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6.1 INTRODUCTION

Global trends and influences have led to setting of standards and norms on women's rights. Women began to organize in various countries and regions in order to highlight their collective voices against gender discrimination. In the 1800s, in the United States and Europe, women began organizing with the suffragist (anti-slavery) movements. Organizing beyond national boundaries helped share strategies with women in other parts of the world and to collectively call for attention on women's rights issues in the international arena. Women initiated global trends and influences with regard to gender-related issues through: **a)** influencing formulation of Declarations and Conventions; **b)** creating implementation mechanisms for the same; and **c)** influencing world conferences. Through these avenues, women sought to bring their own unique and valuable local experiences to influence and shape global trends.

6.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, You should be able to:

- describe the global trends and influences with regard to setting of normative standards on gender-related issues;
- analyze the effectiveness of such standards and mechanisms; and
- explain the relationship between global trends and influences and their relevance to gender and development in India.

6.3 INFLUENCING NORM-SETTING THROUGH CONVENTIONS & DECLARATIONS

6.3.1 Need for International Human Rights

The concept of human rights evolved largely from ideas of individuals' right to autonomy and freedom. Thus international human rights law has been evolved to protect individuals' autonomy vis-à-vis the state. In the 1900s, despite state recognition of human rights, such rights were sometimes curtailed / eliminated by law or by arbitrary means and by informal social mechanisms. Though human rights were recognized by law, they were violated by states. With the Holocaust, when entire groups of people were eliminated by the Nazis of Germany based on their race, ethnicity and other identities, the international community realized that states did not act in the best interests of its citizens and protect their rights and interests at all times. A need was felt for establishing universally recognizable human rights, cutting across all geographical, political and cultural barriers. This was initiated through a series of Declarations (moral / ethical rules of a non-binding nature) and Conventions (mandatory and binding sets of laws) through consensus within the international community.

6.3.2 Universal Declaration & Bill of Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10th December 1948. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. The UDHR is not a convention that is signed and ratified by parties; yet it has acquired the status of customary international

law because of its universal acceptance. Hence no country can now violate its principles. Gender equality is a basic principle of the United Nations. The Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations sets a basic goal “to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women.” Immediately following the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948, work began on expanding upon the rights and freedoms proclaimed therein and codifying them in binding legal form. From this process emerged the two Covenants, namely, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, which were unanimously adopted by the General Assembly in 1966 and entered into force in 1976. They include articles ensuring the equal enjoyment by men and women to the rights they set out.

6.3.3 CEDAW

On 18 December 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The Convention was the culmination of more than thirty years of work by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, a body established in 1946 to monitor the situation of women and to promote women’s rights. It is founded on three principles: equality, non-discrimination and state obligation. It focuses on de jure (equality in law) & de facto equality (equality in result). It moves from a sex-neutral norm that requires equal treatment of men & women, usually measured by how men are treated, to recognize that the particular nature of discrimination against women merits a legal response. It addresses power relations between women and men at all levels - family, community, market and the state. It

discards the distinction the private and the public spheres, by recognizing violations of women in the private sphere (the home) as violations of women's human rights.

CEDAW is significant as it is the only human rights treaty that targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations.

6.3.4 Declaration on Elimination of Violence Against Women, 1993

The Declaration recognizes that violence against women leads to discrimination against women and is a manifestation of unequal power relations between the genders. It defines violence against women as “ Any act of gender based violence that results in, or likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.” It recognizes violence occurring in the family, the community and that perpetrated or condoned by the state. It further observes that the many forms of violence are closely inter-linked and sets out strategies for addressing / eliminating the violence..

6.3.5 Treaty Creating the International Criminal Court 1998

The International Criminal Court (ICC) is the first international judicial institution of a permanent nature that is capable of prosecuting individual perpetrators for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide when national courts are unable or unwilling to do so. More than 100 countries have ratified the Treaty. The ICC Treaty is unprecedented in the manner in which it legislates on crimes against women. A range of sexual and gender-based violations

are recognized as crimes under the Treaty as war crimes and crimes against humanity. These include rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy and other forms of violence that are not invasive but are nevertheless violations of a sexual nature, gender-based persecution and genocide that is committed through sexual violence. Gender concerns have been integrated into procedural and evidentiary rules as well as the structure and functioning of the ICC.

6.3.6 International Labour Standards

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is a specialized agency of the United Nations. The legislative activities and the supervisory machinery established by the ILO to promote and monitor compliance with international labour standards have, over the years, made important contributions to the improvement of the conditions of work and the development of international human rights law for both men and women. These have significance for women working in the formal and informal sectors. In particular, the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 focussed on equal remuneration for men and women for work of equal value; Convention No. 45 dealt with the employment of women in underground work in mines of all kinds; Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 worked towards providing women workers with protection for pregnancy. ILO has also made recommendations on Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers.

6.3.7 Other Conventions & Declarations

Convention for the Suppression of Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others 1949, Convention on Political Rights of Women 1952, Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery 1956, Convention on the Nationality of Married Women 1957, Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age of Marriage and Registration of Marriage 1962 and the Declaration on the

Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict 1974 are some of the other international Conventions and Declarations that address various forms of gender-based violence and discrimination.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. What are the salient features of CEDAW?

6.4 INCORPORATING GENDER CONCERNS IN IMPLEMENTING MECHANISMS

6.4.1 Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)

Established in 1946, DAW functions as a section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN. DAW acted as the substantive secretariat for the four World Conferences on Women (Mexico 1975, Copenhagen 1980, Nairobi 1985 and Beijing

1995). Main responsibilities of DAW include a) to support formulation of policy, global standards and norms on gender equality and women's empowerment at global level, including through analysis and research; b) to promote, support and monitor the implementation of international agreements on gender equality and empowerment of women, including the Beijing Platform for Action, at international and national levels; c) to support the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol; and d) to promote the mainstreaming of gender perspectives across all sectors, both within and outside the United Nations system.

6.4.2 The U.N. Commission on the Status of Women 1947

This Commission is a subsidiary body of U.N.'s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), and is aimed at supporting and implementing the gender goals in the UN Charter. It actively monitors situation of women worldwide, promotes gender concerns, makes recommendations on issues affecting women and suggests policy goals for the member states of the United Nations. One of the first issues that the commission took up was political rights of women and equality in the political arena. It has also helped initiate and monitor implementation of the results of 4 global conferences on women's rights held in Copenhagen, Mexico, Nairobi and Beijing, the details of which are given below under the subhead 'Influencing World Conferences'.

6.4.3 UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

It is the women's fund at the United Nations. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies to foster women's empowerment and gender equality. Established in 1976, UNIFEM focuses its activities on one overarching goal: to support the implementation at the national level of existing international commitments to advance gender equality. In support of this goal, UNIFEM works in the following thematic areas: a) enhancing women's economic security and rights; b) ending violence against women; c) reducing the prevalence of HIV and AIDS among women and girls; and d) advancing gender justice in democratic governance in stable and fragile states. Two international agreements frame UNIFEM's work: the Beijing Platform for Action resulting from the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The spirit of these agreements has been affirmed by the Millennium Declaration and the eight Millennium Development Goals for 2015, combating poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy and gender inequality, and building partnerships for development.

6.4.4 CEDAW Committee

The implementation of CEDAW is monitored by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The Committee is composed of 23 experts nominated by their Governments and elected by the States parties as individuals "of high moral standing and competence in the field covered by the Convention". At least every four years, the States parties are expected to submit a national report to the Committee, indicating the measures they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the Convention. Shadow reports that are prepared by members of civil society

including women's rights activists and non-profit organizations are also submitted to the CEDAW Committee to state the ground realities with regard to the extent to a country's fulfillment of its obligations. During its annual session, the Committee members discuss these reports with the Government representatives and explore with them areas for further action by the specific country. The Committee also makes general recommendations to the States parties on matters concerning the elimination of discrimination against women.

6.4.5 U.N. Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, 1994

This mechanism was created as an outcome of consensus achieved in the Vienna Conference on Human Rights, 1993 for the same. The mandate of the Special Rapporteur is to seek & receive information on violence against women, its causes and consequences, from governments, treaty bodies, specialized agencies and others, and to recommend measures, ways and means at national, regional and international levels. The Special Rapporteur transmits urgent appeals, undertakes fact-finding country visits and submits annual thematic reports to the concerned UN bodies. The present Special Rapporteur is Ms. Rashida Manjoo of South Africa. She succeeds Dr. Yakin Ertürk (Turkey), who served from August 2003 - July 2009, and Ms. Radhika Coomaraswamy (Sri Lanka), 1994 - July 2003.

6.4.6 Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues (OSAGI)

It is headed by the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and comprises a Principal Social Affairs Office in charge of Gender Mainstreaming

and the Focal Point for Women in the Secretariat. This Office was created on 1 March 1997. The Office's main objective is to promote and strengthen the effective implementation of the Millennium Declaration, the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) held in Beijing in 1995 and the Outcome Document of the special session of the General Assembly on Beijing+5. The Office plays a catalytic role and develops new strategies and programmes to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women in all sectors of society, through: a) Advising the Secretary-General on gender issues in such a way that they can be fully integrated into the overall policy direction of the United Nations; b) facilitating, monitoring and advising on the overall policy goals of the UN with regard to gender analysis and for mainstreaming a gender perspective into all activities of the United Nations; and c) assisting in the design of policies and strategies for the improvement of the status of women in the Secretariat and the United Nations system.

6.4.7 Optional Protocol to CEDAW, 1999

The Optional Protocol created a mechanism whereby the CEDAW committee will be empowered to receive complaints from individual women, concerned members of civil society including women's rights activists and organizations, regarding specific violations of the Convention and carry out inquiries into systematic or serious violations of the provisions of the Convention. It is a product of years of advocacy by women for a way to gain direct access to the CEDAW Committee.

6.4.8 Security Council Resolution 1325

Adopted in 2000, this resolution focuses on women, peace and security and is a milestone in gender mainstreaming within the United Nations. The resolution called for the integration of women in all levels of decision-making and peace negotiations, gender-training for peacekeepers and a willingness to ensure Security Council missions take into a/c gender considerations. It also mandated the U.N. Secretary General to carry out a study on impact of armed conflict on women and girls and the role of women in peace building.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. Name some mechanisms that have been created at the United Nations to implement international standards and norm.

6.5 INFLUENCING WORLD CONFERENCES

World conferences, where government representatives of countries worldwide, as well as members of civil society converge, are avenues through which norms and standards are laid down at the international level. This is done through a process of dialogue and consensus-building within the international community. Such norms and standards are often the stepping stones for formulation of Declarations and Conventions. World conferences also focus on assessing the implementation of standards already formulated and adopted by the international community, formulate plans of action and strategies for improving the same and create mechanisms to facilitate monitoring and implementation. Through an active participation of individuals and organizations concerned with gender issues, experiences of women at the grassroots are reflected in and influence the outcome of such conferences. There are two parallel set of world conferences that the international women's movement has closely engaged with: world conferences on human rights and world conferences on women. Given below is a summary of the various world conferences and their achievements:

6.5.1 World Conference on Human Rights – Teheran, 1968

The first international conference on human rights was held in order to review progress made in 20 years since adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and to consider the problems that the United Nations faced in promoting human rights. An achievement for women's rights lies in point 15 of the Teheran declaration, which states as follows: *The discrimination of which women are still victims in various regions of the world must be eliminated. An inferior status for women is*

contrary to the Charter of the United Nations as well as the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The full implementation of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women is a necessity for the progress of mankind.

6.5.2 First World Conference on Women – Mexico, 1975

The focal point of the international celebration of the international women's year was the world conference of the International Women's Year held in Mexico city in June-July 1975. The aims of the conference were a) to remind the world that gender discrimination continued to be a persistent problem throughout the world; and b) a call by the UN General Assembly to focus international attention on developing goals, strategies and plans of action for the advancement of women. The Conference adopted the Declaration of Mexico on the equality of women and their contribution to development and peace; the World Plan of Action for the implementation of the objectives of the International Women's Year; Regional Plans of Action; 35 Resolutions; and a decision recommending the convening of the second world conference in 1980. The Plan of Action also set minimum targets to be achieved by 1980, including equal access of women to education, employment opportunities, political participation, health services, housing, nutrition and family planning. The conference led to the establishment of UNIFEM and International Research & Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) – to provide institutional framework for research, training and operational activities. The conference also witnessed sharp differences among women in their approach to gender discrimination, based on their geographical contexts: the Eastern bloc women emphasized on issues of peace and disarmament, women from western countries on

equality and those from developing world on development. Equality, development and peace were identified as the broad goals of the conference. The conference was significant in bringing about a shift in the way women were perceived: from passive recipients of assistance and support to full and equal partners with men.

6.5.3 Second World Conference on Women – Copenhagen, 1980

The second world conference was held in Copenhagen in 1980 to review and appraise or evaluate the 1975 World Plan of Action adopted in Mexico. The Copenhagen Programme of Action called for, *inter alia*, stronger national measures to ensure women's ownership and control of property, women's right to inheritance, child custody and loss of nationality. The delegates at the Conference urged an end of the stereotyped attitudes towards women. The conference recognized, for the first time, that there was disparity between rights secured and women's ability to exercise these rights. The Conference came to a close with the adoption of Programme of Action, that called for stronger national measures to ensure women's ownership and control of property, improvements in women's right to inheritance, child custody, loss of nationality and ending stereotyped attitudes towards women. The conference led to an important milestone – the adoption of CEDAW. The conference was also significant as it was the first time domestic violence was explicitly mentioned in an official document of the UN.

6.5.4 Third World Conference on Women – Nairobi, 1985

The third world conference on women was convened in Nairobi in 1985. The Conference has been referred to as the “birth of global feminism.” It was the largest

and most influential conference of that time, with over 2000 delegates and several hundred NGOs participating in the official conference, and 14000-16000 women from 150 countries participating in the informal forum. The Conference was mainly to review and evaluate the achievements of the works of the United Nations on behalf of women. In this Conference, “Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies” was adopted, designed for the period 1985-2000. A major outcome of the Conference was the establishment of three categories to measure the progress achieved: a) constitutional & legal measures; b) equality in social participation; c) equality in political participation and decision-making. In the Conference, it was declared that “all issues were to be women’s issues.” Keeping in view that all the issues were women’s issues, measures recommended by the strategies covered employment, health, education, social services, industry, science, communication and environment.

6.5.5 World Conference on Human Rights – Vienna, 1993

Internationally, the World Conference on Human Rights (1993) at Vienna was one of the main turning points in women’s rights. The final statement of the Conference was issued through the Vienna Declaration, which stated: human rights of women and of the girl child are inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The Declaration devotes several pages to treating the “equal status and human rights of women” as a priority for governments and for the UN, and sounds a historic call to recognize the elimination of “violence against women in public and private life” as a human rights obligation. The full and participation of women in political, civil, economic and cultural life at the regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex were identified as priority objectives

of the international community. The conference was also significant in creating a new mechanism – The UN Special Rapporteur for Violence Against Women.

6.5.6 International Conference on Population & Development (ICPD) – Cairo, 1994

This was the first international population conference in which women's health advocates played a central and significant role. The conference, attended by representatives from 179 countries and addressed by 249 speakers, had the overall theme of population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development. The conference dealt with sexuality, sex education, reproductive rights and health, and male responsibility within the family. It was significant in approaching the issue of population from a women's health and development perspective rather than the traditional target-oriented approach. The conference witnessed a struggle between religious fundamentalists, led by the Vatican and women's health advocates. The biggest success of the conference was the linkage drawn between population control and women's rights. This was a significant shift from earlier population conferences that promoted use of contraceptives without regard for societal pressures on women.

6.5.7 Fourth World Conference on Women – Beijing, 1995

The fourth world conference on women was convened in Beijing in 1995, the year of the fiftieth anniversary of founding of the United Nations. In this Conference, the “Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action” was adopted. The Beijing Declaration indicates that the effort of the earlier three Conferences, namely, Mexico Conference, Copenhagen Conference and Nairobi Conference, had helped to improve women's conditions and access to resources, but they had not able to change the basic structure of inequality in the relationship between men and women. The Beijing Declaration

recognized, reaffirmed and acknowledged, *inter alia*, that the status of women had advanced in some important respects in the past decade but that progress has been uneven, inequality between men and women have persisted and major obstacles remain; women's rights are human rights; equal rights, opportunities and access to resources, equal sharing of responsibility of the family by men and women are important. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted at this Conference, identified 12 critical areas of concern: women and property; education and training; women and health; violence against women; women and armed conflict; women and the economy; women in power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for advancement of women; human rights of women; women and media; women and the environment; and the girl child. The Beijing Platform for Action is considered one of the most progressive blueprints for achieving gender equality.

