

# **Community Organization Management for Community Development**

*Editor*

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Maidan Garhi, New Delhi 110068**

July, 2010

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ISBN: 978-81-266-4776-7

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

Print Production: Shri Kulwant Singh.

Laser typeset by Nath Graphics, 1/21, Sarvapriya Vihar, New Delhi -110 016.

Printed at :

## **Preface**

Community has been a central focus of social work practice since its inception. Communities are one of the many social systems that touch people's lives and shape their individual and group identities. As a professional you must have knowledge of the basic concepts pertaining community organization management for community development. In this book 'Community Organization Management for community Development' we shall discuss on various aspects of community and community development, meaning, nature and characteristics features of urban, rural and tribal communities; place of community work within social work practice and community development programmes in rural, tribal and urban areas. Apart from explaining the values, purpose and assumptions underlying community organization, this book also outlines the philosophy and history of community organization in the USA, UK and India. We also discuss about similarities, differences and relationship between community organization and other methods of social work models of community organization, concept and dimensions of power, relevance of power in community organization practice, impact of globalization on contemporary communities, community practice, social action for community development, concept, history scope and relevance of social action, various models of social action, strategies and tactics in social action, values, ethics principles of social action, history, nature, scope, functions and principles of social welfare administration and types and characteristics of social welfare organization . the discussion and deliberation in this book is very important for social work professionals because we have covered several

important topics that are needed for a social work student in the field of social work.

In the first chapter we shall provide an understanding of communities, its characteristics, and how a community is relevant in social work practice. The second chapter deals with urban communities. You will read about the meaning of urban community, historical development of urban areas, spread and characteristics of urban communities, spatial segregation and specific urban communities. The "Profile of rural Communities" elaborates on different aspects of rural communities. You would come to know about the meaning of rural community, diversity of rural communities, rural, social and economic structure and policies and practices in rural community. The write up in the chapter on "Tribal Communities" talks about another type of community, i.e. tribal community. After going through this chapter you will know what a tribe is, what are the demographic features of a tribal community and their social economic structure. You will also be able to distinguish between denotified and nomadic tribes, and some of the major concerns of tribal communities. The chapter on "Community Development Programmes and Accountability" deals with the various community development programmes and the concept of accountability. You will get to know about the history of community development programmes and programmes targeting rural, tribal and urban areas. The chapter on "Community Organization: Concepts, Value Orientation and Assumptions" will give you an idea of what is community organization and how community organization is related to social work. It also discusses the guiding values, purposes and assumptions of community organization.

"History of community Organization" gives you a picture of the history of community Organization in the United

Kingdom, USA and India. You will be able to compare the content and process of the method of community organization in India and the West. The deliberation on “Community Organization as a Method of social Work practice” aims to provide an insight about community organization as a method to find solutions for community problems. You will also be able to establish the relationship between community organization and other methods of social work, and the relevance of community organization for the development of communities. This chapter the distinction between community organization and community development and the underlying principles of Community Organization. The discussion on the “Models and Approaches of Community Organization” will brief you about the steps involved in community organization process, different models that are followed in community organization and other strategies and approaches relevant to community organization. “Current Issues in Community Organization and the role of the community Organizer” elaborates on the concepts of power structure and its relevance in community organization. You will get to know the issues related to gender injustices and community practice with the marginalized groups. This chapter also deals with community organization practice in terms of globalization and its impact on community practice as well as the role being played by a community organizer.

“Social Action: Concept and Application” deals with the concept and terms related to social actions, how social action has been discussed by different scholars, the history, scope and relevance of social action. “Integrated Approach to Social Work and Social Action” deals with a detailed discussion on the integrated approach to social work and social action, various social system the process of intervention under integrated approach to

social work and the interrelationship between Social Action and community Work. The chapter on “Models of Social Action” elaborates the Elitist model, Institutional and Non-institutional models, Popular models, and Gandhian model of social action. “Strategies and Skills in Social Action” talks about the strategies and skills required for social action and will acquaint you with different strategies at different stages like planning, mobilization, management communication and networking in the context of Social action. The chapter on “Social Action: A Method of Social Work” discusses on social action as a method of social work. You will learn about the values, ethics and principles of social action and how social action is related with other methods of social work and social movements.

The chapter on “ Social Welfare Administration: concept, history and nature explains different terms like social development, social welfare and how they are related to social work and social welfare administration, the functions that are carried out by the Social Welfare Administrator, the principles needed to be followed, and the scope of Social Welfare Administration as a method of Social Work, different welfare organizations that are working in the social welfare sector which include Governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations; Bilateral and International organizations as well as Donor agencies and United Nation Bodies, the organizational climate, communication and social marketing, public relations, fund raising, social auditing, conflict resolution, relation between social policy and Social Welfare Administration, and different social policies like Health Policy and its Programmes, education policy as well as social welfare policies.

The preparation for this book extended for a period of two years and several eminent scholars from social work discipline made their valuable contribution. I am ever

grateful to Prof. K.K. Ghosh, Dr. A Malathi, Dr. Neera Agrimitra, Dr. Archana Kaushik, and Dr. Beena Antony for their expertise, time, commitment and the timely completion of the various chapters. I am sure, this book will be of immense help to several social work professionals working in NGO sector, government agencies and other related institution engaged in social work.

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# 1

## **Concepts of Community and Community Work**

*\*A. Malathi*

### **Introduction**

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

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

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## **Definitions**

Community is a set of descriptions of what is implied. It is essentially a subjective experience which defies objective definition. It is felt and experienced rather than measured and defined.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

socio-technical change may have resulted from the proliferation of such Internet-based social networks.

It is also possible for virtual networks to be created and used by geographically and interest bound communities for social uplift and collective action. One example is the case of *village blogs* created by villagers in Goa to tackle the powerful mining lobby.

## **Understanding Community**

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

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

### **Community Construct: Sociological Insights**

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

The *Gemeinschaft* communities are based on natural personal, informal face to face social relationships, where individuals are accepted for who they are, and

not what they have done. People are recognized and accepted for their innate qualities. This sort of human relationship is reflected in families, small groups and traditional communities.

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

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

It is however true that both forms of community life form the current reality of Indian Society and one cannot be attributed a higher/superior value than the other. These need to be viewed as different forms of human association that are present in the rural, urban and tribal communities. It is best to view them as ends of a continuum of human interaction wherein communities are grounded in both informal personal relationships and in the formal institutional structures that are part of contemporary life.

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

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

**b) community based on shared interest or identity or functional community.**

**Community as Bounded by Geographical Space**

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

**Communities of Interest**

This refers to Communities where the membership is based not on shared physical space but on shared interests or characteristics that unite members and provide the basis for one's personal identity. Things like race ethnicity, religion culture, social class professional affiliation and sexual orientation often form the basis of communities of interest. Because such communities are based on identity and interest members carry the community with them. For example one can refer to the caste Mahapanchayats that are a way to foster community identity and to protect community interest. Similarly communities can be formed of alumni associations and old boys/girls associations. There could be communities based on professional interests such

as that of artists, professional associations such as the Engineers of India, Indian Medical Association, Traders Associations, Industrial associations etc. There can also be linguistic, religious and cultural associations. Say the Karnatic Music group, the West Bengal Mountaineering association etc or even the positive people's network, fish workers forum, the dalit writers association, the schizophrenic association of India, the Association of Professional Social Workers in India etc. Sometimes they are also referred to as functional communities. Thus community workers sometimes work with functional communities such as the child labour, the sex workers and so on.

Communities of interest sometimes overlap with locality based communities as when a residential area contains a high proportion of people whose personal identity is tied to one or more specific interest groups, such as the slum and shack dwellers associations, Mahila Milan in Mumbai etc. Most people in urban areas belong to more than one community, with varying degrees of identification of interest and engagement. These multiple community affiliations can be thought of as one's personal community network, representing various locality-based and interest based communities that connect the individual to others and to broader society. It is to be understood that the individual is located across various groups, in a range of formal and informal helping/hindering systems in the community. These provide important tools for the location of the individual in a social context for developing more realistic interventions plans that connect the various levels of human interaction, micro to macro.

### **Community Construct: Social Work Perspective**

In addition to the above understanding of communities Kirst-Ashma(2008) suggests that community theories

can be thought of as a series of lenses that focus on different aspects of community each highlighting different dimensions of the community, its dynamics and the ways it impacts the lives of its members. Three frameworks are said to be useful to look at a community from a **social work practitioner's perspective**. These are:

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

Let us discuss each of the above.

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

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

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

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

b) **Community as an Ecological System:** In this community is seen as having close interrelationship with the environment in a symbiotic manner. There are regular exchange relationships that occur between the various parts of the community where each part gives and receives in symbiotic relationships with others in the system. There is a definite interdependence between various parts so that equilibrium is achieved. It brings into what is known as geo-cultural perspective where in the spatial features (land use patterns and distribution of services) of a specific location interact with the community- its population characteristics (such as size, density, diversity) and technology (production of goods and services, transportation, communication etc) The physical features play a significant role in community life and determine the patterns of interaction. The location of specific groups vis a vis the location of resources (water, land, road) is determined by the social dynamics of the community. Thus lower caste communities are often located away from important and central places in the village community.

Thus important territorial boundaries are not only physical in quality but also social and psychological that represents the social hierarchy.

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

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

immediately visible and also suggest the type of interventions that could be carried out.

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

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

Communities are seen as arenas where competing groups are constantly engaged in conflict over power and the control of scarce resources. Some groups often based on social class, caste, religious, linguistic and regional affiliations dominate over other groups. There is a constant process of negotiation and confrontation to fulfill the basic needs by those who are involved. Sometimes the conflict is resolved in favour of the marginalized, aided by the institutional presence of law, judiciary and administration and at other times the institutions take an opposite stand, and conflict is resolved in favour of the powerful. This perspective enables Social workers to understand the community

power structures, the way decisions are made to favour or condemn groups, the way conflict positions are taken and perpetuated and the role that change agents should play in strengthening the capacities of those lower in hierarchy to change the situation. Such issues are very well evident in urban, rural and tribal areas where the communities are denied access to resources on their social origins or economic situation or political affiliation. Caste and communal riots are an extreme form of those conflict positions.

### **Characteristics of a Community**

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

Community can be seen to have the following characteristics:

- 1) **Human Scale:** Communities have individuals engaging in face-to-face interactions. They are in that sense primary groups who are in direct contact with one another. People know each other and in this sense are in control of the range of interactions they are engaged in. Social structures are sufficiently small and people are able to own and control them.
- 2) **Identity and Belonging:** There is feeling of belonging and acceptance of each other as well as security. Thus one feels a part of the community or a member of a community. Membership involves acceptance by others, allegiance or loyalty to the

aims of the group concerned. This sense of belonging is significant and positively regarded. Community can become the person's self concept. Identity also plays a role in the person not only feeling a sense of belongingness to one community but a sense of difference from the other groups. Institutions within community and shared practices also play a role in identity formation and foster a sense of belonging. It also means that people can face a change in the sense of belonging to changing institutions. These can be seen to erode the togetherness within a community.

- 3) **Obligations:** The belongingness carries with it certain sense of rights and responsibilities. There is a mutuality of trust and reciprocity involved firstly in maintaining community life in terms of participating in the collective activities of community, sharing and interacting with others. Participating in community events with adherence to customs and traditions are ordained by collective will of the members
- 4) **Gemeinschaft:** This implies that the people have a wide variety of roles in which they interact with each other. These interactions are not contractual but are obligatory. These are important for self-enhancement of individuals as well as for fostering the use of a range of talents and abilities for the benefit of others and the community as a whole.
- 5) **Culture:** A community has a specific culture that is reproduced and continuously being shaped by the members of the community, through its social structures, economic systems and power relations. A culture in that sense is all encompassing and all embracing the way of life of a group of people.

## **Place of Community Work Within Social Work Practice**

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

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

### **Historical Perspective**

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

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

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

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

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

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

Community organization emerged in two traditions in England- one with the community worker taking the place of the churches in their role of moral alleviation. Community work is seen to be an attempt to respond to moral confusion because of the erosion of religious faith in the middle of last century; second with the view that the degradation of the poor is a consequence rather than the cause of their poverty.

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

The reasons can be seen as follows:

- a) The deficiencies of case work, as a method of social work seems to be one major force in the development of community organization.

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

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

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

### **Purposes of Intervention**

The purposes of Community work vary with the issues of each community that are the focus. Developed

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

**Indian society is multi cultural and represents a diverse reality that had seen practice of community interventions stemming from various social, religious and political movements. These did consider a change in the social reality and a better life for the marginalized howsoever paternalistic they may have been. The diversity of groups, populations with diverse geo-cultural positions and livelihoods brings with it diverse needs that are more commonly concentrated towards economic improvement. Community efforts in India have been fostering these efforts to improve the lot of the down trodden, the powerless in rural, urban and tribal locations. These efforts have been at the beginning of the century holistic and encompassing all round improvement in the life and living of people in health, education, livelihoods and political empowerment.**

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

### **Social Action as Part of Community Work**

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

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

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

### **Community Development Approaches**

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

problems and dilemmas can be understood and creative solutions derived.

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

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

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

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

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

## **Conclusion**

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

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

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## Urban Communities

*\*A. Malathi*

### Introduction

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

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

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## **Meaning of Urban Community**

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

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

### **Sociological Understanding**

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

Louis Wirth (1938) considers urban areas as relatively large, dense, permanent settlement of socially heterogeneous individuals. Here secondary groups such as the corporation, voluntary associations, representative forms of government and mass media replace the primary group associations that are found

in a village. Such relationships are also considered impersonal, segmental, superficial, transitory and often predatory in nature.

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

Gideon Sjoberg (1960) divided the urban centres into two types, the pre-industrial city and the industrial city, which he distinguished on the basis of differences in the technological level. Pre-industrial cities are those without sophisticated machine technology, where human and animal labours form the basis for economic production. Industrial cities have a predominance of energy sources from fossil fuels and atomic power. The pre-industrial neighborhoods were strongly integrated by personalistic ties of ethnicity and sectarian allegiance. They maintained strong family connections, and social disorganization was little in evidence. Industrial production was not yet the major concern.

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

### **Census Definitions**

As per the 1961 census, an area is considered urban if

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

Census 2001 distinguishes between statutory towns and census towns:

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

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

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

- i) a city or town with one or more contiguous outgrowths,

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

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

## **Historical Development of Urban Areas**

### **Colonial Influences**

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

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

### **Postcolonial Influences**

The neocolonial city represents city development that has taken place in third world countries with the capital from advanced industrial nations, creating enclaves of industrial production. The commodities produced in

neocolonial cities generally are destined for export rather than for home consumption, except perhaps by a small home elite. There are urban factories and urban-resident wage labourers. There is a developing infrastructure of urban transport and communication by which these commodities and labourers are allocated. There is massive urban-ward migration from neighbouring rural areas. The neocolonial city has given rise to informal economy consists of urban services and products provided by the neocolonial city's poorest denizens, the petty hawkers, the shoeshine boys, the household help, the rag pickers, and others who form a class of petty commodity producers and sellers.

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

## **Urbanisation and Spread of Urban Communities**

### **Meaning of Urbanisation**

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

and programmes that promote urban activity and urban spread.

### **Spread of Urban Communities**

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

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

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

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

Urban slum areas are home to more than 40 million Indians or 22.6 per cent of India's urban population. More than 600 Indian towns and cities incorporate slum areas. The largest slum population in cities with population of more than one million) is found in Mumbai (48.9%) and the lowest in Patna (0.25%). As per the size

of the population the 2001 census of India has grouped cities into six classes. These are given below:

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

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

## **Characteristics of Urban Communities**

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

### **Social Aspects**

Secondary relations dominate such heterogeneous communities. The formal means of social control such as law, legislation, police, and court are needed in addition to the informal means for regulating the behavior of the people. There is mobility and openness. The social status is achieved than ascribed. Occupations are more specialized. There is widespread division of labour and specialization with plenty of opportunities for pursuing various occupations. Family is said to be

unstable. More than the family individual is given importance. Joint families are comparatively less in number. People are more class -conscious and progressive and supposed to accept changes. They are also more exposed to the modern developments in the fields of science and technology. Despite these as enduring features of an urban community, we can find variations in the level and degree of specific features. Thus some communities may be more modern, even while living in the same area. Similarly in major human development indicators there may be variations within urban communities though sharing the same geographical space.

### **Caste and Class in Urban India**

Caste affiliation, kinship ties continue in urban areas despite the modernizing and secularizing effects of urban living. In terms of the urban social structure it is seen that there is persistence of social relationships resembling those of rural areas. The so-called secular, formal and rational behaviour that is portrayed by the traditional understanding of urban areas does not entirely apply to the Indian situation. There is evidence of inter-caste/religious /ethnic competition which may turn into conflict situations too. The power structure thus is not only constituted by the hostilities and opposition that are derived from ones' affiliations, but also those derived on account of one's class. The pattern of conflict and cooperation thus cut across caste, religion and class lines.

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

**Families in Urban Areas**

The three major family types of nuclear, joint and extended families are found in urban areas.

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

**Economic Aspects**

The urban economy is predominated by industrial and service sectors. The secondary and tertiary sectors predominate. The mode of organisation of the economy is to achieve the above results in various groups and classes, with an uneven distribution of social and economic resources. There is great diversity of the labour force with a few in the organized sector, receiving a high salary packages and a larger number in the informal economy receiving marginal and sustenance incomes with lack of social security benefits.

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

the result any changes in the global economy affect it directly.

The **unorganized sector** on the other hand consists of smaller scale of operation in terms of capital and labour, private or family ownership, labour intensive, less advanced technology, unregulated markets and unprotected labour(almost no social security benefits-) this is being modified with the social security bill for the protection of unorganized(recently ratified by the Rajya Sabha). This also is affected by government policy regulation as in the case of protection of industry for capital or for labour. The small-scale industrial policy, the programmes of National Institute for micro, small and medium industries institute are some such examples. 93% of the labour force is employed in unorganized sector.

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

### **Inter Relations between the Social and Economic Characteristics**

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

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

for the local economy are influenced by the local governance systems.

### **Urban Poverty**

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

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

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

The urban poor are characterized by inadequate income and unstable asset base, inadequate shelter, provision of 'public infrastructure', and provision of basic services, limited or no safety net, protection of poorer groups

rights through the operation of law and poorer groups voiceless ness and power less ness.

### **Urban-rural Linkages**

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

### **Spatial Segregation**

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

## **Specific Urban Communities**

### **A) Refugee and Displaced Communities**

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

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

Government initiated special agencies, such as the Faridabad, Rajpura and Hastinapur Development Boards and the Sindhu Resettlement Corporation were involved in meeting the housing requirements of the refugees. The experiments at Nilokheri and Faridabad are

significant in themselves. They are based on the principle of self-help on a cooperative basis.

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

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

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

## **B) Slums**

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

Slums are considered as the physical and social expression of inequalities in the distribution of the benefit of economic growth. Slums are neglected parts of cities where housing and living conditions are appallingly lacking. Slums range from high density, squalid central city tenements to spontaneous squatter settlements without legal recognition or rights, sprawling at the edge of cities. Some are more than fifty years old, (infact in Kolkata some of the slums are 150 years old)

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

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

### **Definition of Slum**

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

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

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

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

### **Characteristic Features of the Slums**

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

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

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

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

Among the **unauthorised** slums types are those, which are simply encroachments by the poor people either

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

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

## **Conclusion**

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

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

the informal economic activity in urban areas gets affected they immediately fall back on the rural agricultural economy to provide a safety net.

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

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

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## 3

# Profile of Rural Communities

*\*A. Malathi*

## INTRODUCTION

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

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

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

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

### **Meaning of Rural Community**

Rural communities reside in rural areas. Rural areas as per census consider the village as the basic area of habitation. A village is usually considered as the smallest area of habitation. The village generally follows the limits of a revenue village that is recognized by the local administration. The revenue village need not necessarily be a single agglomeration of the habitations. It could comprise of a large village or a cluster of very small villages. It has a definite boundary and definite name. But the revenue village has a definite surveyed boundary and each village is a separate administrative unit with separate village accounts. It may have one or

more hamlets. The entire revenue village is one unit. There may be unsurveyed villages within forests etc., where the locally recognized boundaries of each habitation area are followed within the larger unit of say the forest range officer's jurisdiction.

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

### **Rural Urban Continuum**

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

There are some sociologists who treat rural-urban as dichotomous categories differentiating the two at various levels including occupational differences, environmental differences, differences in the sizes of communities, differences in the density of population, differences in social mobility and direction of migration, differences

in social stratification and in the systems of social interaction.

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

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

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

### **Diversity of Rural Communities**

Rural society includes a number of communities that live in what are known as villages. Villages in India vary with respect to their natural resource base, population density, demographic features, amenities, connectivity, historicity, and diversity of lifestyles, languages, cultural features and their proximity to city centres. Some villages have very old population as the

majority of younger generation migrates in search of jobs. Such villages are known as Gray villages. Some of the villages are also uninhabited. There are other villages which are known as fringe villages which are located in the outskirts of the towns that eventually become parts of the urban whole. Such examples abound in the metropolitan areas for example, Nayabans in Noida – Harola etc which have been surrounded by the planned city of Noida in the south eastern outskirts of Delhi.

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

Villages are primarily food producing units and they are agriculture based. They produce not only for their own subsistence but also for the urban societies, which are non-producing. Land and the natural resources are the primary means /unit of production in rural societies. Ecological conditions influence the pattern of their stay, with hamlets that are stringed together or individual houses surrounded by their fields.

### **Housing Patterns and Settlements in Rural Areas**

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

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

### **Size of the Villages**

In 1981 census there were 5, 57, 137 inhabited villages in the country. By the year 1991 this number increased to 4689 towns and 5, 80,781 villages. According to 2001 census there are 5161 towns and 6,38,365 villages

including uninhabited villages with 72% of the total population living in villages. Further rural life is characterized by direct relationship of people to nature i.e, land, animal and plant life. Agriculture is their main occupation. Agriculture provides livelihood to about 58% of the labour force.

### **Rural Social Structure**

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

Rural social structure would refer to the inter-relationship, inter-connectedness and inter-dependence of the different parts of the rural society. Caste system is one unique social structure and the inter relationship of the different units (castes) constitutes the structure of the rural society. Society, caste and Panchayat have control over the individual.

### **Caste System**

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

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

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

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

### **Inter-caste Relations**

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

Inter-caste relations are mediated by a system known as Jajmani System. Jajmani is sort of mutual give and take form of relationship in which one family is hereditarily entitled to supply goods and render services

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

### **Family and Kinship Relations**

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

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

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

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

### **Political and Economic Connections**

Political power centered in cities controls villages. The conflicts between different people pertain mainly to the matters of land disputes, traditional power arrangements, sharing of common resources such as

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

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

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

## **Rural Economic Structure**

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

### **Agricultural Sector**

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

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

number of people depending directly on the activities of this sector.

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

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

### **Dry Land Agriculture**

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

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

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

### **Allied Agricultural Activities**

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

### **Non-agricultural Activities**

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

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

### **Basic features of rural economy are:**

- 1) Excessive dependence on Nature.

With 64% of the net sown area in 1993-94 was rainfed that is crop production depended on the

quantum and distribution of rainfall over the growing season. Indian agriculture is vulnerable to natural calamities, such as droughts, floods, hailstorms, and cyclones. This means that the degree of nature induced risk and uncertainty in agriculture is higher than in the non-agricultural sector, with the burden of risk falling on the farmer.

2) Low capital labour ratio.

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

3) Small economic holdings and livestock holdings.

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

4) Low factor productivity.

There is low average crop yields per hectare compared to other nations. The inadequate capital in the form of production of inputs, raw material and improved machinery and equipment available per worker/unit of enterprise

5) Long gestation and low rate of turnover.

The gestation period for investments in agriculture is long compared to non-agricultural enterprises.

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

6) High incidence of poverty and unemployment.

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

7) Preponderance of illiterate and unskilled workforce.

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

8) Lack of basic infrastructure.

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

### **Rural Assets and Poverty**

The picture of assets in rural areas is skewed. Over 78% of the cultivators belonging to the category of marginal and small operators cultivate less than one

third of the land. In contrast less than two percent of the cultivators having holdings of more than 10 hectares each cultivate about 29% of the land.

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

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

### **Rural Credit Markets**

Credit is required in rural areas for consumption and production purposes. Consumption needs require small amounts of credit that meet needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education and health. Credit requirements are usually met from the shaukar/money lender informal institutions. However there is increasing evidence that the growing SHG movement in several parts of the country especially south is able to make inroads into traditional money lending institutions. Their share is less but growing. The traditional institutions survive because of their timely, ready availability of credit and their informal linkages that could be caste or kinship or village based with the client groups. There has been an effort to meet credit needs from the formal institutions but there has been a low presence of these with addition to bureaucratic hurdles in the way.

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

### **Policies and Practices**

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

Reform measures such as reduction in fiscal deficit, reduction of subsidies, devaluation of rupee, export orientation and reduction of agricultural credit adversely affect the rural poor especially in terms of food security, which relates to production, distribution and pricing of the food grains. The agricultural sector is worst affected by the fiscal contraction which invariably result in a

disproportionate cut in capital expenditure. Agricultural sector is the mainstay of the rural Indian Economy which is closely related to the existing pattern of the social equity. The shrinkage of the flow of resources to the rural sector, a misconceived interest rate policy which discriminate against agriculture, a sickening rural delivery credit system, the emergence of a new banking culture nurtured by reforms which is far from friendly to agriculture and rural development all go against the interests of rural economy.

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

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

## **Conclusion**

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

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## 4

# Tribal Communities

\*A. Malathi

### Introduction

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

### The Meaning and Definitions of Tribe

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

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

Historically tribal communities have often been understood as exotic and indicative of forbidden cultures

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

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

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

Majumdar 1958 defines a tribe as a 'social group with territorial affiliation , endogamous with no specialization of functions, ruled by tribal officers hereditarily or otherwise united in language or dialect, recognizing

social distance with other tribes or castes without any social obloquy attaching to them, as it does in the caste structure, following tribal traditions, beliefs and customs, liberal of naturalization of ideas from alien sources, above all conscious of homogeneity of ethnic and territorial integration'.

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

Their comparative isolation, in some ways has kept them apart from the mainstream of society in the country. Partly because of this isolation and partly because of their limited world view, characterized by lack of historical depth resulting in the early merging of history into mythology and an overall tradition orientation, they are integrated in terms of certain themes rooted in the past. These integrative themes and a special cultural focus gave them a separate cultural identity and they often possess latent or manifest value-attitude and motivational systems which are remarkably different from those of the other peoples.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Common Features between a Tribe and a Caste**

However such features are not just the characteristic of tribes but also of castes. Further there is also tremendous variability among tribes. Hence other attempts to define tribes consider them as a stage in the social and cultural evolution. Also with respect to their economic life, the production and consumption

among the tribes is household based and unlike peasants they are not part of a wider economic, political, and social network. This could be resolved by considering the tribes and castes as belonging to one continuum. The tribes have a segmentary, egalitarian system and are not mutually inter-dependent, while castes are in a system of organic solidarity. They have direct access to land and no intermediary is involved between them and land.

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

### **Spread Across Regions and Demographic Features**

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

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

### **Demographic Distribution**

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

The demographic and geographic spread has implications for the policies and programmes they are subject to as well as their social and economic life. For example large population of a tribe means that it is spread over a number of states and therefore the same group is treated differently by different state policies

and development programmes which influences its social and economic structure. Also they may be educated in the language of the state in which they reside – these have far reaching implications for questions of identity and entity of the tribal communities.

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

## **Tribal Communities: Their Social and Economic Structure**

### **a) Social Structure**

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

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

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

changes in the ecological condition or in the nature of relationship with other communities or within their own. Thus the social structure is of dynamic nature.

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

### **Family**

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

### **b) Economic Structure**

In India tribals belong to different economic stages, from food-gathering to industrial labor which presents their overlapping economic stage in the broader framework

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

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

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

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

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

- a) Small economy- smallness of scale which is the fundamental characteristic of tribal communities- the resources, goods and service transactions take place within a small geographical area and within a community of persons numbered in hundreds or thousands. Further one or two good crops are considered staple and produced in bulk. Within the small framework of the tribe and a relatively small number of goods and services are produced and acquired.
- b) Use of simple technology compared to the industrialized economies - may be made by the

producer himself or herself or acquired from others for a small sum. This also means that large-scale production processes are ruled out.

- c) Geographical and cultural isolation- in that they are self-contained and have very little transaction with outside communities in a majority of tribal communities.
- d) The profit motive is usually absent, and the role of an incentive is fulfilled by a sense of mutual obligation, sharing and solidarity.
- e) Cooperative and collective endeavors are emphasized

### **Interdependence of Tribes and Non-tribal Communities**

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

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

### **The Economic Institution of Dhangar**

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

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

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

### **De-notified and Nomadic Tribes**

De-notified, Nomadic and Semi-Nomadic Tribes and Banjara communities constitute the most vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of the Indian society. Some of these communities were identified as 'Criminal Tribes' (which included both castes as well as tribes) in pre-independent India. Although the Criminal Tribes Act,

1871 was repealed soon after Independence, persons belonging to these communities are still viewed by society as habitually criminals.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In order to acquire a comprehensive picture of the situation of these communities and to suggest action for their socio-economic development, a National Commission for De-notified Tribes, Nomadic Tribes and Semi-Nomadic Tribes was set up in 2005 whose report

was submitted recently to the Prime Minister. In the Eleventh Plan, special attention is to be accorded to the well-being of these groups as per the recommendations of the Commission.

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

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

### **Current Issues Facing Tribal Communities**

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

#### **Land Alienation**

They were alienated from their land from colonial times. Their lands were taken away in the name of development, or by money lenders for loan recovery. Also reserving forests in the name of conservation also meant that tribals were kept away from their habitats and livelihood base. The expansion of railways in India heavily

devastated the forest resources in India. In Andhra Pradesh, for instance, the non-tribals own half of the tribal land. In Orissa 54% of land of tribals is lost to non-tribals through indebtedness, mortgage and forcible occupation.

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

### **Poverty Among Tribals**

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

### **Tribals and Indebtedness**

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

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

### **Displacement**

Tribals are displaced from their livelihoods due to projects like large irrigation dams, hydroelectric projects, open cast and underground coal mines, super thermal power plants and mineral-based industrial units. In the name of development, tribals are displaced from their

traditional habitats and livelihoods with little or no rehabilitation, and are rendered destitute and poor. In these large development projects, tribals lose their land not only to the project authorities, but even to non-tribal outsiders who converge into these areas and corner both the land and the new economic opportunities in commerce and petty industry.

### **Shifting Cultivation**

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

### **Poor Quality of Governance**

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

### **Cultural Problems**

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

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

The dwindling resource base of the tribal people in the shape of loss of land, restriction on access to forest produce and lack of opportunities for reasonable wage employment and money lending have caused hardships to tribal people. Significantly, development processes

have interfered in many cases with traditional tribal institutional structure and ethos and have produced negative results. The development process in many tribal areas, instead of providing succor, has been instrumental in causing numerous disadvantages, prominent among them being displacement and loss of land, the tribal's main resource base. Notwithstanding the fact that the State Governments have enacted laws/regulations to control/prohibit transfer of land to non-tribals, land alienation still continues.

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

### **Education**

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

### **Conclusion**

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

We have also seen that these special features make them vulnerable to the changing demands of modern

day living. Their habitats and their life are not as free as they used to be. Their living is mediated by the forces external to their communities. Their natural livelihood base can be taken away and they can easily become destitute. Centuries of exploitation of natural resources has shaken their ecological base.

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# Community Development Programmes and Accountability

*\*A. Malathi*

## Introduction

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

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

## **Community Development**

### **Concept of Community and Development**

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

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

Communities refer to people bounded in specific geographic areas and communities of interest. The past three centuries have seen major changes in the notion of community. We have moved from a predominantly agricultural and rural society, to an urban industrialized society, and now to a post-industrial society. In this latter period of de-industrialization, there has been erosion of community life and a decline in civil society

organizations. These have meant a slow degeneration of traditional family networks, heightened inequality between groups of people as well as growth of institutions to meet the needs of the people, which were hitherto met by the community itself.

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

### **Concept of Community Development**

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

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

Community Development is the process of developing active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect. It is about influencing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives. Community workers facilitate the participation of people in this process. They enable connections to be made between communities and with the development of wider policies and programmes. Community Development expresses values of fairness, equality, accountability, opportunity, choice, participation, mutuality, reciprocity

and continuous learning. Educating, enabling and empowering are at the core of Community Development.

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

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

### **Approaches Used in Community Development**

The various approaches used in community development are:

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

Aims of Community Development are:

- creating equitable conditions and outcomes for health and wellbeing;
- improving the health and prosperity of the community as a whole;
- fostering sustainable community initiatives;
- fostering sustainable self-sufficiency for the people involved;

- increasing personal worth, dignity, and value; and
- building awareness of and resolving issues in the community.

### **Community Development Values**

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

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

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

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

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

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

### **Assumptions in Community Development**

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

- Individuals, groups and local institutions within community areas share common interests that bind them together.
- This commonness also propels them to work together.

- The interests of the various groups are not conflicting.
- The state is a supra body that is impartial in the allocation of resources and that through its policies it does not further inequalities.
- People's initiatives are possible in the communities because of their common interests.

Community development workers are committed to:

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

### **Distinction Between Community Development and Community Work**

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

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

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

### **Community Development Programmes and Accountability**

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

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

Thus community development programmes aim at achieving certain goals such as collectively working to

bring about social change and justice, by working with communities to:

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

### **Accountability in Community Development Programmes**

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

#### **Concept of Accountability**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Characteristics and Principles of Accountability**

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

### **The Four Principles of Accountability**

- a) Specify responsibility and authority
- b) Provide guidance and support

- c) Objective comparison of results against targets and standard
- d) Take appropriate action

## **History of Community Development Programmes**

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

## **Community Development Programmes in Rural, Tribal and Urban Areas**

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

### **Rural Community Development Programmes**

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

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

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

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

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

### **Organization**

The organizational structure was specifically created to undertake community development projects. The

organizational structure was located at the central, state, district and block levels.

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

### **Evaluation**

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

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

### **Criticisms of CDP**

- It has not been a people's programme
- It has followed a blueprint approach to rural development
- It has employed a large army of untrained extension workers who lacked coordination

- There was lack of functional responsibility at the block level that led to a good deal of confusion and interdepartmental jealousy

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

### **Other Programmes and the Community Component**

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

community action and development, in both government initiated and voluntary agency initiated programmes. In certain states the nature and extent of community participation has been significant in bringing about the needed change. Community ownership of programmes has become the official refrain with emphasis given to the Panchayats as vehicles for implementation of the government programme. Though in many cases the Panchayats really do not have enough funds at their disposal, or allocations reach them late in the financial year. Here there is always a danger that local caste and class biases may seep in and maintain the status quo.

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

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

Despite the Group approach there are limitations with respect to making these programmes a truly community driven development programmes. There are various other programmes for village and small-scale enterprises, including some special schemes for scheduled castes

and tribes for promotion of self-employment in rural areas which relies mainly on formation of self-help groups to empower rural communities and enable them to take up economic activities.

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

### **Tribal Community Development Programmes**

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

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

The Scheme/programme and projects under TSP are implemented through Integrated Tribals Development Projects (ITDPs) which were set up in Block(s) or groups

of Blocks where ST population is more than 50% of the total population.

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

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

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

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

by the Public Health Department, water users association by the Irrigation Department, and Mahila Mandals (women's associations) by the Women and Child Department.

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

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

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

Overall, the project has created space during implementation for a multi-stakeholder approach with a specific focus on tribal people. The project saw tribal people as partners in the improvement of their own natural resource base and means of livelihood with programme management that is initiated, executed and monitored by the community. The creation of thrift and credit groups has increased their habit of savings. The

programmes focused on various aspects like, education, health, income generation activities, agricultural development, self-help groups etc.

### **Urban Community Development Programmes**

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

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

### **Swarna Jayanti Shahari Rozgar Yojana (SJSRY)**

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

**Kudumbashree Programme**

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

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

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

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

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

The NGO SPARC, was earlier working with pavement dwellers in Mumbai by providing them with a space to meet and discuss their problems. This led to the formation of women's groups for savings and credit and the establishment of Mahila Milan, a women pavement dweller's organization. Mahila Milan took up the challenge of making themselves visible, developing ways to deal with such common crises like eviction, police harassment, and obtaining water and ration cards. Various groups' experiences were collectively and continuously analyzed to develop the organization's strength and bargaining power with the authorities.

Then an alliance was struck between National Slum Dwellers Federation (NSFD), a loose coalition of local federations active in many cities and Mahila Milan. The Alliance began to develop an educational and organizational strategy for community learning, with pilot projects. The learning was expanded through continuous exchanges between low-income settlements; this has been at the centre of its work ever since.

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

## **Conclusion**

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

reliance and participation. The leadership of community is encouraged.

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

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

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## 6

# **Community Organisation: Concept, Value Orientation and Assumptions**

*\*Neera Agnimitra*

### **Introduction**

There are three basic methods of working with people (individuals, groups and communities). You have already studied two methods namely social case work and social group work. While social case work is oriented towards helping individuals on one to one basis, social group work aims at facilitating the growth and development of individuals through the medium of a group. The third basic method of working with people is community organization. This method aims at developing the capacity of the community to function as integrated unit. This empowers the community to take planned and collective action to handle its own needs, problems and objectives. Community organization is a well established method in social work. It has value orientation and its practice is guided by a set of general principles.

