complicated class structure and stratification. An individual may be a member of diverse groupings with fluctuating status in these groups like residential associations, professional occupational associations, social and recreational clubs etc. These groups do not lend themselves readily to any simple hierarchical arrangement. However, the so-called secular, formal and rational behaviour that is portrayed by the traditional understanding of urban areas does not entirely apply to the Indian situation. There is evidence of inter-caste/religious /ethnic competition which may turn into conflict situations too. The power structure thus is not only constituted by the hostilities and opposition that are derived from ones' affiliations, but also those derived on account of one's class. The pattern of conflict and cooperation thus cut across caste, religion and class lines.

The urban areas show the co-existence of various forms of social relationships and micro societies that represent, urban, rural, semi-urban – traditional and modern. There are also immigrants who live between the urban and rural cultures.

Families in Urban Areas

Family as unit of social life is relatively more emancipated from the larger kinship group. Cities are now being characterised by low and declining urban reproduction rates, which indicate that the context is not very conducive to traditional type of family life. Families are transforming in that mothers are

more likely to be working; marriage age is tending to get postponed; the proportion of single persons is increasing; and families are becoming smaller in size. The transformation of production, educational and child rearing practice to specialised institutions outside home, by families in middle income levels, is depriving the family of some of its characteristic functions.

Individual members within the family also tend to pursue their own diverging interests in their educational, vocational, recreational, religious and political life.

Since the majority of urban families have to live in areas that have cheaper accommodation, often their place of work is located at a considerable distance. This creates pressures on the time available for house care, childcare and maintenance of family bonds. Consequently families suffer a lot of strain. The frustrations experienced at the work place and the degradation of environment contributed by both indoor and outdoor air pollution, takes a heavy toll on the health and mental health aspects of urban families. This is compounded by the rising costs of urban living and privatization of health care.

Substitution of secondary for primary contacts; the weakening of bonds of declining social significance of the family, the disappearance of the neighbourhood kinship; undermining the traditional basis of social solidarity.

Economic Aspects

The urban economy is predominated by industrial and service sectors. The secondary and tertiary sectors predominate. The mode of organisation of the economy is to achieve the above results in various groups and classes, with an uneven distribution of social and economic resources. There is great diversity of the labour force with a few in the organized sector, receiving a high salary packages and a larger number in the informal economy receiving marginal and sustenance incomes with lack of social security benefits. The ethnic and caste basis of occupational specialization and distribution of privileges and disabilities becomes weaker, so that ethnic groups are becoming socio-economically heterogeneous in the urban context.

There are two types of sectors – the **organized or the formal sector** and the unorganized or the informal sector. Organized sector consists of large-scale operations in terms of capital labour wage labour with the use of advanced and modern technology- with institutional arrangements known as public and private sector partnerships. This sector is also closely linked with the global financial and economic systems. With the result any changes in the global economy affect it directly.

The **unorganized sector** on the other hand consists of smaller scale of operation in terms of capital and labour, private or family ownership, labour intensive, less advanced technology, unregulated markets and unprotected labour(almost no social security benefits-) this is being modified with the social security bill for the protection of unorganized(recently ratified by the Rajya Sabha). This also is affected by government policy regulation as in the case of protection of industry for capital or for labour. The small-scale industrial policy, the programmes of National Institute for micro, small and medium industries institute

are some such examples. 93% of the labour force is employed in unorganized sector.

There is a growing evidence of feminisation of poverty and feminisation of labour force especially in the informal sector. That is more and more women joining the labour force for lower rates of wages as their men folk are unemployed or are unable to seek a place in the formal economy.

Inter Relations between the Social and Economic Characteristics

It is necessary to view the social and economic characteristics of urban communities as interrelated aspects. The economic structure is closely linked to the social settlements. Social and economic features of the city thus get enmeshed in a complex web of local economic relations and global economic transactions

The economic structure is closely linked to the social settlements. Social and economic features of the city thus get enmeshed in a complex web of local economic relations and global economic transactions. The settings for the local economy are influenced by the local governance systems.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What according to you constitute the major characteristics of urban communities?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) Describe in your own words the social and economic aspects of urban communities with illustrations from your own region.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 3) Discuss the nature of inter-linkages between the social and economic aspects of urban communities.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Urban Poverty

It is important to understand urban poverty for social workers to design appropriate interventions. Workers engaged in the urban informal economy constitute the bulk of the urban poor. A large section of this population consists of low skilled rural migrants or migrants from smaller towns. Since they have neither the skills nor the opportunities to enter better paid and more secure formal sector jobs, they join the informal work force as soon as they enter the city. They thus move from one level of poverty in their place of origin to another level at their destination. In addition because of cost cutting measures by the formal sector and recession – there is a growing section of workers in the formal sector who have lost their jobs and are compelled to work in the informal sector. This change in their lives means a reduction in their standard of living as well as insecure and unregulated employment.

23.62 percent of India's urban population is living below the poverty line. The urban poor population is 3.41 percent less than the rural poor.

The tenth five year plan notes that urban poor can be defined in a declining scale such as core poor, intermediate poor, and transitional poor. Or they can also be classified in terms of declining poor, coping poor, and improving poor, with different degrees of priority for the three basic needs of survival, security, and quality of life.

The urban poor are characterized by inadequate income and unstable asset base, inadequate shelter, provision of 'public infrastructure', and provision of basic services, limited or no safety net, protection of poorer groups rights through the operation of law and poorer groups voiceless ness and power less ness.

Urban-rural Linkages

It is to be recognized that many poor households have livelihoods that draw on rural and urban resources or opportunities. Urban and rural areas are closely linked, each contributing to the other. These linkages need to be taken into account while planning for community development programmes

2.6 SPATIAL SEGREGATION

All urban communities are spatially segregated. That is, communities can have particular location because of their occupations, linguistic, regional, class and caste affiliation. Further the migrants to a city can settle down owing to group affiliations and informal ties. For example in the case of Delhi, the colonial administration ensured that the city development was to benefit the rulers, after annexation of Bahadur Shah Jaffer, the earlier walled city was neglected as the colonial rulers developed the vast New Delhi area, with wide roads, gardens and parks. There was more spatial segregation after partition, when refugees settled in new areas followed by continued influx of surrounding urban populations. Spatial segregation of city thus was not a one time phenomenon, but took place because of the waves of migrations and political upheavals in the sub-continent. Segregation of the city also took place as the migrants cluster to one particular area because of the informal connections and networks that had with city dwellers. As the refugees because of partition or other political

conditions came into the city, the city got its ethnically based groups like the Tibetan community, the Nirankari Colony, the Nizamuddin Basti etc.

Urban areas are also characterised by a greater separation between place of residence and place of work, on account of specialisation of land use, better transportation and communication facilities, segregation of people according to economic characteristics and a greater reliance on urban planning.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What are the issues facing urban poor? Illustrate with respect to the poor in your region.

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) Give an account of the spatial segregation in an urban area within your region.

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.7 SPECIFIC URBAN COMMUNITIES

A) Refugee and Displaced Communities

The partition of Indian sub-continent into India and Pakistan had deleterious effects on millions of people. There was not only the trauma of leaving one's place of residence, occupation and property but also the apprehension of reaching a safe place. Refugee communities have placed a tremendous strain on the resources of the state/area to which they move. Besides these there is also the trauma experienced when leaving loved ones behind or on the way to a safe destination, they are subjected to violence and loss of dignity. These problems were compounded by the settlements that were established for refugee populations that had the bare minimal facilities. Communities had to establish their lives all over again.

The problem of urban resettlement of the refugees and displaced (2-5 million displaced persons from West Pakistan) was accentuated with the differences in the economic situations of the incoming and outgoing population. This difference has been the more marked in the case of displaced persons from West Pakistan. There was also a difference between refugees related to their origin. Thus, while the Muslim migrant from the Punjab, PEPSU, Delhi, etc., was often a labourer or an artisan, with a comparatively low standard of life, the incoming non-Muslim was frequently an industrialist, a businessman, a petty shopkeeper or one

belonging to the white-collar professions and used to much better conditions of living.

Government initiated special agencies, such as the Faridabad, Rajpura and Hastinapur Development Boards and the Sindhu Resettlement Corporation were involved in meeting the housing requirements of the refugees. The experiments at Nilokheri and Faridabad are significant in themselves. They are based on the principle of self-help on a cooperative basis.

Rehabilitation of refugees involved providing educational facilities, training in vocations, grants for running businesses or setting up small enterprises etc.

Besides this there is internal displacement of communities that is taking place continually when their lands are taken away as in the case of tribal communities or when rivers are submerged during dam construction- the case of communities displaced say in Narmada valley, or the communities that are displaced because of economic pressures- drought and flood moving away from their place of birth to places far off in search of food and work.

Also there is displacement as a result of ethnic or caste violence that makes communities to move to newer areas within a city or elsewhere- through either a government rehabilitation scheme or on their own. Urban areas are made of many such people and major metropolitan areas are seen strewn with such communities.

Check Your Progress 5

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Discuss the nature of rehabilitation of refugee communities. What role do you envisage for social workers?

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) Discuss the problems of the displaced communities in your region.

.....

.....

.....

.....

B) Slums

Areas that are overcrowded with dilapidated structures, faultily laid out and lacking in essential services are generally termed as slums.

Slums are considered as the physical and social expression of inequalities in the distribution of the benefit of economic growth. Slums are neglected parts of cities where housing and living conditions are appallingly lacking.

Slums range from high density, squalid central city tenements to spontaneous squatter settlements without legal recognition or rights, sprawling at the edge of cities. Some are more than fifty years old, (infact in Kolkata some of the slums are 150 years old)

Slums have grown because of the poverty of rural areas. When all livelihood options fail, the rural communities move to urban areas in search of work. Sometimes they move with their entire families or only men migrate first, bringing their families with them later.

The migrants settle down in vacant places, which are not in the control of civic authorities. These areas lack basic civic amenities and these areas have soon grown into slums where people perforce live in unhygienic and unsanitary conditions. While slums are considered derogatively, the work force of the slum is an important constituent of the informal economy, which has links with the formal economy. The communities in slums are settled in groups which maintain their affinal and other bonds.

Definition of Slum

Slums have come to form an integral part of the phenomena of urbanization in India. It is for this reason that first time in the history of census in this country, the census 2001 has compiled slum demography.

As per the Census of India, 2001, the slum areas broadly constitute of:

- i) All specified areas in a town or city notified as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration under any Act including a 'Slum Act'.
- ii) All areas recognized as 'Slum' by State/Local Government and UT Administration, Housing and Slum Boards, which may have not been formally notified as slum under any act;
- iii) A compact area of at least 300 population or about 60-70 households of poorly built congested tenements, in unhygienic environment usually with inadequate infrastructure and lacking in proper sanitary and drinking water facilities.

UN-HABITAT definition denotes a slum as 'a wide range of low-income settlements and/or poor human living conditions.' characterized by the following attributes: a) lack of basic services; b) substandard housing or illegal and inadequate building structures; c) overcrowding and high density; d) unhealthy living conditions and hazardous locations; e) insecure tenure, irregular or informal settlements; f) poverty and social exclusion; and, g) minimum settlement size.

Characteristic Features of the Slums

Physically, slums consist of clusters of huts comprising several rooms constructed with temporary building materials, where each room is inhabited by a family sharing a common latrine, without arrangements for water supply, drains, disposal of solid waste and garbage within the slum boundaries.

