
UNIT 2 RURAL HOUSING

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2.0 OBJECTIVES

After working through this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the problem of rural housing in India;
- comment critically on the importance and the guidelines of the Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) and the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana: Gramin Awaas;
- describe the process of implementing each of these schemes; and
- explain the role of Panchayats in the implementation of these schemes.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Housing in general, and rural housing in particular, is a problem our country has been faced with since her independence. For a common person, owning a house not only provides economic security but also helps in bringing about a social change through which a person can integrate with the immediate social environment. Although a number of initiatives were taken from time to time to provide adequate housing to the rural poor, it was only during 1980s that special attention was given to the construction of houses in rural areas particularly for those belonging Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes and freed bonded labourers. A scheme called Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) for providing housing facilities to the rural poor was launched during 1985-86 as a sub-scheme of Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP), which became a part of Jawahar Rozgar Yojana (JRY) in April 1989.

It was made an independent scheme beginning January 1996. Besides IAY, which made some positive impact, the Central Government announced a National Housing & Habitat Policy in 1998. It aims at providing 'Housing for All' and facilitates construction of 20 lakh additional houses (13 lakhs in rural areas and 7 lakhs in urban areas) annually for the benefit of the poor and the deprived. In keeping with this policy, an Action Plan for Rural Housing was prepared to provide 'Shelter for All', including conversion of all unserviceable *kutcha* houses to *pucca/ semi-pucca* houses. To achieve this objective, a number of schemes for rural housing were initiated which included Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY); Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana: Gramin Awaas; Credit-cum-Subsidy Scheme for Rural Housing; Innovative Scheme for Rural Housing and Habitat Development; Rural Building Centres (RBC); Samagra Awaas Yojana (SAY) and National Mission for Rural Housing and Habitat. A number of them, such as Innovative Scheme for Rural Housing and Habitat Development, Rural Building Centres (RBC), Samagra Awaas Yojana (SAY) and National Mission for Rural Housing and Habitat, have been discontinued.

In this unit, we will discuss two of them, which are in operation now, namely the Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) and the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana: Gramin Awaas.

2.2 INDIRA AWAAS YOJANA (IAY)

The history of IAY may be traced back to the programmes of rural employment, which were initiated in early 1980s. Construction of houses was one of the activities taken up under the National Rural Employment Programme (NREP), which was launched in 1980 and the Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme (RLEGP), which began in 1983. There was, however, no uniform policy for rural housing at the state level. It was only in June 1985 that rural housing received special emphasis when a part of the RLEGP funds was set aside for the construction of houses for Scheduled Castes/Tribes and the freed bonded labourers. This is how IAY came into operation as a part of RLEGP. Later on, in April 1989 when RLEGP and NREP were merged into Jawahar Rozgar Yojana, the IAY became a part of JRY. Beginning on January 1, 1996, however, it was separated from the JRY and made an independent scheme to be implemented and monitored separately. Now it is a part of Rural Housing Schemes.

2.2.1 Objectives of IAY

The main objective of the Indira Awaas Yojana is to help construction/up-gradation of dwelling units for the members of Scheduled Castes/Tribes, to freed bonded labourers in rural areas and also for the non-Scheduled Caste/Tribe rural poor living below the poverty line by providing them a lump sum grant for the purpose.

2.2.2 IAY: The Target Groups

The main target groups of Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) till 1992-93 were the members of the Scheduled Castes/Tribes and the freed bonded labourers living below the poverty line in rural areas. Its scope was extended in 1993-94 to cover other groups of the rural poor, subject to the condition that the benefits to non-SCs/STs do not exceed 40% of the total allocation. From 1995-96 its scope was further extended to cover the families of servicemen of the armed and paramilitary forces killed in action irrespective of income criteria subject to the condition that they should:

- be residing in rural areas;
- be houseless or in need of shelter up-gradation and
- not be covered by any other scheme of housing.

Benefits have also been extended to ex-servicemen and the retired members of the paramilitary forces, subject to the condition that they fulfill the normal eligibility conditions of Indira Awaas Yojana. Three per cent (3%) of the funds are reserved for the benefit of physically and mentally challenged (disabled) persons living below the poverty line in rural areas.

