
UNIT 1 VOLUNTARY EFFORT IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Contents

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Concept
- 1.3 CAPART
- 1.4 Role
- 1.5 Factors Determining People's Participation
- 1.6 Government's Role in Promoting Voluntary Effort
- 1.7 Problems of Voluntary Organisations
- 1.8 Strengthening Voluntary Effort
- 1.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.10 Key Words
- 1.11 Suggested Readings

1.0 OBJECTIVES

The multi-dimensional concept of rural development makes it imperative that resources other than government are also selected and systematically channelised. Voluntary effort, which represents one such resource, is increasingly gaining importance in organising and mobilizing support for the rural development programmes. After reading this unit you will be able to :

- describe the features of voluntary organisations;
- delineate their role in rural development;
- assess government's policy on voluntary effort;
- list the strengths and limitations of voluntary organisations;
- describe some of the problems faced by voluntary organisations; and
- suggest measures for promotion and strengthening of voluntary effort.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Voluntary effort in India has always been an integral part its social and cultural tradition. Voluntary organisations (VOs) have their roots in the people and, as a result, can respond to the needs and aspirations of the community effectively. It is important, therefore, that you are able to make a realistic assessment of the voluntary effort. In this unit, we shall take a brief look at the concept of voluntary effort, the development of voluntary organisation (VOs) in India, the role of VOs in rural development and some of the problems faced by them in the course of their work. We shall also deal with the governmental policy on voluntary effort and suggest what steps can be taken to strengthen and improve the work of VOs.

1.2 CONCEPT

Voluntary effort, as the term implies, is an effort from one's own volition for the welfare of other fellow beings. It involves an active participation of people in its endeavour of social and economic well-being of the community. Voluntary effort aims at helping people to help themselves by mobilizing their own resources, tapping their potential, collectively finding solutions to their problems and implementing them to realize their goals. It is often the outcome of efforts of leaders and activists to mobilize people and motivate them to achieve certain growth oriented goals. Voluntary effort need not always be in conformity or consistency with the current policies and programmes of the State. Quite a number of such voluntary efforts are of the nature of social activism in which individuals and groups organise themselves in protest against unjust national, state or regional policies and programmes which neglect issues of development, especially related to the marginal groups, and, at the same time seek an alteration in the current social and economic systems and structures. Let us discuss some of the characteristics of voluntary effort.

i) **People's Participation**

The term 'people's participation' is sometimes used in the sense of participation in response to the call of an external agency, whether governmental or non-governmental, for supporting its policies and programmes. In this sense it conveys the same meaning as public cooperation. However, in its true sense, people's participation implies participation at all stages, i.e planning, programme formulation, implementation, decision making, sharing of benefits, monitoring and evaluation.

Development programmes conceived and developed with people's participation are closer to the ground realities. They are rooted in the community and perceived as its own activity. People's participation is advocated on the ground that it is a potent instrument for empowering people and bringing in an improvement in the situation which is sustainable.

Voluntary effort is sometimes used interchangeably with people's participation. However, the two terms have much in common but they are not quite identical. Can you say how people's participation is different from the voluntary effort? Is there any difference at all? Let us take an example to illustrate this. A group of people may decide to work for the programme of adult education and set up a VO to undertake this programme. This will be regarded as a voluntary effort. The organisation would plan programmes and map out the strategies. It may not involve the people in the process of planning, programme formulation and for developing tools of monitoring and evaluation. However, if the programme of the VO is to become effective, it will need the active participation of members and representatives of the community i.e. people's participation at all stages, from project formulation, management to evaluation.

ii) **The Third Sector**

In a societal context, VOs constitute the "third sector", the first and second being the "government" and the "market" or private business. The "third sector" (VOs) is also known as the "independent sector", emphasizing the important role VOs play as independent force outside the realm of government and private

business, though, in financial terms, this sector depends heavily on both the government and private business.

As far as law is concerned the various Trust Acts, the Societies Registration Act and the Income Tax Act only refer to a “charitable purpose”. A number of VOs though forced to register under some of these rather archaic Acts, do not quite identify themselves as “charitable” or their work as being “charitable purpose”. This is particularly so with regard to development-oriented VOs.

It is a fact that more than one and half century old Societies Registration Act, of 1860 and the Indian Trusts Act 1882 operating in various states are not broad enough to cover regulations regarding organisations working in areas of developmental support and activities. Perhaps it would be better to have a new and separate legislation to cover these organisations that work for humanitarian causes, but do not fit suitably under the traditional mould of a “charitable purpose”. Development organisations, today, encompass a wide-ranging field of activities, including designing and implementing innovative developmental programmes in various sectors of development, in various areas of research, reporting, documentation and training to support grassroot initiatives and also involves high technical and technological outputs.

What is the key factor that distinguishes an ordinary organisation from a “voluntary organisation”? In our opinion, it is the significant input that volunteers give to the management and operation of the organisation. It is this factor that gives VOs the other commonly used name “non-profit” or “not-for-profit” organisation (NPO). “Non-profit” or “not-for-profit” emphasizes the fact that the organisation does not exist primarily to generate profits for its owners, managers or members.

“Non-profit” or “not-for-profit” does not mean that the organisation must run at a perpetual loss and never even dream of income, surplus or profits. Far from it the NPO may certainly derive profits from extension of services or sale of products, etc. What it cannot do is to distribute the profits among trustees, members of the managing committee, etc. In other words, the NPO may be “income-generating” or “profit-making”, but it cannot be “profit-distributing”.

Some VOs also prefix the term “private” and call themselves Private Voluntary Organisations (PVOs). Private, here, indicates that the organisation is institutionally separate from the government. Hence, government-formed organisation like National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), Council for Advancement of People’s Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) etc., do not fall under the PVO category.

Some VOs like to call themselves non-governmental organisation (NGOs). This is, once again, to emphasize that the organisation is not controlled by the government or any other outside agency.

So we have VOs that call themselves NGOs, PVOs, NPOs and a relatively new breed that chooses to designate itself as “civil service organisation” (CSO). One wonders, what’s next? However, there are certain common factors that characterize these organisations. These include:

Formal	i.e., institutionalized to some extent – if not registered, at least having a definite programme or aims and objectives, as also rules and regulations of governance.
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Voluntary Action

Private	i.e., institutionally separate from the government.
Self-governing	i.e., not controlled by the government or any other outside entity.
Not-for-profit	i.e., involving some meaningful degree of voluntary participation; either in the actual conduct of the organisation's activities or in the management of its affairs.
Non-religious	i.e., not primarily involved in the promotion of religious education-this automatically excludes temples, churches, synagogues, mosques, religious congregations, where religious worship takes place but includes all not-for-profit service organisations affiliated to religious institutions, e.g. schools run by the Arya Samaj or Christian missionaries, etc.
Non-political	i.e., not primarily involved in promoting candidates for elected office, etc.

In other words, religious institutions/congregation, political parties, cooperatives (at least those controlled by the government), mutual saving banks, mutual insurance companies and government agencies fall outside the purview of our definition of NGO, PVO, NPO, CSO, etc.

iii) Features

Voluntary effort and people's participation are often institutionalized through the setting up of a VO. You may have by now some notion of the features of VOs. Let us now try and enumerate them :

- VOs are formed through the initiative of persons interested in the welfare and development, particularly of the disadvantaged sections of society. These persons have a sense of commitment and dedication and are spurred by social consciousness.
- Membership of VOs is purely voluntary.
- While some VOs may have specific areas of interest, others have macro-level and more global objectives.
- VOs are neither formed nor run for profit-making.
- VOs are governed by their own set of rules and regulations and do not function under the administrative control of the government. Some do, however, seek grants-in-aid from government for which they are required to fulfill certain conditions indicated in the grants-in-aid rules.
- Most of the VOs are registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 or similar Acts of the state governments. Such registration entitles them to receive grants-in-aid from the government.

The role of VOs in promoting national development has been considered vital on the following grounds :

- VOs have a first-hand experience and knowledge of needs, problems and resources at the grassroot level.

- VOs are closer to the people.
- The commitment and zeal of voluntary action is in striking contrast to the rigid bureaucratic systems.
- The voluntary sector is more responsive and can operate with greater flexibility. It learns more easily from past experience. Voluntary action is far more cost-effective as it can reduce overheads and does not have an elaborate bureaucratic set-up.

VOs and NGOs

You have probably heard of the term Non-governmental Organisation or NGO. How do you differentiate an NGO from a VO? Some people use the two interchangeably while others use the term NGO to mean a wider entity which encompasses VOs. Both the VOs and NGOs, are involved in activities which are outside the government sector; however, all NGOs are not voluntary in nature. Let us now take a look at some of the differences between NGOs and VOs.

VOs	NGOs
i) VOs are initiated by individuals or groups of individuals for welfare and development. They frame the memorandum of association, rules and regulations and system of governance. VOs may or may not be registered under an appropriate Act.	NGOs are initiated, sponsored and constituted in India generally by government as autonomous bodies for pursuing some specific development objectives. As per government directives they too have their own memorandum of association, byelaws etc. NGOs are registered under an appropriate Act.
ii) VOs receive funds from donor agencies which may include NGOs.	NGOs receive funds mainly from the government multilateral/bilateral funding agencies and channelise them to VOs for implementing programmes.
iii) VOs formulate their own strategies, policies and programmes.	Policies, programmes and strategies of NGOs are influenced by government directives. Inclusion of government representatives in the governing body often as Chairman, or in the Executive Committee as President, facilitates this. The government thus exercises some degree of control in the functioning of NGOs constituted by it. NGOs are required to obtain clearance from government in several matters of policy and programme formulation.

Voluntary Action

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| iv) | VOs show a wide variation in terms of size, scale of operation, organisation and structure. Most are small organisations; these are characterized by a large degree of non-formal style of functioning. | NGOs are usually much larger and complex in their organisational structures. They are formal organisations, and rules, regulations and procedures characterize their functioning. |
| v) | VOs have usually motivated leadership and committed. Their main promoters are honorary and are spurred by the desire to serve society. | NGOs depend on professional paid functionaries and a hierarchical structure to carry out the programmes and activities. |
| vi) | VOs can be both non-political as well as politically or ideologically oriented. | NGOs are usually non-political in nature and are guided by professional and not political compulsions. |
| vii) | VOs can be of the nature of activist organisations which challenge and protest against the unjust and unresponsive established social and economic structures and institutions. | NGOs work within the framework of established social and economic structures. They seek changes through the prescribed institutional framework. |

Code of Conduct

While service, welfare and developmental organisations play a vital role in the progress of the country, there are a few that tend to give the entire sector a bad name. Organisational ethics are the pillars of moral order and discipline. Therefore, our basic and fundamental expectation would be:

- All office-bearers, staff and volunteers of the organisation should maintain high standards of integrity and ensure that funds are not utilized for their benefits or for the benefit of their relatives and friends.
- No activity of the organisation should be used to promote the business or political interest of its office-bearers, staff or volunteers.
- A person holding an elective office in the government should abstain from being an office-bearer of a VO.
- There should be complete accountability and transparency in the functioning of the organisation.

With the liberalisation of the Indian economy, the enhanced focus on the softer sector of development and the increasing awareness of the importance of Human Resource Development, specially women and children, there is a growing awareness amongst the government and the general public that the government machinery alone cannot create an outreach adequate to meet all the demands of the society. NGOs should not, however, be seen as the “extended arm of Government”. Their role is to create awareness and be the pathfinders in solving people’s problems. They can and should innovate, as also experiment, with solutions. They shall continue to play a vital role in accelerating the process of social and economic development in the country.

In the next section, we look at the organisation, structure, and activities of a very important NGO, viz. CAPART.

Note : *In recent years the term NGO has been loosely used to denote those development agencies which work outside the government. Hence, more often VOs and NGOs are treated as same type of organisations dealing with a voluntary effort to bring in change and secure sustainable development.*

1.3 CAPART

The Council for Advancement of People's Action and Rural Technology (CAPART) was set up as a pioneer organisation in September, 1986 as a nodal agency by merging two organisations, namely, People's Action for Development (India) PAD(I) and Council for Advancement of Rural Technology (CART) with a mandate to promote voluntary action and propagate appropriate rural technologies for the benefit of rural masses. Since then, it has been contributing its mite by involving people in the development process through the medium of VOs to supplement Government efforts.

PADI had its origin in the 'Freedom from Hunger' campaign launched by the FAO in 1960. It was registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act in 1973. PADI mainly funded agricultural and animal husbandry programmes. Its funds came mostly from foreign agencies. PADI also helped small and marginal farmers, landless labourers and rural artisans by providing them integrated services for increasing employment, production and income, and organisational services for distribution of agricultural inputs.

CART, the organisation which merged with PADI to form CAPART, promoted development of appropriate technology for use in rural areas and funded research and development efforts by different organisations. It also disseminated knowledge of rural technology to manufacturers of machinery, tools and equipment.

Objectives

CAPART has included in its charter the activities of both CART and PADI. The objectives of CAPART are:

- to encourage, promote and assist voluntary action in the implementation of projects for the enhancement of rural prosperity, with a focus on injecting new technological inputs;
- to act as the national nodal point for co-ordination of all efforts at generation and dissemination of technologies relevant to rural development;
- to act as a catalyst for development of technologies appropriate for rural areas, by identifying and funding research and development efforts by different agencies, particularly the VOs;
- to act as a conduit for transfer of appropriate technology to government departments, public sector undertakings, co-operative societies, VOs and the general public;
- to act as a clearing house of information and as data bank;

Voluntary Action

- to disseminate knowledge on rural technology to the manufacturers of machine tools, equipment etc. so that large-scale production is carried out.
- to promote, aid, maintain and co-ordinate project/schemes aimed at all-round development, creation of employment opportunities, promotion of self-reliance, organisation and improvement in the quality of life of people in rural areas.
- to conduct or sponsor training programmes for trainees, particularly in the voluntary sector, so that improved technology is disseminated to participate in development in rural areas.
- to conduct or sponsor training programmes, seminars and workshops to promote interaction between government agencies and voluntary agencies working in the field of rural development and technology.
- to prepare, print and publish papers, periodicals and books in furtherance of the objectives of the society.

Organisation

The Minister for Rural Development, Government of India, is the President of the Council and also the Chairman of the Executive Committee. The General Body comprise not more than 100 members representing voluntary agencies, Central and State Governments and institutions engaged in activities connected with rural development technology and individuals possessing expertise, experience relevant to the furtherance of the aforesaid objectives of CAPART. They are nominated by the President of the Council. The Executive Committee comprise a maximum of 25 members nominated by the President of CAPART from amongst the members of the General Body. There is also a Standing Committee on Finance and Appointments, which is chaired by the Director General (DG). Finance, personnel and administrative matters, which require approval of the Executive Committee, are considered by this Committee. The DG, as the Chief Executive is responsible for the functioning of the Council for which he is assisted by two Deputy Director Generals (DDGs), Chief Vigilance Officer and Head of the Divisions at the Headquarters and Member Convenors (MCs) at the regional level.

Prior to 1995, all the projects were sanctioned at the Head Office level, with the result that it was difficult to monitor and evaluate the projects. In 1994, six regional offices were created and they started functioning from 1995. At present 9 Regional Committee (RC) offices are functioning at Ahmedabad, Bhubaneshwar, Chandigarh, Dharwad, Jaipur, Guwahati, Hyderabad, Lucknow and Patna. With the creation of these offices, not only has the process of evaluation become more effective but it has also provided opportunity for small VOs who are doing good work at the grassroots level to participate in CAPART programmes. Following the decision of the Executive Committee in 2000, to enhance the powers of the RCs, projects, upto Rs. 20 lakhs (project outlay) can now be sanctioned by these Committees.

In order to introduce transparency in the functioning of CAPART and to ensure involvement of VOs in decision making especially for sanctioning of projects, a Committee system was also introduced by constituting National Standing

Committees (NSCs) at the Head Office level. The NSCs are empowered to sanction projects upto Rs. 1 crore and projects of outlay above Rs. 1 crore are considered by the Executive Committee. There are nine NSCs for different subjects, viz., Marketing and Media, Watershed Conservation and Development Programme, Public Cooperation and Social Forestry, Rural Housing, Rural Technology, Conduct of VOs and related matters, Disability, Drinking Water, Sanitation, Income Generation, and Empanelment of Monitors. The number of NSCs have been reduced to four in view of the decision to discontinue the schemes under IRDP and to fund schemes only under promotion of Voluntary Action in Rural Development (PC), Organisation of Beneficiaries (OB) and Advancement of Rural Technologies (ARTs) and the matter of reconstituting these four NSCs is under process. It may be mentioned that budgetary support is provided only for the aforesaid three schemes.

In order to give flexibility to the PC, OB and ARTS, CAPART has been providing assistance to VOs. Apart from these three schemes, CAPART also supports projects under Disability Action and Watershed Development. However, Watershed Development Schemes can now be funded under PC.

Since its inception in September, 1986 to November, 2000, CAPART sanctioned 19,265 projects involving a sum of Rs. 552 crores and released Rs. 423 crores to about 8000 VOs. From 1999 CAPART has switched over to three sector funding, viz., PC, OB and ARTS and emphasis is on flexibility, integrated and innovative approaches to project preparation, people's participation, funding of good VOs and participation in disaster mitigation and rehabilitation work and transparency. Transparency has been built into the system with powers of sanctioning being exercisable by Regional Committees and Standing Committees headed by non-officials, representing the voluntary sector. Efforts have been made to clarify the scope of PC and OB in particular by providing sub-guidelines on micro-finance, drought proofing, "adopt a village scheme" and to bring within the concept of integrated schemes a flexibility allowing cost norms and activities varying from project to project without having to adhere to any rigid cost norms.

CAPART so far has worked with about 8000 VOs in the sense, they accessed CAPART funds for implementing about 19265 projects. Roughly about 10 per cent of these VOs faced funding restrictions due to failure to abide by the terms of sanction. Amongst the rest, the performance varies. However, due to sustained CAPART support over the years, a leadership has emerged in rural development sector. Prominent VOs that have received sustained support from CAPART are Vivekananda Kendra, Kanyakumari; Rayalaseema Seva Samiti, Tirupati; Mitraniketan, Kerala; Social Work and Research Centre, Tilonia; M.S. Swaminathan Research Centre, Chennai; Shri AMM Murugappa Chettiar Research Centre, Chennai; BAIF Development Research Foundation, Pune; VANARAI, Pune; and Bharatiya Vikas Trust, Manipal.

In the field of rural technology, CAPART has 10 functioning Technology Resource Centres (TRCs) which are VOs equipped with lab facilities and receive annual grant from CAPART for developing appropriate technology and for dissemination of the same through a network of smaller VOs. The objective is to set up at least one TRC in every state and eventually about 100 which may cover districts in the country.

CAPART also channelises funds to VOs from external funding agencies like UNDP as an implementing agency.

Activities

CAPART provides financial and technical assistance to a number of schemes. Let us take up each of these individually :

i) Promotion of Voluntary Action in Rural Development

Motivating VOs to take up work under various poverty alleviation programmes for which assistance is available from the CAPARAT is an important concern. Under this scheme income-generating activities like sericulture, dairy development, village industry, minor irrigation, fodder production and social activities such as health care, education, credit management and drought are supported. During 1988-89, fifty projects involving an assistance of Rs. 519 lakh were sanctioned.

ii) Organisation of Beneficiaries

This scheme provides assistance to voluntary agencies for organising awareness camps and for conscientisation of rural poor beneficiaries of poverty alleviation programmes. The scheme has the following components:

- a) **Training of Social Animators:** Social animators are people from among the target groups who belong to the village. After acquiring training and skills, they act as catalysts to inspire and help the people in realising their potential. This training is done by VOs and other institutions identified by CAPART.
- b) **Organisation of Awareness Camps:** This is done to make the rural poor aware of various socio-economic forces of society and the causes of their being handicaps and at a point of disadvantage.
- c) **Selection of Rural Organisers:** The organisers help the beneficiaries to get organised through realization of the strength of collective action.

iii) Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA)

Under DWCRA, the activities taken up are dairying, tailoring, knitting, food processing and weaving, among many others. In 1988-89, 194 projects involving an assistance of Rs. 324 lakh were sanctioned.

iv) Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP)

The projects under this scheme relate to construction of housing, water harvesting structures, tanks, percolation ponds, roads, social forestry and soil and water conservation.

v) CAPART encourages VOs to take up projects under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP). It provides assistance to projects in pursuance of the objectives of the Technology Mission on Drinking Water.

vi) Central Rural Sanitation Programme (CRSP)

Under CRSP, 260 projects are sanctioned to carry out sanitation related works in villages.

Some of the major programmes of CAPART are listed below :

1) **Watershed Management:** CAPART's Watershed Programme is operational in drought prone areas all over the country with active involvement of grassroot VOs and village level beneficiaries. The programme involves experienced VOs representing different agro-ecological zones. Capacity building stage in the programme is very useful for the VOs as well as for the village level workers, so that implementation work is done according to the watershed principles, such as top to bottom and ridge to valley approach. A unique model of Support Voluntary Organisations (SVOs) to train and technically assist various VOs involved has been developed for better implementation of the programme. Under this programme CAPART has assisted 222 VOs for which assistance of Rs. 6.38 crores has been sanctioned and an approximate area of about 1,42,500 hectares will be benefited after completion of Action Plan and Track 'A' projects.

2) **International Funding:** The International Funding Division receives funds from two sources – DANIDA and United National Development Project (UNDP).

DANIDA is providing umbrella funds to CAPART for implementation of projects through NGOs. The broad theme areas covered under this scheme are agriculture development, agro-forestry, watershed, livestock, environment protection, etc. These projects are being implemented in Karnataka, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. Under Phase III, started in November, 1991, fourteen projects were supported, out of which 12 have been completed. DANIDA extended a grant of Rs. 50 million for supporting these projects.

The Government of India-UNDP sub-programme on energy was initiated in December 1999. The Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources (MNES) the executive agency and CAPART is the implementing agency of the sub-programme. CAPART implements the sub-programme through Society for Rural Industrialisation (SRI), Ranchi and Social Works Research Centre (SWRC), Tilonia in Rajasthan.