Slums are **characterized** by a) Lack of basic services, b) Overcrowding, c) high density doubtful and insecure tenure, d) Inadequate housing, e) Hazardous or precarious environments, f) Lack of access to basic facilities, g) Poverty or social exclusion.

It is to be understood that each locality, each metropolitan area has different slum types and none of them could be subsumed in one broad category. They are locally known with different names and different features with differing histories, different physical layout, pattern of ownership, political patronage and social make-up.

In case of Kolkata, these slum types could be categorized as the unauthorized bustees located on the sides of canals, large drains, garbage dumps, railway tracks and roads.

Among the **unauthorised** slums types are those, which are simply encroachments by the poor people either displaced from the city itself or retrenched from their work place, on the roadside (locally called *jhupri*), canals (called *khaldhar*), or any vacant place (called *udbastu*) another type of displacement is reported as displacement due to an excessive increase in family size. It has been found that the predominant structure types in the slum areas are *pukka*, *semi-pukka* and *kutcha* (crude or imperfect).

The **authorized** slums are the hut type settlements on leased land from landowners, which is let out to migrants; The second type of slum called “thika tenant slums” where the slum dwellers have taken possession at a fixed rent and have constructed their houses; Third types of slums are those constructed by zaminders (landowners) themselves and let out to the slum dwellers. These types of slums are locally called bustees; The fourth type of slums is Refugee Resettlement Colonies (locally called *udbastu* colonies) where land has been leased out for 99 years to the refugees from present-day Bangladesh by the government at nominal rents. (These types of houses are called Berar Ghar).

Check Your Progress 6

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Discuss the characteristic features of a particular slum while tracing its historical development.

.....

.....

.....

.....

2.8 LET US SUM UP

This unit has provided you with an understanding with respect to urban communities. We have seen that Urban communities are not homogenous. There is a variation with respect to their demographic, social and economic features. This variability is not only across urban areas in India but within cities themselves.

Further urban and rural communities are interlinked with each other in myriad ways- both for economic and social reasons. Urban communities borrow from their rural brethren, the culture and customs as well as play a part in rural economy through remittance economy or participation in major agricultural operations. Also when the informal economic activity in urban areas gets affected

they immediately fall back on the rural agricultural economy to provide a safety net.

We also have seen that there are economic interlinkages within the urban communities. Thus both the formal and informal economies are interlinked with each other.

This variegated situation of urban communities brings with it a different set of problems, strengths and limitations of each of these communities affected differentially by the various policies at the national, regional, state and local levels. In working for community development thus provides a backdrop in which community based interventions have to be designed.

2.9 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. UN-Habitat (2003) *The Challenge of Slums: Global Report on Human Settlements*, Earthscan London <http://www.unhabitat.org/downloads/docs/GRHS.2003.0.pdf> accessed on 16th September 2007.
2. Sandhu Ranvinder Singh (Ed) (2003) *Urbanisation in India Sociological Contribution*. Sage Publications New Delhi.
3. Kundu Nitai *Urban slums Reports The case of Kolkata, India* http://www.ucl.ac.uk/dpu-projects/Global_Report/pdfs/Kolkata.pdf accessed on 16th September 2007.
4. Kundu Amitab (2000) *Inequality Mobility and Urbanisation*. Indian council of Societal Science Research and Manak, New Delhi.
5. Smith David Drakakis (2000) *Third World Cities* Routledge, London & New York.
6. Jack Malcolm 2006 Urbanisation, Sustainable Growth and Poverty reduction. <http://www.asia2015conference.org/pdfs/Jack.pdf> accessed on 16th September 2008.
7. Mitra Arup (1994) *Urbanisation, Slums, informal sector, employment and Poverty* B.R. Publishing Corporation, Delhi.
8. Unnayan (1992) *Basti Movements in Calcutta: Housing Struggles of Basti Dwellers in the 1950's in Calcutta*. Unnayan, Calcutta.
9. Nagpal H(1994) *Modernization and Urbanisation in India* Rawat Publications Jaipur.
10. Kasambi M.(1994) *Urbanization and Urban Development in India*. ICSSR New Delhi.
11. Benjamin S(2000) Governance, economic settings and poverty in Bangalore *Environment & Urbanization* Vol. 12 No 1 April 2000.
12. Gregory Pam (2005) *Final Report of the Project R8491, Natural Resources Systems Programme* <http://www.nrsp.org/database/documents/2812.pdf> accessed on 5th October 2008.

13. Jan Lin, Christopher Mele (2005) *The Urban Sociology Reader* Routledge New York & Oxon. <http://books.google.co.in/books?id=19gkifse5N0C&printsec=copyright&dp=definitions+of+urban+community&lr=#PPT10,M1> accessed on 14th October 2008.
14. Report of the Steering Committee on Urban Development, urban Housing and Urban poverty for the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) , from the Tenth plan approach on urban development, urban housing and urban poverty document accessed from http://www.archidev.org/IMG/pdf/tenthplan_approach_on_urban_development.pdf on 20th September, 2008.



UNIT 3 PROFILE OF RURAL COMMUNITIES

**A. Malathi*

Contents

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Meaning of Rural Community
- 3.3 Diversity of Rural Communities
- 3.4 Rural Social Structure
- 3.5 Rural Economic Structure
- 3.6 Policies and Practices
- 3.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.8 Further Readings and References

3.0 OBJECTIVES

The understanding of rural communities helps in designing interventions better. Studying this unit would enable you to

- consider rural society as a heterogeneous society;
- describe the characteristic features of rural communities;
- develop an understanding of the complexity of rural communities; and
- identify critical issues of rural communities

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Rural communities form the backbone of India- adhering to the adage that India lives in its villages. Village life is much talked about in terms of its serenity, idyllic surrounding, free from conflict and having a beautiful relationship with nature. But there is much more to understand about the rural communities in the vast terrain of India. The geographical and cultural variability brings with it social arrangements that are adaptive to the specific context- hence defy the notion of uniformity in village communities. Also the various villages are subject to a number of factors, be it in the ecological, cultural, geographical and political or economic spheres that provide a dynamism to the village community, its existence and their ways of living.

A rural society is better understood through certain key aspects like size, populations, physical structure and their social and economic way of life. Also one needs to look at the way the economic and political policies influence the life of the villagers for any meaningful social work intervention. Social work interventions pertaining to village community have as much to deal with their economic condition as with their political condition and access to power. As much as their variability is a factor, some common elements can be understood

to be the pervasive factors of rural living. These and the institutional presence and its access also make an important focus for social work interventions. Like in the case of urban communities we draw upon insights from sociology, economics, and public administration to develop our understanding of rural communities. Similarly with regard to interventions we draw upon insights derived from social work methods. One predominantly in use is the community organization method.

There is homogeneity across villages in terms of certain broad features of social and economic characteristics. The technological and organizational aspects are also simpler compared to the urban areas and also well laid out within the socialization processes. Within the village there are bounded societies that clearly demarcate between various social groups. This is seen in the restrictions and taboo on rituals and customs and interactions with others. There is village endogamy or caste endogamy. The relationships are informal and primacy is accorded to face-to-face interactions with personal and kinship intimacy being predominant.

3.2 MEANING OF RURAL COMMUNITY

Rural communities reside in rural areas. Rural areas as per census consider the village as the basic area of habitation. A village is usually considered as the smallest area of habitation. The village generally follows the limits of a revenue village that is recognized by the local administration. The revenue village need not necessarily be a single agglomeration of the habitations. It could comprise of a large village or a cluster of very small villages. It has a definite boundary and definite name. But the revenue village has a definite surveyed boundary and each village is a separate administrative unit with separate village accounts. It may have one or more hamlets. The entire revenue village is one unit. There may be unsurveyed villages within forests etc., where the locally recognized boundaries of each habitation area are followed within the larger unit of say the forest range officer's jurisdiction.

The other meaning relates to the nature of livelihoods. Rural thus refers to livelihoods that are based on agriculture and something to do with nature. It would also refer to the scale and nature of technology used in rural areas. Thus in rural areas the technology followed is simple with production levels meeting one's family's needs and some surplus that could be sold in the markets nearby.

Rural Urban Continuum

The rural urban dichotomy is experienced in some states but not in others. For example in some states like Kerala the distinction of a village and town is impossible to discern. Instead there is a continuum. The left end of the continuum consists of the rural whilst the right of the urban having a mix of characteristics. Those which are having mixed features are placed in the middle. Changes from rural to urban are called urbanization. There is nothing like the ideal model of rural or urban but an increasingly urban flavour to rural locales. The rapid process of urbanization through the establishment of industries, urban traits and facilities has decreased the differences between villages and cities.

There are some sociologists who treat rural-urban as dichotomous categories differentiating the two at various levels including occupational differences,

environmental differences, differences in the sizes of communities, differences in the density of population, differences in social mobility and direction of migration, differences in social stratification and in the systems of social interaction.

A third view regarding rural and urban communities, believes that both village and city are elements of the same civilization and hence neither rural urban dichotomy, nor continuum is meaningful.

Some sociologists have used the concept of rural-urban continuum to stress the idea that there are no sharp breaking points to be found in the degree or quantity of rural urban differences. M.S. Rao points out that both village and town formed part of the same civilization characterized by institution of kinship and caste system in pre-British India. But there were certain specific institutional forms and organizational ways distinguishing social and cultural life in towns from that in village. In this one can consider the degree of urbanization as a useful conceptual tool for understanding rural-urban relations. The factors distinguishing rural from urban communities include occupation, size and density of population as well as mobility, differentiation and stratification.

However there is no clear conceptual difference between rural and urban as every village possesses some elements of the city and every city carries some features of the village.

3.3 DIVERSITY OF RURAL COMMUNITIES

Rural society includes a number of communities that live in what are known as villages. Villages in India vary with respect to their natural resource base, population density, demographic features, amenities, connectivity, historicity, and diversity of lifestyles, languages, cultural features and their proximity to city centres. Some villages have very old population as the majority of younger generation migrates in search of jobs. Such villages are known as Gray villages. Some of the villages are also uninhabited. There are other villages which are known as fringe villages which are located in the outskirts of the towns that eventually become parts of the urban whole. Such examples abound in the metropolitan areas for example, Nayabans in Noida – Harola etc which have been surrounded by the planned city of Noida in the south eastern outskirts of Delhi.

A village can have varying composition of social and occupational groups such as agriculturalists, artisans, craftsmen and other occupational groups and all depend one way or the other upon agriculture. One major understanding was that communities, which are non-tribal as well as tribal, tend to live in rural areas. Persons belonging to the former are often known as peasant societies or communities in which there is a definite bonding with the nearby market towns. These communities are not isolated like the tribal communities. Their linkage with the nearby towns is also through some forms of shared governance that bind them within the region to other constituents. They have also well established market links with the nearby town's people for the sale of surplus agricultural produce and for the purchase of useful items for daily living manufactured in the urban areas.

Villages are primarily food producing units and they are agriculture based. They produce not only for their own subsistence but also for the urban societies,

which are non-producing. Land and the natural resources are the primary means /unit of production in rural societies. Ecological conditions influence the pattern of their stay, with hamlets that are strung together or individual houses surrounded by their fields.