### **Meaning and Definition of Community Organisation**

#### **Meaning**

In the earlier chapters, you have been oriented to the definition and concept of community, as also the profiles

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of rural, urban and tribal communities. The community provides the setting and its needs, problems, issues and concerns provide the focus for community organisation, as a method of social work practice.

Community is one of the several levels of intervention in society. There are personal or interpersonal interventions with individuals and families; and macroscale efforts to influence public policy in the larger society. Community interventions are the ones that take collective action and mediate between the individual and the society (Weil, 1997).

The terms community work, community practice, community organization and community empowerment are often used in social work literature. Sometimes they are used to refer to the same type of work, while at times they are used to refer to different types of work. In general however, the terms community work, community practice and community organization are treated synonymously, both in the liberal as well as in the tradition of community intervention. In the more contemporary context, the term “community practice” is acquiring greater usage as it encompasses within itself of four central processes: development, organization, planning and action for progressive social change. Together, these processes form social work’s major method of actively working for social justice (Weil, 2005).

### **Definitions**

To study and to be able to engage in community organization practice, it is necessary to have a clear definition or set of definitions. There are several definitions available in literature. These have evolved at different times and in differing contexts. Let us look at some of the more widely accepted definitions of community organization.

**1. Lindeman:** Lindeman's book in the year 1921 was the first to appear on what became known in North America as Community Organization. He defined community organization as "those phases of social organization which constitute a conscious effort on the part of a community to control its affairs democratically, and to secure the highest services from its specialists, organizations, agencies and the institutions by means of recognized interrelations."

**2. Murray G. Ross:** In the second half of 1940s, a number of works on community organization appeared, perhaps the best of which was that by Murray G. Ross in 1955. His work contributed to the immense popularization of the practice of community organisation in the U.S. He saw community organization as "a process by which a community identifies its needs or objectives, develops the confidence and will do work at these needs or objectives, finds the resources (external and internal) to deal with these needs and objectives, takes action in respect of them, and in doing so, extends and develops cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community". He goes further to identify three main approaches to community organization: (i) the 'specific content' approach, whereby a worker or an organization identifies a problem or set of problems and launches a programme to meet them; (ii) the 'general content' approach, whereby a group, association or council attempts a coordinated and orderly development of services in a particular area; (iii) the 'process' approach, where the objective is not the content (facilities or services), but initiation and sustenance of a process which will involve people within the community in identifying and taking action in respect of their own needs and problems. All these three components related to 'content' and 'process' find a place in his definition.

**3. Harper:** Harper (1959) perceived community organization as an effort to “bring about and maintain progressively a more effective adjustment between social welfare resources and social needs”. It is concerned with (i) the discovery and definition of need; (ii) the elimination and prevention of social needs and disabilities; (iii) the articulation of resources and needs; and (iv) the constant readjustment of resources in order to meet the changing needs better. On a similar note Arthur Dunham (1958, 1970) who was another important contributor to the practice of community organization felt that social work methodology most commonly associated with society, as opposed to individual change is community work, alternatively defined as community development or the new community organization. This was “a process of bringing about and maintaining adjustment between social welfare needs and social welfare resources in a geographical area or a functional field”.

**4. Younghusband:** In 1973, Younghusband defined community organization as “primarily aimed at helping people within a local community to identify social needs, to consider the most effective ways of meeting them and to set about doing so, in so far as their available resources permit”.

**5. Peter Baldock:** Peter Baldock’s (1974) concept of community work was very close to the definition of community organization given by Ross and Younghusband. Baldock opined that community work “is a type of activity practiced by people to identify problems and opportunities and to come to realistic decisions to take collective action to meet these problems and opportunities in ways that they determine for themselves. The community worker also supports them in the process of putting decisions, to help them develop their abilities and independence”.

**6. Kramer and Specht:** Another definition by Kramer and Specht in 1975, referred to community organization as “a method of intervention, whereby a professional change agent helps a community action system, composed of individuals, groups, or organizations to engage in planned collective action in order to deal with social problems within a democratic system of values”. Further, according to them, this method of intervention involves two interrelated concerns: (a) the interaction process, which includes identifying, recruiting and working with members and developing organizational and interpersonal relationships among them, which facilitates their efforts; and (b) the technical tasks involved in identifying problem areas, analyzing causes, formulating plans, developing strategies and mobilizing the resources necessary to have effective action.

**7. Mc Millan:** Mc Millan also contributed to the understanding of the concept of community organization by describing it in a generic sense as “deliberately directed efforts to assist groups in attaining a unity of purpose and action”. He further elaborates its character by specifying that “it is practiced, though often without recognition of its character, whenever the objective is to achieve or maintain a pooling of talents and resources of two or more groups on behalf of either general or specific objectives”.

### **Contemporary Definitions of Community Organisation**

In a more contemporary context, **Murphy and Cunningham** (2003) have defined community organizing as “the systematic process for mobilizing and advocating by using communal power”. They opine that “Organizing for Community Controlled Development (OCCD) combines community organisations’s mobilization and advocacy power with neighbourhood investment strategies to build a strengthened and revitalized

community". They stress on community organizing as it relates to the small place communities. Further, they characterize 'place based community organising' as "a process in which local people, united by concern for renewing their own small territory, plan and act together to form an organizational base that they control. It is a practice that involves collective human effort centred on mobilization, advocating, planning and the negotiation of resources". In this practice, 'mobilisation' includes the building and maintenance of an organizational base, 'planning' includes fact gathering, assessment and strategic and tactical thinking and 'negotiation' refers to persistent pressure and bargaining for sufficient resources to achieve goals.

According to this perception, community organizing as a process of change continuously operates on two tracks, the first being the path of pursuit of agree-upon programme goals, and the second is the path of building, maintaining and continually renewing an organizational base. The ultimate aim of this process is to build 'strengthened' and 'revitalised' communities, where strengthening pertains to the unifying and educating initiatives of the residents to meet their social, civic and economic responsibilities and 'revitalizing' refers to making the place livable, democratic, equitable and tolerant, thereby helping its residents to live with dignity and moral integrity.

**Marie Weil** has been instrumental in popularizing the broader term 'community practice' to instead of community organization. Community practice includes "work to improve the quality of life and increase social justice through social and economic development, community organizing, social planning and progressive social change". She visualized it to be "a cooperative effort between practitioners and affected individuals, groups, organizations, communities and coalitions". It

is also interesting to delve a little deeper into the four central processes of (a) Development, which focuses on empowering citizens to work in united ways to change their lives and environments in relation to their living conditions, economic conditions, and social, employment and opportunity structures; (b) Organizing which includes the processes of community organizing that engage citizens in projects to change social, economic and political conditions. It includes neighbourhood organizing, development of local leadership and coalition development; (c) Planning, which relates to social planning engaged in by citizens, advocacy groups, public and voluntary sector planners to design programmes and services that are appropriate to given communities or regions. It also involves design of more effective services and the reform of human service systems; and (d) Progressive change, encompassing the actions taken by groups to effect positive social, economic and political change. (Weil, 2004)

Scholars and practitioners like **Rubin and Rubin**, in 2005, added another dimension to the definition of contemporary community organising. Their definition as also other definitions based on the consensus models of community organizing have sought theoretical grounding and support from scholars like Putnam who have studied social networks and 'social capital'. Putnam studied associational behaviour and proposed that "joining enabled people to build social capital, which was much like economic capital. People could rely on social relationships and use them as an exchange for support and assistance". (Putnam, 2000)

Putnam's work was quickly adopted by those working with communities, and 'social capital' has subsequently been as the core of community organizing.

Rubin and Rubin incorporated this core element in their definition of contemporary community organization. The

process of community organization has been described by them as “the process of helping people understand the shared problems they face while encouraging them to join together to fight back”. According to them, “organizing builds on the social linkages and networks that bring people together to create firm bonds for collective action. It creates a durable capacity to bring about change”. (Rubin and Rubin as cited in Weil, 2005)

In a similar vein, **Loffer** defines community organization as “the process of building trusting relationships, mutual understanding and shared actions that bring together individuals, communities and institutions. This process enables cooperative action that generates opportunity and/or resources realized through networks, shared norms, and social agency”. (Loffer et al, 2004)

Similarly, **Staples** (2004) focuses on a definition that includes “dual emphasis on participatory process and successful outcomes” and the establishment of disciplined and structured organizations as vehicles for change. This conception of community organization includes both community or social development in which people use cooperative strategies to create improvements, opportunities, structures, goods and services that increase the quality of community life, and social action in which people convince, pressurise, or coerce decision makers to meet predetermined goals. Therefore, according to contemporary practitioners like Staples, community building models that encourage consensus and social action models that promote conflict can be used simultaneously or sequentially.

An examination of the aforementioned definitions of community organization reveals certain important elements. These are:

1. Community organization has been perceived both as a ‘process’ and a ‘method’. The use of the word

'process' brings into focus the movement from the identification of an objective or a set of objectives to the attainment of the same. It also signifies the capacity of the community to function as an integrated unit, as it deals with one or more common problems. Moreover, this process may be conscious or unconscious, voluntary or involuntary, short or of long duration. The use of the word 'process' to describe community organization also connotes a course of action aimed at preparing the members of the community for developmental action. This course of action includes a number of inter-related steps including: (a) Identification of needs, problems and objectives; (b) Prioritisation or ranking of the needs, problems and objectives according to their relative importance and urgency; (c) Developing confidence and determination among community members to meet their needs and solve their problems; (d) Helping them to take appropriate decisions in all these regards; (e) Mobilising resources, in the form of men, money and materials from within the community and outside, necessary to deal with their decisions and plans; (f) Executing their plan of action with proper monitoring of the activities, and taking corrective measures, if required; and (g) Educating others on the strength of collective action, collaborative attitudes and processes of self help.

When described as a 'method', community organization implies the use of a systematic, structured, ordered and conscious way of action used by the change agent or the community organizer to achieve certain pre-determined aims/objectives. The use of specific skills at the level of the organizer ensure that this method of community organization is distinct from the occurrence of

sporadic community events which break the otherwise normal community life.

2. Community organization is directed towards the achievement of both short-term and long term objectives. While the short term objectives involve identifying and ranking the needs and problems of the community and conscious intervention by the change agent to facilitate the community to fulfill needs or overcome problems, the long term objectives are oriented towards building the capacity of the community to function as an integrated unit. The latter involves helping the community to develop its problem solving and self help qualities, so that it can address the recurrence of the problem or the emergence of newer problems or work towards fulfillment of its future needs with full confidence and autonomy. Viewed in this perspective, community organisation is an empowering and capacitating enterprise.
3. Community organization involves working with the community system, and thus entails working at the level of individuals, groups, organizations, community and coalitions.
4. Community organization has also been viewed as a process of change which concurrently operates at two levels, the first being the pursuit for achievement of certain programme/service oriented goals, the second being the path of building, maintaining and continually renewing an organizational base. Thus, community organization as a concept focuses both on development oriented goals as also the ultimate goal of "getting organized". Organizing is the process by which people develop some sort of structure for joining together over time. It takes its most basic expression when individuals form a coherent unity and establish a mechanism

for systematic planning and limited effort. This organizing is the key dynamic in the process of community change (Biddle and Biddle, 1965). In fact, as the community goes through the drill of planning, procuring, operating and reviewing, it produces a unique organization shaped by its local social, political and economic conditions. Building, maintaining and renewing this organizational base is of immense significance for community change.

5. The process of community organization may not always be a natural, spontaneous process. It may also be a deliberative and engineered one. While it may sometimes evolve without the assistance of the professional change agent, it often has to be initiated, nourished and developed by a professional worker, who has the requisite skill and the experience to help people to plan and progressively move toward achieving their agreed on goals.
6. Community organization is not value free, as it adopts democratic values; accepts the cultural fabric of the community and aims at creating equitable, tolerant and socially and economically just communities. It operates on the basis of building consensus and self help and simultaneously directs the community towards a positive change through appreciation of this value system.
7. 'Community practice' and 'community work' are more broad-based terms which find a greater usage in contemporary context. They are used to describe the cooperative effort between the practitioners and the community system. They include work to achieve social and economic development of the community, community organizing, social planning and progressive social change. Thus, community organizing, which encompasses neighbourhood organizing, local leadership development and

coalition development is one core component of community practice

8. Social capital has been recognized as a core ingredient in community organizing. It refers to the connections among individuals and the norms of reciprocity and trust worthiness that facilitate civic engagement, social solidarity and cooperation for mutual benefit. It is therefore the fundamental source of strength for the community. In communities with strong social capital, the community organization process is fostered. On the other hand, in communities with weak social capital, people find it difficult to cooperate, collaborate and join together for collective action.
9. Community organization as a conception has been shown to include both community or social development and social action. In other words, community building models that encourage consensus, and social action models that promote conflict often co exist and can be used simultaneously or sequentially. While the community building model is also the prevailing model used in many international settings, endeavors to bring about large scale systemic changes are also increasingly being undertaken and they represent the social action approach. (We will however consider Social Action as a distinct method of social work and will focus on it as a separate block altogether).

## **Community Organisation in Social Work**

We have discussed the meaning and definition of community organization in the last section. Now let us briefly locate its position in the domain of social work practice.

Although community residents have always worked collaboratively on common needs and concerns, the evolution of formal practice interventions for community work has its origins in the United Kingdom and the United States in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. With the formalization of social work as a profession, community organization came to be recognized as a method of social work practice. As a result, an increasing number of professionals began working in communities. During the initial phase, community work was primarily aimed at trying to help community members to enhance their social adjustment, and viewed in this context it was recognized as a method of social work. It was also viewed as a means to coordinate the work of voluntary agencies.

In India, the experience of working with a slum community in the city of Mumbai led to the establishment of the first institution of social work in the year 1936. Community work, as a method of social work in the Indian context has been largely seen as a process of developing local initiatives, especially in the area of education, health and agricultural development. The focus of work has been, to encourage people to articulate their needs and facilitate them to avail the existing resources to meet their needs. Further, in the situation where there exists a gap between needs and resources, further efforts are made to initiate new services/programmes.

In social work literature, we find the terms “community work”, “community organization”, “community development” and “community practice” being used. At times these terms are used interchangeably for the work undertaken with communities. Some authors have used these terms for the same type of work while others have used them to refer to different types of work with communities. For example, Dunham has used the terms community work, community development and new

community organization alternatively, to refer to the same type of work. According to him the social work methodology most commonly associated with society as opposed to individual change is community work, alternatively referred to as community development or the new community organization. (Dunham, 1958, 1970). Peter Baldock's concept of community work is very close to the definitions of community organization given by Ross and Younghusband.

Ross has identified three approaches to community organization: (i) the 'specific content' approach; (ii) the 'general content' approach; and (iii) the 'process' approach (which have been elaborated in the previous section). However, while he has included all these elements in his definition of community organization, he describes community organization as essentially a "process by which the community identifies its needs or objectives.....and develops cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community". In essence, when engagement with the community takes the form of a "process", comprising of a series of interrelated steps or stages, it can be characterized as community organization.

Authors like Marie Weil have popularized the usage of the term "community practice". According to her "communities are the context of all social work practice, and community practice emphasises working mutually with citizen groups, cultural and multicultural groups and organizations, and human service organizations to improve life options and opportunities in community". Additionally, she describes it as "work to improve the quality of life and enhancement of social justice for the community through social and economic development, community organizing, social planning and progressive social change". In other words community practice relies on community organizing as a means to achieve its goals.

The Encyclopedia of Social Work (20<sup>th</sup> Edition), 2008 also describes “social work that has emerged from the focus on community issues as community practice”. So in the contemporary global context, the term “community practice” is being applied to denote the broad set of interventions with geographic and/or functional communities, and is therefore, finding a much wider usage as compared to the term “community organization” or “community work”.

Thus, we see that the aforementioned terms may be used to represent different components/areas of community work or may be used interchangeably. However, it is easy to see that there are fundamental similarities in their interpretation and usage and their meanings are found to be overlapping.

What is also important for us here is to understand that the community has not only been a context and a setting for social work practice ever since the genesis of the profession, but has also been a means and a vehicle to usher in social change. Being a core method of social work, community work is used to attain the same basic objectives as case work and group work. Like all methods of social work, it is also concerned with the initiation of that process which enables the community to overcome those blocks (apathy, discrimination, dependency, injustice, vested interests etc.) which prevent the community from working together; facilitate release of potentialities; encourage use of indigenous resources and promote growth of cooperative attitudes and skills which make possible achievement of increasingly difficult community objectives.

Another important aspect that needs to be understood is the change in the stance assumed by the definitions of community work/organization. Most definitions which arose in the western context in the earlier time frame represented the consensual approach to community

work. This concept of community work/organization primarily looks at the community as a well defined geographical or functional unit, and the process of community organization is seen as an effort to meet the needs of the target population through internal resources and initiative coupled with outside help, in the form of expertise and resources.

Viewed in this framework, community work was primarily concerned with affecting social change through a process of analyzing social situations and forming social relationships with different groups to bring about desirable change. The three main objectives of community work were (1) To involve people in thinking, deciding, planning and playing an active part in the development/operation of services; (2) To facilitate achievement of personal fulfillment of belonging to a community; and (3) To work under constant tensions between people's diverse, often conflicting demands and the scarce resources available to meet them.

Gradually, interpretations of community work started acquiring a more radical tone. As early as 1968, the Gulbenkian Study Group set up by the Gulbenkian Foundation argued that community work is a means of giving life to local democracy and is a part of a protest against apathy and complacency and against a remote and anonymous authority. Others like Ecklein (1972) also felt that community organizers are concerned with "advancing the interests of the disadvantaged groups.....with redistribution of power and influence".

Community work in the West was primarily conceived in urban locales with incidence of poverty, delinquency, unemployment and poor housing. It laid stress on providing necessary expertise in getting people to be better organized and to identify more efficient strategies for meeting their needs.

The important factors that were expected to facilitate people's participation in community work were (a) the leisure time available to people; and (b) the level of civic and social consciousness which helped people to take initiative. However, the situation has been quite different in the Indian context, where people neither have the time, nor civic and social consciousness. The socio economic milieu, high rates of unemployment and absolute poverty, coupled with the dominance of caste, religion and regional affiliations make it difficult for a civil society to emerge community work in India therefore throws up concerns which are vastly different from those which pertain to the west. These however form the focus of another unit elsewhere in this block.

Additionally, at this stage we also need to be cognizant of a number of contemporary challenges confronting community workers. They must grapple with much more rapid and far reaching social changes than in the past. The shift to a global economy, increased privatization, the decline of the welfare estate, changes in information and communication technology represent significant and difficult challenges for community workers today. We shall delve deeper into some such challenges confronting community work in another section. At present it suffices to understand that it is this increasingly complex and multidimensional nature of the modern society which makes the increasing use of community organization method an essential pre-requisite for the smooth functioning of the society itself.

### **Guiding Values And Purposes of Community Organisation**

Community organization, as we have understood it so far is an integral part of social work practice. In the practice of community organization some questions arise

as to how it should be undertaken. Are there any guiding values and purposes of community organization? Are there any guidelines or principles that may guide it in deciding as to what is sound or socially desirable in the community organization process? How do we ensure better chances of success in achieving the objectives of community organization? We will deal with such questions in this section.

### **Value Orientation in Community Organisation**

Community organization derives from a unique frame of reference, the nature of which is based on a particular value orientation. As in social work, the focus of community organization practice is also guided by a system of personal and professional values.

What are these values? Values are beliefs that delineate preferences about how one ought or ought not to behave. Such formulations of values obviously have some subjective element. We seek a position or an objective we prefer; we value what we think embraces human dignity. There may not be any data to prove that this is "right", "better" or "desirable". It is largely a matter of choice based upon preference for a particular position or objective. There may be a combination of wisdom, experiences and facts that may support this position, but ultimately it is a matter of choice and preference.

The value orientation of community organisation as of all social work methods derives from acceptance of certain basic concepts and principles as a foundation for work with people. These core values which are now increasingly being reflected in the professional code of ethics in many countries are also reaffirmed in the international definition of social work, given by the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) in the year 2000. This is as follows:

“The social work profession promotes social change, problem solving in human relationships, and the empowerment and liberation of people to enhance well being. Utilizing theories of human behaviour and social systems, social work intervenes at the points where people interact with their environments. Principles of human rights and social justice are fundamental to social work” (IFSW 2003).

The core values reflected in the aforementioned definition of social work as also those which find a place in the code of ethics adopted by professional associations of social workers include: dignity and worth of the person, importance of human relationships, social justice, human rights and human dignity, integrity and competence, and professional conduct.

Ross has provided certain articles of faith which represent the value orientation to community organization (and, indeed all of social work). Among these are: (i) the essential dignity and ethical worth of the individual; (ii) the possession of potentialities and resources in each person for managing his own life; (iii) the importance of freedom of expression of one's individuality; (iv) the great capacity for growth within all social beings; (v) the right of the individual to basic physical necessities; (vi) the need for the individual to struggle and strive to improve his own life and environment; (vii) the right of the individual to help in time of need and crisis; (viii) the need of a social climate which encourages individual growth and development; (ix) the right and the responsibility of the individual to participate in the affairs of the community; (x) the practicability and importance of discussion, conference, and consultation as methods for the solution of individual and social problems; (xi) the importance of a social organization for which the individual feels responsible and which is responsive to individual feeling;

and (xii) “self help” as the essential base of any programme of aid. Ross refers to these and other orientations as constituting the “bias” of social work, which condition its goals and precludes certain types of action as being more useful (Ross, 1967).

So we see quite clearly that community organization a method of social work practice is value-oriented and dedicated to the implementation of those goals which are implicit in the value orientation of the social work profession. As a method, community organization strives to secure certain value laden goals.

### **Guiding Purposes of Community Organisation**

To engage with community groups, community workers must also be able to define specific purposes for such engagement. These purposes should be developed in conjunction with those with whom the practitioner works and provide the central motivation for practitioners and community members to move toward a common mutually supported goal.

Weil and Gamble have provided a set of eight purposes which provide the basis for most community practice engagement. (Weil and Gamble 2004). These purposes are:

1. Improving the quality of life of the members of the community.
2. Extending human rights by developing participatory structures and opportunities and deepening democracy for citizens who are excluded and feel powerless to influence policies that have an effect on their lives.
3. Advocacy for a community of interest, such as children; for a specific issues such as political and social rights for women and marginalized populations.

4. Human social and economic development to assure social support, economic viability and sustainability by expanding participation and building grassroots leadership; building economic, social and political assets for the poor in impoverished urban and rural areas.
5. Service and programme planning for a newly recognized or re-conceptualized need or to serve an emerging population.
6. Service integration developing local to national and international means of coordinating human services for populations in need.
7. Political and social action to build political power for the economically and socially marginalized, protect the weak and the poor, foster institutional change for inclusion and equity, and increase participatory democracy and equality of access and opportunity in local, regional and international efforts.
8. Social Justice to build toward human equality and opportunity across race, ethnicity, gender and nationality.

In conclusion, the community worker who has a focus on values and purpose, and who makes those explicit with community groups, will have a greater capacity to develop mutually respectful relationships with the group members and to work as a facilitator to find sufficient common ground for collaborative action.

### **Assumptions Regarding Method**

According to Ross, community organization derives from a unique frame of reference, which assumes a distinct form due to a particular value orientation which stems from traditional religious values which have been

expanded to form the basis of social work philosophy; a particular conception of the problems confronting modern man in the community and certain assumptions that influence the method (Ross, 1955). While we have covered the first component in the previous section, and we will cover the second component in another unit, let us look at the assumptions that influence the method of community organization, which derive in part from the value orientation of, and in part from experiences in social work. Some of these are as follows:

1. **Communities of people can develop capacity to deal with their own problems.** This implies that the community people may confront situations in which they feel disenchanting and hopeless, but they can nevertheless develop attitudes and skills which permit them to work towards shaping their community appropriately to meet their needs.
2. **People want change and can change.** This implies that communities of people constantly change their ways of life and are interested in making their lives better. The will to change is often paralysed by challenging social forces, but if blocks to free thinking and feeling are removed, all people will participate in changes which aim to meet their needs more adequately.
3. **People should participate in making, adjusting, or controlling the major changes taking place in their communities.** This assumption implies that people should have the opportunity to organize to achieve their own common goals, plan the adjustments which must be made in response to certain changes which are beyond their control, and to regulate their own communities as far as possible.

4. **Changes in community living which are self-imposed or self-developed have a meaning and permanence that imposed changes do not have**  
In the community, people as they strive towards achievement of their goals, modify and develop capacities consistent with these goals. In the process the culture as a whole adjusts to the changes that are taking place. Changes such as these are self imposed and determined last longer than those that are externally imposed, because in the latter situation, the community does not feel any sense of participation or conscious planning for adjustment to such changes.
5. **A “holistic approach” can deal successfully with problems with which a “fragmented approach” cannot cope.** This implies that social problems can be dealt with by adopting more coordinated approaches rather than piecemeal initiatives by the separate social agencies working apart from each other. Most of the problems have multiple causation and a single specialized approach to the problem will have limited value.
6. **Democracy requires cooperative participation and action in the affairs. Of the community, and that people must learn the skills which make this possible.** There must be active participation in the development and use of an effective communication process, which facilitates the identification of common objectives and implementation of collective action. People may require practice and the help of experts to establish and maintain democratic community institutions.
7. **Frequently, communities of people need help in organizing to deal with their needs.** This help may be of diverse types, ranging from advice, to

resources/inputs, or programme designing etc. While people may possess their own resources and capacities, they may often require professional help in mobilizing them effectively.

The aforementioned assumptions condition the nature of community organization, the methods used by the community organizer in the field and the principles applicable in the process.

## **Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter was to provide you guidelines to understand the basic concept of community organization as a method of social work practice. We have discussed in detail the meaning of community organization and also provided the different definitions in a chronological order, along with their explanations. You have also been oriented to the more contemporary definitions and understanding of community organization and community practice. An analysis of the definitions has also been undertaken to reveal the core components of community organization.

Having explained the meaning and definition of social work, this unit also highlighted the role and importance of community organization as a method of social work practice. Additionally, we have discussed the value orientation, purposes and assumptions underlying the method of community organization. Having done this, you are now in a position to recognize and appreciate the importance of the values and assumptions and will be able to integrate them while practicing community organization in the field.

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# History of Community Organisation

*\*Neera Agnimitra*

## Introduction

An orientation to the history of community organization helps us to understand the genesis and evaluation of what we now recognize as community organization. It enables us to familiarize ourselves with the problems and challenges faced by the human service professionals in different phases of practice, the strategies and approaches developed to overcome them, and the concrete lessons learnt for maximizing possibilities of change in the context of present day action.

In a broad sense we can say that the history of community organization is as old as the history of mankind. Wherever people have lived together, some form of organization must have always emerged and functioned in order to achieve some common goals or to meet certain common needs of the community. Gradually, together with these informal associations, formal organizations also must have been set up to give a more formal shape and form to such initiatives of societal welfare.

Community organization as a process and a method is aimed at solving the contemporary problems existing in a specific time frame, by adopting democratic principles and people participation. Viewed in this context, the

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beginning of community organization for social welfare can be traced to seventeenth century England, when the Elizabethan Poor Law (1601) was set up to provide services for the needy persons. The formation of the London Society for the organization of Charitable Relief and Repressing Mendicancy and the origin of the Settlement House Movement in 1880 were the other landmarks in the history of community organization.

Although little has been documented about the history of community organization, it has been practiced as a method of social work in many western countries including Australia and the United States of America. Apart from the United Kingdom, it has had a long and active history in the United States of America. The practice of community organization in these two countries has influenced the practice of community organization in the Indian context.

As students of social work, especially of community organization, it is important to understand the past, draw lessons from it, and develop and evolve new models, methods and strategies required to work with the new and emerging problems confronting contemporary communities. In this chapter, we will be tracing the history of community organization in the United Kingdom and the United States of America, followed by a brief historical profile of community organization practice in India

## **Community Organisation in the United Kingdom**

British community work emerged from the charity work of the Anglican Church and the University Settlement Movement. It was primarily a response to the suffering of the people in the clutches of urban poverty. In other words we can say that the genesis of community work

in the U.K. was inspired by philanthropic motives; particularly of the church.

As the 20<sup>th</sup> century progressed, there began to emerge a gradual transition away from charity and benevolent paternalism towards a philosophy of liberation. This in turn led to a change in class and gender consciousness. It was during this time that people like Sylvia Pankhurst and groups like the Women's Housing Association adapted ideas of self help from the Chicago settlement that Jane Addams had modeled based on Toynbee Hall. Pankhurst set up a cooperative factory to provide employment, and a crèche based on education through play. She also initiated community action when during the First World War (1914-18), she supported families to occupy empty houses, in the wake of escalating rents. The Women's Housing Association organized a mass tenants strike, leading the government to regulate rents. Thus, collective action became popular throughout the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, ending in the General Strike of 1926.

Community centres were also built with the aim of integrating the marginalized groups, and were seen to offer a form of social work response to the needs of the working class and an intervention to control unrest.

In the 1950s, community work practice in the U.K. became influenced by the theory that emerged from North America, based primarily on the work of Murray Ross. This inspired a new approach to neighbourhood and interagency work (Pople, 1995).

Community work began to emerge as a distinct occupation with a strong educational component in the 1960s, following the **Younghusband Report (1959)**, which identified community organization as a key component of social work, based on the American Model. Community organization was perceived to be an

approach to help people identify and define their own needs, and identify ways in which these could be met. In this context, Kuenstter (1961) presented the first collection of community work material, relevant to the British context. This was really the beginning of British Community Work.

The term 'community development' gradually came to be applied to community work that was based on local neighbourhoods. In 1968, the **Gulbenkian Report**, based on research into the role of community work in the U.K. projected community work as an "interface between people and social change" (Calouste-Gulbenkian Foundation, 1968). It defined community work as a full time professional practice based on neighbourhoods, which helped local people to decide, plan and take action to meet their needs with the help of outside resources. Within this, the key components were recognized as improving the delivery of local services; developing interagency coordination; and influencing policy and planning.

A number of other influential reports were also published which had impact on the development of community work in the country. One of these was the **Seebohm Committee Report, 1968**, which recommended the expansion of community work especially through social service provision and the **Skeffington Report, 1969**, which recommended increased public participation in urban planning.

The British Community Development Projects were launched in 1969 as one among a series of initiatives designed to deal with urban deprivation. The projects aimed at evolving cost effective welfare measures to tackle the high concentration of deprivation and adopted a variety of strategies to work with the communities. While some projects operated on '**dialogue model**' of

social change, and focused largely on ameliorative activities, some rejected such approaches, as they only provided 'support for the status quo'. By and large, the projects rejected conflict-based community action as a means of achieving their goals, as it was felt that such action was sporadic, alienated the decision-makers and led to group instability. In their view the way to achieve change at the local level was to increase access to, and democratic control over the resources that were already available. Its goal was to radically change the organization of resources within the local area, and not to act as an outside pressure group.

The findings of some projects however argued that people affected by inequality need to be facilitated to influence the way in which their needs are tackled and therefore saw value in conflict-based community action. These projects recognized the wider structural issues. They recommended a '**social planning**' strategy, concluding that the provision of empirical evidence was the most useful strategy for influencing policy.

In the period since 1968 a substantial number of those professionally engaged in community work became advocates of '**community action**', a form of community work whose main features included a support of disadvantaged groups in conflict with authority and an accompanying reformist or Marxist perspective on society. There were a number of reasons for this development. The impulse of urban community action was encouraged to some extent by the example of urban action among the blacks in the U.S. from Martin Luther. Secondly, developments in community work practice in the form of the Urban Programme in 1968 and the Twelve Community Development projects which emerged from this programme in 1969 also impacted the emergence of community action. The Projects which focused on twelve poor communities, closely reflected on the impact

of poverty on people's lives and advocated that it was the radical/structural Marxist analyses of discrimination which was responsible for the continued existence of poverty and the plight of the urban poor.

Thirdly, the work of community organizers like Gramsci, Paulo Freire and Saul Alinsky started impacting the community work practice in the subsequent phase. They were strong advocates of the radical tradition of community action and were largely instrumental in popularizing the radical stance in community work.

Fourthly, the early seventies had witnessed an increasing recognition and expansion of community work, both through the voluntary and government sectors. However as the decade progressed, there was a greater emphasis on state sponsorship of community work. This resulted in some inherent contradictions. While community workers were working with the local people to organize them and to facilitate them to demand better public services, they were employed by the very state which was responsible for the provision or the 'non'-provision of these services.

As a result of all of the aforementioned developments, two split/distinct approaches to community work arose. The first approach believed that there is a multiplicity of competing power bases in society which are mediated by the state and that community work is only capable of ameliorative small scale neighbourhood organizing and small scale reforms. This approach was conservative, with an emphasis on consensus and cooperation. On the other hand, the alternate approach strongly proposed community work as the locus of change within the struggle for transformation of the structures of society that were recognized to be the root cause of all oppression. This approach, also known as the radical approach to community work, took on the

'hard issues' of social justice and sustainability, while the former 'consensus' approach focused on the local 'soft issues' such as provision of services and interagency work.

Many community practitioners realized the advantages in combining these two approaches, which had in common the ultimate objectives of enabling people to cope with their life situations and of developing improved provision of services/resources. It was also felt that both approaches could support each other. Community action might ignore the immediate needs of people, in the interest of collective cause, while provision of social services might ignore the importance of such conditions and attempt to deal with community problems as though they were individual problems. However, working with and against the state continued to pose an ongoing challenge for community work, with the state acting as both employer and oppressor.

After the election of the Thatcher government, the anti-state approach of radical community work became an increasingly ineffective mechanism to challenge the Neoliberal ideology that emerged and which embraced: a free market economy; minimum government; acceptance of inequalities; nationalism and the welfare state as a minimal safety net (Giddens, 1998). The welfare state ideology which had survived until the 1980s now started receding in the wake of economic recession and the immense welfare burdens on account of rising unemployment. Ideals of collective responsibility which had formed the basis of the welfare state, gave way to a competitive culture driven by consumerism. Under Thatcherism, social reforms devoured rights and reduced benefits for some of the most vulnerable groups in society. These risks of poverty were further multiplied on account of class, gender, ethnicity, age and disability, all of which went to imply that poverty was not a result

of personal failings of an individual but arose on account of structural anomalies.

With the election of the Blair government in 1997, a small change took place. Community and civil society came to be recognized as the interface between the people and the state. With the state playing an enabling role, voluntary organizations were encouraged to tackle the new needs. There was increasing concern about those neighbourhoods which had a high incidence of poverty, unemployment and associated problems of crime, poor health, poor service delivery, poor quality schools etc. The focus therefore became the regeneration of poor neighbourhoods. In the year 2000, the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal was initiated for this purpose. Area based programmes emerged to tackle the specific local problems. The idea of community cohesion was revised. Although it is too early to assess the impact of the National Strategy, limited research evidence has shown that the community involvement programmes are poorly planned, inadequately resourced and not very effective (Burton, 2003).

Thus, in the contemporary phase of community work in the United Kingdom, both the radical perspective and the more moderate and consensus based approaches to community work co-exist. There is no consensus on which approach is more effective and workable in dealing with the current dilemmas faced by community work professionals.

## **Community Organization in the United States of America**

The movements in England also impacted the turn of events in the United States. In 1880, the Charities Organisation was set up to put rational order in the realm of charity and relief. The development of

community organization within American communities since 1865 was concerned both with community activities in which professionals were engaged and also with indigenous community efforts, especially within oppressed groups.

For the purpose of analysis American history can be divided into five phases (Gavin and Cox, 2001). These are as follows:

### **1865 to 1914**

During this period between the end of the Civil War and the beginning of World War I, a number of social issues emerged in the US and these had a strong impact on the welfare practices. These included the rapid industrialization of the country, the urbanization of its population, problems emerging out of immigration and changes in oppressed populations. These issues highlighted the need for the emergence of community organization practice. Immediately after the Civil War there were organizations that sought to support and sustain the newly won civil rights. The black community, the Chicanos\*, the Native American community and the Asian American Community were all confronted with problems related to poverty, race relations, cultural conflicts and marginalization.

Community organization activities during this period can be divided into two categories: the first being those which were carried out by institutions related to present day social welfare activities and the second category of activities were those conducted by those with no direct connection to contemporary community organization programmes, but which nevertheless have been of interest for community practitioners. The latter include the organization of political, racial and other action groups.

A number of factors had contributed to the development of the Charity Organization Societies in England in 1869 and by 1873 in the United States. These Societies initially came into existence to coordinate the work of the private agencies which provided for the needs of the poor. Soon they began to offer direct relief and other services. A number of social factors contributed to this development. These included the movement of large populations into cities like those defended from Mexicans, large scale immigration to meet the manpower needs of growing industries and the emergence of many social problems associated in the wake of these, like poverty, inadequate housing, declining health status and exploitation. This led to the development of agencies directed to ameliorating these conditions. Separate efforts were also made by groups associated with different neighbourhoods, as also ethnic and religious groups.