The Bihar energy sub-programme, 'Energy Services for Rural Industrialization in Angara Block, Ranchi', aims to demonstrate a Rural Industrial Area (RIA). Catering to 15 villages in this block, the sub-programme provides energy services such as lighting, irrigation, agro-processing facilities, etc. for these villages. The core of the RIA are two 50 kw bio-mass gasifier-based power generating stations and a Common Facility Centre (CFC) aimed at catalyzing value addition in these communities. The experience gained from this sub-programme will be synthesized to develop a replication strategy and analyse the effect of industrialization on tribal communities.

The second energy sub-programme titled as 'Demonstration of Community Based Solar Energy for Sustainable Development – IND/98/642 of UNDP' is implemented by SWRC. This sub-programme aims to demonstrate community based solar PV systems in 8 remote unelectrified village clusters in the 7 states of Rajasthan, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Sikkim, Jammu & Kashmir and Assam. The programme is of 3-year duration with a total budget of US \$ 1.2 million.

Based on the SWRC model of creating village level capacity in installation and maintenance of solar PV systems through a network of Rural Electronic Workshops (REW) and trained Barefoot Solar Engineers (BSE), this programme will result in (a) a network of either REWs, (b) installed solar PV systems including lanterns and fixed systems, (c) demonstration of productive uses; and (d) creation of participatory decision-making structures at the village level. Eight community-managed revolving funds will be created to contribute to sustainability of the installed system as well as REWs over a 10-year period.

3) ***Initiatives in Disaster Mitigation:*** CAPART has adopted a policy of involving the VOs in dealing with the adverse situation caused by occurrence of natural calamities and to support the rural population in their efforts to rehabilitate themselves through projects to reconstruct their dwelling houses and to take up livelihood restoration activities. The strategy in this regard has been to create some models of relief and rehabilitation work which can be replicated by the state government and other agencies and in forging partnership with well known national and international philanthropic organisations so that the limited resources of CAPART could generate optimum benefits. A summary of the work done by CAPART in this field through the VOs is placed below.

- i) ***Uttarakhand Earthquake:*** On 30th March, 1999 a strong earthquake struck Uttarakhand. Vast areas of the state were badly affected. The impact of the earthquake was felt across 3,166 villages and affected 4.41 lakh people. CAPART sanctioned projects worth Rs. 1.4 crores to 15 VOs for the construction of 215 temporary shelters and 22 permanent earthquake proof shelters. Over 700 families benefited from these projects. The permanent shelters are community assets for use of training and motivation programmes for various social and economic development activities.
- ii) ***Orissa Super Cyclone-1999:*** CAPART mobilized 55 VOs for taking up comprehensive rehabilitation projects in super cyclone affected areas which include schemes for construction of core houses, reconstruction of existing dwelling houses with improved designs, livelihood restoration schemes to assist farmers, fishermen, rural artisans, weavers, etc. and also capacity building for meeting future calamities by dissemination of knowledge about cyclone and preparedness. As long-term strategy, CAPART is assisting VOs to undertake rehabilitation programme on land development, afforestation, housing technologies, training of artisans to promote income generating programmes and stimulate awareness and work-out strategies for disaster-preparedness. The total cost involved in 61 projects being implemented by 55 VOs is Rs. 3 crores. These projects will benefit a large number of families directly and indirectly.
- iii) ***Drought:*** Drought affects many parts of the country. The worst impact of the drought in recent years has been in the states of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh. CAPART has provided an assistance of about Rs. 4 crores in these states by supporting 37 VOs. This has resulted in the creation of employment opportunities at the village level and has reduced the rate of distress migration. In addition, assets for combating drought have been created for the rural communities, which will be useful to combat future droughts in the area.

iv) *Flood*: In the areas affected by unprecedented floods CAPART mobilizes VOs to take up projects. In the flood affected areas of Bihar, Orissa and West Bengal VOs are given assistance to mount economic rehabilitation efforts.

4) **Marketing Development Division**: A wide variety of products, largely using locally available material, are manufactured under income generation schemes. Since most of these products are manufactured in relatively remote areas and in small quantities, CAPART provides opportunities to such rural producers to come together and market their products collectively in Gram Shree Melas, that are organised in various parts of the country. In addition to providing outlet for such products the Melas also offer an excellent opportunity for the rural producers to interact with end-users of products and get their feedback. Such feedback has been responsible for tremendous changes in terms of design, colour and variety of products manufactured by the rural poor. CAPART also organises interaction with experts in the field of design, marketing, packaging, etc. during the Melas. In the recent years four Gram Shree Melas have been organised by the Marketing Division. In addition, the CAPART participated in four Swadeshi Melas organised by the Centre for Bhartiya Marketing Development, a unit of Swadeshi Jagran Foundation.

As a part of its programme of providing marketing support to rural producer groups, a Design Development Workshop for Women's Self-help Groups in the area of knitting and weaving was organised at Keylong in Lahul Sapiti District of Himachal Pradesh, where professionally trained designers worked with local women to come up with improved designs and new products which would enable the weavers to achieve higher value addition to their existing products substantially. The results of the Workshop were displayed at India International Trade Fair.

CAPART organised a large exhibition, spread over an area of over 50,000 sq. ft., SARAS-2000 during the India International Trade Fair held from 14-27 November, 2000 for promoting products of the rural poor manufactured under the income generations Schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development and CAPART. More than 1000 participants including a large number of artisans from states and Union Territories, from DRDAs and VOs participated in the exhibition. SARAS-2000 resulted in direct sales of over Rs. 1.5 crores and firm orders worth more than Rs. 2.5 crores. A catalogue of selected products with particulars of products as well as manufacturers is available on a Compact Disk so that buyers can access such products directly from the rural producers.

CAPART, in association with the Ministry of Rural Development, also participated in 2 International Fairs. In May, 2000 CAPART participated in 'Memphis in May Festival' held on the banks of Mississippi river in the USA. The Ministry of Rural Development and the CAPART also participated in Expo-2000 held at Hanover in Germany in 2000 where a large number of DRDAs and VOs were given opportunity to test market their products in the international market.

5) **New PC Scheme**: The National Standing Committee on Public Cooperation and Social Forestry has approved three Sub-Guidelines on the following important issues under PC Scheme.

- i) *CAPART Guidelines on Micro-Finance* – With the issuance of these guidelines, all income generation schemes will necessarily be self-help group based and in future no IRDP/DWCRA type scheme will be entertained. The guidelines on micro-finance have been prepared after several discussions and a workshop with DHAN Foundation, Madurai, which is one of the leading VOs in the field of micro-finance.
- ii) *‘Adopt A Village’ Programme* – This scheme provides a framework for implementing integrated schemes at the level of village and Panchayats. As of now, the VOs are submitting projects in the name of an integrated scheme which merely club three-four activities which were earlier being done by CAPART, like hand pump, low cost toilets, housing, fish ponds, etc. With the formulation of this scheme, it has now been insured that the project is formulated by the people through participatory rural appraisal techniques and reflects the felt needs of the people at the grassroots level. The emphasis will be on empowerment issues, income generation and infrastructure support. It will now be essential that the VO and the project implementation team is well trained in implementing micro-plans. Since the funds to be released in integrated schemes would be substantial, it is mandatory for the VO to have a track record of implementing such schemes. Smaller NGOs with less experience who are desirous of implementing the scheme will have to undergo training with one of the Support Voluntary Organisations – Micro Planning (SVO – MP) on the lines of watershed guidelines. They will be allowed to take up action plans only if the SVO – MP certifies that they have successfully completed the training programme and that they have the capacity to implement the scheme. It is, therefore, made clear that only organisations with sound technical and managerial experience will be allowed to take a project directly. The idea is to develop model villages through convergence of efforts and appropriate linkages to raise the production function, incomes and employment in a village in a sustainable manner.
- iii) *Drought Proofing Scheme* – This scheme is primarily meant for drought prone areas. The VOs submit the plan for three years and incorporate drought-proofing activities in consultation with the Gram Sabha. It is expected that this scheme will complement CAPART’s watershed development programme, which has been in operation. While selecting the VOs, the emphasis will be on the organisation’s past track records in implementing such schemes.

The main objectives of the scheme are as follows :

- Drought proofing.
- Generate employment and stop migration from rural areas.
- Develop a flexible system responsive to local needs to combat drought by people’s own efforts and appreciation of the problem.

6) ***Awareness Generation Programme:*** Organisation of beneficiaries of anti-poverty programme is given due importance by CAPART through its OB scheme. The objective of this scheme is to create awareness among the rural poor, organise them into groups and strengthen their bargaining capabilities. Financial assistance under the scheme is provided for mobilization of beneficiaries,

organising them into a group, holding awareness generation camps and to monitor follow-up programmes so that real benefits of development programmes reach them. Another programme for consolidation of benefits of awareness, is the training of social animators so as to create change agents in rural areas. It is expected that by such efforts, development programmes will be more effective and speedy in the thrust areas. Under this, CAPART is also providing financial assistance to VOs to take up motivation programme for the benefit of elected members of the Gram Panchayats. The entire programme is operated at the RC level as the quantum of assistance provided falls well within the financial ceiling of Rs. 20 lakhs.

Check Your Progress I

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

1) List the objectives of people's participation.

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2) How would you differentiate between public co-operation and people's participation?

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3) List four characteristics of NGOs.

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4) Discuss the role of CAPARAT in mobilizing the voluntary organisation in the country.

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5) What are different schemes for creating rural markets and promoting rural handicrafts?

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6) List 4 different schemes for supporting the rural beneficiaries especially those below the poverty line.

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1.4 ROLE

Before we come to the present role of VOs, let us briefly trace the evolution of voluntary effort in India, beginning with the pre-Independence period and then move on to the post-Independence era.

Pre-Independence Period

Prior to the nineteenth century, family, kinship, caste and the village community were the main institutions expected to meet the problems of the needy and the destitute. Charity and relief for large numbers were organised generally at times of distress such as floods and famines. The effort was mostly by way of individual philanthropy arising from religious fervour and piety.

During the latter part of the nineteenth century and earlier part of the twentieth century, voluntary effort became more organised, and several religious groups founded societies for welfare work. Missionaries, too, played an important role in organising social services, though they often had the covert objective of proselytisation as well.

During the national struggle for Independence, voluntary effort of a secular nature gained momentum. This was largely due to the efforts of a number of national leaders and social reformers. Mahatma Gandhi's emergence as a national leader in the struggle for Independence and his philosophy of social reconstruction and rural uplift ushered a new era of mass mobilization for social and economic betterment of the masses, particularly in the area of rural development. The social reform movements and the role played by national leaders led to renewed interest in the acute social and economic problems of rural India and the setting up of a large number of VOs, often small in size, but fired with considerable enthusiasm and zeal of the founders and their associates. It is largely their efforts which helped to provide educational and health services to people in different parts of the country, as Government's response to social services needs at that time was very inadequate. A large number of schools,

colleges, charitable dispensaries, and welfare institutions that were established towards the beginning of the twentieth century was the result of voluntary efforts. The workers in these organisations were more motivated than government functionaries, knew the local area and people well, and worked hard to advance the cause of social and economic well-being of the masses.

Post-Independence Period

With Independence and acceptance of planning as an instrument for social and economic transformation of the country, a more systematic and broadbased approach became possible. The launching of the national programme of Community Development (CD) in rural India opened up new challenges.

As you will recall, the approach in CD was an aided self-help, as it was intended to be planned and implemented mainly by the villagers themselves, with the government offering technical help through extension services, and providing some financial assistance for carrying out the programmes.

Extension education and community organisation were two main methods employed in CD projects. Unlike extension where the main help in terms of technical advice and inputs came from outside the community, in CD projects the effort was to mobilize the community and its resources through its own efforts. This approach was intended to lead to the realization that if self-help and community participation could become the mainstay of rural development, development would be self-sustaining and at a faster pace. Efforts therefore, were made as a part of the CD to promote voluntary action in rural areas. Functional groups of women and youth were organised at the grassroots which came to be known as Mahila Mandals and Yuvak Mandals, respectively. These groups were to function as energizers for mobilizing women and young people in taking up development work in their areas.

During the 1950s, people's involvement and contribution to development work was also sought through *shramdan* (voluntary contribution of labour) in development projects. VOs were also involved and assigned development works. Some Lok Karya Kshetra projects were started for involving the people in development and building local leadership.

During the Third and subsequent Five Year Plans, the importance of voluntary efforts, co-operative self-help and community effort was stressed and promotion and support of VOs became the policy of the State. However, the detailing of the role of the voluntary sector in the 1960s and 1970s was left to be defined by ministries/departments of the government. Since most ministries were implementing programmes in rural areas, they brought out their own guidelines and patterns of assistance to VOs. These often did not take into account the holistic nature of development work, nor were the resources of different ministries pooled for development work in a particular area even in allied or closely interlinked areas. For instance, the Ministry of Environment and Forests through the National Wasteland Development Board (NWDB) evolved guidelines for assistance to VOs engaged in wasteland development. The Department of Rural Development through CAPART did the same for VOs engaged in social forestry.

The Seventh Plan recognized that government alone could not handle the task of rural development. It enunciated a clear-cut policy for involvement of VOs

in rural development in a sustained manner. It stressed the need to enlist voluntary agencies in accelerating the process of social and economic transformation through their participation in the planning and implementation of programmes of rural development. The accent in the Seventh Plan was on introducing professional competence and managerial expertise in VOs to meet the requirements of development.

The subsequent Plans clearly gave prominence to the place that VOs occupy in the development process. The Tenth Plan document (2002-2007) makes a clear-cut statement about how integral is the role of NGO/VOs in bringing change and improvement. In the Tenth Plan the Planning Commission has outlined India's human development goals and targets for the next 5 to 10 years.

Tenth Plan

The Tenth Plan indicated a number of functions that the VOs could perform. We have added a few. You may like to enlarge the list:

- Securing people's participation which is vital to the success of programmes of rural development as it increases the acceptability and utilization of the services.
- Ensuring that the benefits of rural development reach the rural poor.
- Acting as link between the administration and people to bring about changes, specially in the attitude of the people, through motivation and building up of awareness.
- Supplementing government programmes in rural areas by offering a wider variety of choices and alternatives.
- Functioning as watchdog of the people at the local level and thereby improving the services and the accountability.
- Activating the delivery system and streamlining its functioning.
- Disseminating information.
- Demonstrating how local initiative and local resources can be effectively used.
- Training and motivating grassroots workers.
- Mobilizing community resources which would add to the total resources available for development.
- Facilitating the process of change in social and economic structures so that the benefit can reach to a larger number of people.

In the Tenth Plan, programmes and areas were listed out in which the participation of VOs was visualized as being particularly important. These were :

- Integrated Rural Development Programme.
- Implementation of land ceiling and distribution of surplus land.

- Enforcement of minimum wages to agricultural labourers.
- Identification and rehabilitation of bonded labour.
- Development of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.
- Supply of safe drinking water.
- Afforestation, social forestry, development of alternative energy sources.
- Promotion of small family norm.
- Primary health care, control of communicable diseases and preventive health programmes.
- Programmes for women and children in rural areas.
- Literacy programmes.
- Promotion of village and cottage industries.
- Promotion of science and technology in rural areas.
- Rural housing.
- Environmental concerns.

Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yajana (SGSY)

In April 1999, the IRDP and allied programmes, including the Million Wells Scheme (MWS), were merged into a single programme known as Swarnajayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY). The SGSY is conceived as a holistic programme of micro enterprise development in rural areas with emphasis on organising the rural poor into self-help groups, capacity-building, planning of activity clusters, infrastructure support, technology, credit and marketing linkages. It seeks to promote a network of agencies, namely, the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs), line departments of state governments, banks, NGOs and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for implementation of the programme. The SGSY recognizes the need to focus on key activities and the importance of activity clusters. The programme has in-built safeguards for the weaker sections. It insists that 50 per cent of the self-help groups must be formed exclusively by women and that 50 per cent of the benefit should flow to SC and STs. There is also a provision for disabled beneficiaries. The programme is credit driven and subsidy is back ended. The credit and subsidy ratio is pegged at 3:1. The subsidy is fixed at 30 per cent of the project cost subject to a maximum of Rs. 7,500 per individual beneficiary for those in the general category and 50 per cent of the group.

Self-help Groups

Self-help groups become cohesive in the long run only if they are homogenous. Social mobilization is an important step in the formation of self-help groups. It requires a high degree of motivation, morale, expertise, management skills, time and pro-poor orientation on the part of the person who acts as a catalyst for group formation. SGSY is implemented through the DRDAs. These organisation would have to be supported by NGOs, PRIs and other community-based organisation in the formation of the self-help groups. The Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI), National Bank of Agriculture and Rural

Development (NABARD), Rashtriya Mahila Kosh (RMK) and many zilla parishads have emerged as important players in the promotions of self-help groups. Strong networks and linkages would be established with such institutions under SGSY. These organisations would act as self-help promotion institutions and would ensure a continuing relationship with self-help groups.

Promotion of Micro Finance and Micro Enterprise

Successful experiments in the promotion of micro finance and micro enterprise have revealed a strong partnership between NGOs and financial institutions. NGOs have an inherent advantage in reaching the poor due to their proximity, the trust they generate by working in the area, their commitment, flexibility in approach, responsiveness and cost effectiveness. They have played a dynamic role as social animators and organisers in rural areas. Many NGOs have not only been instrumental in the formation of self-help groups but have also nurtured them over the years. Such NGOs have a strong presence in many states. However, voluntary and non-governmental action is weak in some of the poorer states. These are also the states where the spirit of cooperation and collaboration may be lacking because of poverty. Training of social animators would have to be promoted in such states.

Credit-delivery System

The SGSY programme would be credit driven. The outreach of the credit delivery system in the country continues to be limited, despite several measures to streamline it. The legitimate demands for credit remain unfulfilled as a vast majority of the poor remain outside the purview of the formal credit system. The mismatch between demand and supply of credit arises out of an inadequate and inefficient delivery system. The policies of direct lending, administered pricing of credit and lack of freedom in the selection of borrowers have resulted in the high cost of credit delivery for the formal credit institutions and, consequently, to the borrowers. A system would have to be put in place which is flexible and responsive to the financial needs of the poor and is capable of supplying timely and adequate credit.

The inadequacies of formal credit institutions could be overcome by combining the strength of commercial banks with the intermediation capabilities of NGOs to effectively link the poor with the commercial banking channels. This would be a cost-effective alternative for providing credit to the poor as banks would be able to reach a larger number of small borrowers with lower transaction costs. The risk of default on loans would be lower due to group pressure and the groups would also monitor the end use of credit. Access to banks through self-help groups would lower the transaction cost of the borrowers. In the credit delivery system under SGSY, financial intermediation by NGOs would be encouraged. The experience of Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) and other organisations would be replicated on a larger scale.

In the Ninth Plan, both IRDP and SGSY were subsidy-driven programmes. This subsidy itself has become a major obstacle in the promotion of self-employment ventures. The experience of institutions providing micro finance shows that the poor are capable and also willing to pay for the credit and other financial services rendered by NGOs and financial institutions without depending on the government for subsidy. Financial resources in the Tenth Plan, therefore,

would be directed towards providing infrastructure and other support facilities which increase the return to household and reduce their risks. It would be used in innovative ways to lower the transaction cost for both the swarozaris and the lenders and to create a strong and viable partnership with NGOs and other organisations working for the economic well-being of the rural poor.

District Planning Committee (DPCs)

The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act provided for the constitution of District Planning Committees (DPCs). However, the provision on DPCs is rather weak as it provides for the preparation of only draft plans by DPCs. State governments have not given adequate attention to the DPCs and the Government of India's guidelines on district planning have not been fully operationalised. DPCs should be set up and its functionaries must be trained in the basics of planning. The gram sabha/panchayat should be associated with the preparation of village development plans based on the felt needs of the people. These plans should be integrated with the panchayat samiti and district-level plans to make the grass-root planning process a reality in the Tenth Plan period.

The voluntary sector has witnessed a phenomenal growth in the country in the last 20 years. These institutions have played an important role in community mobilization, providing technical support to the community for developmental projects, especially in the areas of health and education. It has been clearly established that where panchayats, community organisations and user groups have worked in close cooperation, people have benefited immensely from developmental projects initiated either by the government or the communities themselves. People's organisations, whether in the form of an NGO or a group of experts, provide expertise and competence to the panchayats that they otherwise may not possess. However, in many places, the emergence of constitutionally-mandated PRIs has led to a conflict of interest as both VOs and these institutions occupy the same space. The voluntary agencies have to recognize that PRIs are institutions of governance and must work in close cooperation with them. The PRIs, for their part, have to recognize the critical role that VOs can play in enhancing their capabilities.

The delivery of programmes would improve only if the PRIs emerge as strong players in the social and economic life of the country. NGOs and other civil society organisations can facilitate the evolution of PRIs as institutions geared to promote the well-being of the rural poor.

Functional Areas

You have by now some idea of the areas of work of VOs. These can be grouped under the following broad categories:

- i) **Advocacy** – advocating causes which are socially relevant such as improving the condition of rural poor, abolition and rehabilitation of bonded labour, adoption of small family norm, preventing environmental degradation, improving women's status, promoting literacy, etc.
- ii) **Social Activism** – advocating changes in organisations and structures through awareness, organisation building and, when necessary, challenging existing systems and institutions, and advocating radical action.
- iii) **Relief** – providing relief to victims of natural and man-made calamities.

- iv) **Development** – implementation of a wide range of development programmes.
- v) **Research, evaluation and documentation** – studying problems of the rural areas and evaluating development programmes thereby expanding the knowledge based on development strategies, delivery systems and cost effectiveness of programmes. The documentation of information on voluntary effort provides information which is invaluable for programme planning.
- vi) **Training** – providing professional skill to the functionaries at different levels and upgrading competence in different areas of responsibility.