Housing Patterns and Settlements in Rural Areas

- a) Different kinds of villages are found all over the country. In some, the fields of the village surround a tight cluster of houses. An outlying hamlet or several satellite hamlets are also found attached to some villages in this case.
- b) Linear settlements – e.g. in Kerala and Konkan and in the delta lands of Bengal. In such settlements houses are strung out each surrounded by its own compound. However there is little to physically demarcate where one village ends and another begins.
- c) Here there is scattering of homesteads or clusters of two or three houses. In this case also physical demarcation of villages is not clear. Such settlements are found in hill areas, in the Himalayan foothills, in the high lands of Gujarat and in the Satpura range of Maharashtra.

Usually a village is conceived as a physical entity having an aggregation of houses of mixed architecture (some of mud and thatch and some of cement) in the midst of surrounding agricultural fields. Of course there may be some exceptions to the general image of a village. Village can have more than ten thousand population as in the case of Kerala. Or the village may be a conglomeration of cement houses inhabited by people who may predominantly be in service or may be self-employed non-agriculturalists as in the case of a number of villages situated near towns and cities in Himachal Pradesh.

Size of the Villages

In 1981 census there were 5, 57, 137 inhabited villages in the country. By the year 1991 this number increased to 4689 towns and 5, 80,781 villages. According to 2001 census there are 5161 towns and 6,38,365 villages including uninhabited villages with 72% of the total population living in villages. Further rural life is characterized by direct relationship of people to nature i.e, land, animal and plant life. Agriculture is their main occupation. Agriculture provides livelihood to about 58% of the labour force.

3.4 RURAL SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Village, community, family and caste are the basic components of the rural social structure. They encompass the entire field of life: social, economic, political and cultural life of the rural people. The complexity of social norms and values statuses and rules, rights and obligations is reflected in them. These are long enduring rural social institutions which have millennia old historical roots and structures.

Rural social structure would refer to the inter-relationship, inter-connectedness and inter-dependence of the different parts of the rural society. Caste system is one unique social structure and the inter relationship of the different units (castes)

constitutes the structure of the rural society. Society, caste and Panchayat have control over the individual.

Caste System

Caste is the fundamental principle of social organizations in the Indian village. The structural basis of Hinduism is the caste system.

Caste is also seen as a 'monopolistic guild'. The occupation on which a caste has monopoly may be very simple. Village is conceptualized as an aggregate of castes, each traditionally associated with an occupation. The members of the caste are spread over a region in more than one village. The members of a caste have matrimonial relations with the neighbouring villages.

Sometimes, the castes are also named after the corresponding occupations, e.g. caste, dholi caste, chakali- washerwomen, Kammari- potters etc. Members of the caste marry within their own caste-but usually outside their village. In other words, the village is exogamous, while the caste is endogamous. There are some systems of marriage in which the men of upper castes marry women of lower castes allowing lower caste women to move up the hierarchy. This is known as hypergamy, (anuloma). For political purposes, social control and matrimony, the members of the caste in a village are dependent upon their caste group located in other villages. Society, caste and Panchayat have control over the individual.

It is also true that all caste occupations are not found in the village. A village has some castes – but for services it may depend on members belonging to various other castes from neighbouring villages. Caste and class are linked to each other with high castes usually being associated with higher classes.

Inter-caste Relations

Inter-caste relations at the village level constitute vertical ties. The castes living in a village are bound together by economic ties. Generally peasant castes are numerically preponderant in villages and to perform agricultural work, they need the services of carpenter, blacksmith and leather worker castes. It is unlikely that all castes are located within a village, consequently they depend on neighboring villages for certain services, skills and goods.

Inter-caste relations are mediated by a system known as Jajmani System. Jajmani is sort of mutual give and take form of relationship in which one family is hereditarily entitled to supply goods and render services to the other in exchange of the same. The person rendering the services or supplying the goods is known as kameen or prajan and the person to whom the services are rendered is called a jajman. Thus under jajmani system a permanent informal bond is made between jajman and kameen to meet each other's need for goods and services. Exclusive and durable relations exist because when the family moves out it becomes its moral duty to find an alternative service provider for its patrons. These rights are also sold. Jajmani system is characterized by unbroken hereditary and multidimensional relationship based on barter system.

Family and Kinship Relations

Rural family functions as the unit of economic, cultural, religious and political activity. In agricultural societies the family becomes the unit of production, distribution and consumption. Marriage is a decision of the family governed by rules of kinship. Family has a strict control and administrative powers over the individual.

Both nuclear and joint family with their modifications are found in rural India.

There are Inter regional variations and in the distribution of family types.

Currently the family is changing in rural India with changes in the social and economic situation. The family as a unit of production has changed more into a unit of consumption. Rules of marriage vary between South and North India.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What are the main features of rural social structure in India?

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) Discuss the linkages between caste and class in rural society.

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 3) What are the main features of the Jajmani system? Find out its variations in your region.

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 4) Discuss the changes taking place in the Jajmani system in your area.

.....

.....

.....

- 5) What is the nature of family found in rural India? How is it considered as the basic unit? Discuss distribution of power in rural India.

.....

.....

.....

Political power centered in cities controls villages. The conflicts between different people pertain mainly to the matters of land disputes, traditional power arrangements, sharing of common resources such as the community pastures, water and forest resources and transgressing caste boundaries. Panchayats are usually the forums for dispute resolution. There are two types, one the Village Panchayat and the other Jati Panchayat. The former deals with the welfare of the families living in that village undertaking collective tasks of the village such as performing rituals for the welfare of the entire village or organizing programs for the collective welfare such as building tanks, roads, granary. A traditional caste council called Panch or five, comprises of a small but always an odd number, deals with issues related to caste matters and inter-caste relations. A particular caste is dominant implying either a numerical predominance, or control over economic resources, political power or having a high ritual status, or first ones to take advantage of the Western Education system.

Lower castes are often reduced to a marginal status. The dominant castes have often resorted to violence to keep other castes submissive. The power of the Panchayat is being reduced by the presence of the secular formal institutions, of the dominant castes. There is also conflict between the traditional caste Panchayats and the secular institutions such as the Gram Panchayat. Class has an economic dimension. Upper castes are the landed, and lower castes are the landless, generally.

The power relations are also closely related to the gendered location one has. Thus in rural society women have less power in decision-making and their needs and concern do not seem to be well articulated at the household level and in the larger community. Their institutional presence is also considerably less as compared to men. These are compounded when class and caste are joined together.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What are the basic features of power relations in rural areas?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.5 RURAL ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

The salient features of a rural economy are related to the conditions of agriculture that is the predominant economic activity. The rural sector consists of agriculture and non-agriculture related activities, which are known as farm and non-farm economy.

Agricultural Sector

The agricultural sub sector consists of agriculture and allied economic activities such as crop husbandry, animal husbandry, and dairying, fisheries, poultry, and forestry. The non-agricultural sector consists of economic activities related to industry, business or services. This refers to the cottage and village industries, khadi, handloom, handicrafts etc. Business refers to micro enterprises, trading of general goods, small shops petty traders etc, whereas services refer to transport, communication banking and input supply, marketing of farm and non-farm produce etc. The main stakeholders of rural sector include farmers-agricultural and non-agricultural laborers, artisans, traders, money lenders and those engaged in providing such services as transport, communication, processing, banking and education and extension.

Agriculture is the mainstay of Indian economy because of its high share in employment and livelihood creation notwithstanding its reduced contribution to the nation's GDP. The share of agriculture in the gross domestic product has registered a steady decline from 36.4 per cent in 1982-83 to 18.5 percent in 2006-07. Yet this sector continues to support more than half a billion people providing employment to 52 per cent of the workforce. This means that the share of the value of goods and services produced by the agricultural sector has diminished much more than the decline in the number of people depending directly on the activities of this sector.

It is also an important source of raw material and demand for many industrial products, particularly fertilizers, pesticides, agricultural implements and a variety of consumer goods.

Growth of agriculture over a period of time remained lower than the growth in non-agriculture sectors. The gap between the growth of agriculture and non-agriculture sector began to widen since 1981-82, and more particularly since 1996-97, because of acceleration in the growth of industry and services sectors.

Dry Land Agriculture

Dry land agriculture is usually unaccounted for in mainstream agriculture. In India, it is estimated that 410 million people depend on the dry lands for a living. Dry land agriculture is another economy in rural areas that closely enmeshes with the 'poverty geography' of the country. Other than the arid zones where even rainfed farming is quite difficult, the heart of the drylands is in the semi-arid zones. Drylands in this country constitute more than 70% of the cultivable lands and despite several odds stacked against them, produce about 42% of the country's food. It is reported that nearly 83% of sorghum, 81% of pulses and 90% of oilseeds grown in the country come from these areas.

Rural livelihood systems in dry lands are usually a mix of natural resource based, non natural resource based and migrant incomes. These have tended to persist over several decades without any change because of the policy focus on green revolution. The nature of agricultural strategy underwent significant changes in the early plans to the current. These have important implications for promoting rural livelihood base. Strategy of green revolution and spread of irrigation was emphasized.

Much of the technologies, subsidies and public support systems provided under this undifferentiated agriculture policy fail in responding to the needs or problems of dry land agriculture, thus promoting inequity, whether we examine input support (irrigation, fertilizers, seeds) or out-put support (minimum support price and procurement price mechanisms). A similar tendency is visible in terms of agriculture research priorities, technology development and investments.

Allied Agricultural Activities

Animal husbandry and horticulture, pisciculture, apiculture and sericulture are examples of allied activities which are closely related to agriculture and provide marginal or substantial source of income for rural communities.

Non-agricultural Activities

This sector in rural areas constitutes an important component of the rural work force constituting 20 to 25% of the rural work force. This includes manufacturing of implements and work of artisans and crafts persons that support the agricultural work.

Rural industries that fall into the Khadi and village industries serve as an important support for employment. Also some of the people are employed in rural services such as health, education and the markets. In 2001 the workers in rural industries accounted for 3.8% of the rural work force and above 3% for the total workforce of the country

Basic features of rural economy are:

1) Excessive dependence on Nature.

With 64% of the net sown area in 1993-94 was rainfed that is crop production depended on the quantum and distribution of rainfall over the growing season. Indian agriculture is vulnerable to natural calamities, such as droughts, floods, hailstorms, and cyclones. This means that the degree of nature induced risk and uncertainty in agriculture is higher than in the non-agricultural sector, with the burden of risk falling on the farmer.

2) Low capital labour ratio.

This refers to the amount of capital available per worker. As there is a large workforce depending on agriculture this makes the capital available per capita low.

3) Small economic holdings and livestock holdings.

The existing land inheritance law means that the process of subdivision and fragmentation of landholdings continues unabated affecting generation after generation. Almost all the marginal and small farmers are poor, producing very little marketable surplus. It is estimated that the farmers having less than four hectare of land are not financially viable. Thus over 90% of farms in India are not financially viable. Compounded with this is the factor of continued low returns which is making the cultivators to join the ranks of agricultural labour

4) Low factor productivity.

There is low average crop yields per hectare compared to other nations. The inadequate capital in the form of production of inputs, raw material

and improved machinery and equipment available per worker/unit of enterprise

5) Long gestation and low rate of turnover.

The gestation period for investments in agriculture is long compared to non-agricultural enterprises. Three to four month period for crops to mature, six years for a calf to the stage where milk production is possible, and in horticulture the fruit tree takes about 5-10 years for bearing fruit. Longer time is taken for a return on investment.

6) High incidence of poverty and unemployment.