6.5.8 Rome Conference on the International Criminal Court (ICC) – 1998

The conference was held with the specific purpose of adopting the Treaty creating the ICC. Women's rights activists and non-governmental organizations participated actively throughout the process of formulating the Treaty and Rules related to the ICC, facilitated largely by the formation and persistent work of the Women's Caucus for Gender Justice. The Caucus was successful in integrating a strong gender perspective into the substantial provisions of the Treaty (that codified crimes), provisions on procedure and evidence, and those on the structure of the court. This ensured that the Treaty was not formulated solely by the bureaucrats and diplomats of various states so as to perpetuate and serve their own interests, but accurately reflected the local level experiences of women and incorporated their perception of necessary standards and norms to address the issue of gender-based violence during

times of conflict and peace. Throughout the process of negotiations and conclusion of the provisions of the Treaty and thereafter when Rules of Procedure and Evidence were formulated, women's groups were constantly vigilant to ensure that crucial definitions were not narrowed down, and important provisions were not converted into "soft" policy documents. For more details, please see sub-section II - v above.

6.5.9 (Beijing + 5) – 2000

Beijing +5 was a Special Session of the General Assembly held in June 2000, titled 'Women 2000: Gender Equality, Peace and Development for the 21st century'. The Special Session reviewed and assessed the progress achieved in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, adopted in 1985, and the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. It also considered future actions and initiatives for the year 2000 and beyond. Health issues in general, and the issue of unsafe abortion in particular, were hotly contested by the delegates. The General Assembly adopted a Political Declaration and Outcome document entitled "further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action". The document identified achievements and obstacles in the implementation of the twelve critical areas identified by the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA), and actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and achieve full implementation of the PFA. Delegates also considered key policy and programme interventions by governments, the private sector, non-profit organizations and other civil society actors, and set out time-bound measures to be undertaken.

6.5.10 U.N. World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) - Durban, 2001

This conference focused on issues pertaining to racism and racial discrimination. Durban Declaration and Programme of Action (DDPA) concluded at the Conference is a comprehensive, action-oriented document that proposes concrete measures and far-reaching recommendations to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The DDPA embodies the firm commitment of the international community to tackle racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at the national, regional and international level. Although the DDPA is not legally binding, it has a strong moral value and serves as a basis for advocacy efforts worldwide. The conference was significant in exploring the linkage between racism and gender, as race and gender compound the victimization of many women in marginalized groups, such as Afro-American women in the United States and dalit women in India. The DDPA also highlights the gender dimension of racial discrimination and attributes a key role to women in the development of programmes to combat racism and intolerance.

6.5.11 Durban Review Conference - Geneva, 2009

This conference reviewed and evaluated the goals set in the WCAR conference in 2001. The Outcome Document of the Conference incorporates elements such as: the reinforcement of "the political commitment to the implementation of the DDPA"; the emphasis on the increased suffering, since 2001, of many different sorts of victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and similar forms of intolerance; the identification, sharing and dissemination of "some best practices in the fight against

racism"; the reaffirmation of "the positive role of freedom of expression in the fight against racism, while also deploring derogatory stereotyping and stigmatization of people based on their religion or belief"; and the launch of a process that will examine how the prohibition of incitement to hatred, as reflected in Article 20 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, has been implemented in various parts of the world."

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. Name some international conferences that have influenced standard-setting on issues related to gender

6.6 ROLE OF NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS (NPOS)

There has been a tremendous increase in the number of NPOs created in the twentieth century, owing partly to the fact that the Charter of the UN gave recognition to such organizations under Article 71. International NPOs engaged in gender-related issues perform a range of functions that include a) the preparation and distribution of reports of gender-based discrimination and violations in countries across the world; b) creating awareness among the media about issues of women's human rights by distributing information to them; c) lobbying and advocacy; d) drafting model legislations that incorporate the human rights discourse on issues pertaining to gender discrimination; and e) information dissemination and awareness-raising on women's human rights. Such organizations play an important role in upholding human rights, in accordance with standards set by the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights and other human rights instruments. NPOs are autonomous of the government. International NPOs are often very large and influential bodies, capable of exercising international pressure through which they compel the governments of countries across the world to enforce human rights in their respective countries and be vigilant in order to prevent infringement of these rights. Many international NPOs have a consultative status with U.N.'s Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), which enables them to participate in world conferences and meetings, and influence country representatives in the standards that are formulated on issues pertaining to gender.

6.7 RELEVANCE OF GLOBAL TRENDS & INFLUENCES ON GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Inter-linkages between global trends and influences that facilitate standard-setting at the international level, and the domestic context become significant for the following reasons:

- International standards influence domestic jurisprudence by providing referral points for courts in interpreting women's human rights of individuals and in ascertaining state responsibility. For example, a number of landmark judgments on women's rights have successfully referred to and used provisions of the CEDAW;
- Standards evolved by the international community can be used as benchmarks to critique and measure domestic laws and legislative amendments. For example, The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act 1958 has also been critiqued consistently for violation of India's obligations under international treaties;
- International standards and norms have the potential to be used as standard-setting mechanisms for domestic law reform initiatives. An example of this is the Law Commission of India's consultative paper on witness protection, where it refers to witness protection under international law. The campaign on Communal Violence Bill has also used international standards, concepts and principles.
- They provide a framework for making the state accountable and liable for violating international obligations;
- They provide us additional forums (at the international and national level) to discuss human rights issues;

- They provide a mechanism to monitor compliance – through the periodic reporting system under various treaties and international human rights bodies; and
- They inspire domestic campaigns for signing / ratifying / acceding to international treaties pertaining to gender discrimination and gender-based violence.

6.8 SUMMING UP

International standard-setting plays an important role in complementing legal, social and political processes at the ground level. The issue of gender and development is no exception. Global trends and influences can exert political and diplomatic pressure on the policy makers to make suitable changes in laws, policies, rules and other standards, as well as to effectively implement the same. At the same time, they also equip concerned members of the civil society with a yardstick against which the local context can be evaluated, and a tool for advocacy in order to impact law and policy-making. For a timeline of global trends and influences, please see graph below.

6.9 GLOSSARY

De facto: De facto is a Latin expression that means "by [the] fact". In law, it means "in practice but not necessarily ordained by law" or "in practice or actuality, but without being officially established". It is commonly used in contrast to de jure (which means "concerning the law") when referring to matters of law, governance, or technique (such as standards) that are found in the common experience as created or developed without or contrary to a regulation. When discussing a legal situation, de jure designates what the law says, while de facto designates action of what happens in practice. It is analogous and similar to the expressions "for all intents and purposes" or "in fact".

De jure: De jure (in Classical Latin de iure) is an expression that means "concerning law", as contrasted with de facto, which means "concerning fact". The terms de jure and de facto are used instead of "in principle" and "in practice", respectively, when one is describing political or legal situations. In a legal context, de jure is also translated as "concerning law". A practice may exist de facto, where for example the people obey a contract as though there were a law enforcing it, yet there is no such law. A process known as "desuetude" may allow de facto practices to replace obsolete laws. On the other hand, practices may exist de jure and not be obeyed or observed by the people.

6.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

On 18 December 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The Convention was the culmination of more than thirty years of work by the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, a body established in 1946 to monitor the situation of women and to promote women's rights. It is founded on three principles: equality, non-discrimination and state obligation. It focuses on de jure (equality in law) & de facto equality (equality in result). It moves from a sex-neutral norm that requires equal treatment of men & women, usually measured by how men are treated, to recognize that the particular nature of discrimination against women merits a legal response. It addresses power relations between women and men at all levels - family, community, market and the state. It discards the distinction the private and the public spheres, by recognizing violations

of women in the private sphere (the home) as violations of women's human rights. CEDAW is significant as it is the only human rights treaty that targets culture and tradition as influential forces shaping gender roles and family relations.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

DAW, UN Commission on the status of Women, UNIFEM, CEDAW Committee, OSAGI.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

World Conference on Human Rights – Vienna, 1993

International Conference on Population & Development (ICPD) – Cairo, 1994

Rome Conference on the International Criminal Court (ICC) – 1998

U.N. World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance (WCAR) - Durban, 2001

Durban Review Conference - Geneva, 2009

Box: 1 SUMMARY OF LEARNING POINTS

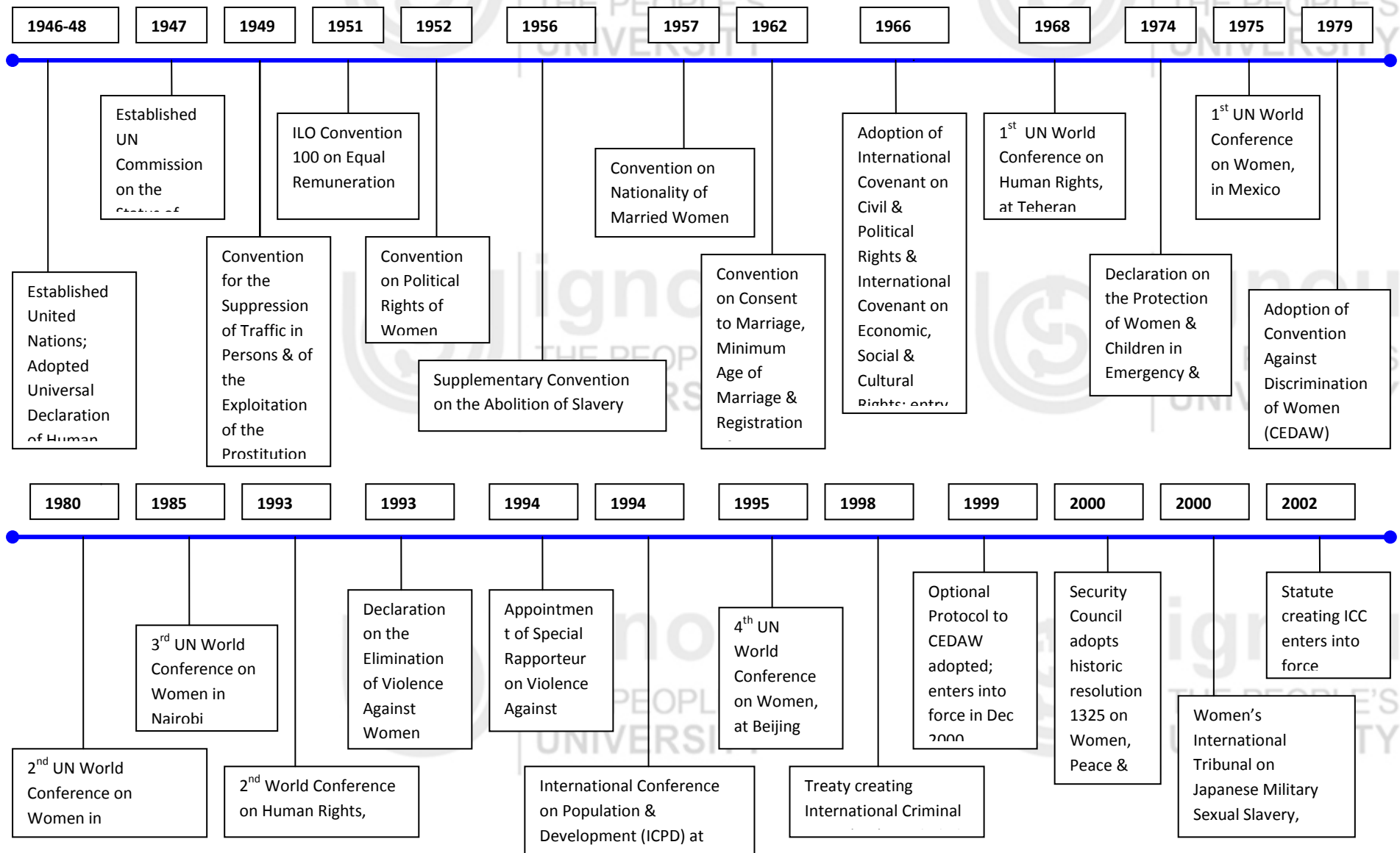
The main learning points in this unit are as follows:

- Women initiated global trends and influences with regard to gender-related issues through: a) influencing formulation of Declarations and Conventions; b) creating implementing mechanisms for the same; and c) influencing world conferences.
- International conventions and declarations set standards and norms on gender discrimination and gender-based violence;
- Some such standards are embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Convention on

Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, Rome Treaty creating the International Criminal Court (ICC) and standards set by the International Labour Organization (ILO);

- Global trends and influences include creation / strengthening of mechanisms to implement the standards set;
- World conferences are avenues through which norms and standards are laid down and their implementation monitored at the international level, through a process of dialogue and consensus-building within the international community;
- Non-profit organizations have a crucial role to play in upholding human rights of women, both at the local as well as at the international level;
- Global trends and influences impact standards and norms set on gender issues in India in many ways, and are intrinsically linked to gender development in India.

TIMELINE OF GLOBAL TRENDS & INFLUENCES



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6.12 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND PRACTICE

1. Write an essay on UN conferences on Women, Human Rights, Population and Development, Racism and xenophobia.

2. What do you mean by CEDAW? Explain how it helps women against violence?

UNIT: 7 GENDER, DEMOCRACY AND DEVELOPMENT (NOTIONS OF STATE)

Structure

7.1 Introduction

7.2 Objective

7.3 Gendered Approach to Development: The Theoretical Framing

7.3.1 What is meant by the gendered approach to development?

7.3.2 How do different theoretical perspectives capture the women's aspirations for development?

7.4 Mainstreaming Gender: The Viability of the State

7.4.1 What is implied by the term gender mainstreaming?

7.4.2 Can state play a practicable role in promoting gender mainstreaming?

7.5 Democratizing the State: The Context of Globalization

7.5.1 Has democratization in the era of globalization promoted or obstructed women's development?

7.5.2 What measures must be undertaken to facilitate women's development in a democratized state?

7.6 The Challenges Ahead

7.7 Summing Up

7.8 Glossary

7.9 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

7.10 References

7.11 Questions for Reflection and Practice

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The theoretical and practical aspects of ‘development’ have remained marked by shifting connotations. After the Second World War the term development, especially in economic usage, implied industrialization and urbanization. During the colonial period many of the ideas central to development were cast in terms of ‘progress’, which encompassed an understanding of modernity- both economic and socio-cultural. In the 1970s, the process of development began to be linked with the democratic political systems whereas in the post-cold war world, ‘globalization’ has become the dominant frame within which the issues of development are increasingly being discussed.

While the meaning of development kept adjusting itself to the changing historical contexts, the notions of ‘gender’ and ‘democracy’ contributed in their own ways in enriching the general development discourse. The notion of gender, understood as the *social construction of sex*, explored into the political roles that men and women were able to perform in the process of development. The concept of democracy, conceived as the *popular control over governance*, discussed the political apparatus that was suitable for ensuring people’s participation in the process of development. Though the notions of gender and democracy raised different sets of questions and initiated different kinds of debates pertaining to development, they were intrinsically related in significant ways. The interplay between gender relations and development issues and how the drive for democracy impacts upon the role of gender in the process of development constitute the basic theme of this unit.

7.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the notion of gendered approach to development;

- Distinguish between the liberal, Marxist and radical perspectives on gender and development;
- Evaluate the role of state and national machineries in mainstreaming gender in the process of development;
- Assess whether the process of democratization in the era of globalization has promoted or obstructed the gendered approach to development; and
- Grasp the nature of inter-relationship between the notions of gender, democracy and development.

7.3 GENDERED APPROACH TO DEVELOPMENT: THE THEORETICAL FRAMING

7.3.1 What is meant by the Gendered Approach to Development?

The concept of gender is reflected in Anne Fausto-Sterling's belief that the interaction between the biological beings and the social environment influences the individual capacities. Gender refers to the socially constructed and institutionalized roles, behaviors, activities and attributes that a given society considers appropriate for women and men as individuals.