1.5 FACTORS DETERMINING PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION

We shall now take a look at some of the factors which facilitate people's participation :

- i) **Extent to which programmes are based on felt needs:** A programme can be successful only when it is based on assessment and articulation of needs by the people. For instance, a VO's programme of popularizing nutritious low cost weaning foods is likely to have a limited success if this is not perceived as a need by the people.
- ii) **Motivation and leadership:** The community worker should be able to enthuse and motivate the people into wanting to participate in the programme and to convince them of benefits that will accrue. He must have credibility and the qualities of leadership. Democratic leadership can go a long way in promoting people's participation.
- iii) **Communication:** The community worker must communicate with the people in a medium which they can understand. As you know, different programmes and target groups would require the use of different media.

You may also be interested in knowing about factors which hinder people's participation. You could well ask why the community does not participate in programmes which are meant to benefit them. There can be several reasons for this:

- i) Most of the time the non-participation is because the community has not been prepared sufficiently ahead of the launching of the programme and local leadership has not been involved and taken into confidence.
- ii) Quite often village factionalism, rural power structures and vested interests prevent the people from joining in specially if the programme challenges the existing system, denies social justice to the poor and is exploitative in character.
- iii) The bureaucracy is often another hurdle in implementing such changes since they apprehend that this will imply erosion of their authority and status.
- iv) Illiteracy, poverty and a generally low level of awareness are other reasons.

You will recall that one of the least successful aspects of CD was the inability to evoke local initiative and participation. Few local bodies showed any enthusiasm or interest and even the panchayats did not participate to any appreciable extent. The Balwant Rai Mehta Committee was of the view that we need to discover or create a representative and democratic institution which is functional and will provide the local interest, supervision and care necessary to ensure that expenditure of money upon objects conforms with the needs and wishes of the local people and assign to it appropriate finances. This would make it possible to evoke local interest and initiative in the field of development. More than a decade has passed since the 73rd Amendment to the Constitution was made in 1992, which recognize the crucial role Panchayat has to play in local self-government.

Panchayati Raj today constitutes a very important step in bringing development closer to the people. It has become synonymous with people's participation and constitutes a very potent instrument for activating people's will and action. People's participation implies direct involvement through self-help groups, cooperatives and also through elected representatives to panchayat bodies. Panchayati Raj institutions too can, and do, undertake development activities and can motivate and involve the community or provide mechanisms to ensure people's participation. However, care has to be taken that these initiatives are not comprised by factions and dominant groups.

Check Your Progress II

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

1) List ways in which VOs can help in the implementation of rural development programmes.

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2) List three factors which hinder people's participation.

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3) Will a strong panchayati raj set up lead to better voluntary effort?

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Activity 1

Visit a voluntary organisation. Describe its work under the different functional areas indicated in the unit.

1.6 GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN PROMOTING VOLUNTARY EFFORT

As you have seen, government's recognition of the role of VOs is based on the following premises:

- Government alone cannot mobilize all the resources needed for meeting people's needs.
- The quality and efficiency of government sponsored programmes increases when people are involved at different stages of programme planning, implementation and evaluation.
- Voluntary agencies complement very well the development endeavours of government by filling gaps in terms of geographical coverage, programme needs and community mobilization.
- Voluntary agencies strengthen the community's capacity to develop and recognize the potential to take up development work which is sustainable and meets local needs.

The main instruments through which government promotes voluntary action are:

- Official policy statements. As, we have seen, the Plan documents have, as a matter of policy, indicated promotion and support of voluntary effort as an important aim.
- Involving non-officials in Commissions, Study Teams, Committees, Working Groups etc. set up by different Ministries of the government for policy planning and implementation. Such involvement of experts, public figures and social workers is now a common practice.
- Giving grants-in-aid to VOs for implementing programmes identified for the purpose. Various Ministries and Departments both at the Centre and in the states sanction grants-in-aid to a large number of VOs.
- Giving clearance for grants-in-aid to VOs from foreign donor agencies, where this has been considered necessary.
- Helping VOs to improve their skills and knowledge by organising training and project formulation programmes.

The National Fund for Rural Development has been set up by the Government of India. It provides grants to VOs and has been included under the category of activities eligible for full tax exemption under Section 80G of the Income Tax Act. The Fund has been constituted for attracting donations for rural development projects. Donors get full exemption from income tax for the amount donated to the Fund.

You have already read about CAPART – the organisation specifically set up by

the Government of India as the nodal agency to promote rural development through VOs and co-ordinate the generation and dissemination of technologies relevant to rural development.

In order to qualify for receiving aid from government, the VOs are required to meet criteria such as the following:

- The organisation should be registered under one of the Acts. It should be a legal entity.
- It should be based in a rural area with experience of working with rural communities for some duration.
- It should have as its objective the serving of social and economic needs of the rural community, specially the weaker sections.
- It should adopt only constitutional and non-violent means for rural development.
- It must work on a no-profit and no-loss basis and not as a contract.
- Its activities should be open to all citizens of India irrespective of religion, caste, creed, sex or race.
- It should have organisational set-up and manpower which indicates professional competence and skills to implement programmes.
- Its office-bearers should not be elected members of a political party.
- It should have audited accounts, an annual report of its activities approved by its General Body, regular election of its office-bearers, and regular meetings of the executive committee, thus indicating a vibrant democratic structure.

1.7 PROBLEMS OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

You should not get the impression that because of the official policy of promoting and supporting voluntary effort and allocating funds to different ministries for grants-in-aid to VOs, their problems have been satisfactorily resolved. This is far from true.

In spite of the grants-in-aid now available to a large number of VOs, a majority of them still face an acute problem of lack of financial resources which hampers their functioning. At times, lack of financial resources may not be as severe a constraint as lack of assured funds on a continuing basis. Because of this problem, some VOs are forced to give up an activity half way through and pick up another for which funds are available. Some VOs depend heavily on foreign funds which are uncertain. Funding agencies have their own perceptions and often impose their priorities and programme designs on the VOs. Ad hoc grants from government or aid agencies tend to reduce them to faceless bodies running a variety of unlinked programmes. This threatens both continuity and expansion.

VOs also face leadership problems. As the VOs expand the area and scope of their activities, some prominent personalities often begin to assume overriding

powers in running the organisation. Taking initiative and making decisions become the prerogative of a few at the top. This increasing centralization affects flexibility of functioning, hampers democratization of decision-making and obstructs the emergence of new leaders and team-work thereby gets compromised. The views and concerns of younger members of the organisation are often overlooked and even suppressed. This gives way to groupism within the organisation. Quite a few VOs suffer from the absence of a second line of leadership. The process of decision-making and style of functioning do not indicate a plan to build leaders, and to inculcate healthy organisational norms.

It has also been seen that not many VOs pay adequate attention to build the target group's capacity to change and develop, and identify their own leaders. The lack of efforts to develop viable organisations of the rural poor is one reason why despite the presence of NGOs and VOs for several decades, grassroots organisations have not really come up. Absence of good grassroots VOs affects genuine empowerment of the poor.

A low salary structure and inability to provide a career ladder limits the ability of VOs to recruit and retain qualified and trained staff needed for several types of activities. Paid workers of VOs often have a mixed set of attitudes: some are genuinely interested and committed while others perceive this as an interim arrangement till a better alternative emerges. The absence of a career ladder results in a larger turnover. This naturally tends to affect the functioning of the VOs.

Poor maintenance of records and accounts and lack of attention to organisation-building through motivation, staff development and guidance are other problems. Most voluntary organisations lack the administrative and technical competence to prepare project proposals and apply for grants.

Uneven development of voluntary effort in different parts of the country is yet another constraint. In fact there seems to be no relation between the size of the state or its population and the number of active VOs. Several parts of the country, particularly the backward areas, suffer because of the absence of VOs which can utilize funds allocated by the government for implementing schemes through such organisations.

Despite the official policy of encouraging voluntary effort, VOs do not get real support from the bureaucracy and political leaders, their professed statements notwithstanding. From the point of view of the VOs, governmental agencies, including those at the district level and below, are not willing to shed their power and monopoly over the development programmes. They claim superior knowledge and expertise in the implementation of rural development programmes. Barring some exceptions, the attitude of these government agencies toward VOs is apathetic. They do not treat the VOs as equal partners in the process of large programme implementation. At the national or state levels there may be the best of understanding among them, but at the grassroots level, the relationship is not always promotive. The style of functioning remains bureaucratic and there is an expectation that VOs will show their obeisance in the corridors of power to get grants. The unfortunate result is that genuine grassroots level organisations get discouraged and are not able to procure grants. A large number even prefer not to depend on government funding. In recent years there has been a tendency for several spurious organisations to be set up

with the objective of getting grants from government which are often siphoned off or diverted for other purposes. Through their clout they are able to get grants even though these organisations exist only on paper. Adverse publicity about them has a fall out on the genuine organisations as well. It is now quite well known that several politicians and political parties use VOs to promote their own interests. This has become a matter of genuine concern.

There were moves, both official and non-official, in the mid 1980s to set up a Voluntary Council of India and to have a Code of Conduct for Voluntary Organisations. This was expected to help in the formulation of a coordinated policy, facilitate selection of agencies for government funding, prevent misuse of funds, and safeguard the rights, privileges and interests of the voluntary sector, specially the smaller agencies. The idea, however, ran into strong opposition from several voluntary groups as it was feared that this would lead to control and regulation of the voluntary sector and, increased bureaucratization, thus adversely affecting the functioning of organisations working with marginalized groups.

1.8 STRENGTHENING VOLUNTARY EFFORT

Now that you are familiar with the role of VOs, their strengths, and some of their problems, you should also know some of the measures that could be taken to improve the situation. In this section we shall take a look at the suggestions for promoting and strengthening voluntary effort. After going through them see if you can add some of your own.

- The leaders should, through word and deed, promote voluntary effort. Industrialists, professionals and the academic community should demonstrate their commitment in this regard. This will give them much greater insight into the development problems of the poor.
- There should be a radical change in the manner in which the bureaucracy deals with VOs. An extension oriented promotive style of functioning is very important to accomplish the objectives.
- Grants-in-aid programmes should be widely publicized among VOs and assisted in applying for these grants since many of them have little experience in this regard.
- The flow of grants-in-aid is affected if there are no agencies to take them. Hence special effort at promoting voluntary effort should be made in those states or areas where voluntary agencies are non-existent.
- The system of grants-in-aid should be streamlined and simplified. Grants must be released in time as delays create problems in providing services and paying the staff.
- VOs must make a conscious effort to improve their own organisational structures and administrative competence, including accounts and housekeeping. They must develop competence not only in problem solving and promoting development but also in motivating and sensitizing people and building capacity of the community for problem solving and sustainable development.
- There must be greater coordination among NGOs and VOs to avoid

duplication of services. A Coordinating Council of Voluntary Organisations will be useful for providing a forum for collaboration and co-operation and in jointly taking up issues of concern with the government.

- A clear training policy must be implemented by VOs, as motivation is not enough. A professional approach is always able to achieve better results.
- The larger VOs should develop appropriate personnel policies for the staff.
- Programmes of VOs must be documented and widely disseminated so that society is in a better position to assess their endeavours. This would also serve as resource material for others.

Check Your Progress III

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

1) List six problems of voluntary organisations.

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2) How can voluntary effort be strengthened in the country? List five steps.

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3) How can VOs become more viable, financially and administratively to play a more constructive and meaningful role in the development? List six approaches from your own assessment of VOs work.

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1.9 LET US SUM UP

Voluntary effort has a critical role in development as it shows how vibrant a society is in trying to solve its own problems. In this unit we discussed the concept of voluntary effort and its main features. We saw how VOs differ from

NGOs not only in the matter of their origin and sponsorship, but also in terms of their funding, autonomy, style of functioning etc. We gave a brief account of CAPART, an NGO set up by the Government of India, to promote voluntary effort and people's participation, and facilitate the development and transfer of technology relevant to rural areas.

We noted that the main sources of strength of voluntary effort are commitment and dedication, flexibility and ability to respond to local needs, close interaction with the community and innovativeness. VOs, however, have to face problems in terms of funding, concentration of decision making in the hands of a few, unattractive service conditions of paid staff, apathy of the bureaucracy, and tendency of politicians and others to use VOs for personal or political gain.

We saw that the government recognizes the complementary role of VOs and provides grants-in-aid for implementing priority development programmes. We indicated steps that need to be taken to strengthen voluntary effort such as, for instance, demonstration by the leadership of their genuine commitment to treating VOs as partners, extension oriented promotive style of functioning of the bureaucracy, simplifying grants-in-aid procedures, setting up a coordination mechanism among VOs, training of personnel and improving their organisational structure and administrative competence.

1.10 KEY WORDS

Communication	: Communication is sharing of knowledge, ideas and information among people in ways such that each person gains a common understanding of the meaning, intent and use of the message.
Extension Education	: Extending knowledge from the laboratory to the community. This knowledge may be in areas such as agriculture, animal husbandry, health, etc. Extension education has a promotive and developmental approach for building the capacity of the target group.
Memorandum of Association	: A Memorandum of Association is drawn up for the registration of a society under the Societies Registration Act.
NGO	: Non-government organisation. VOs are also NGOs, but not all the NGOs are VOs, as for instance, those initiated, sponsored, and constituted by the government.
Panchayat	: A village council. Under the <i>panchayati raj</i> legislation of different states <i>gram panchayats</i> are elected bodies and represent the lowest tier in the panchayat raj set up.

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UNIT 2 VOLUNTARY AGENCY ADMINISTRATION

Contents

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Nature and Scope of Voluntary Agency
- 2.3 Administration at the Design Stage
- 2.4 Planning and Budgeting
- 2.5 Administration at Implementation and Stabilization Stages
- 2.6 Staff Development
- 2.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 2.8 Key Words
- 2.9 Suggested Readings

2.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit aims at acquainting you with the principal administrative tasks of an administrative manager working in a voluntary rural development agency. You will be given a comprehensive understanding about programme/agency administration at the design stage, implementation stage, and the stabilization stage.

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- indicate how to start a voluntary agency;
- identify the administrative tasks and activities;
- list the steps to be taken at the stage of designing a voluntary agency;
- outline the main activities at the implementation and stabilization stage; and
- assess agency programmes.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

You know by now that voluntary agencies are non-governmental and are run by a group of concerned citizens. They work with women, senior citizens, adolescents, the disabled, the Scheduled Castes, tribal communities and other disadvantaged sections. These agencies also work in the area of environment conservation, wild-life protection, water-harvesting, pollution control as well. These agencies not only provide the services; they also generally work to build the inner strength of these vulnerable groups so that they can voice their issues and protect their interests rights. As you have seen in the previous unit, flexibility, responsiveness, and local character of the voluntary agencies make them uniquely suitable for supplementing government efforts.

Examples of Voluntary Agencies Beliefs

We believe that all people are of equal value and have the same rights, but are born into inequality of circumstance and opportunity; this can be changed.

We believe in the fundamental equality of human beings which goes beyond the essential inequality of possessions, skills and circumstances.

We believe that poverty is an injustice, that which is caused, and can be changed by human action.

Howsoever non-formal and unstructured a VO may be, it is accountable to the society at large, to the target group it serves, to government and unto itself. It has, therefore, to undertake some basic administrative tasks. This unit aims at giving you an overall picture of the day-to-day management of voluntary agencies and also discusses the major problems and issues involved in administering a voluntary agency.

Analysing NGO Trends

Firstly, the 'NGO growth factor' has been a dominant trend of the 80's – growth in the number of NGOs, growth in the volume of funding, growth in the number of resource agencies who have come to stay, growth in government funding, growth in auxiliary services (off-the-field expertise), growth in commercial development agencies, growth in the number of support institutions and centres for development studies etc.

Secondly, the transformation of youth clubs/people's organisations into projects had taken place which qualified them to receive funds from CSWB and CAPART, often to carry out a 'one time programme' thereby becoming small NGOs themselves.

Thirdly, there is a definite direction towards which all these transformations are taking place – youth clubs to small projects, small projects to medium groups, medium groups to big projects and big projects to multi-million projects. Therefore, the unsaid goal seems to be to grow to the next stage and ultimately reach the multi-million stage. Why this trend? There is a very clear role model set by some NGOs.

Fourthly, an increasing member of professionals are turning to 'off-the-field' development work. Research, evaluation and the consultancy model fits well; there is plenty of money in it. There will be a growing tendency on the part of the resource agencies to rely on them more and more for the smooth running of projects and consequently shift in the direction of policy decisions being influenced by the expert advice offered by them.

Fifthly, as the size of an NGO grows, the stakes with resource agency also increase. The resource agency cannot easily pull out after making all these investments and hence a vicious circle is created. Although resource agencies may not fully agree with the growth pattern, yet they cannot easily withdraw. The resource agencies have no mechanism by which they can arrest the growth and more importantly, they are seldom fully aware of the magnitude of growth, as it is not obligatory on the NGOs to share all their plans, transactions and programmes with them. Nor is it obligatory for resource agencies to share

with one another, their plans. So, when one eventually learns about the true size of a project, it will be too late to change course.

Sixthly, during the 80s, the government realized the inability of its machinery for effective delivery of its various schemes, popularly known as anti-poverty schemes and the initiatives taken by the government to use NGOs for its delivery system has influenced the NGOs in becoming implementers of programmes.

Seventhly, it is alleged by some that the entry of multilateral agencies like World Bank, IMF, UNDP etc. as the sub system of the global system, who have all sought to sponsor schemes and ideas that had together provided a techno-economic package influenced the NGOs, which were essentially meant to serve the interests of world capitalism. These schemes, be they in the form of a White Revolution through milk producers' cooperatives and dairy products or a Blue Revolution in the form of advanced marine research and use of technology which resulted in depleting sea resources, or a Green Revolution which advocated the use of chemicals and fertilizers to double and triple the agricultural output which largely comprises cash crops and export market oriented goods or social forestry schemes to plant on a large scale eucalyptus trees to feed the paper industry or mulberry cultivation and sericulture to provide silk in the world market, were all programmes seeking the involvement of NGOs for their successful implementation.

Positive Impact of NGOs

The foremost achievement of NGOs has been in establishing a grassroot link. Truly, after the missionaries, it was and is the NGO that has reached the villages, the tribals, the dalits, the women, the poor on a much larger scale. The difference here is while the missionary had something to preach on alternative religion, the NGO showed the people an alternative way of coping with their problems. Wherever the NGOs have spread, they have organised people into groups, be it in the name of sangams or beneficiary groups or whatever.

People are kept at the center; people are empowered; people have been made aware; people have been organised; people can resist exploitation, be it caste based or class based. People can demand their rights and get the benefits meant for them from the government.

NGO work has brought out very clearly the contradictions and the failure of the approach followed by the government to change the existing conditions of the poor. A powerful resistance is often put up to the dominant model of development.

Special focus has been given to the problems of dalits, tribals, the landless, and the plight of women and children and issues like declining water resources, ecological crisis, environmental degradation and disfunctioning of the government machinery have been brought to the forefront.

Sensitising the bureaucracy, government officials and the media to the issue of the poor, the environment and the overall functioning of the system which does not benefit the poor, has been partly accomplished.

Exploration of alternatives – alternative educational system, alternative health system, alternative power bases – all opposed to the dominant model of development, has been attempted by the NGOs.

Influencing government policy formulation and even playing a limited role in evolving schemes, however marginal they may be, within the system, cannot be a small achievement.

Limitations of NGOs

- *Crisis in vision*

A major limitation often cited is that there is no clear 'vision'. This alludes the NGOs, the support institutions, resource agencies, academic bodies or the enlightened bureaucrats. The vision is fragmented.

- *Project as an end*

Project precedes the primary task of 'people centred development', whether it is an NGO – which is either fighting for survival or building an empire as the case may be, or a resource agency – they are preoccupied with board meetings, project screening, evaluations for further funding and caught up with crisis management.

- *Isolated initiative and fragmented approach*

The need for a common perspective in limited operational belts and the need for concerted efforts among all concerned is not internalised. Therefore, the need for a concerted effort. Also, cooperation between resource agencies, between NGOs and other partners in development and finally, providing a platform for people's organisations to come together, are resisted and opposed.

- *Lack of data and area analysis*

The basic area analysis, database, clarity of approach and long-term commitment are lacking.

- *Ad hoc plan*

Though, eventually funding continues for a long time in most cases, it flows in bits and pieces, which is self-defeating, as it compels the NGOs to work within a limited time frame, rather than with a long-term, vision.

- *Project evaluation – a futile exercise*

There is no comprehensive assessment of all the partners who are involved in this process, to reflect on the outcomes.

- *Lack of strategic perspective*

Often the NGOs lack any strategic perspective for their work. One can see very few macro links to the work carried out in an area.

- *Lack of macro theory*

The NGOs usually work in their own isolated environments, totally unaware of the need for macro linkages and without any perspective or theory for accomplishing a tangible social transformation outside their immediate surroundings, not considering the relatedness of the problems to the macro forces.

- *Non-alignment – a weakness*

It is often the case with NGOs that they work in their own small little worlds without sparing any thoughts to aligning with others who are working on similar lines and working together towards their goal as a greater force.

- *Individualistic approach – a limiting factor*

This individualistic approach followed by NGOs is characteristic of the work within the NGO itself. Usually there is no shared vision or goals among the NGO staff which drastically limits the scope of their work, be it within the NGO area or in the particular area where they are working.

2.2 NATURE AND SCOPE OF VOLUNTARY AGENCY

Administrative managers of voluntary agencies engaged in rural development are continuously called upon to explain their activities to the government, to the funding agencies and to the rural people to gain acceptability. Since the administrative manager cannot for ever assume a stable and continuing base of support, s/he must ordinarily give attention to winning support for the agency's goals and existence. Administrative managers must take care not to threaten widely held community values and norms, and must try to ensure that programmes are implemented in a manner that responds to the needs it intends to serve. This process requires building capability within the agency as well. Let us first try to understand the meaning of voluntary agency administration. We then move on to the components of administrative tasks and activities.

Definition of Voluntary Agency Administration

Administrative management of a voluntary agency can be defined as a process concerned with:

- translation of agency's mandates into operational policies and programmes.
- design of organisational structure and processes through which goals can be achieved.
- securing of resources in the form of men and material.
- societal legitimization necessary for goal attainment and organisational survival.
- selection of appropriate technology.
- optimizing organisational behaviour directed towards increased effectiveness and efficiency.
- evaluation of agency's performance to facilitate systematic and continuous change and development.