The poverty in terms of absolute numbers as per official figures is 22%. But the incidence of poverty and the conditions for the above poverty line to turn into poverty situations are plenty. There is increasing rural debt experienced even by the rich farmers specially those in the cotton belt. The uncertainties unleashed by the economic reforms make the poor suffer more. Low skills are compounded by low work availability. Similarly unemployment conditions are increasing.

7) Preponderance of illiterate and unskilled workforce.

The labour force in rural areas is less skilled because of the disadvantaged class and caste status. They are unable to complete basic schooling. Both individual and collective structural factors make it difficult for the labour force to acquire skills required to move them from primary sector to the secondary and tertiary structures.

8) Lack of basic infrastructure.

Basic infrastructure in terms of connectivity and health and education facilities as also market facilities related to cold storage, etc are still to be achieved in adequate numbers and quality.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

1) What are the two major sectors comprising the rural economic structure?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

2) Discuss the potential of non-agriculture and allied activities increasing rural employment and raising incomes.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

- 3) What are the basic features of rural economy? Discuss with reference to your region.

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 4) Discuss how agricultural strategy with a focus on Dry land agriculture could change the situation of rural masses.

.....

.....

.....

.....

Rural Assets and Poverty

The picture of assets in rural areas is skewed. Over 78% of the cultivators belonging to the category of marginal and small operators cultivate less than one third of the land. In contrast less than two percent of the cultivators having holdings of more than 10 hectares each cultivate about 29% of the land.

The average size of holding is bigger in states such as Punjab, Haryana and Gujarat. On the other hand in eastern states like Bihar and West Bengal the operational size of these holdings is relatively small. It may be remembered that the regional differences in the structure of holdings are related to the pressure of population on the land, soil, agro climatic conditions and the extent of irrigation. It is also true that the economic value and productive potential of small holdings in irrigated areas might be higher than relatively large landholding in areas where agricultures is largely dependent on rains.

The incidence of poverty is closely linked to the employment, ecological setting and ethnic profile of the population. Even if employment is available the nature of such an employment determines whether such a person is poor or not. The incidence of poverty in rural areas is linked to such factors as landless or marginal farmers cultivating low value products, mostly for family subsistence; self-employed artisans/service rendering people catering to low income customers/markets; women headed households and groups with larger families but limited assets and earning opportunities; people with limited skills and education engaging in seasonal casual work; socially excluded, depressed groups (e.g lower castes), tribals, nomads etc; victims of the side effects of development of infrastructure and other changes which disintegrated their past sustenance strategies (e.g people affected by breakdown of traditional occupations because of macro economic changes, construction of big projects, decimation of forests etc).

Rural Credit Markets

Credit is required in rural areas for consumption and production purposes. Consumption needs require small amounts of credit that meet needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education and health. Credit requirements are usually

met from the shaukar/money lender informal institutions. However there is increasing evidence that the growing SHG movement in several parts of the country especially south is able to make inroads into traditional money lending institutions. Their share is less but growing. The traditional institutions survive because of their timely, ready availability of credit and their informal linkages that could be caste or kinship or village based with the client groups. There has been an effort to meet credit needs from the formal institutions but there has been a low presence of these with addition to bureaucratic hurdles in the way.

The growth of formal banking institutions was high during 1970s and 1980s following nationalization of banks in 1969. However there has been a decline in the formal banking services in rural areas since 1990s. Flow of credit to rural areas also declined.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Discuss the linkages between rural poverty and rural credit.

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.6 POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Policies and prescriptions related to institutional presence, and procedures which govern access or that control and constrain legitimacy related to citizen participation etc strongly influence rural communities.

Reform measures such as reduction in fiscal deficit, reduction of subsidies, devaluation of rupee, export orientation and reduction of agricultural credit adversely affect the rural poor especially in terms of food security, which relates to production, distribution and pricing of the food grains. The agricultural sector is worst affected by the fiscal contraction which invariably result in a disproportionate cut in capital expenditure. Agricultural sector is the mainstay of the rural Indian Economy which is closely related to the existing pattern of the social equity. The shrinkage of the flow of resources to the rural sector, a misconceived interest rate policy which discriminate against agriculture, a sickening rural delivery credit system, the emergence of a new banking culture nurtured by reforms which is far from friendly to agriculture and rural development all go against the interests of rural economy.

Reform and post reform period impact on agriculture are found to be deleterious to the rural poor and the rural landless. Reforms have increased the vulnerability of these masses and this forms one of the critical issues for rural community development.

There are many policies that the government makes with regard to the rural sector directly- such as policies related to agriculture, rural credit policy, policy on investments to be made in social sectors- policies related to the provision of infrastructure in rural areas such as in health, education, employment (NREGA)

road connectivity, housing and sanitation, drinking water supply etc. At the same time policies related to industry such as mining, availability of land for real estate for urban areas affects villages located in urban fringes. Similarly the fiscal policy, which promotes export promotion, favouring areas for tourism development such as in the coastal areas affects the rural people who are living in these areas. These play a role in affecting the livelihoods of these communities and make them vulnerable to the point of crisis in survival. Thus these become critical for social workers to working with rural communities. Thus any thing that affects the rural populace be it with governance issues such as service delivery or with lack of institutional presence, is of great concern for rural community work.

Check Your Progress 5

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Discuss how rural communities are affected by government policies.

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.7 LET US SUM UP

We have seen how rural communities are understood through certain key aspects of like size, populations, physical structure and their social and economic way of life. We have also seen that despite the diversity there are certain common features like the social system of caste and inter caste relations which are closely related to their economic activities. The lower social hierarchy also means low in assets and income. We have also seen the importance of strengthening the livelihood base of agriculture and allied activities especially in the dry land region for the development of communities at the margins. We have also understood that the living conditions of these communities are subject to change both from external and internal factors especially from the policy interventions by the government. These would be important for any meaningful social work intervention.

3.8 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. S.C Dube (1955) *Indian Village* Cornell University Press, Ithaca.
2. Government of India *Economic Survey (2007-08)* New Delhi.
3. Government of India *10th Five Year Plan* New Delhi.
4. Government of India *11th Five Year Plan* New Delhi.
5. Singh Kartar (1999) *Rural Development in India* Sage Publications.
6. A.R. Desai (2005) *Rural India in Transition*, 2nd ed Popular Prakashan Mumbai.

UNIT 4 TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

*A. Malathi

Contents

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 The Meaning and Definitions of Tribe
- 4.3 Spread Across Regions and Demographic Features
- 4.4 Tribal Communities: Their Social and Economic Structure
- 4.5 Denotified and Nomadic Tribes
- 4.6 Current Issues Facing Tribal Communities
- 4.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.8 Further Readings and References

4.0 OBJECTIVES

We have discussed the urban and rural communities. There are certain other communities which are quite distinct in their ways of life which is far from the modern ways of living. Hence there are certain issues related to their interaction with the other social groups as well as their coping abilities in the changing modern life. This unit is an attempt to bring an understanding of the special way of life of tribal communities and their concerns for us to address through various community development efforts. By going through this unit you would be able to

- define and describe tribal communities;
- understand and explain the social and economic features of tribal communities;
- distinguish between denotified tribes and nomadic tribes; and
- point out the major concerns of tribal communities including denotified communities

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit looks at the tribal communities of India. It does so by firstly looking at the position of tribes historically, the coinage of the term tribe and its various meanings, the diversity among the tribes of India, their linkages with the rest of the rural society, and their natural resource dependent livelihoods. The profile would include their economic and social aspects and the current issues of the tribal communities.

4.2 THE MEANING AND DEFINITIONS OF TRIBE

The word tribe is derived from *Tribus*, a Latin word meaning “a group”. Dictionary meanings of a tribe range from considering them as

*Dr. A. Malathi, Delhi University, Delhi

- a) any aggregate of people united by ties of descent from a common ancestor, community of customs and traditions, adherence to the same leaders, etc.,
- b) a local division of an aboriginal people,
- c) division of some other people,
- d) a class or set of persons, especially one with strong common traits or interests,
- e) a large family.

Historically tribal communities have often been understood as exotic and indicative of forbidden cultures that are ancient and need to be preserved. This has led to some of their classifications since the colonial times and their categorization into nomadic, criminal, vanvasi, adivasi etc. These terms are overridden by their inclusion in scheduled tribes list- that by itself tries to build a category of tribes known as the scheduled tribes. And also gives legitimacy to those listed as being recognized by government as such. The numerous nomenclatures provided by the sociologists, census officials and the government have only created confusion as to how should tribes be categorized, understood and treated. All these have implications for the mainstreaming of tribes that is actively being encouraged by all those concerned with tribal communities, sometimes with positive outcomes and at other times, deleterious to the very existence of tribe(s).

Robert Redfield considers tribe to be a small community and possessing characteristic features as

- i) distinctiveness: where the community begins and where it ends is apparent. This is expressed in the group consciousness of the people of the community
- ii) smallness: a compact community with a small population
- iii) homogeneity: all the persons do similar activities and have similar state of mind. All persons have similar livelihood strategies, which continue over generations,
- iv) self sufficiency: The community is self-sufficient and provides for most of the activities and needs of its people.

Majumdar 1958 defines a tribe as a 'social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous with no specialization of functions, ruled by tribal officers hereditarily or otherwise united in language or dialect, recognizing social distance with other tribes or castes without any social obloquy attaching to them, as it does in the caste structure, following tribal traditions, beliefs and customs, liberal of naturalization of ideas from alien sources, above all conscious of homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration'.

According to S.C. Dubey (1960) 'the tribe generally refers to territorial communities living in relative isolation of hills and forests'.

Their comparative isolation, in some ways has kept them apart from the mainstream of society in the country. Partly because of this isolation and partly because of their limited world view, characterized by lack of historical depth

resulting in the early merging of history into mythology and an overall tradition orientation, they are integrated in terms of certain themes rooted in the past. These integrative themes and a special cultural focus gave them a separate cultural identity and they often possess latent or manifest value-attitude and motivational systems which are remarkably different from those of the other peoples.

Mandelbaum (1956) mentions the following characteristics of Indian tribes:-

- a) Kinship as an instrument of social bonds.
- b) A lack of hierarchy among men and groups.
- c) Absence of strong, complex and formal organization.
- d) Communitarian basis of land holding.
- e) Segmentary character.
- f) Little value on surplus accumulation on the use of capital and on market trading Lack of distinction between form and substance of religion

In this way we can see that a tribe is a social group of people associated with

- a) homogeneity,
- b) isolation and non-assimilation,
- c) territorial-integrity,
- d) consciousness of unique identity and common culture,
- e) animism (now defunct) as an all-pervasive religion,
- f) the existence of distinctive social and political systems with an absence of exploiting classes and organized state structure,
- g) multi-functionalist kinship relations,
- h) segmentary nature of the socio-economic unit ,
- i) frequent cooperation for common goals,
- j) self-sufficiency in their distinct economy, and
- k) a common dialect, and many other attributes that seem to have remained unchanged over centuries.

The concept of homogeneity and equality among the tribes has been challenged by social scientists. It has been found that there is considerable inequality in term of economic and political rights related to the control of marriage, exchange of allied goods and the redistribution process. There is enormous diversity within the tribes of India.

The tribes are said to live in exclusion and isolation of other communities but the historical relations of the tribes and non-tribes from time immemorial is often forgotten.