2.2.3 Identification of Beneficiaries

The process of identifying beneficiaries involves the following considerations/steps:

- District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs)/Zilla Parishads (ZPs) to decide the number of houses to be constructed/upgraded under IAY scheme panchayat-wise during a particular year.
- This decision has to be based on the allocation made and the target fixed.
- The above decision of DRDA/ZP is conveyed to the Gram Panchayats.
- Gram Panchayats hold Gram Sabha meetings and select beneficiaries for IAY according to the guidelines and the target fixed for them.
- The Gram Panchayat keeps the Panchayat Samiti informed by sending a list of the selected beneficiaries to them. No approval of the Panchayat Samiti is required.

2.2.4 Selection of Beneficiaries: The Priorities

The process of selecting beneficiaries under the scheme involves prioritization as detailed below:

- i) The first priority in the selection of beneficiaries goes to freed bonded labourers, it means that they receive the highest priority.
- ii) The second priority goes to SC/ST households. Among them the sub-priorities involve those SC/ST households which are the victims of atrocities; SC/ST households which are headed by widows or unmarried women; SC/ST households affected by floods, fires, earthquakes, cyclones or similar natural calamities; and the other SC/ST households.
- iii) The third priority is given to the families/widows of the personnel from defense services/paramilitary forces killed in action.
- iv) The next priority in the selection of beneficiaries goes to non-SC/ST households living below the poverty line. However, benefits to this category of household should not exceed 40% of the total number of household helped under the scheme.
- v) The next in the priority list come the physically and mentally challenged persons living below the poverty line. Three per cent (3%) of the total funds allocated have been earmarked for this purpose.
- vi) The sixth priority goes to ex-servicemen and retired persons of the paramilitary forces.
- vii) The last priority involves those who have been displaced on account of developmental projects, nomadic, semi-nomadic and de-notified tribals. This category also includes families with physically and mentally challenged persons provided all such families are living below the poverty line.

The selection of the beneficiaries is subject to the condition that the households of all the above categories except the one listed under item (iii) above are Below the Poverty Line (BPL).

The allotment of houses is in the name of the female member of the beneficiary household. Alternatively, the house is to be allotted jointly in the names of the husband and the wife.

Check Your Progress I

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answers.

b) Check your answers with the possible answers provided at the end of this unit.

1) In which year did the Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) become an independent Scheme? What is its main objective?

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2) In 1995-96 the scope of IAY was further extended to cover the families of the servicemen of the armed and paramilitary forces killed in action irrespective of the income criteria. What were the conditions attached?

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2.2.6 Functioning of IAY

In order to make IAY effective, it is important that the necessary information regarding the location of houses, cost norms, type of material/technology to be used, fuel efficient *chulhas*, water supply and sanitation and the involvement of beneficiaries/voluntary organisations is made available to all the concerned. We shall now discuss each one of these concerns in some detail.

Location and design of IAY houses

Houses under the scheme are to be built on individual plots in the main habitation of the village concerned. They can also be built in clusters within a habitation so as to facilitate the development of infrastructure and other common facilities. Care is to be taken to build IAY houses close to the village. Besides safety and security, it would also ensure nearness to work place and social communication. No specific design is prescribed except that the plinth area of the house should be around 20 sq. meters. It is necessary to remember that the main responsibility of constructing the house is that of the beneficiary.

It is also necessary to remember that the houses meant for physically challenged people should incorporate the concept of *barrier-independence*, so that they don’t face any problems in moving around the house. In areas where there is frequent

occurrence of floods, cyclones and earthquakes, the houses to be built have to be disaster resistant.

Cost norms and distribution of funds

You know that price levels increase from time to time. This phenomenon has its impact on cost norms to be fixed for the construction of houses under IAY. Taking this into account, the cost norms under IAY have undergone changes from time to time. The expenditure allowed for a house under IAY at present is as under:

Table 1: Unit costs for Construction and Upgrading old Structures

Items	Plain Areas	Hilly/Difficult Areas
Construction of houses including a sanitary latrine and a smokeless <i>chulha</i> .	Rs. 25,000/-	Rs. 27,500/-
Upgrading of an un-serviceable household.	Rs. 12,500/-	Rs. 12,500/-

Source: Guidelines for IAY (Effective from 1-4-2004), Ministry of Rural Development, GOI.