Administrative Tasks and Activities

Administrative practices in voluntary agencies involves tasks and activities. Administrative tasks are those that the administrative manager must accomplish himself/herself or cause to be accomplished (i.e. get it done) in order to create and sustain an agency's functioning effectively and efficiently, whereas administrative activities are those that s/he must carry out himself/herself.

Examples of Voluntary Agencies Development Analysis

Poverty is a result of inequity in the structure of national and international economic systems.

Neglect and abuse of children's rights results from a breakdown in national and family values.

Global environment degradation is due to over-consumption in the developed countries and the necessary survival strategies of poor people in the Third World.

Examples of Voluntary Agencies Vision, Purpose and Action

We envision a world without hunger and injustice.

Our organisation works for the eradication of poverty in the world through direct community development action.

We are committed to working together with our partners to address the social, economic, political and spiritual concerns of our constituencies.

We are an organisation development consultancy which aims to contribute to the building of organisational effectiveness amongst those organisations working towards social transformation.

Our purpose is to relieve distress, poverty and avoidable suffering throughout the world.

The principal administrative tasks are :

- i) **Planning and developing the programmes:** Programmes are the instruments through which the agency accomplishes its goals and objectives. The administrative manager's tasks are to assess the needs of target groups, determine which of these needs will be met, and design programmes to meet those needs. This includes a model of action, intended outcomes, the nature of services to be provided, the persons to be served, and the manpower and financial resources required. Since planning is a continuous activity involving expansion, adjustments and modifications of the initial design, the programme design should include continuous monitoring, updating and refinement.
- ii) **Acquiring resources:** Resources are the life-blood of an agency. A critical task of the administrative manager is to continuously mobilize material, financial, manpower, and technical resources to sustain the agency's activities and programmes. Estimating the magnitude of the resources needed, identifying sources from where these resources can be sought, obtaining them, cultivating and sustaining these resources to ensure continuity and stability in the flow of resources, planning to expand the resources, and accounting for the expenditure are various activities that require the administrative manager's attention.
- iii) **Designing organisational structures and processes:** This refers to formal specification of authority, responsibility and expectations for clarity in the working relationship between staff members. Among other things, the administrative manager has to specify the division of labour, distribution of authority, and rules that govern work. Sometimes an organisational

chart, operational manual, job description and specification of communication channels serve as good tools. Grooming staff, conflict resolution, co-ordination, and devising an incentive system fall under this category of administrative tasks. Rigidity, however, has to be avoided so that flexibility and creativity are not stifled.

- iv) **Developing and maintaining staff capability:** This refers to defining skills and capabilities necessary to implement programmes, specifying educational qualifications and experience necessary, developing criteria for assessing employee performance, selecting the appropriate staff, assigning work, and developing their capabilities through supervision, team-work, in-service training, job rotation, and special assignments.
- v) **Assessing agency programmes:** This entails assessing the very conceptualization of the programme, efforts taken to implement it, efficiency of delivery system and effectiveness of the programme. Such assessment can be concurrent or periodic, depending on the need.
- vi) **Changing agency programmes:** The agency is constantly subjected to external pressures such as changing perceptions/expectations of the community at large, advancement of technology, work of other agencies, obligations and expectations of the funding agencies and so on. The dynamic interaction between the agency and these factors makes change and adjustment necessary on the part of the agency. Expansion, withdrawal of services, shifting of location, addition of new activities, modifying existing procedures/programmes are not only important but also necessary for the survival of the agency.

Arising from the administrative task mentioned above the following thirteen activities entail day to day practice.

- i) **Planning:** Projecting the future trends, taking steps to meet them, determining goals, policies and programme strategy, and scheduling them under long-term, short-term and immediate time frames are various planning activities done individually or in a committee/team/group through discussions and correspondence.
- ii) **Information processing:** Reading, recording, correspondence, reporting, reviewing, signing, telephoning, noting are examples of information processing for the purpose of maintaining organisational communication.
- iii) **Controlling:** This entails directing, regulating, approving and sanctioning through meetings, supervision, discussion, communication, etc.
- iv) **Co-ordination:** This would apply to both planning and implementation stages so that the efficiency of programme management increases.
- v) **Evaluating:** It means appraising the cost in terms of manpower, money, material and effort in relation to the tangible or intangible benefits of programmes, individual staff performance, and new ideas.
- vi) **Negotiating:** It means conferring, discussing and bargaining with a view to reach an agreement with government officials, beneficiaries, staff and others.
- vii) **Representing:** It means speaking before groups such as the press, government officials, and others for the purpose of explaining the agency's work and advocating the interest of the beneficiaries.

- viii) **Staffing:** This entails recruiting, selecting, appointing, promoting, assigning and transferring both paid staff and volunteers who will be implementing the programmes.
- ix) **Supervising:** Explaining assignments, rules and procedures, taking initiative, guiding, directing, training and delegating are a part of supervisory responsibilities.
- x) **Allocating space and supplying:** It involves supply of equipment, stationery, and other material required for programme implementation.
- xi) **Ancillary activities:** These include attending or taking part in meetings or activities that are closely related to the main interests of the agency but do not form part of the main work. Such activities include, lobbying for a legislation or protesting a decision which adversely affects the community.
- xii) **Direct service:** It consists of providing services as per the agency's mandate.
- xiii) **Budgeting:** It is drawing up in financial terms the income and expenditure covering the activities of the entire agency.

Check Your Progress I

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.
b) Compare your answers with the text.

1) List the objectives of voluntary agency administration.

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2) What are the principal administrative tasks ?

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Activity I

Visit a voluntary agency and describe briefly the main administrative tasks it performs. Also, give your comments.

2.3 ADMINISTRATION AT THE DESIGN STAGE

General Meeting

A General Meeting of a VO is a meeting of all the members of the organisation. Normally only one general meeting is held in a year to discuss and approve important matters like approval of audited accounts, appointment of auditors, review of activities during the year. This meeting is called Annual General Meeting (AGM).

All organisations are required to hold an AGM once in a year. It is normally conducted within six months from the end of the financial year and all the activities and accounts for the previous financial year are placed. Apart from the annual meetings, general meetings can also be called during the year if the circumstances so demand. All general meetings other than the AGM are normally called as Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM).

In a general meeting all the members of the organisation have a right to participate. Therefore all the decisions of enduring significance should be taken in a general meeting.

Board Meeting/Governing Body Meeting

The meeting of the governing body of an organisation is held more frequently to take administrative decisions. Normally one such meeting should be held in every three months. The governing body meetings are very important for the management of an organisation.

Notice

A notice of every meeting is required to be given in writing. Care should be taken to provide for the length of the notice while framing the bye-laws of the organisation. In the absence of any time limit of notice in the bye-law, it is desirable to give 21 days notice for a general meeting and 7 days notice for a governing body meeting.

Agenda

Alongwith the notice of a meeting; it is desirable to enclose the list of items to be discussed, such list is known as AGENDA. It is very important that the agenda of a meeting is sent in advance preferably with the notice, it helps a member to prepare for the meeting. Issue of a meticulous agenda in advance shows the transparency and democratic functioning of an organisation.

Quorum

The term quorum implies the minimum number of members that must be present to make the proceedings of a meeting valid. Normally the bye-laws of an organisation specify the quorum required for different meetings.

If the quorum is not available in the meeting then the meeting should be adjourned. Normally the meeting is adjourned to the same day of the next week, at the same time and place. In the adjourned meeting even if a quorum is not present, the meeting is held as a valid meeting.

It may be noted that proxies are not permissible for the determination of quorum in a meeting.

Proxy

Proxy refers to a person or a representative empowered to attend a meeting on behalf of a member. Any member of an organisation who is entitled to attend and vote at meetings is also entitled to appoint a proxy has to carry an authorization from the member entitled to attend the meeting should authorize his/her representative in writing in a proxy form.

A proxy form should be deposited in advance at the registered office of the organisation at least two days before the date of the meeting.

Proxy should preferably be avoided in a voluntary organisation and be used in general meetings only.

Minutes

Minutes is the formal record of the proceedings of the meeting. It is important to record the summary of the proceedings of the meeting in a written form. A minutes book can be of loose sheets chronologically bound together or a bound register. The pages of the minutes should be consecutively numbered.

Minutes of the previous meetings is usually read and confirmed at the beginning of the meeting. The confirmed minutes is signed by the chairman and subsequently it cannot be altered or corrected.

All the members are required to sign in an attendance register during the meeting, but the members can also sign in the minutes.

Resolutions

A resolution is a format expression of the decision taken by the members in a meeting. It is required to specifically mention the decision or opinion in the shape of a resolution alongwith the number of members voting in favour and against that particular resolution.

There are two kinds of resolutions: (i) General Resolution where a simple majority is required to pass, (ii) Special Resolution, where a higher percentage of support is expected to pass the resolution. Normally the support of 3/4th of the members present is sufficient for a special resolution. However one should verify its bye-laws for the numbers required to pass a special resolution.

You would be curious to know the various administrative functions at the design stage. A voluntary agency, as you are aware, gets started through the initiative of a person or group of persons who share the idea with like minded persons to mobilize their support and give it a concrete shape. This proposal is then discussed with a larger group of persons and later group of persons and later put up to community leaders and potential sponsors for obtaining their support. The entire process involves the following steps :

- formulation of project proposal
- registration of the voluntary agency
- mobilizing support
- acquiring funds

Let us look at the registration procedure will be discussed in detail later in unit 5

Formulation of Project Proposal

Germane to a project proposal is the identification of a need expressed by people or creating an awareness of a need felt important by an external agency. Sometimes, people do not express their need in specific terms. They may come with problems asking for help or they may simply put up with it as something ordained by destiny.

There are a number of ways to systematically assess community needs. Even a single case can trigger an interest and an initiative can be taken based on it. Existing research reports, feedback from grassroots level workers of existing

agencies, enquiries from potential beneficiaries, requests from local leaders, or a community crisis such as floods can provide the necessary justification for initiating a project.

Assessment of community needs will help to identify the objectives that an agency should pursue. Objectives are precise statements of intention that can be translated into pragmatic programmes. As far as possible, it is better to set a manageable number of objectives, say four or five, as an agency can easily lose a sense of direction when it pursues a multiplicity of objectives. It is better to have objectives which are inter-linked and, mutually supporting to obtaining better results. For instance, a voluntary agency engaged in rural development may wish to undertake agricultural programmes, educational programmes, health services, extension of credit, forestry and so on.

Objectives indicate what is to be done, but not how. An important element in a project proposal is determining the way the objectives will be achieved. In development work, specification of means is as important as the ultimate goals to be achieved. An important question in this regard is whether the agency is going to foster dependency on the part of the beneficiaries, or will they be empowered with information and capabilities with which they can help themselves. You must have heard of the remark that it is better to teach fishing to people than give fish as dole since while the former builds her/his capacity to be self-reliant the latter makes her/him dependent.

The actual method of work, the criteria for giving financial assistance, the way it will be decided, who will benefit and such other important aspects of the programme strategy will need to be clarified by the agency. For instance, analysis of the conditions under which agricultural labourers will participate in a mass boycott, the conditions under which the tribal leadership will emerge, the factors that will motivate their women to protest against sexual harassment by the landlord and planning of ways to meet the situation, need to be spelt out. Similarly, the strategy to be adopted by the voluntary agency to enable women's participation in the labour market in large numbers that will enhance critical consciousness of their economic interests will have to be indicated.

The design should next spell out the organisational design and structure. The organisational chart, the type of paid staff and volunteers required, legal status of the agency etc. will have to be indicated.

Having specified the programme and organisational design, the proposal should mention the estimated cost of running the programme, the various types of resources that will be needed and the sources from which the resources will be mobilized.

The proposal should also explain who the potential beneficiaries will be, the nature of benefits, the delivery system, the periodicity of assessing the performance of the agency, and other aspects of monitoring and evaluation.

The project design should be discussed with the community leaders, experts, social workers and the staff. The final step in formulation requires the proposal to be approved by the agency.

Mobilizing Support

The voluntary agency, if it is to work successfully, needs to mobilize support

not only of the community that it seeks to serve but also of organisations, both governmental and non-governmental, with whom it will interact or whose functions have a bearing on its work. Several agencies think that if the services it provides are good, support will automatically come. Apart from this being a short-sighted view, there would be other groups/agencies/institutions who may have reservations about the agency's purpose and the functions. In the first place, it will be necessary to identify the agencies/persons whose support would be helpful. Thereafter a well drawn up strategy on how the support of the client group, the community, the village leaders and influential persons, governmental functionaries and others will be obtained, prepared, discussed and implemented. It is quite possible, that there would be indifference, and even opposition, in some quarters. That makes such an effort all the more necessary.

Acquiring Resources

A voluntary agency may receive financial support from different sources. At the planning stage itself it should be decided which sources of financial support will be accepted. The sources can be governmental, non-governmental or international.

Governmental sources of funding can be local government, state government or central government. A number of ministries/departments can be approached. Government grants are usually annual though a longer commitment of grant-in-aid is possible. These are given to agencies that are registered and meet the criteria of grant-in-aid.

When an agency is applying to the government for grants it is required to furnish audited statements of :

- income and expenditure in the previous year, and a few years preceding it.
- receipts and payments in the previous year, and a few years preceding it.
- balance sheet in the previous year and a few years preceding it.

A number of other documents such as the annual report, names and designations of office-bearers, date of last elections of office-bearers, etc. have to be furnished.

Non-governmental agencies from where financial support can be received can be big business houses, private trusts and individual donations.

It may be necessary for the agency to organise fund-raising events from time to time. This often requires professional help. It is possible that the agency's activities can be financed fully or partly by the interest derived from its own endowments/corpus. The activities can be supported to some extent also by the fees charged for the services rendered.

Voluntary agencies can also receive funds from international organisations. There are different types of international funding:

- UN organisations and inter-governmental organisations which work only through national/state governments.
- World Bank/Asian Development Bank which sometimes stipulate that the project for which it gives loans should be implemented through voluntary agencies.

- Foreign aid-giving agencies which work under bilateral agreements. Funds from these organisations are routed through government approved agencies and follow government guidelines.
- Foreign non-governmental organisations.
- Foreign individual donors.

Dependence on external funding beyond reasonable limits can be counterproductive as there is likely to be a considerable degree of uncertainty in regard to flow of funds on sustained basis. Besides, it may reflect in varying degree the donor agency's priorities.

Budgeting and Audit

Agencies have to prepare a budget so that they are able to balance the inflow of funds (income) in a particular year with the outflow (expenditure).

A budget is a statement giving financial allocations for different items or activities. The recurring and non-recurring items are listed separately. Although an annual budget is necessary for carrying out the activities in each financial year, a three or five year estimate is also prepared in advance to indicate the growth of activities and the demands of funds.

The budget reflects the objectives of the agency in financial terms. It is also intended to serve as a means of control, a yardstick to measure the performance against predetermined targets and standards. It is the medium through which the staff are brought together for making a concerted plan of action within available means. A budget calls for and ensures financial discipline.

Every agency should have a system of good financial accounting and auditing to ensure the financial and administrative health of the organisation. This more necessary if the agency receives funding from outside. An agency has to furnish periodically to the funding agencies the progress of expenditure against sanctioned amount and the extent to which targets have been achieved.

Check Your Progress II

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

- 1) Indicate the points that have to be kept in view when formulating a project proposal.

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- 2) Indicate the source from which a voluntary agency can financial resources.

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Activity 1I

- 1) Visit a voluntary agency. Find out the procedure for applying for financial support from government agencies.
- 2) Contact some voluntary agencies and then find out their sources of financial support.

2.4 PLANNING AND BUDGETING

Introduction

Initial planning of a project programme is very important. Inadequate planning is a persistent problem in development projects/programmes. It is observed that quite often planning documents are specific and clear as to the physical and financial inputs, between personnel and activities lacks in thorough assessment of the overall objectives, the target groups and the external factors determine success or failure of a project/programme.

Deficiencies in planning are usually reflected in inadequate monitoring systems. During implementation, there is often too much emphasis on physical results, and too little on policy issues and the effects of the project / programme on the target groups/community at large.

Planning is the most important part of a project, it is the stage of conceptualization and laying down of the future agenda in a potentially feasible seed form. This task may involve the following factors though it is a highly subjective issue :

- Generation of ideas
- Scouting for project ideas
- Preliminary screening of ideas
- Feasibility of promising ideas
- Survey of facts and figures
- Financial analysis – developmental returns
- Economic analysis – cost/benefit in the organisational context
- Ecological analysis – environmental impacts
- Technical analysis wherever necessary
- Determining overall worth of the project
- Preparation of funding proposal

Financial Planning

All the planning exercise have to go hand in hand with the requirement and availability of funds. All the projects and programmes have to be conceived in financial terms. The financial aspect of planning is broadly known as budgeting.

A Project/Programme entails various kinds of expenditure such as :

- i) Capital expenditure
- ii) Expenditure on programmes
- iii) Administrative costs

A project may require various kinds of financial outlay over the entire life of the project. A project or programme may range from less than one year to six or seven years or more. It is very important to understand that one has to plan and anticipate both the receipts and the payments required at each stage, during the entire life of the project.

For example, if certain funds are received in a certain year and the requirement for those funds is in the succeeding year, then one has to account for the interest which would be earned on those funds during the intervening period. Similarly if an asset is purchased in the initial year, one has to account for its utility available over the entire span of the project.

Under such circumstances it is very important to understand the capital nature of expenditure and the intricacies involved in the decision making in this regard.

Capital Expenses: An Overview

Capital Expenditure: Capital expenditure in common parlance is an expenditure of enduring nature. In other words it refers to an expenditure whose utility is not limited to a small period of time but years. There is much divergence of opinion and practice in the classification of expenditure between Capital and Revenue. However, the following indicators have been laid down as establishing the fact that the expenditure is of capital nature:

- a) Any expenditure which is undertaken for the purpose of increasing surplus either positively by way of increasing earning or negatively by decreasing working expenditure.
- b) If the expenditure, whether increasing the earning capacity or not, produces an asset comparatively permanent in character.

Capital expenditure may, therefore, be described as an expenditure resulting in the increase/acquisition of an asset or increase in the earning capacity/efficiency of a business organisation.

Planning of a project generally involves planning of capital expenses over a period of time. Therefore it is very important to understand the importance and the problems involved in taking decision regarding such expenditure.

Importance: Decisions about capital expenditures are considered important because of the following reasons:

- **Enduring effect:** All capital expenditure are made for a long period and their utility continues for years. Therefore one has to anticipate the need and effectiveness of such expenditure throughout the duration of the project.
- **Cannot be reversed:** Normally a capital expenditure once made is irreversible in nature. Any assets or equipment purchased cannot be disposed off immediately without incurring losses except in few exceptional circumstances. Therefore a wrong decision in this regard may defeat or dilute the basic purpose of a project.
- **Huge investment:** Unlike revenue expenditure, capital expenditure normally involves substantial amount of money. Therefore, one should be extremely careful in taking such a decision, because if an incorrect

expenditure is made which is beyond the means of project, it may ultimately prove disastrous for the project.

Problems: Whenever decisions about capital expenditure are required to be taken, the following problems generally arise:

- **Measurement problem:** In revenue expenditure, one can easily measure and compare the cost and benefits. Contrarily it is very difficult to measure and analyse the cost and benefit of a capital expenditure spread over the life of the concerned asset.
- **Uncertainty:** Since a capital expenditure is for a long period and its benefits extend into the future, it becomes extremely difficult to predict its exact utility in future. The world is changing at a very fast pace and the rate of obsolescence of goods and technology is always a threat.
- **Spreading the project over assets life:** The cost and benefit associated with a capital investment decision normally extends to a period of 2-10 years as far as development projects are concerned. At times it becomes extremely difficult to match the utility span of a capital expenditure with the span of the project. The utility of an asset may be more or less than the exact span of the project. Therefore it is essential to ensure that the utility/life of the asset is as close as possible to the span of the project.

Budgeting

A budget is the financial translation of a project plan. All the planned expenditures and receipts are estimated as per the budget and consequently the feasibility of a project is judged. Budgets have two aspects:

- i) The sources of funds.
- ii) Activities and expenses.

Budget is a very important tool of financial management. It helps in estimating in advance the probable receipts and payments and in comparing the variances after the completion of the project activities. In other words budget is the financial parameter on the basis of which the project activities are conducted. After completion of the activities the actual expenditures are compared with the budgeted expenditure, the variances help in understanding the need of or improving the system in terms of budgeting as well as implementation.

2.5 ADMINISTRATION AT IMPLEMENTATION AND STABILIZATION STAGES

Let us now see the points to be kept in mind at implementation and stabilization stages.

Administration at Implementation Stage

The administrative process at the implementation stage is primarily conditioned by the agency's need to establish clientele and constitute a system of reciprocal relations with groups and organisations in the environment. At the same time, addition of staff to work in the agency introduces an element of accountability in the agency's performance and a need to find ways to effect greater consistency, co-ordination, and control.

It is necessary to build programme competence, define service domain and reduce uncertainty in inter-agency and intra-agency relations at this stage. Three major tasks in this regard are:

- attracting clientele and establishing rapport with the community and other agencies;
- structuring the agency so as to promote efficiency, co-ordination and accountability; and
- developing appropriate policies for personnel selection and development of staff competence.

Some of the general principles to be observed during the implementation stage are:

- consult and involve local people at every stage.
- give sufficient notice.
- explain the purpose clearly and repeat it as often as necessary.
- have the meeting conducted, to the extent possible, by local people.
- record the proceedings in a way that everyone will understand and agree.
- assign follow-up work.
- reconvene meetings at short intervals.
- keep participation open.
- get the first activity inaugurated formerly so as to attract attention widely.
- use simple words and symbols familiar to the community.
- make the outcome of the activity/benefit tangible, immediate and appropriate.
- employ local people as far as possible, employment of outside professionals being resorted to only to the extent absolutely necessary.
- keep the number of staff employed at the minimum to reduce the incidence of continuing liabilities.
- use local know-how.
- keep expenses to the minimum and avoid ostentations expenditure at all costs.
- have openness in communication between members of the staff and between agency and the community.
- devise simple procedures and forms that are based on trust.
- promote self-confidence.
- issue instructions which are clear, and take care to see that it should be possible to carry them out.
- observe time schedules and encourage its observance.
- select beneficiaries on the basis of rational criteria derived from the objectives of the programme.
- encourage staff and volunteers to learn and build teamwork.
- exercise close supervision in a matter which is promotive and builds confidence.