Many of the definitions of tribes are thus problematic; hence social scientists have conveniently used the officially recognized Scheduled Tribes to categorize tribes. The constitution of India in its article 342(i) provides that the President of India with due consultation with the governors of the states may designate the tribe and tribal communities or parts of groups within tribes or tribal

communities to be Scheduled Tribes for each state. This juridical terminology has received uncritical acceptance. Hence both for social workers and social scientists the term is practically synonymous with the list of those communities listed in the Scheduled Tribes.

The definitions of tribes continue to characterize certain categories of pre-literate cultures covering a wide range of forms of social organizational and levels of techno-economic development. In understanding tribes, social workers draw upon a variety of contributions drawn from sociology, anthropology, history and political economy.

Given social workers' desire for changing the condition of the communities towards self-reliance with social justice perspectives, tribes are conceived in two ways firstly as irrational and traditional with the need to make them, modern and rational; and second as ones who are exploited and vulnerable.

However attempts to integrate them with the mainstream are done without clarifying what that mainstream is. As pointed out by Pariyaram M Chacko, there are many areas of tribal life which the mainstream non-tribals can profitably assimilate such as the notions of wealth, of gender, equality, of sex and marriage and of the principle of non-interference.

Common Features between a Tribe and a Caste

However such features are not just the characteristic of tribes but also of castes. Further there is also tremendous variability among tribes. Hence other attempts to define tribes consider them as a stage in the social and cultural evolution. Also with respect to their economic life, the production and consumption among the tribes is household based and unlike peasants they are not part of a wider economic, political, and social network. This could be resolved by considering the tribes and castes as belonging to one continuum. The tribes have a segmentary, egalitarian system and are not mutually inter-dependent, while castes are in a system of organic solidarity. They have direct access to land and no intermediary is involved between them and land.

Tribes are always understood in comparison to mainstream civilizations –that it may fight, serve, mimic, or adopt but cannot ignore. In India it has been found that tribes have been transforming themselves into larger entity of the caste system; others have become Christians or Muslims. There is further a change in their economic life – that is a change in the livelihoods- from hunting and gathering to peasantry, and in modern times become wage labourers in plantations, mining, and other industries. There is a **changing notion of tribe- which has to be the frame work for understanding tribes.**

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Define a tribe. Trace the historical evolution of the concept of a tribe.

.....

.....

.....

.....

2) Write in about ten lines the main features of a tribe.

.....
.....
.....
.....

4.3 SPREAD ACROSS REGIONS AND DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURES

The tribal communities are spread in all regions of the East, West, North and South of India with varying altitudes, terrain and resources. This means that each tribe has a different history, ecology and political economy and socio-cultural complexities. Further there is contiguity of the spread both within India and the neighbouring countries. Some of the Scheduled Tribes within the borders of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur and Mizoram have their counterparts across the borders of China, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia.

Tribals constitute only 8% of the population but occupy nearly 20% of the geographical area, which contains over 70% of the minerals and the bulk of forests and water resources.

Demographic Distribution

The population of Scheduled Tribes number only 19 million people distributed among 212 communities in the 1951 census. Their strength has increased to 38 and 52 million in 1971 and 1981 census. As per 2001 census, the Scheduled Tribes population is 84.32 million, constituting over 8.2 percent of the country's population. Some tribes were temporarily accommodated in the other backward classes' category. In 1950 there were 212 and in the year 2003, there are 533 tribes as per notified schedule under Article 342 with largest of them being in Orissa (62). Of the 698 scheduled tribes, seventy five are considered as primitive tribes. They are considered more backward than scheduled tribes and continue to live in pre-agricultural stage having very low literacy rates. The listing of tribes in the schedule depends on whether synonyms and sub-tribes are treated separately or not. There are also variations in the size of the communities, from 31 people of Jarwa to over 7 million Gonds. The numerically small tribal communities comprising of less than 1000 people are Andamanese, Onges and Toda etc. On the other hand, tribes like the Bhil, Santhals, Oraon, Munda, Mina, Khond and Saora and the like had more than 1 million population each.

The demographic and geographic spread has implications for the policies and programmes they are subject to as well as their social and economic life. For example large population of a tribe means that it is spread over a number of states and therefore the same group is treated differently by different state policies and development programmes which influences its social and economic structure. Also they may be educated in the language of the state in which they reside – these have far reaching implications for questions of identity and entity of the tribal communities.

Let us consider the social and economic structure of tribal communities now.

4.4 TRIBAL COMMUNITIES: THEIR SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

a) Social Structure

The social structure is unique for each tribe. This comes with the way the family is organized, the customs and beliefs and the place of habitation, racial and linguistic features.

There is a wide variation across the communities with respect to the above. There are also wide variations with regard to the particular social institutions that characterize all communities such as their family, marriage and kinship relations as also their particular modes of economy, that are much dependent on the ecological conditions of living. Further the relationship of the community with the nature and the kind of rituals associated with it is another facet that distinguishes them from other communities.

The social life of the tribals revolves round the various activities for common existence by sharing in common activities under the bonds of relationship. Each tribe has its own structure and organization. As the tribals form a small community of their own in a particular territory their relations are direct and intimate. By no means such patterns of relations are sacrosanct or unchanging. They are subject to the influences from changes in the ecological condition or in the nature of relationship with other communities or within their own. Thus the social structure is of dynamic nature.

The social life of Indian tribes can be said to have a design with the individual forming families, families forming lineages, lineages in sub-clans or sub-local groups and sub-clans in clans or local group and clans in phratries or territorial groups phratries in moieties; moieties in sub-tribes and finally sub-tribes making up the tribe. In this social design the smallest unit is the individual who forms the minimum or the smallest group like family or household. The smaller groups are combined into a larger one through several levels of incorporation. It is not necessary that all the above social units exist in every tribe

Family

The Family is the basic social and economic unit. There are well established roles for the various members of the family that are closely related to their authority and power within their social group. The economic, political, ritual rights are also associated with the development of the family. The various tribal communities differ with respect to the nature of authority within the family and the group; the nature of relations with outsiders; the kind of work allocation and distribution within the families, the ritual and secular power exercised and so on. All of this is dependent on the habitats they live in – that is the natural living conditions and their relationship with it.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What is a tribal social structure? What is the basic social design among the tribal communities in India?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- 2) Explain the significance of authority of the family in tribal social structure.

.....
.....
.....
.....

b) Economic Structure

In India tribals belong to different economic stages, from food-gathering to industrial labor which presents their overlapping economic stage in the broader framework of the stages of economy. A tribe is usually considered as an economically independent group of people, having their own specific economy and thus having a living, pattern of labour, division of labour and specialization, gift and ceremonial exchange, trade and barter, credit and value, wealth, consumption norms, capital formation, land tenure and good-tangible and intangible –economic status. All these are significant markers for a special tribal economy in the broader set-up of Indian economy. The interdependence between the cultural, social life and the natural surroundings is of great significance in understanding tribal economy.

The economic life of the tribal communities has to be seen in the light of non-monetary aspects that influence their living conditions. They have a very simple technology which fits in well with their ecological surroundings and self-dependent nature. Their economy can be said to be of subsistence type in which there is assurance of subsistence livelihood to all the persons in the community. This is achieved through the social determinations of labour and land allocation and the social right to receive emergency material in times of need. Thus there is a strong and persistent social control of production and distribution. They follow what is known as “**marginal economy**”. This refers to the practice of different types of occupation at one time by a group of people for their livelihood. That is a tribe can indulge in all kinds of occupations to eke out its subsistence such as hunting, food gathering, shifting cultivation, fishing, domestication of animals, horticulture, and also some artisan work like production of crafts and other items required by other communities in rural areas. The complexity of economic subsistence is indicated by the combination of activities that they indulge in.

Also they may have linkages with other rural communities and their economy. Thus, some of the tribes practice settled agriculture, and are in touch with the other communities. They supply honey, medicinal plants, toys, baskets etc in exchange for grains, cereals, clothes, etc. Thus they follow a basket of livelihoods that is dependent upon the ecological cycle of the area they inhabit.

The mode of production in tribal economy is traditional, indigenous and culturally predominant. This needs to be understood in its structural arrangements and enforced rules for the acquisition and production of material items and services in the context of their cultural, social and natural living conditions. Further there are no class divisions within the tribes as the production relations are governed by the social arrangements. They are culturally a social unit, with being an enterpriser and worker as well as producer and consumer, all at the same time. The system of distribution is linked to the barter system or mutual exchange.

Some of the elements of this economic system are seen to be

- a) Small economy- smallness of scale which is the fundamental characteristic of tribal communities- the resources, goods and service transactions take place within a small geographical area and within a community of persons numbered in hundreds or thousands. Further one or two good crops are considered staple and produced in bulk. Within the small framework of the tribe and a relatively small number of goods and services are produced and acquired.
- b) Use of simple technology compared to the industrialized economies – may be made by the producer himself or herself or acquired from others for a small sum. This also means that large-scale production processes are ruled out.
- c) Geographical and cultural isolation- in that they are self-contained and have very little transaction with outside communities in a majority of tribal communities.
- d) The profit motive is usually absent, and the role of an incentive is fulfilled by a sense of mutual obligation, sharing and solidarity.
- e) Cooperative and collective endeavors are emphasized

Interdependence of Tribes and Non-tribal Communities

The functional relationship between tribes or within tribes or tribal people and non-tribal of the tribal villages or the region is characterized by interdependence quite similar to the **Jajmani** system. Under the system each caste group, within a village is expected to provide certain standardized service to the people of other castes. The head of the family who is served by an individual is known as his Jajman while the man who performs the service is known as the **Kamin** of Jajman. The Jajman pays his Kamin in cash or kind on a daily monthly or yearly basis.

For example in the Jaunsar Bawar there is a typical interdependence seen in the agriculturalist, the artisan and the community servant and the free professional of the area. They help each other out. The *Koltas* till the lands of the Brahmans and Rajputs (khasas) for years together on some annual or periodical agreements and on payment. The *Bohars* make iron implements for agriculturists. The drummer *Bajgis* or *Dhakis* are an indispensable artisan community in Jaunser-

Bawar. Their services are required in the temple on communal and ceremonial occasions.

The Economic Institution of Dhangar

This institution facilitates the agriculturalist activity. One gets the agricultural labour ryotwaris for cultivating one's own vast land. The person who is employed by a big landowner is commonly known as **Dhangar** in tribal Bihar. **Dhangar** is a most familiar word for the tribes like the **Oraon, Minda** and **HO**.

In tribal Bihar the big landowners keep agricultural labour land the year round. A labourer is engaged the month of *magh* on annual basis. Apart from annual payment in cash or in kind he is provided with food and a roof. From the day he is engaged he becomes a family member of the employer and gets the same social privileges. There is no difference in status between the employer and his *Dhangar* or agricultural labourer. He can even marry the land owner's daughter or sister if he belongs to a different clan. Generally the *Dhangars* are drawn from the same village.

Thus Tribals practice a mixed economy. The economic system of any Indian tribe cannot be exclusively placed in a particular typology in its strict sense. The fact that a tribe uses all available means to eke out its subsistence and combines minor forest produce collection with cultivation or shifting cultivation, simple cultivation with food collection indicates the complex economy of these people.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What are the basic features of a tribal economy?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
- 2) What do you mean by subsistence economy? Illustrate with examples from your region.
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
- 3) What are the ways in which tribal communities are related to other communities? Explain with an example.
.....
.....
.....
.....