The main functions of the Charity Organization Societies(COS): were (a) cooperative planning among charitable institutions for the amelioration of various social problems and the creation of new social agencies and the reform of old ones. They were actively engaged in securing reforms in tenement housing codes, developing anti-tubercular associations, obtaining legislation in support of juvenile court and probation work, establishing programmes for care of dependent children, beggars and vagrants. Some of the most significant contributions of the COS to community organization included the development of community welfare planning organizations and social survey techniques.

Social Settlements emerged fifteen years after Charity Organization Societies with Toynbee Hall being one of the first settlements in the slums of East London in 1884. Stanton Coit who visited Toynbee Hall in 1886

established the University Settlement in New York later that year. Unlike the COS, settlements had no predetermined scheme for solving the problems of society. Their leaders saw environmental rather than individual factors as responsible for the prevailing conditions. Services like kindergartens and clubs for children, recreational programmes, evening schools for adults etc. were the major thrust of their programme and social reform was the most basic focus point of settlements. Settlement workers fought for laws to protect employed women and abolish child labour. One important component of social settlements was stress on participation and democracy. Residents involved themselves in the life of the community and helping neighbours to develop their potentialities to deal with their problems more effectively. The settlement idea spread very rapidly and by 1910 there were over four hundred settlements in the U.S.

During this era, a number of associations were created in many ethnic groups. In 1890, the Afro-American League of the United States was created to procure funds, legal and voting rights for the black Americans coping with their shifting status in American life. The Committee on Urban Conditions among Negroes in New York city later become the National Urban League, and in this many social workers were employed. From the 1880s many organisations came into existence to preserve a Mexican-American way of life. Organisations for the benefits of women also emerged. They showed a concern with the poor working conditions for women and equal rights. The women's suffrage movement and the movement for the abolition of slavery became important.

As far as social work education was concerned, community organization as a specialization had not yet emerged as a separate entity. There were individuals

concerned with coordinating charity, organizing neighbourhood settlements, or mobilizing protest in racial matters, but they had little professional identity. Some training activities began to emerge in 1898 when the New York COS initiated a summer training course, expanded to a one year programme later. By the end of World War I, seventeen schools of social work came into existence. The Association of Training Schools for Professional Social Work was also formed. The emphasis however was more on case work than on community organisation.

### **1915 to 1929**

After World War I, several new conditions emerged that had a significant impact on community organisation practice. The development of community organisation institutions like the Community Chest and United Fund was one such condition. This period saw an increase in the number of welfare institutions, which generated demands for coordination, and better fund raising methods. While the philanthropists established the Community Chests or United Funds to supply aid, the professionals supported the community welfare council to dispense this aid. Community Chests were initiated by large contributors and most of the work was handled by volunteers. World War I gave great impetus to the development of chests like war chests.

The Council of Social Agencies and the Community Welfare Council developed as a result of the increasing professionalism among those who helped the poor. The friendly visitor was replaced by the paid agent. The COSs founded schools of philanthropy, which became graduate schools of social work. A growing cadre of welfare professionals with the support of many volunteers were interested in organising a rational, systematic approach to the welfare needs of communities. They formed

councils which were often assigned the responsibility of distributing the money raised by community chests.

The Social Unit Plan became a very important development in community organisation. It was launched in 1915 and led to the development of block councils, block workers and federations referred to as Citizens Councils.

By 1920 Joseph K. Hart had written a text entitled "Community Organisation" and between then and 1930 at least five books were written on the subject. Case work emphasis had hitherto existed in view of the prevalent ideologies and emphasis on individual conformity to the "System". In fact community organisation practice during this period was largely aimed at enhancing agencies orientated towards personal adjustment. Except for workers in settlement houses, and the Social Unit Plan, little thought was given to changing social institutions. Nevertheless some different ideas began to emerge Linderman spoke of the value of "an attempt on the part of people who live in small compact local group to assume their own responsibilities and guide their own destinies" (Linderman, 1921).

### **1929 to 1954**

Social Work in this period was deeply affected by the depression and the World War II. There was a vast increase in unemployment, as also bank and stock market failures. The expansion of government programmes was a direct result of the depression. The government became the most significant planner and promoter of welfare programmes through the enactment of legislations and social security and minimum wages. The Federal government through its agencies became the main impetus for social planning. While this was

not really a period of innovation in community organisation, it was a time during which efforts were made to conceptualise the nature of community organisation practice. The relation between community organisation and social work was examined, the objectives of community organisation were reflected upon and the role of the community practitioner was deliberated upon.

The depression also stimulated a major upsurge of trade unionism. The passage of legislation showed that the government was facilitating the development of unions. Many minority communities and depressed classes got a major boost of strength due to this development.

However, in the period the community organization agencies found themselves unable to cope with the massive needs of the country. This period marked a shift of emphasis in operations from local and private to regional or national and public. The government became the main impetus for social planning.

As far as development of the profession was concerned, this was a time during which intensive efforts were made to conceptualise the nature of community organization practice. There were three overriding concerns. These were: (i) the relation between community organization and social work. While one school of thought contended that community organization was not really a legitimate form of social work practice, the other school made efforts to establish community organizations affinity to the basic values and concerns of social work (ii) an interest in the objectives of community organization, ranging from strengthening community cohesion to prevention/amelioration of a wide ranging set of social problems, and (iii) the appropriate role for the practitioner, which was envisaged to "strike a balance between giving help and fostering self determination of the community".

### **1955 to 1968**

The growth of the Civil Rights Movement, the end of legal school segregation and the rising dissatisfaction of the black Americans gave birth to a number of organisations which sought to end the inequality of opportunity for the black people. Martin Luther King, Jr emerged as a leader in this struggle. As these organisations fought for black pride, they also demanded autonomy in black affairs including neighbourhoods. Subsequently, other minority groups also started asserting themselves, claiming their rights and their special identity. Thus, there was a growing effort to create ethnic minority institutions, including neighbourhood control of schools, business, professional societies, labour unions, interest groups and rights organisations.

Late in this period, other groups also asserted themselves. These included the elderly, the gay men and lesbians, the handicapped and women. Student activism also increased phenomenally. Many student activists turned to social work and particularly to community organisation in search of a career compatible with their personal commitments. Many were influenced by the community organisation projects carried out by the students for a Democratic Society, and also by the dynamic organizing style of Saul Alinsky and the many organisations he helped found.

The Federal government took increasing responsibility for dealing with a wide range of social problems, like mental health, alcoholism, physical disability etc. through grants-in-aid to state and local governments. Many programmes encouraged preventive measures in the local communities, a process requiring community organisation skills. Programmes like VISTA, Neighbourhood Youth Corps, Adult Education, and other community action programmes offered opportunities for

local initiatives. Programmes like Model Cities Programme were also established in 1966 to solve urgent urban problems.

This was the time when on the one hand, the American people supported the development of responsibilities of the government in solving the problems of welfare and on the other hand, there was a renewed emphasis upon participatory democracy and “maximum feasible participation”. Along side there was also a strong sense of disengagement from society on the one hand and of opposition to those who controlled society on the other. These currents were also reflected in social work, with some students taking up government jobs, while others participating in anti-establishment grass-roots organisations. Moderation and social planning formed the dominant orientation of community organisation. Training for community organisation grew substantially and by 1969 the number of schools of social work providing training programmes for community organizers increased to forty eight. Efforts were also made to clarify the nature of community organisation and give recognition to the development of community organisation as a specialized form of practice within social work. In 1962, the Council on Social Work Education gave formal recognition to community organization as a method of social work comparable with casework and group work. An effort to develop curriculum for training community organizers was initiated in 1963. One of the most important development during this period was the recognition that community organization practitioners required professional training, different from that in other social work specializations.

### **1969 and After**

The year 1969 marked the beginning of the Nixon administration, followed by the Carter and Reagan

administrations. The thrust of these administrations was on reducing the role of the government, particularly the national government in social welfare. Three main developments during the period, specifically in the eighties and thereafter shaped the social conditions and the trends in social work practice at the community and societal levels. These were: (i) The emergence of an information society, characterized by “high technology” in every sphere of life; (ii) The growth of a world economy, leading to vast shifts in investment patterns and inter-organisational relationships on a global scale; and (iii) Decentralisation, leading to the increased role that state as opposed to national government started playing in the U.S., and the vast increase in neighbourhood organizations and the shift of population to rural areas and small towns (Naisbitt, 1982).

The most important development with the most impact on the current phase of community organizing is the belief in the value of self-help activities. Hundreds of organizations have arisen for mutual aid in the last many years and continue to be created on almost a daily basis in the U.S. The move towards participation has grown, together with a rise in initiatives, activism and a greater say of people in determining their own affairs. Another important trend which has emerged according to Naisbitt is “networking”, particularly that enabled by computer utilization, in which people seek ways of locating that American society has moved towards becoming a society of even more diversity. This is reflected in the many forms that the family is taking. The options available to women to work and to play any family role is accepted, and if not, is fought for. The traditional family has given way to blended families, one parent families, gay male and lesbian couples and “living together” families.

As far as development of community organization institutions is concerned, the major shift in community organization practice since the seventies has been the withdrawal of the federal funding and the termination of many community oriented federal programmes. Nevertheless, the number of grassroots organizations has expanded substantially. These organizations have generated many alternative forms of support including state and local governments, voluntary donations, fund raising efforts, support from multiple constituencies like labour organizations, churches and businesses. Organizations have developed in all ethnic communities and among all socio-economic groups.

As far as the development of the profession is concerned, a major shift has taken place during this period and this is a shift to thinking of community organization activities as part of "macro" practice that also includes interventions at organizational and societal levels. This shift recognizes that social change takes place through a set of activities that sometimes focus on a single organization, sometimes on a community, and sometimes on a society as a whole. The skills that the practitioner uses are specific to the particular level, but more often are appropriate to several levels. Opportunities to practice include roles which may be oriented towards management within an organization, organizing within a community, or policy creation and/or implementation within regional and societal institutions. The tools available to practitioners have grown over this period as has knowledge regarding organizational, community and societal phenomena drawn from major advances in social sciences, particularly sociology, social psychology, anthropology, political science and economics. A unity of thinking among all social workers regarding micro and macro practices of change has been encouraged by the spread of systems-oriented and ecologically based thinking.

Social workers are increasingly recognizing the necessity for systems changes and the participation of the consumer of social services in these changes. (Rothman, Erlich and Tropman, 2001).

## **History of Community Organization in India**

Community work preceded social work education which formally began in India in 1937. The experience of working with slums in the city of Mumbai led to the establishment of the first institution of social work education, which was the 'Tata Institute of Social Sciences', followed by the 'Delhi School of Social Work' in the year 1946. No serious cognizance of community work was however taken before the 1950s. It was only in the year 1951 that a massive government programme of community development, the first of its kind in post-independent India was launched.

Community work in India was largely seen as a process of developing local initiatives, particularly in the areas of education, health and agricultural development. This was to be undertaken by liasoning needs with available resources. The major thrust was on motivating people to express their needs, and to avail themselves of existing resources. (Siddiqui 1997).

From 1937 to about 1952, community work in india was fairly dormant. This was the time when the social work profession was in its infancy and trainees were primarily absorbed as case workers in different settings. While community organisation was being taught as a method of social work, there were hardly any job opportunities which provided avenues for community practice. Some opportunities only emerged with the launching of the Community Development Programme in India in 1952.

In this initial phase a prominent advocate of community development in India, was Mukherji. He described community development as “a movement designed to promote better living for the whole community, with the active participation and if possible at the initiative of the community”. Further, he emphasized that “whenever the initiative is not forth-coming, efforts should be made to arouse and stimulate this initiative” (Mukherji 1961). Mukherji contributed significantly to the development of community work in India. He perceived community development as an amalgamation of two processes: ‘extension education’ and ‘community organisation’. ‘Extension education’ was expected to improve the knowledge and skill base of people; and to change their attitudes to make them progressive and desirous of improving their living conditions. ‘Community organisation’, on the other hand entailed setting up of three institutions in the village. These were: the village panchayat, the village cooperative and the village school. Other associated organisations such as women’s organisations, youth groups, farmers and artisans associations were also sought to be developed to assist the three main institutions in achieving the overall development of the community.

In U.K. something similar had transpired in the second phase of community development, from 1930 to 1950, wherein people were encouraged to look for solutions to social problems in their own neighbourhoods. However, while in the U.K., this effort was initiated by voluntary associations, in India the programme was launched by the government. Moreover, while the focus of community work in India was primarily rural, in the U.K. and U.S.A. and in other European countries, community work was largely urban in nature. In India, a variety of people from diverse fields like health, education, agriculture and administration were a part of the team working at

the block level. Specific methods to work were however not evolved. Urban community development was very limited and very limited number of social workers were involved in the same. In such a context, it would not be wrong to say that in this phase, community work in India, by and large remained rural, whereas social work education and practice remained urban, both in location and character.

In the 1970s, the nature of community work largely remained ameliorative, and not radical or conflict-oriented. Social workers started working in urban slums in sizeable number. This was primarily on account of the fact that a large number of voluntary organisations started undertaking work in the realm of literacy, provision of basic amenities of life, women and children's development etc. Many other organizations, previously confined to institutional work started adopting a community focus. This led to a wider practice of community work, where 'community' mainly implied target population in a defined geographical area or neighbourhood.

The current phase of community work in India is characterized by a growing dissatisfaction largely on account of the slow and less than envisaged outcome of practice. The impact of globalization and privatization and the following neo-liberal offensive on welfare, accompanied by a gradual withering away of the state has led to a weakened community fabric and substantial erosion of the notions of popular participation. While much of this will be covered in a separate section in a subsequent unit, it suffices to mention here that the rapidly changing community context and a new set of community issues necessitate rethinking on ways of engaging the communities in purposeful action to promote better living for themselves.

Over the years, there has been a growing recognition of an alternate approach to community organizing which is more 'radical' in its stance. It pre-supposes the existence of a disadvantaged section of the population that needs to be organized in order to make demands on the larger community for increased resources or equal treatment (Bobo, Kendal, and Max, 1996). The style is highly adversarial and intervention seeks to redistribute power and resources, change legislative mandates and promote social justice. This approach has come to be known as the Social Action approach. In fact, Social Action has found recognition as a distinct method of social work practice. While some schools of social work treat it as a part of the broader community organisation method, some treat it as a separate method in itself.

As far as the practice context is concerned, social work professionals in India have not been prominent in the social action arena, although there has been participation on a small scale basis. By and large,, the nature of community practice has remained ameliorative, welfare oriented or having the usual 'problem-solving' roots.

An important factor that has impact on the contemporary nature and scope of community work undertaken by social work professionals has been their employability. Most community practitioners work in context of community based voluntary organisations, which in turn are increasingly governed by the mandates of funding organisations. Thus, the nature of community work in India is often project oriented and 'externally' driven i.e. originating from outside the community. This sets limits on the practice of community work that can actually be undertaken.

Since the early nineties, the popularization of Community Outreach (in context of health, education,

child guidance, disability rehabilitation etc.) and more recently the involvement of business houses and corporates in promoting welfare in their neighbourhoods (commonly referred to as Corporate Social Responsibility) has also broadened the scope of involvement of professionals in community practice. This has also provided the much needed boost to the practice of community work.

In the same time frame, there has also been a discernable movement into the notion of capacity building, which stresses the fact that people have the right to an equitable share in the world's resources, and to be authors of their own development. Strengthening people's capacity to determine their values and priorities and to act on these is increasingly being recognized as the basis of community practice. Capacity building as part of community organization is being perceived as an approach to development rather than a set of pre packaged interventions. Capacity building is not doing development for the needy, it is in essence assisting people to plan and exercise their choice of development. However, although there is a strong case for expediting the incorporation of these notions in real life community organizing, this has not really been the case. Presently, these notions are visible more in theoretical deliberations than in practice situations. Nevertheless, exceptional initiatives at the grass roots level in several parts of the country raise the hope and confidence of professionals that desirable changes in the practice of community organizing are on the anvil.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter we have discussed the history of community organization as a method of social work practice. We have seen how the early efforts of the social

reformers and the activists to improve the living conditions of the deprived communities in the West gradually evolved and transformed into a formal method of social work.

Besides elaborating on the genesis and evolution of community organization in the U.K., the chapter also traces the development of this method in the USA. A profile of the history of community organization in the Indian context has also been presented to enable us to understand the nature and trends in the practice of this method from the commencement of social work education in 1936 to the present time. This chapter facilitated us to develop a comprehensive insight into the developments which have shaped the contemporary practice of this core method of social work.

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## 8

# Community Organisation as a Method of Social Work Practice

*\*Neera Agnimitra*

### Introduction

Community organization is one of the core methods of social work, just as case work, group work, social welfare administration, and social work research. While the context of the caseworker is the “individual”, and that of group worker is the “group”, the community organizer operates in the “community” context. The caseworker seeks to help the individual client identify his/her problems; develop the will to deal with these problems; facilitate action with respect to them; and in doing so, increase the individual’s understanding of himself/herself and his/her capacity for integration. Similarly, the community organizer works with the whole community as the ‘client’. He/she deals with its major subcultures; enables the community to identify its important needs and problems; develop the collective will to deal with these; and to take action with respect to them; and in doing so, enhances the capacity of the community to function as an integrated unit. In short, the term community organization is used to describe a method of social work used to intervene in the life of a community in order to solve community problems.

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## **Community Organisation as a Macro Method**

Work with communities when viewed from the humanitarian perspective, is as old as society itself. One or the other form of community work has always been existing. But when viewed from the perspective of methods of social work profession, community work is of relatively recent origin. It was the Lane Committee Report (1939) which first recognized community organization as a method of social work.

Community organization is considered as a Macro method of practice in social work (Fink 1978) or macro level social work, as it is used to address the broader social problems that affect a large group of people. The term 'macro' is used because of ability of this method to involve a large number of people in solving the social problems collectively. This method thus enables us to enhance the scope/degree of intervention. Unlike case work, which deals with only one individual at a time or group work, which deals with a limited number of participants, community organization deals with a large number of people at any given time.

Individual approach is not practical in a context where the magnitude of problem/s faced is alarming. In such cases we have to use a method which can concurrently help a large number of people. This is especially true in case of developing countries where the magnitude of several problems faced by people is immense and so there is an urgent need to work with larger constituencies. In such a context, the community becomes an important level of social work intervention and community organization emerges as an effective method of social work practice to ameliorate the widespread economic and social problems faced by these countries.

Community organization is also characterised as a macro method because it can be successfully implemented at the local level (i.e. at a locality/ neighbourhood level) or at state level or even at the regional or international level, depending on how we define the 'community' in community organization.

### **Community Organisation as a Problem Solving Method**

As mentioned earlier, for community organization method, the community is the client. Just as the other methods of case work and group work, the method of community organisation also strives to solve the problems and fulfill the needs of its 'client', which is the community.

It is also concerned with:

- a) the release of its latent potentialities;
- b) the optimised use of its indigenous resources;
- c) the development of its capacity to manage its own life; and
- d) the enhancement of its ability to function as an integrated unit.

The end goal is the development of self confidence and self help; the emergence of cooperative and collaborative attitudes, skills and behaviour, which then form the basis of sustainable action and change in the client system.

Like the other methods, community organization also relies on similar assumptions, namely the dignity and worth of the client, the resources possessed by the client to deal with its own problems; the inherent capacity that the 'client' possesses for growth and development; and the ability to choose wisely in the management of its own affairs. A case worker assumes that often

individuals become overwhelmed by the complexities of life and thereby become psychosocially paralysed, which in turn curtails their own capacity for response by way of action. But with appropriate facilitation, this stage can be overcome, and the normal process of growth can be resumed for the individual concerned. Moreover, like the case worker who accepts the client as he/she is; develops a professional relationship with the client; starts from where the client is; and helps the client to become functional and autonomous, the community organizer also has the same general orientation and relies on a similar approach in working with the community, which is the client for him/her.

Community organisation therefore shares a common base, and a common core of philosophy and method with case work and group work. It is also committed towards solving problems and facilitating change in the client system. The nature of problems dealt with in the context of Indian communities relate to poverty, unemployment, exploitation, lack of access to basic services and denial of social justice/rights. The problems may also be more group specific i.e. as they relate to particular groups like women, children, youth, elderly or the backward classes.

While there are common objectives, assumptions and certain generalized approaches to be followed by all social work practitioners, there are also significant differences between community organization and the other methods. As the social work practitioner moves from the general to the specific context, he/she has to develop certain distinctive ways of dealing with the problems of the individual, the group and the community. In addition to the fact that some of the same insights and methods develop differently in different settings, each process has distinctive insights and methods of its own.

Since the worker in community organization works on a larger canvas, he/she is (a) concerned with the different sub-groups and sub-cultures within the same; (b) has to develop insights about the value systems, behaviour patterns, social organization, formal and informal leadership as they pertain to the diverse groups; (c) understand the interests and problems that these groups have in common; and (d) assess the degree of cooperation and competition that exist in them. The methods of understanding and operation used will therefore be different from that of the case worker or the group worker.

In any process of problem solving there are three basic steps viz. study, diagnosis and intervention/treatment. First, the problem has to be studied by collecting information. From this information, the main causes leading to the problem have to be identified. This step is referred to as 'diagnosis'. Based on the diagnosis, a solution or intervention is evolved called 'treatment'. In any context, problems can be solved only after following this three step procedure.

In the context of a community, this problem solving procedure can be used only with the collective involvement of the people who are individually and collectively the stakeholders in the causation and the solution of the specific problem being dealt with. For e.g. people in a certain community may be confronted with the problem of high incidence of morbidity. With the help of the community organiser this problem first has to be studied. The link between the commonly prevalent disease/s and their causal factors may be established. In case these causal factors are related to the accumulation of stagnant water in the open drains outside the houses and/or an ineffective system of garbage collection, then it is only with peoples' participation that a treatment/intervention can be

devised. The latter will be in the shape of a collective endeavour at the level of all the people affected by the problem, whereby a participatory system of garbage collection/disposal and timely cleaning of the community drains can be established. The lesson learnt through this illustration is that often problems confronting individual members of the community have their roots in the community and therefore their solution also lies in the community. Unless the community works out a collective solution and acts on it, problems such as the one illustrated above cannot be solved.

## **Relationship Between Community Organisation and Other Methods of Social Work**

### **1) Community Organisation and Case Work**

Case work forms an integral part of community organization. When the community organizer enters the community, he/she interacts with people on an individual basis, identifies their needs and works towards their mobilization into groups and organizations. In other words, work with individuals and families become the beginning point for community mobilization. Individual contact strategy is also used to create awareness on relevant issues/problems.

The community organizer also has to deal with a number of significant individuals in the community. These may be (a) individuals who may be expected to oppose and resist change; (b) individuals in special positions like leaders, power holders; (c) individuals belonging to weaker/marginalized sections, who may be lacking the will and the capacity for participation. It is in such instances that knowledge and skills related to case work become an absolute must for successful community work.

## **2) Community Organisation and Group Work**

The community can be understood as a collectivity of groups, existing in a web of interlinked social chains. In the course of community organization, the organiser's most prominent preoccupation is to deal with the small and large groups and subgroups. Community organization therefore is also described as inter-group practice. An understanding of group work helps the community organizer to strengthen inter group relationships and facilitate their convergence on a common platform. He/she often identifies small groups where a beginning can be made and then strives to develop inter-group linkages to achieve wider participation on commonly perceived needs. In such a context, dealing with groups and group processes becomes an integral part of community organization.

It is therefore clear that, a community organizer has to work with individuals, families and groups to achieve community goals, and should possess case work and group work skills, apart from community organization skills.

### **Community Organisation and Social Work Research**

During the process of engagement with communities, the community organizer has to also rely on research knowledge and skill sets. Community organization as a process has to start with fact finding. Use of research is inevitable in locating, identifying and understanding the community. It is also relied upon to undertake need/problem assessment, which requires an objective and systematic gathering of quantitative and qualitative data. Research also furnishes important qualitative data on priorities and preferences of people, their attitudes and perceptions towards an issue or a problem. It may also be used for specific purposes like conduction of

epidemiological studies or for the study of social indicators. Monitoring and evaluation also requires an ongoing use of research through the conduction of baseline and end line surveys.

In contemporary context, participatory research techniques are increasingly relied upon to elicit community participation in assessing and prioritizing needs, as also in drawing up preferred community interventions.

### **Relevance of Community Organisation for Community Development**

Community organization and community development are interrelated. To achieve the goals of community development the community organization method is used. According to the United Nations, community development deals with total development of a community, that is in its economic, physical, and social aspects. For achieving total development, community organization is used as a means. In community development the following aspects are considered as important:

- a) Democratic procedures
- b) Voluntary cooperation
- c) Self-help
- d) Development of leadership
- e) Educational aspects.

All the above aspects are relevant from the perspective of community organization. (a) Democratic procedures deal with allowing all the community members to participate in decision-making. It is possible to achieve this through community organization. The selected or elected members or representatives are helped to take

decisions. Thus democratic procedures help people to take part in achieving the community development goals. The community organization method also values democratic procedures for enlisting people's participation. (b) Voluntary cooperation means that the people volunteer their participation. For this they have to be first convinced. They should feel that they need to involve themselves in the process of development without inhibitions. This attitude is supported by the community organization method. People's emotional involvement is necessary for successful community organization. If discontentment about their conditions is created, then people will volunteer for participation. Community organization emphasizes the discontentment aspect only to make them initiate participation. (c) Self-help is the basis for community development. It deals with the capacity of people to mobilize internal resources. Self-help is the basis for self-sufficiency and sustainable development. Even in the context of community organization, self-help is emphasized and promoted. (d) Development of leadership is an important aspect in community development. Leadership deals with influencing and enabling people to achieve the stipulated goals. Community organization also places great emphasis on leadership development. It is only with the help of leaders that people are motivated to participate in action. (e) Educational aspects in community development imply helping people to know, learn, and accept the concepts of democracy, cooperation, unity, skill development, effective functioning etc. In community organization the above mentioned aspects are considered to be extremely important. Thus, both emphasize the educational aspects for the progress of the community. All this supports the statement that community organization and community development are interrelated and mutually supportive. Both emphasize democratic method

and self-help principles. So, in community development programmes, the community organization method is used as the implementing method.

### **Distinction Between Community Organisation and Community Development**

There are many similarities between community organisation and community development. But for theoretical purpose it is possible to differentiate between community organization and community development.

- a) Community organization is a method of social work while community development is a programme for a planned change and development.
- b) Community organization emphasizes the process, but community development emphasizes the end or goals.
- c) Community organizers are mostly social workers and social change agents. But community development personnel can be from other professions including agricultural experts, veterinary experts, and other technical experts.
- d) Community organisation is not time bound. It is achieved step by step according to the pace of the people. But community development is time bound and time is specified for achieving the development objectives.
- e) In community organization people's participation is important. But in community development people's development is more important.
- f) In community organization the assistance provided by the government and external agencies is not a critical factor. But in community development

external assistance from the government or other agencies is considered important.

- g) Community organization is a method of social work and this method is used in many fields. But unlike community organization, community development is considered as a process, a method, a programme, and a movement for planned change.
- h) Community organisation is used in all the fields but community development is mostly relied upon in context of economic development and for enhancing the living standards of the people.
- i) In community organization planning is undertaken by the people but community development planning is mainly carried out by an external agency mostly belonging to the government.
- j) In community organization people are organized to solve their problems, but in community development goals have to be achieved and it is for this purpose that people are organized.
- k) Community organization is universal to all communities, but community development programmes differ from people to people depending upon whether the area is rural, urban or tribal, as also other characteristics of the area.

Thus, we see that even though there are differences, both community development and community organization are interrelated. The ideal community development takes places where community organization method and its various steps and principles are effectively put into practice.

### **Principles of Community Organisation**

The principles of community organization can be understood as the generalized guiding rules. They also

refer to a “rule of right action” or “a value judgment as to what is sound or good community organization”. It follows therefore that principles are usually expressions of value judgments.

Moreover, principles are shaped and limited by the frame of reference of community organization, as has been discussed in the previous sections, and in harmony with the nature and spirit of social work in a democratic society. This implies that we become concerned with the dignity and worth of individuals, their freedom, choice of options and right to self determination, security, participation, all of which could lead to a more wholesome and abundant life for them. It also implies that these principles are in alignment with such general principles of democracy such as self-reliance, cooperation, partnership, transparency and sustainability.

These principles are also shaped by an understanding of the social forces which impinge on the individuals and the groups comprising the community, as also the planning process, and some knowledge of the empirical work in groups and communities (Ross, 1955).

In the literature on community work, we find various sets of principles evolved by different practitioners to inform community practice. These are as follows:

**A) Dunham, in 1958 suggested a set of twenty eight principles of community organization, broadly categorized under seven headings:**

1. Democracy and social welfare.
2. Community roots for community programmes.
3. Citizen understanding, support, participation and professional service.
4. Cooperation

5. Social welfare programmes.
6. Adequacy, distribution, and organization of social welfare services, and
7. Prevention.

In identifying these principles, Dunham broadly conceptualized community work as a process of delivering social welfare services in a community. The community which formed the context for evolving his set of principles was a typical urban middle class neighbourhood in a western society. Thus, this community was vastly different from a typical Indian community in which a professional community worker is expected to work.

As can also be observed from the aforementioned headings, Dunham visualized an ideal type of social service network and highlighted the benefits of democracy, participation, cooperation and adequacy of programmes to meet the needs of the community. In essence, the principles formulated by Dunham were really a broad based set of guidelines or ideal conditions, rather than specific principles of community organisation.

**B) Murray, G Ross also developed an elaborate set of thirteen principles to guide community organization**

According to him, the process of community organization requires some kind of structure and social organization. The task or problem is expected to be dealt with by some group, committee, council, commission or some other form of organization, formal or informal. Since this organization or association becomes the main channel through which the community organization process moves, the principles which guide the development and work of this association therefore

become the relevant principles of community organization. The thirteen principles identified by Ross were:

**1) Discontent with existing conditions in the community must initiate and/or nourish the development of the association**

This implies that some deep and widely shared feelings of discontent with some aspect/s of community life will be a more effective springboard for the creation and development of the organization/association. Although discontent is not the only motivational factor leading to community participation, it is likely to lead to a more dynamic involvement than other motives. Such dynamic involvement of people is desirable, if the community association is to sustain, and overcome the many difficulties that come its way. Only if there is a profound conviction about community problem(s), and “a deep feeling that the prevailing community situation is wrong and must be righted”, does the group get common motivation to overcome the problem.

It is when the often dormant discontents are expressed and agreed upon, that a community association may emerge, or become dynamic so that the community is facilitated to resolve cooperatively some of its common problems.

**2) Discontent must be focused and channelled into organization, planning and action in respect to specific problems**

Discontent per se is of doubtful value. In fact unfocused discontent is often a major block to any purposeful action, because it then translates into a situation of chronic dissatisfaction. Only when discontent is focused and ordered that it becomes a suitable and healthy motive for action. Discontent should therefore be specific and focused in terms of specific achievable goals.

**3) The discontent which initiates or sustains community organization must be widely shared in the community**

Community organization, according to Ross, is not a minority movement. It cannot be initiated solely by reason of needs or discontents which appeal to only a very small group in the community. The discontent must therefore be recognized by the major parts of the community, so that they all may be motivated to do something about it.

Community organization is not concerned simply with solving certain problems, important as they may be, but also with developing the capacity of the community to deal with its own problems. It is essential, therefore, that the discontent focus on those problems about which there is, or can be, unanimous agreement, so that they can provide a common framework for cooperative work by the community. If such widespread agreement is not always possible, efforts to "spread the area of shared concern" need to be necessarily made.

**4) The association must involve leaders (both formal and informal) identified with, and accepted by, major subgroups in the community**

Community organization requires the participation of people of the community. However, everyone in the community cannot always be involved in face to face contact with all other members of the community, especially if the size of the community is large. Therefore, some means must be evolved for participation through representation. This is made possible by first identifying all major groupings of people in the community and subsequently, identifying the leaders of these groups. The major groupings should not only include the formal groups but also the multiplicity of informal groups which sometimes exist in communities and which hold the

allegiance of the people. These groups can be brought into dialogue with each other around some common problem/s. This can be done most effectively through the accepted group leaders, both formal and informal. These leaders know their people and in turn are known by their people. They can therefore act as effective communication links between the diverse groups.

**5) The association must have goals and methods of procedure of high acceptability**

The association brings together different groupings of people, each having their specific interests, attitudes and behaviour. The task of integrating these groups into a unified association which can work on a cooperative basis is a difficult one. If the association is to sustain, it requires a statement of general goals and methods of procedure. These should be known and accepted by the people so that they provide a way of life for the association and for carrying on its business. These will constitute the common frame of reference, which in periods of disagreement and conflict can be referred to as a means of finding direction and emphasizing the common purpose for which the association exists.

**6) The programme of the association should include some activities with emotional content**

To bind together the diverse groupings of people comprised in the community and to develop cohesion, common ideas, feelings, traditions, celebrations and festivities play an important role. These contribute to the building of the community sentiment which is so important for community integration. Thus there is need to encourage activities directed towards providing rich emotional experiences to the members. Rituals which symbolize the values for which the association stands are valuable because they reinforce loyalty to those goals and unify the group around these goals.

**7) The association should seek to utilize the manifest and latent goodwill which exists in the community**

According to Ross, there are extensive sources of good will and support in the community which can be mobilized in cooperative community initiatives. They may be in the form of people who may be willing to contribute and participate in any constructive community effort; other professionals who may be keen to associate with the community practitioners; or leaders who may represent groupings of people who could be associated with the community endeavor

However, this goodwill is seldom recognized and rarely utilized. Its underutilization is primarily on account of two reasons: (a) lack of awareness about the existence and sources of goodwill at the level of the community workers; and (b) inability to tap, release or utilize this goodwill due to lack of compatibility of the proposed initiative with people's real needs, concerns and interests. The latter is important as the association needs to orient its work in such a way that it fits into the experiences and belief systems of the people, so that the initiative becomes meaningful to the people and thereby receives their whole hearted support.

First of all, community leaders can be utilized to understand (a) how to communicate with community groups; (b) the real and 'felt' needs and concerns of people; and (c) methodologies of seeking support from them becomes imperative in this scheme of things. Secondly, appeals for support should be made on a personal basis to people, as person-to-person contacts are much more helpful in establishing contacts and strengthening the community spirit. Thirdly, people should be given the opportunity of participating and contributing at the level at which they are comfortable and in a manner that has meaning for them.

**8) The association must develop active and effective lines of communication both within the association and between the association and the community**

Communication, which is undoubtedly the essence of community life is a process by which the area of common understanding and shared values is widened in the community. Such a process does not often emerge/develop easily.

To begin with, effective communication within a group or between groups depends on the quality of relationships between the people. When negative emotions predominate in these relationships, communication is likely to be far less effective than in situations where there are positive feelings of friendliness, respect and trust. Therefore the essential task in the association devoted to community organization is the development of an atmosphere in which participants feel safe and are able to express themselves freely.

Secondly, the way in which communication is structured also becomes important. Practitioners of community organization have recognized the advantage of small groups if meaningful interaction between members is to take place. Communication is also likely to be more effective in situations where leadership functions are shared, and where informal and intimate discussion of problems is undertaken. Accordingly, if a real understanding of the community organization process is to be achieved, the content of a single interaction must be limited to a few manageable items, and sufficient time must be provided for interaction. This is based on the assumption that people need time and opportunity to understand, assimilate and use new ideas and new information. It is a known fact that messages move more

effectively through 'accepted' channels than through new channels. These 'accepted' channels may vary in all communities and only a study of the local customs will yield information about them. Community groups are also likely to be more receptive if messages are transmitted to them by their own leaders instead of an outsider. It makes sense to tap the wisdom of the local people themselves as they are the best judge of what kind of communication and what media are most effective.

**9) The association should seek to support and strengthen the groups which it brings together in cooperative work**

The association, which seeks to be an organization of the community, is made up of community groups. If these groups are disorganized or apathetic, the association is likely to have a narrow base of participation and support. Therefore, if the association is to emerge as a strong one, the groups composing it must be strong and cohesive units. There needs to be consistent efforts to help the constituent groups to achieve cohesion and capacity to function cooperatively, as also independently. The weak groups must be capacitated to identify their problems and undertake action for the resolution of the same.

**10) The association should be flexible in its organizational procedures without disrupting its regular decision-making routines**

Acceptance and establishment of rules and methods of procedure lead to a sense of security in the operation of the association. Flexibility in the association does not imply any disruption of these established procedures. What is however implied is the opportunity to use a variety of methods in undertaking the proceedings of the association. The use of studies, visits, appointment

of committees, camps etc. may be contemplated for acquiring data and generating consensus, without impinging on the decision making responsibilities of the group assigned to do so.

**11) The association should develop a proper pace for its work and relate it to the existing conditions in the community**

First, the association must obtain a proper pace for its own work. This develops as members learn to work together, when procedures are established and responsibilities are accepted. Establishment of objectives with agreed upon time schedules help to bring about a pace of work in the association to which all gradually adjust.

Further, the pace at which a community will involve itself in a community initiative is very important. Just as in case work, where we try to adapt treatment procedures to the pace at which the client is comfortable, the same principles also apply to the practice of community organization. Here our 'client' is the community. Any community project requires adjustment to the change that is created in its wake. Based on the disposition and capacity of the people making the change, a time period is certainly required to adjust to the change. Establishing a pace that is consistent with that of the community and comfortable for it therefore becomes imperative.