A sanitary latrine and a smokeless *chulha* are to be provided with each IAY house. Latrines could be constructed away IAY houses on the sites of the beneficiaries. Wherever possible, efforts are to be made to dovetail funds from Total Sanitation Campaign (TSC) for providing sanitary latrines, so that more money may be made available for the construction of IAY houses. In case, the beneficiary is unable to construct a sanitary latrine, whatever the reasons, an amount of Rs.600/- is to be deducted from the assistance provided for the construction of a new IAY house or for upgrading an un-serviceable *kutchha* house. Similarly, where smokeless a *chulha* is not possible, a deduction of Rs.100/- is to be made from the assistance provided.

Credit-cum-subsidy for construction/upgrading of un-serviceable kutchha houses

Up to 20% of the total funds may be utilized for upgrading the existing *kutchha* houses and towards subsidy for the construction of houses with credit from Banks/Financial Institutions. Credit-cum-subsidy is to be provided subject to the following conditions:

- i) Rural households having an annual income of up to Rs. 32,000/- only.
- ii) Ceiling of subsidy under the Scheme is Rs. 2,500 per household.
- iii) The upper limit of the construction loan under this scheme is Rs. 50,000. It is the responsibility of the State Governments/DRDAs concerned to coordinate with the financial institutions to make the credit facility available to interested beneficiaries.

If the amount earmarked for credit-cum-subsidy for upgrading the *kutchha* houses is not spent in full, the balance can be spent on the construction of new IAY houses.

Use of local materials and low cost technology

In order to reduce the cost of construction, efforts are to be made to encourage the use of local material and low cost technology. Technologies that use bricks, cement and steel on a large scale are to be discouraged. It is considered desirable to substitute burnt bricks by sun-dried bricks of earth/soil. Similarly, as far as possible, cement is expected to be substituted by locally manufactured lime and *surkhi*. However, bricks manufactured by beneficiaries themselves may be used for house construction. This helps in reducing the cost of construction.

Smoke free chulha

You know that shortage of fuel is a problem that the country is faced with. It is because of this that fuel-efficient *chulhas* have been developed and are manufactured at a number of places. In addition, these *chulhas* are smoke free, which is good for health. It is, therefore, necessary that every house constructed under the Yojana be provided with fuel-efficient *chulha*.

Drinking water and sanitation

The agency responsible for implementing IAY has to ensure the availability and supply of drinking water. Wherever other sources of drinking water are not available, a hand pump has to be installed even before the work starts. Funds for such activities are available under the Rural Water Supply and other similar programmes.

Sanitation is an equally important requirement. It is necessary that sanitary latrines be constructed along with the houses. It is also necessary that people are made aware of the use of such latrines. Similarly, an efficient drainage system and other common facilities need to be developed using the funds for the infrastructure development component of the programme. This will help to keep the environment clean.

Involvement of beneficiaries

The Yojana provides complete freedom to the beneficiaries as to the manner of the construction of the house. In this regard, beneficiaries are allowed to make their own arrangements for construction materials, engage skilled workmen and also contribute family labour. A committee of the beneficiaries could be formed, if need be, to coordinate the work. All this is expected to:

- reduce costs;
- ensure quality of construction;
- provide satisfaction to and ensure acceptance of the houses by the beneficiaries and
- incorporate hazard-resistant features in the design of the houses.

Ban on contractors or departmental construction

It is very important to remember that no contractor is now allowed for the construction of the IAY houses. If any cases of construction through contractors come to the notice of the authorities, the Government of India reserves the right to recover the releases made to the State for those constructions. These houses should not be constructed by any Government department either. Government departments or organisations can, however, give technical assistance or arrange for coordinated supply of raw material. The spirit of the IAY is that the houses are not to be constructed and delivered by any external agency. On the other hand, the houses are to be constructed by the beneficiaries themselves for themselves.

Involvement of voluntary organisations

Beneficiaries need to be motivated to use sanitary latrines and smoke-free *chulhas*. For this, the local voluntary agencies that have a good record of work may be associated with the construction of IAY houses. Even supervision, guidance and the monitoring of construction may be entrusted to such non-governmental organizations. In particular, their help may be taken in promoting and popularizing the use of sanitary latrines and smokeless *chulhas*.