4.5 DENOTIFIED AND NOMADIC TRIBES

De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes and Banjara communities constitute the most vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of the Indian society. Some of these communities were identified as 'Criminal Tribes' (which included both castes as well as tribes) in pre-independent India. Although the Criminal Tribes Act, 1871 was repealed soon after Independence, persons belonging to these communities are still viewed by society as habitually criminals.

The terms 'de-notified' and 'nomadic' do not belong to the same typology as the former term is legal and the latter ecological. The communities which were notified as criminal during the British rule and which were de-notified after independence are called de-notified tribes. However, as some of the de-notified communities were nomadic and vice versa, they are usually considered together.

As they are constantly on the move, they do not have any domicile. Though many of them have now begun to settle down, traditionally they did not possess land rights or house titles. As a result, they are deprived not only of welfare programmes, but also of citizenry rights. They were not considered untouchables but occupied lowermost positions in the social hierarchy.

The Denotified and Nomadic tribes make up about 60 million of India's population. There are 313 Nomadic Tribes and 198 Denotified Tribes.

Denotified tribes or Ex-Criminal Tribes are the tribes that were originally listed under the Criminal Tribes Act in 1871, as "addicted to the systematic commission of non-bailable offences." Once a tribe became "notified" as criminal, all its members were required to register with the local magistrate, failing which they would be charged with a crime under the Indian Penal Code. The British authorities listed them separately by creating a category of criminal castes or tribes. By this act, the government wanted to certify that communities have criminal tendencies, which are inculcated from birth onwards, and second, once a criminal, he or she is a criminal always.

The grouping of all such tribes in various parts of the country as one is questionable, as it ignores the fact that they differ from each other in their codes of conduct, modes of signs which they use to convey information to the people. They are considered as caste groups that have failed to adjust themselves to new conditions and have fallen into anti-social activities.

The lack of free social intercourse denies these criminally habituated people an opportunity to reclaim themselves. Further their socialization and continued isolation is reinforced by the social security within their communities. The problems of segregation was manifested in their being isolated and not having social interaction with the mainstream society – hence denial of the normal processes of social change, secondly they were suffering from fear psychosis-fear of police reprisal etc. raids by police etc. This led them to suspect everyone. Mutual distrust was the order of the day. Thirdly their family life suffered as they were jailed frequently and were away from their families. This also led them to experience deprivation of love and affection that are due to human beings and violation of their rights as human beings.

The Criminal Tribes Act of 1952 repealed the notification, i.e. 'de-notified' - the tribal communities. This act was however replaced by a series of Habitual Offenders Acts that asked police to investigate a suspect's criminal tendencies and whether his occupation is "conducive to settled way of life." The denotified tribes were reclassified as habitual offenders in 1959.

In order to acquire a comprehensive picture of the situation of these communities and to suggest action for their socio-economic development, a National Commission for De-notified Tribes, Nomadic Tribes and Semi-Nomadic Tribes was set up in 2005 whose report was submitted recently to the Prime Minister. In the Eleventh Plan, special attention is to be accorded to the well-being of these groups as per the recommendations of the Commission.

Despite these there are still some old issues plaguing these communities. Some of these are:

- a) Classification and enumeration of denotified and nomadic tribes, thereby providing constitutional safeguards and covering them under the Prevention of Atrocities Act (1989).
- b) Strict scrutiny of the caste certificates of DNTs and penalization of bogus DNTs.
- c) Sensitization of the police force by information dissemination and in-service training, and setting up of special cells (in collaboration with NGOs) for legal aid and counseling, especially for women.
- d) Free and compulsory education to genuine DNT children till at least they are up to higher secondary level.

Check Your Progress 4

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Who are denotified tribes? Explain the difference between denotified and nomadic tribes.

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) What are the deleterious effects of Criminal Tribes Act? How do you intend to deal with such effects in improving the status of this group of people.

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 3) What are the current issues facing denotified tribes?

.....

.....

.....

4.6 CURRENT ISSUES FACING TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

Tribals are at the bottom of social and political ladder in India. In Post-independent India, the requirements of planned development brought with them the spectre of dams, mines, industries and roads on tribal lands. The major issues facing them are

Land Alienation

They were alienated from their land from colonial times. Their lands were taken away in the name of development, or by money lenders for loan recovery. Also reserving forests in the name of conservation also meant that tribals were kept away from their habitats and livelihood base. The expansion of railways in India heavily devastated the forest resources in India. In Andhra Pradesh, for instance, the non-tribals own half of the tribal land. In Orissa 54% of land of tribals is lost to non-tribals through indebtedness, mortgage and forcible occupation.

The land alienation often is a result of ignorance of tribals in getting their land recorded properly, negligence of officials involved and sometimes sheer corruption in evicting the tribals from their lands. The mining industry in Goa undermined the tribal rights to cultivate by getting these lands on lease. Also polluting both land and soil and the rivers make it impossible for tribals to continue their subsistence livelihoods.

Poverty Among Tribals

Majority of tribes live under poverty line. Currently, the tribal communities live in the most food insecure areas.

Tribals and Indebtedness

Tribals are heavily indebted to the local money lenders because of their poverty.

Loss of access to Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP)s deforestation, preference for man-made plantations in place of mixed forests, regulatory framework, diversion of NTFPs and forests to industries, nationalization of NTFPs, and exploitation by government agencies and contractors in marketing of NTFPs, has meant loss of livelihood base for the tribal communities.

Displacement

Tribals are displaced from their livelihoods due to projects like large irrigation dams, hydroelectric projects, open cast and underground coal mines, super thermal power plants and mineral-based industrial units. In the name of development, tribals are displaced from their traditional habitats and livelihoods with little or no rehabilitation, and are rendered destitute and poor. In these large development projects, tribals lose their land not only to the project authorities, but even to non-tribal outsiders who converge into these areas and corner both the land and the new economic opportunities in commerce and petty industry.

Shifting Cultivation

Tribal communities practice shifting cultivation, a customary practice they have been engaged in through generations. This is becoming difficult with less and less forest land being available to the communities.

Poor Quality of Governance

There is poor quality of governance that afflicts the tribal areas. Programme delivery has deteriorated everywhere in India, but more so in tribal areas. There is often a transfer of posts from tribal regions to non-tribal regions.

Cultural Problems

Due to contact with other cultures, the tribal culture is undergoing a revolutionary change. This has meant a degeneration of tribal life and tribal arts such as dance, music and different types of craft, and have also raised questions of preserving cultural identity.

Lack of Sensitivity in Dealing with Upsurge of Tribal Anger against the Exploitative System

The dwindling resource base of the tribal people in the shape of loss of land, restriction on access to forest produce and lack of opportunities for reasonable wage employment and money lending have caused hardships to tribal people. Significantly, development processes have interfered in many cases with traditional tribal institutional structure and ethos and have produced negative results. The development process in many tribal areas, instead of providing succor, has been instrumental in causing numerous disadvantages, prominent among them being displacement and loss of land, the tribal's main resource base. Notwithstanding the fact that the State Governments have enacted laws/regulations to control/prohibit transfer of land to non-tribals, land alienation still continues.

The various state policies and development interventions have left the tribal communities alienated from their natural resource base and pauperized them due to loss of land.

Education

Educationally the tribal population is at different levels of development but overall the formal education has made very little impact on tribal groups.

Check Your Progress 5

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What are the major issues facing tribal communities now? Discuss any one of them in detail.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

4.7 LET US SUM UP

We have seen that tribal communities are special groups of people who have distinct way of life depending on their relationship with nature, with distinct habitat social and economic life. No tribes are similar. In addition to these features we have also seen some specific features pertaining to the denotified and nomadic tribes. These tribes have been falsely and unjustly categorized as criminal tribes by the British administration. Hence they have been subject to lot of hardship through segregation with the help of criminal tribes act. After independence this law was repealed and there have been numerous efforts at their rehabilitation.

We have also seen that these special features make them vulnerable to the changing demands of modern day living. Their habitats and their life are not as free as they used to be. Their living is mediated by the forces external to their communities. Their natural livelihood base can be taken away and they can easily become destitute. Centuries of exploitation of natural resources has shaken their ecological base.

4.8 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. B.B. Kumar(1998) *The tribal societies of India* Omsons Publications New Delhi
2. L.P Vidyarthi and Binay Kumar Rai (1976) *The Tribal Culture of India* Concept Publishing company New Delhi
3. Buddadeb Chaudhuri (Ed) 1992) *Tribal Transformation in India* Vol. III Inter-India Publications New Delhi.
4. Chacko, Pariyaram M. (ed 2005.) *Tribal communities and Social Change*, Sage Publications, New Delhi

UNIT 5 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

**A. Malathi*

Contents

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Community Development
- 5.3 Community Development Programmes and Accountability
- 5.4 History of Community Development Programmes
- 5.5 Community Development Programmes in Rural, Tribal and Urban Areas
- 5.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.7 Further Readings and References

5.0 OBJECTIVES

We have discussed the various aspects of communities located in rural, tribal and urban communities in the earlier units. There are certain critical issues that can be addressed through community development programmes. These programmes need to have a certain design that includes accountability considerations. After going through this unit you will be able to

- define and explain what community development is;
- describe some of the community development programmes in rural, tribal and urban areas; and
- understand the concept of accountability and its importance in community development work.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This unit of community development programmes and accountability are built on the earlier understanding of what communities are, and how are they located, in the social and economic contexts. They also gave us some idea of the issues facing these communities. There are various ways in which these issues are addressed. Community development programmes whether initiated by Government or non-government agencies seek to address the issues and concerns of the communities. The concept of community development programmes focuses on the interventions for community development to be people centered and people led, that seek to change for better, the conditions of living of these communities. Questions such as what is better for the community, who decides on these, who implements the programmes what are the ways in which the programmes are monitored or implemented, who takes decisions regarding funding and allocations, who is accountable to whom, form the central focus of community development programmes that determine the success in reaching the goals of community development. Thus community development programmes

need to be understood with dimensions of their **context, creation and culmination**. The **context** factors relate to the issues, problems, concerns of the community, the background of the community and the strengths and weaknesses of the community. The **creation** refers to the specific programmes related to addressing the issues and concerns of the community with what intentions (values basis and goals), strategies and mechanisms. The **culmination** would relate to the way the programme reaches its goals and with clear identification of people and processes that are accountable. This trio of C's is interrelated and very important for community development programmes.

5.2 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Concept of Community and Development

Community development has two terms community and development both of which need some understanding. The concept of community has already been discussed in Unit I. We reiterate some of its definitions as “A relatively self-sufficient population, residing in a limited geographic area, bound together by feelings of unity and interdependency”.

“a social, religious, occupational, or other group sharing common characteristics or interests and perceiving itself as distinct in some respect from the larger society within which it exists, for example the business community; the community of scholars”.

Communities refer to people bounded in specific geographic areas and communities of interest. The past three centuries have seen major changes in the notion of community. We have moved from a predominantly agricultural and rural society, to an urban industrialized society, and now to a post-industrial society. In this latter period of de-industrialization, there has been erosion of community life and a decline in civil society organizations. These have meant a slow degeneration of traditional family networks, heightened inequality between groups of people as well as growth of institutions to meet the needs of the people, which were hitherto met by the community itself.