Gender, especially the role of women, is widely recognized as vitally important for development issues and processes. Since the idea of development aims at transforming societies so as to improve the living standards of the poor and because women tend to be over-represented in the poorest segments of almost every society, the concept of gender becomes crucial for development. The gendered approach to development is guided by a focus on gender-equality and women's participation. It includes an understanding of different roles and expectations of the genders within the community.

The gendered approach to development, as opposed to women's development, is not just about 'addition' of women or increasing the visibility of women in the already existing development issues and processes. Cornwell is apprehensive that an approach where women

are merely 'added in' may provide an increased visibility to women's interests but will not lead to their substantive empowerment. The 'women's interest' concentrates on the lives of women, whereas the 'gender interest' penetrates deeper to address the structures of relations between men and women. The gendered approach to development means the freedom and capacity of women to design and control the development agenda in accordance with their own aspirations. In this context, one can discuss different theoretical perspectives that differently gauge the developmental aspirations of women. An understanding of the theoretical framing of women's aspirations is important for knowing the places that women occupied in various development agendas.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. Define gendered approach to development.

7.3.2 How do Different Theoretical Perspectives Capture the Developmental Aspirations of Women?

The *liberal theory*, which promoted 'individualism' and 'political freedom', appeared very attractive to women from development point of view. It allowed women to find a place in the public arena which in its public imagery was quite unique as women were traditionally kept confined to private spheres. Carole Pateman expanded the definition of 'politics' to encompass both the public and the private spheres, thereby creating room for the participation of women in politics and development discourse.

However Kandiyoti lamented that the liberal regime opened up an arena for 'state-sponsored feminism' which at one and the same time circumscribed and defined its parameters. In the light of the lack of technical expertise amongst women, the emphasis on industrialization in a liberal state meant that focus remained on male employment. The acceptance of commercialization and mechanization of agriculture as tools for development in the liberal societies implied the marginalization of women's work in rural areas. The taming of nature as the part of developmental exercise caused displacement of population, resulting in particular vulnerabilities for women. The liberal developmental approach did not see women as a distinct and particularly disadvantaged group. The anticipation of the liberal development agenda that women would automatically benefit via men turned out to be an illusion.

The *Marxist theory*, which encouraged 'socialism' and 'economic equality', subordinated gender issues to more substantial matters of economic development. In the Marxist scheme, the notion of 'class' (understood as the economic categorization within society) was given priority over the notion of 'gender' (conceived as sex-based differences). The Marxist theory held that the chief cause of the suffering of women was not patriarchy but capitalism. Therefore the development of women could be ensured by abolishing the liberal capitalist state and establishing a socialist mode of production ultimately leading to communism which would have a classless and a stateless society.

However the socialist model of development also remained problematic for the upliftment of women. Judith Stacey observed in the Chinese context that the new socialist morality linked sexuality not with procreation but with felicitous marital relations where concerns about the women's appropriate behavior within the family were accepted and were given succour through policy-making and implementation. Evans argued that the construction of socialism in the 1950s in China required producing children for the development of society and therefore having children was a social duty, failure to which was severely criticized by the communist party that ruled the state. The Marxist development framework allowed patriarchic social relations to remain stable and women seemed to be shut out of the institutional design.

In both liberal and Marxist theories, the articulations of 'nationalist' ambitions remained crucial to the setting of political and economic development agendas. As such the development agendas spoke in the name, not of particularistic groups, but of pan-national interests. Particularistic interests of women were regarded as threats that would disturb and dislocate the coalescing of national development agendas.

Consequently, the much highlighted national development agendas contributed to the overall growth of GDP (Gross Development Product) but the share of women in it and the issue of the substantive upliftment of women remained a far cry. Though the national development agendas marginally helped in improving the status of women, one could witness a growing gap between the improving political indicators of women's empowerment and their continuing social and economic marginalization. Despite the fact that women increased their participation in parliaments fourfold between 1945 to 1995 and one hundred and eighty five countries signed the Convention for the Elimination of all forms of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW), the gross inequalities persist in terms of employment, safety,

working hour, workload, education levels, income, property ownership, access to land, technology and credit facilities.

While reflecting on the linkage between the ‘descriptive’ representation of women in political institutions and the ‘substantive’ representation of women’s interests that might result from this, Shirin M. Rai raises the question as to why the translation of descriptive into substantive representation was taking so long? What structural inequalities were proving to be most resistant to change, and why might this be the case? Since these questions were not addressed by the traditional liberal and Marxist development theories, a feminist critique of these theories cropped up.

Initially, the feminist theoretical intervention pleaded for the inclusion of women in the prevailing patriarchic world. But later on, the feminists realized that the inclusion of women in the prevailing patriarchic structures would not have a truly emancipator effect. Rather, the ‘othering’ of women as a category and their marginalization in the theory and practice of development created an image wherein women were essentially viewed as ‘victims’. Therefore an important alteration was introduced in the feminist perspective by projecting the image of women not as victims but as ‘agents’. The *radical theory* considered women not as victims in need of rescue but as actors in struggle against their exploitation and oppression. Instead of fighting for the women’s space in already existing structures, the radical approach started redefining the existing structures from the feminist standpoint.

Though the radical approach seems right in its thrust to move away from the analysis of the positions of women in the male-dominated institutions and in its emphasis on the need to explore the underlying biases of the socio-economic and political practices, it faces the dilemma posed by the divisions within women’s groups on grounds of class, race, disability, sexuality, religion and location. For instance, the location based cleavage within women’s groups becomes prominent when the northern and southern feminists adopt different lines of

argument for criticizing the ongoing process of global development. The 'northern' feminists criticize the gender-biased nature of global development and call for a need to utilize the opportunities of empire as means of resisting patriarchal constraints. By contrast, the 'southern' feminists contend that women's declining positions is directly related to their assimilation, willingly or unwillingly, into the global market economy that is embedded in a patriarchal exchange between the North and the South. While the 'western' feminists believe in the ideology of maternal imperialism and seek power for women in the imperial projects, the 'nationalist' feminists reject such delineations of women in their own countries because their acceptance of the values of the western feminists make them easy targets for traditionalist attempts to delegitimize their struggle for women's rights. The divisions within women's groups result into the lack of solidarity in women's movements. Though the women's movements have facilitated the growing presence of women's voice in the public domain, the difficulty is that absences and silences are built as some women speak on behalf of all women. The challenges faced by the women's movements reveal the complications involved in the process of gender mainstreaming.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. How do liberal and Marxist attempt to promote women's interests in the process of Development

7.4 MAINSTREAMING GENDER: THE VIABILITY OF THE STATE

7.4.1 What is implied by the Term Gender Mainstreaming?

Gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality. It can be defined as a strategy of making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the development policies in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men could benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. This involves an assurance that gender perspectives and attention to the goal of gender equality remain central to all activities- research, legislation, advocacy/dialogue, resource allocation and planning, implementation and monitoring of development projects. According to the viewpoint of the UN (United Nations), the ultimate goal of gender mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality in such a manner that the structures of inequality are transformed. Since 1997 the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women have been charged with overseeing and reporting on the progress in the direction of gender mainstreaming.

Though the concept of gender mainstreaming focuses on the notion of equality, there has been a debate whether it is more appropriate to use the language of 'equality' or that of 'inequality' for promoting gender mainstreaming. S. S. Ali argues that the language of equality emphasizes upon sameness rather than differences and therefore breeds a universal discourse which is essentially inadequate in different cultural contexts. He opines that

different cultures attach different values to the notion of gender and therefore it is ethically important to be sensitive to these cultural differences while pursuing the strategy of gender mainstreaming and asserting the equal rights of women.

However the international bodies like the UN stress the need for universal women's rights because any dilution of equal treatment of women on cultural grounds undermines the very basis of gender justice. It allows women of some countries, religions and ethnic groups to be left out of discussion about refining the rights of women and men, thereby reinforcing traditional gender roles. Therefore gender mainstreaming must essentially use the language of equality. The equality based gender mainstreaming has to be concretized by the states that are embedded in particular cultural contexts.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. How does the concept of equality become debatable in the context of gender mainstreaming?

7.4.2 Can State Play a Practicable Role in Promoting Gender Mainstreaming?

The institution of state continues to be the focus of women's movements. In order to embed gender perspectives in the development policies and programs, the women's movements depend on the potential of state, especially the state-based national machineries. National machineries, also called as women's agencies, emerged as instruments for advancing women's interests after the World Conference of the International Women's Year in Mexico City (1975) and became more strengthened after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing (1995). As the central policy coordinating unit inside the state government, the main task of the national machineries is to support government-wide mainstreaming of a gender equality perspective in all policy areas.

While women's movements, NGO's (Non-governmental organizations) and international bodies have striven for the recognition of national machineries, there has been a concern that national machineries can be used, especially where a strong women's movement does not exist, to co-opt the gender equality agenda within the nationalist state policies. The dilemma associated with the capacity of national machineries suggests that states are ambiguous terrains for women's movements. The women's movements need to be cautious while engaging with state bodies and striking complex negotiation and bargaining by both- those living within the state boundaries and those living on the outside. Shirin M. Rai terms such a dialectical position of women's movements as 'in and against the state'. She argues that the policy-making bodies of state are not unitary but fractured and an engagement with state bodies is not a matter option but an imperative for women if their interests, however diverse, are to be at all represented in policies of the state.

In this context, Caroline Moser and Maxine Molyneux have made an analytical distinction between women's 'practical' and 'strategic' interests. The practical interests ensure compliance with the existing order and reflect the fulfillment of women's immediate demands- such as housing, water, childcare, better working conditions etc- by the state. By

contrast, the strategic interests question the existing order and reflect the need to shift the paradigms of state power. The political links between practical and strategic interests can only emerge through dialogue, praxis and discussion. National machineries need to be able not only to participate in making these distinctions clear but to strategize according to the specific contexts within which they function. For this national machineries must possess a combination of following features:

- a) They must be located at a high level within the decision-making hierarchy to effectively influence government policies.
- b) They must have a clear mandate and functional responsibility.
- c) They must have close and strong ties with the civil society groups (NGO's) supportive of the enhancement of women's status.
- d) They must enjoy sufficient human and financial resource.
- e) They must be accountable.

The probability of the simultaneous presence of all these features is high when national machineries are part of a democratic state. Chazan argues that the undemocratic military rulers follow a policy of purposeful female neglect. In a similar vein, Goetz states that the undemocratic nature of bureaucracies is manifested in their hostility to development agendas that challenge accustomed organizational patterns. The unavailability of any formal institution to women in non-democratic states leads to their exclusion from the patron-client relationships that take the place of more visible political participation. Thus the democratization of the state becomes absolutely crucial for furthering the gender equality agenda.

The pertinent question that we continue to grapple with in our assessment of national machineries for advancement of women is, whether they can deliver a sustained agenda of women's development, given their relatively weak position within the state system. It is in

this context that the process of democratization becomes promising. The democratization process facilitates the embedding of national machineries in the architecture of state governance. This involves democratization of state and political systems as well as gender mainstreaming within state and policy structures.

7.5 DEMOCRATIZING THE STATE: THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

7.5.1 Has Democratization in the Era Of Globalization Promoted or Obstructed Women's Development?

R. Robertson optimistically claims that of all the strategies experienced by people, democratization has the greatest chance of success and it means more than just the right to vote and hold opinions independent of church and state. His understanding of democracy is broad and embraces the processes of participation, empowerment and freedom to choose. Such a broad understanding of democracy appears compatible with the goal of women's development as it provides ample scope for challenging the gender identities. However, Nancy Fraser is skeptical about the potentialities of identity politics fostered by democratization. She opines that the identity politics may allow for 'recognition' of inequalities but not necessarily for 'redistribution' of resources. Countering the opinion of Nancy Fraser, Iris Marion young argues that in the very process of demanding recognition of hitherto marginalized groups, the process of democratization allows for a redistribution of discursive power.

Though the theoretical debate on democracy appears inconclusive on the issue of promoting women's development, the actual practice of democracy demonstrates an alarming picture. The low levels of participation of women in public life confirm the fact that women have always been on the margins of democracy. Many a times, the process of

democratization that allowed women to enter public life and challenge the gender bias of state, also co-opted their struggles in violent ways. Therefore the tension between the processes of democratization and women's development play out in complex ways.

Recently, the onset of the era of globalization has witnessed the push for democratization. The process of democratization is informing the governance agendas of the international bodies like the IMF (International Monetary Fund), WB (World Bank) and WTO (World Trade Organization). Loans are often tied to the conditionality of democratizing the state institutions and bureaucracies. Democratization in this sense demands some structural adjustments such as deregulation, free trade promotion and state cut backs. These structural adjustment programs have had the most devastating effect on women's development. The cutting of government subsidies and social welfare provisions has hit the poor women the hardest. They have been denied the necessary health care which in turn has resulted in an increasing maternal mortality. The sky-rocketing food prices and export-oriented agriculture pattern contribute to women's declining access to food and nutrition. Women perform multiple roles for paid and unpaid labor as formal jobs are fading away from the employment scene. According to World Bank, the female labor force shrunk from 53% in 1980 to 49% in 2005, while men continue being employed at roughly the same level around 86%. The conditions of women in economically backward states have been worse. As per the estimates provided by the World bank, women in Africa receive less than 10% of all credit going to small farmers and each year 6,00,000 to 8,00,000 people are trafficked across international borders. Women and girls make up the majority trafficked for sexual exploitation.

But the same structural adjustment programs have opened up new windows of opportunities for women belonging to upper and middle class. The upper and middle class women who have access to appropriate technical education are well placed in the job market. The economic globalization in the form of 'market democracy' is manufacturing a group of

professional women who are self-reliant, articulate and assertive. However, the real challenge is to ensure that similar opportunities become available to poor women as well.

7.5.2 What Measures must be undertaken to Facilitate Women's Development in a Democratized State?

Since the process of democratization does not have a uniform impact on the position of women coming from different backgrounds, the agenda of women's development requires a preferential and preventive treatment for the poor women. The state and state-based national machineries as well as non-state organizations (NGOs, private firms, charities etc) must work in collaboration with each other for equipping the poor women so that they are not adversely affected by structural adjustments and could adapt themselves to the changing demands of the globalized market democracy. Sunanda Sen refers to this kind of protective measure for women as 'safety net'. Safety nets are non-contributory transfer programs that intend to prevent the poor women from market shocks that may force them to fall below a certain level of poverty. Safety net transfers include cash transfers, food based programs (such as supplementary feeding or distribution of food stamps, vouchers and coupons), in-kind transfers (such as supplies of school uniforms, books and technical training), price subsidies (for food, electricity or public transport), public works, fee waivers or exemptions (for health care, schooling and other utilities).

In addition to the provision of safety nets, the task of achieving women's development necessitates following activities within the democratized states:

- a) Ensuring non-discrimination within private welfare regimes - As the democratized state is forced to cut subsidies and step back from welfare activities, the women are increasingly compelled to rely on private institutions for welfare services. To minimize the vulnerabilities of women in this scenario, the national machineries must launch a campaign to end the discrimination against women in private sectors.

- b) Stressing transparency of political parties and state departments- The democratized state must be held accountable for its activities pertaining to gender mainstreaming.

The audit of political parties, the preparation of gender budgets by government departments and the openness of the state to the civil society scrutiny are significant.

- c) Monitoring the leadership's commitment to gender equality- The will and ideology of the leaders of the democratized state must be under constant vigilance of national machineries. While leaders can take advantage of the civil society mobilization by women to push the ideal of gender equality, the civil society mobilization in the name of culture or religion can also undermine the leadership's commitment to gender equality.

- d) Securing women's representation through quotas- The democratized state provides quotas for women in order to ensure that their interests are considered at the time of political debates, policy making and implementation. However the outcome of quota regimes has been somewhat complex. On the one hand, the participation of women in political affairs through quota has an impact on familial and institutional relations, even though this impact is rather fragile and needs further nurturing in order to be consolidated. On the other hand, the quota-based representation reflects the gender regimes of inequality and generates concerns about the co-option of women into state machinery without any significant shifts in their status.