Improvement of environment

You perhaps know that under IAY due attention has to be paid to the improvement of environment. IAY places a lot of emphasis on plantation of trees in the entire habitat and around the individual house. Such plantations are expected to help the beneficiaries get fuel/fodder/small timber in due course of time and may be taken up under the social forestry programme. Keeping in view the agro-climatic conditions of the region concerned, plantation of some popular indigenous species like Neem, Mohuva, Pipal, Chandan, Oak, Amla, Coconut, Mango, Deodar, Rose Wood, etc. is advised. This list is merely illustrative, and not exhaustive. Cultivation of fruits and vegetables at the household level also needs to be encouraged for improving nutritional intake of the beneficiaries.

Inventory of houses

In order to have a proper record, the implementing agency is supposed to have a complete list/inventory of houses constructed under IAY. It should give the following details:

- Date of the start and the completion of the construction of the house;
- Name of the village and block in which the house is located and
- Name, address, occupation and the category of the beneficiary concerned and other relevant information.

Display of IAY board and logo

After the construction of houses is completed, the concerned DRDA is expected to ensure that each house displays:

- Government of India Rural Housing logo;
- Year of construction and
- The name of the beneficiary.

2.2.7 Implementation of IAY

It is of utmost importance that such a scheme is properly implemented and misutilization of funds and other irregularities are kept to the minimum. Indira Awaas Yojana is implemented through District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) or through Zilla Parishads at the district level and Block Samitis at the intermediate level. Gram Panchayats have been assigned the role of identifying the beneficiaries of this scheme.

Transparency in the implementation of IAY

You will agree that transparency plays an important role to check misutilization and other irregularities. People have a right to have access to the information, which affects their lives. Keeping this view, IAY provides disclosure of necessary information at various levels viz. village, block and district levels. The type of information expected to be available for the public at all these levels may among others include the following:

Village Level

- list of people below the poverty line;
- list of disaster resistant construction features suitable for the region/locality;
- lists of beneficiaries during the preceding year and the current year;
- funds allocated for IAY for the village;
- IAY Guidelines/Criteria for selecting beneficiaries and
- IAY/GOI sign boards displayed on the allotted houses.

Block Level

- information about costs, source of funding and the implementing agencies involved in the construction of houses at block level;
- information about the availability and distribution of funds under IAY— village wise and
- the progress made in the implementation of IAY.

District Level

- information about the distribution of funds under IAY, Block/Village-wise;
- criteria for the distribution of funds, Block/Village-wise, including the norms for the selection of beneficiaries under the Indira Awaas Yojana.

Monitoring of IAY

The monitoring of IAY is done at different levels. At the national level, the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India, is responsible for:

- release of funds;
- overall guidance;
- policy making and
- monitoring and evaluation of the programme at the national level.

It is the responsibility of the State Governments to ensure that the programme is being implemented satisfactorily and that the construction of houses is in accordance with the prescribed procedures. As an apex body at the State level, there is a State Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committee for Rural Development Programmes, which monitors this programme at the State level. A nominee of the Union Ministry of Rural Development represents the Central Government in the Committee meetings. Monitoring at the District, Sub-District and Block levels is done by the concerned IAY officers. This involves:

- field inspection for physical monitoring;
- regular District visits by IAY officers to ensure proper execution of the programme and
- a fixed minimum number of field visits to be allotted to each supervisor level functionary at the District and Block levels.

In addition to the above, separate monthly and annual progress reports are also submitted to the Central Government by the respective State Governments/Union Territories in respect of IAY. These include:

- monthly progress reports to be submitted on or before the 10th of every succeeding month in a prescribed format through telex/fax/e-mail/nic.net; [The availability of this communication technology, provided at the State and District levels, is expected to speed up monitoring process.]
- a detailed annual progress report to be submitted by the 25th of April of the succeeding financial year in a prescribed format.

2.2.8 Funding of IAY

Indira Awaas Yojana is a Centrally sponsored scheme. It is funded on a cost-sharing basis by the Government of India and the States in the ratio of 75:25. It means that the Central Government provides 75 percent of the funds while the State Government concerned provides 25 per cent of the funds. In the case of Union Territories, the Government of India provides 100 percent funding for the scheme.

Criteria for the allocation of resources

The criteria for the allocation of resources have two aspects. The first one pertains to allocations to the States/Union Territories and the second to those for inter-district allocation. As far as allocation to the States/Union Territories is concerned, it is done on the basis of the following two criteria:

Poverty Ratio: The poverty ratio as prepared by the Planning Commission is used for this purpose.