Administration at Stabilization Stage

As an agency enters the stabilization stage, the question of survival is no longer a matter of prime importance. Well settled rules, regulations, job specifications and performance standards are the hall-mark of a stable agency. Staff maintenance at this stage is concerned with the kinds of supervision and leadership that will promote satisfactory levels of performance and job satisfaction.

At the stabilization stage, the effectiveness of agency should be assessed and regular channels for accountability established. The cumulative effect of external demand for effectiveness on the morale of the agency staff will have to be moderated with the help of buffering and neutralizing mechanisms.

Development of a proper monitoring system of programme implementation is also a major area of concern.

Innovations and improvements can be introduced as a device for maintaining high morale and accountability. Procedural, programmatic, and basic changes can be initiated. The exact shape, nature and procedure of introducing change should be decided on a participatory basis. At this stage, choice of issues for response, choice of persons to be involved and other matters need to be considered. The basic philosophy of the agency should determine the choices availed. Thus, stabilization stage is not a static stage. On the other hand, it is at this stage when the agency enjoys a secure position that attention can be given to development and innovation.

2.6 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

All agencies have now to recruit paid staff as well. The recruitment, retention, and development of staff has been one of the major problems faced by VOs. Under the banner of voluntarism, VOs expect their paid staff to render dedicated and self-less service with unattractive salaries and service conditions. Those who join these VOs are often forced to accept such conditions as they do not have a better alternative. In some cases ad hoc responses play a decisive role in the matter of creation of posts and appointments. As a result, VOs face problems in administering programmes. Staff development has been one of the low priority areas of VOs. Let us take a look at some of the important aspects of managing personnel.

Type of Personnel Needed

The organisation's goals, objectives and the kinds of programmes will decide the type of personnel needed. These are usually of two types viz., administrative personnel and programme personnel.

The administrative personnel may include the personnel working in the finance section, the clerical staff, etc. The programme staff would include the programme coordinators and other who are directly involved in the implementation of programmes. They include the technical personnel.

Recruitment

Most of the VOs do not follow proper recruitment procedures. This affects their functioning. For recruitment to be effective, it is necessary to frame the

recruitment rules setting out the qualifications, mode of recruitment, scale of pay, etc. A job description is also necessary. Vacancies have then to be announced. The selection process starts with the screening of applications, short-listing the candidates, conducting a written test if necessary, constituting a selection committee, interviewing the candidates and making the appointments. Usually a panel of names is drawn up in order of merit and appointment letters are sent accordingly.

Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is the systematic assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of an employee's performance of assigned tasks during a specified period. It usually takes into account factors such as knowledge, understanding, skills, achievements initiative, ability to relate to other persons in the organisation and to the clients, etc. Performance appraisal help the agency to improve efficiency and to identify in an objective way employee who do better than others.

Training

Training is now recognized as an investment in staff development. It not only increases knowledge, understanding and skills, but also provides better motivation. Voluntary agencies are now called upon to implement a wide range of programmes and engage in some degree of social engineering as well. Workers have constantly to interact with people, communicate with them and function as change agents. Training helps not only in career development and efficiency of the employees, but also improves the agency's performance.

Before conducting any training programme for the staff, careful planning of syllabus, resource persons, duration of training, and the learning outcomes, are important. A number of innovative training methodologies are now available which use a participatory multi-media approach.

Check Your Progress III

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

1) What are the main areas of concern at the stabilization stage?

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2) What are the main functions of an agency's budget?

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Activity III

Visit a rural development agency, and request for the audited income and expenditure statement, receipt and payment statement and the balance sheet. Study the entire expenditure and discuss with the person in charge of accounts

in the agency how these statements reflect the agency's activities and performance.

2.7 LET US SUM UP

In this unit we first discussed the meaning and scope of voluntary agency administration. We saw that the principal administrative tasks are planning and developing the programmes, acquiring resources, designing organisational structures and processes, developing and maintaining staff capability, and assessing and changing agency programmes. We also considered the different types of activities that arise from these tasks.

We stated that voluntary agencies typically evolve through several stages overtime, each of which is characterized by a set of administrative tasks. Each stage poses different problems and dilemmas and demands differential attention. The three stages of change and development are design stage, implementation stage and stabilization stage.

Design stage is the initial stage of development. It commences with conceptualization of an idea, identification of a need/problem/issue. This stage is marked by a preoccupation with translating the concern/policy into concrete programmes of action and in getting legal recognition of the agency as an independent entity.

The implementation stage commences as the agency swings into operation. Scheduling day-to-day activities, devising various procedures and channels of communication to promote efficiency, coordination and accountability, negotiating exchanges, recruiting and placing staff are major administrative preoccupations at this stage. Stabilization stage is concerned with assessing the activities of the agency, instituting changes where change is required, maintaining other activities of the agency, ensuring continuity of the agency, and resolving conflicts.

We saw that staff development which is generally neglected by voluntary agencies has to be an important area of concern. Recruitment, performance appraisal and training need careful attention for improving the agency's performance and the motivation of the staff.

2.8 KEY WORDS

Elites	: Influential section of a population.
Non-recurring expenditure	: Expenditure which does not recur, i.e. incurred once.
Recurring expenditure	: Expenditure which recurs, i.e. incurred often.
Staff development	: Identification of manpower needed in relation to activities to be performed, salary structure, recruitment appraisal of performance, promotion/carrer ladder, and training.

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UNIT 3 DEVELOPING COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMMES AND PROJECTS

Contents

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Meaning
- 3.3 Planning Community Based Programmes
- 3.4 Programme Formulation
- 3.5 Working with Community Group
- 3.6 Let Us Sum Up
- 3.7 Key Words
- 3.8 Suggested Readings

3.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit aims at familiarizing you with the process and methods involved in developing programmes and projects that are community based. After reading this unit you will be able to :

- outline the concept of community based programmes;
- indicate the steps involved in identifying community needs;
- state the process of identifying beneficiaries and resources; and
- describe the principles of working with communities.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

While planning and developing rural development programmes, the government or a voluntary agency may follow different approaches. You have seen that very often government schemes and programmes are prepared at the state capital and are handed down to district and block level for implementation, following the same schematic pattern. Such programmes usually end up by remaining government activities as the beneficiaries themselves are neither involved nor have access to planning/decision making processes and systems. There is little scope for flexibility to make changes in response to local needs. We see today passive dependence on government initiatives and the implementation of programme according to the government's perception of what is good and necessary for the community. The people, for whom these programmes are meant, participate only as beneficiaries.

In this unit we shall discuss how to develop a rural development programme that is community based. First, we shall analyse the meaning of a community based programme. Secondly, we shall learn how to plan a community based programme. Finally, we shall discuss the processes involved in formulating a

programme followed by a brief analysis on the techniques in working with the community.

3.2 MEANING

The term community has already been discussed and is not unfamiliar for you. You may recall from Block 1 of Course 1, that a community is a group in which the members live in such a way that they share the basic conditions of a common life. A community has a territorial base, a strong sense of identity and deep sense of togetherness. One's life may be lived wholly within it. One's social relationships may be found within the community.

A community based programme does not necessarily connote a programme which is universal in its coverage and aims to benefit all or most of its members. It implies a programme that is planned, initiated, sustained and implemented with the participation of the community. In other words, it connotes people's involvement and participation at every stage. A programme organised by an outside agency, even if it is a VO, will not be community based if it does not follow the above criteria.

The assumptions behind community based programmes are the following :

Bottom-up Planning

There are limits to the extent to which outsiders can have insight into the problems of a community. Local people too have capabilities in planning, activating and involving the cross-section of the community in broad-based decision making, using a consensus-based approach and team-work in implementation. It is essential that the creativity of the total community is mobilized for effective developmental process.

Need-Based

The planning of community based programmes should stem from the needs of the community. There may be some needs which are felt by the community. There may be others which have not been identified by the community but which experts feel are critical for the community, for instance, environmental sanitation and preventive health. In such cases it would be necessary to sensitize the community to such needs.

Local Resources

However scarce the local resources may be, their mobilization and utilization are essential. Local resources can be in the form of money, material or manpower. Availability of local resources can not only draw funds from outside but also help in the sustenance of the programme when such outside funding ceases.

Participation

Participation by the community is critically important because it initiates further action through democratization of decision making. Participation is the keystone for effective work. Involvement of local people brings local knowledge and expertise into use and thus reduces unnecessary dependence on technocrats and outsiders. It empowers people to take action collectively.

3.3 PLANNING COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMMES

The process of planning plays a vital role in the development of community-based programmes. Community organisation practitioners use planning skills, but too often these skills are seen as being narrow and technical, creating a gap between the planner and the people. Time after time, you will find that as a practitioner you will be called upon to draw a representative group which can be involved in goal determination, programme development, programme implementation and evaluation. Since planning precedes action and forms the basis for the other stages of community-based programmes, in this section we shall discuss the various steps required for developing them.

Approaching the Community

The first step in planning a community-based programme is to ‘enter’ the community. Very often, when an outside agency ‘enters’ a community it creates speculation and suspicion in the minds of the local people. Hence, ‘entry’ into the community is to be planned very carefully. The following are some of the ways of entering the community.

Meeting Community Leaders: If possible, the community leaders are identified before deciding how and when to approach them. In a community, generally two kinds of leadership exist, viz., formal and non-formal. The former is elected or chosen by the community through a formal prescribed procedure, as for example, the *pradhan* of the Gram Panchayat. The latter can be a teacher or religious leader or others who, by virtue of their social, religious or other factors come to be regarded as leaders. The community worker must meet both types of leaders and try to explain the purpose of meeting and win their confidence.

Preparation of the Community: At this stage the community leader assisted by the community worker introduces the idea of starting a community-based programme to the members through meetings and discussions. The broad purposes are discussed and doubts/anxieties clarified. In order to foster wide acceptance, all groups are invited.

Community Diagnosis: Though the problems and needs of the community might emerge in community meetings and discussions, it is often difficult to assess their magnitude and their complexity. A properly planned survey, designed through community participation conducted by a trained person will provide a better perspective on the community problems. While this could lack the rigour of social science research, it would nonetheless give a reasonably good factual picture. This would help not only to know about the conditions of the community and to assess the needs but also enable local leaders and the people to be better informed about their conditions and the problems faced by them.

The following guidelines can be used for community diagnosis through a sample survey :

- decide the objectives of the survey.
- determine the principal areas of inquiry.
- prepare a simple schedule suited to local needs and adapted to the skills of the interviewers.

- make known to the leaders the purpose and the reasons for collecting data.
- select the interviewers from the local community and give them a brief orientation and training in collection the information.
- gather the information through the schedule and through interviewing people who are in a position to give information on some key areas.
- tabulate the data.
- write up the report.

Need Identification

If the results of the survey are disseminated in the community, it can generate a lot of interest, discussion and activity and pave the way for identifying programmes needs.

Community meetings and informal exchanges with members would also help. It is not feasible to tackle all the problems simultaneously. At the same time, the question arises as to which need or needs are the most important because it is desirable to begin a programme with a relevant activity important to a significant number of people. Therefore, the process of how to prioritize the needs assumes importance. The following steps can be followed:

Presenting the problems to the community: The problems identified are reported back to the community in a form understandable to them. It can be presented orally or in writing. Oral presentation to community leaders provides a good opportunity for discussion of the major problems identified by the survey and expressed in community meetings as well.

Determining the criteria: Some of the criteria which can be used to identify problems requiring immediate attention and action are the incidence and gravity of the problem, groups primarily affected, the number of persons affected, the importance that the community places on tackling the problem, and the likely consequences if the problem is not tackled immediately.

Choosing problems to work on: As we have mentioned earlier, it is not always feasible to work on all the priority problems simultaneously. Nor is it easy to have unanimity or to reach at a consensus. Usually, the problems chosen are the ones which are the most pressing as perceived by the majority and which are amenable to local solutions given available resources and the resources that can be mobilized. In some cases the following procedure can be followed:

- The priority problems are presented to the key members of the community with an explanation as to how these were identified. Ensuring active involvement of the key members is important as it would make the decision making process more easy and meaningful and increase their commitment to the programme.
- The members of the community are asked to rank the problems as most immediate, immediate, not immediate.
- The problem which is identified as most immediate by most members can be selected for priority action.

An alternative method is to let the key members talk among themselves, decide, and then inform the community. The first method is preferable for evolving a consensus through discussion and debate. It is necessary in either case to ensure that powerful interests do not dominate and the interests of the disadvantaged and the women are safeguarded.

Check Your Progress 1

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.
b) Compare your answers with the text.

1) How are programme needs identified?

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2) How would you approach an unfriendly if not hostile community?

(*Hint* : See the text which describes the usual method. Use your knowledge and experience or those of others and write down the steps for cases such as the above.)

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3.4 PROGRAMME FORMULATION

In the previous section we have seen how to select or prioritize problems which need immediate action. In this section let us discuss the various processes involved in formulating an action plan or a programme.

Before going into the process of formulating a programme or project proposal let us look at the kinds of policy and inter-organisational issues that need to be considered :

- 1) Which are the major groups, organisations, institutions concerned with the problem? What is the nature of interaction between these groups and what are the forces impelling or preventing them from working together?
- 2) Which parties/groups have been identified as sources of support or opposition?
- 3) What general approaches have been used?
- 4) What are the major material and non-material resources available locally? What are the pre-conditions and how are they monitored?
- 5) What resources are currently being used for coping with the problems?
- 6) What alternative solutions could be developed that may be acceptable?
- 7) What is the outcome expected by the community?

Setting Objectives

Having decided on the problems to be tackled, the objectives have to be clearly defined as a first step while formulating a programme. Objectives are derived from the goals which are stated in broader terms and have a longer time perspective. Objectives are precise statements of intentions that can be translated into pragmatic programmes. As far as possible, it is better to set a manageable number of objectives (not exceeding say four or five) which can be achieved within a reasonable time frame. When objectives are quantified in a time frame, these are called targets.

Determining Programme and Service Components

The objectives will determine the programme and service components. It is important that these are prepared in sufficient detail so that monitoring becomes easy. Some of the aspects that need to be covered are determining the beneficiary groups, the criteria for selection of beneficiaries, the services that will be provided, the strategy for accessibility of the beneficiaries, the use of the services by them, and the delivery system.

Identification of Beneficiaries

Identifying the beneficiaries is an important but at the same time a very complex task specially when subsidies/loans or other forms of assistance are involved, or when local power structures wish this to be done in a manner which furthers their interests or does not empower others in a manner which will challenge their dominance. Quite often, evaluation of development programmes indicates that selection of beneficiaries was not done according to the criteria laid down for the programme. Various methods of selecting beneficiaries can be used. We mention some here:

- The survey helps to identify the beneficiaries.
- The official or agency entrusted with the task of implementing the programme prepares the list on its own by applying the criteria laid down in the scheme.
- Leaders of different groups are asked to suggest names.
- Selection is done through an open meeting in which all are asked to participate.

If any of the first three methods is followed and after the preliminary list has been prepared, it is best to discuss this in an open meeting so that ineligible persons can be identified and those who are eligible but were left out, can be included. This procedure is particularly important where subsidies or loans at a concessional rates or other benefits are involved.

Setting Milestones

Setting milestones means indicating the stages needed to accomplish the stated objective/goals. This is important in formulating a programme. The following points are to be considered:

- Select the tasks needed to accomplish the programme objectives.
- Identify the difficult tasks and the possible obstacles that might arise at the time of action.

Voluntary Action

- Decide on when each action is to be carried out.
- Identify the tasks that can be undertaken by members of the community and/or the possible ways in which the community can participate in implementing the programme.
- Assign responsibilities as to who will do what, and when. The stated actions can be written in the following format.

Goal	Milestones	Who will do it	Target	Dates
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While specifying the actions needed for achieving the objectives, the agency must be very clear as to whether it is going to foster dependency on the part of the members of the community or they will be empowered with information with which they can help themselves in the long run. This is one of the important principles of developing a community-based programme.

Identifying the Resources and Preparing the Budget Estimate

The next step in programme formulation is the identification of the resources, i.e., resources available locally and those needed from outside the community. Given the economic conditions of rural village communities, expectation of financial contribution by the local people could be a sensitive issue. For example, when the majority of workers in a village community get a meager wage of say Rs. 12 per day only for a few months in a year, we cannot request them to contribute towards meeting the full or a significant cost of the programme. At the same time, in order to make them feel “we do our own programme”, it is essential that their contribution, whether in cash or in kind, is obtained even if it is meager. The resources of the community might include materials, equipment, funds, skills, technical knowledge and manpower.

A budget estimate has to be prepared indicating how much money is allocated and for what purposes. You have read in the previous unit about the functions of an agency’s budget. Before preparing a budget estimate, a realistic estimate of the extent of finances that can be mobilized is essential as there are some assured grants or incomes, and some which are somewhat uncertain. The budget estimate should be presented to the community. Over optimism about funds is not desirable, specially if there is the danger of the programme getting to be stopped midway. Similarly, for recurring expenditure, a long-term perspective of resource availability is necessary.

Planning Programme Implementation

The following aspects ought to be taken into consideration while planning for

programme implementation with the objective of making the programmes acceptable to the community and achieving the desired goals:

- Finding able and willing local leaders to assume responsibility for launching the programme.
- Setting up committees, which will include representatives from the community, to supervise and review the programme.
- Identifying organisations within and outside the community to assist in the implementation of the programme.
- Dividing the tasks and assigning them to different persons and as far as possible involving members of the community to carry out the key tasks.
- Establishing a suitable recording and reporting system of the ongoing activities.
- Deciding on the type and number of beneficiaries to be covered initially.
- Ensuring the availability of finance at least for the first year.
- Finalizing the duration of the entire programme and the time required for each activity.

Check Your Progress II

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

1) Give an example of an objective and a target based on it.

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2) How can beneficiaries be identified ? Which method would you prefer?

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3.5 WORKING WITH COMMUNITY GROUPS

In the preceding sections we have discussed the various processes of developing a community based programme. In our discussion we have seen that the nucleus of the community based programme is the participation of the community. In the first unit we introduced you to the concept of community participation. Here we discuss some of the salient features of community participation.

Features of Community Participation

In Unit 1 of this Block we introduced you to the concept of people's participation. Participation, as we saw, implies direct involvement of the people and involvement not through representatives. Participation must be understood in

terms of participation in decision making at all stages—planning, implementation and monitoring – so that the people can share in the benefits of development. People’s participation in the context of rural development has to be seen not only as an input to development but also as a means of empowering the rural poor to play an effective role in rural development. For developing a community-based programme, participation of people has to be recognized as an intrinsic part of the process of development rather than merely as a facilitator.

Some authors are of the view that participation, in order to be broad-based and meaningful, would imply alteration in existing social and economic structures which are incompatible with equity. Conscientisation is often considered an important step in people’s participation particularly for redressing or correcting inequalities and exploitation. Conscientisation in a simple sense means critical awareness-building. It is founded on the principle that all men and women are equal and that the learners, even the most oppressed, are capable of change and can free themselves from any form of existence which is fatalistic or deterministic. Among all the means of eliciting people’s participation, conscientisation has gained wide prominence and acceptance. The work of the Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, ‘Pedagogy of the Oppressed’ has been widely discussed in this context and has made a profound impact on scholars and social workers interested in equality and justice for the deprived.

Critical awareness-building is based on a deep humanistic concern for people. This leads the people to assess their needs from their own perspective rather than those of the powerful who have made the poor mere tools in their hands for profit and power. It implies a reawakening of the capacity of the poor to understand and analyse the causes of one’s situation and to act in order to be able to change the situation.

Types of Community Participation

As we have seen, community participation as a process involves a close interaction between the people and the functionaries. A number of ways exist by which people may join the planners and implementers and these can be assessed in terms of type of participation, its functions and location of power. As the community comes closer to decide its own life situations, the more successful will be the community-based the programme. We can think of six modes of community participation.

Modes of Community Participation in Planning and Managing Development

Guidelines for Collaboration / Integration

Identity of participants	Focus of power	Functions	Assessment in terms of direct exercise of power by the people
1) Educated group (elite) appointed by outside authorities.	Government functionaries and local elite.	Legitimizes outside plan through local elites.	Community is minimally involved in decision making.
2) Government functionaries such as Convenor of Village Development Committee	Government functionaries and local elite.	Legitimizes outside plan through local elite and implementation of outside programmes is facilitated because local elites have authority from above.	Community is minimally involved in decision making. People participate as followers or as recipients of benefits.

3)	Government functionaries consult people after plans have been drawn up.	Government functionaries	Legitimizes outside plans by making people feel that they have had a say in the matter.	Consulting the community after the plans have been decided; allows a few genuine options of participation but only as a token.
4)	Government functionaries consult people's groups from the beginning of plan.	Government functionaries and the people but the former have more power.	Allows a meeting of minds; gives people a more realistic understanding of planning need to establish priorities.	People's involvement from the beginning gives them a significant share in decision making; however, government functionaries still control the process.
5)	One or two beneficiaries are represented on the Board	As beneficiaries are few in number, the Government functionaries being in the majority have a say.	Legitimizes the concept of people's participation; simultaneously it legitimizes outsiders' control	People share decision making responsibility.
6)	Local people beneficiaries are in the majority on the Board	People have a major say in the decisions	Legitimizes peoples' power and empowers people.	Empowering people provided they do not act as pawns of outsiders.

Guidelines for Collaboration/Integration

Fundamental to community-based work is integration and close collaboration between different organisations and persons. Formal integration involves merging of different services in a pre-determined way. Informal integration involves close working relations as it develops persons even though they do not belong to the same organisation.