**12) The association should seek to develop effective leaders**

Development of those leaders who will facilitate the community organization process; help the association to be productive; and contribute to the development of morale both in the association and the community is an important requirement. It is more realistic to accept

that instead of one central figure, there are actually many persons contributing to the leadership of a group. For eg. “popular leader” and a “task leader” may both be desirable. While the latter may keep the group engaged in its work, the former may help to maintain and restore group unity and keep members happy. The customs and expectations of the group may determine how many, and what kind of leadership functions, the central figure should assume. Any change in the sharing of leadership functions should be made with all members of the group actively participating. Such a process of group training can be the most realistic and effective means of leadership training.

### **13) The association must develop strength, stability, and prestige in the community**

Community organization seeks to increase cooperation among community groups, as they deal with community projects. The successful achievements of the association can facilitate this. The association must have strength both in terms of the involvement of accepted group leaders and its ability to work through difficult community problems. Only such an association will win the participation and support of the people and become a symbol of community cooperation.

Due to the heterogeneous membership of the constituent groups, the association must be prepared to face outbursts of hostility, scapegoating, withdrawals or failure. These must be worked through. It is only through self understanding, will the association be able to achieve cohesion, stability and productivity.

**C) In the context of working with actual practice situations in India, Siddiqui (1997) also evolved a set of eight principles to guide community organization practitioners. These are briefly described below:**

**1) The Principle of Specific Objectives**

It is difficult to organize the community as a cohesive unit, particularly in the early stages of work. The community consists of different client groups, all of whom may have differential needs, thus necessitating differential programmes. For example in the Indian context, a separate forum for women is required due to cultural constraints. The principle of specific objectives prescribes the practice of consciously formulating specific objectives of working with different client groups on the one hand, and formulating specific community oriented objectives, on the other. This enables the worker to make a beginning at the group level, which otherwise is difficult to achieve.

**2) The Principle of Planning**

The worker must adhere to meticulous planning of community work. This implies developing a blue print for the entire work to be undertaken in terms of programmes, financial/resource requirements, personnel requirements, space etc. Planning also helps to anticipate problems one is likely to face in implementing the programme and devising contingency plans for meeting them. For example, a community worker may disregard the cultural milieu of the community and try to encourage girls to attend a co-educational school. This is an example of lack of planning, leading to failure of the programme and even community displeasure.

### **3) The Principle of People's Participation**

People's participation is the most important component of any community cooperative venture. Ambitious plans of community development in the Indian context have failed partly due to lack of people's effective participation. Eliciting and sustaining people's participation often requires special insights and years of experience of working with people. Identification of the 'felt needs' of people; critical examination of the project feasibility; development of a realistic strategy to involve people; assumption of a pace of work which is in consonance with community's adjustment and capacity; adherence to community's right to self determination and giving equal importance to all groups/factions are some ways to elicit people's participation. Helping people to participate in accordance with their capacity is a better strategy than expecting them to participate in all issues.

### **4) The Principle of Inter-Group Approach**

Small communities as described by Robert Redfield in his book 'The Little Community', have four defining qualities of distinctiveness, small size, self sufficiency and homogeneity. But such communities seldom exist in contemporary context. Most communities consist of people of different backgrounds, occupations, castes, religions and political affiliations. There are what can be described as "communities within communities" and "overlapping communities". The community worker is therefore expected to first identify the smaller groups with whom he can make a beginning and later develop inter-group linkages for achieving targets which require involvement of people on a larger scale. These groups can function independently to a certain extent but can also come together to form a wider network of community people in order to deal with the common problems. The inter-group approach can also work on the basis of

dividing the geographical area of the community into smaller units (clusters or lanes) and then forming groups in the same.

**5) The Principle of Democratic Functioning**

This principle is based on the belief that there is a tendency among common people to remain passive and allow others to take decisions for them. In this process, a few people tend to dominate and take control of all resources and benefits. The community worker therefore has a primary obligation to educate people and to create appropriate mechanisms to facilitate a wider participation and to curb the tendency of domination by a privileged minority. The principle of rotating leadership is also a step in the same direction.

**6) The Principle of Flexible Organisation**

The creation of a formal organization is difficult task, as people in general are not used to confirming to rules and set procedures, and often do not immediately perceive the benefits of allocating specific roles and responsibilities to specific people. Thus, it is better if community workers opt for a more flexible approach to organization in order to accommodate people with varied abilities to function effectively. Informal arrangements work better in the initial phase. Rules and procedures are very important, but they should be made to facilitate rather than hinder participation. Formation of various committees may also prove more helpful as more people can thereby obtain the valuable experience of taking the lead in participating and decision making.

**7) The Principle of Optimum Utilisation of Indigenous Resources**

Countries of the third world are generally short of resources. The governments are unable to provide

adequate basic services like housing, drinking water, sanitation, health etc. The community worker therefore has to largely depend on the mobilization of resources from various sources, including the government. In the context of the given shortages, efforts to mobilize indigenous community resources become imperative. These include indigenous human resources in the form of voluntary labour (Shramdan) and locally trained community volunteers (to undertake health, education and other programmes) as also space (in the form of available buildings like schools, panchayat ghars etc. or open spaces like playgrounds, chaupal etc.). It is also an accepted practice to avoid provision of free services and to encourage people's contribution for the services provided. It promotes the self esteem of people, and curbs dependency on outside help. It also results in the proper utilization of services as dependence on indigenous resources leads to greater sustainability of programmes.

### **8) The Principle of Cultural Orientation**

In most third world countries, traditions and customs are very important. It becomes important for the community worker to be oriented to the cultural milieu of the community and show respect to its customs, traditions, values etc. This will enable her/him to gain the acceptance and respect of the community. However, this does not imply that the worker should support such customs which may harm the people or are detrimental to them (e.g. belief in supernatural powers, early marriage, sati etc.). In such cases, a gradual effort to change community's perception and practices is called for.

Based on the above elaboration of the sets of principles, the following are most relevant for guiding the practice

of community organization in the Indian context; These are as follows:

**a) Community organization is a means and not an end**

Community organization is a process by which the capacity of the community to function as an integrated unit is enhanced. It is therefore a method or a means to enable people to engage in planned collective action in order to deal with their own needs and problems on a sustainable basis.

**b) Community, like individuals and groups are different**

Each community has its own peculiarities, unique points, problems and needs. To deal with communities effectively, they must be individualized.

**c) Communities like individuals have a right to self-determination**

In community organization, the worker enables the community to develop its own policies, plans and programmes. They should not be superimposed. This is based on the premise that people are the best judge of their own situation and the process should originate in the experience of the people themselves.

**d) Community welfare rather than agency self interest should be the first consideration in determining programme**

The programmes of an organization should be defined in relation to the programmes of other agencies, and in relation to the needs of the community. Moreover, no agency should cover so large a portion of the community problems or so large a geographical area as to inhibit the development of other organizations as the overall problem is apparently beyond its own resources. The

welfare and development of the community assumes paramount importance for the agency initiating community intervention.

**e) Community organization is to promote community solidarity and the practice of democracy**

Community organization should seek to overcome the disruptive influences which threaten community solidarity and vitality of democratic institutions. Discrimination, segregation and exclusion should be discouraged while integration, inclusion and cohesiveness should be promoted.

**f) Community organization requires a clear identification of the community**

The client of the community organization process is the community. It follows as a first prerequisite that this community be clearly identified.

There are various interpretations of the community and these have been covered in an earlier section. It is important to determine and define the community, its nature and limits. Once the community is identified, the entire community must become the concern of the community practitioner. The welfare of the whole community is always more important than the interest of any one section/group in the community.

**g) Community organization should have its roots in the community**

Proper fact finding and assessment of community needs is the pre-requisite to starting any community programme. Community organization should have its origin in the real "felt" needs of the community and should not be superimposed from outside.

**h) Community Organisation requires the identification and mobilization of available resources, both external and indigenous**

The fullest possible use should be made of the existing resources or services. In the absence of resources/ services, the same have to be tapped from various sources such as government, non-government agencies and the community. Use of indigenous community resources must be stressed. These include both physical and human resources.

**i) Participation is the basis of community organisation**

The concept of self help is the core of community organization. Participation of the community throughout the process of community organization should be encouraged, both from the perspective of democratic principles and feasibility. Participatory planning, followed by participatory implementation and evaluation should be encouraged and fostered.

**j) Reliance on Voluntary Cooperation**

Community organization must be based upon mutual understanding, voluntary acceptance, and mutual agreement. It should be free from authoritarian pressure, repression and regimentation. It should not be imposed from above or outside, but must be derived from the inner freedom and will to unite all those who practice it.

**k) Emphasis on coordination of effort**

The practice of community organization should be based on the spirit of cooperation and coordination, rather than competition.

Emphasis on collaboration and cooperative attitudes and practices does not imply elimination of all differences or tension, or of conflict. In fact, these latter forces

provide life and vitality to any process. However, it is important to keep in mind that conflict can be both disruptive and destructive, or positive and creative. What is required is that the community organization worker identify such forces and modify them so that they become beneficial to the community as a whole.

**l) Limited use of authority is preferred**

Application of authority or coercion may sometimes be required in community organization, but it should be used as sparingly as possible, for as short a time as possible, and only as a last resort. Such a situation should be followed as soon as possible, by resumption of the cooperative and collaborative process.

**m) Community organization structure should be kept simple**

The structure of the community organization should be kept simple and as per the preferences or traditions of the community. Sometimes too much of machinery bogs down and gets in the way of the process.

**n) Recognition and involvement of indigenous leadership is necessary**

While people's participation in the process of community organization is imperative, everyone in the community cannot be involved in face to face contact with all others in the community. Therefore, it is important to identify the leaders (both formal and informal) who are accepted by the different groups and sub-groups in the community. Inclusion of these leaders is an important step in community integration, as they act as important communication links with their groups/sub-groups.

**o) Dynamic and flexible nature of programmes and services is desirable**

Social welfare agencies and programmes must be responsive to the changing conditions, problems and

needs of the community. The community is a dynamic entity, which constantly changes and evolves. Additionally, the circumstances, needs and concerns of the people also keep changing. Therefore, it is necessary that the programmes and services be flexible to accommodate such change/s.

**q) Broad representation should be given to all groups**

Every group/sub group or faction in the community should be given the opportunity for participation and for explicit voicing of its interests in the organization.

**r) Services/benefits must be distributed equitably**

The social services, resources and benefits of the programme/intervention should be made available equally and without discrimination to all members who need them.

**s) Barriers to communication must be broken down**

Community organization should result in free contacts among different social groups in the community. Attitudes of concern for the welfare of the total community must be developed through opportunities to work together on common projects.

The greater the differentiation in community life, the greater is the need to develop an understanding of the needs and contributions of the other groups.

**t) Communities often need professional help**

Sometimes communities organize spontaneously to make way for change. However, in most cases, the professional worker is required to help the community discover, identify, plan and implement to meet its needs. The success of community organization depends in large part upon the ability of the worker to bring about voluntary participation in achieving common goals. The worker however has an obligation to make the community

autonomous and not to create undue dependence on himself/herself.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter we have discussed the significance of community organization as a macro method of social work practice and as a problem solving method in the community context. We have also deliberated on the relevance of community organization for achieving the ends of community development. The significance of using community organization in integration with other methods viz. case work, group work and social research has also been highlighted in some detail.

Finally, a detailed depiction of the principles underlying the community organization method have been discussed. These will facilitate a meaningful engagement with the community as the 'client' of the community organizer.

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## 9

# Models and Approaches of Community Organisation

*\*Neera Agnimitra*

### **Introduction**

The previous chapters have given you a reasonably good understanding of the concept of community organization; its application as a method of social work practice at the community level; its relationship with other methods as also its historical growth and development in the U.K., U.S.A. and India. You have also been provided a detailed orientation to the general and specific principles underlying community organization.

In this chapter, we will be presented a detailed description of the models, approaches and strategies of community organization. They will serve as a reference for work and give you a clear understanding of what you can expect in specific contexts. They will guide you in assuming a specific stance and direction based on the needs and the problem condition of the community at hand. Additionally, the series of steps to be followed in engaging the community for purposeful action have also been highlighted to elaborate on the 'process' orientation of community organization.

### **Steps in Community Organisation**

As mentioned earlier, community organization is a "process". This process is representative of a movement,

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which may be conscious or unconscious, voluntary or involuntary, from the identification of a problem or objective to the solution of the problem or attainment of the objective/s identified by the community. From the beginning to the end, this process involves a series of steps which although distinct may overlap in real practice. The sequence of these steps or stages may also vary, depending on the specific context in which they are applied.

These important steps or stages in the community organization process are presented below:

1) **Role Searching**

The first step in the community organisation process is an analysis of the proposed goals that the worker or the implementing agency proposes to pursue. In practice this decision is usually influenced by the objectives of the parental organization which employs the worker directly or which funds the organization which employs him.

However, if a community organizer wants to achieve some degree of conviction in his efforts and wishes to avoid failure, he should subject his idea and the organization's objectives to a critical analysis. Are the objectives in line with the needs of the community? How will the proposed programme help? These questions can help the organizer to become clear about his work. He may not be in a position to change agency policy/programmes, but clarity will help him to see what he can or cannot achieve in his work. Moreover, an analysis of the resources that the organizer/agency possesses or hopes to invest (including time inputs, financial resources, human resources etc.), as also the selection of the geographical or functional community needs to be undertaken at this initial stage.

## **2) Enlisting People's Participation**

The organizer is expected to develop a positive and purposeful rapport with the people in the community. He may either adopt a formal way of introducing himself directly or through a known community contact like a leader, school teacher, or anganwadi worker, or utilize an informal approach, wherein he may simply start visiting the community and meeting people. The basic purpose is to acquaint himself with the community and to explain his presence.

It is important to remember that at this stage the organizer should not give false hopes to the people or make false promises just to elicit a positive response from the people. He should also avoid developing relationships based on caste, regional or religious affiliations, as it could prove counter productive. Excessive reliance on any particular leader or group to establish initial rapport and working base in the community should also be avoided. The organizer should convey the impression of being open, flexible and accommodating.

## **3) Developing a Community Profile**

A community profile is information about the community and its members. It is necessary to include a variety of information to provide a good description of the community. The knowledge should be acquired in partnership with the community. The knowledge should be acquired in partnership with the community members and its key persons.

The important components of a community profile are:

- i) Identification Data, including the name, geographical location, part of the administrative division etc.

- ii) Local History, including the genesis, changes in population/resources, important events etc.
- iii) Transportation and communication, including the spatial dimensions, nature of transportation and communication links with the community.
- iv) Population characteristics, including
  - a) Total approximate population
  - b) Distribution as per age, gender, caste, religious affiliation, regional background, languages spoken.
  - c) Educational background, in terms of average education level, position of women in terms of education, identification of disadvantaged groups with respect of education.
- v) Employment and Income Features, including sources/types of employment for the community/for women/for disadvantaged social groups; average family income.
- vi) Housing Pattern and Characteristics, including prevailing housing types, ownership dimensions, size of dwellings, layout and its basis.
- vii) Resources Available/Infrastructure, including
  - a) Health related infrastructure: nature and types of facilities available; analysis of accessibility, availability and affordability.
  - b) Educational facilities: types, capacity, management, availability of teachers, teacher-pupil ratio, gender division, etc.
  - c) Drinking water facilities and Electricity supply.
  - d) Issues related to sanitation.
  - e) Availability of financial institutions like banks, cooperatives, markets etc.

- f) Non-governmental organizations, like voluntary organizations, women's clubs, youth clubs etc.
  - g) Community recreation centres.
  - h) Agricultural and veterinary services.
  - i) Public Distribution System: Eligibility, process.
  - j) Governmental schemes/programmes
  - k) Places of worship
  - l) Other facilities like library, panchayat ghar, barat ghar/community hall, police station.
- viii) Major Problems in the Community, like
- a) Health related issues
  - b) Income/livelihood related issues
  - c) Education related concerns
  - d) Potential for inter-group tension
  - e) Other problems or issues with specification

#### 4) **Needs Assessment**

The community organizer has to assess and understand the needs and problems faced by the community people. The needs could range from:

- i) Basic needs such as housing, electricity supply, water supply, sanitation etc.
- ii) Economic needs such as need for employment, increase in agricultural productivity, procurement of credit etc.
- iii) Educational needs, such as needs for non formal education, remedial coaching, improvement in quality of education, available/infrastructure, need for vocational courses etc.
- iv) Health needs, such as need for health facilities/ staff.

- v) Recreational needs such as need for sports facilities, community centre, reading room, playground, park etc.
- vi) Information needs, with regard to available resource centres, services, schemes/programmes being implemented.

During needs assessment/problem identification, the following points should be kept in mind:

- a) It is important to differentiate between the 'felt' needs of the community people and the needs perceived by the community organizer. Often, the organizer presents his own appraisal of community needs and initiates action based on this appraisal. However, such action is neither relevant to the community nor is it sustainable, as it is not based on the real needs of the people.

The 'feeling about' is therefore the prime determinant of the importance of a need or a problem, and such needs are therefore referred to as 'felt' needs. It is only when the felt needs of the community are identified and form the basis of action, that the process is likely to be productive and sustainable from the perspective of the community.

- b) There is often a gap between expressed needs and actual needs of the community. People may express/ articulate the need for literacy, while their actual need may be stable livelihood options. This confusion often leads to the initiation of programmes which may not elicit people's long term participation.
- c) Many a times the community organiser assumes that a consciousness of the different needs/problems exists in the minds of the people. However, this may not be so. People often live with their unmet need/problems for so long that they learnt to accept them or adjust to them to such a degree that their

feelings about them lie deeply buried. In such cases, the community organizer is expected to facilitate the process of bringing these feelings to a conscious level. It is only when people explore and reveal their latent feelings that their genuine needs, concerns, hopes and expectations are identified.

- d) There may also be diversity in the concept of need. In such a context it becomes important to understand what people mean by a certain articulation of a need. For example, when people express the need for housing, what exactly do they mean? Do they want regularization of their land, or require low income dwellings or financial help for repairs/additions? Exploring the diverse expectations is important, as the programme has to cater to people's real aspirations.

**5) Ordering/Prioritizing Needs**

All the identified needs and problems of the community are first listed by the community with the help of the community organizer. This is a process which makes the people understand their own situation. This involvement of the community in listing their needs and problems will ultimately lead to their participation in the solving of the problems or fulfillment of the needs.

Further, amongst the host of needs and problems listed, all cannot be considered together for further action. They will have to be analysed for their magnitude, severity, symptoms and causes. Based on this they will have to be ordered and a priority will be given to them. It will be in this order/priority that they will have to be taken up for action.

**6) Problem Analysis and Redefinition**

The selected need/problem has to be examined, analysed and stated in order to be fully understood in its multiple

dimensions by the people. This step is also imperative in order to undertake purposeful planning and action.

Need/problem analysis involves (i) making a statement of the need or problem, in a way that it most clearly express the difficulty experienced by the affected people; (ii) identifying the direct causes and direct effects of the core problem/s; and (iii) stakeholder analysis.

The latter will involve the identification of the stakeholders who are affected by the problem; those who cause the problem; those who may contribute in dealing with the problem; and those who may resist/work against the proposed action. Thus, the need/problem has to be thoroughly analysed, redefined and clearly stated at this stage.

#### **7) Formulation of Achievable Objectives**

The redefined need/problem is converted into achievable objectives for further action. At times the objectives/goals will have to be split into many parts, so that they could be converted into specific programmes and activities oriented towards fulfilling the needs and solving problems.

Let us assume that low educational attainment of girls is a problem identified by the community. However, non availability of the school is not a reason for the same. It is analysed and found that parents do not send their girls to the community school. Again this arises not so much from the low priority accorded to girl's education at the level of the parents, as from the absence of female teachers in the school. When the cultural milieu of the community does not favour the teaching of girls by a male teacher, the root cause of the problem is the absence of female teachers, while the general problem externally appears to be a general low educational attainment by girls.

### **8) Development of Community Confidence and Willpower**

Many communities identify needs and problems which they feel incompetent to achieve or deal with. This is particularly true of those communities in which apathy, indifference, and complacency has set in. In such circumstances, identifying, analyzing and stating the needs/problems is of little use if the people do not find the will and confidence for action. Communities lacking these will find it difficult to mobilize for action.

Sometimes a crisis situation shakes them and mobilizes them for action. For example, a demolition of a slum cluster or the occurrence of a disaster or an accident in the community may spontaneously awaken the community and prepare it for purposeful action. However, often support has to come from an external agent, such as the community organizer whose stimulation, encouragement and support is essential to give them the confidence that “we can do it”.

### **9) Work Out the Alternatives**

Based on the objectives, different options are explored by the community through brain storming. In order to solve the selected problem the community has to generate a number of alternatives to address the problem. For example, the problem of a high drop out rate from the school in the community may be directly related to the defective functioning of the school. What are the different options open to tackle this problem? The concerned teachers can be met and advised. The defective functioning can be brought to the notice of the higher authorities in different ways. The higher authorities can be met by representatives or a signature campaign may be conducted or a protest march could be organized. There could be many such options which could be either exercised singly or in combination with others.

**10) Selection of an Appropriate Alternative**

Among the proposed alternatives, the best alternative or set of alternatives is selected for dealing with the selected problem. Often one starts with exercising a mild option, and gradually going on to other more strong measures. If nothing works out the use of the radical social action method also offers a possibility.

**11) Work Out a Plan of Action**

To meet the selected need or deal with the selected problem, an action plan is proposed in which responsibilities are assigned and a tentative organizational structure is prepared. The time frame, resources required and personnel involved are decided at this stage. Suppose the drop out problem considered earlier is to be tackled, it may be decided to first meet the school authorities and present a petition. This has to be planned in terms of date, time, who, how many, where, etc.

**12) Mobilisation of Resources**

To implement the proposed plan of action, requisite resources are to be assessed, identified and mobilized. These resources may be in the form of money, time, manpower and material. An estimate is made and the sources are identified for mobilization.

It is important to strike a balance between internal and external resources. The organizer must involve the community in identifying the potential sources (internal and external) from which to obtain resources. The internal resources of the community are of primary importance and they have to be tapped. The community can provide resources in the form of space, materials, money/service charges, manpower in the form of volunteers and its traditional/indigenous wisdom.

However, where necessary drawing upon resources from outside the community also becomes important. External resources may be in the form of funding, expert advice, technical assistance etc.

What is required in dealing with most community needs/problems is an awareness in the community about “what we can do for ourselves” and “where we need outside help”. To attempt to deal with the problems for which local resources are inadequate may simply cause frustration and a sense of failure in the community people in the long run. At the same time, too much reliance on external resources often leads to over dependency on outside help.

Communities like individuals seldom use their own resources to the full. In communities where the process of community organization is initiated and continued, people are often surprised at their resources and capacities to take part in community initiatives.

### **13) Implementation of Action**

Taking action is the most vital component of the community organization process. While implementing the plan of action, the active participation of people through acceptance of responsibilities has to be ensured. The people have to be prepared and guided to hold responsibilities and become partners in the problem solving process. There has to be a gradual taking over by the community and a simultaneous withdrawal of the agency/worker to facilitate sustainability of the process.

In the community organization process, it is this tangible practical action leading to some achievement, even partial, which ultimately tests and proves the validity of the process. If something is accomplished, the difficulties will be suffered, and a new satisfaction,

confidence and strengthened resolve will develop in the community participants.

#### 14) **Evaluation of Action**

The implemented plan is evaluated to assess the success and determine the limitations/constraints faced during implementation. Maintenance of accurate records of all work done and development of a framework for analysis are necessary pre-requisites for objective evaluation. The positive and desirable results need to be appreciated and the shortfalls/undesired results need to be identified, analyzed and discussed.

Evaluation can be undertaken either on a periodic basis or at the end of a phase or at the end of the programme/activity. Again, it can be either undertaken by the organizational personnel in collaboration with the community or by an outsider or an expert. It is desirable to have both types of evaluation, as community participation in evaluation leads to capacity building in community members. Moreover, it strengthens the feeling of responsibility and accountability in them.

Evaluation should be done with reference to possibilities for the future and should be perceived positively by all concerned.

#### 15) **Modification**

Based on the evaluation, necessary modifications are planned and incorporated. The learning derived through the evaluation process enables the community to identify the strong points and the weak points of its action plan. In order to enhance the effectiveness of the intervention and to bring about a permanent solution of the selected problem, modifications are imperative. These modifications facilitate a more effective response to the need/problem taken up for collective action.

**16) Development of Cooperative and Collaborative Attitudes**

While all the aforementioned stages are important and in fact inseparable, certainly none is more important than the final one viz. the development of cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices in the community.

What is implied here is that as the process of community organization evolves and progresses, people in the community come together to understand, accept and work with one another. In the process of fulfilling a common need or dealing with a common problem/s, the diverse sub groups and their leaders become aware and inclined towards cooperation with other sub groups in similar endeavors.

This process may not necessarily lead to the eradication of all differences between the subgroups and subcultures within the community or the achievement of complete homogeneity, but it often leads to an increased ability of the groups to understand this diversity and accept the same. They will be more inclined to develop the skills of overcoming the conflicts which may arise from time to time. At the same time it may also lead to the development of a common frame of reference within which all can work together for common ends.

Through this experience, the community will be in a better position to deal more readily and skillfully with similar problems which may arise in the future, by being able to recognize them earlier and by being better equipped to cope with them as they arise.

Thus, community organisation is not simply concerned with the development of a new community centre or a water system or a balwadi, but more important is the development of an enhanced capacity to undertake other

collaborative projects in the community. For many persons participating in the process it will be the accomplishment of the immediate objective which will be more important, but for the professional worker, it is the long term goal of development of the community's capacity to function as an integrated unit with respect to its needs, problems and common objectives. This goal will gradually come to be understood and cherished by the community too.

## **Models of Community Organisation**

### **What is a Model?**

A model can be understood as a medium through which a person looks at the complex realities. It serves as a reference for the work undertaken and gives a clearer understanding of what could be expected. A model can also be understood as a strategy or an approach for accomplishing a vision, and the appropriate steps to be followed to get there. Some models have evolved out of the specific ideologies of change, while some have arisen in response to certain concrete situations or experiences.

A number of persons have attempted to develop a classification of models of community organisation.

**A. Murray. G. Ross** (1955) preferred to use the term 'approach'. He identified three main approaches to community organization. These are:

- 1) The General Content Approach
- 2) The Specific Content Approach
- 3) The Process Approach

#### **1) The General Content Approach**

The focus of this approach is on the coordinated and orderly development of services in the community. This

approach incorporates two sub-approaches viz. (a) the strengthening of the existing services and (b) initiating new services. The general objective is effective planning and organization of a group of services in the community.

### **2) The Specific Content Approach**

This approach comes into operation when an individual organization or the community itself becomes concerned with some specific issue of concern or some requisite reforms, and consciously launches a programme to achieve the stipulated goal/s or objective/s. Thus, this approach involves specific issue oriented organization of services.

### **3) The Process Approach**

This approach does not focus so much on the 'content', as on the initiation and sustenance of a 'process' in which all the people of the community are involved, either directly or through their representatives. It involves identification of problem/s and taking purposeful action with regard to the same. The emphasis is more on building the capacity of the community for self-help initiatives and collaborative enterprise. Four factors are very important for this approach. These are (i) Self determination of the community; (ii) Indigenous plans; (iii) People's willingness to change; and (iv) Community pace.

**B)** In the year 1968, **Jack Rothman** introduced three models of community organization. These were:

- 1) Locality Development
- 2) Social Planning
- 3) Social Action

These three models construct were revised and refined by him in the year 2001 (Rothman, 2001), taking into account the changes in practices and conditions in

communities. Instead of referring to the three approaches as the 'Models', he preferred referring to them as the 'Core Modes of Community Intervention'. Moreover, these three approaches or modes are described as ideal-type constructs, which to a very large extent do not exist in pristine, full blown form in the real world, but are useful mental tools to describe and analyse reality.

According to Rothman, these three modes of intervention to purposive community change can be discerned in contemporary American communities and internationally. Community intervention is the general term used to cover the various forms of community level practice, and has been used instead of the term community organizing, as it has been found to be a useful overarching term to employ. The three modes of intervention are:

- a) Locality Development
- b) Social Planning/Policy
- c) Social Action

### **Mode A: Locality Development**

This approach presupposes that community change should be pursued through broad participation by a wide spectrum of people at the local community level in determining goals and taking civic action. It is a community building endeavour with a strong emphasis on the notions of mutuality, plurality, participation and autonomy. It fosters community building by promoting process goals: community competency (the ability to solve problems on a self help basis) and social integration (harmonious inter-relationships among different ethnic and social class groups). The approach is humanistic and strongly people-oriented, with the aim of "helping people to help themselves". Leadership

is drawn from within and direction and control are in the hands of the local people. “Enabling” techniques are emphasized.

Some examples of locality development include neighbourhood work programmes conducted by community based agencies, and village level work in community development programmes.

While locality development is based on highly respected ideals, it has been criticized by people like Khinduka, who characterize it as a “soft strategy” for achieving change. Its preoccupation with process can lead to a slow pace of progress and may divert attention from the important structural issues. Embracing consensus as a basic modus operandi, those who stand to lose from the proposed reforms may be in a position to veto effective action. Moreover, in contemporary context, locality is steadily losing its hold over people and powerful national, regional and global forces are influencing the patterns of life of people.

### **Mode B: Social Planning/Policy**

This approach emphasizes a technical process of problem solving regarding substantive social problems, such as housing, education, health, women’s development etc. This particular orientation to planning is data-driven and conceives of carefully calibrated change being rooted in social science thinking and empirical objectivity. The style is technocratic and rationality is a dominant ideal. Community participation is not a core ingredient and may vary from much to little depending on the problem and the circumstances. The approach presupposes that change in a complex modern environment requires expert planners who can gather and analyse quantitative data and manoeuvre large bureaucratic organizers in order to improve social conditions. There is heavy reliance on

needs assessment, decision analysis, evaluation research, and other sophisticated statistical tools.

By and large the concern here is with task goals: conceptualizing, selecting, arranging and delivering goods and services to people who need them. In addition fostering coordination among agencies, avoiding duplication and filling gaps in services are important concerns here.

Planning and policy are grouped together because both involve assembling and analyzing data for solving social problems.

Two important contemporary constraints impacting this mode, according to Rothman are: (1) Planning has become highly interactive and diverse interest groups rightfully go into the defining of goals and setting the community agenda. It involves value choices that go beyond the purview of the expert or bureaucrat; and (2) Impact of reduced governmental spending on social programmes, due to economic constraints, leading to a lower reliance on the elaborate, data driven planning approach.

### **Mode C: Social Action**

This approach presupposes the existence of an aggrieved or disadvantaged segment of the population that needs to be organized in order to make demands on the larger community for increased resources or equal treatment. This approach aims at making fundamental changes in the community, including the redistribution of power and resources and gaining access to decision making for marginal groups. Practitioners in the social action domain aim to empower and benefit the poor and the oppressed. The style is primarily one in which social justice is a dominant ideal (Karp, 1998).

Confrontational tactics like demonstrations, strikes, marches, boycotts and other disruptive or attention gaining moves have been emphasized, as disadvantaged groups frequently rely heavily on “people power”, which has the potential to pressure and disrupt’. Practitioners of this approach mobilize low power constituencies and equip them with skills to impact power. This approach has been used widely by AIDS activists, civil rights power groups, environmental protection organizations, feminist groups, labour unions and radical political action movements. Human service professionals have not been prominent in the social action area, but there has been participation on a small scale basis. Modest salaries, absence of professional expertise and need for long term commitment are important deterrents in this approach becoming more widely used.

### **Three Community Intervention Approaches**

(Rothman, 2001)

The aforementioned table lists a set of practice variables that help describe and compare each of the three modes of intervention. These include goal categories; assumptions; basic change strategy; change tactics; practitioner’s roles; orientation towards power structure; definition of beneficiary system; uses of empowerment etc. The three approaches differ in terms of most of these practice variables.

Rothman further points out that each community intervention mode is not as self contained and mutually exclusive as it appears to be. Actually intervention approaches overlap and may be used in mixed form in practice. (Rothman, 2001).

<b>Selected Practice Variables</b>	<b>Locality Development</b>	<b>Social Planning/ Policy</b>	<b>Social Action</b>
Goal categories of community action	Community capacity and integration; Self help (process goals)	Problem solving with regard to substantive community problems (task goals)	Shifting of power relationships and resources; basic institutional change (task or process goal)
Assumptions concerning community structure and problem conditions	Community lacks viable relationships and problem solving capacity	Substantive social problems exist like poverty housing, health etc.	Disadvantaged populations, social injustice, deprivation, inequality
Basic change strategy	Involving a broad cross section of people in determining and solving their own problems	Gathering data about problems and rational decision making enabling an effective course of action.	Crystallizing issues and mobilizing people to take action against enemy targets
Characteristic change tactics and techniques	Consensus; communications among community groups and interests; group discussion	Consensus or conflict	Conflict confrontation, direct action, negotiation
Practitioner roles	Enabled-catalyst coordinator, teacher of problem solving skills and ethical values	Fact gatherer and analyst, programme implementer, expediter	Activist advocate: agitator, broker, negotiator or, partisan

Medium of change	Guiding small, task oriented groups	Guiding formal organizations and treating data	Guiding mass organizations and political processes
Orientation toward power structure	Members of power structure as collaborators in a common venture	Power structure as employers and sponsors	Power structure as external target of action: oppressors to be coerced or overturned
Boundary definition of the beneficiary system	Total geographic community	Total community or community segment	Community segment
Conception of beneficiaries	Citizens	Consumers	Victims
Use of empowerment	Building the capacity of a community to make collaborative and informed decisions	Finding out from consumers about their needs for service; informing consumers about their service choices	Achieving power for the beneficiary system-the right and the means to impact community decisions; promoting a feeling of mastery by participants

**C.** Another categorization of models of practice quite similar to the one suggested by Rothman, has been given by **Siddiqui** (1997). This also comprises of three models which are outlined below:

- 1) Neighbourhood Development Model
- 2) System Change Model
- 3) Structural Change Model

1) **Neighbourhood Development Model**

The general assumption underlying this model is that people living in a community (neighbourhood) have the basic and inherent capacity of meeting their needs/problems through their own initiative and resources. The worker is expected to induce a process which will make the community realize this and consequently make efforts to achieve a greater degree of satisfaction for its members, individually and collectively. Recent changes in this model of community work lay more emphasis on the development of a self sustaining, indigenous organization within the community to take over this role from the worker or the agency as soon as possible. Thus, the role of the worker is seen as unleashing developmental energies within the community, rather than as a provider of services.

Contrary to its name, the model's application is not limited to generating services to cater to people's needs or improving the physical/resource infrastructure of the neighbourhood. The model can be employed to develop new ideas too. The emphasis is to encourage thinking on the part of people themselves, to adopt progressive attitudes, rather than doing things for them.

This model of effecting change has the limitation of being confined to the micro perspective only. It does not look at linkages of the micro with the macro realities, and

the impact of the latter on the community. However, inspite of this limitation, this model has continued to be practiced in India and other third world countries more commonly than the other models.

The experience of community work in India has shown that a complete withdrawal of workers/agency, even in the best planned neighbourhood model is not possible. A long term involvement of the social worker/agency due to the change process being a long drawn and gradual one is required.

The specific steps involved in this model are:

- 1) Identification, local and demarcation of the physical area
- 2) Entry into the community
- 3) Identifying the needs of different sections
- 4) Programme Planning
- 5) Resource Planning
- 6) Developing an organizational network in the community
- 7) Partial withdrawal within a time frame

## 2) **System Change Model**

This model presupposes the existence of various arrangements in society to cater to the basic needs of education, health, housing, employment etc. These are considered as independent systems, which in turn are comprised of sub systems. The ultimate rationale for the existence of these systems is social production and social consumption.

These systems can become dysfunctional due to a variety of factors, which in turn create strain and pressure on the system. The system may become dysfunctional either because what it is producing is not relevant for people,

or because many people do not have access to what is being produced, on account of disparities between different socio-economic or spatial segments of the population. Symptoms of this dysfunction appear within the community as a problem or a set of problems. For these to be tackled, first the system and its sub systems need to be understood in order to arrive at a useful framework for understanding what one finds at the grass roots level. Subsequently, the worker attempts a strategy of either restructuring or modifying the system. This is termed as a “system change” approach/model to community work.

The specific tasks associated with this model are:

- 1) Collecting relevant facts about the specific deficiencies in the system, e.g. urban bias; disparity in access to services; lack of trained functionaries, inadequate delivery structure; lack of funding etc. leading to inadequacy.
- 2) Sharing of the findings within the community/communities.
- 3) Selecting an appropriate strategy to influence decision making bodies or to focus attention on the issue.
- 4) Mobilising community and outside support to put the plan into action.
- 5) Developing an organization in the community and linking it to similar organizations in other communities and other agencies which can help them in demanding change.

### 3) **Structural Change Model**

This model visualizes the community as a small cell within the larger body of society. In other words, various tiny communities constitute the bigger whole i.e. the

society or a nation state. The model assumes that the manner in which the relationship between different sections of the population is structured, formally (constitutional framework, law, policies etc.) or informally (customs, public opinion etc.) determines the social rights of individuals. This also determines the relationship of the state vis-à-vis the individual or a community, as also the intra-community and inter community relations.