Housing Shortage: It is determined on the basis of the previous census conducted. It means that *housing shortage* is determined from the 2001 census. As far as the inter-district allocation is concerned, the following criteria are applied:

- The proportion of rural SC/ST population in a district to the total rural SC/ST population in the State,
- Housing shortage in a district in proportion to the total housing shortage in the State/UT.

Both these variables are given equal weight for purposes of the inter-district allocations. It may be noted that under IAY, shifting of funds/resources from one district to another is not permitted. Within the total allocation, 80 per cent is to be spent for new constructions and up to 20 per cent for upgrading the existing *kutcha* houses.

Procedure for the release of funds

The allocation of funds under IAY is released to Zilla Parishads/DRDAs in two instalments. The procedure for release is as follows:

First Instalment: The first instalment amounting to 50% of the total funds allocated is released to DRDAs/ZPs at the beginning of the financial year, subject to the fulfillment of following conditions.

- Those districts that have claimed and obtained the second instalment of the funds in the preceding financial year receive the first instalment for the current year. However, if any specific condition had been imposed at the time of the release of the last instalment of the previous year, its compliance is ensured before the release of the current first instalment.

Second Instalment: The second instalment of the Central assistance is released on a request, in the prescribed format, from the DRDA concerned and on the fulfillment of following conditions.

- The districts concerned should have utilized 60% of the total available funds at the time of applying for the second instalment.
- The opening balance of the district, i.e. the aggregate of the balance with DRDA should not be more than 15 per cent of the total funds allocated to the district during the previous year. If the opening balance is more than this limit, the Central share of the excess amount is deducted proportionately at the time of the release of the second instalment.
- DRDA has to indicate the state's proposed share to the IAY scheme for the current year. Taking into account the state's share, the Centre releases its matching contribution.
- The State Government should have released all its contribution (including that of the previous year) due up to the date of the application. If there is a shortfall in the state's contribution, a corresponding amount of the Central share (*3 times the shortfall of state share*) is deducted from the amount of the Central share of the second instalment of the current year.
- The DRDA should have submitted the Audit Report of the previous year.

- The DRDA should have submitted the utilization certificate for the previous year in the prescribed format.
- The Governing Body of the DRDA should have approved the Annual Plan.
- The DRDA should have submitted the progress/Monitoring Report.
- DRDA should also have submitted various certificates mentioning that:
 - there has been no embezzlement of funds;
 - there has been no diversion of funds from one district to another;
 - interest earned on the deposit of IAY in the preceding year has been taken into account while calculating the opening balance of the current year.

Cuts imposed on the late receipt of proposals

The release of the second instalment depends on the time when utilization is reported. Under the system, proposal(s) received in the months of January and February attract progressive deductions from the total Central allocation for the year @10% and 20% respectively.

Release Calendar: On the basis of the receipt of a complete proposal for the second instalment, the amount released will be adjusted as follows:

Proposal received in	:	Funds allocated
December	:	50% of the allocated funds
January	:	40% of the allocated funds
February	:	30% of the allocated funds
March	:	20% of the allocated funds.

The proposals received after the 15th of March are not to be accepted. Zilla Parishads/ DRDAs are required to complete all the incomplete houses sanctioned/taken up in the previous year first (with the funds available during the current year), even if there is a deduction while releasing the second instalment in the previous year due to unavoidable circumstances.

Release of state share to DRDAs: The State/UT share has to be released to DRDAs/ZPs within one month after the release of the Central assistance.

Special Provision for the Release of Assistance to Inaccessible Areas

In a country like India, which is spread over such a large geographical area, there are certain areas, which have a limited working season for various reasons. Taking these peculiarities into consideration, it has been decided that the entire Central assistance to such areas/districts would be released in just one instalment. It is expected that the States concerned would also release their share to such districts in one instalment. The funds, however, are released only on the fulfillment of the conditions stated above. At present the areas identified to qualify for such relaxation include Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti, Leh, Kargil, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep and, if decided, any other areas which have a limited working season.

Separate bank account for IAY

It is necessary that a separate Bank Account be opened for IAY funds. While doing so, it is necessary to remember that:

- IAY funds (both the Central and the State share) are kept in an exclusive savings account of a nationalized/scheduled/cooperative bank or in a Post Office by the DRDAs;

- funds are withdrawn from the accounts only for incurring expenditure under IAY and
- the interest earned on IAY funds so deposited becomes a part of IAY funds.