Some of the practice guidelines are :

- Assume that informal networks exist.
- Expect formal/informal networks to exhibit varying characteristics.
- Beware of costs.
- Organise user-related information about formal/informal network.
- Encourage informal positive attitude towards formal/informal networks.
- Analyse information about these networks.
- Work in partnership with the existing networks.
- Work with network members' needs.
- Work with groups of users and volunteers.
- Protect staff from pressures.
- Encourage sharing of information.
- Decentralize decision making and control systems.
- Consciously develop team members' skills.
- Formally identify link persons.
- Share resources.

- Arrange meetings with entire team.
- Encourage the entire team to take decisions.

Principles of Working with the Community

The following principles may serve as guidelines while trying to elicit community participation:

- **Be focused:** Clarification of goals and understanding of programme objectives is basic to working with community groups.
- **Identify the Leaders carefully:** Leadership is the single most important ingredient in successful community work and hence selection of leaders from the community should be thoughtfully and carefully done.
- **Be prepared:** Progress and movement of the programme is directly related to the adequacy of preparation before and after meetings in which decisions are made.
- **Be involved:** A climate of involvement of all members should be created for participation to being productive and effective.
- **Build support:** Support, and not supplant, the leadership.
- **Communicate:** Keep all members informed of the activities and developments at frequent intervals formally and informally.
- **Be dynamic:** Maintain a sense of progress, movement and accomplishment that is so essential for the morale and satisfaction of the community group.

Key Factors in Working with Community Groups

Let us now identify the key factors in working with community groups.

One should not get the impression that a community is homogenous, that all persons living in a community will participate in decision-making, that their participation will always be for the common good, and that no one will oppose a proposal, or that no one will enhance his self interest. More often than not, a community has factions, interest groups, competing and sometimes conflicting goals, and a power structure in which some groups or persons dominate.

Locating Centers of Power

Locating centers of power in a community is not an easy task. There are those who enjoy status because of the position they hold; there are those who have a high reputation; and there are those who have traditionally been participating in making important decisions in the community. There are various theories about power structure and locating centers of power in a community. Each group competes with others to corner as much benefits as possible. Each group will willingly and actively participate only if there are tangible benefits accruing to them. In the final analysis, it is inevitable that only few groups will participate actively.

The role of the community worker is to guide these groups and their participation in such a way that the interests of the poor and the vulnerable do not suffer.

Decision-making

Decision regarding development programmes are complicated. If decisions (not of a routine kind) are made by one person, it may be handicapped by limited information, experience and ideas. To reduce risk and to gain legitimacy, all major decisions are best taken by committees or in open meetings. Group decisions gain legitimacy because the group can be so composed as to have persons who bring to bear on the problem diverse frames of reference and viewpoints, and the group has a leader who facilitates this creative process.

Roles and Rules

All group processes involve a basic underlying structure – a framework that holds the group members together and partly accounts for order in their behaviour. Individuals who occupy certain positions in the group generally perform certain roles. These roles evolve in the group process through role differentiation. Rules in the group explain what action should be or should not be performed by members. Both roles and rules take time to evolve.

Techniques for Working with Groups

It is important to know some of the strategies/techniques for working in or with groups and making the groups work. It is useful for the community worker to be aware of them to facilitate group functioning and to detect those that are not desirable. Let us try and list these techniques :

Technique	Definition
Reasoning	Any statement using rational arguments to influence others.
Expertise	Superior knowledge or skills or experience.
Compromise	Both community worker and target group give up a part of their desired goals in order to obtain some of them.
Bargaining	Explicit statement about reciprocating favours and offering other two-way exchanges.
Persuasion	Simple statements to induce, convince or coax into action.
Simple statement	A matter-of-fact statement of one's desires.
Persistence	Pursuing firmly; repeating one's point.
Assertion	Forcefully stating one's view.
Thought manipulation	Making the target think that the agent's way is the target's own ideas.
Fait accompli	Openly doing what one wants without avoiding the target.
Hinting	Not openly stating what one wants; indirect attempts at influencing others.
Emotion alteration	Agent attempts to alter emotions of target.

Voluntary Action

Threat	Stating that negative consequences will occur if the agent's plan is not accepted. He may occasionally use facial expression or body language.
Deceit	Attempts to mislead the target into agreeing by the use of flattery or wrong information or traps.
Evasion	Doing what one wants by avoiding the persons who would disapprove.

Conducting Meetings

In Block 4 of Course I in the unit on 'Communicating with People', you learnt the principles and the methods of inter-personal communication. A meeting is a forum of inter-personal communication.

For a meeting to be conducted successfully the composition, seating arrangement, frequency and the agenda have to be carefully designed.

There are some techniques of conducting a meeting which are also useful for channelising the thinking of the group in the desired direction. Formal groups can be made to function effectively by observing the following formal procedures:

- Giving terms of reference and clarifications in writing.
- Specification of committees' authority.
- Limiting the size of the group to an optimum.
- Careful selection of chairperson.
- Appointment of a regular Secretary.
- Preparation and distribution of agenda, notes and other supporting documents several days before the meeting.
- Prescribing frequency of meetings.
- Ensuring punctuality in starting and ending the meeting.

For a smooth conduct of the meeting, the leader and the members also have to see that the objectives of the meeting are achieved. The leader of a Committee should :

- Control the garrulous.
- Draw out the silent.
- Protect the weak.
- Encourage diversity of ideas and alternative approaches even if they are conflicting.
- Watch for suggestions.
- Come to the most senior people first but at the same time give opportunity to all.

- Close on a note of achievement.
- Similarly, members should also state their position as clearly and logically as possible, and listen and ponder on others' point before their own point is pushed.
- Seek out an acceptable alternative if the discussion gets bogged down.
- Not to yield for the sake of harmony but accept a decision only if it is based on sound logic.
- Shun techniques that bypass logic merely for the sake of reducing conflict.
- Look out for different viewpoints and pull everyone to the discussion.

Leadership

The role of leaders in collective thinking, group decision making and in influencing others cannot be under-estimated. Leaders exercise influence on the group members and influence their behaviour. They are, in turn, influenced by them. This is a reciprocal process by which group members permit themselves to be influenced and motivated to facilitate attainment of mutually satisfying goals.

Many factors such as the participation rate, characteristics of the group, nature of the task, and dynamics of the organisation contribute to improving interpersonal relation within the group and in helping the group successfully to complete its tasks. Leadership plays an important role in this regard.

The skills of the leader manifest in (a) communicating with people, (b) building credibility in himself and in his proposals, (c) locating dissent/opposition, (d) piloting the agenda, and (e) in persuading the group members to commit themselves to the objectives of the agenda. The external environment, situational stimuli, size of the group, its structure, and existence of factors which block the achievement of its goals, also influence the effectiveness of the leader.

Leaders are identified by finding from the members of the community the persons they consider as leaders in the matter of influencing or directing, or by asking the functionaries or other persons the names of persons who they think exercise leadership functions. The assumption here is that influence is not exercised in the same degree by every member. It is important to remember that influence is not exercised by most members of the community. In most cases however, this is of a very limited nature. In the case of leaders the influence is exercised among much larger numbers.

The identification of community or group leaders is, however, not always an easy task specially when there is likely to be some kind of a plurality of leadership and in some cases a hierarchy which is not necessarily formalized or structured. Sometimes leaders become identified when there is a crisis or when some important goal has to be achieved.

Some leaders are authoritarian in style – determining policies, indicating the strategy and plan of action, and assigning tasks. Community-based programmes demand a democratic style of leadership-sharing with members in policy making and implementation, asking the members for alternatives, choosing the best course of action through participation and involvement, giving members

the freedom to choose their responsibilities, and encouraging group thinking and decision-making. Sometimes the community expects the leader to direct and assume charge because it has not undergone the experience and strength of democratic or participatory leadership. With conscious efforts on the part of the leader, this can change and community participation can become effective.

Check Your Progress III

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

1) What does conscientisation imply?

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2) Can you list some principles of working with the community?

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3) How does authoritarian leadership differ from democratic leadership ?

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3.6 LET US SUM UP

We read in this unit that a community-based programme is one that is planned, initiated, sustained and implemented with the participation of the community

and characterized by the involvement and participation of people at every stage. We noted that such programmes were need based, involved the use of resources and were not entirely supported from outside. We also described the ways of approaching the community, making community diagnosis and defining the needs. We considered the various processes involved in formulating a programme and discussed in this connection how objectives are determined, beneficiaries are identified, milestones are set, resources are identified, budget estimates are prepared, and programme implementation is planned.

We considered the features of community participation. We saw how the process of conscientisation or critical awareness-building was important for reawakening of the capacity of the poor to understand and analyse the cause of one's situation and act in order to be able to change the situation.

We considered various types of community participation and assessed them in terms of direct exercise of power by people. We also read about some of the practical guidelines for community-based work for collaboration and integration. We noted that among the principles of working with the community were the need to be focused, identify leaders carefully, be prepared, be involved, build support, communicate and be dynamic. The key factors in working with community groups were also identified and the techniques of working these group were illustrated. We also considered the roles of leaders in community-based programmes and their functions. We concluded that community based programme demanded a democratic style of leadership and sharing of decision making with members in matters of policy and implementation.

3.7 KEY WORDS

Community	: A group living in a geographical area having a strong sense of identity and a deep sense of togetherness. The members of the group share the basic conditions of a common life. All of one's social relationships may be found within the community.
Goal	: A statement indicating what is sought to be achieved. Goals are usually expressed in a longer time perspective.
Leadership	: This is defined in the context of the degree of influence a person exercise on other members of the group or community.
Objective	: This is derived from the goal and is a precise statement of what is sought to be achieved.
Schedule	: A questionnaire filled by an investigator from the respondent in a face-to-face situation.
Target	: A quantified expression of an objective in a time frame.

3.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

Cox, F. M. , J. L. Elrich, J. Rothman and J. E. Tropman (1977), *Tactics and Techniques of Community Practice*, F.E. Peacock Publishers : Illinois.

Handley, R.M., M. Cooper, P. Dale and G. Stacy (1987), *A Community Social Worker's Handbook*, Tavistock Publications, London.

UNIT 4 SOCIAL ACTION

Contents

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Meaning
- 4.3 Features
- 4.4 Social Action and Social Reform
- 4.5 Strategies of Social Action
- 4.6 Social Action in India
- 4.7 Let Us Sum Up
- 4.8 Key Words
- 4.9 Suggested Readings

4.0 OBJECTIVES

This unit aims at familiarizing you with an important method through which the deprived and the oppressed sections of society seek changes to achieve social justice. Social action has a long and chequered history even though its identification as a technique is a more recent phenomenon.

After studying this unit you will be able to:

- analyse the meaning of social action;
- indicate its main features;
- describe the strategies;
- discuss the tactics; and
- describe some of the social action movements in this country.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Social action has been a part of the process of development of human society. There has hardly been any time in social evolution when people have not organised themselves and enjoined to protest against injustice, to seek redressal of grievances or alterations in unjust social, economic and political structures. The struggles that ensued did not always achieve their goals but they represented important expressions of deprived people's attempts to secure a more humane society. Social work education gave social action an academic status by recognizing it as one of the methods of Social Work and its inclusion in the curriculum of Master's degree programmes.

Voluntary effort and people's participation have been recognized as being critical to the success of any development endeavour and find a legitimate place in almost all the plan documents and official policy statements. However, social action, as a tool to mobilize people for development work, is rarely

mentioned in such documents probably because it represents to those in authority an organised endeavour to bring about changes which often results in conflict of interests with those in power who are sometimes opposed to such initiatives of change, overtly or covertly.

Social action is a very powerful instrument in the hands of the people to secure social justice and human rights. The foremost practitioner of social action in our country was Mahatma Gandhi. Social reformers, trade union leaders, public workers and political activists have been involved in social action movements in one way or the other. For all those who are interested in empowering people, this unit is therefore of considerable interest.

4.2 MEANING

There is currently no universally accepted definition of social action, though there is a broad understanding of it. We give here some of the more widely used definitions so that you have an idea of how different scholars have viewed social action.

One of the earliest definitions was by **Mary Richmond** (1922) who considered social action in terms of “mass betterment through propaganda and social legislation”. This definition however, is too general and fails to bring out the distinguishing features of social action.

A more elaborate definition is given by **Friedlander** (1963): “Social action is an individual, group or community effort, within the framework of social work philosophy and practice that aims to achieve social progress, to modify social policies and to improve social legislation and health and welfare services.” This definition, as you will see, rules out conflict or radical alternation when it prescribes action “within the framework of social work philosophy and practice”.

Roger Baldwin defines social action as “Organised effort to change social and economic institutions as distinguished from social work or social service, the fields which do not characteristically cover essential changes in the established institutions. Social action covers movements of political reform, industrial democracy, social legislation, racial and social justice, religious freedom and civil liberty; its techniques include propaganda, research and lobbying.” This definition does not specifically refer to social action as seeking change in a manner consistent with social work values. It seems to suggest, however, as will be evident from the methods it mentions, that the action for change will be within the parameters of the existing institutional framework.

Gabriel Britto brings out the ‘conflict’ element when he states that “Social action is a conflictual process of varying intensity initiated and conducted by the masses or by a group of elites, with or without the participation of the masses in the action against the structures or institutions or policies or programmes or procedures of the government and/or relevant agencies and/or power groups to eradicate/control any mass socio-economic-political problem with a view to bringing betterment to any section of the under-privileged at a level larger than that of a sociologically defined community”. This definition brings out also the role of leaders from outside the affected groups initiating and conducting social action movements.

Paull, too, recognizes the element of conflict when he observes that social action refers to “those organised and planned activities that attempt to influence the social distribution of status, power and resources.”

Some scholars emphasize the use of ‘legally permissible’ methods while others state that the methods could be legal or not legal if the situation so warrants. Some state further that the objectives of social action may not necessarily be in conformity with culturally approved goals and values, specially when these are seen as major obstacles.

4.3 FEATURES

From the consideration of the definitions of social action, you may have got some idea about its features. We indicate them here although it is important to remember that not all forms of social action necessarily reflect them nor do all the authors agree that these are characteristic of social action.

- Social action is an organised effort directed at bringing about change in social, economic or political structures and in their style of functioning, in order to achieve social and economic well-being, specially of the under-privileged groups, and in bringing about a just social, economic and political order. It is perceived as a method of empowering the deprived through mobilization and collective action against vested interests and against exploitation by existing power groups (political groups, economic interests) and against exploitation by existing power groups (political groups, economic interests, industry, trade etc.).
- The field of social action cover a very wide spectrum – political reforms, social and economic reform, removal of social injustice and religious intolerance, restoration of human rights, enactment of legislation, sharing of power in decision making and in benefits, protection of the environment, liberation from the stranglehold of current mores, etc.
- The objectives of social action can be radical i.e., questioning the very foundation of current structures, and aiming at the overthrow and often proposing alternatives even if these have not been precisely worked out. At the other end, social action may work for changes within the existing system.
- Social action can be directed against global, universal issues like protection and conservation of environment through action, against its degradation, or on more localized issues like crime, sale of alcoholic drinks, wrongful use of village community resources by dominant individuals or groups, exploitation of labour, punishment of a wrong-doer, illegal felling of trees, etc. Even in the former case, social action programmes have to be specific and focused so that it is possible to mobilize support and organise pressure groups.
- The geographical area of social action and the numbers involved may be very large or relatively small depending on the issue.
- The driving force for social action may come from outside without initial sharing of the goals or strategies with the people being mobilized, or only partly sharing them. To achieve sustained results, however, involvement of the people in the goals and strategies is important.

- The goals of social action are not value neutral. They are value-oriented and normative in character, though these values and norms may at times be at variance with the culturally approved goals and values.
- Social action has elements of conflict, the resolution of which may not always be through peaceful and totally non-violent means even though violence may not be an explicitly propounded method.
- Social action may in some situations involve the use of methods or pursuit of goals which are wide in scope, more comprehensive and futuristic and may go beyond the law. However, social or moral legitimization of goals and methods is important.
- Social action movements require commitment of the leaders, their emotional involvement and belief in the goals and in the means used.
- Social action is not non-political. However, most of the social action movements are not initiated directly by political parties.

Check Your Progress I

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

- 1) In what ways would you consider Friendlander's definition of social action as inadequate for developing countries?

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- 2) List five features of social action.

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4.4 SOCIAL ACTION AND SOCIAL REFORM

As a student you would be interested in knowing the difference between social action and social reform. You have some knowledge about social action. Let us first understand briefly the meaning of the term social reform.

Gore (1987) defined reform as “a deliberate effort to bring about a change in social attitudes, culturally defined role expectations and actual patterns of behaviour of people in a desired direction through processes of persuasion and public education”. He further observed that most social reform movements emanate from the “recognition of the dignity of the human individual and

therefore, of the responsibility of the privileged to widen opportunities of life for all segments of the population.”

Let us now try and briefly state the common features of social action and social reforms:

- Both owe their beginning to dissatisfaction with existing systems or values and seek change in the direction of social justice. Both appeal to the ‘advantaged’ to accept the change in order to provide a better deal to the ‘disadvantaged’.
- Both follow a variety of strategies and tactics to achieve their goal, several of which are common.
- Both follow the method of mass mobilization.
- Both have normative ends.

Let us now see in what ways social action and social reform differ from each other:

- The scope of social action is much wider. Social reform is only one field of social action.
- Social reform represents a goal, at least an intermediate one, in the sense that through such reform, the status and situation of people affected will improve. Social action can be one of the means of achieving this goal.
- Social reform does not seek total alteration of economic, political and social structures nor does it reject them. It seeks amendments or changes in specific aspects of them in order to humanize them. Social action could seek radical changes or even reject existing systems when it amounts to injustice, inequity, repression and exploitation.
- Social reform movements are a product of the times and its importance has varied in different periods of history. Social action has a place, relevance, and need at every stage of a society’s development.
- The main actors in social reform may come from social and religious groups. Social action interests cut across different communities.
- An important objective of social reforms is to consolidate the change through legislation. In the case of social action, legislation may or may not become necessary as the objective may as well be achieved through non-legislative means.

4.5 STRATEGIES OF SOCIAL ACTION

There are different strategies of social action. The strategy determines the tactics used. Whatever the strategy, several steps are involved in organising social action movements. Let us consider these aspects.

Types of Strategies

Various strategies and techniques of social action have been identified, some conceptually, others on the basis of analysis of actual movements.

Gabriel Britto (1984) made an attempt to identify the strategies in the Gandhian model of mobilization for action. These are:

Credibility-building: This implies building of a good public image of the leadership, the sponsors and the participants based on cherished social values.

Legitimization: Promoting the movement's objectives as being morally right, and therefore the action is legitimate and permissible socially and morally.

Dramatization: This implies mobilizing the population into action through emotional appeals, soul-stirring speeches, management of the media, novel procedures of drawing support, catchy slogans, processions, protest marches and such other techniques.

Multiple strategies: This implies a concerted programme of action involving advocacy, education, persuasion, facilitating actions, pressure tactics etc.

Dual approach which implies building a counter system as an alternative or reviving a system which is declining, or has declined, but which is perceived to be beneficial. A constructive counter action plan is proposed is in opposition to an existing system which is perceived to be unjust, exploitative or undesirable.

Manifold programme: This implies developing social, economic and political programmes which would facilitate mass mobilization for social and economic reconstruction and political independence.

Siddiqui (1984) has mentioned the stages used in the Sarvodaya strategy drawing from the Sarvodaya social action movements inspired by the Gandhian philosophy. The stages are :

- 1) Prachar (Publicity)
- 2) Parichaya (Introduction)
- 3) Adhyayan (Survey or study)
- 4) Sahavasa (Association)
- 5) Seva (Service)
- 6) Pratikar (Resistance)
- 7) Construction Work or Community Service
- 8) Building the Climate of Change

Stages 5 to 8 indicate that in the Gandhian approach constructive social service and peaceful non-violent ways of achieving change are basic. In fact, Gandhians strongly advocate 'constructive work'. This includes activities like relief work in emergencies such as floods, setting up basic education schools, the promotion of Khadi and other cottage industries and crafts, anti-liquor propaganda, and social work among the Harijans and the women.

Speaking about the non-violent social action model, **Das Gupta** (1984) observed : "Although non-violent social action also uses conflicts and struggles as weapons, its purpose is not to 'defeat' an enemy but to 'win' him over. The aim is not to crush an individual, or to destroy an opponent however importantly placed he may be in a system, but to change the system and to protect the body

and the psyche of the so called ‘enemy’ – both for his own good as also for the good whom the person opposes. Its aim is not to win only a struggle but to establish new values and norms, that may pioneer the way to a new society. Means are ends in the non-violent battle and the ends are means. Since the two are equated in the structure of the method of non-violent action, the latter cannot, and does not, use ends to justify the means but harps on the need for adopting pure means for reaching pure goals.

Several scholars of social action point out that when non-violent technique for building pressure through mobilizing public opinion fails to alter the system or undo the injustice, some form of militancy and systematic expressions of hatred, anger, dislike, contempt, force (not necessarily violent) are perceived as necessary, even if it in a limited way. **Das Gupta (1987)** refers to the “conflict cum-not-non-violent model”. He observes: “The adjective ‘not non-violent’ instead of the term ‘violent’ is deliberately chosen here as only a few of those who belong to the school of action would, even if they reject the non-violent model, agree to call their path the path of violence”.

Let us now see how social work educators look at social action strategies. **Desai (1984)** has classified the strategies available to social workers into three categories:

- **Collaborative:** This is based on the assumption that people in power will agree to change even when a conflict approach is not adopted. Change can be brought about because “the intended change is either the lesser of the two evils or they have themselves identified the factors which affect the very existence of the institution or the achievement of its goals; they are disenchanted, or dissatisfied and therefore willing to engage in the change effort though some part of the system may show initial resistance”.
- **Bargaining, Negotiating and Advocacy:** The assumption here is that since resistance is anticipated, some kind of mild pressure would be necessary. In the words of Desai: “These could include techniques of bargaining and negotiation, publicity which leads to discomfort for the target of change, advocacy through the media and attempts to isolate the target group from the opinions of the community at large. The techniques utilized may, to some extent, deviate from the usual interpersonal behaviours, and include methods such as satyagraha, morcha, and other methods of dramatizing the situation and developing public opinion”.
- **Conflictual/Confrontational:** The assumption here is that there is fundamental differences in positions and viewpoints and therefore strong pressure tactics become necessary (such as, for instance, demonstration and civil disobedience, or direct action). Since conflict in its more extreme manifestations could mean annihilation, elimination, defeat or subjugation, these have not been mentioned by Desai as possible tactics, probably because they are not in harmony with the educational philosophy of social work.