In the structural change model, the worker analyses the link between the macro structuring of social relationships and the micro-reality (the latter could be the problem of unemployment in the community, or lack of access of large sections of the people to education or health facilities or credit/other resources). The worker tries to mobilize the community to participate in the radical alteration of the macro structure so as to impact the micro reality.

This is a very complex task for the community worker as it calls for very different kinds of skills. It also requires the worker to possess an understanding of human society in all its dimensions: economic, political, social and cultural. It also calls for an understanding of the link between micro and macro realities.

A structural change model has to work out an alternative form of society, which will transform the existing conditions at the micro level of the community at hand. In other words, it would translate into the adoption of an alternative political ideology. The 'macro' does not often include only the policies of the nation state, but also factors and powers outside the nation state. For e.g. the influence wielded by the International Monetary Fund, World Bank and big powers on many third world countries, which impact the distribution of goods and services in the society. At times, therefore,

there is need to influence the larger world order, in order to be able to bring changes in either the nation state or a whole group of nations suffering from biased/skewed international policies.

Thus, the complex nature of the model, a lack of preparedness on the part of the worker, a feeling of lack of faith/relevance within the community, and the conflict such a model is likely to generate, make this by far the most difficult and rarely practiced model of community work.

The specific tasks involved in the model are:

- 1) To develop an understanding of the link between micro and macro social realities.
- 2) To make a conscious decision about an alternative political ideology.
- 3) To share this understanding with the community, to enable it to make its own decisions.
- 4) To help the community identify a plan of action to pursue its goal by locating specific issues and consequent action to launch a long struggle.
- 5) To help the community sustain its interest, enthusiasm and capacity to meet the strain which is likely to arise out of an inevitable conflict with the existing power structure.

This form of community work is therefore radical in its orientation. The achievement of any goal may be the objective; however, it is equally important that people gain in terms of greater self confidence, organizational and social skills and derive an understanding of the vital issues which concern them in society. In other words, the use of this model may be to sow the seeds for social change.

A type of community work which is distinct from the aforementioned three models, in terms of its scope is termed as the Inter-Community Model of Community Work (Siddiqui, 1997).

### **The Inter-Community Model of Community Work**

The scope of this model is wider than the neighbourhood model. There are certain problems/needs in the community which may not be tackled, either within the community or through community resources. For example, the problem of unemployment or lack of training facilities or health facilities cannot be tackled within a community. Low income levels and resource base of the community make it difficult to initiate and sustain a programme which aims to meet some such needs within the single community context. This calls for an inter-community approach.

The worker locates the programme in a place where people from different communities can come and participate. The worker visits various communities, to make people aware of the programme and motivates them to participate. A community nucleus is usually established, comprising of beneficiaries and other influential persons, to dispense information about the initiative. In such efforts, the representatives of the different communities participate in deciding the programme, its location and the mode of sharing resources and responsibilities for its management. This model can lead to the establishment of an organization or council to provide specific services in different communities.

The inter community work model is different from the neighbourhood model, as the scope of its coverage is wider. It differs from the other two models since its goal is to meet local needs, rather than change the system or structure.

## **Other Strategies and Approaches to Community Organising**

**A) Peter Dreiver** (1996), another writer has given a typology that confines itself to locality, but in the small community world he finds the same tripartite division by dimensions: social, political, and economic. Dreiver (1996) called his typology “Community Empowerment Strategies” and identified the following alternative directions:

1) **Community Organising:** Mobilising people to combat common problems and to increase their voice in institutions and decisions that affect their lives and communities (a direction with political emphasis).

2) **Community Based Development:** Neighbourhood based efforts to improve an area’s physical and financial condition such as new construction or rehabilitation of housing (a direction with economic emphasis).

3) **Community-Based Service Provision:** Involves neighbourhood-level efforts to deliver social services (e.g. child care vocational training, maternal and child health etc.) and is called “building human capital”. (a direction with social emphasis).

These are rather narrow directions that are insufficient by themselves. They depend on other organizations being around to take care of the distress not addressed by the single-dimension approach. For e.g. if we were dealing with a community organizing approach, then the neighbourhood would also need the community based development approach to work with economic distress and a service provided to handle social distress (Murphy and Cunningham, 2003).

**B) Robert Fisher** (1984) presented a much broader perspective of approaches. He identified “three dominant

approaches”, to neighbourhood organizing. These are as follows:

**1) Social Work Approach**

In this approach, the society is viewed as a social organism and all efforts are oriented towards building a sense of community. The community organizer plays the role of an enabler, an advocate, a planner and a coordinator, who helps the community to identify a problem in the neighbourhood, attempts to procure the requisite resources by gathering the existing social services and by lobbying with those in power to meet the needs of the neighbourhood. This approach is consensual and gradualist in nature. The goals was the Social Settlement Movement in the US and the War on Poverty Programme of the Johnson administration in the sixties.

**2) The Political Activist Approach**

This approach is characterized by militant confrontation and heavy pressure on the power institutions of society. Power sharing is a major goal. This method is based on advocacy, conflict and negotiation and is used by mass based organizations such as those initiated by Saul Alinsky, who is also considered to be the founder of this approach. The organizer is a mobiliser and leadership developer, and the problem condition is social and economic oppression arising out of powerlessness. The ultimate goal is the elimination of social, economic and political disparities (a direction with political emphasis).

**3) Neighbourhood Maintenance Approach**

This approach arose out of both the previous approaches, and is characterized by middle-class residents and their small business and institutional allies who seek to “defend” their community against change and perceived threats to property values. The “problem conditions may

include decline in municipal services, deterioration in neighbourhood sanitation, water supply, or increased crime. The organizer might be a volunteer community leader or a trained specialist in urban planning, community development etc. The method used may be peer group pressure may be a civic association/ neighbourhood association. In the initial phase, peer group pressure may be used to convince the officials to deliver services to the community, but later it could assume the form of the political activists approach as they realize that goals can only be achieved through confrontation.

**C) Saul Alinsky (1945)** one of the founders of modern neighbourhood organizing reflected deeper into the different approaches of community organizing. According to him social change and community organization could either be primarily reformist or revolutionary, depending on how fundamental the changes are, which are sought.

Organizations with a reformist stance primarily strive to modify or reform the system, trying to make it fall in line with the needs of the people. On the other hand, revolutionary organizations question core assumptions and propose radically different alternatives to the existing ones. For example, the latter would involve themselves in basic changes related to gender roles, or overthrow of casteism etc.

Saul Alinsky presented two distinct approaches or traditions to organizing. These are:

**1) The Social Mobilisation Tradition**

Here the core strategic goal is to get people to act together; to gain power through the numbers of people involved. This is based on the assumption that such pressure will make those in power comply with the demands that are made.

In this tradition, emphasis is on the mobilizing effort i.e. contacting people and encouraging them to become socially and politically active. Social mobilization tradition encourages people to petition vigorously; protest; demonstrate and not to fear direct action and confrontation. Social mobilization efforts are also labelled as “campaigns”, as they utilize collective power to create change. Moreover, the changes brought about through the campaigns are sometimes less important than the strength and unity that comes about through the mobilization, as mobilization in itself is empowering.

## **2) Social Production Tradition**

In this tradition, the strategic goal is to acquire services, material goods and resources for the people in need. The core emphasis is on achieving the outcome i.e. helping those in need with the problems they face. In order to achieve the core goal of acquiring goods/services for the target group/s or to attempt redistribution of resources/benefits, supporters of this tradition are more likely to work with those in power. People are encouraged to learn to participate in the political system and to manage relationships with agencies that provide services. The social production initiatives are usually labeled as “projects” as they are primarily endeavors to create services that benefit those in need.

Alinsky preferred to refer to “Community Organisation” as “Community Organising” with emphasis on power, pressure and high profile public actions. His favoured approach was confrontative and rested on displays of people’s strength through marches, parades, public hearings, disruptive boycotts, picketing and sit-downs. He created the “Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF)” comprising of organisers who carried his methods all over the U.S.

When Alinsky began his work, community organization was a social work approach, wedded to traditional forms of cooperation and consensus. However, throughout the 1950s, Alinsky trained residents into adopting the confrontationist mode to tackle the chronic impoverishment and joblessness. Many faculty and students of social work and neighbourhood groups began to accept power organizing.

Some 40 years later power tactics are still latent in most organizations, but are not so widely used as during the 1960s.

**D) Hanna and Robinson (1994)** also advocated the relevance of the transformative model, as opposed to the more traditional approaches. Like Alinsky, their typology also sprung out of the soul of the oppressed resident, and included the following three strategies:

1) **Traditional Politics**, which involves elite, non participative efforts that bend the status quo just enough to preserve it. It involves rational problem solving, but income, resource, and status gaps remain.

2) **Direct Action Community Organising**, which involves mass-based organizing, sometimes using confrontation. It is power oriented and aims to empower non elites to negotiate with the elites for a share in power.

3) **Transformative Social Change**, which involves small groups, intensive study and reflection, and people becoming acutely aware and knowledgeable about the oppressive forces. Emphasis is on self-directed learning and a fully collective approach to group awareness, decision making and social action, which liberates participants from the mind set of dependency and oppression.

Hanna and Robinson judged the first two strategies to be inadequate and favoured the transformative social change practice. They drew on the work of Friere (1972), author of “Pedagogy of the Oppressed” to recommend “liberating education” as an essential pre-action component of community change, which they called “overall transformation of a society”.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter we have discussed the different steps, models, strategies and approaches to community organization. While the steps in the community organization process include role searching, purposeful entry and assessment of ‘felt’ needs of the community as the initial few steps, it usually completes the cycle with capacity building and the building of collaborative and cooperative attitudes among community members.

A number of writers and practitioners of community organization have forwarded a number of models, approaches and strategies for community organising. Varying between the more conservative and traditional models based on consensus, and the more radical and transformative models and strategies, these provide us with alternative options of engaging the community system for collective action. Having understood and analysed these you will become more clear about the application of specific models/approaches in specific settings and contexts.

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## 10

# **Current Issues in Community Organisation and the Role of the Community Organiser**

*\*Neera Agnimitra*

### **Introduction**

A nexus of serious challenges faces community organizers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. While some of the issues like persistence of poverty are old, others such as globalization have emerged recently. The connections between the diverse problems are becoming increasingly complicated. In the contemporary context, community organizers must not only deal with problems related to poverty and marginalization but also tackle the effects of global economics on developing countries like our own. Globalization has increased deprivation and poverty world wide and is playing a primary role in shrinking the role and propensity of governments of developing countries to fund social programmes for their populations. In such a context, all social workers, and community organizers in particular, need to be better equipped to address conflicts within and across the diverse groups comprising Indian communities, so that they can focus on social and economic achievement for all groups that have been marginalized.

Contemporary communities are showing a decline in social relations, emotional bonds and sentimental ties that characterized the communities of yesteryears.

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Community consciousness and community spirit are showing a decline. The decrease in attachment to the geographical 'locality' or 'neighbourhood', arising on account of the enhanced mobility of the population is contributing to a decline in the sense of attachment, social ownership and public responsibility. Power politics is tending to permeate all aspects of community life and people are getting divided into different political groups and sub-groups. The joint family system is disintegrating, especially in urban communities and the tensions of daily living are leading to increased physical and mental stress. Communal disharmony, gender based inequality, factionalism, deprivation and impoverishment of the marginalized, and denial of human rights are some of the urgent issues challenging the practice of community organization today. This unit gives you a broad understanding of power and the impact of power dynamics on community life. It also explains the relevance of power in community organization. Besides, it also gives an insight into the other issues which are affecting community dynamics and community functioning like gender inequality, caste/class dynamics, factionalism and the resultant marginalization of the weaker sections. Additionally, a brief orientation to the major impact of globalization on communities and community organization is also being presented. The role of the community organizer, and the range of skills required to tackle the challenges of community work, are depicted in a separate section in this chapter.

### **Working With the Community Power Structure**

Power is the ability to influence others, their beliefs and behaviour. It is the ability to make things happen. It also implies political or social ascendancy or control.

Floyd Hunter explained the nature of power and power structure. Power appears in many forms and in a variety of combinations. It flows from many sources like money; votes; law; possession of information, expertise or skills; group support; links and contacts; charisma, social roles, access to rewards and resources; position, titles, ability to gratify important needs; monopoly of essential resources, alliances, conviction, courage etc. Power often accumulates in a person or a constituency and this is usually referred to as a power centre. Every society is characterized by a power structure. Power is not confined within a single or specific power centre. Every level or organization of society is characterized by the presence of some power. Even the so called 'powerless' persons and constituencies within society possess power, only it is latent and yet to be discovered and developed.

Generally speaking every community has a power structure which is specific to itself. It varies from one community to the other. Usually, some individuals or groups of people are at the top of the power pyramid and thus constitute the power centres. They wield influence on the community, drawing power from diverse sources. They may influence the community through formal and informal connections and also through subordinate leaders. With money being an important source of power, it is usually the rich and the affluent persons and groups who possess most power. In the Indian context, the possession of land as the most important economic resource also contributes to the accumulation of power in certain persons and groups.

In Indian communities a multiplicity of power sources exist. In other words, power is usually dispersed across many persons and groups. There is often a flexibility in the power structure that is noticed. The primary aim of some community groups is to gain or extend their power.

While those in power are concerned with maintaining or even enlarging their power base, those with relatively less power strive to bring about a redistribution of power and exerting an influence on the decisions taken by people in power. All community groups are likely to come up against, and have to reckon with the exercise of power in their locality.

The community organizer has to necessarily understand the power dynamics in the community. He has to understand who wields the power in the community and how do these persons/groups influence the action of others. These aspects need to be understood and analyzed by the organizer for the effective practice of community organization, and is known as community power structure analysis.

Indeed the community organizer can learn a great deal about community power by actually grappling with it in the pursuit of the goals of community practice. But action is likely to be more effective if it can be planned and organized in the light of some prior analysis of the local power distribution.

The perspective of the community as a centre for power and conflict places power and politics front and centre in our understanding of the community. It assumes that communities are composed of competing groups and power centres, which are constantly engaged in expanding their power base and control over scarce resources. Some groups, based on social class or caste have less access to power and must constantly challenge those with power to acquire access to community resources, such as education, employment opportunities, health care, housing, police protection etc. This ongoing tussle/conflict can produce significant pressure for change in the distribution of power and resources in the community.

The idea of class conflict has its origins in the work of the 19<sup>th</sup> century German economist and philosopher Karl Marx, who argued that society is divided into two groups—those who have access to wealth and power and who control the means of production, and those who have little or no power and are exploited by the small privileged group. Economic power and control over economic resources extends beyond the means of production into the realm of politics. Economic power is transformed into political power as the capitalist elite use their economic resources to dominate the political arena. This leads them to strengthen their position of power and to further subordinate the lower classes.

In any community, people with power make important community decisions and even control the implementation of such decisions. For e.g. the traditional leader or *pradhan* of a village is an important centre of power. He can influence the people to act or even not to act. If he exerts a positive influence on the community, positive and purposeful community change becomes possible. On the other hand, if he so desires, he can also be instrumental in stalling any intervention for desirable community change. Thus, community development is greatly influenced by the power structures of the community. People who are influential can mobilize the participation of a major segment of the community.

In the Indian context, the social structure becomes important to locate power centres and leaders in society. In rural India, power centres are found in various contexts, such as caste, lineage, and territorial groups. There are mainly two primary sources of power in the rural communities. First, are those who derive power from traditional sources like caste and kinship. As caste and kinship still form the core of village social organization, they go a long way in defining the power

structure and decision making process in rural India. The second category comprises of those who derive power by occupying positions in the organizations introduced in the context of developmental activities like panchayat sarpanch/members, functionaries of voluntary organizations/community based organizations, chairpersons of mahila mandals/nav yuvak mandals etc. In certain cases, some persons may acquire power due to their personal qualities and abilities, as also their commitment/past experience at handling or solving community problems.

Power is often dispersed and there are usually several power centres. Beginning with the joint family, the power and authority in the joint family centres around the senior male member of the family, who is considered as the head or 'karta' of the family. His authority is unquestionable and his decisions are binding on all members. Heads of large and important households enjoy a dominant position and exert great influence in community matters. The senior member of the lineage group (i.e. the kunba) also wields significant power and authority on account of his seniority and hereditary rights. He is the leader and the representative of the kunba, and solves the inter-kunba problems. He attends all village meetings and is the spokesperson for his kunba. His decisions are binding on the members/constituents of his group. The family, lineage and kinship groups merge into caste, which is all pervasive. The principle of seniority in age, inherited privileges and economic power determine the position of individuals or groups of individuals as caste leaders. The members of the dominant caste wield great power and influence in the village. The headman or the lambardar usually comes from the dominant caste.

The village temple and priest/maulvi also hold positions of power. They are not merely religious heads but are

also consulted on a number of other issues affecting the community, like settling disputes. Besides these sources of power, age is another factor which has considerable significance in determining village leadership. Seniority in age is respected and revered.

External sources of power and outside leaders derive power from their specialized knowledge, skills and ideas they bear. Besides, their position or designation may also facilitate them to acquire a position of power within the community. They may unwillingly compete with established leaders. They gain their position of power and prestige and influence established groups. They may also create new groups. School teachers, village health workers, doctors, heads of local NGOs and block officials comprise this category of leaders/power holders.

### **The Relevance of Power and Leadership in Community Organisation**

Development is influenced by the power structure of the community. People who are influential can mobilize a major segment of the community. There are two models of community power structure. These are the Stratification Model and the Pluralist Model. The Stratification Model suggests that social class principally determines the distribution of community power. According to this model, the power structure in the community is composed of the stable upper class elite whose interest and outlook on community affairs are relatively homogeneous. The Pluralist Model, rejects the idea that a small homogeneous group dominates community decision-making. It states that there are numerous small special interest groups that cut across class lines, which are represented in the community decision-making process/system. These are interest groups with overlapping memberships, and widely differing power bases. Community decisions are the

result of the interactions of these different interest groups. Their theoretical orientation can help the community organizer in his action.

The organizer has to identify the members of the power structure. He can rely on the Reputation Approach to locate the community elites. According to this approach, the basic procedure is to ask a group of informants who are knowledgeable about the community to list the people they believe to be most influential in the community affairs. There may be variations in this procedure with regard to how informants are selected, and how questions are put up. By tallying those people most frequently named as influential leaders, he can identify the core of the community power structure.

The Position approach is another method of locating the members of the power structure based on the assumption of the Stratification Model. This approach assumes that people holding the highest office in the community are at the top of the power structure. By scanning the executive lists of the important social, political and economic organizations in the community, one can compile a list of members occupying the power structure. This approach requires fewer efforts than the Reputation Approach.

Locating the power structure and the leaders, who may be both formal and informal and who can influence the thinking and behaviour of the community members thus assumes primary importance. These power holders are involved to induce peoples' participation in order to achieve the organizational objectives. If the existing power centres are not in line with the community organizational objectives, then a new centre of power is identified and developed to get peoples' commitment and participation, and thereby facilitate purposeful community change.

The community organizer must therefore concern himself with the identification of those leaders who will encourage the participation of the other members of their groups. Some specific advantages of working with leaders are: (1) Leaders contribute by bringing the different factions in closer contact with the larger community and thereby integrating groups into a more cohesive whole. (2) By working with the power centres and leaders of the different factions and groups, the organizer is indirectly able to work with the whole community. It is not possible for him to work with each and every member of the community. However, leaders being representatives of their respective groups facilitate participation from members of these groups. (3) Leaders can also be used as a leverage point for initiating a process of change, which may eventually spread throughout the whole system. (4) Leaders provide readymade communication channels to reach the community. If the organizer is able to reach the leaders, his message is sure to reach the people. (5) In a similar vein, leaders also provide ready made cooperative groups for self help projects and thereby obviate the greater amount of work that would be necessary in a less organized and more individualistic type of society. If the leaders are convinced about the desirability and utility of a proposed community initiative, then they can be instrumental in influencing/convincing the members of their group, thereby rendering the task of the organizer much simpler than it would otherwise be. Thus, leadership from within the community can facilitate mobilization, organization and participation of the community in community initiatives and is therefore the key to enlisting peoples participation.

However, it is important to identify and include the 'real' leaders, who are accepted and respected by the community. Often, the organizer makes the mistake to

assume that the pradhan or other prominent figures holding important offices are the leaders, but in reality they may just be nominal leaders. There may be other informal leaders who may be the 'real' leaders in the sense of being in a better position to exert a positive influence on the community people. It also needs to be remembered that in Indian communities, power and leadership is not confined to one person or source. It is often dispersed and therefore there are several persons whose involvement may be necessary to secure the effective participation of the community as a whole. The fact that leadership is spread out rather than concentrated is an advantage to the organisers, as he/she is bound to come in close contact with at least some of them. Moreover, there is greater likelihood of finding some leaders who may be progressive and sympathetic to the new programmes/initiatives.

### **Gender Sensitive Community Organization Practice**

The Oxford dictionary defines gender as sexual classification i.e. the classification of persons into males and females. But gender is not merely a biological attribute. It is created by society and is thus socially defined. The social system in India, and in fact the world over has evolved its own set of rules which have led to socio cultural differences between men and women. These in turn are responsible for discrimination and subjugation of the female sex in society.

The gender system gives different values to men and women. Society is organized around specific parameters, the functionality of which is ensured by developing a set of systems and institutions. The system of patriarchy provides basis to male -female differentiation and the unfavourable conditions that girls and women face. The

practice of male female differentiation is created and fostered by the adoption of differential norms, codes of conduct, life styles and discriminatory practices for males and females. The biological differences between males and females are extended to become the criteria for the economic and social positioning of the two sexes.

Allocation of differential roles in a certain manner is a core aspect of the gender system. Roles are allocated not only in accordance with the biological function of procreation, but are misappropriated according to the values prescribed to males and females. Patriarchy prescribes 'dominating and controlling' social functions to males, while 'supportive' functions are in the domain of females. Right from birth, males are attributed to be superior, as they are the inheritors of resources, and the carriers of the family name and lineage. The function of the main earner is also attributed to the male, scaling his position of importance. The females are expected to be the 'family caretakers' and perform secondary functions of child nurturing and running the households.

Along with role allocation, certain norms, beliefs, values, as well as practices reinforce this male female hierarchy. Males therefore procure access to economic resources like land and property, inheritance, education, skills, productive employment and the associated high status. On the other hand, women are deprived of all such privileges, including nutrition, medical care, education, skill development and opportunities for productive employment. Multiple social handicaps and atrocities keep them in a position of subjugation. The declining sex ratio and increasing incidence of female foeticide and infanticide are grim reminders of this unfortunate reality. The practice of male-female differentiation results in deprivation and oppression for the female at all stages and in all spheres of life.

Community organization and community development, if they are to be consistent with the social justice perspective must take into account the fundamental nature of gender discrimination and oppression. The community organization initiatives must ensure that they do not reinforce the different forms of structural oppression, against women, and preferably counter them in whatever way or ways are appropriate within the specific context.

This requires the community organizer to be aware of the complex, subtle and pervasive ways in which gender subjugation/oppression operate, through the media, the education system, organizational structures, etc. It also requires them to be critically aware of their own backgrounds and sexist attitudes (if such exist).

Community development structures and processes can easily reinforce the dominant structures of oppression. For e.g. inviting male members for meetings, or calling for meetings during a time which is unsuitable for females or calling 'mixed' meetings in a context where the cultural context restricts female participation in the presence of men, or nominating male members for all important positions or including male beneficiaries in the programme can easily minimize female participation in the initiative. An unthinking or uncritical approach reinforces rather than challenges structural disadvantages based on gender. More positively, community organization should ideally address issues of gender. While there is oppression or disadvantage, a community will not reach its full potential, and the goals of social justice will not be achieved. Strategies specifically designed to overcome such disadvantage, and based on affirmative action, equal opportunity, consciousness raising, education and sensitization of the male members will need to be purposefully employed.

## **Community Practice with the Marginalised Groups**

Apart from gender, caste and class dimensions also act to reinforce inequality in society. Caste and class are both status groups, which implies an association of individuals who enjoy a distinctive style of life and a certain consciousness related to the group to which they belong. While caste groups are hereditary groups with fixed status, classes are defined in terms of the relations of production. The members of a class have a similar socio-economic status in relation to other classes in the society, while the members of a caste have either a high or a low social status in relationship to other castes.

### **Caste**

Caste is understood to be both a structural and cultural phenomenon. As a unit, it can be defined as a 'closed rank status group', that is, a group in which the status of the members, their occupation, the field of mate selection and interaction with others are all fixed. As a system, it refers to interrelated status and patterned interaction among castes characterized by an aggregation of restrictions like restrictions on change of membership, occupational mobility, marriage and communal relations. In understanding caste as a system, there is a pre-supposition that no caste can exist in isolation and that each caste is closely linked with the other castes in a network of economic, political and social relationships. As a cultural phenomenon, caste may be viewed as a specific set of values, beliefs and practices.

### **Class**

A social class is "one of two or more broad groups of individuals who are ranked by the members of the

community in socially superior and inferior positions” (Ginsberg, Morris, 1961). Thus, the social class is characterized by (a) a feeling of equality in relation to members of one’s own class; (b) a consciousness that one’s mode of behaviour will be in harmony with the behaviour of those with similar standards of life; (c) a choice of occupations within a limited range; (d) a feeling of inferiority in relation to those who stand above in the social ranking; and (e) a feeling a superiority in relation to those falling below in the social hierarchy.

**The axis of inequality of caste, class, and gender results in marginalizing large sections of the population.** Not only does it restrict the mobility of these sections, it leads to the practice of untouchability, bondage, oppression and the prevalence of social evils like dowry system, purdah system, female foeticide, child marriage etc. Thus, these three principal forms of structural disadvantage namely caste, class and gender can be considered to be fundamental, in that they are all pervasive and identifiable in most, if not all social issues, social problems, and inequities. For this reason, the victims of caste, class and gender oppression must come first in any consideration of the disadvantaged in modern society. Included among the victims of class oppression must be the poor and the unemployed, as it is their relationship to the means of production which has resulted in their disadvantage. These forms of oppression and marginalization obviously interact and reinforce each other, thus to be a dalit woman in poverty is to be trebly disadvantaged.

There are other groups which can also be regarded as disadvantaged and marginalized, while not necessarily being the victims of the primary structural disadvantage. They include the aged, the disabled (physically and intellectually), the tribals and the indigenous people.

### **The Notion of Empowerment**

The notion of empowerment is itself a complex one and is central to a social justice strategy. It is central to community work and many community organizers choose to define their role in terms of an empowerment process. Simply stated, **empowerment aims to increase the power of the disadvantaged**. It involves giving power to individuals or groups, allowing them to take power into their own hands and redistributing power from the 'haves' to the 'have nots'. (Ife, 1995)

As we have already seen, power is a complex and contested notion, thus giving us different perspectives of empowerment.

The pluralistic perspective visualizes empowerment as a process of helping the disadvantaged groups and individuals to compete more effectively with other interests, by helping them to learn and use skills in lobbying, using the media, engaging in political action, understanding how to 'work the system', and so on. The work of Saul Alinsky in empowering the black communities in the USA was based on the pluralistic perspective. Alinsky, one of the most influential figures in community work did not aim to change the American political system, but simply aimed to teach the disadvantaged group how to work more effectively within that system and to become more skilled in competing with other groups for power through social action, political pressure, covert threats, publicity, etc.

The elite perspective to power and empowerment requires not only learning the ability to compete for political power and learning political skills, it also entails focus on the power elites. The latter is achieved either by joining them to change or influence them (wherein the activist joins the group to change its policy or have some involvement in, and influence over, local decisions),

or to seek alliances with powerful elites (e.g. by enlisting the help of the legal profession in pursuing issues of human rights or anti-discrimination legislation and practices) or by seeking to reduce the power of the power centres through more fundamental change (for e.g. limiting power by legal challenge).

The structural perspective views the empowerment agenda as much more challenging, as it can only effectively be achieved if the forms of structural disadvantages can be challenged and overcome. Empowerment is therefore considered to necessarily be a part of a wider programme of social change, with a view to dismantling the dominant structures of oppression. Thus, a broad based agenda specifically addressing the issues of class, gender and caste becomes imperative.

The post-structural perspective visualizes empowerment as a process of challenging and changing discourse. It differs from the other three perspective in that its strategy for empowerment is primarily intellectual rather than activist; it emphasizes understanding, analysis, deconstruction, and education rather than action.

From the point of view of a community organizer, there is some value in each of the aforementioned perspectives. The specific choice of a particular perspective or the option of intermixing more than one perspective to define one's strategy will have to be made by the community organizer based on the specific context and the ideological base of the organization to which he/she belongs. However, important and rich insights can be obtained from a broad understanding of the different perspectives to empowerment.

There still remains the important question as to what sort of power is involved in the term 'empowerment', i.e. what kind of power is it that we as community organizers

wish to enhance? While this is primarily a value question, we can identify certain parameters of power, as they obtain in community based empowerment strategies. Jim Ife (1995) identifies seven main categories of power. These are:

**1) Power over personal choices and life chances**

Many disadvantaged groups have little power to determine the course of their lives and make decisions about their lifestyle and occupation. This may arise out of consequences of poverty, patriarchal structures and values, caste based restrictions or oppression against indigenous people and minorities. Cultural norms and values can also restrict people's options. An empowerment strategy will therefore seek to maximize people's choices, to increase their power over decisions involving their lives.

**2) Power over the definition of need**

'Dictatorship over needs' implying that needs often tend to be determined and defined not by the person who is experiencing them but by others (the state, professionals etc.). This is disempowering, and an empowerment perspective would require that people be given the power of defining and prioritizing their own needs. This may require education and access to information.

**3) Power over ideas**

Empowerment should necessarily entail the power to think autonomously, and not have one's world view dictated by force or by being denied access to alternative frames of reference. It should legitimize the expression of these ideas in a public forum and the capacity of people to enter into dialogue with each other. This approach emphasises the educational aspect of empowerment.

**4) Power over institutions**

A good deal of disempowerment comes from the effect of social institutions, such as the education system, the health system, the family, etc. An empowerment strategy should therefore aim to increase people's power over these institutions and by changing these institutions to make them more accessible, responsive and accountable to all the people.

**5) Power over resources**

Many people have little access to resources and little discretion over how these resources will be utilized. This applies to both economic and non-economic resources such as education, opportunities for personal growth, recreation, health etc. An empowerment strategy to maximize the effective power of all people over the distribution and use of resources and to redress the inequality of access to resources is necessary.

**6) Power over economic activity**

The basic mechanisms of production, distribution and exchange are vital in any society, and to have power, one must be able to have some control over and access to, these mechanisms. This power is unequally distributed, and is a cause of significant disempowerment. An empowerment process would, therefore, seek to ensure that power over economic activity be more evenly distributed.

**7) Power over reproduction**

Control over the process of reproduction has been a significant issue for feminist critique. It not only includes the process of birth, but also child rearing, education and socialization: all the mechanisms by which the social, economic and political order is reproduced in succeeding generations.

## **Achieving Empowerment**

The various strategies which can be adopted by the community organizer to achieve the empowerment of the marginalized and disadvantaged groups can be broadly classified under the following headings:

### **1) Policy and Planning**

Empowerment through policy and planning is achieved by developing or changing structures and institutions to bring about more equitable access to resources, services and opportunities to participate in the life of the community. Apart from facilitating people to use existing policy provisions, programmes and services, through widespread awareness generation, and helping in setting up of appropriate mechanisms for redressal of problems pertaining to lack of access, the community organizers can focus on pressing for more progressive policies of affirmative action or positive discrimination to redress the existing disadvantages faced by the specific groups.

### **2) Social and Political Action**

This approach emphasises the importance of political struggle and change in increasing effective power. It emphasises the activist approach and seeks to enable people to increase their power through some form of direct action.

### **3) Education and Consciousness Raising**

Empowerment through this approach emphasises the importance of an educative process adopted to equip people to increase their power. This incorporates notions of consciousness raising: helping people to understand the society and the structures of oppression and giving them the vocabulary and skills to work towards effective change. These forms of empowerment provide the basis for an empowerment model of community work practice.

## **Globalization and its Impact on Community Practice**

The advent of economic globalization has led to a transformation of the environment of community practice, in both industrialized and developing countries. While the implications for both the block of countries are distinct, certain fundamental changes are common to both sets. Globalization has fundamentally changed the relationship between the market and the state, with serious consequences for low income people and low power constituencies. The growing dominance of market mechanisms has affected policy making at the national and local levels in ways community organizers are just beginning to understand. The spread of privatization and the concentration of transnational corporate power, as also the influence of such organizations as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) is impacting the local, national and regional frameworks. The emergence of the well integrated global market is leading to a number of changes including the shift of manufacturing and service industries to those areas of the world which have the cheapest labour and least restrictive regulations; the increasing use of technology; the need for fewer workers with high skills; a decline in the gender distinction of work with its resultant impact on family and work relations, and a widening gap in income, wealth, education, skills and status between different groups. Many of the changes that underlie globalization are particularly damaging to the poor nations and to the low-income or disadvantaged communities.

Governments of poor nations like India have been forced to divert human resources and funds away from the more urgent development priorities, such as education, public health, and the social service sector. The choice

of the development strategy is increasingly being influenced by the powerful nations and international organizations and is therefore moving away from public debate. Removal of subsidies in agriculture, removal of import restrictions, dilution of the Public Distribution System, unrestricted entry of foreign MNCs into the country, acceptance of intellectual property rights and many such changes are already having serious implications on both rural and urban communities. While on the one hand, the public sector is forced to effect funding cuts on social programmes, the private sector is quite naturally concerned with lowering the costs of production, especially wages and benefits. All this will ultimately result in the destabilization of long standing institutions and communities, particularly in the subsistence model economies like India. Globalization is also leading to environmental degradation and commercialization of the natural resources, which often form the basis of livelihood sustenance for the poor and marginalised communities.

In such a context, community organizers have to reassess their strategies and approaches in order to effectively respond to the consequences of economic globalization. They need to recognize that previous strategies, which viewed communities and nations in isolation from the international environment are no longer adequate. Community organizers will need a strong international knowledge base and the ability to analyse the complexity of local and global situations. They will have to create new approaches to respond to the growing gaps in employment, income and wealth. The focus of community practice at the local level will have to shift to take into account the changing priorities of national policies and their consequences. In the context of the withdrawal of state welfare intervention, a larger role will have to be played by the non-profit

organizations in resolving community problems. Community based planning will increasingly become the responsibility of local NGOs, self help groups and volunteers. The organizers will have to facilitate the creation of alternative economic and political institutions at the local level, such as cooperatives and peoples' organizations, and focus on how communities can become self sufficient centres of alternative, life sustaining culture through grassroots empowerment. (Weil, 2005) There will have to be a renewed emphasis on building social capital at the community level and on developing innovative models of fund raising and resource mobilization. Skills in facilitation of groups and organizations as the key to enlarging the focus of coalitions to represent communities to respond to their problems will need to be developed and utilized. Their skills as advocates and facilitators to prepare groups, communities and organizations to participate in social action and social movements will also need to be mobilized.

Thus, community organizers will have to assume responsibility to influence the direction of major economic and political trends by combining long standing principles of self determination, social justice, and democratic participation with updated skills and knowledge that reflect new social and technological realities. As the South African proverb states "we will learn the road by walking".

### **Roles of Community Organiser**

The community organizer having the essential characteristics and skills as also knowledge about the principles, process and steps of community organization, will be in a position to apply the same in the community setting through the assumption of appropriate roles.

The diverse roles of a community organizer are discussed here. These roles are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive.

**1) Guide**

The primary role of the community organizer is that of a guide who helps the community to discover the ways and means of achieving its own goals. As a guide, he helps the community to move effectively in the direction which it sets for itself. While the organizer has some responsibility to help the community choose this direction wisely, based on the many factors which may operate in the given context, the choice of direction and method of movement must ultimately be that of the community. Thus, he is not a person to shoulder the responsibility or solve problems of the people. Instead, he provides the various options or avenues, and shows different ways of dealing with the community problem/s. As a guide, he is required to provide the much needed information and ideas which the community may initially lack. For example, in a community facing the problem of unemployment, he should be able to provide information about the various employment schemes, options for self employment, the terms, conditions and sources of availing credit, and other relevant information to those seeking employment. The ultimate choice and means of deriving employment/income generation rests with the community.

In a situation where the community organizer perceives the need and relevance of a particular project for community development, he may stimulate a need with respect to this project. He may encourage discussion on the project and may suggest the advantages of action on the same. But his role as a guide does not permit him the liberty of launching action on this project unless the community is ready and is desirous for such common action.

## **2) Communicator**

The community organizer transfers or transmits information and knowledge to the community. Often community members demonstrate an ignorance of information and ideas. Sharing of information enables the community to use this information to meet its needs or resolve its problems. Thus, the organizer being an essential link between the community and the outside world is expected to play the role of an effective communicator. The communication between him and the community may be handled through diverse forums, including individual contacts, group meetings, group discussions, public meetings, written material etc.