Maintenance of accounts

IAY accounts are maintained according to a set procedure. The DRDAs are expected to follow the accounting procedures prescribed by the Ministry of Rural Development. It is also important to remember that the General Body of the DRDA concerned has to approve the final account of the preceding **year by 30th June** and get its account audited **before 31st August** of the same year. Thereafter, the DRDAs are expected to send the audited report as approved by its General Body, both to the Central as well as the State Government **before 30th September** of the same year.

Evaluation studies

Evaluation is a tool that helps us to know as to whether the objectives of a particular programme have been achieved or not. Concurrent evaluation facilitates mid-term correction while the implementation is in progress. It is, therefore, important that the States/Union Territories conduct periodic evaluation studies. They are also expected to encourage conducting evaluation studies by reputed organisations/institutions. It is also necessary that remedial follow up action be taken on the basis of the outcome of concurrent evaluation. Copies of the reports of these evaluation studies are also to be sent to the Ministry of Rural Development for their information and use.

Check Your Progress II

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answers.
b) Check your answers with the possible answers provided at the end of this unit.

1) What was the new dimension added to IAY in 1999-2000?
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2) Who is responsible for the implementation of IAY? What inbuilt mechanism is available to ensure transparency in its implementation?
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2.2.9 New Initiative and Future Strategy

The Government is attaching a lot of importance to IAY. The Ministry of Rural Development has conducted a number of workshops on rural housing, which were attended by people’s representatives, Panchayati Raj functionaries, NGOs and the

technical and the administrative personnel of the State Governments. There is a felt need for standardizing, popularizing and replicating cost-effective, disaster resistant and environment-friendly construction technologies, designs and materials and also developing ideal, sustainable rural human settlements consistent with the geo-climatic variations and natural disaster proneness of the places/regions concerned. It has been decided to improve the quality of houses constructed under the IAY by disseminating the information developed by various agencies on all these aspects. Also, DRDAs are expected to take full advantage of the findings and recommendations of these workshops and seminars.

2.3 PRADHAN MANTRI GRAMODAYA YOJANA: GRAMIN AWAAS

The Government of India introduced a comprehensive scheme called Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) with the objective of achieving sustainable human development at the village level. Since *shelter* is a part of the sustainable human development, a special component of PMGY, namely Gramin Awaas (GA) addresses the problem of rural shelter specifically. Although there are other schemes of rural housing like Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) in operation, it was thought desirable to supplement them through this component of the comprehensive PMGY scheme. We will now discuss the objectives and the implementation strategy of this component (Gramin Awaas) of the PMGY.

2.3.1 Objective of PMGY (GA)

The main objective of the Gramin Awaas component of the PMGY is to reduce the shortage of houses for families living below the poverty line in the rural areas and also to assist in the healthy development of the habitat in these areas.

2.3.2 PMGY: The Target Groups

The main target groups of the Gramin Awaas component of the PMGY are the members of the Scheduled Castes/Tribes, the freed bonded labourers and the non-Scheduled Caste/Tribe poor people living below the poverty line in the rural areas. As in IAY, in this scheme also three per cent (3%) of the funds is reserved for the benefit of physically/mentally challenged persons living below the poverty line in rural areas. It is to be noted that not more than 40% of the total allocation during a financial year can be utilized for the construction of houses for non-SC/ST families living below the poverty line.

2.3.3 Identification of Beneficiaries

The process of identifying beneficiaries involves the following considerations/steps:

- District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs)/Zilla Parishads (ZPs) are to decide the number of houses to be constructed under the Gramin Awaas component of PMGY panchayat-wise.
- The above decision of DRDA/Zilla Parishad is conveyed to the Gram Panchayats.
- The Gram Sabha selects the beneficiaries for the Gramin Awaas component of PMGY from the list of eligible households keeping in mind the target allotted.
- The Gram Panchayat sends a list of the selected beneficiaries to the Panchayat Samiti for their information, as there approval is not required.

2.3.4 Protection of Women’s Interest

The allotment of houses is made in the name of the female member of the beneficiary household. Alternatively, the house is allotted in the names of both the husband and the wife.

Check Your Progress III

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answers.
 b) Check your answers with the possible answers provided at the end of this unit.