While the evidence of the impact of quota-based representation is mixed, the national machineries and women's movements can derive benefit from it. The quota-based strategy offers two facilities to national machineries and women's movements. First, they can lobby women more directly on women's rights. Second, they can use the expertise of women parliamentarians and bureaucrats for furthering the agenda of women's development. However their capacity to deliver more broadly on gender equity would depend on the

availability of economic resources (The developing states fair badly on the economic front!) and the intensity of the political will of the elites in terms of addressing issues of gender equality (The orthodox/obscurantist states hinder the activities of progressive elites!). While the challenges on the path of women's development are intact, the opportunities offered by the process of democratization remain attractive for realizing the ideal of women's emancipation.

7.6 THE CHALLENGES AHEAD

The gendered approach to development has been widely adopted in an increasingly democratizing globalized world. While commenting on the goal of gender equality, the mainstream economists boast on 'procedural progress' and insist that there is slow but steady development in women's status. However the feminist economists argue that 'substantive progress' would be possible only when markets would become more accessible and equitable for women, domestic work would be counted, concerns for childcare would be shared and health and safety issues at work as well as equal pay for equal work would be ensured. Catherine Hoskyns argues that despite small and critical gains, the fundamental shifts in policy frameworks are not happening so as to place women at a better position.

The traditional economic methods of calculating development also need to be amended in the light of the hardships faced by the women. Shirin M. Rai complains that there has been little work done on what economists would 'depletion'. The mainstream economists measure depletion of machinery, capital goods and environment but they rarely talk about depletion of household and social reproduction that directly affects the lives of women. Besides the concept of depletion, Camilla Stivers argues that the administrative notions of 'efficiency',

‘economy’ and ‘expertise’ need to be redefined so as to accommodate the sentiments of women in the agenda of development.

The task of achieving women’s development through gender mainstreaming has become all the more complicated in the era of globalization. Not only the modes of production and exchange but also the modes of governance and resistance have become globalized. As the terms of political participation are shifting in the light of changing relations between state and sub- and supra-state institutions, the real challenge for politically marginalized women’s groups is to find an effective way of participation not only in state but also in sub- and supra-state institutions.

Another dilemma associated with women’s empowerment emanates from the exercise of women’s agency. Though the exercise of women’s agency helps in bringing about positive transformation in their situation, it also makes them more vulnerable to the obscurantist forces which are resistant to change. In this context, Uma Chakravarti has written a moving analysis of the functioning of Women’s Development Programs in Rajasthan. She demonstrated how the flawed execution of Women’s Development Program became apparent when a women and her husband were beaten to death by the locals who disliked their active participation in the development program. Chakravarti opines that the government wants empowerment without breaking into the power of those who have power over the disempowered. There lies a significant challenge of combining the measurement of ‘agency’ with the measurement of ‘vulnerability’ in the feminist literature.

7.7 SUMMING UP

What continue to unfold are the struggles of women and men seeking to transform the world that they inhabit so that it becomes more conducive to their ideal of development. Their struggles are marked with constant tensions between structure (understood as the world

as it is) and agency (conceived as the forces that change structures). The tensions between structure and agency cast long though shifting shadows in which both globalized and gendered power are exercised and the resistance to oppression takes shape.

7.8 GLOSSARY

The World Trade Organization (WTO): The World Trade Organization (WTO) is the only global international organization dealing with the rules of trade between nations. At its heart are the WTO agreements, negotiated and signed by the bulk of the world's trading nations and ratified in their parliaments. The goal is to help producers of goods and services, exporters, and importers conduct their business.

International Monetary Fund (IMF): The International Monetary Fund (IMF) is an organization of 187 countries, working to foster global monetary cooperation, secure financial stability, facilitate international trade, promote high employment and sustainable economic growth, and reduce poverty around the world. The IMF promotes international monetary cooperation and exchange rate stability, facilitates the balanced growth of international trade, and provides resources to help members in balance of payments difficulties or to assist with poverty reduction. The IMF has 187 member countries. It is a specialized agency of the United Nations but has its own charter, governing structure, and finances. Its members are represented through a quota system broadly based on their relative size in the global economy.

7.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1. The gendered approach to development means the freedom and capacity of women to design and control the development agenda in accordance with their own aspirations.

In this context, one can discuss different theoretical perspectives that differently gauge the developmental aspirations of women. An understanding of the theoretical framing of women's aspirations is important for knowing the places that women occupied in various development agendas.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1. The *liberal theory*, which promoted 'individualism' and 'political freedom', appeared very attractive to women from development point of view. It allowed women to find a place in the public arena which in its public imagery was quite unique as women were traditionally kept confined to private spheres. The *Marxist theory*, which encouraged 'socialism' and 'economic equality', subordinated gender issues to more substantial matters of economic development. In the Marxist scheme, the notion of 'class' (understood as the economic categorization within society) was given priority over the notion of 'gender' (conceived as sex-based differences).

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

1. Though the concept of gender mainstreaming focuses on the notion of equality, there has been a debate whether it is more appropriate to use the language of 'equality' or that of 'inequality' for promoting gender mainstreaming. S. S. Ali argues that the language of equality emphasizes upon sameness rather than differences and therefore breeds a universal discourse which is essentially inadequate in different cultural contexts. He opines that different cultures attach different values to the notion of gender and therefore it is ethically important be sensitive to these cultural differences while pursuing the strategy of gender mainstreaming and asserting the equal rights of women.

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7.11 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTIONS AND PRACTICE

1. Evaluate the positive and negative impact of democratization on women's development.

2. What is meant by safety net? How can a democratized state secure the development of women?

3. What are the challenges that exist on the path of women's development in the contemporary world?

UNIT 8: NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN INDIA

Structure

8.1 Introduction

8.2 Objectives

8.3 The Rise of NGOs

8.4 NGO Sector in India

8.5 Classification of NGOs

8.6 Importance of NGOs

8.7 Summing Up

8.8 Glossary

8.9 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

8.10 References

8.11 Questions for Reflections and Practice

8.1 INTRODUCTION

We are living in an era characterized by some as marked by the decline or retreat of the state. The decline of the state is accompanied by an increasing attention towards civil society institutions. Among the social groups and associations of various kinds that are considered to make up civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have become especially prominent in the last two decades. In the years after Independence, people exhorted the state to take the initiative with respect to social transformation; now the expectation is that NGOs

will perform the same role. Be it the field of education or health, providing drinking water, organizing forest-management groups or thrift societies for working women, NGOs are supposed to take the lead. How has such a dramatic shift occurred? How have NGOs become such an important part of civil society? In this Unit we will discuss all these aspects.

8.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the importance of Civil Society Organizations;
- Analyze the role of NGOs in development; and
- Evaluate the impact created by NGOs in development process.

8.3 THE RISE OF NGOS

The rise of NGOs is one of the central processes in the sphere of development since the 1980s. This period also coincides with the demise of developmentalism as a project of the nation-state and the rise of post-developmental neo-liberal political economy (or what has also been described as market triumphalism). In what is often characterized as a move from inefficient states to efficient markets, NGOs hold a distinctive mediating position. Given the profound implications of the NGO involvement in development, there is a great need to critically examine the changing relations among NGOs, state agencies, multilateral and bilateral funding institutions and other social groups. This situation has great bearing on the

way in which we conceive of the process of social change and the roles of different social actors within it. Students of the sociology of organizations, political sociology, sociology of social movements and sociology of development need to pay greater attention to the phenomenon of NGOs.

By and large, sociologists have not given the phenomenal growth of NGOs the critical attention that it requires. There are hardly any systematic studies of their membership: what is the socio-economic background of the activists associated with them? Similarly, there are no attempts to analyse the NGOs as organizations: what are the dynamics and the process of decision-making within them? We know almost nothing about the power relationships within these groups and associations, nor do we know about the forms and channels of participation that affect the power relationship (Fisher 1997: 456). The literature on NGOs mainly consists of broad descriptive histories and, sometimes, generalized accounts of their achievements in the form of evaluation studies.

One of the reasons for the absence of rigorous studies is perhaps the close collaboration between academics and the NGOs' practical work. Often, social scientists have close links with NGOs, and since many NGOs operate in the cross-disciplinary space between academic research and activist intervention (policy study and advocacy, training and capacity building, social work and service delivery, etc.), they offer to academics many opportunities to pursue their work in the domain of non-academics practice. This collaboration has prevented many scholars from subjecting NGOs to the same scrutiny as other social institutions.

Although NGOs claim to believe in openness and transparency, many of them are not open to scrutiny by outsiders. Those who have achieved a degree of success and fame are often hostile to any objective studies by outsiders not approved by them.

8.4 NGO SECTOR IN INDIA

The NGO sector in India is characterized by tremendous diversity and heterogeneity. Ignoring this diversity, unfounded generalizations are often put forward and unfair comments and criticisms are offered. NGOs differ from one another in size, funding and functions; in the levels at which they operate; and in organizational structures, goals and membership (Fisher 1997: 447). There are over 14,000 NGOs registered under the Foreign Contributions Regulations Act. In all, there may be over 30,000 NGOs in India.

There are many definitions of NGOs. The voluntary sector includes non-governmental, non-profit organizations. They may be engaged in a variety of activities: implementing grassroots/sustainable development, promoting human rights and social justice, protesting against environmental degradation and many other similar tasks. Some activists resent and reject the term NGO and instead designate themselves as social action groups, political action groups or social movements (see Kothari 1993). Anna Hazare's village development group at Ralegan Siddhi in Maharashtra and Ela R. Bhatt's Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in Gujarat are both identified as NGOs, but are very different from each other in terms of size, membership, funding, approaches, strategies and outcomes. These differences only show that one should be very careful while making generalized statements about NGOs.

8.5 CLASSIFICATION OF NGOS

Just as there are many definitions of NGOs, there are several classifications too. Ghanshyam Shah and H.R. Chaturvedi (1983) divide NGOs into three main categories: techno-managerial, reformist and radical. Indira Hirway (1995) classifies NGOs in Gujarat into welfare-oriented (including health and education) development organization and empowering NGOs. Sudarshan Iyengar (1998) classifies NGOs in Gujarat into four categories: Gandhian, service delivery organizations, professional organizations and mobilization organizations. D.C. Korten (1990: 115-27) distinguishes three generations of NGOs: the first, committed to relief and welfare; a second, attending to small-scale, local development projects; and a third, consisting of community organizations interested in building coalitions. C. Elliot (1987) has outlined a similar typology of NGOs based on distinctions among charity, development and empowerment work.

In Korten's (1990) view, the first generation relief and welfare NGOs, which predominate in the developing world, often have close tie with state and international development aid organization and do not overtly engage in political activities. The second-generation development NGOs organize individuals locally to address issues like public health and agricultural development. These groups frequently help their constituents to overcome structural constraints, to challenge local and regional elites and to assist in reducing dependency relationships. The third generation NGOs explicitly target political constraints, engaging in mobilization and 'conscientization'. Their focus is on co-ordinating communications and linkages among people's organizations. These networks help to spread awareness of the practical local successes of some second generation development strategies and to serve as catalysts for wider social movements. However, these types are more ideal than real and not mutually exclusive (Fisher 1997:448).

In the literature on NGOs, there are several positive cases of the very poor people successfully organizing themselves. The SEWA at Ahmedabad is one such example. Bhatt (1998:146-61) has described the activities of The SEWA Bank, one of several organizations working under the SEWA umbrella. The SEWA Bank has organized thousands of poor working women and mobilized them to run a co-operative bank, which encourages savings and fulfils their credit requirements for consumption, trading and production purposes. Its annual turnover runs into crores of rupees. George Mathew (1999: 529-34) has pointed out several instances in which panchayats and NGOs have worked together using their complementary skills and resources to achieve common goals.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. List the different classification of NGOs

As reported elsewhere (see Attwood and Baviskar 2002), NGOs sometimes try to fill the gap between informal savings groups and dysfunctional, state-run 'co-operative' credit systems.

In 1976, the Grameen Bank, a new type of NGO, was established in Bangladesh. The bank advanced only small loans to poor people, primarily women organized into small groups. As with informal saving groups, group discipline ensures loans repayment. Other NGOs in Bangladesh have established similar 'micro-credit' programmes. The Grameen Bank system of small-group discipline seems particularly effective in reducing poverty and promoting women's empowerment (Hashemi et al. 1996). Yet, cultivation of group discipline entails high administrative costs, paid by external donors.

In Andhra Pradesh, an experiment in Women's Thrift Co-operatives (WTCs) was launched in 1990 under the auspices of the Co-operative Development Foundation (CDF), a local NGO based in Hyderabad. WTCs raise funds solely through small, regular contributions from their members, who earn interest on savings at 1 per cent per month. For loans, they pay 2 per cent. A village WTC may consist of 200-500 women, divided into groups of 10-50. Group discipline ensures excellent rates of loan recovery. Loans are used for household expenses, including house repair, education and health care, as well as investments in agriculture, livestock and small business.

In less than a decade, over 33,000 women formed 101 WTCs. As on 31 December 1998, their combined savings totaled Rs 26 million, with no external grants or loans. The CDF provides advice and support in established WTCs, but the latter soon become self-sufficient and self-managing, a source of empowerment for their members. About half the member and leaders come from landless households; another one-third have less than three acres of land (Biswas and Mahajan 1997; Rajagopalan 1999).

If strong, vibrant and lively civil society is the foundation of modern-open-democratic polity, NGOs are the very life-force for the civil society. Civil society and NGOs seem to go together. One cannot exist without the other. Civil society, when it is not used as a synonym for society in general, is used to refer to 'that segment of society that interacts with the state, influences the state and yet is distinct from the state' (Chazan 1992:281).

8.6 Importance of NGOs

The growing prominence of NGOs in the field of development is strongly related to the declining legitimacy of the state. Increasingly, the state is looked upon with suspicion, if not contempt. It is considered to be corrupt, oppressive and anti-poor. Least governance is seen as a sign of good governance. Post-developmental ideologies of neo-liberalism chose to espouse the virtues of market enterprise. 'Good governance' is believed now to consist of two functions: facilitating the free play of market forces and enabling decentralized institutions of 'participatory management' to be formed. Participatory management is the new mantra for the provision of services through local municipalities and panchayats, as well as in the sphere of natural-resource management. State structures are criticized as being rigidly bureaucratic and corrupt and thus unsuited for performing either welfare or resource-management functions; whereas, NGOs are seen as 'civil society' actors that are more accountable, responsive and committed to bringing about social change. The state is seen as consisting of entrenched interests and styles of functioning that make it unwilling and unable to work with people, a role that NGOs are supposed to be good at. Thus, NGOs have emerged to perform a bridging function, taking on functions that the state is unsuited for, and are performing them with lower overheads, greater efficiency and motivation. Increasingly, it is not only funding institutions but the state itself that accepts the presence of NGOs and, in fact, expects them to

take over certain tasks. This new set of institutional linkages between the state agencies and NGOs, between state and 'civil society', needs to be explored more thoroughly.

The Indian state was initially indifferent, if not hostile, to encouraging NGOs in the sphere of development, although charity and relief organizations were tolerated to a certain extent. This climate changed after the mid 1980s. First, in the Seventh Five-Year Plan (1985-90) and later in the Eighth Five-Year Plan (1992-97), the government openly welcomed and encouraged participation of NGOs in the development sphere. Recently, the state has sanctioned about Rs. 1.5-2 billion annually for NGO funding, which is a substantial amount (Patel 1998: 47).

Such a significant presence of NGOs in our civil society is not so common elsewhere. In October 1992, while speaking on the role of NGOs in India's rural development at the American University in Cairo, I was told by senior faculty members during discussion time that there were hardly any NGOs in the development field in Egypt. In India, they are so ubiquitous that we take them for granted, just as we take our democratic political set-up for granted. Amartya Sen (1986: 30-40) has brought out the significance of India being an open democratic society in his comparison with China where nearly 23 million people died during a famine in 1958-61 and the world at large did not even hear about it for decades. In the Indian political system, with a free press, opposition parties and a large number of NGOs, such an occurrence could never have happened.