A somewhat similar classification of strategies of social action has been given by **Lees (1972)**. He categorizes them as:

Collaboration: This is useful where, according to Lees, “there is basic agreement about the way an issue should be resolved or the likelihood of reaching such agreement once the issue is fully considered”.

Competition: This is relevant where there is ‘conflict’ over interests but where it is possible for the contending parties to agree on the means to promote the different view-points. According to Lees this implies conflict over goals but consensus over means.

Disruption: This occurs when there are little chances of reaching an agreement and the tactics used may vary from “peaceful demonstration to revolutionary upheavals”.

Whatever the classification, it is important to remember that the different strategies do not comprise water-tight compartments. Nor do they represent an orderly movement from the peaceful to the disruptive strategies. Sometimes the conflict model is adopted when the other models fail. Sometimes even if one model is applied, the approaches of the other models are selectively used.

Tactics

From the definitions of social action and the discussion of the strategies, you have seen that social action involves the use of a variety of tactics – often a combination of them – depending on the philosophy and ideological beliefs of the sponsors, the techniques used by the other party, and the dynamics of the situation as it develops.

Some of the tactics have been explicitly identified and are listed below:

- Fact finding.
- Publicity, advocacy, dissemination, using both formal and nonformal media.
- Education, awareness-building, conscientisation.
- Mobilizing support and opinion through established institutional systems and political processes.
- Expressing anger, wrath, hatred in dramatic and innovative ways.
- Cooperation/collaboration.
- Using slogans.
- Negotiation, bargaining, arbitration.
- Disruption and mild coercion (mild resistance, protests, marches, morcha, dharna, strikes, boycotts, fasts, gherao etc.) defiance of orders and various forms of economic sanctions.
- Strong coercive tactics (extra-legal measures, and direct action).

The choice of tactics is conditioned by the choice of strategy. Though confrontation and conflict are inherent in social action, most social activists would like to abstain from violence and seek resolution of the conflict and change by building moral and public pressure. Most of the social action is also not directed towards the overthrow of the system but rather its humanization.

Steps

As you must have realized by now, certain steps are involved in social action. These are enumerated here:

- 1) Identifying the problem (in this case injustice), diagnosing it, gathering information about it and about who the principal actors are, what roles they play, what interests they have and what benefits they derive.
- 2) Determining the position to be taken.
- 3) Identifying the social action goals i.e. the expected outcomes. These should be specific and at least some should be tangible.
- 4) Mobilizing support using both nonformal and formal methods and locating the networks of influence and power.
- 5) Setting up the machinery to carry out the struggle, canvas action, provide leadership.
- 6) Laying down the strategy. A well-drawn out plan indicating series of actions and their networking among the leaders.
- 7) Laying down the communication channels and the decision-making loci of the social action movement.
- 8) Carrying out the action.
- 9) Reviewing the implementation of the strategy and, if necessary, weighing alternative approaches and working out alternate plans.
- 10) Sustaining the pressure.

Some writers have suggested the stages as:

- Awareness-building (Steps 1 & 2)
- Organising people (Steps 3, 4, & 5)
- Developing the strategy (Steps 6 & 7)
- Action (Steps 8, 9 & 10)

Check Your Progress II

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

- 1) In what ways does the strategy in the Gandhian model of social action differ from others?

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Activity I

Identify a social action issue (even a hypothetical one) and draw up two action plans. Base the first one on the Gandhian model and the second on other models.

4.6 SOCIAL ACTION IN INDIA

India has been the place of many social action movements. Let us briefly mention some of them.

Satyagraha is a uniquely Indian concept and mode of social action shaped into a formidable tool by Mahatma Gandhi. Although based on non-violence (since Gandhi believed and practiced ahimsa and considered it a powerful tool), satyagraha meant exerting moral pressure, through mass mobilization, mass courting of arrests, and long protest marches to achieve the goal. We mention here some examples.

The Rowlatt Act Satyagraha: What is popularly known as the Rowlatt Act (1918) represented an attempt to put war time restrictions on civil rights and detentions without trial for a maximum period of two years. All sections of Indian political opinion vehemently opposed the Rowlatt Act but it was left to Mahatma Gandhi to work out a practicable all-India mass protest. The intention was to go beyond petitions but at the same time to stop it from being unrestrained or violent. Initially, the volunteers merely courted arrest by publicly selling prohibited literature. It was then extended by Mahatma Gandhi to include the idea of an all India Hartal (strike).

The Salt Satyagraha: Mahatma Gandhi's famous Dandi march symbolized protest against the government monopoly of salt and the claim to salt tax. The march which started from Sabarmati to the sea through the heartland of Gujarat attracted considerable attention both within India and outside. Mahatma Gandhi propagated manufacture and auctioning of salt by the people violating the unjust law. This action was accompanied by boycott of foreign cloth and liquor.

The Nagpur Flag Satyagraha: This was started in mid 1923 against a local order banning the use of the Congress flag in some areas of the city.

The Borsad (Kheda district, Gujarat) Satyagraha: This was directed against a poll tax imposed to be paid by every adult for the police required to suppress a wave of dacoities. The movement took the form of total non-payment of the new levy by all the 104 affected villages and the tax had to be withdrawn.

The Vaikom Satyagraha: This was the first temple entry movement. It was essentially an attempt on Gandhian lines to assert the right of low caste Ezhavas and untouchables to use roads near a Travancore temple.

Gandhian social action has to be understood in the context of the Gandhian philosophy of work which aimed at building a social and economic order based on non-violence, and building the strength of the people and the moral fabric. It included not only activities like relief work in emergencies but also setting up basic education schools, the promotion of khadi and other cottage crafts, anti-liquor propaganda, uplift of the lower castes and untouchables.

'Chetna' march in Panchmahal and Sabrakantha districts of Gujarat: This was organised by DISHA (a voluntary organisation) which, on analysis of its programmes, came to the conclusion that unless awareness is created among the forest labourers, minor forest produce collectors, small community action groups and other agencies working in the area, the injustices and exploitation would continue and the affected people would not come forward to lodge their

complaints, narrate their grievances and seek redressal. One of the methods devised by DISHA to generate awareness was to organise a foot march in the area which covered nearly 1000 km through the most backward districts.

Mahila Mukti Morcha – Dalli Rajhara: Dalli Rajhara is an iron ore mining town in the southern Durg district in Madhya Pradesh. The mines here are largely worked manually through contractors. Contract labourers are mainly members of Adivasi, landless and small peasant households from the seven districts of Chattisgarh in eastern Madhya Pradesh.

The women took a leading role in organising social action struggles. For example, in 1979-80, the wages of the workers improved after a successful struggle. A successful anti-alcoholism campaign was carried out on the ground that it drained hard won benefits back into the pockets of the contractors and liquor merchants. The mass mobilization achieved among the households was a rare example of mobilization on a social issue. Women played a leading role in propagating the philosophy of this campaign, and in organising mohalla committees, for detection and punishment. In 1982 the women started their own forum called Mahila Mukti Morcha (MMM). The forum concentrated on three broad areas of concern – women and work, women and health and women’s struggles. Action arising out of MMM platform was largely issue-based. Awareness and mobilization were effected through a variety of methods including plays and songs, and through annual observation of martyrdom of those who had struggled for the rights of the poor.

Narmada Bachao Andholan is a social action movement which has brought together several organisations engaged in developmental issues, for the environmental problems caused by the construction of the Narmada Dam. The movement today enjoys widespread support, cutting across different segments of the population, apart from people directly affected by the construction of the dam. The movement is spearheaded by eminent social workers, scientists, intellectuals, students and the local villagers. Huge protest marches have been organised in which villagers from far and near, from different states, have participated with banners, shouting slogans, sporting badges forming a human chain on the banks of the Narmada in protest, taking pledges, organising demonstrations at the dam site, and often violating prohibitory orders. Its defiant message from the people to decision makers and planners is for full participation at all the levels of planning and that the people are no longer prepared to watch in mute desperation, as projects after projects are approved without ensuring that the benefits accrue mainly to the people and are not cornered by the vested interests like the ‘contractor and the rich’.

4.7 LET US SUM UP

You have seen in this unit that social action represents an organised attempt of the people to secure a more humane society. It is a powerful instrument to empower the poor and to secure social justice and human rights. It seeks changes in an unjust social and economic order or in unjust actions. You also saw that while some scholars were of the view that social action should be confined to seeking the goals within the existing social, economic and political framework and accepted methods of seeking change, others were of the view that the methods could be legal, or not so legal if the situation so warrants, specially when legally permissible methods fail. Social action may also not always be in

conformity with current social and cultural values of dominant groups in society, specially when they are seen as major obstacles. The social and moral contents of the action give it the necessary social and moral legitimacy. The goals of social action are not value-neutral.

You read about the various strategies of social action, including the Gandhian Model. You learnt about different ways of classifying the strategies of social action and the tactics that are used. You also read about the step in social action for awareness building, mobilization and organising people, laying down strategies and carrying out action. Finally you read about some of the social action movements in India.

4.8 KEY WORDS

Dharna	: Picketing.
Gherao	: A coercive action in which workers/others agitating for the acceptance of their demands, encircle those in decision- making positions for longer hours to force them to agree.
Morcha	: The term literally means organisation of a front (as would be the case of the foremost line of the army against the enemy) to fight for their rights or for an issue of wider social concern.
Satyagraha	: Struggle for truth using non-violent means. This was developed into a formidable tool by Mahatma Gandhi through mass mobilization and exertion of moral pressure to undo injustice and exploitation.

4.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

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UNIT 5 FORMATION AND STRENGTHENING OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS

Contents

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Meaning of the Voluntary Organisation
- 5.3 Need and Purpose for Registration
- 5.4 Formation of Voluntary Agency and its Registration
- 5.5 Registration as a Trust
- 5.6 Registration Process
- 5.7 Organisational Design and Structure
- 5.8 Relevance of Creation of Work-oriented Atmosphere
- 5.9 Let Us Sum Up
- 5.10 Key Words
- 5.11 Suggested Readings

5.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit you should be able to:

- understand the need for registration and management of social organisation;
- significance of drafting the constitution and bye-laws/memorandum of the association;
- registration process;
- get an insight into the organisational design and structure; and
- creating a work-oriented atmosphere, understanding, authority (structures), relationship, working with boards, committee and other functionaries, working with professional teams.

5.0 INTRODUCTION

Voluntarism and social service has a long history in India. It was the main source of welfare and development since Vedic times except for the Maurya and Gupta periods, which had substantial public welfare systems. The colonial period witnessed the large impact of Mahatma Gandhi and the Gandhian methods, on the growth of voluntarism. He was convinced that voluntary action was the the most suitable instrument for development of the country. Besides the political Independence, the objective of Gandhian voluntary organisation was rural reconstruction.

After Independence, Gandhian voluntary organisations dominated the national scene. It aimed at agriculture and livestock programmes, khadi and village

industries, cooperatives and education. However, this consensus on development strategy started receding to the background in 1960s and 1970s, but it continued to influence the growth of voluntary activism. The later half of 1980s and early 1990s witnessed a large expansion of VO both because people were losing faith in government and because there was a rapid rise in the availability of funds from domestic and foreign sources. A major highlight of this period was the establishment of VOs that provided training, evaluation and documentation to other grass-roots VOs.

Also, the rapid growth of population in the country without corresponding growth of resources and wealth distorted the population-resource balance resulting in poverty, hunger, mal-nutrition and other forms of socio-economic evils. In this backdrop, VOs or Non Government Organisations (NGOs), as they are called in the terminology of the United Nations, emerged as an alternative strategy of development. This sector has always had an important part to play in leading and implementing innovative ideas within social service. It has achieved incredible success at grass roots level due to its participatory approach. But it is a matter of concern that appropriate awareness about administration and functioning of such organisations is still not widely available to both the students and practitioners in the field. Also, they are facing a number of difficulties such as dearth of finances, lack of trained workers, weakening of community support, duplication, overlapping etc. So before we deal with the processes of establishing and management of the social service organisation, we will briefly deal with the underlying meaning of the concept.

5.2 MEANING OF VOLUNTARY ORGANISATION

The key to social welfare emerges from autonomous and flexible actions that are necessarily voluntary in nature. It commences with focused action coupled with determined intention of like-minded people to transform the socio-economic paradigm of society particularly for weaker sections, based on social justice and not merely on philanthropy and charity.

The distinction between the voluntary effort and action must be clear at the outset, even though it is often used synonymously. The prerequisite of the latter includes planning and conscious action of a group to deal with certain issues, the former often does not entail this. Thus, voluntary action is necessarily problem oriented – which is not only geared towards dealing with a problem but also towards prevention of its occurrence. When a group initiates such focused action to act formally, it assumes the character of voluntary organisation.

The definition of a voluntary sector organisation used in this section is that of a ‘**general charity**’ as provided by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations. General charities:

- are independent of government and business;
- are non-profit making;
- provide a wider public benefit that goes beyond any membership.

There are wider definitions of charities, which include organisations such as trade unions, colleges and universities, however this assumption is not covered here.

According to **Brown and Korten** (1991) “.....voluntary organisations represent a distinct class of organisations that depend on energy and resources given freely by their members and supporters because they believe in organisational missions, not merely because of political imperatives or economic incentives”.

Who does the voluntary sector include?

There are VOs dealing with various areas of civil society. The categories include: international aid, health, culture and recreation, environment, volunteer promotion, civil and advocacy organisations, social services, education and research, animal welfare, and other single-issue organisations. It would also include within its sphere organised social action for advocating social justice and fight against different kinds of exploitation- social, economic and political. The voluntary sector may also be known as the not-for-profit sector, voluntary and community sector, third sector and charity sector. A term coming increasingly into vogue is the civil society. Internationally voluntary sector organisations may be known as non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Scope

The sector is diverse covering almost every conceivable type of interest and activity. The main characteristic of these organisations is that they are cause-led, established to do something specific rather than make a profit. India's Seventh Plan assigned an important role to the voluntary sector in the three fields of primary health and family planning, the environment and women's development. The Eighth Plan repeated the same emphasis. There was a major expansion in funds provided to VOs by the government and foreign donors. The economic reforms initiated in 1991 visualized a considerable reduction and rationalization in the role of government and a corresponding expansion in private sector, including presumably the voluntary sector.

Size

The total number of VOs is difficult to determine. It may vary from 50,000 to several hundred thousands, depending on the definition of the VOs making this voluntary/charity sector, a big business. Most of the organisations get themselves registered under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 in order to gain legal status. These organisations range from international charities such as Oxfam who offer paid work to accountants, managers and administrators, personnel and fund-raising staff, to small organisations run almost entirely by unpaid volunteers

Check Your Progress I

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

- 1) What do we mean by voluntary sector? Please also list down few of its important features.

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5.3 NEED AND PURPOSE FOR REGISTRATION

A) Need

i) *Establishing and Managing*

Any group of like minded individuals can come together to form an association or a society. However, registration under the appropriate law of the land must be done to gain legal identity and standing. Also, VOs operating in social systems establish and maintain contact with several individuals. In general course, the community also interact with the organisation as a whole and not each member individually. Thus, it is imperative that the organisation is considered as one entity which can be achieved only by giving it a legal basis and this individual liability gives place to group liability. Registration under appropriate law, depending upon the nature of activities of a group of individuals will transform their status to an organisation.

ii) *Finances*

One of the main factors of efficient functioning of VO and implementation of its programs is the availability of financial resources. In the present welfare oriented system, several other partners in the development process have emerged besides governmental grants in the form of aid, assistance from various corporate bodies, national and foreign donor agencies etc. Since the VOs essentially fulfill social objectives and developmental role, it is suggested by some that it is government's responsibility that they provide financial and technical assistance to them. While seeking governmental grants and other financial assistance, an organisation must keep in mind that one of the essential prerequisites for the same is registration. An organisation must be registered under appropriate Act, or produce certificate that it is regularly constituted branch of that organisation. It should also maintain regular accounts and proper audit statement. The other donor agencies, most importantly foreign agencies, also disburse funds to registered organisations.

Thus, registered organisations can seek funds from three main sources: government sources, corporate and other bodies and foreign donors. Since the Seventh Five Year Plan emphasises on VOs several ministries have a budget for NGOs. Each Ministry has its own set of guidelines and you can make respective enquiries in the respective departments.

Foreign funding agencies are categorized under the following:

Bilateral funds: This means that countries that have come into bilateral agreements with India and have funds for NGOs. Earlier, foreign funds used to be channelised through the Government of India but after 1972 foreign groups pressurized their governments to give a portion directly to NGOs in the Third World.

NGO donors: Usually NGO groups and charity organisations. Examples—OXFAM, Action Aid, Save the Children Fund etc.

Sponsors: Groups like Action Aid help in sponsoring the programmes concerning the children.

iii) ***Tax Deduction***

Section 80(G) of Income Tax Act enables an individual or company to avail of deduction of 50 per cent of their donation to VO accredited by the tax authorities from taxable income, provided the donation exceeds Rs. 250/- (two hundred and fifty only) and is less than 10 per cent of total income in that year. This has opened the floodgates for many NGOs as the donor group is exempted from being taxed for that sum. It has also enabled the organisations to bring in more locally available resources.

iv) ***Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 1976***

A VO needs to be registered and operational for three years before it can get FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act, 1976) number and thereby receive funds regularly from foreign agencies. Also, the VOs have to be non-political so that the funds are not used by any political party. The Home Ministry of the Government of India issues and administers these certificates after determining eligibility through reports from government field agencies who seek information directly from the organisation or through enquiries at the community level. From the viewpoint of the organisations, FCRA certificate is important, for it does not require the approval of sectoral ministries at state or Center, for programme that do not adhere to the government guidelines and they can initiate projects for innovations and also have sufficient funds for the same.

v) ***To Address Problems of Functioning***

Any group or body of persons, can come together to form a Society and start functioning. However, registration assumes significance in this collective endeavor to do away with problems that might arise in future. These issues may range from internal dynamics amongst the members to the external functioning in the community. Besides laying down aims and objectives in the Memorandum, the registration also spells out the process of internal management viz. membership, subscription, rights and privileges of membership, general body – its powers, duties and functions, managing body, sub-committee, sources of income and utilization of fund, audit of income, operation of bank accounts etc.

Any modification in the constitution can be made only subject to the approval of the Registrar providing protection to members in internal functioning and also to the organisation as an entity.

B) **Purpose**

The main purpose of VO is to work for the betterment of a particular target group with a committed focus and efficient delivery. The initiatives cover a range of issues on various social purposes like education, health, cultural and other social activities, economic purposes like trade union activities, developments of co-operatives, self help groups etc.

Financial resources and infrastructural support available for functioning largely determine the broad purposes of the organisation. Besides, orientation and experience of the organisation in the specific field also play a crucial role in framing its purposes.

For instance, in the present development sector, one can witness the

mushrooming of voluntary agencies and initiatives on health issues particularly on HIV/AIDS. The purposes of these organisations vary from creating awareness to providing emotional, health and occupational support to the target group. The government and other foreign donor's commitment to combat this malady also determine such intense non-governmental and voluntary participation.

C) Organisational Accountability

The VOs have to account for their activities and report to the authorities about the proper use of funds, subsequent to acquiring registration. They also have to register with the income tax authorities to seek income tax exemptions on the grants they receive and also separate registration for the foreign funds they receive.

The main distinguishing features of VO are:

- 1) It is registered under an appropriate act to give a legal entity to a group of individuals – also to transform the individual liability to group liability. Some of the acts under which organisations can be registered are: the **Societies Registration Act, 1860; the Indian Trusts Act, 1882; the Cooperative Societies Act, 1904; the Joint Stock Companies act, 1956** or any similar act; but most of the welfare agencies are registered under Societies Registration Act (XXI of 1860).

(The following associations may be registered under Societies Registration Act (XXI of 1860): 'Charitable societies, the military orphan funds, societies established for the promotion of science, literature or the fine arts, for instruction, the diffusion or useful knowledge, the foundation or maintenance of libraries or reading rooms for general use among the members or open to the public or public museums and galleries of paintings and other works of art, collections of natural history, mechanical and philosophical inventions, instruments, or designs.')

- 2) It has an administrative and executive management committee.
- 3) The organisation must have declared a set of objectives, including quantitative ones. It should be based on keen appreciation of ground realities and should be the end result of genuine consultation among all the members involved.
- 4) It should have its own democratic principles, rules and procedures that govern the internal functioning of the body and should not have an external control.

The significance of registration of an organisation is due to the fact that the community perceives it as one legal entity and considers dealing with one body more rewarding than interacting with different individuals. Besides, such a group of individuals will be more sustainable and ensure effective delivery of service. An organisation in a longer run would be better equipped to deal with various complexities rising out of daily functioning and management.

“The philanthropic or humanitarian organisation with its board of directors, its paid staff, and its constituency can develop the benefits of group thinking and collective action. It can work out division of responsibility among these groups collectively and individually, so that each interested individual may serve

according to his ability. It can develop specialized functions, establish permanent and steadily improving standards of service and follow a continuous progressive policy independent of the life or death of any individual. It can secure public support and funds impossible for the individual to obtain and can conserve them through the years.” (Social Agency Administration by Elwood Street, Harper and Bros.)

In brief, some of the advantages are mentioned below as following:

- Registration gives permanency and continuity to the organisation.
- Group liability instead of individual liability – particularly in situation of financial and other resources that are involved.
- Group thinking and concerted action instead of individual action.
- Collective action with shared responsibility.
- It gives the reflection of an independent and responsible entity to the community.
- It ensures the benefit to members of being relieved from unlimited financial liability. It can sue or be sued as an organisation.