The community organizer can also rely on the use of different techniques like skits, role plays, street theatre, and audio-visual shows to disseminate the requisite information. A greater reliance on the locally accepted and indigenous channels of communication is desirable, as it leads to more effective communication. Local leaders, and local groups like women's groups, youth groups, children's clubs etc. are some such options. The ability of the community organizer to play this role effectively will, to a very large extent, determine the quality and the intensity of the community organization process.

## **3) Enabler**

The community organizer plays the role of an enabler by facilitating the community organization process. As mentioned earlier, he is not expected to carry out the work by himself but is expected to enable the community to plan and execute work related to achievement of its needs/problems autonomously. It is through the performance of this particular role that the community organizer is able to facilitate a process of capacity building and empowerment of the community.

Within the ambit of his role as an enabler, the community organizer enables by first awakening and focussing discontent about some community condition/s, followed by facilitating members to verbalise their discontent. Thereafter, he helps them to see the commonality of their feelings and nourishes the hope that something can be collectively done about the same. He further enables the community to organize to act. The role of the enabler requires judgment about how much of encouragement can be given, how much anxiety relieved, how much support provided at different stages so that the community is able to move at a comfortable pace and with sufficient self confidence. Enabling the community to maintain good interpersonal relations, cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices, and to deal with inter-group tensions, conflicts and other blocks also fall in the domain of the community organizer.

#### 4) **Expert**

As an expert, the organizer's role is to provide information, knowledge and advice in a number of areas about which he has specialized expertise. Often, the organizer has to provide research data, technical experience, and resource material, advice on methods which the community may need and require in the process of achieving its goals.

The organiser may serve as an "expert" in community diagnosis and analysis and may help the community to understand its own structure, dynamics, potentialities and constraints. He is expected to be skilled in research methods, able to conduct studies and formulate research policy. He may also have expert knowledge of organization and procedure. He should also be well informed and able to provide information about programmes, policies, legislation as also resources

provided by government departments, private agencies, international organizations, and ways of securing the same. He should be able to facilitate the bridging of gaps between community's needs and available resources.

The worker as an expert does not superimpose or insist on the acceptance of his "expert knowledge". This is only offered for consideration and discussion, to be used as effectively as the community is able to adopt it.

#### 5) **Counsellor**

The community organizer initiates work by developing an intensive understanding of the community. Often he is expected to enable the community to understand itself in terms of its multiple dimensions. It may entail diagnosis and treatment of the community as a whole. He may help the community to face its underlying forces and attitudes which may be creating tension and conflict among the groups in the community. Further, after enabling the community to recognize these deep rooted ideas and practices, verbalise about them, and begin to cope with them, the community is helped to develop a capacity to function more effectively as an integrated unit. Thus, as a counselor and social therapist, the organizer deals with the deep-lying and often latent forces which threaten to disrupt the community organization process.

#### 6) **Animator**

In the process of community organization, the organizer encourages and provides direction to the community to carry out collective, self help initiatives. In developing societies like India, people are often victims of a chronic 'dependency syndrome' and therefore fail to spontaneously mobilize of action or even take crucial decisions on their own. In such a context, the organizer as an animator helps the people to come forward and

participate in all phases of the process, from planning to evaluation. By raising suitable questions/issues, he assists in conscientising the community and stimulating people to overcome their attitudes and blocks to participation.

**7) Collaborator**

The community organizer collaborates with his colleagues, co-professionals and other organizations working in the community. In contemporary context, the importance of maintaining collaborative partnerships with other organizations is well recognized. In the situation where there are also other organizations working towards similar problems, a collaborative effort is not only more desirable but also more productive and feasible. Therefore, the community organizer is expected to network with such other organizations to establish effective linkages and collaborations.

**8) Consultant**

The community organizer enjoys the trust and confidence of the people and is often relied upon to advise them about matters of vital importance to them. His expertise and experience is relied upon by the people, who often seek his guidance and expert advice. As a consultant, he makes himself available to people, who are in need of his inputs. He is also able to furnish his expertise to community groups and community organizations.

**9) Model**

The community organizer is often perceived as a role model and a source of inspiration by the people. He needs to be conscious of the influence that he is able to exert on the community. His behaviour and approach are often emulated by the people who look up to him for his knowledge, skills and expertise. He also sets innovative models of working on community issues

which could be replicated in other communities facing similar circumstances/problems. By proper planning in approaching a problem and executing the plan and documenting the whole process will be of great help to others. The problem solving process sets a model for others to follow.

10) **Innovator**

The community organizer innovates, performs and constantly strives to improve upon the techniques through the process of community organization. This gives a lead to the people of the community and enables them to try out new ways and means to find solutions to their needs and problems. Community organization is not merely for solving problems, but the broader goals of capacity building of individuals, groups and the community as a whole have to be meaningfully achieved. Innovative ways of improving the capacity of the people, introducing new and more effective ways of community building, as also reviving the traditional and indigenous systems from within the community form an integral part of the role expected from the organizer.

11) **Motivator**

The community organizer stimulates and sustains active interest among the people for reaching a solution to their needs and problems. The community organizer encourages the community to take up a minor task and complete it successfully. This in turn enables the people to take up more difficult tasks. In such a process, the people at times may not take any initiative or may be content to live with the existing situation. In such a context, the organizer motivates the people by making them observe, analyse, understand and respond to the situation. When people are discouraged, because they are not able to achieve what they wanted or there is resistance and opposition, in such situations the

organizer plays the role of a motivator to help them continue efforts inspite of difficulties.

**12) Catalyst**

In the process of community organization, the community organizer enables the people to become empowered by gaining accessibility and control over resources and acquiring skills in decision making. He/she accelerates the actions and reactions of people so that they are able to achieve the desired results. As a catalyst, the organiser is able to increase the response level of the people. The catalyst role further enables the people to become independent and become better equipped in responding to their own needs and problems.

**13) Advocate**

The role of the advocate is to represent or persuade the members of the community and prepare them to represent their issues to the concerned authorities in order to bring about an effective solution to their unmet needs. The advocacy role is an important one in the present context of community work. The needs and problems of the people have to be presented at appropriate forums and the required support and networking obtained in order to increase the pressure on the oppressive forces. In the role performance of the advocate, the community organizer champions the rights of community groups. He/she speaks on behalf of the community to gain access to services or to improve the quality of services provided. Thus, as an advocate, the community organizer argues, debates, bargains, negotiates, and confronts the forces working against the interest of the community.

**14) Facilitator**

The community organiser helps the community to articulate its needs, clarify and identify its problems,

explore appropriate strategies, select and apply intervention strategies, and develop people's capacities to deal with their own problems more effectively. A facilitator provides support, encouragement, and suggestions to the community so that people may proceed more easily and skillfully in completing tasks or solving problems. A facilitator assists the community in finding coping strategies, strengths and resources to produce changes necessary for realizing goals and objectives. A facilitator helps client systems to alter their environment in the desired direction.

15) **Mediator**

The community organizer intervenes in disputes between parties to help them find compromises, reconcile differences, or reach mutually satisfying agreements. The mediator takes a neutral stance between the involved parties. A mediator is involved in resolving disputes between members or between the community and other persons in the broader environment.

16) **Educator**

The community organizer as an educator conveys information to the community and those in the broader environment. The organizer provides information necessary for coping with problem situations, assists the community in practicing new behaviour patterns or skills, and teaches through presentation of role models. The community organizer makes available information necessary for decision making.

Community organization is a macro method in social work. The community organizer, with the required qualities and skills will be able to work with the people. While working with people of different backgrounds or from different geographical settings, the different roles can be applied. All the roles need not be, or cannot be,

applied in all the settings or in dealing with all the problems. Moreover, there is no one role which is superior or inferior and while dealing with any problem the organizer has to play more than one role. Therefore, depending upon the situation and the needs and problems of the community appropriate roles have to be performed.

### **Skills in Community Work**

Community organization, like any other method, or intervention strategy of working with people, requires specific skills. These skills help the worker in carrying out specific tasks with precision and with minimum effort. "Skill" means the worker's capacity to apply knowledge and understanding to a given situation (Trecker, 1948). However, to identify the different types of skills needed for community work practice is difficult for a variety of reasons. Firstly, as is evident from the discussion on models, the scope of community work is vast. Secondly, working with a community entails working with groups and individuals. And lastly, there is no consensus on what constitutes "skill" (Siddiqui, 1987) in social work literature. A closer analysis of the attempts made so far to identify helping skills reveals that usually the author tries to conceptualize the various steps in the helping process, and accordingly identifies skills around these steps.

McMohan (1996) has identified the following skills for social workers and refers to them as the 'Foundation Skills for Social Work'. These hold relevance for the practice of community organization:

**I) Relationship skills**

Listening	Responding
Feeling/sensing	Paraphrasing
Clarifying	Information giving
Referring	

**II) Problem solving skills**

Problem identifying	Data Collecting
Assessing/goal setting	Planning/task defining
Selecting and implementing intervention	Evaluating
Terminating	

**III) Political skills**

Advocating	Taking legal action
Providing evidence	Bargaining
Organizing	Publicizing
Demonstrating	

**IV) Professional Skills**

Recording	Research
Time-management	Teamwork

Rivera & Erlich (1995) have identified some skills along with values and attitudes, the community organizer is expected to possess:

- 1) Similar cultural and racial identification.
- 2) Familiarity with customs and traditions, social networks, and values.
- 3) An intimate knowledge of language and subgroup slang.
- 4) Leadership styles and development.

- 5) An analytical framework for political and economic analysis.
- 6) Knowledge of past organizing strategies, their strengths, and limitations.
- 7) Skills in conscientization and empowerment.
- 8) Skills in assessing community psychology.
- 9) Knowledge of organizational behaviour and decision-making.
- 10) Skills in evaluative and participatory research.
- 11) Skills in programme planning and development and administration.
- 12) An awareness of self and personal strengths and limitations.

**Siddiqui** (1997) categorized skills in the following eleven categories:

- i) Skills in Rapport Building
- ii) Skills in Identification of Needs
- iii) Skills in Resource Mobilization
- iv) Skills in Programme Planning
- v) Skills in Programme Management
- vi) Skills in Evaluation
- vii) Skills in Recording
- viii) Skills in Encouraging Community Participation
- ix) Skills in Working with the Group
- x) Skills in Working with Individuals
- xi) Skills in mobilizing Community Action

**I) Skills in Rapport Building Include:**

- a) Skill in developing professional relationships with the community

- b) Skill in developing rapport with funding organizations
- c) Skill in developing relationship with colleagues

**II) Skills in Identification of Needs include:**

- a) Skill in identifying the needs of different communities
- b) Skill in classifying needs and fixing priorities
- c) Skill in helping people arrive at a consensus about the community needs

**III) Skills in resource mobilization include:**

- a) Skill in identifying sources which can be harnessed for resources
- b) Skill in preparing a project proposal
- c) Skill in locating indigenous resources

**IV) Skills in Programme Planning include:**

- a) Skill in developing a programme in accordance with the needs of the community
- b) Skill in keeping the programme in harmony with the cultural needs and traditional practices of the community.
- c) Skill in achieving self sustainability with minimum resources

**V) Skills in Programme Management include:**

- a) Skill in developing a blueprint for a division of roles
- b) Skill in finding the right person for the job
- c) Skill in developing an adequate system of monitoring and supervision

**VI) Skills in Evaluation include:**

- a) Skill in identifying a specific set of indicators
- b) Skill in data collection
- c) Skill in analysis of the data

**VII) Skills in Recording include:**

- a) Skill in process recording
- b) Skill in maintaining proper records
- c) Skill in keeping personal records

**viii) Skills in encouraging community participation include:**

- a) Skill in identifying ways to involve people in decision-making at every stage in community work
- b) Skill in developing suitable structures to institutionalize peoples participation
- c) Skill in a gradual transfer of programme management to people to achieve self sustainability of the programme

**IX) Skills in working with groups include:**

- a) Skill in analyzing the group situation
- b) Skill in dealing with group feelings
- c) Skill in developing inter-group relationship

**X) Skills in working with individuals include:**

- a) Skill in identifying and accepting individual cases
- b) Skill in assessing the problem
- c) Skill in using referral

**XI) Skills in mobilizing community action include:**

- a) Skill in identifying a suitable issue
- b) Skill in using multiple strategies
- c) Skill in using the mass media

**Weil** (2005) has identified the following range of specialized skills relevant to community practice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century:

**Practice Skills**

- Policy practice
- Lobbying
- Advocacy
- Programme design, implementation and management
- Financial management
- Management
- Organizing
- Non-profit development
- Social marketing
- Fund raising
- Facilitation
- Citizen participation
- Leadership development
- Volunteer management
- Proposal development
- Contract management
- Human resources management
- Grassroots planning
- Sectorial planning
- Cross-sector planning
- Campaigns
- Public education
- Contest skills

Confrontation tactics  
Negotiating  
Mediation  
Position-taking and writing  
Group and intergroup development  
Economic and social development  
Social planning  
Political and social action  
Coalition/network development

**Research Skills**

Program evaluation  
Participatory research  
Use of administrative data  
GIS  
MIS  
Community assessments  
Community mapping and asset mapping  
Neighborhood analysis  
Policy and poverty research  
Cost benefit/cost-effectiveness analyses  
Community analysis  
Empowerment research  
Action research  
Statistics  
Use of social indicators

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, you have gained an understanding of some of the important contemporary issues in community organization. The concept and dimensions of power, and its relevance to community organization have been discussed. Besides, the prevailing notions of empowerment and how they contribute to defining more broad based and specific strategies to combat inequality stemming out of caste, class and gender have also been analysed in this chapter. The chapter has also provided you with an insight to gender sensitive community organization practice and the scope of community practice with marginalized groups.

Another important component highlighted in this unit is the impact of globalization on contemporary community practice and the role that community organizers can play in the prevailing context. Lastly, the unit has focused on the wide range of skills and competencies required by community organizers to perform their challenging roles effectively.

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# 11

## **Social Action: Concept and Application**

*\*Archana Kaushik*

### **Introduction**

Social Action has been used to signify a wide range of primarily voluntary initiative to bring out change in social systems, processes and even structure. Social workers, more often than not, have divergent opinion about the scope and relevance of social action. This ambiguity has even accelerated the debate whether to recognize social action as a method of professional social work.

It may be reiterated that in professional social work, six methods of working with people have been identified — casework, group work and community organization are the primary methods while social action, social work research and social welfare administration are the auxiliary or secondary methods. You may recall that differential social situations led to emergence of case work and group work in the western countries, while social action was more popular in countries like India.

As trained social workers, our aim is to help distressed people remove their problems and resolve conflicts. Whatever method, we opt to use in a social situation, we seek to improve the barriers and divisions between people, promote the bonds that cement social relationships and ensure well-being. At times, skewed

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power equations and resource accumulation in the hands of a few create hurdles in the way of ensuring well-being of the disadvantaged clients. And no option is left for social workers but to come in conflict with the current configuration of inequality and diswelfare. Through social action, we, the social workers address the basic issues causing inequalities and injustice within the social system and structure that push a particular population group on marginalization.

Social Action is one of the most controversial methods of social work practice that has brought about a lot of debate among the social work practitioners as it addresses and uses the conflict present in social system to realize the goal of social justice and empowerment. Social workers advocate for the rights of the marginalized sections of the society. They may have to employ strategies like hunger strike, sit-ins, protests and such other ways to demonstrate their discontent. It is the usage of such strategies that have made social action a debatable issue and a controversial method of social work.

There are situations in the social environment that precipitate inequality and injustice, adding to the vulnerabilities and impoverishment, hardship and misery to certain sections of society, which, even after much of efforts, are not resolved amicably — such circumstances call for social action. It is a method of social work by which rights and interests of marginalized people are protected by coming in conflict with systems and structures that perpetuate accumulation of resources and power to disburse those resources in the hands of a few who are insensitive to the needs of weaker sections of society. Through social action, skewed resources and power are redistributed to uplift the disadvantaged groups in the society. Added to this, scope of social action is also to build a democratic and just,

transparent and harmonious social structure and efforts are directed towards achieving these objectives too.

In this chapter, the meaning, process, relevance and scope of social action would be covered at length. You may realize that social action is one of the most applicable and appropriate methods in the India's context. *Narmada Bachao Andolan* and movement that led to realization of Right to Information Act, are some of the finest examples to show how pertinent social action is in the contemporary social environment. Let us look into the concept of social action in detail.

## **Social Action: Concept and Related Terms**

The term **Social Action** is being used to depict a spectrum of voluntary action or initiatives that aim to address relevant social, political, economic, ecological and ethical issues in the country. In the last few decades, the term has become increasingly ambivalent and ambiguous with interplay of varying meanings and contexts. A wide range of activities like; charity, relief work, service delivery, public policy initiatives, advocacy campaigns, social movements, socio-political mobilization, networking for desired social change have been clubbed under the gamut of the term – social action. In a layman's understanding, social action would cover whole rubric of activities directed towards desired social change for the benefit of masses. Varying meanings emerging out of different types and contexts of problems and their interventions makes social action a complex and yet dynamic concept.

In the Indian context, social reform movement and following movement for political freedom and the tradition of Gandhian approach to social work and social action have played a crucial role in shaping the

perspective of social action meant for the upliftment of downtrodden. Social action is taken as a transformational practice to meet the objective of promoting well-being by bringing change in the arrangements in social system that lead to inequality and injustice, preventing people from realizing their full potential as self-determining agents. Likewise, from Gandhian perspective, social action as a practice covers varying degrees of samrachana (reconstruction) and sangharsh (struggle).

Let us understand the concept of social action through some of the definitions in the social work literature.

Mary Richmond, for the first time, in 1922, made use of the term social action in social work. She has defined social action as “mass betterment through propaganda and social legislation”. This definition stresses on improving the condition of huge sections of population as an aim of social action with propaganda and social legislations as main strategies.

**Lee (1937)** stated, “social action seems to suggest efforts directed towards changes in law or social structure or towards the initiation of new movements for the modification of the current social practices”. Planned social change seems to be the aim of social action as per this definition.

**Coyle (1937)** noted, “social action is the attempt to change the social environment in ways, which will make life more satisfactory. It aims to affect not individuals but social institutions, laws, customs, communities”. This definition stresses on collectivistic approach of social action rather than individualistic.

**Fitch (1940)** maintained that social action is legally permissible action by a group (or by an individual trying to promote group action) for the purpose of furthering

objectives that are both legal and socially desirable. This definition focuses on inclusion of those strategies that are legally permissible in the process of social action.

**Further, Sydney Maslin (1947)** presented limited scope of social action by regarding it as a process of social work mainly concerned with securing legislation to meet mass problems. This definition confines the scope of social action in securing social legislations.

**Hill (1951)** described social action as “organized group effort to solve mass social problems or to further socially desirable objectives by attempting to influence basic social and economic conditions or practices”. Here, influencing basic social and economic conditions has been highlighted as the function of social action.

**Wickendon (1956)** applied the term social action to that aspect of organized social welfare actively directed towards shaping, modifying or maintaining the social institution and policies that collectively constitute the social environment. Desirable change in social structure is the key element in this definition.

**Similarly, Solender (1957)** maintained that social action in the field of social work is a process of individual, group or inter-group endeavour, within the context of social work philosophy, knowledge and skill. Its objective is to enhance the welfare of society through modifying social policy and the functioning of social structure, working to obtain new progress and services.

**Likewise, Baldwin (1966)** defined social action as “an organized effort to change social and economic institutions as distinguished from social work or social service, the fields of which do not characteristically cover essential changes in established institutions. Social action covers movements of political reforms, industrial

democracy, social legislation, racial and social justice, religious freedom and civic liberty, its techniques include propaganda, research and lobbying". This is a comprehensive definition of social action, noting its uniqueness in relation to other social work methods, strategies and techniques being used and dimensions covered.

**Friedlander (1977)** stated that 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. Modifying social policies and improving legislations are significant aspects of this definition.

All these definitions give different viewpoints of social action and yet share many common features. To some, its scope is broad while others limit its relevance and significance in their definitions. Similarly, differential opinions are expressed regarding the usage of strategies and tactics of social action. Let us look at some more definitions of social action, especially those by Indian social work authors.

**Nanawati (1965)** considered social action as "a process of bringing about the desired changes by deliberate group and community efforts. Social action does not end with the enactment and signing of social legislation, but that the execution of the policies was the real test of success or failure of social action". This definition focuses on long term impact of social action as indicator of its success.

**Moorthy (1966)** stated that "the scope of social action includes work during catastrophic situations such as fires, floods, epidemics, famines, etc., besides securing social legislation". Work during calamities and disasters have been highlighted in this definition.

The Institute of Gandhian Studies defines social action as the term commonly applied to “social welfare activity, which is directed towards shaping or modifying social institutions and policies that constitute the social environment in which we live.”

**Singh (1986)** maintained that “social action is a process in which conscious, systematic and organized efforts are made by some elite(s) and/or people themselves to bring about change in the system which is instrumental in solving problems and improving conditions which limit the social functioning of weaker and vulnerable sections. It is, on the practical plane, nearer to social reform than to social revolution, which aims at smashing the entire existing social structure and to build up a new social set-up. It is conflictual in nature but at the same time non-violent”. This broad definition covers many shades of social action - clarifying the process, goal, target groups, nature, resemblance with social reform and ethical base of non-violence.

Thus, we observe that social action is considered a method of social work practice that aims at bringing about structural changes in the social and economic systems largely through social legislation and alterations in social policy. Disadvantaged section is the target population and mass mobilization is crucial, yet, target group may or may not actively participate in the planned intervention. It is planned and conscious effort with specific strategies and techniques to be implemented to achieve the goals of equality, social justice and empowerment.

Now, attention may be diverted to some of the social interventions and processes that share similar aims and objectives as social action. One such term is **Advocacy**. A Latin word, advocacy means — raising voice on behalf of others [ad- on behalf of others and

voca-raising voice]. It is an activity that influences, motivates and encourages democratic powers to take decisions on various social issues and problems in favour of downtrodden and marginalized population. Advocacy may be defined as the process of influencing and persuading those people who have social, political and economic powers so that they can bring desired changes in the policies with the aim to ensure equitable resource distribution in the social system.

Advocacy, in its aim and even usage of strategies is very similar to social action. They share same values and ethics as their belief in equitable distribution of resources, human rights and social justice. In fact, many of the social workers consider advocacy as one of the strategies of social action, the latter being broader and more complex.

Another term that shares similarity with social action is **Social Movement**. Wilkinson (1971) defined social movement as “a deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution or withdrawal into ‘utopian’ community”. In another definition, Blumer (1957) says, “social movements are collective enterprises to establish a new order of life”. Peasant movement, tribal movement, dalit movement, women’s movement, students’ movement, etc., are a few examples of social movement. The downtrodden and the marginalized communities have mobilized themselves and raised their voice against the failure of state and society to safeguard their livelihood and Rights. Social action and social movement share same ideological beliefs and values, but social movements have been, more often than not, unplanned and sporadic while social action is a well-defined process initiated and guided by social work professionals in the light of theoretical and conceptual

basis. However, you may recall that Narmada Bachao Movement is led by a social work professional, Ms. Medha Patekar.

Social action is taken as an auxiliary method of professional social work. It is an organized effort to change or improve social and economic institutions. Some of the social problems like dowry system, depletion of natural resources, alcoholism, housing, health, etc., can be and have been tackled through social action. The objective of social action is the proper shaping and development of socio-cultural environment in which a richer and fuller life may be possible for all the citizens. From the above discussion, certain peculiar features of social action may well be delineated. It is essentially, an intervention directed for solution of mass problem(s) and aimed at improvement of mass conditions. It talks about influencing institutions, policies and practices. The goal of social action is redistribution of power, resources, human and material. It aims to do advocacy on behalf of, or along with, mobilized sections of disadvantaged client population. It tends to influence the decision-making process at the political and social levels.

Thus, we see that social action is seen as a method of professional social work to be used to bring about or prevent change in the social system through a process of making people aware of the socio-political and economic realities that influence or condition their lives and by mobilizing them to organize themselves for bringing about the desired results through the use of appropriately worked out strategies, with the exception of violence. Let us take a look at the historical processes related to emergence of social action as method of professional social work practice.

## **History of Social Action**

India has a long tradition and history of reform movements, voluntary actions and philanthropic initiatives with the aim to seek welfare of masses, which you have read in your other blocks covering history and philosophy of social work. This must have given you an idea that in the light of social situations, that were mainly social problems affecting the masses, reform movements took place in India. Even during Bhakti movement, Kabir, Nanak, and other religious reformers in their preaching addressed the removal or abolition of social evils in the name of traditional practices that were creating hurdles in the well-being of common people.

It may be noted that in the West, problems were mainly psychosocial in nature, more focused to individual behaviour and social interactions. This resulted in development of methods of social work practice like casework and group work, which was further substantiated with Freudian psychoanalytical theories and Erickson's psychosocial theories that were developed during that period only.

In India, problems were of different nature — illiteracy, poverty, exploitation of lower caste people, untouchability, abuse and exploitation of women and inherent practices of gender discrimination and the like. These social evils prevented a large section of the society from getting equitable distribution of resources and opportunities for development and thereby enjoying a dignified life. Social reform movement led by Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Iswarchandar Vidhyasagar resulted in abolition of sati pratha, measures for permitting widow remarriage among Hindus, entry of women in the formal education system and so on. Dwarkanath Tagore, Debendranath Tagore, Keshab Chandra Sen and others

worked for founding educational institutions for women and emancipation of women in West Bengal. In western part of the country like Maharashtra, Prarthana Samaj established in 1867 in Bombay clamoured for caste reform. Justice Ranade considered the Father of the Renaissance in Western India, founded Widow Marriage Association. Similarly, Jyotiba Phule established orphanages and schools for girls. In the same way, Ramakrishana Mission founded by Swami Vivekananda did a lot of social service like starting dispensaries and orphanages, running schools, etc.

All these initiatives set the stage for more concrete form of social action. Certain benefits of these social reform movements were passage of social legislations like abolition of sati custom, widow remarriage Act, mobilization of masses and awareness about social evils. Further, historical evidences reflect that though there have been history of social reform and social movements for more than two thousand years in India, a more formalized and coherent form of social action emerged in the beginning of the nineteenth century. This formalized social action which emerged as a political response to the colonial state by the British in India. As the social base for political freedom broadened, the dividing line between social movement for abolition of social evils in the country and political movement as freedom struggle almost disappeared. Movements led by socially enlightened individuals, particularly, in the last half of the nineteenth century, helped in creating social and political spaces for social action.

Freedom movement, especially led by Mahatma Gandhi laid foundation of a strong culture of social action. It may be noted that the legacy of the Gandhian social action has played a crucial role in laying the foundation of social action in India. Gandhian social action includes a combination of samrachana (that is, reconstruction)

and satyagraha (insistence on truth). He practiced and preached for imbibing values of non-violence, stressed on ideas of swadeshi (of one's own country) and swaraj (self-rule). Gandhian ideology of peaceful protest in the freedom struggle has made the whole world bow down in front of his ideology, conviction and belief. Alongside, he also stressed on reconstruction — The Tolstoy farm was set up by Gandhi, with the funding support of his German friend Kallenbach, Sir Ratan Tata, Nizam of Hyderabad, Indian National Congress and Muslim League. These led to formation of various kinds of institutions to strengthen social action.

Further, Gandhian activism to protect the rights of peasants in Champaran and Kheda and the rights of mill workers in Ahmedabad demonstrated the effectiveness of micro-level social action in influencing the larger political arenas and action. The Gandhian praxis of grassroots political struggle along with macro-level policy initiatives and broader interventions for social reform further set the guidelines for social action. The ideas of satyagrah and swadeshi served both as ethical principles as well as political strategies. The cumulative social action at the socio-political arena helped in the emergence of a more radical stream in the freedom movement in the first decades of the twentieth century. Inspired by Gandhiji, the political movement, infused with the spirit of social reform, became a national movement participated by all, irrespective of caste, creed or community.

After 1920, for about three decades, many other instances of social action emerged at the center-stage. Prominent ones are communist movements, Dalit movement initiated by Dr. Ambedkar, the Hindutva movement propounded by Hindu Mahasabha and Rashtriya Swayam Sevak Sangh. In consonance, the social reform movement against the hegemonical

Brahmanism, led by Mahatma Phule in Maharashtra, Narayana Guru in Kerala and Periyar Ramaswamy Naykkar in Tamil Nadu were other important social justice initiatives. The reformist initiatives for the welfare and equality of women by Pandita Ramabai and Savitribai Phule also played significant role in the endeavours of political freedom. Likewise, Ramakrishna Mission initiated a number of charitable, reformist, educational, welfare and development activities.

All these small scale and large, regional and national level social action initiatives propagated mass mobilization, mass awareness and action, provided ample opportunity to practice skills, techniques of social action, encouraged leadership among few and ability to question surroundings among the masses that hamper their social functioning. This in turn, strengthened the historical background of social action in India and courage and confidence to fight for freedom against colonialism.

After Independence, many young idealists expressed their dissent to the apathy of the state and to the cynical manipulation by the dominant political parties. Social action by JaiPrakash Narayan, social movement led by Medha Patekar, Aruna Roy and Arvind Kejriwal's initiatives for Right to Information Act and many more are some fine examples of relatively recent social action interventions.

**Worldwide trend:** Likewise, the world history is also full of examples of social action that were expressed in the form of Civil Rights Movement, Student Unrest in the USA against the Vietnam War, the revolt in Prague against the authoritarian State, the Naxalite movement in India and the neo-left movements in different parts of the world. Many of these movements were a reaction to an increasingly authoritarian and oppressive state

and associated insensitive socio-political processes. Emergence of Liberation theology was an expression of dissent to the oppressive power structures of the state. Feminist movement sought to question the structure of patriarchy. The two aspects common in various kinds of movement were the sense of dissent (to traditional state, power structures, culture and ideologies) and a mass mobilization to bring about change in the existing structure and system. These social movements, reform initiatives and social action activities formed the background for social action as a method of social work practice.

### **Scope and Relevance of Social Action**

Being one of the methods of professional social work, social action, undoubtedly shares a striking similarity with the former term. As the approach of social work practice has shifted from charity to empowerment, the scope of social work has expanded enormously. With emergence of rights based approach, relevance of social work practice has become almost omnipresent. Ensuring rights of the child would mean that we have to tackle problems like child labour, processes causing street children, education of children (drop out, retention, quality of education), discrimination against girl child in family and community, child trafficking and child prostitution, poverty, malnutrition, health problems, disability among children, delinquency, child abuse, exploitation, and the like. This would also include provision of optimum opportunity to all the children for growth, development and participation. The social work professionals may have to work at preventive, rehabilitative, ameliorative, curative and promotive levels. Further, if the causative factors are looked into and social work professionals decide not to opt for softer approaches, then dealing with most of the above-

mentioned problems would require practice of social action. For instance, abolition of child labour would demand policy and legislation initiatives at the macro-level along with mass mobilization that would discourage remunerative child work in all forms.

The scope of social action is very vast and it is one of the most apt methods of social work practice even in today's context. The innovative approaches, participatory techniques, outreach, and holistic thinking are critically important in creating a better world, which is indeed the vision of social work profession. In fact, it is due to social action by some of the socially enlightened people and voluntary sector, that various basic Rights- the Right to Health, the Right to Water and Food, the Right to Shelter and Work, the Right to Knowledge, the Right to a Dignified and Just life, the Right to one's Entitlements, etc., have been put on the table. Recently, the successes made in terms of legislation like as Right To Information Act and National Rural Employment Guarantee Act are because of concerted efforts and constant pressure exerted on the government by civil society organizations.

Apparently, you may think that if government of our country that has committed itself to be welfare-state, takes adequate measures for the welfare and development of the weaker section of the society, then, what is the scope left for social action. Hypothetically you may be right but despite the pro-active face of the government, socio-demographic indicators give us a dismal picture of the country. Nearly 40 percent of the country's population is living below poverty line. Poverty levels continue to be high even though every year newer schemes and approaches for poverty alleviation are designed and implemented. Even after nearly 60 years of Independence, there are places like Kalahandi where still people die of hunger. At many places like in Orissa, people sell off their offspring for 10-20 rupees because

of poverty. Crores and crores of rupees are allocated for combating poverty, and statistics reflect that numbers of people below poverty line are increasing every year.

Further, Female literacy rate in the country is still nearly 50%. According to one estimate, close to 50% of students in the age group of 6-11 years are not able to read, write and do simple arithmetic. Similarly with respect to health, the situation is very bleak if not worse — 80% people opt for private health care system when need arises as government health care system lags behind both in quality and quantity. It is estimated that about 3% of the population are pushed below poverty line every year because of health expenditure. Social security system in the country lags behind even those nations that are economically quite poor off compared to us.

Nonetheless, taking the broader and optimistic view of India's fast progress and booming economy would not let us (the social work professionals) to pay attention to problems like poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, gender discrimination, female foeticide, child labour, accessibility and affordability of adequate health care system, provision of social security system and so on and so forth. Social action is meant to bring about necessary changes in the policy and legislation for well-being of disadvantaged sections of society. Further, if policies and social legislations are in place, then focus should be shifted to implementation stage. Social workers may have to deal with problems like corruption, red-tapism, insincerity, lack of accountability and transparency that hamper formation of egalitarian social structure. Thus, despite innumerable schemes and programmes, policies and legislations, if things at grassroots are not right, then, social action may be carried out to set the systems right, which indeed is the need of the hour in the present Indian context. It

may be affirmed again that there is a need to bring out necessary changes in the system — fixing people who are not performing their duties sincerely, people who are corrupt and eat up money meant for the welfare of the poor, politicians involved in various scams — all these situations call for social action as milder approaches would not work in such cases.

There have been innumerable instances of successful work accomplishments through social action. Trainee students of social work during their fieldwork have demonstrated excellent use of social action in various situations — in urban resettlement colonies, students have taken up issues like preparation of ration cards for poor, improving bad roads, unhygienic and unsanitary conditions prevailing in the surroundings, non-availability of teachers in government run schools, and the like. They mobilized community people and confronted the responsible authorities like Municipal Corporations, Public Works Department, local MLAs/MPs of the area and other elected leaders, created pressures through signature campaigns, sit-ins, hunger strikes, morchas, involved media to create pressure and have got the work done.

Thus, social action is a powerful tool that becomes much more effective if the primary stakeholders (beneficiaries) are mobilized to create the pressure. Now-a-days, even media is playing a vital and pro-active role — justice in Jussica Lal Murder case, Priadarshini Mattoo case were resolved after media's social action. Even Indian cinema has projected potential of social action in excellent manner through movies like Lage Raho Munna Bhai, Rang De Basanti that have triggered successful social action and advocacy in different parts of the country. In this and other units of the block, you would come across many examples of social action that have been carried out in recent past in various parts of the country that

would again project the scope of relevance of this method of social work.

### **Social Action: Some Reflections**

In spite of being a very powerful tool of social change, social action, for decades together, has not been able to attain adequate attention in social work teachings as well as practice. It is only in mid-1970s that social work educators began to visualize social action as an important instrument in social development. As the empowerment approach gained momentum, the relevance of social action increased further. There was a paradigm shift in the way planning and implementation of socially relevant projects and programmes were taken up. Initially social planners and policy makers planned for the people at grassroots 'assuming' their problems and needs (Trickle down theory). Then, gradually there was shift in the focus and primary beneficiaries are now involved in the process of planning and implementation which is bottom up approach. With 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments people at grassroots are enabled to take active part in social auditing through gram sabha and ensure accountability, transparency and judicious use of their resources. Though many evaluation studies have shown that panchayati raj system is a paper tiger, it may be visualized as a solid system, at least anatomically, that needs social action intervention and people's active participation may be sought to make the system function effectively.

The radical social work approach could not gain ground strongly, despite a rich historical and cultural background because of several reasons. One, fieldwork training, in majority of educational institutions, is not designed in such a way that trainee students spend

substantial time in the community and develop a rapport strong enough to mobilize resources. Such restrictions often drive students not to take up hardcore issues. Therefore, skills needed for social action are not inculcated adequately among the trainees. Second, many of the voluntary agencies have to depend for funds either on government or international agencies. They were coming in conflict with the system that comprise of government control. International agencies or foreign funding too have their own guidelines and they may not fund for the hard pressing issues requiring social action. Third, social work professionals may not feel motivated enough to contribute required time and energy resources in the community, which may not be part of their job (employment). Voluntarism has its own limitations, which is, at times, internally driven. Lastly, social action is very difficult, requiring proficiency in communication, analysis of social situation, perseverance, ability to mobilize people, adequate usage of strategies like signature campaign, sit-ins, hunger strike, persuasive skills, which is not everyone's cup of tea. Medha Patekar, during her Narmada Bachao Andolan, was often threatened for life. Resisting such crisis is not easy for most of the social work professionals.

In most of the Third World countries, welfaristic approach dominates due to charity and religious obligations being the starting point of social work. In that context, adopting an empowerment perspective, largely through consensus, is not an easy task. Facilitating increased access for maximum number of people to the essential social service needed for their development, obviously, would call for social action as a primary method of social work. Unfortunately enough literature is not developed on social action. The use of the process of social action requires far greater clarity on the part of trained social workers of its goals and objectives, conceptual

framework, ideological and belief system. There is a need to build up a new theoretical discourse and perspective on social action, based on a fresh look at the various social action practices and institutionalization process, in the context of the paradigm shift in the production of knowledge, communication and political process.