Many international agencies, such as the World Bank, which were earlier working exclusively through national governments, now prefer to work through NGOs in implementing some of their projects. In one of its review of such programmes (Gibbs et al. 1999), the Bank has noted several positive aspects of working through NGOs without giving up some of its reservations. It is noted that the NGOs are far less constrained by bureaucratic

procedures and administrative inefficiencies. What is more important for the Bank is the relative absence of blatant corruption and leakages in the channeling of funds. This absence results in a much greater share of benefits reaching the targeted groups than is likely to happen while working through the state machinery.

However, one should be cautious in generalizing from some of these developments. One should not jump to the conclusion that the state is retreating. Those who benefit from state structures are well entrenched. One should not rule out the possibility of the state trying to co-opt. NGOs to retain its supremacy, rather than retreating from the scene.

NGOs are now an organizational form to which considerable social prestige adheres; they are in an advantageous position to secure contracts and consultancies. They provide opportunities for social enterprise for many individuals and social groups. The range of NGO activities spans a vast spectrum.

On the one hand, there is the case of Joint Forest Management (JFM), where a caucus of NGOs mobilized by the Society for the Promotion of Wastelands Development (a government-initiated NGO) helped to reform government rules regarding JFM in several states to make them more equitable and democratic, especially with respect to women's rights (see Jeffery and Sundar 1999).

On the other hand, there is the case of an NGO in Andhra Pradesh in the animal husbandry sector that systematically misappropriated funds for several years, while the Delhi office of their foreign donors turned a blind eye to this for fear of attracting adverse publicity.

State corruption and NGO complicity had a field day in the Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART), the government body set up to fund grassroots NGOs, where funds were disbursed and later evaluations. There are several instances of NGOs being started by bureaucrats (retired or in service), academics and politicians - sometimes for sincere contributions to social development, and often as a conduit for receiving funds with scant work to show for them. Given the cross-over of the personnel between the state and NGOs, the contrast between their institutional structures and ideologies may well be overdrawn.

As with other agencies, the cases of outstanding success in the NGO sector are few and far between. Whenever a case is perceived as successful, there is an attempt to replicate it elsewhere: for instance, the SEWA in Gujarat was persuaded to start branches in other states.

One has to find out if these efforts succeeded as much as the original. The co-operative dairy complex represented by Amul at Anand in Gujarat is another famous example. From 1970 to 1995, there was a huge programme called 'Operation Flood', funded by the European Union and World Bank to replicate the Anand pattern all over the country. It did not work (see Baviskar 1999). Impressed by the success and vitality of sugar co-operatives in Maharashtra, the central government encouraged similar projects in other states. Most of them failed. Inspired by the outstanding success of Anna Hazare bringing about all-round development at Ralegan Siddhi in Maharashtra, the state government persuaded him to accept the chairmanship of committee to replicate the experiment all over the state. The committee was to select one village from each taluka and thus, create about 300 Ralegan Siddhis across the state. He was given the necessary financial and other support. However, the political parties had their own agendas. Their representatives, such as the MLAs and others, pulled in different directions. The state bureaucracy was lukewarm in its support since it resented

Hazara's critical stance towards it. Hazare had to give up the mission when he encountered the problems of replication under state patronage. He is much more chastened after this experience. The issue of replicability is linked to the question of scale. How adequate are NGOs when they attempt to substitute for the state and take on tasks that, in order to make any kind of dent in terms of social problems, must be conceived on a nation – wide or state-wide scale?

Whereas many NGOs espouse democratic decentralization, the working of their own organization is often idiosyncratic, with authority being vested in one charismatic figure who started the NGO. Structures for the redressal of employee grievances, mandatory in most formal organizations, are often absent in NGOs where personalized management practices tend to prevail over more impersonal rule-based procedures. This contradiction has been the source of conflict in at least two well-known cases, where worker were forced to leave the organization at the behest of the founders. Whereas state structures are at least formally rule governed, the same is not true of NGOs where the spirit of voluntarism is sometimes used to obscure exploitation and manipulation.

NGOs often seem to indulge in double standards. When criticizing state structures, they plead for openness, transparency and democratic participation. However, many of them do not seem to observe these norms in their own functioning. Crucial decisions are often taken at the top by the senior leaders without any scope for ordinary workers to participate in decision-making deliberations. The leaders are most reluctant to openly discuss the matters relating to funding. They talk enthusiastically about the current and future programmes but not about the sources and quantum of funding. That is why, when Bunker Roy of the Social Work and Research Center (SWRC), Tilonia announced open scrutiny of the finances of his

organization, it made headlines. He offered to open the accounts in a public meeting and answer any questions relating to them. No other NGO has come forward with a similar offer. Similarly, Roy sparked off controversy by suggesting a code of conduct for NGOs. His move was strongly opposed in several quarters. It was considered to be an attack on the freedom of NGOs and an attempt to control them through regimentation.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. Give one criticism about the functioning of NGOs,

Many NGOs find it hard to resolve the problem of succession and routinization. Having been set up with the initiative of some dynamic and charismatic leader who inspires a following and support, the organization finds it difficult to continue once the leader is removed from the scene. It may lose its old élan and spirit. Routinization with impersonal rules and regulations has the same effect.

It is now recognized that development requires not only the 'hardware' of investment in physical infrastructure, but also the 'software' of developing human capabilities. Without capacity building for managing institution, learning legal-rational procedures for decision-making and accounting, raising questions and suggesting alternatives, development will not be socially sustainable. NGOs have been entrusted with the task of developing this 'software'. This raises problems of its own. By and large, NGOs that receive external funds are expected to fulfil physical and financial targets, show tangible results (how much money spent, how many trees planted, how many people trained, etc.), but without regard to the quality of the output. Often, the expected output is hard to measure since it is difficult to come up with quantifiable indicators of empowerment. After thousands of training workshops and orientation tours have been held, it is still not clear at the end of the day exactly how the cause of development has been served. Yet, the pressing need to meet physical targets (the requirement of bureaucratic accounting practices) often forces NGOs to take shortcuts so that the more gradual and open-ended process of empowerment is compromised.

While NGOs are often critical of politicians and bureaucracy for misusing and misappropriating public money earmarked for development, the NGO record is not so exemplary. Recently it was reported that NGOs have not submitted grants utilization certificates amounting to several crores of rupees. They have been warned that no further grants will be released till they submit utilization certificates.

The economy and efficiency claimed on behalf of NGOs is only relatively superior. When the late Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi revealed that less than 15 per cent of the total money spent by the government on development programmes reached the targeted beneficiaries, there was a wave of shock and surprise. According to some calculations, this proportion may be 20 per

cent in the case of NGOs, which also spend substantial amounts on their own salaries and infrastructure. The difference in terms of benefits to the poor may not be so great after all (Ramachandran 1998:170).

The issue of accountability is also raised by the dependence of NGOs on external sources of funding. Ever since the issue of foreign funding was raised by the CPI (M)-leader Prakash Karat (1984), characterizing it as an imperialist strategy of penetration into neo-colonial setting, the debate crops up again and again. Opinion is sharply divided among NGOs themselves on these issues. While Bunker Roy is willing to accept a ban on foreign funding, many others are vehemently opposed to it.

Before the last general elections, several highly respected NGOs, such as the Indian Social Institute and Ankur, were asked by the government to show cause why their FCRA (permits under Foreign Contributions Regulation Act) should not be cancelled because they had supported an anti-communal advertising campaign. Any overtly political NGO activity that seems to threaten the status quo may thus be attacked by the state or by a political party. Moreover the issue of funding gives the state a convenient leverage over NGOs.

Conflicts among NGO, donor, state and grassroots agendas and under-standings are also exemplified in the recent controversy over 'Sahayog', and NGO in the UP hills that produced a booklet about AIDS and reproductive health using 'explicit' language. This NGO, led by urban-educated upper-class activists and funded by the MacArthur Foundation, ran afoul of local sentiments as mobilized by the Bharatiya Janata Party activist. This controversy shows also that the issue of representation (whose concerns do NGOs voice?) needs to be examined more carefully. The belief that NGOs represent the view of vulnerable social groups, or are

sympathetic and empathetic towards them, a belief that has been used to justify the greater reliance on NGOs for development, needs closer scrutiny.

8.7 SUMMING UP

NGOs have been around for quite some time and they are likely to remain with us in the foreseeable future. Systematic studies are required to say anything with confidence about them. In the absence of such studies, our understanding of NGOs will remain vague, superficial and hazy. Sociologists of organizations, political sociologists and sociologists of development all need to pay serious attention to them. Such a cumulative effort will enable us not only to understand NGOs but also their contribution to development and social change.

8.8 GLOSSARY

Good Governance: Good governance is an indeterminate term used in development literature to describe how public institutions conduct public affairs and manage public resources in order to guarantee the realization of human rights. The concept of "good governance" often emerges as a model to compare ineffective economies or political bodies with viable economies and political bodies.

Participatory Management: Participatory management is the practice of empowering people and other stakeholders to participate in organizational decision making.

8.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

1. Just as there are many definitions of NGOs, there are several classifications too. Ghanshyam Shah and H.R. Chaturvedi divide NGOs into three main categories: techno-managerial, reformist and radical. Indira Hirway classifies NGOs in Gujarat into welfare-oriented (including health and education) development organization and empowering NGOs. Sudarshan Iyengar classifies NGOs in Gujarat into four categories: Gandhian, service delivery organizations, professional organizations and mobilization organizations. D.C. Korten distinguishes three generations of NGOs: the first, committed to relief and welfare; a second, attending to small-scale, local development projects; and a third, consisting of community organizations interested in building coalitions. C. Elliot has outlined a similar typology of NGOs based on distinctions among charity, development and empowerment work.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

1. NGOs often seem to indulge in double standards. When criticizing state structures, they plead for openness, transparency and democratic participation. However, many of them do not seem to observe these norms in their own functioning. Crucial decisions are often taken at the top by the senior leaders without any scope for ordinary workers to participate in decision-making deliberations. The leaders are most reluctant to openly discuss the matters relating to funding. They talk enthusiastically

about the current and future programmes but not about the sources and quantum of funding.

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8.11 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTIONS AND PRACTICE

1. Explain the role of NGOs in Development process.
2. Critically evaluate the performance of NGOs.
3. Does the growing number of NGOs reflect the failure of state machinery?
Substantiate your arguments with suitable example.
4. Analyze the role of NGOs in women empowerment.

UNIT: 9 CHANGING FACETS OF VOLUNTARY SECTOR (NGOS, CBOS)

Structure

9.1 Introduction

9.2 Objectives

9.3 Development Planning

9.3.1 Models of Development

9.4 The Voluntary Sector

9.4.1 Definition and Concept

9.4.2 Characteristics of Voluntary Sector

9.4.3 Typologies of Voluntary Organizations

9.4.4 Challenges and Limitations of NGOs

9.5 The Contemporary Development Scenario

9.5.1 Shift from Charity to Development Perspective

9.5.2 Role of NGOs in the Contemporary Scenario

9.5.2 Scope of NGOs in the Contemporary Scenario

9.6 Changing facet of Voluntary Sector

9.7 Summing Up

9.8 Glossary

9.9 Answers to Check Your Progress Exercises

9.10 References

9.11 Questions for Reflections and Practice

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Development is a multi-dimensional process involving reorganization and reorientation of entire economic and social system.

Development is the process of improving the quality of all human lives with three important aspects. These are:

- Raising people's living levels, i.e., incomes and consumption, levels of food, medical services and education.
- Creating conditions conducive to the growth of people's self-esteem through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions which promote human dignity and respect.
- Increasing people's freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choice variables i.e., varieties of goods and services.

In this Unit we will discuss how development brought out with the help of voluntary organizations.

9.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- Define the concept of voluntary sector and explain its characteristics and role;
- Analyze the shift in development perspective; and
- Examine the scope of NGOs in contemporary scenario.

9.3 THE DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

In India, social welfare sector remained by and large neglected due to the long spell of foreign rule. In the post-independence era, when The Indian Constitution was drafted, a number of provisions were brought in for the social welfare of communities and people. As a result, the Preamble of the Constitution aims at assuring social, economic and political justice to the people and the Directive Principles commit the nation to be a welfare state. The interests of both individual and the state are being protected with mixed pattern of the economy which comprises both private and public sectors.

9.3.1 Models of Development

The history of international development can be periodized in terms of shifts in development thought, politics and practice over time. Being with the establishment of the Breton Woods Institutions after World War II, development programmers of governments in South and of international organizations and aid agencies in the North have navigated a constantly changing course over the years as following:

- During 1950s and 1960s, emphasis was laid on large scale infrastructure , industry and agriculture,
- In the 1970s, there was basic needs focus on individuals and families
- In the 1980,s, emphasis shifted to participation , sustainable development , and gender equity
- More recently, the attention shifted to issues of economic liberalization and civil-society.

Today at the outset of 21st century, the top 20 percent humanity captures 86 percent of all income; the bottom 20 percent has only 1.3 percent...While the North-South differential was about 30:1 in 1965, it is now 70:1 and rising [Susan George, Oxford Today II,No-3 [1999].

India being one of the emerging powers of the world has done all round progress since last 6 decades of its existence. These developments have been appreciated globally. But at the same time, it is an open secret that by all estimates, 1/3 of entire Indian population lives below the poverty line. Since India has adopted democracy as a mode of governance and instead of police, state has preferred the concept of 'welfare state', therefore it is the moral duty of the successive governments to provide basic amenities to all of its populace with inclusive context for the poorest of the poor. India has accepted planning process since its inception as the guiding regulator of its developmental process and till now the same is working. The Planning process has been borrowed from the Russian model by the founding fathers of India.

Since last six decades of the implementation of planning process, it is now established that it has not been able to address the genuine grievances of the deprived people. Non-Governmental Organizations or Voluntary sector has emerged in India in a coherent way only in later part of 1970,s and early part of 1980s. Due to the less achieved goal of the desired targets it has been felt that involvement of the voluntary sector is badly required. Several leading organizations of the voluntary industry took this opportunity as the challenge and took a gamut of positive steps for the implementation of the desired developmental goals of the government. For an example Sadguru and AKRSP, founded in 1974 and 1983, respectively, have been pioneers in natural resource management in India and are ranked amongst the older and more established NGOs in this field. Given that the entire international development sector is itself barely fifty years old, Sadguru,s 35 years history span might be termed the history of modern development.

NGOs in India are extremely varied in terms of size , activity , and philosophy. Although development as an international industry is relatively young, development within different regional and local contexts predates the 1940,s. In the Indian Sub-Continent , for example , Gandhian constructive work activities were common in the 1920,s and the 1930,s. Gandhi insisted that without social and economic development , a society could not be stable. According to Gandhi, the parameter of the development process is the empowerment of the poorest of the poor. Gandhi did not confine himself on lip services but implemented these guiding principles even during the independence movement.

[Alliband , Terry, [1983] , Catalyst of Development ;Voluntary Agencies in India , Hartford, Connecticut ;Kumarian Press]

In due course of time due to a gamut of factors exclusively due to globalization, development for the democratic countries have become their lifeline and they cannot excuse on any ground due to the open window of international media [both electronic and print]. Almost coincidently to the start of the globalization process, the United Nations had accepted Right to Development as one of the basic tenets of the modern regime of international human rights in 1986. Earlier only civil and political rights were important but with the passage of this convention, it has become necessary for the member states of the United States system to implement it. India has already signed on this convention and is now committed to implement it in its letter and spirit.

It has been felt recently that only government machinery is not enough to ensure the concept of sustainable development under which every citizen of the country could get basic amenities. In recent years inclusion has been adopted as important instruments of the development process. This agenda could be really

fulfilled only when we will be able to establish good governance. The concept of good governance is however very old and one could find it into the Arthashastra of Kautilya but even today, *Enlightened Modernism* it is equally important for the realization of genuine and participatory democracy. Voluntary sector has done massive work into the remote areas of the country, which remained backward despite progress into urban sector therefore their expertise needs to be incorporated into the planning process. In these changing priorities of the development process, the government has given adequate space to the voluntary sector into the planning process and even in its implementation. Currently 11th five year plan [2007-2012] is under progress and during the formation of this plan; the government has given adequate representation to the voluntary sector. In the prevailing contemporary international and domestic scenario, without active involvement of the voluntary sector, the real concept of sustainable development can not be ensured. It is a positive development that government of India has accepted this reality and is using the expertise of the voluntary sector into the process of development. There is a need to sustain this process and even more active participation of the voluntary sector into the formation as well as implementation of the planning process.