Constitution and Bye-laws/Memorandum

The objectives of the organisation has to be broadly defined in the constitution which also indicates the duties, powers and functions of the various parts of the organisation. Besides the constitution, the organisation also draws up the bye-laws or the detailed rules and regulations governing the day-to-day functioning. A constitution can be understood as a brief statement spelling out the broad goals and objectives of the organisation, often including the quantitative goals too. It often does not include the detailed procedures to be followed for the attainment of these objectives; which are incorporated in the bye-laws.

The rules and procedures must also be given similar significance because while the constitution reflects the ultimate objectives, bye-laws and rules define the routes to be followed for the attainment of those objectives. It also defines crucial factors such as the membership, management, finance, personnel responsibilities, dissolution, etc. Briefly, bye-laws are needed for the following reasons:

- Smooth functioning of the organisation
- Division of the roles and responsibilities
- Stability of the group

Thus, rules and procedures of the organisation are as important as constitution for the development, systematic functioning, stability as well as sustainability of the organisation and group. These are also crucial, as they prevent ineffective functioning, disunity, unhealthy relation and non-cooperation among the members, etc.

Check Your Progress II

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

- 1) Why do you think an organisation need to work in detail upon its bye-laws and rules? What are its advantages?

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5.4 FORMATION OF VOLUNTARY AGENCY AND ITS REGISTRATION

Registration of the Voluntary Agency

The Constitution of India guarantees its citizens right to “form association” under Article 19. The provision is operationalised with the help of legislations such as the Societies Registration Act, 1860, (or similar state Acts), Indian Trusts Act, 1882, Company’s Act, 1956, or Cooperative Society’s Act. A group of people associating themselves as a society, on registration under any of these laws, become a separate legal entity whose legal identity is distinct from its constituting members. A registered society/agency enjoys perpetual succession by virtue of this legal recognition and enjoys continuity apart from the changes in its constituting members. This legitimization of its distinct identity and existence entitles the agency to carry on a number of activities that are in keeping with its goals and aspirations. Registration entitles agency to acquire movable or immovable property in pursuance of its expressed objectives. It insulates the associating members from personal liability. The other benefits of registration are that the surpluses generated as a result of the society’s activities do not accrue to an individual but are used to further the objectives of the society. It also makes the society eligible to apply for and receive grants-in-aid from government and other funding agencies. The agency can also apply for exemptions from income tax in respect of donations, and other incomes.

Some VOs prefer not to register themselves, as registration brings with it government scrutiny and fulfillment of the conditions stipulated under the Act concerned. Sometimes a voluntary agency may want to work as a change agent and wish to be able to develop critical consciousness among people. It may prefer to be free from government surveillance and control and therefore desire a non-formal unstructured arrangement. Such agencies work in a highly individualized manner and would come up against problems of continuity, mobilization of resources, financial accountability, organisation and division of responsibilities, etc.

It would always be desirable for an agency to have a constitution, giving the aims and objectives, organisational structure, membership, mode of election of office-bearers, tenure, locations, etc. An application has to be made to the Registrar of Societies/Co-operatives/Companies/Charity Commissioner, as the case may be, at the time of registration according to set procedure. The Memorandum of Association and the Rules and Regulations governing the

agency have to be prepared and submitted. Although the procedure is more or less the same throughout the country, there are slight variation in different states.

For receiving funds from foreign agencies, the VO has to be separately registered under the Foreign Fund Contribution (Regulation) Act, 1976. Rules have been framed by the Government of India in this connection.

Registration under The Societies Registration Act

Any person, entity, have the right to carry on development work irrespective of any formal registration. However it is important that all VOs should get themselves legally registered. Few reasons of getting an organisation registered are as under:

- Properties can be lawfully vested in the name of the organisation.
- Bank accounts can be opened in the name of the organisation.
- It becomes a legal entity which can sue and be sued.
- It can be registered under the Income Tax Act, Foreign Contribution Regulation Act and various other legal authorities.
- It provides greater credibility in sourcing funds as well as implementing programmes.
- It can have sustained longevity independent of its founders.
- The liability of the members generally becomes limited.

Forms of Registration

In India various options of registration of an organisation are available. The most convenient and popular form of registration is under The Societies Registration Act, 1860.

An organisation can also be registered as a Trust under The Charitable and Religious Trust Act, 1920 or The Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950.

An organisation can also be registered under section 25 of the Companies Act, 1956.

The above mentioned forms of registration are prevalent in India and one has to choose keeping in view the purpose and size of the organisation.

In this unit we will also discuss the procedure related with the registration of an organisation under The Societies Registration Act, 1860 and registration of a trust.

Registration of the Organisation

A group of seven or more persons are entitled to register an organisation under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. Such an organisation can be for any literary, scientific or charitable purposes. Section 20 describes in detail the purposes for which a VO can be registered. The Memorandum of Association and the bye-laws are filed with the Registrar of Societies.

In addition to the Societies Registration Act, 1860 various states of India have framed their respective Acts and Rules. The registration is done under the

auspices of various state governments in whose territories the organisation is located. Subject to minor variations between various states, an organisation can be registered in any district. To have state-wide jurisdiction it is desirable to register the organisation with the Registrar of Societies of the respective states.

Documents to be Furnished for Registration

The following documents are required for the purpose of registration.

- 1) Memorandum of Association alongwith a certificated copy, signed by all the subscribers.
- 2) Bye-laws or the Rules and Regulations, alongwith a certified copy of the same.
- 3) Affidavit on non-judicial stamp paper sworn by the President/Secretary. The affidavit should be attested by an Executive Magistrate or Notary Public.
- 4) Documentary evidence of the premises of the registered office. Evidence such as House Tax Receipt or Rent Receipt. A no objection certificate from the landlord should also be furnished.
- 5) A covering letter alongwith the requisite fees, requesting the Registrar for registration. The fees payable ranges between Rs. 10/- to Rs. 100/- in different states. The exact amount payable should be verified from the local registering authority.

Certificate of Registration

The Registrar of Societies will verify and process the above mentioned documents. After satisfying himself about the compliance of the provisions of the Act and the correctness of the documents he/she will issues a Certificate of Registration.

The Certificate and the Bye-laws form the prima facie evidence of the registered Society. Certified copies should be made of both these documents to be used for all other legal and administrative matters.

Check Your Progress III

Notes: a) Space is given below for your answer.

b) Compare your answer with the text.

- 1) List four reasons why a voluntary agency should be registered.

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Activity I

- 1) Visit a voluntary agency. Find out the procedure it followed for registration
- 2) Supposing you wish to start a voluntary agency. Draw up the Memorandum of Association, and the Rules and Regulations.
(Hint: Procure these some voluntary agencies and then draw up your own).

5.5 REGISTRATION AS A TRUST

Formation of an organisation as a Trust is fairly simple, but the provisions, procedures and the laws related with trust are fairly complex. Under Indian Laws various kinds of Private and Public Trusts can be formed. For the purposes of our discussion we will confine ourselves to the laws and procedures related with a Public Charitable Trust.

Ironically The Indian Trust Act, 1882 is not applicable to Public Charitable Trust. Public Trusts are formed under general law. The other relevant acts are Religious Endowment Act, 1863, Charitable and Religious Trust Act, 1920 and The Bombay Public Trust Act, 1950.

Essentials of a Valid Trust

The following are the basic ingredients of a valid trust:

- i) The author or settlor of the Trust
- ii) The Trustee
- iii) The Beneficiary
- iv) The Trust Property
- v) The objects of the Trust

The Author, or the Settlor, refers to the person who sets aside certain property for the benefit of the beneficiaries. The trustees are the persons who manage this property for the benefit of the beneficiary as per the trust deed. The author himself may or may not become a trustee.

A Public Charitable Trust can be formed even if immovable properties are not set aside. Normally certain funds are settled in the trust deed for the benefit and purposes as mentioned in the trust deed.

Who Can Form a Trust?

Any person competent to deal with property can create a trust. Besides Individual, a body of Individuals or an Artificial Person such as an Association of Persons, an Institution, a Limited Company, a Hindu Undivided Family through its Karta, are eligible.

Three certainties of a trust are

- i) Certainty of intention to create trust.
- ii) Certainty of the objects and the beneficiaries.
- iii) Certainty of the subject matter of the Trust i.e. fund or properties must be specified and settled in the deed.

Charitable Purpose

To form a Public Charitable Trust it is important that the objectives of the trust must be of charitable nature and of general public utility. The Charitable Endowment Act, 1890 defines charitable purpose as a purpose for the relief of the poor, education, medical relief and advancement of any other object of

general public utility but does not include a purpose which relates exclusively to religious teachings or worship.

Since it is necessary for a trust to be registered under the Income Tax Act, it is important to understand the meaning of 'charitable purpose' as per the Income Tax Act. The term charitable purposes has been divided into 4 parts:

- i) **Relief of Poverty:** Charitable purpose of providing support including financial support to poor people. The relief provided should be of public character. Relief such as help to the employees of the company or relief of group of private individuals like 'poor relatives' of the donors, would not be of charitable purpose.
- ii) **Education:** Promotion of education, literature, science or fine-arts is a charitable purpose. Education need not necessarily be for the poor only, it may extend to others as well.
- iii) **Medical Relief:** Arrangement of medical relief to the needy patients is a charitable purpose. It is not necessary that the medical relief should be free of cost, or at a reasonable cost.
- iv) **General Public Utility:** Advancement of any object of benefit to the public or a section of the public would be considered as a charitable purpose. It has been held that promotion of sports and games can be considered as a charitable purpose.

Procedure of Formation of a Trust

No clear-cut statutes are available for the formation of Charitable Trust. The only Central legislation available is The Charitable and Religious Trust Act, 1920. This act is limited in its applications, and does not provide any effective control over Public Charitable Trusts.

To form a valid Public Charitable Trust it is always desirable to prepare a Trust deed. Such Trust deed should clearly specify and satisfy the certainties of a trust.

Meetings and Resolutions

Sound governance largely depends on the effective interactions between the decision making persons of the organisations. It is very important that regular meetings are conducted for :

- Decision making
- Planning and Budgeting
- Resource mobilization
- Legal Control
- Appointment of Auditor
- Purchase of Capital Accounts
- Appointment of staff, etc.

5.6 REGISTRATION PROCESS

and end at a one stage. The registration under the Society Registration Act, 1860 entails following points:

1) **The Form**

The form is available from the Office of Registrar in State capitals. (Guidelines and instructions for completing the form is included.)

2) **Filling up the Form**

Any group of seven or more members desirous of working for any charitable propose or cause may, by subscribing their names to a memorandum of association and filing the same with the Registrar of Societies or any other officer appointed under that Act by the state Government can form a society.

The Memorandum of Association should contain the following particulars:

- a) **Name and address of the association:** While selecting the name of the organisation, care should be taken that it is simple, short, and comprehensible; and also reflects the objective of the organisation. Also, the proposed name should not be identical to that of any other organisation that has been registered. The complete postal address of the organisation should be included to be approved as the registered office.

The signatures of the applicant office bearers on Memorandum of Association have to be attested by witnesses. The Memorandum of Association prepared in the manner indicated above and signed by seven or more persons sponsoring the organisation and should be submitted along with the prescribed fees, to the Registrar who will record the name of the society.

In most states, the District magistrate is authorized to do so. Registration takes about month and the official cost is Rs. 50.

- b) **Purpose:** the broad aims and objectives for which the organisation has been set up should be clearly stated.
- c) **Membership requirements:** The document shall also indicate the qualifications for becoming members of the organisation, that may be based upon financial provisions, minimum age, special interest and contribution in the programme.
- d) **Other particulars:** It should also contain aspects such as Board of Directors, Office Bearers, Elections, Sub Committees, Meetings, Official year, Amendments to the Constitution, Finances, Maintenance and operation of bank accounts; Assets and Dissolution.

3) **Legal Assistance**

The filing and subsequent registration at the Office of Registrar involves drafting of the Memorandum and Rules and regulations in a way that protects both the members and the organisation from legal issues and difficulties that may arise in future. Also, all suits by or against the society shall be commenced or defended in the registered name of the society. Thus, it is advisable to take legal assistance in the process of formulation of the document and filing it to the Registrar.

4) Final Stage

The organisation would file with the Registrar of the Societies, a memorandum showing the name of the society, its objects, names and address and occupations of the members of the governing body accompanied with rules and regulations and a copy of proceedings of the general meeting at which it was resolved to get the society registered.

The Memorandum prepared in this format and signed by seven or more members sponsoring the organisation would be submitted to the Registrar with the prescribed fee. He would record the name of the society under the Act and issue the certificate of registration. The registered body would have to submit the annual list of managing committee members and other information as required by the Act to the Registrar. Upon registration, all properties, movable and immovable, will become the property of the society, and all suits by or against the society will be commenced or defended in the registered name of the society.

Other Issues to be noted

1) Types of Registration

- a) **Local/State level:** Desirous persons subscribing the names to the memorandum of the organisation should not be (in any case) less than seven.
- b) **National level:** if the society proposes to give national character to the organisation, there must be minimum of eight different persons from different states of Indian union as signatories to the Memorandum.

2) Membership

- The names, addresses, occupations and the designations of the present members of the Governing Council and subscribers to the Memorandum is required with their signatures witnessed/attested.
- Local and National membership depends also on the scale of operations of the organisation.
- Membership fees: There can be different types of members depending upon the amount they contribute to the organisation, such as life members, special members, annual members, active members, contributing members, etc.

Check Your Progress IV

Notes : a) Space is given below for your answers.

b) Compare your answers with the text.

- 1) List various relevant points of registration process.

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5.7 ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN AND STRUCTURE

Many voluntary and social service organisations tend to ignore efforts that are aimed towards strengthening their own organisational capacity and instead focus upon field work, directed toward helping their target groups. This is quite understandable from the perspective of the organisations that are struggling to sustain themselves. Their project funding is often quite specific and restricts them to manoeuvre to other directions. However, other VOs often do have resources for organisational development, but they have often not paid adequate attention to it.

This preoccupation with the field work often leads to a precarious situation. It is important that organisations together with their focus on efficient delivery do not also neglect issues of internal organisational functioning. Often this neglect leads to a situation where the organisation deteriorates and other points of organisational sickness develop. Thus, proper balance between field work and organisational work is a prerequisite for maintaining sustainability of a VO.

There are different kinds of organisations dealing with various issues ranging from education, health, women empowerment, social activism, etc. with different nature of activities; and thus there is often not one unique solution offered by academicians and practitioners for effective organisational structure and design. There is however a general philosophy and an approach which can be adapted to a variety of situations and organisations. Some of the most prominent of these principles in context of these VOs are:

- To ensure sustainability of the organisation, a clear sense of purpose and sense of direction must be developed together with objectives. This should be the end result of genuine consultation among all parties involved.
- These organisational objectives should be translated into specific work plans for various departments and individual staff. Such an exercise can lead to minimization of role conflict.
- General budget and staff allocations should be based on these objectives. Often in present scenario, the entire budgeting exercise is directed mostly by the funding agencies and thus for organisations it becomes too fragmented to be really useful.
- Besides periodic review, which should be both ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ and involve all layers of the management and executive staff, efforts to identify gaps should also be made simultaneously.
- Efforts should also be made to adequately compensate the staff, both materially and by giving proper incentives.

With the spurt of both voluntary action and social service organisations, a trend towards involving experienced and professional personnel for the execution of the projects is encouraged. Often, a multi-layered matrix structure has evolved in the organisations constituting of three streams of staff: (i) retired and senior bureaucrats and technocrats committed to the voluntary sector with their considerable administrative and technical experience with governmental policies and programs; (ii) professional managers from institutes of social work, rural

management and other social sciences; and (iii) local and grass-roots field workers with in-depth understanding of people.

Thus, organisational design and structure of the VOs is not homogenous. However, what differentiates the organisational structure of voluntary agencies from others is often the existence of an atmosphere of friendly, informal but committed work culture. There is generally no distancing between the staff and managers. These organisations operate in a fairly participatory style. The organisational structure and design are often determined by the stage of organisational development of a voluntary agency which are at various stages of Struggle for Survival (wherein organisations try to establish their credibility with the community, government and donors and own workers); Stage of Growth and Consolidation (wherein the main task is to expand operations and build organisational routines for efficient functioning); Stage of Innovation and Recognition (wherein the organisation exhibits preferences for quality as against straightforward quantitative growth, which has significant bearing on the organisational culture, structure and leadership), Stage of Drive to Institutional Maturity (characterized by an effort of organisation to safeguard its autonomy by reducing dependence on single donor and mobilizing resources themselves and issue of smooth leadership succession) and the final stage of Autonomous Self Sustained Organisation (marked by leadership, self confidence, financial independence, participative functioning, and accountability). Each of the stages have a significant bearing upon an organisation's management of its own resources both men and material and also maintenance of its structure and design.

5.8 RELEVANCE OF CREATING OF WORK-ORIENTED ATMOSPHERE

Work-oriented Atmosphere and Organisational Culture

Many factors, internal and external, have their impact upon the VOs and they determine their life span. These factors are very crucial for understanding the organisational dynamics. Earlier, we dealt in brief about the work culture in the previous sections. Let us attempt to understand the various issues related to it, authority, understanding, relationship and working with boards, committees and professional teams.

While discussing organisational culture and work-oriented atmosphere we would focus on three relevant aspects. The first is the degree of commitment of the entire organisation. This basically entails the level of morale, sense of direction and job satisfaction, apart from monetary compensation. A committed staff is very essential to harboring positive work atmosphere in a VO.

The second aspect of informal work culture implies lesser emphasis on hierarchy, rules and flexibility and free flow of communication within the organisation. The first stage of organisational development of a VO tends to be informal, simply organised and strongly bonded. As organisations grow in scale, it often becomes difficult to maintain the desired characteristics mentioned above. In cases of those that succeed, and it makes the capacity of leadership crucial to renewing the motivation of the workers. It is important that an organisation at this stage, introduce better formed structure, procedures and systems to facilitate its efficient working.

The third aspect of participative decision-making implies a system of consultation up and down the directions of the hierarchy in both directions. All the staff should have equal opportunity to contribute to decision-making, leading to an enhanced feeling of commitment and a joint sense of responsibility. It also creates congenial atmosphere for innovations.

Also, another crucial function of any organisation is to encourage process of coordination “to bring into common action, movement or condition, to relate and combine various parts in harmonious balance and adjustments” for the attainment of the declared objectives. The work atmosphere of an organisation can be gauged from the relationship and communication that exists between the:

- i) Various departments of the agency,
- ii) Various staff members of the agency,
- iii) Between various sub committees on boards,
- iv) Between the staff and the management.

Participatory style and smooth intra-organisation communication is very significant for harboring positive work culture. It is crucial also because of the fact that adequate monetary compensation is often not given to the staff and effective and efficient delivery of the services is determined to a large extent by high motivation, commitment and identification of the organisational goals to the wider ideals of welfare state.

Authority

The leadership of the VO is very crucial. It rests upon leaders and managers to get the organisation to realize objectives. However, the primary task of the leadership also varies according to the stage of the organisational development. It varies from the early leadership in primarily demonstrating the usefulness of the new organisation to the skeletal staff, donors and the community to the leadership in more mature organisation which primarily involves expanding the scale of operations, mobilization of funds, organisational procedures and networking.

On a closer look at leadership of the top level of voluntary groups and organisation, one can witness that often with some exception, it is concentrated in the hands of elderly persons. This trend gets reflected in their style of functioning that is often a combination of authoritarian and democratic style. The younger cadres of leaders are more democratic than their older colleagues.

However, though both these sets of leaders are capable of strong commitment and pragmatic problem solving, they often are weak on managerial competence, defined as the capacity to mobilize resources, handle crises, coordinate different sections of the organisation, create administrative systems and plan for succession. Various professional institutes have recognized this crucial fact and have introduced various sections in their syllabi that aim at encouraging leadership and equipping them with both knowledge and techniques to deal with various complexities. Leaders of the VOs must spend more time in nurturing their staff and building up the institution than only being preoccupied with issues external to the organisation.

Working with Professional Teams, Boards, Committees and other Functionaries

There are several reasons why VOs want to collaborate and work with various other bodies, committees, functionaries and professional teams. This is primarily because the target group or community they serve need multifaceted development while an organisation is likely to have limited capacity to deliver. Specialisation of VOs along sector lines also implies a corresponding division of tasks. More frequently, organisations collaborate to overcome isolation and share their experiences and also pool their resources for effective and efficient delivery. Thus, organisations are increasingly collaborating with various bodies and committees, often providing their specialized knowledge in the process of policy formulation and often guided by recommendations of expert groups in defining their own objectives.

These relations and collaborations among various groups and the VO can be at various levels: (i) simple exchange of information; (ii) pilot testing by VO of government and non-government innovations; (iii) replication by these bodies on a much broader scale of innovations made by VOs; and (iv) joint delivery of services with each playing significant part. Often, participation of VOs in various committees is an attempt to affect a change in the perception of government, other societies and community at large through persuasion, advocacy, and demonstrations.

Thus, VOs work at four levels with various boards, committees and professional teams:

- i) Information sharing
- ii) Consultation
- iii) Decision-making
- iv) Initiating action

5.9 LET US SUM UP

India has always had a strong NGO movement, enriched time and again by early missionaries, philanthropists, Gandhians, social workers, common people and the professionals. Without digressing into their ideological and motivational framework and categorization, (they are called voluntary developmental organisations, grass roots organisation, social action groups, charitable trusts, support organisations, awareness building groups), one can say that they all have contributed to the development of the country. In almost all kinds of short-term and long-term development activities, we find that NGOs have worked closely with the people espousing their causes.

However, for increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the delivery of these organisations it is important that various academicians, practitioners and professionals attempt to comprehend functioning and management of these voluntary agencies. Also significant is the fact that potential social entrepreneurs are familiar with routes of registration of organisation and various other related issues.

5.10 KEY WORDS

- Voluntary action** : It includes planning and conscious action of a group to deal with certain issues. It is necessarily problem oriented – not only geared towards dealing with a problem but also towards prevention of its occurrence.
- Voluntary effort** : When a group initiates ad-hoc efforts to deal with a problem, or an issue without much planning.
- NGO** : Non Government Organisation is characterized by features such as being independent of government and business; is non-profit making; and providing a wider public benefit that goes beyond any membership.

5.11 SUGGESTED READINGS

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