Development as a concept would imply that there is progress or change for the better in such a way to enhance the security, freedom, dignity, self-reliance and self-development of groups of people. This would involve twin concepts of social as well as economic development.

Concept of Community Development

Community development may be defined as a process by which the efforts of the people themselves are combined with those of governmental authorities, to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities to integrate these communities into the life of the nation and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.

Community development is a collaborative, facilitative process undertaken by people (community, institutions, or academic stakeholders) who share a common purpose of building capacity to have a positive impact on quality of life.

Community Development is the process of developing active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect. It is about influencing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating

in the issues that affect their lives. Community workers facilitate the participation of people in this process. They enable connections to be made between communities and with the development of wider policies and programmes. Community Development expresses values of fairness, equality, accountability, opportunity, choice, participation, mutuality, reciprocity and continuous learning. Educating, enabling and empowering are at the core of Community Development.

Community Development is about building active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect. It is about changing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives. Community Development Workers support individuals, groups and organizations in this process on the basis of certain values and commitments.

Community development works for strengthening of face to face communities to meet the psychological needs of belonging, practical needs of mutual care, and the political need for participation and campaigning for rights and resources.

Approaches Used in Community Development

The various approaches used in community development are:

- using an asset-based approach that builds on strengths and existing resources;
- encouraging inclusive processes that embrace community diversity; and
- community ownership through collaboratively planned and led initiatives.

Aims of Community Development are:

- creating equitable conditions and outcomes for health and wellbeing;
- improving the health and prosperity of the community as a whole;
- fostering sustainable community initiatives;
- fostering sustainable self-sufficiency for the people involved;
- increasing personal worth, dignity, and value; and
- building awareness of and resolving issues in the community.

Community Development Values

Community development has certain inherent values. These can be termed as:

Social Justice - enabling people to claim their human rights, meet their needs and have greater control over the decision-making processes, which affect their lives.

Participation - facilitating democratic involvement by people in the issues, which affect their lives, based on full citizenship, autonomy, and shared power, skills, knowledge and experience.

Equality - challenging the attitudes of individuals, and the practices of institutions and society, which discriminate against and marginalize people.

Learning - recognizing the skills, knowledge and expertise that people contribute and develop by taking action to tackle social, economic, political and environmental problems.

Co-operation - working together to identify and implement action, based on mutual respect of diverse cultures and contributions.

Assumptions in Community Development

There are certain implicit assumptions in community development. These are:

- Individuals, groups and local institutions within community areas share common interests that bind them together.
- This commonness also propels them to work together.
- The interests of the various groups are not conflicting.
- The state is a supra body that is impartial in the allocation of resources and that through its policies it does not further inequalities.
- People's initiatives are possible in the communities because of their common interests.

Community development workers are committed to:

- Challenge the discrimination and oppressive practices within organizations, institutions and communities.
- Develop practice and policy that protects the environment.
- Encourage networking and connections between communities and organizations.
- Ensure access and choice for all groups and individuals within society.
- Influence policy and programmes from the perspective of communities.
- Prioritize the issues of concern to people experiencing poverty and social exclusion.
- Promote social change that is long-term and sustainable.
- Reverse inequality and the imbalance of power relationships in society.
- Support community led collective action.

Distinction Between Community Development and Community Work

Community development is best used to refer to a process, or a way of doing something, which entails the mobilization, participation and involvement of local people on common issues important to them.

Community work, on the other hand, is often used as a general term and refers to initiatives or activities that are delivered at a local level that may not actively involve members of the community as participants but merely as users of services.

Within India, we might say all forms of community practice go together- that is provision of basic services, campaigning for the rights of people and fostering community based approaches for self-development and increasing their stake in the developmental processes. There is an increasing use of professional approaches, techniques and strategies to build the capacities of communities to undertake community development programmes which aim to bring in self-reliance, freedom and dignity.

5.3 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Community development programmes base themselves on the involvement of people in formulating and executing programmes. It also means the development and use of large number of local institutions and voluntary groups local and voluntary groups, use of group work techniques and the development of local leadership, development of administration which is development oriented rather than bureaucratic in approach.

Local self-help village groups are promoted and actively involved in the development of the village, Mohalla, hamlet, in mobilizing natural and human resources for making improvements in various aspects of life with the active involvement of government and non-government agencies.

Thus community development programmes aim at achieving certain goals such as collectively working to bring about social change and justice, by working with communities to:

- identify their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities;
- plan, organise and take action;
- evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the action
- and to do all these in ways which challenge oppression and tackle inequalities.

Accountability in Community Development Programmes

In all community development programmes the key lies in the implementation of the programmes for reaching the goals in such a way that the accountability issues are taken care of. Any community development programme has to have inbuilt components of monitoring and evaluation and transparent accountability procedures. The concept of accountability needs to be understood before we proceed any further.

Concept of Accountability

The concept of accountability includes two elements: 'answerability' of those who hold power to citizens and 'enforceability' of penalties in the event of failure to do so (Goetz and Jenkins 2001)

Accountability is seen as political and managerial accountability the former referring to accountability of decisions (social) the latter referring to accountability in carrying out tasks of according to agreed performance criteria (input, output, financial etc) In another case, some authors speak of political accountability, community accountability and bureaucratic accountability.

Questions such as accountability of who to whom, when and on what issues, purposes of accountability and how it is to be operationalized are key to put in place a proper accountability mechanism.

Accountability mechanisms could include citizen participation in public policy making, participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, citizen monitoring of public service delivery, citizen advisory boards, and lobbying and advocacy campaigns.

Accountability requires that one group or individual provides a professional or financial account (or justification) of its activities to another stakeholding group or individual. It presupposes that an organisation or institution has a clear policy on who is accountable to whom and for what. It involves the expectation that the group held accountable, will be willing to accept advice or criticism and to modify its practices in the light of that advice and criticism.

Characteristics and Principles of Accountability

- Accountability is personal: authority can only be delegated to one person.
- Accountability is vertical: from top to bottom, responsibilities and authority is delegated from supervisor to subordinate (supervisor holds subordinate accountable).
- Accountability is neutral: It is neither a positive nor a negative concept. Excellent results are recognized, but failure may involve sanctions, including the withdrawal or modifications of working systems.

The Four Principles of Accountability

- a) Specify responsibility and authority
- b) Provide guidance and support
- c) Objective comparison of results against targets and standard
- d) Take appropriate action

Check Your Progress

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) What do you understand by the term community development?

.....

.....

.....

.....

- 2) What is your understanding of accountability?

.....

.....

.....

.....

5.4 HISTORY OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Community development efforts have a long history dating back to pre-independence times. There were programmes like the Sevagram and Sarvodaya rural development experiments of Bombay State, Firca Development Schemes of Madras State, Pilot projects of Etawah and Gorakhpur. These efforts were because of a desire for new techniques, new incentives and confidence to undertake development work. Some of these programmes involved rural reconstruction experiments that had the thinking and backing of nationalist thinkers and social reformers.

5.5 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN RURAL, TRIBAL AND URBAN AREAS

There are a number of community development programmes launched by the government as well as voluntary organizations. Basic to all these programmes is people's participation and development. We now look at some of such programmes in rural, urban and tribal areas. These are only indicative and attempt to give an insight into the design and functional aspects.

Rural Community Development Programmes

Community Development Programme drew its inspiration and strategy from erstwhile projects of rural development in the 1920s and just before Indian Independence, as well as the international influences on community development project that developed both in the Great Britain and in America.

The first major rural development programme launched after independence in October 1952 in 55 development blocks was with the following main objectives.

- a) To secure total development of the material and the human resources in rural areas.
- b) To develop local leadership and self-governing institutions.
- c) To raise the living standards of the rural people by means of rapid increase in food and agricultural produce.
- d) To ensure a change in the mind-set of people instilling in them a mission of higher standards.

These objectives were to be realized through a rapid increase in food and agricultural production by strengthening programmes of resource development, such as minor irrigation and soil conservation, by improving the effectiveness of farm inputs supply systems, and by providing agricultural extension services to farmers. It had a wide range of programmes for developing agriculture animal husbandry, rural industries, education, health, housing, training, supplementary employment, social welfare and rural communication.

A project area was divided into three development blocks, each comprising about 100 villages and a population of about 65,000 people. In areas where a full project was not considered feasible one or two development blocks were started to begin with. Subsequently CDP became a national programme that covered all the rural areas of the country.

Organization

The organizational structure was specifically created to undertake community development projects. The organizational structure was located at the central, state, district and block levels.

In September 1956, a new ministry of community development was created. Then the ministry of Agriculture and Rural development was in overall charge of the programme of the country. Currently the entire centrally sponsored programmes are part of the Ministry of Rural Development. From a centrally sponsored programme it became a state-sponsored one in 1969.

Evaluation

The community development programme was evaluated by a committee headed by Balwantray Mehta which gave its recommendation for a three-tier system of local governments that are popularly known as Panchayati Raj. At the grassroots or village level were to be formed at the village Panchayats at the middle or block level were to be Panchayat Samitis and at the apex or district level Zilla Parishads were to be formed. It recommended administrative decentralization with control vested in elected bodies.

The three- tier structure of Panchayat Raj institutions was brought into existence in January 1958. These objectives were later incorporated in the 73rd amendment of the constitution of India ensuring democratic decentralization through Panchayati Raj system.

Criticisms of CDP

- It has not been a people's programme
- It has followed a blueprint approach to rural development
- It has employed a large army of untrained extension workers who lacked coordination
- There was lack of functional responsibility at the block level that led to a good deal of confusion and interdepartmental jealousy

From a community development approach there was a shift towards specific programmes that focused on which agricultural development strategies (in the new agricultural strategy) - focusing on specific areas. This changed the nature of community involvement in the programme. A target approach was adopted – the identification, training and development of these became the responsibility of development officials and the research scientists with emphasis on scientific, technical and managerial aspects in the intensive agricultural development strategy.

Other Programmes and the Community Component

A change in these programmes came about with the advent of the Integrated Rural Development Programme that had conceived of rural development as that of targeting specific groups with a focus on asset creation or wage employment. Later on in the Integrated Rural development programme launched in the sixth plan, the asset creation has taken a cluster-oriented approach that emphasized on the creation of groups for participation and management. Group approaches became the focus in all programmes of rural development dealing with the forestry (joint forest management) watershed, National Rural Health Mission or Elementary Education other poverty alleviation programmes as well as the mid-day meal scheme (mother's committees to be formed). Participatory management was emphasized with a mandatory requirement of neighbourhood groups in the above programmes. The DWCRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas) has been instrumental in popularizing the self-help group concept and its has now become a widespread phenomenon for community action and development, in both government initiated and voluntary agency initiated programmes. In certain states the nature and extent of community participation has been significant in bringing about the needed change. Community ownership of programmes has become the official refrain with

emphasis given to the Panchayats as vehicles for implementation of the government programme. Though in many cases the Panchayats really do not have enough funds at their disposal, or allocations reach them late in the financial year. Here there is always a danger that local caste and class biases may seep in and maintain the status quo.

The later government programmes of Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY), in which the focus was on establishing a large number of micro-enterprises in rural areas. This was based on the ability of the poor and potential of each area, both land-based and otherwise, for sustainable income generation. This programme used the concept of groups that could be utilized for building community led initiatives.