9.4 THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

The voluntary sector has come into being after a lot of changes in the much prevalent traditional practice of charity or philanthropy. It operates through not-for-profit organizations, NGOs, which in India have consolidated their base from the social movements. Hence, they have internalized values of informal functioning, non-hierarchical way of team work and less fear of the 'unknown'.

9.4.1 Definition and Concept

In the Development parlance comes the not-for-profit sector, which is often called the third sector that has come to exist along side with the public and private sectors in the economy. This sector is characterized by growth and development of independent organizations, called non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

In its broadest sense, the term "Nongovernment organization" refers to organizations (i) not based in government; and (ii) not created to earn profit (Asian Development Bank).

NGOs have arisen out of a need to work *in and for* the community in the areas where no governmental or any kind of philanthropic interventions has been able to reach. In other words, NGOs have filled the widely existing gap between the growing and diversified needs of a vast majority of population at the grassroots and the facilities and services that they need to have an access to.

"NGOs may be called as a product of the perceived and demonstrated inadequacies of the state-tied traditional model of development partnership. The need for NGOs and the potential they have in mitigating the problem arising from this inadequacy is evident yet, the NGOs have emerged as a better alternative in tackling some of the basic issues facing human kind today". (Singh, R.K. :2003).

9.4.2 Characteristics of Voluntary Sector

The voluntary sector is premised on non-commercial interests and works on the following premises:

- Reaching out to the community through an insider's approach.
- Improving quality of life of the community.
- Redefining social outreach work in line with broader development objectives.

NGOs, particularly those operating at the field level, are especially known by their ability to:

- form close linkages with local communities;
- engender community ownership;
- participate in development efforts;
- Quickly respond to new circumstances;
- experiment with innovative approaches;
- identify emerging issues;
- identify and express beneficiary views that otherwise might not be heard; through consultative and participatory approaches;
- build bridges between people and communities on one side, and governments, development institutions, and donors and development agencies on the other; and
- frequently represent issues and views important in the dynamics of the development process through advocacy.

9.4.3 Typologies of Voluntary Organizations

A wide range of organizations can be regarded as developmental NGOs. These groups vary significantly according to philosophy, purpose, expertise, program approach, and scope of activities.

Important distinctions can be drawn with regard to:

- the functional roles of different types of NGOs;
- the differing roles of NGOs on the continuum of NGOs from the local level, to the national level, and to the regional and international levels; and
- the operational orientations and approaches of different kinds of NGOs.

While different kinds of NGOs may perform distinctly different roles and functions, a single NGO can also assume several roles and functions. For example, a particular NGO

may be implementing welfare programs, taking up community issues, conducting action research etc.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. List the characteristics of NGO.

Operational/Advocacy NGOs:

Operational NGOs can be regarded as NGOs whose primary areas of activity are directed toward the contribution or delivery of development or welfare services, including emergency relief, and environmental protection and management. Reflecting the range of issues and interests that have emerged in development and welfare and in relation to the environment, operational NGOs display a range of programs, organizational structures, operational orientations, and areas of operation, both program-related and geographical.

Operational NGOs exist at the local or community level, district and national levels, and regional and international levels.

Advocacy NGOs can be regarded as NGOs whose primary orientation is toward the advocacy of policies or actions that address specific concerns, points of view, or interests. In the context of development, advocacy NGOs work to influence the policies and practices of governments, development institutions such as the Bank, other actors in the development arena, and the public. Advocacy NGOs more often exist at national and international levels. While often working individually, advocacy NGOs increasingly are forming national and international networks and consortia that link groups with parallel or convergent interests. Most often, advocacy NGOs exist to serve as a voice that they consider otherwise would not be heard in social, economic, and political processes.

Despite differentiations between operational and advocacy NGOs, in many cases it may not be possible to characterize an NGO entirely as operational or advocacy. Some operational NGOs do focus entirely on service delivery and do not possess an analytical or advocacy base; some advocacy NGOs are oriented entirely toward activities such as policy analysis and advocacy of development processes. However, most NGOs are involved in a mix of activities.

Level of Operations

Among operational NGOs, distinction may be made as per their level of operations;

- **International-level NGOs**, often headquartered in developed countries;
- **National-level NGOs**, whose orientations are towards issues and interests in the countries in which they are based; and
- **Local-level or Community-based NGOs** that generally exist to address concerns in relatively localized geographical areas. NGOs operating at the community level often reflect memberships comprising individuals who have come together to address

immediate community-based interests. While often possessing limited technical or implementation capacity, community-level NGOs can be especially significant in projects that require identification of local needs or direct beneficiary participation.

NGOs with greater operational capacity can play larger roles, for example, in the identification, design, and implementation of projects or components of projects, or in consultations leading toward policy and program development.

NGOs operating at the national and international levels often have important technical and organizational capacities. In some cases, larger and more capable NGOs can serve as intermediaries between governments, development agencies, and other NGOs, channeling information, resources, and technical support. Some international NGOs, and some national NGOs, have become capable in a number of roles, including provision of donor support to smaller NGOs. NGOs at every level increasingly are cooperating and collaborating in networks and consortia, sectorally and at the national and international levels.

9.4.4 Challenges and Limitations of NGOs

NGOs are formed by a group of people tied together with common aims and objectives. These are independent organizations with a specific agenda and line of action. These organisations are not a magic wand which when moved can remove all the anomalies from the community. Though these organizations not only complement the role of government but also fight the prevailing systemic inadequacies in their own right, they themselves may suffer for reasons like access to limited resources and facilities to work with.

NGOs work amidst the most challenging situations which may range from drought areas, remotest regions or war torn conflict areas. They are most often confronted with the following challenges:

- **Element of Dependence:** NGOs have no funds of their own. They are completely dependent on outside resources which may either come from the government,

corporate, philanthropic individuals or the civil society at large. This element of dependence makes 'merciful' the position of NGOs and, many a times, their agendas become donor driven. The weak financial base and cessation of funds from outside sources gives uncertainty and irregularity to NGOs work and many innovative and good initiatives taken by them cease to take off at an appropriate time.

- **Lack of technical capacity:** NGOs by and large suffer from lack of technical expertise and a weak resource base. They do not have an access to human and other resources which leads to inappropriate planning and faulty implementation of development programs. Limited managerial and organizational capacities restrict their role and activities in the development sector.
- **The Lost Voice:** Except for the large and accomplished NGOs, the voice of small organizations very often goes unheard by the planning authorities. Their grassroots experiences are unfortunately not assimilated in the process of development planning for the nation.
- **Status and Reputation:** NGOs are often considered as money fetching machines which gather money from all possible sources and enjoy the patronage under charity and philanthropy. With a growing role and scope of NGOs in the development sector, vested interests have also infiltrated the sector. In the process, genuine organizations with a genuine work appeal are likely to get a tainted image and reputation.
- **Isolation and neglect:** NGOs sometimes may have limited strategic perspectives and weak linkages with other actors in development. In some countries, the relationship between NGOs and government may involve political, legal, ideological, and administrative constraints. Because of their voluntary nature, there may be questions regarding the legitimacy, accountability, and credibility of NGOs and their claims as to mandate and constituencies represented. Questions sometimes arise concerning the

motivations and objectives of NGOs, and the degree of accountability NGOs accept for the ultimate impact of policies and positions they advocate.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. What are the shortcomings of NGOs?

9.5 THE CONTEMPORARY DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

The social sector has been traditionally characterized by charity or philanthropy. The provision of basic services and facilities to the community was considered a charitable cause. With change in approach to that of Basic Rights, the social sector is rapidly becoming the Development sector which considers the overall improvement in the community's quality of life based on Rights approach.

9.5.1 Shift from Charity to Development Perspective

In a traditional way, development was confined as the charity by the state towards the people. In democracy, people are the focal attention and all well-being efforts made by the state were perceived by the angle of charity. But the essence of democracy is against this notion and even communist China didn't have this version of development.

In democracy, people are the central point and it is the moral duty of this version of the state to fulfil the basic aspirations of the people. These rights were not granted by the state to the people but people deserve those rights because they are entitled for that as a human being. Being the human being, people are availing those rights from the nature therefore, in its earlier version of the people's rights it was called as natural rights. Initially after the end of the Second World War, when the majority of colonial state emerged as independent countries of the world system, they took development as charity from the state to the people but with the due process of time, this context has changed in a radical manner.

It is the era of globalisation where the entire world has become closer to each other and the concept of global village has gained new currencies. Since 1986 with the passage of the United Nations Declaration of the Right to the Development, it has become mandatory for all states to implement social and economic rights of the people as the core of the human rights. After the passage of this convention, it has been widely felt that without ensuring economic empowerment, the real aims and objectives of the concept of welfare state could not be achieved.

In the age of transparent world even the context and meaning of the development has changed in a radical manner. Now development means ensuring human security. Discourses on human security have brought together issues of human dignity, rights and well being in a comprehensive way. They span a variety of disciplines such as security studies and

international relations, international law and organisations, sociology and cultural politics of rights, translational sociology and economics of human development. Gender issues, although generally present in such discourses, have been approached in a fragmented manner.

A consolidation of research findings and theoretical debates on human security from feminist perspectives is urgently needed to ensure effective incorporation of gender concerns in training, research and policy intervention.

Gender component has emerged as a focal point of development in recent years due to the prevailing fact that they constitute half the population and without incorporating them into the developmental process, the real concept of sustainable development could not be achieved. Nobel Laureate, Amartya Sen has outlined that the parameter of the success of development in any society could be measured with the fact that how far it has provided due space for the gender empowerment.

The concept of human security as an evolving concept expresses a collective search among communities of policy-makers, academic institutions and civic organisations for such ethical and theoretical reasoning as will bring security issues into a new focus. Significant in this endeavour is the ability to comprehend and respond to threats --- to human life and dignity—which are an outcome of the interplay between global forces and local structures. The United Nations Commission on Human Security co-chaired by Amartya Sen and Sadako Ogata was mandated in 2001 to provide answers to ways of achieving the Millennium Development Goals so as to attain freedom from fear and freedom from want for the humankind. The Declaration was endorsed in 2000 by some 180 states. Human security means integrating Human Rights, Human Development and Human Security as three facets of a common base for the protection of human life and dignity as enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [UDHR] and the subsequent human rights treaties.

The failure of development directed by the state can be attributed to the inefficiency of the government, institutions and people in charge of implementing all those efforts. This task has provided an ample opportunity to the voluntary sector to play a serious role in development. Due to these prevailing realities in recent years, non-governmental organisations have projected an increasingly strong presence. They can no longer be characterised simply as volunteer organisations supporting the efforts of developing countries to develop; they are also emerging as important actors in the realm of international politics, and have demonstrated the potential to shake even the foundations of the international economic order. They have emerged as the leading harbinger for the restoration of justice based world economic order. Equally they are raking up the issue of global warming; which has emerged as the biggest threat for the survival of the humanity. Changing dynamics of development at the outset of 21st century insisted that good governance and strengthening of delivery mechanisms have been extremely important for the realisation for the concept of development. Good governance is required because it strengthens the genuine demand of the people and thus cementing the regime of rule of law and in a coherent method ensuring development in its entirety. In India and other third world countries, the successive governments have managed a huge amount for the development but the earmarked goals could not be achieved due to the prevailing hazards like corruption, red-tapism etc. Strong governance will be the key for strengthening development in such cases.

In India, 1/3 of the population still lives under the poverty line. However it is still a debate as how to alleviate poverty! In this regard two important interrelated drivers of increased inequality and social exclusion have led not only to new approaches but also to the new understanding that poverty must be addressed in both North and the South. The increase in inequality within and between countries has been cited as a major problem by unlikely sources, for an example, the IMF and *The Economist* – neither of which is noted for liberal

inclinations. In a paper written for the *IMF's World Economic Outlook*, Nicholas Crafts point to the startling growth in inequality as rich nations [and the rich within them] have grown richer while poor countries [and the poor within them] have grown poorer. “ Income in Mozambique fell from \$ 1,000 [per capita] a year in 1950 to \$ 8,50 in 1990, while in America growth went from \$ 10,000 [per capita] to \$ 24,000 [all in 1990 prices]” [Marc, Lindenberg & Coralie Bryant [eds.] 2001]. According to the World Bank the rapid increase in inequality and poverty is the fundamental problem of our times.

In India, the concept of social inclusion insisted by Ambedkar needs to be incorporated for the implementation of developmental goals. In general, social inclusion includes minorities, especially when discrimination excludes them from full participation in the life and benefits of the community. Yet prejudices are not the only factor within the focus of social exclusion. There are those who are excluded from full economic and social participation for a variety of reasons – joblessness, racism, drugs, alcohol, disabilities or religious / cultural differences. These kinds of differences are quite frequent in India therefore the government has adopted the inclusive mode of development for redressing the genuine grievances of all these varieties of deprived people. The number of poor people of India is equivalent to the number of entire European or American population therefore without their incorporation into mainstreaming process of development; India can not achieve the desired goal of sustainable development. Government is working in this direction but we know that government lacks empirical outputs to strengthen this process therefore it has taken the support of the voluntary sector to ensure this mode of development, which has the possibility to ensure social inclusion.

9.5.2 Role of NGOs in the Contemporary Scenario

In contemporary scenario, NGOs have come up in all possible areas be it urban slums, rural villages, tribal areas or underdeveloped islands. The issues addressed by NGOs are as wide as the areas of social concern such as environment, education, health, microfinance, sanitation, energy etc.

The role of NGOs today may be summarised as

"NGOs are voluntary social work organisations who render help to government and society for improvement of quality of life of people and also animals. From education to health to environment and to poverty alleviation, the scope of NGOs operational areas touch every part of life--- (O.P.Goel: 2004).

In other words, emergence of NGOs may be called to represent the 'new social movement' that has managed to strike roots among a cross-section of the people and also been able to shape the organisational set-up across the country. (V. Krishna Ananth: New Role for NGOs).

In tune with the rapidly changing times, NGOs have to work with the complex market forces and to professionalise their functioning; they are dissociating their agendas from that of the charitable organisations. They organise seminars, workshops and conferences to discuss and exchange their field experiences in a non-threatening atmosphere. They are moving towards office automation to facilitate their communication with other organisations all over the globe.

9.5.3 Scope of NGOs in the Contemporary Scenario

In the contemporary scenario, NGOs are performing multiple functions which may be slotted under various categories:

- **Social welfare:** The community well-being programs are initiated and implemented in the areas of health, education, environment etc. These programs may be self-funded by the group of persons who initiate an NGO and financial support may subsequently reach from various quarters. These programs may even be initiated in partnership with government, corporate or foreign funding agencies. Such programs are most often time bound and are essentially meant to improve the quality of life of community people. They may have a single aim or address various social issues with an integrated approach.

- **Advocacy:** NGOs spread awareness among people on various such issues which directly or indirectly affect their lives. The issues addressed may pertain to government functioning, state policies, social customs and practices, environmental degradation etc. It's the impact of advocacy that Right to Information Act (RTI) and Right to Education Act has come into being.

- **Action Research:** Several NGOs conduct independent research on social issues before conceptualising a social program for the community. The knowledge and information resulting from this kind of research brings about a set of indicators and basic areas of intervention required for a particular socio-cultural situation. The organisations also conduct research on behalf of other agencies who are interested in formulation and implementation of programs meant for social welfare. It was action research which emphasised the need to make our women economically independent if the issue of child labour has to be tackled.

- **Community Mobilisation:** Due to grassroots presence, NGOs have been able to mobilise people against wrong and unsuitable policies of the government

and other arenas. The best example may be drawn from Medha Patkar's led Narmada Bachao Andolan which built a popular movement involving several thousand ordinary people to raise their voice against their displacement due to a gigantic developmental project coming up in their geographical area.

In a way, NGOs have become people's voice in certain regions which safeguards the interests of community people. While bridging the gap between the community and the government, it often mediates on behalf of the people.

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. Examine the role of NGO in contemporary scenario.