1) What is the main objective of PMGY? How are women’s interests protected under its Gramin Awaas component?

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2.3.5 Functioning of the Gramin Awaas Component of PMGY

In order to make the Gramin Awaas component of PMGY effective, it is necessary that relevant information pertaining to the location of houses, cost norms, types of material/technology to be used, fuel efficient chulhas, sanitation and the involvement of beneficiaries is provided as and when needed. We shall now discuss each one of them in some detail below.

Location and design of houses under Gramin Awaas component of PMGY

Houses under this scheme are to be built on individual plots in the main habitation of the village. They can also be built in a cluster within a habitation so as to facilitate the development of infrastructure, such as internal roads, drainage, drinking water supply and other common facilities. Care has to be taken to ensure that the houses are located close to the villages and not too far away, so as to ensure closeness to the place of work, social communication, safety and security. It is necessary to remember that the main responsibility of constructing houses is that of the beneficiaries. No specific design is prescribed except that the plinth area of each house should not be less than 20 sq. metres.

As discussed in under IAY, it is important to remember that the houses meant for the physically challenged people incorporate the concept of barrier-independence so that they do not face any inconvenience in moving around in the house(s).

Cost norms and distribution of funds

The permissible expenditure for a house under the Gramin Awaas component of PMGY is as follows:

Construction assistance per Unit	For Plain Areas	For Hilly/Difficult Areas
	Rs. 20,000.00	Rs. 22,000.00

Upgrading the *kutch* houses

For conversion of unserviceable *kutch* houses into *pucca*/semi *pucca* houses, a maximum assistance of Rs. 10,000/- is provided under the Gramin Awaas component of PMGY. Twenty percent of the total Gramin Awaas component of PMGY funds is allocated under this head.

Use of local materials and low cost technology

In order to reduce the cost of construction, every effort is made to encourage the use of local material and low cost technology (developed by various institutions) to the maximum extent. In areas susceptible to natural calamities (such as fires, floods, cyclones and earthquakes), the incorporation of disaster resistant structural design are encouraged.

Provision of smoke free *chulhas* and sanitary latrines

Houses built under the Gramin Awaas component of PMGY scheme are to ensure that every house constructed has a smoke-free, fuel-efficient *chulha* and a sanitary latrine. Further, there is a provision for planting trees around the newly built houses. All these measures are expected to keep the environment clean.

Involvement of beneficiaries

The Gramin Awaas component of PMGY provides complete freedom to the beneficiaries as to the manner of the construction of the houses. They have full freedom to contribute family labour or engage skilled workmen and to make their own arrangements for construction materials. All this is expected to:

- reduce costs;
- ensure quality of construction and
- provide satisfaction to and ensure acceptance of the houses by the beneficiaries.

It should be noted that no contractor or government department/organization is allowed undertake or get involved in the construction of houses under this scheme.

2.3.6 Implementation of the Gramin Awaas Component of PMGY

The Gramin Awaas component of PMGY is implemented through the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) or through Zilla Parishads (ZPs) at the District level. Gram Panchayats have been assigned the role of identifying the beneficiaries of the scheme.

How Gramin Awaas component of PMGY is implemented?

The State Government forwards proposals for the construction of houses under the Gramin Awaas component of PMGY to the Government of India. In addition to the proposals for the houses for the poor, the proposal may also include some provision for internal roads, drainage, drinking water, plantation, improvement of habitation and for making the houses cyclone and earthquake resistant. The proposals are scrutinized and sanctioned by a competent committee, which comprises the following members:

- Secretary (Rural Development);
- Additional Secretary and Financial Advisor (Rural Development);
- Advisor (RD), Planning Commission;
- Joint Secretary (Rural Housing);
- Director In-charge PMGY (Gramin Awaas).

The Secretary (Rural Development) acts as the Chairman and Director In-charge of Gramin Awaas component of PMGY as the convener of the committee.

Procedure for the release of funds

On the recommendation of the Ministry of Rural Development, the Ministry of Finance releases funds for the scheme to the States/Union Territories in two instalments. The second instalment of funds is released on fulfilling the following conditions:

- Concerned State/UT Government should have submitted utilization certificate; and
- Concerned State/UT Government should have submitted the Audit Reports.

Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the Gramin Awaas component of PMGY is basically the responsibility of the State Governments. The DRDAs/ZPs submit periodic reports regarding the performance of the scheme to the State Government concerned in a prescribed format. The State Governments/Union Territories, in turn, submit separate reports and returns on the performance of the scheme to the Union Government in a prescribed format.

State Governments/Union Territory Administrations conduct periodic evaluation studies on the implementation of Gramin Awaas component of PMGY. Studies on issues arising out of concurrent evaluation may be got conducted by reputed institutions/organisations. On its own, the Central Government, may also conduct evaluation studies. Copies of the reports of evaluation studies conducted by States/UTs are to be submitted to the Government -of India also. These studies help in taking corrective/remedial action.

Check Your Progress IV

Note: a) Use the space provided for your answers.
b) Check your answers with the possible answers provided at the end of this unit.

1) The Gramin Awaas component of PMGY provides complete freedom to the beneficiaries. Why?

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2.4 LET US SUM UP

This unit gave us detailed information about two major schemes for Rural Housing, namely Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) and Gramin Awaas component of PMGY. The main points discussed in this unit are the importance and objectives of these schemes, the procedures used for identifying the beneficiaries and the various aspects of their functioning and implementation.

The Indira Awaas Yojana and Gramin Awaas as a component of PMGY are designed primarily to provide free housing to the members of the Scheduled Castes/Tribes, the freed bonded labourers and other categories of the rural poor. It is expected that a thorough understanding of these schemes would help a development functionary or

a student of rural development play an effective role in solving the basic problems of housing in rural India.

2.5 KEY WORDS

Beneficiaries	:	Persons who are supposed to benefit from a particular programme/scheme.
Inaccessible Areas	:	The areas that are impossible to reach.
Monitoring	:	Is the process through which information flow takes place to enable the management to assess the progress of implementation and take timely corrective action, if needed.
Evaluation	:	Is the process to determine whether the objectives set for a particular programme/scheme have been achieved or not.

2.6 REFERENCES AND SUGGESTED READINGS

Ninth five-year plan (1997-2002): Planning Commission, The Government of India, New Delhi.

Activities and Achievements 1995-96: The Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, The Government of India, New Delhi.

Annual Report 1998-1999: The Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment, The Government of India, New Delhi.

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Rural Housing Schemes-Guidelines, 2000: National Mission for Rural Housing and Habitat, The Ministry of Rural Development, The Government of India, New Delhi.

2.7 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS – POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Check Your Progress I

- 1) It was on 1st January 1996 that Indira Awaas Yojana became an independent scheme after it was separated from JRY. The main objective of IAY is to help construction of houses free of cost for the members of Scheduled Castes/Tribes, freed bonded labourers in rural areas and also for the non-Scheduled Castes/Tribes rural poor living below the poverty line.
- 2) The conditions attached included that they should be residing in rural areas; be houseless or in need of upgrading their shelters provided they are not covered by any other scheme of housing.

Check Your Progress II

- 1) It included upgrading of unserviceable *kutcha* houses to semi-*pucca* or *pucca* houses having sanitary latrines and smokeless *chulhas*. It was basically aimed to help a large number of people living in unserviceable *kutcha* houses in bad conditions to improve their housing conditions. Twenty per cent (20%) of the IAY funds have been allocated for this purpose.

- 2) It is being implemented through District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) or through Zilla Parishads at the district level and by Block Samitis at the intermediate level. Gram panchayats have been assigned the role of identifying the beneficiaries of this scheme. In order to bring about transparency, IAY provides disclosure of all the necessary information at various levels, viz. village, block and district levels. The type of information expected to be available for the public at all these levels among others include, list of beneficiaries, funds allocated for IAY for the village, implementing agencies that take up houses at block level, muster roll details, etc.

Check Your Progress III

- 1) The main objective of PMGY is to achieve sustainable human development at the village level. In order to protect the interests of women, the allotment of houses is made in the name of the female member of the beneficiary household. Alternatively, the house is allotted in the names of both the husband and the wife.

Check Your Progress IV

- 1) Under Gramin Awaas component of PMGY, the beneficiaries have full freedom to contribute family labour or engage skilled workmen and to make their own arrangements for construction work. It is felt that all these measures help reduce costs, ensure quality of construction, provide satisfaction to and ensure acceptance of the new construction by the beneficiaries, which is necessary for the success of the scheme.