The Self-help groups (SHGs) formed under SGSY may consist of 10-20 members and in case of minor irrigation, and in case of disabled persons and difficult areas, i.e., hilly, desert and sparsely populated areas, this number may be a minimum of five. Self Help Groups should also be drawn from the BPL list approved by the Gram Sabha. The SHGs broadly go through three stages of evolution such as group formation, capital formation through the revolving fund and skill development and taking up of economic activity for income generation.

Despite the Group approach there are limitations with respect to making these programmes a truly community driven development programmes. There are various other programmes for village and small-scale enterprises, including some special schemes for scheduled castes and tribes for promotion of self-employment in rural areas which relies mainly on formation of self-help groups to empower rural communities and enable them to take up economic activities.

Wage employment programmes like the Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana, Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana and Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act has enabled 100 days of employment, do not have the provision of community building by themselves or the formation of groups. However because of NGO or activist involvement these programmes are also taking the shape of movements for community action and development – demanding their rightful share in the employment schemes promoted by the government.

Other recent programmes of community development include:

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, Rajiv Gandhi Grameen Vidyutikaran Yojana, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, National Rural Livelihood Mission, Antyodaya Anna Yojana, National Food Security Mission.

Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana, Indira Awas Yojana, Janani Suraksha Yojana, Members of Parliament local Area Development Scheme, National Literacy mission and Midday Meal Scheme are the other notable community development programmes being implemented.

Check Your Progress 1

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Discuss the basic assumptions of community development programmes in India.

.....
.....
.....
.....

- 2) Critically analyze the Community development Programmes in India.

.....
.....
.....
.....

Tribal Community Development Programmes

The tribal communities received some help through Special Multipurpose Tribal Development Projects (MTDPs) created towards the end of 1954. These MTDPs could not serve the interests of the tribal people since the number of schemes were numerous. Later the Community Development Blocks where the concentration of tribal population was 66% and above were converted into Tribal Development Blocks (TDBs). Due to failure of this to address tribal communities needs, Tribal Sub-Plan Strategy (TSP) was evolved for rapid socio-economic development of tribal people, and is continuing even now with the following objectives:

1. Over all socio-economic development of tribals and to raise them above poverty level.
2. Protection of tribals from various forms of exploitation.

The Scheme/programme and projects under TSP are implemented through Integrated Tribals Development Projects (ITDPs) which were set up in Block(s) or groups of Blocks where ST population is more than 50% of the total population.

The Government of India formed a Ministry of Tribal Affairs in October 1999 to accelerate tribal development. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs came out with a draft National Policy on Tribals in 2004. The draft policy recognizes that a majority of Scheduled Tribes continues to live below the poverty line, have poor literacy rates, suffer from malnutrition and disease and is vulnerable to displacement. It also acknowledges that Scheduled Tribes in general are repositories of indigenous knowledge and wisdom in certain aspects. The National Policy aims at addressing each of these problems in a concrete way.

There are many tribal community development initiatives from the NGO sector that worked closely on the issues of tribal communities, specially their capacity building and sustainable development.

Many of the initiatives concerned with tribal development have adopted participatory approaches made to ensure the successful completion of the project goals. There are many tribal community development initiatives from the NGO sector that worked closely on the issues of tribal communities, specially their capacity building and sustainable development.

During the last 10 to 15 years, with increasing recognition of the importance of people's participation for increasing the effectiveness of development interventions, an extensive array of 'people's' institutions have been created in the villages for the implementation of sectoral programmes. These include joint forest management (JFM) committees being set up by the Forest Department, education committees by the Education Department, watershed associations and committees by the DRDA, water and health committees by the Public Health Department, water users association by the Irrigation Department, and Mahila Mandals (women's associations) by the Women and Child Department.

One of the most successful one is the **Andhra Pradesh Tribal Development Project**.

The APTDP established a variety of local-level institutions, including SHGs, cluster-level associations of SHGs, user groups/village development committees (such as for education, health, irrigation, soil conservation and grain banks) and a nodal institution in the form of VTDA's. The latter were conceived on the one hand as the forum for the expression of community priorities and concerns and on the other hand as a means of delivering projects and programmes to the communities. The leaders and members of VTDA's were chosen by the communities as their representatives, and generally this selection required the approval of the traditional councils of elders, so that the relationship between the new and the old did exist, albeit on an informal basis.

In addition, one novel concept introduced was the formation of community coordination teams consisting of groups of dedicated young professionals who lived in tribal villages to assist in social mobilization, awareness-building and the identification of needs and priorities around which development interventions could be built.

Overall, the project has created space during implementation for a multi-stakeholder approach with a specific focus on tribal people. The project saw tribal people as partners in the improvement of their own natural resource base and means of livelihood with programme management that is initiated, executed and monitored by the community. The creation of thrift and credit groups has increased their habit of savings. The programmes focused on various aspects like, education, health, income generation activities, agricultural development, self-help groups etc.

Check Your Progress 2

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Discuss how the issues of tribal communities could be addressed through community development programmes.

.....

.....

.....

Urban community development programmes can also be promoted by government or by voluntary organizations or member organizations. Such community initiatives have been reported in the work of urban sanitation, urban housing and urban health. All of this requires an external element of support or initiative coming from a few individuals or groups. Case studies presented below are only indicative to the extent to which community groups can actively work towards claiming citizenship and their fundamental right for a decent living. Organizations world wide like the Slum and Shack dwellers International and their partners in various countries have made a world of difference in housing and sanitation issues. Organizations like the slum Jagathu of Bangalore have also played an important role in raising community consciousness and invoking moral responsibility among those who govern including bureaucracy and legislature.

Some of the successful community development programmes in urban areas are presented below.

Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY)

This scheme launched in 1997, has two components of the Urban Self-Employment Programme (USEP) and the Urban Wage Employment Programme (UWEP) These were substituted for various programmes operating earlier for urban poverty alleviation. Like its rural counterpart this scheme also builds on the group approach at dealing with self-employment issues

Kudumbashree Programme

Kudumbashree is a government programme for poverty alleviation of women experimented first in an urban setting in Alappuzha, which was later scaled up to selected Panchayats. In this scheme women representatives of all the neighbourhoods in a ward are grouped into an area development society(ADS) chaired by the Panchayat member. The ADS of all the wards in a Panchayat are federated into a Panchayat level Development committee chaired by the Panchayat president. In other words, this is a programme for poverty alleviation that seeks to bring all poor women organized for micro-credit under the governmental umbrella. It has its basic in the neighbourhood groups approach.

This was launched in Alappuza Municipality in 1993 for poverty eradication with a difference. The mission was to eradicate poverty through concerted community action under the leadership of local governments, by facilitating organization of the poor for combining self-help with demand led convergence of available services and resources to tackle the multiple dimensions and manifestations of poverty, holistically. The basic unit was the neighbourhood group federated as Area development societies (ADS) at the ward level and these were federated to form the community development society(CDS) at the town level. Various developmental programmes like water supply training for women to start income generating units managerial training or the elected members of the ADS and CDS, health and education camps, construction of dual pit latrines. This community based organizations of Alappuzha Municipality contributed to the success of the participatory approach for poverty eradication. The neighbourhood groups of 20-40 women members belonging to risk families of the neighbourhood concerned elected one woman as their leader and she

was designated as RCV(resident community volunteer). Another women was elected as the president of the NHG. Three other women were elected as community volunteers and those volunteers have specific responsibilities and tasks, focusing on community health, infrastructure and income generation activities. The committee of the NHG comprised of these five elected women. NHGs generate the micro plans which are incorporated in an ADS under mini plan, which was consolidated into a town plan by the CDS which is registered society under the Travencore-Cochin Literary, Scientific and Charitable societies Act of 1955.

The Kudumbahshree project because of its in-built participatory character has achieved tremendous success. This has resulted in the government of Kerala extending the CDS system to all the 57 towns in Kerala through a government order giving legitimacy to the entire project helping the poor women.

The **case study of SPARC** and its work with cooperatives of women pavement and slum dwellers (Mahila Milan) and the National Slum Dwellers Federation, shows a great range of activities involving hundreds of thousands of urban poor which have received little foreign funding.

The NGO SPARC, was earlier working with pavement dwellers in Mumbai by providing them with a space to meet and discuss their problems. This led to the formation of women's groups for savings and credit and the establishment of Mahila Milan, a women pavement dweller's organization. Mahila Milan took up the challenge of making themselves visible, developing ways to deal with such common crises like eviction, police harassment, and obtaining water and ration cards. Various groups' experiences were collectively and continuously analyzed to develop the organization's strength and bargaining power with the authorities. Then an alliance was struck between National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSFD), a loose coalition of local federations active in many cities and Mahila Milan. The Alliance began to develop an educational and organizational strategy for community learning, with pilot projects. The learning was expanded through continuous exchanges between low-income settlements; this has been at the centre of its work ever since.

The alliance began to explore the building of secure houses (in terms of tenure). This it did through a series of activities that involved upgrading member's knowledge and confidence in building and undertaking such tasks. "Shack-counting", through community-initiated and managed surveys and maps, helped communities to identify their problems and develop their priorities. This also produced a visual representation of their situation, which helped the development of physical improvements and helped in the negotiations with external agencies. Community members learnt how to develop their own homes - how to get land, to build, to keep costs down, to manage professionals, to develop new materials, to install infrastructure and to negotiate with government agencies. They developed designs through collective house-modeling, which usually included developing full-scale models which are discussed through community exchanges. This has resulted in the construction of over 3,500 houses built with permanent collective tenure, and 5,000 borrowers.

Other programmes of urban community development include: Rajiv Awas Yojana for urban housing; Atal mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation, Smart Cities mission, HRIDAY.

Check Your Progress 3

Note: Use the space provided for your answer.

- 1) Discuss some of the urban community initiatives in your own area.
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
- 2) List some measures to promote accountability in community development programme.
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

5.6 LET US SUM UP

We have discussed the concept of community development as a process facilitated by external agencies, with people and their development as a central focus. In community development the social worker is concerned with issues of social justice, equity, self-reliance and participation. The leadership of community is encouraged.

We have explored the concept of accountability to mean answerability to the people, the donor agencies, government bodies and NGO partners. There is a need for proper accountability systems so that responsibility is clearly mentioned and people held accountable to their work. Community participation is a key to accountability.

We have explored the various community development programmes within the rural, tribal and urban areas in some detail. There are initiatives that are both people led and government and NGO inspired. There is a need for convergence of all these programmes especially those for poverty alleviation that are truly participatory and community monitored and implemented. We can learn from the success of the initiatives and transfer these to various other programmes.

5.7 FURTHER READINGS AND REFERENCES

1. Butcher H., Glen A; Henderson P; and Smith J: (1993) *Community and Public Policy*, London, Pluto Press
2. Jim Ife (1995) *Community Development* Wesley Longman Sydney
3. Mizrahi Terry and Davis Larry E (2008) *Encyclopedia of Social Work Vol I* NASW Press & Oxford University Press New York.

4. Marie Weil (2004) *The Handbook of Community Practice* Sage Publications London.
5. Uphoff Normon and Krishna Anirudh & Esman J. (eds).(1998) *Reasons for Hope: Instructive Experiences in Rural Development* Sage Publications New Delhi,
6. Singh Kartar (1999) *Rural Development in India* Sage Publications
7. A.R. Desai (2005) *Rural India in Transition*, 2nd ed Popular Prakashan Mumbai
8. History and concept of Kudumbashree programme www.kudumbashree.org accessed on 26th October 2008.