9.6 THE CHANGING FACET OF VOLUNTARY SECTOR

In tune with the changing times, the basic fabric of voluntary sector is undergoing a change at many fronts (Patel,V., 2002:162) :

- **NGOs need to professionalise their functioning** so as to make a greater impact. Workshops, seminars, conferences in which studied presentations are made and field experiences are discussed in a non-threatening atmosphere, should become a regular feature of their functioning. Skills of rapid analysis of the situation, report writing, preparation of executive summary and statement of accounts should be the basic requisite for all NGOs.
- **Impact of office automation** on the functioning of the NGOs has been double edged. On the one hand, it has facilitated their communication and generated employment for an army of tele-workers. They have enabled the NGOs to establish rapport with the government organisations at the time of natural or man-made disasters. On the other, the spokespersons of NGOs are losing their skills of verbal expression, extempore presentations, debates and discussions due to their dependence on technology. The conflicting interests of teleworkers and field workers create war like situation in the office.
- **Interaction between NGOs and government organisations** has been full of tension because of differences in their sub-cultures. In contrast with a more egalitarian functioning of NGOs, the government organisations are used to blue prints and order from above. With a majority of their labour force belonging to the organised sector, government organisations use field reports, area studies and eye-witness accounts of investigative journalists for policy

planning. Now that both NGOs and government organisations have global connections, competition between them has ensured transparency, accountability and efficient functioning.

- **Induction of Scientists and Technocrats in the NGOs:**

Before launching any new campaign, advocacy programme or policy intervention, the NGOs have to undertake research in the specialised fields. This effort makes them work with professionals -Doctors, scientists, engineers, media persons and management experts. This interaction has changed the character of Indian NGOs as the workers in the organisations are forced to work beyond slogan mongering and giving fiery speeches. Importance of technical competency and scientific thinking is accepted by everyone in the organisation. Use of transparencies, video films, slide projectors and exhibitions has become organic part of the NGO study circles. Sometimes they are more equipped than the mainstream bodies working on the same issues.

- **NGO professionals working as Consultants of the mainstream bodies:**

NGO professionals who are up-to-date in their database and effective in verbal conversation are accepted by the mainstream bodies as consultants. This gives intellectual freedom and scope for experimentation to the professionals and at the same time, the mainstream bodies get ready made pool of knowledge from the experts for their think tank.

- **Civil societies and the NGOs:**

In western and southern states of India, NGOs are legitimised by the civil societies. Development media and regional language television channels, print

media have played a major role in enhancing credibility of NGOs in the eyes of the masses. Visibility of NGOs activities has had a mixed response from the community. While the programmes concerning public health, education and employment generation are accepted by the community, the social reform agenda (fight against child marriage, child labour and domestic violence) meets with resistance from vested interests. NGOs in such situations have to depend on moral and material support from long distance friends. Day to day survival struggle in the midst of social boycott created by the bullies makes NGO functioning quite challenging.

- **State machinery and NGOs:**

NGOs functioning for more than two decades have established equilibrium with the state machinery. NGOs collaborating with the government apparatus are dealing with major policy issues and using their credibility for area development. Some NGO activists have become politicians, academicians and decision makers with the government bodies and international organisations.

- **Task force of the Crorepati NGOs:**

When the NGOs were poor the upper section of the society either ignored them or gave them awards. Now they are perceived as competing entrepreneurs. Hence it is increasingly difficult for them to take up development agenda that would ensure better quality of life to the have-nots. Moreover, due to high stakes of these organisations, fund-raising becomes 'be all and end all' **of their existence.**

- **Task force of the Lakh Pati NGOs:**

In this case, stakes are not too high, goals are limited and boundaries are well defined. They face comparatively less competition. Their agenda is flexible and

they face no threat from vested interests which are economically more powerful than them. They also get easy legitimacy from the local self government bodies, panchayati raj institutions and the state secretariat. But in the absence of self-sustaining income-generating activities, many of them have to be on the continuous lookout of project funds, endowment funds and corpus funds.

- **Political parties and safety for community workers:**

There is a growing concern from the NGOs and human rights organisations about safety of community workers, investigative journalists, documentary film makers and street theatre actors in response to harassment by the political parties.

- **Financial Institutions and NGOs:**

In response to Development debate over the last decade, most of the financial institutions have started supporting projects of the NGOs. Guidelines of the major financial institutions include development oriented programmes in their list of priorities.

9.7 SUMMING UP

In the contemporary scenario, the voluntary sector occupies a very significant place in all facets of development sector. It plays an active role in all the areas such as community well being, advocacy of social issues, mobilisation of community to accommodate broader outlooks and perspectives, influence policy making and legislation through action research etc. It fills the gap between government's planning and programme implementation in the field. It also acts as a watchdog for social evils like child labour or domestic violence and contributes to formulating public opinion against the same. It works closely with the civil

society and represents its viewpoints through social awareness drives with community participation. The voluntary sector may take up local issues at the national at international forums and form consensus over localized solutions with global mandate. Their networking with regional and global organisations is a useful tool for advocacy at international forums. This facilitates mobilising opinions over common issues and drawing global policies to be followed by all. The issues address may be as wide as child labour or climate change. NGOs are now set to take major advantage of communication revolution, information technology and modern managerial practices with the perspective of social justice, distributive justice and gender justice.

9.8 GLOSSARY

The Directive Principles of State Policy: The Directive Principles of State Policy is guidelines to the central and state governments of India, to be kept in mind while framing laws and policies. These provisions, contained in Part IV of the Constitution of India, are not enforceable by any court, but the principles laid down therein are considered fundamental in the governance of the country, making it the duty of the State to apply these principles in making laws to establish a just society in the country. The principles have been inspired by the Directive Principles given in the Constitution of Ireland and also by the principles of Gandhian ideology and relate to social justice, economic welfare, foreign policy, and legal and administrative matters.

9.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

- form close linkages with local communities;
- engender community ownership;
- participate in development efforts;
- Quickly respond to new circumstances;
- experiment with innovative approaches;
- identify emerging issues;
- identify and express beneficiary views that otherwise might not be heard; through consultative and participatory approaches;
- build bridges between people and communities on one side, and governments, development institutions, and donors and development agencies on the other; and
- frequently represent issues and views important in the dynamics of the development process through advocacy.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Element of Dependence

Lack of technical capacity

The Lost Voice

Status and Reputation

Isolation and neglect

Check Your Progress Exercise 3

Social welfare

Advocacy

Action research

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9.11 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND PRACTICE

1. What do you understand by the term Voluntary sector?
2. Discuss, “There is a shift from Charity to Development paradigm.
3. What are the characteristics of an NGO? How are they relevant in the contemporary scenario?
4. Comment on “NGOs mitigate human suffering!”. Discuss with the help of examples of two contemporary NGOs.

UNIT: 10 SERVICE DELIVERY MECHANISM

Structure

10.1 Introduction

10.2 Objectives

10.3 Concept of Service Delivery Mechanism

10.3.1 Notion of Institution and Service Delivery

10.4 Outline of the Institutional Models and their Role in Service Delivery

10.4.1 Traditional Model

10.4.2 The Corporate Model

10.4.3 The Commercial Contractual Model

10.4.4 The ‘Entrepreneurial’ or Strategic Management Model

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10.1 INTRODUCTION

In response to the needs of the citizens, governments at various levels have been the major providers of basic public services. In a country like India, cutting across ethnic, linguistic, geographical, resource endowments, climate and economic development, it is hard to conceive how the governments at different level manage delivery of services. A robust decentralized system is the critical core of India's strength in delivery of services in close to six hundred districts in India.

The state and the local government in India devote a major part of their budget for public services. The nature and scale economies of most public services are such that

government has a virtual monopoly in the delivery of services. The diversity of public services and difficulties in tracking their delivery are some of the reasons, why the problems of public service access, productivity and quality have received only limited attention.

A closer scrutiny at the service delivery mechanism in India shows that delivery of services often fails the poor and the marginalized. The failure is generally in terms of – access, quantity and quality. The root cause of failing service delivery can be attributed in four ways.

- The budgetary expenditure on social services typically addresses the need of the non-poor
- Allocation on social expenditure does not reach the frontline service provider
- In-effective service delivery by service providers
- Lack of demand from the poor and the marginalized

10.2 OBJECTIVES

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- Describe service delivery mechanism as a concept;
- Explain institutional aspects in service delivery;
- Analyze the factors involved in inefficient delivery of services; and
- Comprehend the factors responsible for effective service delivery.

10.3 CONCEPT OF SERVICE DELIVERY MECHANISM

Service delivery mechanism is a tool that offers services for which there is broad consensus that some type of government action is necessary, desirable, and/ or inevitable. They include essential functions ranging from ensuring law and order to development programs with a strong rationale for public sector involvement -- such as irrigation, sanitation, improved water supply, and components of education and health.

10.3.1 Notion of Institution and Service Delivery

Local Government is the sphere closest to the public at which the delivery of services takes place. The manner in which this is done depends largely on a local authority's institutional make-up (organizational design and structure) which generally determines the way it is managed.

Although the institutional structures of local authorities differ, global economic changes and the evolution of information technology have to a large extent has altered the way the services are delivered. However, populist schemes, and political motives have also influenced the manner in which the service delivery system has been structured.

10.4 OUTLINE OF THE INSTITUTIONAL MODELS AND THEIR ROLE IN SERVICE DELIVERY

In this section you will study about the different models of service delivery mechanism

10.4.1 The Traditional Model

The traditional model of service delivery is based on strong welfarist objectives and is typical of a large bureaucracy. This type of local authority organization flourished in the UK from the Post-World War II period until the early 1970s (Benington and Hartley 1994:15). In this model, local authorities are seen primarily as vehicles for the delivery of state services according to standards set by national government. In other words, the local authority is seen as the sole agent responsible to meet the development needs of its constituents. The model assumes stability, homogeneity and continuity in society. Its operation is based on long-term rigid plans which are 'scientifically' determined and which do not allow for management flexibility which is important in the planning and implementation of projects (Wooldridge and Cranko 1994:4).

10.4.2 The Corporate Model

The institutional model is very much influenced by management practices in the private sector. It gained prominence in government in the early 1970s due to a desire for reform (of the traditional welfarist model) and the belief that (as in industry) technology, amalgamations and a larger scale of production can improve the efficiency of the provision of local services (Goldsmith 1993).

The model is characterized by the centralization of political and managerial power behind corporate rather than departmental objectives. It remains strongly hierarchical (although some layers of the pyramid may be merged for rationalization purposes). For

example, political power is concentrated in a single committee which decides corporate priorities and sets the policy and financial guidelines for each department and committee.

10.4 3 The Commercial Contractual Model

The commercial contractual model aims to reduce corporatism, public expenditure and the powers of local government by introducing quasi-market relationships and commercial business principles into local authority management (Goldsmith 1993; Benington and Hartley: 1994). The model reduces the number of departments and committees within a local authority to a bare minimum since its main argument is not so much for the council to provide services, but to decide upon contractual and competitive tendering requirements (Benington and Hartley 1994). It allows for the arrangement of the local authority into either a purchaser or provider of services, and the creation of business units and devolved cost centres which compete both with internal and external markets (Benington and Hartley 1994).

10.4.4 The ‘Entrepreneurial’ or Strategic Management Model

The entrepreneurial or strategic management model differs from the contractual model in, but in this marketization and the contracting out of services is a necessity rather than an option. As such, it supports the loosening of bureaucratic rigidities and the devolution of decision making power (Wooldridge and Cranko 1994:7). It endorses the view that the role of government in service provision should be minimal and not be its core business. Rather, governments’ role is to be a strategic manager and a regulator of services based on the needs of its constituents. In this concept, government is also seen as individual customers. (Haftack

1997:12). In this model, management structure is drastically rationalized. (Hafteck 1997:12). Departments are re-structured and rationalized under key themes (e.g. environment and development) and operational services are turned into business units or quasi-autonomous agencies (Benington and Hartley 1994:17). Decision making is based upon two main centres of power: a strategic policy making and planning body at the corporate centre of the local authority (often involving close joint working between a core group of councillors and executive officers) and a frontline organization (often involving devolved decision making and decentralized operations) (Benington and Hartley 1994:17). In this model, one thing is implicit that it gives public service workers more delegation of authority and greater respect for their expertise and experience.

10.4.5 The New Public Administration Model

The New Public Administration model is based on the assumption that a bureaucratic culture is best suitable for governance, because it could be used effectively through co-operation with other public agencies. This model seeks to strengthen the hand of the state in public service on the premise that entrepreneurial approaches are inadequate for managing the public sector. The model argues this point on the grounds that the public and private sectors are two unique entities (in terms of their objective and agenda) and hence need to be managed differently. However, it does not advocate rejecting the private sector. Rather, it seeks to involve the private sector through market testing and the contracting out of services through various forms of public-private partnerships (Hafteck 1997:12). Social equity is central to this model since it sees the local authority as an agent committed to the effective and equitable provision of public services (Hafteck 1997:11).

Although still hierarchically structured, this model places particular emphasis on authority and leadership in the management of projects, and on inter-departmental cooperation. In this structure, communication and interaction is not only vertical but horizontal and more integrated. This can also mean the rationalisation of departments and political committees by modifying and making more optimal use of already established systems through streamlining, restructuring and re-grouping of service units (Hafteck 1997:11). Furthermore, the model also allows for community and business interest to be represented in special departmental forums.

10.4.6 The Governance Model

The governance model has emerged in the 1990s and seeks to strengthen the engagement of civil society with government, while acknowledging that the market has a role to play in supporting local authority objectives. This model therefore seeks to combine positive aspects of both the New Public Administration and the Entrepreneurial models even if they may not be compatible from a practical perspective (e.g. the promotion of competition and the attainment of social equity at the same time) (Hafteck 1997). While, combining the best principles of the New Public Administration and entrepreneurial models this model supports the creation of forums (where civil society directly participates in policy making and implementation) and the creation of a strong strategic management committee comprising of politicians and officials.

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. Give an account on commercial contract model.

THE PEOPLE'S UNIVERSITY

10.5 ANALYSIS OF APPROACHES TO SERVICE DELIVERY

The Traditional Model

In this model, the service is delivered by a local authority, which is not customized, but is the result of mass production. In other words, services provided are of a standardised nature based on the 'one size fits all' concept. Because of the separation of departments in a highly hierarchical bureaucracy, there is little formal inter-departmental co-ordination at a lower level, since each has its own role to fulfil and its own programmes to develop (Hafteck 1997:9-10). In this model contact with the public is very much limited to lower-end workers at the base of the pyramidal structure. (Hafteck 1997:10).

Critics of the Traditional Model argue that its management and organisation style is not geared towards any kind of strategy. The model only works for an organisation that mass-produces standardised products. It is argued that this is inappropriate for a society where the

state is becoming increasingly differentiated, providing a wide range of services to an increasingly diverse population with diverse needs (Wooldridge and Cranko 1994).

The Corporate Model

The services delivered under the Corporate Model are more customised than in the traditional model in that geographical and product-based sub-divisions of local authority departments are common rather than the arrangement of departments into functional sub-units (Hafteck 1997:10). Inter-departmental co-ordination in terms of planning and implementing projects is very limited. Consultations with the users of services are organised on initiative from the local authority who decides what is best for them (Hafteck 1997: 10-11).

This model has been criticised for depoliticising local government by concentrating too much power in the hands of technocratic officials in high ranking positions, and for disempowering local councillors, pressure groups and the public (Benington 1976). Consequently, decisions about service delivery are divorced from the public since it is done by professional management elite. The danger of this is that public needs may not be correctly addressed because of a lack of consultation and participation.

The Commercial Contractual Model

In this model, non-core local authority services (such as refuse collection and disposal, recreation etc) are contracted out to the private sector or to management buy-outs (Benington and Hartley 1994:16). Local authority interaction with the end-user becomes more divorced in this model than in the Corporate Model as most of it occurs through lower-end contractor or workers of stand-alone business units. Proponents of the Commercial

Contractual Model argue that competition is good for the local authority since the spread of it to the provision of services will do an enormous amount to improve standards and efficiency.

Thus, the argument is that the local authority should not be a universal provider but rather an agent to encourage diversity and alternatives, with elements of competition between different service providers (Hambleton 1990). It is also argued that contracting-out leads to an increased level of versatility and effectiveness because of active product development and flexibility (Martin 1996).