Thus, we can consider social action as the most 'controversial' and yet the most challenging method of social work profession. The process of social action is often moulded by the larger socio-political contexts and cultural ethos. Social action encompasses both moral and political undercurrents. Unfortunately, social work practice in India has not depicted any significant changes in the social structure or in major problems like poverty, child labour, women exploitation, illiteracy, unemployment, etc., and to a large extent, social work professionals have confined themselves to service delivery roles. Becoming a change agent was taken up by a handful of social work professionals.

One of the interesting facts that you may realize is that while there is no dearth of interventions through social action in the country, before or after independence, often, change agents have been the non-social workers. Stated otherwise, social action was done by various people in many parts of the country and most of them never had social work background, understanding of theoretical frameworks and professional skills and expertise. It just required commitment, understanding of the issue at hand and conviction and courage. In the next unit, you would be able to understand various facets of social action in a better way when we will deal with principles, values and ethical considerations in social action as a method of social work.

## **Conclusion**

Social action is one of the very challenging and powerful methods of social work practice. It is used for mobilizing masses in order to bring about structural changes in the social system or to prevent negative changes. It is based on human rights perspective and adopts the process of empowerment through redistributive justice. Certain social problems like poverty, exploitation, abuse, stigmatization, ecological issues, bonded labour, child labour, women empowerment, substance abuse, etc., can be tackled through social action. The main objective of social action is to bring solution of mass problems, improve in mass conditions and redistribution of power, resources (human, material and moral). Other similar terms like advocacy and social movement were also mentioned. We discussed the historical evolution of social action tracing bhakti movement, social reform movements and political struggle led by Gandhiji. Gandhian ideology plays a crucial role in social action.

While discussing scope and relevance of social action, we explored that majority of developmental issues in the contemporary world may be resolved through social action. If we want to have long term solutions and believe in human rights and empowerment perspective, then social action becomes apt for us.

Certain problems were also discussed in the light of the fact that social action, though relevant, is not very popular. Constraints in social work training, our personal value system, dependence on the state machinery (who may be the perpetrator of injustice) are some of the issues that create hurdles in the usage of social action as a method of social work practice.

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## **Integrated Approach to Social Work and Social Action**

*\*Archana Kaushik*

### **Introduction**

Social work is an evolving discipline where interventions are geared up towards initiating, exploring, retaining and modifying the ways and means by which persons, individually and/or collectively are helped in resolving disruptions in their social functioning. Like other disciplines touching social life of human beings, social work too needs to design and re-design conceptual frameworks, theories and models related to interventions. As social situations change, the outlook to analyze and measure various social situations should also change. Theories and concepts guiding us through our social interventions also need to be revised, updated, improved and evolved. It is in this context, that Integrated Approach to Social Work was developed that would provide you a comprehensive framework of social intervention based on system's theory, fitting in most of the social situations requiring planned, guided social change.

Pincus and Minahan have given this framework with a view that social work interventions are not unilateral and 'people's participation' is needed in almost all situations. In this approach, social worker enters into a system, thereby consciously altering its previous state

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and balance as a means of attaining explicit goals. The underlying assumption in developing the unitary method or integrated approach to social work intervention was that regardless of the many forms social work practice can take, there is a common core of concepts, skills, tasks and activities which are essential to the practice of social work and represent a base from which the practitioner can build. The traditional social work theories and methods have been woven around dichotomous terms (person and environment, clinical practice or social action, micro-system and/or macro-system) that, in some way, provided a myopic perspective of viewing social reality. Pincus and Minahan have suggested the following criteria for developing a unitary or integrated model for social work practice:

- 1) This unitary model should provide an all-encompassing framework, avoiding conceptualizing social work practice in dichotomous terms like either case work or social action, individualist or collective approach. It is believed that the strength of the profession lies in recognizing and working with the connections between these elements.
- 2) The social worker has tasks to develop and maintain relationships with a variety of people in any planned change effort (and not with the clients and his/her family only).
- 3) The social worker is required to work with and through many different sizes and types of systems (one to one relationships, families, community groups) in helping a client.
- 4) There should be selective and judicious use of theories (ego, learning, communication, etc.) in understanding social situations.
- 5) The Model should be applicable in variety of situations and settings.

In the subsequent sections of the unit, you would study at length about this integrated approach based on system's theory, substantiated with enough field examples. You are also advised to make use of this model in your field work practicum.

## **Understanding Various Systems**

Social work practice based on system's approach primarily focuses on the interaction between people and various systems in social environment. People are dependent on systems (say, ethnic and cultural system, economic system, health system, workplace system) for obtaining the material and non-material resources, services and opportunities to growth and development. In this regard, three types of resources have been described, from the clients' perspective:

- 1) Natural or informal system (family, relatives, friends, neighbours, etc.),
- 2) Formal system (membership organizations, - labour unions, support groups, PTA), and
- 3) Societal resource system (hospital, legal services, schools, work place).

It is assumed that people are dependent or rather interdependent on these systems for accomplishment of their life tasks (Life tasks are activities relating to daily living such as growing up in the family, learning in schools, entering into work force, marriage, bearing and rearing children). At times, despite the help potentially available from the network of informal, formal, societal systems, in certain situations people may not be able to obtain resources, services or opportunities they need to cope with their life tasks and realize their goals. The role of social worker, here, is to look at the inadequacies in the interaction between

these systems (or any one system) and the people that may cause distress, problems and mal-functioning. Let us analyze this point in some more detail for better understanding:

Inadequacies at informal resource system may be **lack of informal helping system** (there may be no friends or neighbours, people of a particular social group not included in social intercourse) or **reluctance to turn to informal system** (hesitation to ask for help from friends, relatives, etc., past experience, fear of loss of face may add to these inhibitions) or **inability of the system** to meet the needs of the people. For instance, in a village in India, a particular socially marginalized group, may be geographically staying at secluded place or may be shy in putting their needs across to people in the neighbourhood. Further, informal system may be responsive but not well-equipped to solve the problems of the people in distress.

Likewise, inadequacies of formal resource system may be as follows — Groups may not exist (say, labourers being exploited and no labour unions exist to protect their rights) or people may be reluctant to join (HIV positive people may be fearful of their identity being disclosed on joining HIV support group) or are unaware of their existence or the system may be unable to meet needs, that is, lack of necessary resources and influence to provide services to its members or to negotiate on their behalf with a societal resource system.

Further, there may be inadequacies of societal resource system – one, needed resources or services may not exist in sufficient quantity (e.g., inadequate quality and quantity of food grains for Public Distribution System available to poor families). Else, needed resources or services may exist but not geographically, psychologically or culturally available to those who need it (e.g., mental

health services not available in rural areas and needy people not seeking mental health services because of fear of being labeled as 'mentally ill') or no information about existing resources or usage of resources may lead to further problem (say, hospitals labeling patients as HIV positive and discriminating them).

Added to this, there may be conflict between various systems which may affect resources/service utilization (health care system exists but may not be affordable or may be far off and with poor transportation connectivity). At times, there may be other inadequacies like intra-system problems hampering its effective service delivery (say, in a hospital, doctors on strike or no funds to buy equipment for treatment of patients). Thus, you may realize that there may be many problems in the functioning of various systems in a social environment requiring social work intervention.

The purpose of social work, in above mentioned cases, is to enhance the problem solving or coping capabilities of people and link people with systems that provide them with resources, services and opportunities. The aim of social work is also to promote the effectiveness of operative systems through improvement of social policy about which you would study at length in subsequent sections. Let us understand the systems from the perspective of social work intervention.

From the viewpoint of social work intervention, four basic systems have been laid down - Change Agent System, Client System, Target System and Action System. Detailed description of these systems is as follows:

- a) **Change Agent System:** Change Agent may be any person or group, professional or non-professional, inside or outside a system, who is attempting to bring about change in that system. A change agent

is a helper who is specifically employed for the purpose of creating planned change. It may be an agency, NGO or social worker.

- b) **Client System:** It is the 'specific system that is being helped'. Client system may be the individual, family, group, organization or community which, in addition to being the expected beneficiary of services, is a system that asks for help and engages the services of social worker as a change agent.
- c) **Target System:** This system includes the people the change agent needs to change or influence in order to accomplish his/her goals from the target system.
- d) **Action System:** It is used to describe those with whom social worker deals in his efforts to accomplish the tasks and achieve the goals of the change efforts. An action system can be used to obtain sanctions and a working agreement or contract, in order to identify and study a problem, establish goals for change or influence the major targets of change.

Now, let us take an example: a woman (client system) approaches the social worker (change agent system) with the problem that her alcoholic husband (target system) beats her up daily. Social worker, as a part of intervention may counsel the husband and get him rehabilitated with the help of de-addiction centre. Here, all those persons - doctors, NGO officials, staff at de-addiction centre - who took part in the rehabilitation process would be the action system. The change agent may like to study the gravity and extent of problem of alcoholism in the community, may take up a research study intending to find the root cause of the problem with alcoholism only as a behavioural manifestation. He/she may find that under-employment and unemployment among youth and adults, poor economic

condition and easy availability of liquor coupled with cultural consent to males for alcoholism is the prime cause behind the rampant problem, which is affecting the health status of, say, 80% of youth in the community.

The intervention by change agent may include working at various levels – state to ensure Income generating programmes, shops selling alcohol in the community to be banned, creating awareness about harmful effects of alcoholism, knowledge creation about Prevention of Domestic Violence Act. In this case, target system would be the state (reluctance on the part of administrators to run income generating programmes, red tapism, corruption), shops selling alcohol, all alcoholics in the community and all the people believing that alcoholism is associated with masculinity and it is right on the part of men to ‘drink’.

The action system would be everybody taking part in the process of intervention (researchers doing study, media propagating messages about anti-alcoholism, domestic violence, NGO functionaries, field workers and so on). So, we understand that client system would be any person approaching change agent with a problem. Action system would be persons participating in the process of intervention and target system would be those persons who need to alter their behaviours and attitudes so that an egalitarian and just social system would be created.

Further, you may realize that one problem situation may call for many action systems, as reflected in the above example. Depending upon the situation, an action system could be an existing system already in operation (family, peer groups, schools, etc.) or a new system developed by the change agent as a part of intervention (say opening VCTC at hospital, self help group of terminally ill patients). The change agent may not be

directly interacting with all the people in an action system but may have indirect contact at various points in the time span of intervention, say, first researchers, then NGO workers involved in rehabilitation of alcoholic clients, then media persons, and so on. The change agent may require their services only once or regularly. These services may be paid or unpaid.

Next, change agent's status (as independent citizen, volunteer, honorary or paid staff of NGO), career aspirations, job security, promotion, his/her own value system, conviction to the ethics and principles of social work profession, knowledge level, ability to mobilize, convince people, enthusiasm, creativity — all would have a bearing on the intervention. Added to this, the change agent (social worker) may also attempt to enlarge action system by involving other members of a larger system, (say, elected leaders, policy makers, coalition of NGOs, free-lancers, media persons) or he/she may reduce the client system (for example, work with alcoholic and his family; work with neighbourhood and then reduce some members).

An important diagnostic task of the social worker, usually in collaboration with the client system, is to establish the goals for change and then determine the specific people- the targets - that will have to be changed if the goals are to be reached. Let us look at the process of intervention under integrated social work approach.

### **Process of Change Effort**

The process of intervention in social work can be categorized in eight phases, details of which are as follows:

A word of caution: though process has been categorized into various phases, the activities may often be overlapping.

**a) Assessing Problem**

In first phase, the social worker (change agent) identifies the problem area (say, news reports of weavers committing suicide in Banaras of Uttar Pradesh) and collects more information about the nature of problem, social situation, life-style of people, contingent and precipitating factors causing the problem at hand [community of *Julahe* (weavers) in Banaras are traditionally involved in making famous hand woven Banarasi saris as a small scale family enterprise. Since, hand weaving consumes lots of time and in the advent of technological advancement, industrialization and globalization, people have options for cheaper electronic machine made banarasi sarees. Added to this, middlemen take heavy commission for hand woven sarees while giving the weavers meager amount. With no other livelihood options, no social capital, no backward and forward linkages, weavers spend weeks together in perpetual hunger and with least hope of any improvement in the system, are committing suicide. They are mostly from traditionally marginalized community of Muslims, illiterate, with no financial backup, no exposure to market needs and situations, no contacts with business persons who control marketing of Banarasi sarees].

**b) Collecting Data**

It is the second phase, where the social worker collects data about the problem at hand in an objective, scientific manner. She (let us assume social worker is female) may use research tools like questioning (direct verbal, direct written, projective verbal, projective written), observations (participative, non participative) and analyzes in order to find the root cause(s) of the problem. In the situation discussed above, the change agent collects all the details of number of weavers, their

proportion, their family background, their work details like time taken in weaving a sari, designs adopted, knowledge about government's schemes for loans, options of selling to co-operatives, coping patterns and so on. She finds that informal resource system (family, friends, neighbourhood) is unable to take any ameliorative action; the weavers are not aware of Formal system (cooperative groups, self-help groups, NGOs) that may provide some respite; and they have no say in the societal resource system, that is, work-place and as a result in utter frustration, they are committing suicides.

### **c) Making initial contacts**

In this third phase, the change agent gathers information about the systems (other than client system) and tries to develop initial contacts. Stated differently, the social worker gains more insight about the functioning and transactions of other systems in the social environment vis-à-vis client system. It is stakeholders' analysis that you have read in previous units of this block. With the information collected about various systems, the change agent develops action plan for intervention. This would answer the questions as to which part of the system to contact, and method of initiating contact that may include direct approach or asking somebody to influence target system, one to one or group approach and usage of mass media.

Continuing with the above example, the change agent during stakeholders' analysis notes that the middlemen are the unfavourable stakeholders, government functionaries implementing schemes like Swarn Jayanti Gram Swarojgar Yojana (SJGSY), providing financial and technical inputs are in 'unknown' category in terms of favourability of stakeholders. Further, probe into the system provided the information that corruption, lethargy, red-tapism etc. is rampant in the government

and state is apathetic towards the dismal conditions of weavers. The change agent chalked out the strategy to involve media at suitable time in the intervention as a part of action system.

**d) Negotiating contracts (means joint agreement on action system)**

In this fourth phase, operating procedures are laid down with respect to client system, action system and target system. More clarity is gained in terms of tasks performed by each party to achieve the goals. In this strategies are explicitly laid down in terms of dealing with resistance to change in relation to various systems in the social environment. These would include involvement of other systems or replacing the services of one system from the other, upsetting equilibrium, providing hope, motivating, negotiating with the system on behalf of or with client system (see the similarity with social action).

In the above example, the employing NGO, its networks with other organizations would be the constituents of action system. In this phase, contractual agreements, if desired so, would be made between various NGOs and Community Based Organizations regarding sharing of responsibilities to achieve the goal(s). The middlemen would show reluctance to the idea to provide due share to weavers. The intervention strategy may be to negotiate with them amicably and if they do not agree, then may be to develop direct contacts between weavers and the market. It would also include simultaneously developing the non-existent services like self-help groups of weavers who would be associated with local NGOs to facilitate their linkages with cooperatives and marketers.

**e) Forming Action System**

In this fifth phase, the change agent concretizes the action system by chalking out all the details of who all would constitute action system, what roles they would perform and what would be their entry points and period of exit, duration of their intervention and the probable impact. In any one change effort, the worker may form many different action systems to collect data, assess the problem, make an initial contact, negotiate a contract, or influence the major targets to help achieve the outcome goal.

In continuation with the above example, the change agent includes the counselors (for helping weavers for counseling to prevent suicides), social work professionals (to form self-help groups of weavers and establishing contacts with banks), trainers from other organizations working in the area of poverty alleviation and income generating programmes (to provide necessary inputs in formation of self help groups and informing about its functioning and utility to the client system) market researchers (to explore direct contacts with shop owners, traders and wholesalers, cooperatives and government controlled shops; to look for other innovating linkages with neighbouring countries, NRI and similar groups) mediators/negotiators (to reduce resistance from middlemen and facilitating government officials for implementation of poverty alleviation schemes in the community; legislators and elected leaders at various levels for necessary policy intervention), media (for putting up the case before the public in a right perspective through special bulletins, talk shows, etc., and if any stakeholders fail to cooperate after much persuasion, then defamation through media may form part of intervention). These would be the vital components of the action system and in the expected roles in the intervention process has been described.

**f) Maintaining and coordinating an action system**

It is the sixth phase, when focus is on the coordination between various components of action system. It would also involve looking at the problems in the development of relationships between members of action system, if any, may, differ in levels of motivation, commitment among members, job turnover, knowledge and skill enhancement, etc. Likewise, there may be problems in functioning that may result from absence of clarity about role distribution, communication gaps, rapport formation by action system, conflicting values and attitudes. The worker or change agent is required to deal with conflicts within the action system and finally prepare the system for ACTION.

In the case of above example, worker may encounter many knotty issues as when some counsellors may have biased attitudes about some religious members that may hamper their effectiveness in counseling. The employing agency may not want to come in conflict with the local goons working as middlemen and negotiators may not have perseverance to fight till the end in dealing with corruption and red tapism. With consistent motivation, persuasion, giving the factual information about the apathetic condition of weavers, shaking conscience and using similar other strategies, the change agent may be able to deal with conflicting issues and gear the action system for the intervention.

**g) Exercising influence**

In the seventh phase, the actual intervention to bring about desired change is put into action. The change agent, through the use of relevant knowledge, expertise, and legitimate or charismatic authority, status and reputation, personal attractiveness, control over flow of information and established relationship with the client

group brings out desired changes. The process, specifically includes change in behaviour, attitude, belief in target system by providing positive or negative inducement, (influencing a target system by providing rewards for complying, with an influence effort, or punishing it for not complying), persuasion and use of relationships to achieve desired goals.

With regard to the above example, the change agent motivates the government officials, middlemen for desired behaviour by praising their previous works, shaking their conscience by telling them the vulnerabilities of weavers (positive inducement) and if still they do not 'change', then threatens them to defame, disciplinary action (negative inducement). Further, the power of mobilized community people, media usage, value of relationship of change agent with clients would also have weightage in the intervention. Fear of defame, isolation, social boycott, changes in the target system (here, government officials and middlemen).

#### **h) Terminating the change effort**

This eighth phase is the last one in the process of intervention. It necessarily does not merely indicate a point reached at the end of planned change, rather is the integral part of the whole process. Specifically, it includes — evaluation of the change effect (means assessment of success-failure in terms of planned change and foresight gained for future action which is self-sustained) and disengaging from relationships (means that formal separation from client system so that they are no more dependent on change agent system for 'help' and dealing with reactions like denial, regression, expression of needs, flight and so on) and lastly, stabilization of change effort (creating systems, institutionalizing people's participation, developing coping skills towards self-reliance).

In the above example, the change agent develops self-help groups, develops formal linkages with NGOs, Banks, Marketers, Shop Owners, Dealers, Customers and the like (creating informal resource system and institutionalizing community participation) and trains the client system to develop leadership, cooperation and collaboration and gradually reduces their dependence. All patiently deal with reactions showing emotional dependence of client system. With regular feedback one analyzes the success of change effort.

### **Role of Social Worker**

After comprehending the systems and process of intervention, let us look at the roles, functions, qualities of social worker or change agent in the change effort, to which you can identify yourself.

Specific functions of social worker/change agent may well be described as:

- 1) **Help client system enhance and effectively utilize their own problem solving and coping capacities:** Change agent may identify and contact people who need help, provide information, develop understanding, give support, encourage to examine alternative ways of linking with the needed system.
- 2) **Establish initial linkages between people and resource systems:** Change agent may locate target clients (starving community with 'Meals on Wheels'); provide information about resource systems; help overcoming hurdles in resource utilization (crèche facilities so that mothers can work); referrals to resource system and follow up; advocacy to negotiate with resource system (e.g., patient discharged from mental hospital- persuading his employer to keep him back); forming new resource systems (terminally ill cancer patients' support groups).

- 3) **Facilitate favourable interaction between people and societal resource system:** It is one of the important functions of the social worker or change agent to make societal response system aware of the problem that its operating procedures are causing problems for its consumers (e.g., girls not allowed to go to school in neighbouring village). Change agent acts as consultant helping societal resource system improve its functioning and assist in developing new services (say, conscientize parents and community people on needs of girl child education and facilitate opening a school within the village premises). He/she may coordinate between various resource systems, organize consumers to advocate on their own behalf, do advocacy, mediation and resolve conflicts between natural, formal and societal resource systems.
- 4) **Facilitate favourable interaction within resource systems:** This function of social worker is aimed at changing interactions of people within informal, formal or societal resource systems. Social worker acts as a liaison between various sub-parts of the system, transmits information from one part to another and decreases hostility and conflict between subparts. The worker may advocate for the interest of one part of the system which lacks access to resources and power to make decisions or prepares sub parts to advocate for their own rights and interests. He/she acts as a consultant to members of a system and helps improve their internal functioning, role assignment, communication, etc. The worker may help the members towards empowerment and self reliance.
- 5) **Policy Change:** It is one of the most difficult yet vital functions of change agent. It includes collecting and analyzing information related to problems or

issues that demand policy change, mobilizing primary and secondary stakeholders for social action and chalking down the strategies and tactics as mentioned in the preceding units.

Let us now pay attention to characteristics and types of social work relationships. Social work relationships are the sustained interactions between client system and change agent system that are established with certain purpose. About this relationship, you had read at length in units on casework and counseling. Briefly, three major characteristics of social work relationship are – one, these relationships are formed for professional purpose related to planned change work; two, worker works for the interest and needs of clients and not for his/her own interest in a professional relationship and three, the relationship is based on the objectivity and self awareness where the personal troubles, opinions, beliefs of the worker should not enter or hamper the change effort.

According to Pincus and Minahan, there are three types of relationships between client system and change agent system – collaboration, bargaining and conflictual. It may be noted that one type of relationship may be changed to another – say, conflictual relationship may turn to collaboration and *vice-versa*. Details of each of these are as follows:

**Collaboration:** It is considered the 'ideal' type of relationship where there is agreement on the goals and operative procedures between client system and change agent system. Commonly, in this type of relationship decisions are made democratically and worker practices client self- determination. You would find processes and relationships in community organization very near to this one. The client system shows trust and confidence in the worker. This relationship is feasible when the

clients view the goals of change as desirable and in their self interest. Further, in this relationship, client system believes that demands placed upon it will not require major changes in its existing power and status.

**Bargaining:** This is the typical relationship that connotes the beginning of client-change agent relationship. The initial contacts with target or client system are defined by 'testing' each other and then bargaining takes place with regard to existing resources and powers which is followed by collaboration. Further, if no consensus between goals and ways to achieve goals occurs between the two parties (change agent and client/target system) bargaining continues. Bargaining occurs when client/target system perceives that it may not be entirely in its self interest to work for the goals delineated by change agent. Added to this, differences in socio-cultural values, perception of power change, perceived difference between shared goals between the two parties also leads to bargaining. Also, you may have read in psychology that people tend to maintain their old pattern of values and working style and are apprehensive in trying out newer ways and processes. All these factors lead to bargaining relationship between clients and change agent.

**Conflict:** Conflictual relationship occurs when the shared goals as proposed by the change agent appears to be threatening to the self-interest of the target system. For example, upper caste people in a village oppressing the lower caste would not like the idea of land reform (land re-distribution) and would have conflictual relationship with the change agent. Here, the target system, the land owners, perceive that the demands laid down by the change agent would snatch away their existing prestige, power and status and hence would resist redistribution of resources and power. In this case, social workers may not operate with expected social

work values, ethics of openness, mutual trust and honesty with target system.

It may be reiterated that the relationship between client/target system and change agent is quite dynamic and liable to change during the course of time. Target system may initially have conflictual relationship which can turn into bargaining and later to collaborative one.

Let us now briefly comprehend the skills and qualities change agent must have in order to bring about desired change in various systems. The obvious expectation would be that the worker inherently believes in the worth and dignity of human beings and sees problems in the functioning with various sub-systems and perceives client/target system as 'diseased'. Firm conviction in the values and ethics of social work is a must. Regarding skills, social worker is not expected to be dexterous in all the faculties (communication, programme media, ability to mobilize people, counseling, research and the like), rather he/she should be able to network with different people having differential proficiencies and get the work done to achieve the desired goals [skills of a social work have been at length covered in Unit 4].

## **Social Action in Relation to Community Work**

The term 'community development' refers to a process aimed at economic and social progress of the whole community with active participation of the community people. Community development is an amalgamation of two vital components — first, people's participation and second, the technical and financial assistance provided from the government agencies and both these components complement each other. Community development is not possible if any one of the aspects is

missing. People's participation, their ability to cooperate and assimilate, along with the technical know-how from government agencies is a must for realizing the goal of community development. Initiating and implementing community development programmes on a large scale, say, at the national level, would require adoption of consistent policies, motivating and enabling administrative arrangements, recruitment and training of dexterous professionals in various related fields, mobilization of local and national resources, research, experimentation and evaluation and involvement of community people in the process of their own development. How it is linked to social action?

Community development as well as social action, have the same inherent goal — overall development of the community. They both correspond to the basic needs of the community and all their activities are initiated in response to the expressed needs of the community people. Both these processes adhere to concerted action and the establishment of multi-purpose programmes for achieving the goal of long-term, sustainable and well-balanced community development, where all sections of the society get their equitable share of resources and power. In fact, social action is taken as one of the models of community organization and community development.

Looking at the programme aspect, both the processes, i.e., community development and social action share similarity in terms of tasks that include problem identification and focus on felt needs, identification, encouragement and training of local leadership, involving community people in resource identification, discussing various alternative action strategies and picking up the most suitable ones, bringing about desirable change in attitudes and behaviours of the community people, creating a conducive environment where values like interdependence, sharing, cooperating

and coordinating, are encouraged and thereby ensuring people's participation. Social action as well as community development share the basic belief that greater participation of women and youth in the process of social change and development would not only lead to their empowerment but would also ensure long term sustainability of the desired results.

Community development aims at increased and better participation of the people in community affairs, revitalization of existing forms of local government and transition towards effective local administration where it is not yet functioning. Social action works for re-distribution of power and resources to achieve social justice. In fact, in communities where there is inequality and injustice, community development has to first rely on social action and once resources and powers are reallocated, then only constructive work has any meaning.

Sometimes, in order to achieve the objective of overall community development, some changes in the social system and institutions, that is social action, are required. To exemplify, poverty has remained one of the most pressing problems of our country. For more than two decades, many piecemeal programmes were planned and implemented in a number of poverty-affected communities in the country to reduce the poverty problem. Still, the situation kept on worsening as the number of people living below poverty line rose. During late 60s and early 70s, a rethinking was done on the whole concept and strategies of development, highlighting the need for structural changes in society, to bring about a substantial change in the standards of living of the masses which means greater access to essential services such as education, health, housing and employment. As a result, 'Structural Adjustment Programmes', Land Reforms, 20-point poverty alleviation

programmes, etc., were evolved. These strategies of radical change emphasized a more equitable distribution of resources and the organization of people to strengthen their capacity for claiming a better deal in society.

However, to be fully effective, communities' self-help projects require both intensive and extensive assistance from the government whereas social action is anti-authoritarian. Community development is done at the micro-level whereas the social cause for which social action is required, most often, has wider range. Lastly, the most basic factor in social action is a method of working with people in professional social work while community development is the process and a goal to do constructive and developmental work with people's participation and government assistance.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, you studied about integrated social work approach that rests on general system's theory. There are four systems – client system (who approaches with a problem to) the change agent (social worker, any person committed to the cause) for help; change agent studies the situation in a holistic manner and develops plan for change effort; all the people who participate in the change effort would constitute the action system while the system requiring change is termed as target system.

Three types of resource systems were described in the unit. They are — Informal resource system like family, peers, friends; formal resource system like self help groups, counseling centre, formal clubs, institutions, etc.; societal resource system would be the workplace system, legal system, political environment and so on. Social worker studies the linkages between these systems and plans intervention after studying the systems in a holistic manner.

Following this, eight phases of intervention are dealt with at length. These eight phases are — assessing problem, collecting data, making initial contacts, negotiating contracts, forming action system, maintaining and coordinating an action system, exercising influence and terminating the change effort. All these phases have been described with relevant field examples.

Roles of social worker in order to enhance positive interaction between various systems were also described in detail in the unit. Roles are at various levels – micro, meso and macro levels. This apart, a commentary on the skills required by social workers was given. All these components of integrated social work approach have been covered with pertinent examples.

It is hoped that this would give you a broad perspective of integrated social work approach that has wide applicability in most of the field situations.

Lastly, relation between social action and community development was covered, specifying the unifying and differentiating trends between the two.

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## Models of Social Action

*\*Archana Kaushik*

### Introduction

The preceding chapters have discussed myriad of areas where social action can make a dent in the restricting conditions that do not allow some people to live their lives to the full. There are many 'ways' in which social action is carried out — progressive persons or group of people may raise voice on behalf of people living on margins, or may mobilize people to take action to bring about desired changes in the social system. There are many models of social action. The literal meaning of 'Model' is the modality or style or pattern of doing a particular thing, which is replicable. A 'model' of social action means a peculiar way or process of achieving set goals with certain identifiable stages and characteristics. Stated differently, social action, in its process of achieving its objectives, adopts certain manner or modality, which is termed as 'model of social action'.

Historical evidences bring out that social action can be initiated and carried forward by the elites exclusively without the participation of those section(s) of population for whom it is being undertaken. Classical example is Raja Ram Mohan Roy playing vital role in enactment of social legislation against 'Sati-pratha'. Models in which elites, play pivotal role in social action, with or without involvement of marginalized sections of population comes under the category of 'elitist' models. Playing a

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facilitative role in mobilization of the masses, preparing them to take action and in that process empowering them to take charge of own life would categorize social action into 'Popular' model of action. In this, marginalized population takes up the total charge of the social movement in its own hands, though social actionist/activist provides necessary guidance. Freedom movement under the leadership of Gandhiji is a fine example of popular social action model.

In this chapter, models given by various social work educators have been presented. Some theorists have categorized social action into Institutional (social action initiated by some institution like government or non-governmental agency) and non-institutional models (those initiated by people). Various sub-groups have been described based on the stakeholder who initiates social action and then who follows. Gandhian model of social action has also been described with all its sub categories and relevant examples.

### **Elitist Social Action Model**

Broadly, Britto (1984) has categorized social action into two models — Elitist Social Action and Popular Social Action. It may be reiterated that when certain motivated, progressive and sensitive people raise voice on behalf of the marginalized section of the population, primarily without active participation of that population group, it is termed as elitist model of social action. On the other hand, when marginalized people themselves carry forward the task of liberation from exploitation, may or may not be with the leadership/guidance of social actionist/activist/worker, it comes in the category of popular social action. Three sub-models can be identified in each type of social action. In this section, we would focus on Elitist model of social action.

### **Elitist Social Action**

It is the action initiated and conducted by the elites for the benefit of the masses, either exclusively or with marginal participation of masses. There are three sub-models of elitist social action — legislative social action model, economic sanction model and direct physical model — as described below:

i) **Legislative Social Action Model:** In this model, group of elites undertake social action for bringing about social change. This process generally includes understanding the magnitude, extent and urgency of the problem at hand (may be undertaking full fledged research work), creating public opinion (say, involvement of electronic, print media) and designing intervention with the aim to bring about desired change in the social legislation or social policy. The differential aspect of this model lies in the fact that the general population or the target group is not involved directly in the process. Some elites either themselves or along with like-minded individuals take-up the social issues, which they think is a pressing problem. Strategies and tactics like media advocacy, legislative advocacy, judicial advocacy, lobbying, networking, coalition and the like are used (about these you would study in detail in the next unit). It may be noted that essential pre-requisites for this model of social action is extensive and intensive knowledge of social situation, social processes, micro-macro linkages, excellent analytical abilities and communication and persuasive skills.

Key terms, here, are **elitist** and **social legislation**. Change is brought by liberal minded people (elites) through social legislation. In general, these people belong to intelligentsia of the society, are of radical outlook, believe in social justice and empowerment and have strong motivation to eradicate causes of exploitation

and oppression. Another potent variable that acts like a catalyst in the process of elitist model of social action is the strength of social capital (i.e., linkage with those people who have resources, who are decision-makers, social planners, policy makers). The elites carrying out social action have the knowledge about and access to the people and systems that have the power to influence the lives of marginalized sections of the society. To exemplify, Raja Ram Mohan Roy had the relevant legal knowledge, perspective defined by social justice and access to decision-makers when he persuaded the then state to enact legislation against Sati-system. Likewise, socialists like Aruna Roy, Arvind Kejriwal who played pivotal role in enactment of Right to Information Act also, more or less, adhered to elitist model of social action. In fact, majority of contemporary social legislations like National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, Juvenile Justice Act, 2006, The Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizens Act, 2007 have been tabled because of socially enlightened people who undertook elitist social action model and tried bringing change through social legislations.

ii) **Economic Sanction Model:** In this model of social action, the elites make use of their power to influence economic condition/position or profits or financial transactions of the 'oppressors', who are denying the rightful share to labour class. Social workers/activists/actionists (elites) have control over some economic resources, which is used as a weapon to obtain benefits for their clientele. There have been many instances when the labour officers have bargained for economic benefits (pay hikes), medical insurance, community development programmes (education of children of labourers, provision of electricity, safe drinking water) to the Management making profit on the hard work of labour class. Many social work students undertook social action

during their fieldwork when Delhi Government tried to 'rehabilitate' the poor people staying in slums to the outskirts and remote areas, quite far from the places of their work. Protests by civil society organizations (social action groups, advocacy groups, NGOs, CBOs, etc.) against World Trade Organization, Liberalization policy of the Government and at some places against the Special Economic Zones, have been social action initiatives under this category.

iii) **Direct Physical Model:** It is a process where elites tend to punish those responsible for the cause of injustice and thus try to bring about benefits to their clientele. It is quite debatable issue as Britto has maintained that under this model, elites take the law in their hands to penalize the oppressors. Media initiating social action and joining together of students, women's groups all across the country for justice for Jussica Lal followed by Priyadarshini Mattoo can be included in this type of model. Rang De Basanti movie also tried to portray this Direct Physical model of social action. We may exclude bloodshed and violent means of registering protest in any model of social action. Other strategies like taking out processions, candle light marches, sit-ins, dharnas, may well be taken into account by the social activists engaged in this model of social action.

Let us now pay attention to Popular Social Action Model.

## **Popular Social Action Model**

### **Popular Social Action**

In contrast to elitist model of social action, whenever the elite incorporate the clientele in the process or whenever the oppressed groups themselves carry it out, such social action is termed, 'popular social action'. Stated differently, in popular social action model, a large

section of people from marginalized section of population, with or without elite participation, carry out the process of social action. In this, when threshold of tolerance of exploitation is crossed, people come out and rebel against the oppressing system and people. It is the feeling against injustice, dehumanizing situations that trigger agitation for social action, elites (social actionists/social activists) may guide, facilitate, provide adequate information, help oppressed group understand skewed socio-political equations, or may not play any role in the process. The oppressed and marginalized community aims its confrontational/conflictive action against the unjust and dehumanizing structures, agencies, policies, procedures or oppressive agents. Popular social action has three sub-types — Direct mobilization model, Dialectical model and the Conscientization model. Unifying and unique features of these subtypes have been described below.

i) **Conscientization Model:** It is firmly grounded on Paulo Friere's concept and ideology of conscientization, i.e., creating awareness among masses through education. Paulo Friere developed the concept of conscientization, which means educating the people about the oppression, oppressed and the oppressor (their own position in the two groups), their inter-relationship, the power structure and ways to liberate from the oppressed or oppressor class. Friere maintains that the situation when the oppressed and/or oppressor are conscientized, there exists motivating possibilities for the true liberation of mankind as well as for the most efficient domestication of man. He believed that education could be a tool for re-education and social action. Conscientization process results not merely in learning of literary skills, but it is intended to assist the participants to liberate themselves from all structures, which inhibit the realization of their full

humanity through action-reflection-action. This form of social action involves maximum participation of the concerned population. People are given opportunity to analyze and understand the social structures, which circumscribe their life. To know is to change; and so they are invited to transform the structures through the means of their choice. As a result of humanization, it is hoped that the oppressed do not become oppressors in their turn. In the present situation, this model of social action is being extensively used in several countries.

**Field example:** An NGO working in a resettlement colony in Kolkata has taken up the issue of discriminatory treatment done against the girl child at the familial, community and society level. The gender prejudices and biases in our patriarchal social structure have most often given lesser share than due in the distribution of family resources, be it nutrition, education or other opportunities for development. The NGO made use of street plays, emotional speeches, debates, documentary films, etc., to conscientize the people towards the vulnerability and exploitation of female children. Issues of female infanticide/foeticide, poor health and malnutrition, school dropouts, low wages, torture of dowry victims, rape, molestation and so on were taken up. With the usage of conscientization model of social action, the NGO was able to make a little difference in the negative and indifferent attitudes of general public towards girl child.

ii) **Dialectical Mobilization Model:** This model of social action is based on the dialectical approach of conflict theory of social change as given by Marxist school of thought. According to dialectical approach, 'conflict' in any system is considered natural in the sense that any settlement of conflict is temporary and each reconstructed system carries within itself the seed of

its own transformation. Thus, 'conflict' can be taken as the engine of social change. So, dialectical mobilization model of popular action helps in promoting conflict to exploit the contradictions in a system, with the belief that a better system will emerge as a result. The meaning of 'Dialectic' is the art of logical disputation. When individuals or groups take up extreme positions and argue, the position of one may be taken as the thesis and that of the other as antithesis. The result of their argumentation, a certain conclusion acceptable to both, may be termed synthesis. Thus, the positing of contradictory positions and arriving at a better conclusion is termed dialectics in logic. Actionists who follow a dialectical process take the conflict in a positive sense as they assume that all forces in nature and human institutions, clash and develop. Every institution and every social force contains in itself the element of its own disintegration. They expose the contradictions within a system, promote conflicts and expect a higher-order-result in the social-economic-political structures.