The model has been criticised for its pre-occupation with price as the main measure of public service, as the commercial contract is the main form of transaction and accountability (Benington and Hartley:1994). Furthermore, each service is seen as a stand alone business unit with very little co-operation and collaboration with other services or areas of need. As a result of this, services may not necessarily be provided on an integrated and cost-effective basis.

The Entrepreneurial or Strategic Management Model

The main motto of this model is to satisfy demand based on customer choice. It places strong emphasis on service efficiency rather than effectiveness. Non-core services are contracted out through competitive tendering to the private sector or to business units. End-users are seen and treated primarily as individual customers and the interaction between them and the local authority is reduced to marketing exercises (quality sampling, customer surveys). The model has been criticized on the grounds that the values of individual satisfaction are judged to be more important than the values of achieving collective democratic consensus (Hafteck 1997:12). It is argued that the model's obsession to disengage local government from direct service provision goes contrary to what local government should stand for (i.e. to ensure the collective well-being of all its citizens). It is therefore

incapable of advocating on behalf of the socially and economically marginalized (Wooldridge and Cranko 1994:7). As a result of this, the model falls short on ensuring equity, fairness and social cohesion. Because the local authority defines itself as no longer being the sole agent who delivers services, it is forced to act as a broker in an arena where it has limited ability to set the terms on which agreements are negotiated (Wooldridge and Cranko 1994:7). As the model is obsessed with increasing the role of the private sector in service delivery, it is argued that when there is little or no profit to be generated from services provided, the private sector becomes disinterested and ineffective, which often results in a poorer quality of service. Social equity and the involvement of civil society is left to occur through trickle-down

mechanisms and through “spillover” effects.

The New Public Administration Model

In this institutional model, a more integrated approach to the management and political structure helps to ensure greater effectiveness in decision making and a lesser turnaround time for decisions to be implemented. It is therefore designed to place greater emphasis on service delivery, which it still sees as a core responsibility of the local authority. However, it does not ignore the role of the private or not-for-profit sector in service provision. Rather, it chooses to engage the private and not-for-profit sector on condition that equality in public services is not traded off for short-term profit motives. Because it allows for greater interaction and stakeholder participation, the model sees the local public as informed and active citizens participating in the local authority’s affairs. It also places particular emphasis on public sector collaboration in its quest for service efficiency. The

participation of worker and citizen in decision-making about service delivery and a strong stance on social equity are seen as key strengths of this model.

The Governance Model

Critiques of this model argue that the partial devolution of service delivery responsibilities to private and non-profit sectors may imply considerable short and long term investments for the local authority (e.g. in time and training), both within the local authority and outside, in civil society. However, the positive about the model is that it allows for public participation in planning and decision making hence ensuring that the public is with the service delivery process right from the start. This minimizes any potential future problems related to the nature of services that are provided.

10.6 FACTORS IN INEFFICIENT SERVICE DELIVERY

10.6.1 Access

Access to basic services continues to be an issue, although at different levels for health, education, water and sanitation. In this context, we see three primary barriers to access.

First, there is the issue of the availability of physical infrastructure at a reasonable distance, a problem that is mostly confined to remote rural regions. With the gradual expansion of services and increase in spending in social sector spending, most people have access to a wide variety of services. Second, there is the problem of affordability of services for the poor.

Even when access to services is free, utilization involves costs. Third, there is the issue of

tackling social exclusion – ensuring that institutions and communities do not engage in practices that deliberately exclude access for particular groups. The groups that are excluded vary from country to country depending upon institutional and social factors. In India, caste-based exclusion dominates, whereas in Nepal, exclusion is largely based on spatial and social inequalities. In most contexts, women are responsible for the collection of water, women tend to use health services on a more continuous basis, and there are greater cultural and social barriers for girls to attend schools. Women are adversely affected by the poor design of services .

10.6.2 Quality

Publicly provided basic services are of poor quality. There seem to be three key reasons for this. First, the networks of facilities often lack basic, essential equipment and supplies. Stories abound of schools without books and materials and health posts without drugs or examination equipment. Sometimes, corruption is the culprit; for example, when drugs have been diverted for sale privately. In other cases, after the payment of staff salaries, there simply are no resources left for supplies. Second, existing facilities are frequently poorly maintained. When key equipment breaks down, it is often not repaired. The neglect of maintenance and repair has a political logic: it is easier and more attractive for governments to raise the capital costs of creating new facilities. Third, public health and education systems are often plagued by unmotivated and absent personnel. These basic services are labour intensive. Despite the existence of adequate numbers of professionals within countries, it is difficult to recruit staff to work in remote schools or clinics.

Absenteeism is high. One study of primary healthcare providers in Bangladesh found an absentee rate of 74 per cent . Motivation levels among staff are low. In addition, staff

members are paid low salaries with inadequate resources, leading them to develop private practice and use public institutions as a source of new clients. These proxies for quality can distort the incentives for providers and often lead to over-prescription and growth of expensive treatments. In the absence of clear indicators of quality, users become reluctant to pay for it, which can lead to a race to the bottom. In other cases it might be almost impossible for a layperson to ascertain quality, as is evident from the growing problem of the sale of counterfeit drugs. This is particularly of concern when the poor are paying for services in the private sector. While non-profit providers are more likely to be concerned with quality, systems of accountability are lacking to ensure appropriate standards. The lack of clarity of standards and regulation in both health and education is an issue that needs to be addressed.

10.6.3 Affordability and Sustainability

The sustainability of quality services at affordable levels is premised on a sound system of financing. There are some key issues related to financing that need to be addressed for sustainable and affordable health and education systems.

First, in some countries, there is simply inadequate public spending on basic services. For example, in Nepal and Bangladesh, *per capita* health expenditure is only US\$12. In Cambodia, the government spends only 3.2 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) *per capita* on primary education compared to 12.5 per cent in Thailand (World Bank 2004). Partly, the problem in some countries is that basic services are not adequately prioritised. In others, e.g. Bangladesh, tax takes are low, making it difficult for governments to devote additional spending to basic services without increasing tax revenues. Clearly in many contexts, significant additional

resources will be required in order to reach the poorest. Yet, if public services have been chronically under-funded, then it will take time before the results of additional resources will be seen. Second, the level of public expenditure also depends upon a broader understanding of the role of the state in the provision of services. User charges are expected to place health facilities on a sounder financial footing, increase incentives for staff to be responsive and generate accountability relationships among users and providers. However, there is a danger that user charges will price out certain sections of the population, particularly the poorest, from accessing services. Third, in those countries where the aggregate levels of expenditure seem adequate, resources frequently do not reach the poor. There is often bias in expenditure towards services that largely benefit the rich. For example, the education budget can be weighted towards tertiary education: in Nepal, 46 per cent of the spending on education is biased towards the richest fifth; and in India, the richest fifth receive three times the healthcare spending compared to the poorest fifth (World Bank 2004). There is also the problem of corruption: funds targeted for primary-level facilities never reach them. An audit of expenditures in Uganda found that only 13 per cent of the non-salary expenditure on primary education actually reached the schools (World Bank 2004).

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Note: i. Use the space given below to answer the questions.

ii. Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this Unit.

1. What are the factors responsible inefficient service delivery?

10.7 EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY

Decentralization is the desirable instrument to solve the problem of efficiency in service provision. Decentralization encompasses, at least theoretically, some advantages with respect to centralized service provision. Some of these are: (1) decentralised provision of services is more efficient in a context where there is heterogeneity of preferences. (2) competition and innovation in the provision of public services by local governments enhances efficiency; and (3) local authorities are directly accountable to local population through elections.

Decentralization improves the flow of information. It increases the local pool of local revenues through taxation. Lowers costs and enhances economies of scale, provided that the services are supplied by the appropriate level of government. It reveals the preferences of the community and boosts the participation of the community in decision making and financing. Decentralization fosters accountability in the system, while improving the chances of monitoring at a micro level.

Colombia started the process of decentralisation in mid-1980s and it is one of the cases where decentralisation is seen as having a positive impact on service delivery. Some of the areas where progress has been observed are increased service coverage, citizen satisfaction, attention to rural areas and the poor, cost consciousness and increased resource mobilization efforts .

10.8 Public – Private Participation

The term privatisation encompasses a variety of arrangements incorporating the private sector in service provision. Private sector involvement can be seen as a continuum of options ranging from supply and civil work contracts to management contracts and concession type of arrangements.

Private-Public Partnership (PPP) is a popular way to designate these different contractual arrangements between the state and the private sector in the area of service delivery. According to Grimsey and Lewis (2002) PPPs can be defined as agreements where private sector bodies establish a long-term contract with public sector entities for the construction or management of public sector infrastructure facilities. These agreements also cover the provision by private entities of services such as health and education using public infrastructure facilities (e.g. schools and hospitals).

PPPs can incorporate some of the following features : a) ☐ The public sector entity transfers facilities to the private sector (with or without payment in return) usually for the term of the arrangement. B) ☐ The private sector entity builds, extends or renovates facilities c) ☐ The public sector entity specifies the operating features of the facility d) ☐ Services are

provided by the private sector entity using the facilities for a defined period of time (usually with restrictions on operations and pricing) e) □ The private sector firm agrees to transfer the facility to the public sector (with or without payment) at the end of the arrangement.

Concessions fall under the umbrella of PPPs. They are a mode of operation often encountered in the water supply sector. In all concessions a public entity grants the right and obligation to provide the service to a concessionaire, but the public sector retains asset ownership. The terms and conditions of service provision are specified in a contract or license. The private contractor takes over the operational responsibility and at least part of the commercial risk. Concessions allegedly provide explicit incentives for efficiency, for example, they encompass mechanisms linking the concessionaire's compensation to service performance.

Concessions are thought to be flexible instruments. They can be tailored to attract private participation when state ownership remains desirable or is the only option, for example, if law or the constitution excludes private ownership. However, for the same reason concessions are complex because they must harmonize the interests of the state, consumers and the private sector. Concession arrangements can achieve substantive efficiency gains, yet those efficiency gains are subject to the feasibility of writing complete contracts. Bearing this in mind it is important to question the motivation for governments and private sector entities to enter into a PPP arrangement.

Governments have been motivated to enter into PPP arrangements to reduce debt, to achieve the best value-for-money and to transfer risks incurred during the execution of service delivery projects. Risks present in projects can be faults in project design, construction delays, cost overruns, insecure revenue stream among others. However, the risk that the predicted revenue stream from cost recovery does not materialize is the greatest threat to the sustainability of the project.

The increased participation of the private sector on PPPs affecting basic service provision in developing country is motivated by the alleged perception that, with government commitment, the risks associated to basic service provision are low. The reasons are the following: Firstly, basic services like water and health are necessities so the demand for services is not expected to change a lot in response to changes in prices. Secondly, services are rationed so there is an immense potential to raise revenues by reaching an increased number of users through market expansion. Thirdly, with adequate project design services are supposed to be run close to full capacity. Finally, services like water supply are natural monopolies. In countries with low regulatory capacity private sector expects higher returns by means of exercising monopoly power to extract additional rents.

All these characteristics make the sphere of basic service provision very attractive for the private sector. In addition, it is useful to note that the trend towards increased liberalization of the service sector is changing the nature of the private sector itself. It is now more common to observe transnational corporations operating in the area of services in developing countries. However, the trend is uneven across sectors and across regions. There is an increased volume of foreign transactions involving infrastructure services like telecommunications, power and water supply. Latin America was the highest recipient of

foreign direct investment in the utilities sectors in 1999. In the case of health care the advance of internationalization world wide has been slower. The Latin American market is considered to have huge potential for the expansion of (North American) HMOs (The Economist, 8th May 1999).

10.9 COMMERCIALIZATION AND COST RECOVERY

Commercialization was called upon as a solution to enhance efficiency. This is based on the principle of cost recovery through user charges. Cost recovery was justified by the fact that the poor were in effect paying for services. Payments took the form of cash or exchanges, but also involved huge opportunity costs and an added burden on poor people's time. In addition, cost recovery measures found supporters among those who thought that users needed to be prevented from over using services. The application of cost recovery is observed in publicly run facilities as well as in private ones. For this reason an explicit distinction must be made between commercialization and privatization. In some instances it was commercialization that led the way to the transfer of asset ownership from the state to the private sector (privatization) but this has not always been the case. The introduction of commercialization is linked to the idea that the allocation of services through mechanisms of a commercial market enhances efficiency. In addition, the application of cost-recovery reflects a change in attitude towards the role of basic services. The concept of public services recedes and is converted into the concept of business. This means that goals like equity and/or security of supply are replaced by profit maximization . Basic services are seen as commodities which can be provided on commercial basis. In theory cost recovery is expected to cover all costs incurred in running the services, but in practice the application of full cost recovery depends on the service and on the availability of government support to finance part

of the costs. The operation of services on a commercial basis is supposed to generate a rate of return on the investment – one that is close to market returns. However most importantly, cost recovery is allegedly essential to generate revenues for extending services to meet unmet demand as well as increasing demand, as well as ensuring access to all user groups and in particular the poor whom remain excluded when supply is rationed.

10.10 CO-PRODUCTION

Co-production is another term to define private sector participation on service delivery. Following Ostrom (1996) we define co-production as "the process through which inputs from individuals who are not in the same organization are transformed into goods and services." Co-production calls upon citizens' engagement in the production of public goods and services that affect them. Co-production is favoured by two factors, that of decentralization and technical innovation. The opportunity costs of organizing residents to construct or participate in decisions concerning local service delivery in one neighborhood are much lower than trying to coordinate residential work teams for a whole city. The well-documented experience of condominial sewerage system first developed in Recife (Brazil) is used as an example of how technological innovation made it possible for the increased participation of citizens in the construction and maintenance of services. Importantly, citizens were able to participate from the very start of the project. Their views were incorporated during the planning process. Neighborhood meetings organized by work teams took place to gather inputs and suggestions from the users.

10.11 SUMMING UP

To improve the efficiency of public service delivery several models are emerging in the contemporary scenario at the backdrop of new public management principles. Corporate bodies are also getting involved and public private partnership is being promoted. But one should keep in mind that how gender is being considered in this condition. In order to make the service delivery more effective the whole process should be engendered. All the models should be operated from gender perspective, otherwise all constituents of the society cannot get their benefit equally and services cannot be rendered to them.

10.12 GLOSSARY

Private Sector: In economics, the private sector is that part of the economy which is run by private individuals or groups, usually as a means of enterprise for profit, and is not controlled by the state. By contrast, enterprises that are part of the state are part of the public sector; private, non-profit organizations are regarded as part of the voluntary sector.

Public Sector: The Public Sector referred to as the state sector is a part of the state that deals with either the production, delivery and allocation of goods and services by and for the government or its citizens, whether national, regional or local/municipal. Examples of public sector activity range from delivering social security, administering urban planning and organizing national defenses.

10.13 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS EXERCISES

Check Your Progress Exercise 1

The commercial contractual model aims to reduce corporatism, public expenditure and the powers of local government by introducing quasi-market relationships and commercial business principles into local authority management. The model reduces the number of departments and committees within a local authority to a bare minimum since its main argument is not so much for the council to provide services, but to decide upon contractual and competitive tendering requirement. It allows for the arrangement of the local authority into either a purchaser or provider of services, and the creation of business units and devolved cost centres which compete both with internal and external markets.

Check Your Progress Exercise 2

Access to services, quality of services, affordability to services and utility of services.

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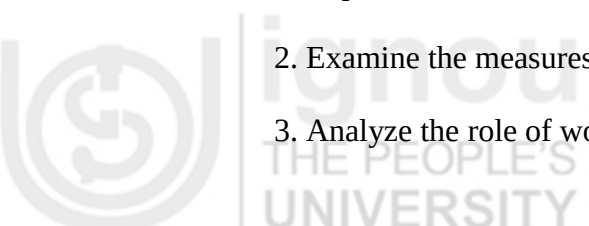
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10.15 QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTIONS AND PRACTICE

1. Explain the role of different institutional models in service delivery.
 2. Examine the measures to be taken for effective service delivery.
 3. Analyze the role of women in service delivery mechanism.
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