**Field Examples:** A group of human rights activists have organized 'Jan Sunwai' with the aim of raising voice against torture by police on innocent people in Bihar where the local SHO and higher rank officials of police department, representatives from Nation Human Rights Commission and district magistrate were called and police were questioned about the custodial deaths of two minors who were in lock up for petty theft and many other such cases were taken up. Both the parties (perpetrators, here, the police and the victims, families of accused) presented their point of view.

An NGO in West Bengal is creating awareness among the general public about electoral reforms so that money and muscle power should not be the criteria for giving votes to any candidate. Just a fortnight before Assembly elections, the NGO organized group discussions with

the aspiring candidates and sitting MLAs in various constituencies. The perception of people's problems and their probable solutions were discussed. The general public attended the discussions with NGO people mediated the discussions, which often lead of huge arguments and conflicts. Through logical disputation, the general public was made aware of the credibility of the candidates and an appeal was made to give their vote to the deserving candidates and not to get lured away by any temporary favours offered to them by these candidates. Usage of dialectical mobilization model of social action for electoral reform proved quite useful in enabling the people to establish a clean democratic political institution in their respective areas.

**iii) Direct Mobilization Model of Popular Social Action:** In direct mobilization model, specific issues are taken up by the social actionists and the masses are mobilized to resort to protests and strikes to achieve the objectives. In this process, the leaders or elites pick up specific grievances or issues that are affecting the people at large. They analyze the causal factors, which are at the root of the injustice. They formulate the alternative policies and procedures and mobilize the masses for protest activities for the purpose of achieving the set objectives.

One fine example of this model would be the fishermen's movement. During post independence period, a large number of trawlers and mechanized boats entered in the fishing sector. This led to massive over fishing to capture lucrative foreign markets. Their fishing method destroyed several species of fish. The imbalance, thus created in the eco-system, led to lowering of the stock available for traditional fishermen. Mechanization in the fishing sector had put poor fishermen at the mercy of moneylenders, merchants, exporters and multinationals. The government was apathetic.

The fish workers united together and raised their voice against the issue. They developed a well-structured organization and started their protest. As the movement started spreading from blocks to districts, the leaders formed union to bargain their demands with the government. The movement expanded to the coastal areas of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamilnadu, Goa and Maharashtra and later in other states also. The union forced the governments to make suitable policies and programmes to secure their livelihood and eco-balance.

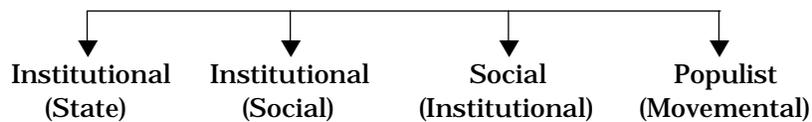
The above mentioned models (elitist and popular) have been described by Britto. He has mentioned a loophole in the elitist social action — the elitist concept of the problems of the weaker sections and the solutions offered would inevitably be determined by their own value system, which may not be in conformity with how the weaker sections themselves perceive their problems and how they went to solve them. Let us now look at other models of Social Action.

### **Institutional and Non-institutional Models**

Apart from the above mentioned models of social action, Singh (1984) has also delineated certain other models of social action based on the locus of action and the initiators. He has described two models — **Institutional and Non-institutional or Social**, with sub models. In Institutional models, social action is initiated either by State or non-government organizations while in non-institutional or social or populist model, common people or the disadvantaged sections of the society make the first move. It may, however, be noted that the approaches taken in all these models of social action might be overlapping. Let us study these models in some detail. The Schemata below shows the models of social action as propounded by Singh. Institutional model has two

sub-types — Institutional (state) and Institutional (social). Institution, here, means any formal organization with legal and social entity like State, voluntary organizations, etc. Likewise, Non-institutional model too has sub-types — Social (institutional) and Populist (Movemental). By non-institutional, we mean any informal group socially active in the community, say, self-help group, pressure group of women, etc.

#### **Models of Social Action**



**Institutional (state) model of social action:** It is the social action initiated by the state or government. Social action by the state generally takes an indirect form, and its aim is to benefit the people with or without their participation. The approach is commonly parliamentary, representational, bureaucratic and elitist. The action is organized or sponsored within the framework of law, or may be legalized subsequently. For instance, government passing orders for regularization of unauthorized settlements of poor in urban settings and also implementing programmes for community reconstruction, say, proper sewage, availability of safe drinking water, free immunization and health check-ups. Especially, in the context of India, the State has, through the Constitution, committed itself to be a 'welfare-state' and therefore, is obligatory to provide all the services needed for the development and well-being of all sections of the population.

**Institutional-social model of social action:** In this type of model social action is initiated by voluntary organizations, whether or not getting financial support from the government. In this model, action is initiated

either directly or with the support of the people. People's participation may be sought at the beginning or in between the process. Stated otherwise, in the beginning the action may be initiated by leaders of the voluntary organization for the disadvantaged section of population group but subsequently it progresses with and through them (the marginalized group). The inherent theme behind such type of social action is primarily 'welfarist' or providing relief and services to the needy. The action often takes place within the framework of law. To exemplify, social action taken up by NGOs, say, fixing the allocating sweepers by the municipal corporation of that area during sanitation drive in the slums or a initiating a movement to re-admit school drop out girls and boys in a community.

In the above two models, social action is initiated by formal agency like State or NGO and in the second sub-type (i.e., institutional-social model), people are involved subsequent to initiation of social action. The next two models – social institutional model and populist model are initiated and carried out by the marginalized groups themselves. Let us see the differential aspects of these models.

**Social institutional model of social action:** This type of social action may be organized by the citizens, self-help groups, elites, the deprived and others for their benefit but in its progression and development may seek support from formal groups and institution(s) which may like to espouse its causes. It may be direct, participatory and even radical. Depending upon its success it may institutionalize itself formally or remain in the character of a spontaneous and sporadic effort with an informed and critically aware social base and power. The nature of such action may be constitutional or extra-constitutional. The social institutional model can be distinguished from the institutional social model in that

in the latter one action is initiated by the institution, say an NGO, and at some stage people are mobilized to participate. On the other hand, in social institutional model people initiate social action and may collaborate with some institution working for the similar cause.

**Field Example:** In a middle class residential colony in Delhi, the elderly united themselves to provide better security services for them like initiating a telephone help-line for the elderly people connected to the nearest police-chowki, day and night patrolling to the area by police, giving space in the community centre for starting a club for the aged to spend their free time together with friends and neighbours. The sitting MLA didn't pay much attention to their demands. The elderly people mobilized other people too to show their protest. They approached two NGOs working for the care and support to the elderly for participating in the social action. This is an example of social institutional model of social action.

**Populist/ movemental model of social action:** The fourth model rests entirely on popular social base and power, rejects dependency and stresses self-reliance through collective effort, active participation, and continuing education. This is an ideal form of social action in the sense that participants join hands together out of their own experience, take decisions in collaboration and consensus with each other, and while thinking, deciding and working together in helping themselves strengthen their collaborative attitude, mutual trust, shared dreams and aspirations. This type of social action is, indeed, an action of the people, for the people and by the people. This type of action may take of some of the characteristics of a movement and may both be constitutional and extra-constitutional. It may be routinizing or self-terminating.

**Field example:** In a village of Rajasthan, water scarcity was affecting the life of people badly. Women folk had to walk miles away to fetch some water. In the last summer, more than 500 cattle died in need of water. The village people got united to solve the problem. They approached the Area Development Officer (ADO) and talked to the authorities. The ADO promised to sanction some money for constructing wells and hand-pumps but did not keep his promise even after several follow-ups by the villagers. The village people thought about other alternatives along with persuasion for money to the ADO. They decided to build check-dams to conserve rain-water. The village people collaborated and cooperated and constructed two check dams. Some people approached the district collector and requested him to intervene. With persistent persuasion the authorities also released money for building wells and hand-pumps. Their success story motivated people of other villages too.

In this type of model, people learn to cooperate and collaborate with their fellow-beings, and a conducive atmosphere defined by mutual trust, sharing, tolerance and inter-dependence, learning to accept diverse views, reaching at mutually agreed goals and the like is created which institutionalize people's participation.

### **Gandhian Model of Social Action**

As you have read in Unit 1 of this block, the history of social action in India is highly influenced by the Gandhian ideology and principles of non-violence and constructive work. In this section, we would be studying Gandhian model of social action in some detail.

Social action of the Gandhian tradition emerges as a class in itself because of its emphasis on spirituality, purity of means and ends, non-violence as a creed, austerity (limitation of want), and moral re-armament

of people. Constructive thinking, mobilization, organization and action are the essential ingredients. People's power remains the basis in all types of social action of this tradition. This model has following sub-types:

**Militant non-violent tradition:** With non-violence still the base, this tradition or approach calls for political and revolutionary character of the social action. It aims at forceful intervention to bring radical changes in the social system. It does not totally rely on peaceful measures and mere confinement to constructive work done at the grass-roots level and rather it believes in re-distribution of power and resources through mass mobilization for action. For example, *chipko* movement emerged out of the protest against rampant deforestation in the Himalayan hills caused by indiscriminate deforestation for commercial consumption.

**Gentle non-violent tradition:** The works done by Vinoba Bhave for satyagraha and village and community reconstruction are fine examples of gentle non-violent form of Gandhian social action. *Bhu-daan* (donation of land) and *gram-daan* (donation of villages) for reconstruction of the Gandhian socialist community formed the vital components of this tradition.

**Citizenship model of constructive work:** This type of social action concentrates mainly on the grass-root level of social action (citizenship) through education. It rests on constructive work and believes that necessary changes in the social system would happen in due course of time. It rejects coming in conflict with the authorities, protests and boycotts to achieve the desired objective of social change. It prefers consensus (*Lok-sammati*), citizenships role (model) and through it visualizes a revolution in thought and method (*Bichar kranti* and *paddhati kranti*).

Gandhian approach further maintains that the government depends upon the people and not vice-versa. All the exploitation is based on cooperation — willing or forced — of the exploited and therefore there is a need to generate social power, a capacity to control the resources and power through action by groups of people. In all the three traditions of Gandhian social action, people's base is considered primary. While gentle non-violent and citizenship models concentrate on the solution of social and economic problems, through people building and action, militant non-violent tradition model also adds political dimensions to them.

Another model that encompasses all the characteristics of the above three types of traditions of Gandhian social action is Lok-Shakti, details of which are as follows:

**Lok-Sakti Model of social action:** From Gandhian perspective of social work, this is the classic model of mass mobilization to bring about the desired change in social structure. There are two major view-points or approaches in the tradition of Gandhian Constructive work: One group believes that constructive social work can gradually bring about the desired change within the existing legal and constitutional framework. It focuses on educating people and appealing to the conscience of those who possess property and power to sacrifice it. Constructive work, along with awareness generation, undertakes programmes with state support for community reconstruction. The other group of Gandhians maintain that the need of radical activism or massive changes in the social institutions arises when the state machinery or constitutional means fail to deliver services to the community adequately. As a result there is a need for mass action. Their conception of Gandhian socialism aims at eliminating exploitation and poverty, provision of equal opportunity to all for self-development and full development of the material and

moral resources of the society and their adequate appropriation. They believe that in a socialist society, people are voluntarily prepared to give in their own interests and wishes to the larger interests of the society. Such a kind of socialism cannot be achieved only through political action, social action is also needed. Sarvodaya is taken as a social movement aimed at individual and social action. Emphasis is laid on revolution in thought and method, the role of citizen, the need for *lok-shakti* (people's power) and *lok sammati* (people's consent) for building up *sw-raj* (self-governance) and *su-raj* (good-governance).

The concept of *lok-shakti* is very significant in Gandhian Constructive work tradition. *Lok-shakti* refers to the collective capacity or power of the people, expressed or latent, to deliberate, decide and act together. *Lok-shakti*, in order to be effective, must have the quality of ethical virtues and appeal, and it must use non-violent methods for social change. The underlying thought behind the concept of *lok shakti* is that unless the energies and capacities of the community people are mobilized, and they become self-reliant and capable of taking initiative collectively and voluntarily, their development would undoubtedly be slow especially in a democracy. *Lok-shakti* is the essence of democracy. The state power (*rajya-shakti*) cannot fulfill its objectives without *lok-shakti*.

In the Indian context, the sarvodaya movement is one of the finest examples of social action. The process used by Sarvodaya workers is quite similar to the process of social action, with following stages:

*Parichaya* (first introduction): This is a stage of introduction to the clientele and their social needs and problems. In this stage social issues and strategies are introduced to the masses.

*Adhyayan* (survey or study): Information is gathered from the population on the burning issues and its impact on the socio-economic and cultural aspects of life are seen.

*Prachar* (propaganda): It involves creating awareness at the mass level. The propaganda is meant for mass mobilization for taking action at the integrated level.

*Sahavasa* (association): Cooperation is sought from different people and organizations working in the same geographical field and or on the similar issues.

*Seva* (service): Welfare and developmental services are offered to the target population.

*Pratikar* (resistance): It involves coercive measures against the existing authority, which require change of power, structure and/or functioning.

**Construction work or community service:** Emphasis is on the constructive activities carried out at the community level. This enhances the credibility of the movement.

**Building the climate of change:** Social environment is made conducive to positive change.

However, if the emphasis is in rendering of service, then it becomes more akin to community organization than social action. Nonetheless, the concept of *lok shakti* in *sarvodaya* clearly indicates that the emphasis is on change. Common methods used in Gandhian social action are — parades, vigils, posters, teachings, mourning, protest meetings, etc. All these methods are peaceful demonstration of discontent and dissatisfaction.

## Conclusion

Model of social action is a particular manner or modality used in the process of social action for

achieving its objectives. Britto gives two models of social action as:

**Elitist Social Action:** The elite carry out social action exclusively by themselves or with marginal participation of the masses. It has three sub-types. Legislative social action model is a process in which elite groups conduct studies on the gravity of the problems, create public opinion and lobby to try to modify the social policy. In economic sanction model the elites, by gaining control over some economic, social, political or religious weapon try to obtain benefits for the clientele. Direct physical model is a process where elites take the law in their own hands and punish those responsible for the cause of injustice and thus try to bring about benefits to their clientele.

**Popular Social Action:** A large section of people with or without elite participation take confrontational/conflictive action against the injustice. It also has three sub types. Conscientization model is based on Paulo Friere's concept of creating awareness among masses through education. Dialectical mobilization model helps in promoting conflict to exploit the contradictions in a system, with the belief that a better system will emerge as a result. In direct mobilization model, specific issues are taken up by the social actionists and the masses are mobilized to resort to protests and strikes to achieve the objectives.

There are some other models of social action as given by Singh. In institutional (state) model social action initiated by the state or government. In institutional-social model social action is initiated by non-governmental institutions which are aided or unaided by government and later people's active support is sought. In social institutional model social action may be organized by the people for their benefit and they

may seek support from formal institutions working in similar field. Populist/ movemental model is an action of the people, for the people and by the people. Gandhian model of social action has three sub types: Militant non-violent tradition, Gentle non-violent tradition and Citizenship model of constructive work. Lok shakti is the inherent theme behind Gandhian social action.

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## **Strategies and Skills in Social Action**

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### **Introduction**

The process of social action involves usage of a wide range of strategies, tactics and skills by the social activists/actionists to achieve the desired objectives. These strategies, tactics and skills differ while dealing with different stakeholders or target audience like affected community people, policy makers, bureaucrats and officials, change agents, general public, media and the like. For instance, in the first stage of analysis of the social situation, the social actionist relies on skills to find answers to key questions like — what are the problems and key concerns of the marginalized group; existing gaps in the policy layout and implementation of policy objectives; what changes are required at the policy and programmatic levels and how these changes would influence the reference public (marginalized group); types of changes required at legislation, proclamation, regulation, legal decision, institutional practice and other forums — specific instruments for analysis like problem tree, resource (material, human and financial) analysis, PRA/PLA techniques, SWOC (Strength Weakness Opportunities and Challenges) analysis, etc., become quite handy at this stage.

Likewise for mobilization, carefully and consciously, specific strategies are adopted for coalition building,

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strengthening partnerships, reaching consensus/ agreement for resource distribution, building networks, communication for motivation, conflict resolution, dealing with internal dissents and other aspects. There is a clear connecting thread between one stage to the other and success of each stage subsequently helps in forming strategies and tactics at the other stage.

Keeping all partners together with persistence in making the cases are both essential, in carrying out social action. Effectively used communication strategies, at this stage, go a long way in defining the success of social action. Developing and maintaining media support with personal contacts, press release, press conferences and dealing with controversy, holding policy makers accountable for commitments, monitoring public opinion and publicizing positive changes along with time to time public acknowledgement of the roles of various coalition partners are some of the dynamic features of the stage of 'Action'. All these areas of operation require specific expertise and judicious use of strategies. The social actionist/activist must be skillful enough to get all these tasks accomplished effectively. Evaluating the intervention and ensuring sustainability of desired changes would call for different types of skills and strategies. In this unit you would be studying about these aspects of social action at length. A word of caution— merely reading about skills and strategies does not make a person acquire dexterity in these areas. Practice in the field is a must along with critical and analytical thinking abilities.

### **Strategies and Tactics in Social Action**

Social action involves collaboration, motivation, negotiation, mediation, persuasion, confrontation and conflict resolution in its process and, in order to show its dissent against the authority, may adhere to sit-ins,

hunger strike, protest march, boycott, slogan display, and other such strategies and tactics. Strategies and tactics form the core of social action practice. A look at the meaning of strategies and tactics, which, more often than not, are used interchangeably, may be beneficial to understand the concept better.

The dictionary meaning of strategy is plan/ policy/ approach/ stratagem. Likewise, tactic means method/ approach/ course/ ploy/ policy/ device/ scheme/ way/ trick/ maneuver. It may be noted that, though both terms appear quite similar, 'strategy' is a larger term equivalent to form or model of social action while 'tactic' would cater to specific, pinpointed action. Let us examine various strategies and tactics delineated by academicians and researchers being used in the process of social action.

Strategies and tactics provide dynamism to the process of social action. Therefore, forming a consensus on the strategies that are possible and available is quite difficult as newer strategies and tactics are being used with changing times in various stages of social action. Lees has described following main strategies:

- 1) **Collaboration:** In this, the underlying assumption is that to bring about change in power equation, resorting to conflictive strategies are not always necessary. The authority may be responsive and bring out necessary changes to provide equitable resource sharing to the marginalized groups too. In this, social workers collaborate with the local authority and other authorities or agencies with the aim to bring about needed improvements in the existing social policy. This strategy is based on homogeneity of values and interests, through which substantive agreement on proposed interventions is obtainable. In collaborative strategy, the change

in the social structure or institution is brought through peaceful means. Such means are education, persuasion, demonstration, and experimentation.

- 2) **Competition or bargaining, negotiation, advocacy:** The second set of strategies are based on the premise that one anticipates some resistance to change, and the activity of the change agent may have to be accompanied by tactics which are not exclusively persuasive but rather seek to affect change through pressure. In this strategy, contending parties utilize commonly accepted campaign tactics to persuade, to negotiate and to bargain, with the willingness to arrive at a working agreement.
- 3) **Disruption or conflict/confrontation:** Third set of techniques are based on the premise that in the struggle between those who are pro status quo and those who are pro change, resistance is an aspect of the change effort and therefore the dynamic of conflict is inherent in the social action effort. This strategy signifies a more militant approach and it may include strikes, boycotts, fasts, tax-refusal, 'sit-ins' etc. Lees also includes riots and guerilla warfare though these may be omitted by many other social workers as any use of violence will be unacceptable to values and ethics of professional social work.

Likewise, Lees has suggested nine tactics used by social actionists/activists in various stages of social action. These tactics generally overlap across various stages in the process of social action. They are:

1. Research
2. Education
3. Co-operation and
4. Organization
5. Arbitration
6. Negotiation
7. Mild coercion
8. Violation of legal norms
9. Joint action.

Both the overall strategies and tactics suggested by Lees seem to follow a sequence, which may mean that one should begin from a collaboration approach and may resort to a disruption strategy for the achievement of the desired objective if the earlier strategies do not produce the desired results. The use of strategy or the tactics would also depend on the goals selected and the socio-cultural milieu.

Richard Bryant has also postulated two sets of strategies: **Bargaining** and **Confrontation**. Bargaining includes lobbying, submitting petitions, information and publicity campaigns, etc. Similarly, confrontation contains strikes, demonstrations and sit-ins. To this, Singh adds another strategy — **Administrative approach**. He mentioned that “most often than not, any struggle or effort towards drastic or radical change is viewed by the establishment as a law and order problem and therefore, an administrative approach or strategy is adopted to deal with the situation”. It includes persuasion, bargaining, pressure, coercion, infiltration, concession, co-option, splitting, etc.

Further, Hornstein lists certain strategies for social intervention — individual change, techno-structural, data-based, organizational development and culture change, violence and coercion, and non-violent direct action, accommodation, exposures, living examples, public support, presentation of proposals, competition, lobbying, agitation and subversion. Hornstein has classified these strategies or tactics of social action as:

- 1) **Direct action tactics:** Picketing, marches, fraternization, haunting, leafleting and renouncing honours.
- 2) **Non-cooperation:** Strikes, boycott, tax-refusal.
- 3) **Intervention:** Sit in, reversal strike, obstruction.

Next, in the Gandhian tradition, **non-violent protest** and **persuasion, non-cooperation** and **non-violent intervention** have been included as the three broad categories of strategies or methods of social action. In fact these three characteristics of Gandhian social action shares striking similarity with the ethics, values and philosophy of professional social work. It may be noted that though social action requires confrontation, negotiation or persuasion, it does not approve of any violence, or hostility, cruelty and blood shedding. It means that even the discontent is shown in a peaceful manner.

## **Planning Strategies**

Planning is one of the most crucial aspects of the process of social action. It is developing a blue print of the action to be taken. It is often said that good planning is half the work accomplished. In social action, at the planning stage, enough information about the causes of the problem at hand is collected and analyzed. There are certain newer techniques and strategies being used in social action, as we observe in other fields wherever management of people and administration of programmes are involved.

The planning process starts with collection of basic background information about the problem. Identification of causal and precipitating factors, gravity and extent of the problem, socio-economic and cultural background of the marginalized community or section of people, their felt, unfelt needs and aspirations are looked into. Certain strategies becoming handy in this planning stage are as follows:

**Situational analysis:** This strategy gives a clear and comprehensive view of problematic environment and justifies social action. Depending upon the problem at

hand, through research or other objective methods, information is collected about **political factors** (favourable/ unfavourable national and regional policies and programmes; political decision-makers and decision-making mechanisms; relevant local reform policies and strategies; and related legislations and regulations), **Institutional factors** (responsible administrative system and their efficacy related to handling the 'problem'), **economic and financial resources and factors** (economic policy and economic reform and their impact on common people in general and poor in particular; system of micro-credit and loan, etc.), **infrastructure and civic amenities** (any differential, implicit or explicit service delivery system in civic amenities and infrastructure), **social and cultural conditions** (social and ethnic groups, linguistic groups, gender roles, religious and caste system, social values and attitudes and their impact), **environment factors** (natural resources, geographical and climatic conditions and their impact on living conditions of habitants). This would give an overview of the situation that needs to be changed.

**Problem Analysis:** It is more specific and confined approach where not only the root cause of the problem is analyzed but also its multifarious effects. Analysis should be based on objectively identified facts and apparent reasoning of the problem. For instance, in a village of Thakurs and dalits, the latter not getting access to safe drinking water, may be due to political rivalry at the panchayat level and seemingly obvious reason of Thakurs oppressing dalits may not be the real case. It is always useful that this analysis should be participatory and not merely the academic exercise undertaken by the agency taking lead or an intellectual exercise by social work professionals. Participatory Rural Appraisals are quite popular as well as effective not

only as important research tools but also helps in developing good rapport and mobilizing people as it involves affected people in the analysis of their own problems.

**Resource Analysis:** This includes appraising the availability/non-availability of human, material, financial, technical, social and political resources. It also involves identifying stakeholders who have resources which are deficit in the case of marginalized community and strategic planning of redistribution of the same needed for development of disadvantaged group for whom social action is initiated.

**Stakeholder Analysis:** This is a dominant strategy to sharpen the intervention focus and design appropriate strategies ahead for action. Stakeholder analysis provides the social actionist/activist with information about all the stakeholder groups like target groups, direct beneficiaries and final beneficiaries and whether they are favourable or unfavourable. The analysis starts with identifying the various players who are affected by the problem (mainly the marginalized group) or who affect the situation (the oppressor group like state, elite, etc.), might become useful partner (like electronic or print media) or might become conflict partners or threats to the intervention (say, administrators or elected representatives at various levels). Categorizing them according to levels of favourability or unfavourability (for instance, highly favourable, favourable, uncertain, unfavourable or highly unfavourable) would be the next step. Identifying the interest and expectations of various stakeholders and accessing their strengths and potential contributions would be the subsequent step.

**SWOC (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Challenges) Analysis:** This goes hand in hand with stakeholders' analysis. It gives an insight into the

intervention designed for achieving goals. The main actors/leaders/facilitators analyze what are their strengths and weaknesses and well as that of their opponents', what are the opportunities available to them and what are their challenges or constraints. This is basically cost benefit analysis after which intervention strategies are designed.

After understanding the concept and principles of social action, let us take a look at the skills needed by social workers for social action. These skills are no different from the general skills the social worker possesses by imbibing the ethics and principles of professional social work. A social worker using social action, as a method of social work requires certain skills, main among them are dealt with below in brief.

Planning strategies are quite crucial as they lay foundation for success or failure of the intervention. Chances of successful social action are least, if problem is wrongly identified at the initial stage or real cause is not looked into or strengths and weaknesses of partners and opponents are not realized properly. Objectivity, observation, analytical skills, skills to use strategies like SWOC analysis, stakeholders analysis, skills to analyze and present qualitative and quantitative data, skills in research, skills to help people identify their problems and probable solutions, skills to communicate results of baseline study for problem analysis to the target audience are some of the vital skills needed in the planning stage. Planning helps in setting realistic objectives that in turn would help in monitoring and evaluating the intervention. Let us now pay attention to managerial strategies.

### **Managerial/Mobilization Strategies**

Managerial/mobilization strategies would aim at influencing those people who have social, political and

economic power so as to facilitate re-distribution of resources and power with the aim of improving the life of disadvantaged sections of society. It includes — lobbying, public mobilization, mediation, civil disobedience, strikes, dharnas, protests, signature campaigns and legislative efforts ways, to mention a few. Mobilization strategies are meant to facilitate marginalized group raise their voice regarding the oppression and exploitation against them.

Advocacy is considered the key strategy in social action, which in fact, is a combination of various strategies aimed at bringing about change in social systems and influence power and political relations between various social agencies. It is the process of raising the voice on behalf of the weaker sections of the population who lack political powers and economic resources, whose voice die out before reaching the top officials and who depend on the mercy of bureaucracy. Success of advocacy is dependent on the strategy, tactics, capability of leaders and workers, knowledge about the problem, related legislations, policies and appropriate use of media. Advocacy is a powerful tool for intervention. Advocacy may be initiated by anybody, and many successful advocacy campaigns have been initiated by common but knowledgeable and committed people.

Advocacy begins by providing opportunity to people to unite. In this, various groups and communities can be motivated to create public opinion through discussions. Through this process concerning issues, their solutions emerge, and people learn to develop an insight into the solution of problems that affect them. Many a times, advocacy is done simultaneously at various levels. Therefore knowledge about various systems is important. There can be formal as well as informal structure of a system. Only knowledge about the system is not enough, strategies and tactics to influence the

system are also required. One should be able to anticipate how the opposition can counteract your agreement and then what should be your move.

Advocacy may be done at various levels — **personal** level (raising issues concerning daily life), **family** level (gender discrimination, age related issues like child abuse, elderly abuse; not letting a member live life in his/her own terms; unequal distribution of family resources, etc.), **community** level (issues related to community well-being, any section of community not getting equitable share and discriminated against on account of ethnicity, religious, caste bases), **area** (basic amenities and services like water, sanitation, health facilities, school, and other infrastructure not made available by the responsible administrative authorities), **state** (schemes, programmes, implementing policies, political representation, land rights, etc., are not in consonance with equality and social justice), **nation** (influencing policy intervention, human rights, basic rights, interventional conventions, ties and relations for the benefit of poor and disadvantaged) and **International** ( issues related to world trade treaties, international loan, Arms deals, illegal trade, global warming, etc.)

Decisions taken at one level may influence people at other levels. Therefore, for long term and sustainable change, advocacy should be done simultaneously at various levels. For example, if a nation has taken a lot of international loan, it would be difficult to provide primary education to all. Therefore, if we are fighting for the right to education to all, we must also raise the issue of international debt.

Active participation of people in the process of social action would build trust and credibility that are important for mobilization of people. For mobilization,

disadvantaged sections of society or reference targets are informed that people are given equal rights in democracy and it is the duty of the state to protect the rights of its citizens. As a responsible citizen, it is our duty that we too remain alert regarding our rights and related issues. It is known to us that in today's world, violation of rights are not uncommon especially among those who are socially, economically and politically backward. Merely helping people think about their problems in human rights perspective, facilitates mobilization process. Consistent communication with the affected group to keep their spirits high for fighting for their rights would be vital strategy for mobilization.

Mainly three types of advocacy have been identified — Legislative, Bureaucracy and Judiciary advocacy. **Legislative advocacy** aims to influence the legislative process and recommend new legislations, to amend legislations or raise voice against proposed and accepted ordinance or record dissent against implementation of legislations. Legislative processes are held in parliament or Vidhan Sabha. Policies are passed through legislatures, new legislations are made and amendments are made to older ones. For this legislative procedures like question hour (first one hour of the (Parliament) House, lower or upper, is reserved for asking and answering questions, Zero hour (time period between question hour and parliament's next session), adjournment motion, violation of parliamentary privilege, call attention notice, Half-an-hour discussion, no confidence motion, petition, etc., may be used for advocacy purposes. These are some of the procedures, under certain code of conduct and rules and regulations that are maintained in parliament and Vidhan Sabha. Knowledge about these procedures and their functioning can become a powerful advocacy tool for pressure and advocacy groups.

**Bureaucracy advocacy:** At times, rigid bureaucratic structure, red-tapism causes much hurdle in the process of implementation of pro-poor policies and programmes, which calls for social action against the system. At present, Right to Information Act has become a strong tool to fight against negative aspects of bureaucratic system and ensure transparency and accountability. There have been many success stories after the advent of this RTI Act.

**Judicial advocacy** mainly aims to protect public interest, challenge state's anti-poor policies and programmes, enforcing constitutional and legal rights and bringing forward desired changes in the existing legislations. Public interest litigations are filed, participation as Amicus Curie and knocking doors of Supreme Court under Right to Constitutional Remedies are some of the measures advocacy groups can make use of.

This apart, **coalitions and networks** are formed which are groups that come together for a common cause and fulfillment of shared objectives. They are powerful tools for furtherance of advocacy objectives. Any advocacy can be successful only if it involves more and more people, that is why coalitions and networks are developed. The chances of success of an advocacy strategy become higher if it involves many different types of groups (religious, social, youth, women, etc.) as these groups have their own influence reach and public acceptance. A coalition becomes very strong if such groups come together whose association or coming together was considered unexpected. Various groups in coalition possess diverse and multi-dimensional qualities and capabilities, which is shared when these groups come together for a collective reason, making the coalition very strong. These coalitions may be permanent (initially they are temporary but later become permanent, they are structured, have rules,

Board that work under specific well defined regulations, e.g., trade unions, etc.) or temporary (after fulfillment of objective, it is dissolved), formal (membership is specific and paid) or informal, geographic, multi-goal, single goal centred.

**Media advocacy:** It is the most popular strategy in the contemporary scenario. Usage of media for fulfillment of objectives of social action is called media advocacy. Radio, Television, newspapers, street plays, stories, the Internet, and such others, may be used for advocacy. Media advocacy is used not only to create pressure on policy makers and bureaucratic system but also for creating public opinion, mobilizing and involving common man for the cause.

It may be noted that perception of the situation by the leaders or decision-makers and their experience counts much more in the selection of the strategy. To exemplify, in the backward classes or peasant movements, strategies like withdrawal, self-organization, conversion, combining of caste with class, mobilization, division of labour, attacking the monopoly of elite groups by the deprived, use of secular and religious themes, participation in or shunning of elections (democratic political processes), emulation, propaganda, mass-appeal, articulation, of deprivation, sensitization, protest, demonstration, etc. have been used.

Thus, we see that many strategies and tactics are used by the social workers in the process of social action. Here, it may again be reminded that though social action may use strategies such as confrontation and tactics like boycott, sit-ins, rallies, blockades, marches, tax-refusals and other forms of showing disobedience and discontent to the authorities having power and resources, stress is on equitable distribution of resources and power and social justice through a peaceful process.

Let us now talk about a different set of strategies that form the heart of social action. These strategies are 'omnipresent' in the process of social action and are grouped as **Communication strategies**. These communication strategies are used in seeking information, convincing, mobilizing, advocating, motivating, discussing, persuading and negotiating with various stakeholders. Success of social action depends on how well the issue is communicated with stakeholders.

Usage of appropriate strategies ensures mobilization of marginalized sections of the community. In fact, social worker makes use of different communication strategies throughout the process of social action right from rapport formation, in exploring various dimensions, causes, implications of problem at hand, informing marginalized community about problem and its alternative solutions, motivating them to raise their voice against injustice, resolve conflicts, encourage people's participation, negotiate, confront authority, engage in logical disputation and withdraw after the objectives of social action are achieved.

Communication is defined as a process of sending a message through a channel to receiver. The process of communication means sharing information, sending and spreading, receiving and giving message. A message can be verbal or non-verbal or a combination of two. Skills lie in the treatment of the message, which may be used to motivate and mobilize people or argue with the oppressive system. Social workers who have the nick of using appropriate words according to the situation often lead the social action to success. For sending the message across, many channels like posters and banners, street plays, even one-to-one or group meetings, radio, television, newspapers, emails and the internet, etc., can be used.

It is important to take into account the socio-economic background, differential linguistic characteristics, perception, cultural milieu, literacy and educational levels of the stakeholders before conceiving the message to get the desired results. Adequate selection of channel of communication depends on various parameters like capacity of medium to reach to the poor, capacity to seek cooperation, capacity to reach to the common people, cost effectiveness and so on. A good message is the one that is simple, focused on main point, can be easily remembered and can be repeated. Slogans, rhymes, parody of songs often catch attention of the people and explicitly and implicitly help in mobilization.

### **Skills in Social Action**

Look at specific skills needed by social actionist would be beneficial, especially at the planning stage. These can be broadly identified as follows:

**Relational skills:** Social workers (or social actionists or social activists) should have skills for building rapport with individuals and groups and skills for maintaining these relations. They should be able to develop and maintain professional relationship with the clients. The social workers should have the ability to identify the leadership qualities among the clientele and should be skillful to harness these qualities for social action. Along with this, working harmoniously with the established local leaders is needed. They should be able to deal with intra-group and inter-group conflicts effectively. Also ability to diagnose problematic behaviour among the clients and providing counseling is needed to develop and maintain integration within the community people. The social workers should identify tension-producing situations and diffuse them before they become serious. Developing and maintaining cordial relations with other agencies and NGOs working in the same geographical

area and those working for similar causes is also required.

**Analytical and research skills:** Social workers, engaged in social action, should have the ability to objectively study the socio-cultural and economic characteristics of the community. They should be able to find out the pressing problems and needs of the clientele. They should be able to analyze the social problems, contributing factors and its ramifications on the social, economic, political, ideological, cultural, ecological aspects of life. They should be able to conduct research and/or understand the likely impact of research studies in a functional sense. Added to this, the social workers should be able to facilitate the community people to speak out their own felt needs and prioritize them. They should never try to impose their own understanding of the social situation and problems to the community people.

**Intervention skills:** After need identification, the social workers should have the ability to help the clientele chalk out practical intervention strategies to deal with the problem. They should provide various options to the clientele and help them in analyzing pros and cons of each option for taking up proper steps. Social action requires 'confrontation' with authorities. The social workers must inform the community about the consequences of taking up hard steps like sit-ins, boycotts, strikes, etc. They should be able to maintain the desired level of feeling of discontent and emotional surcharge to bring about the necessary change, enthusiasm and courage among the community people for a fairly long time so as to minimize the scope of failure of mass mobilization before the set objectives are achieved. The social workers should be able to maintain patience and composed behaviour, as they have to deal with emotional tranquil of the clientele in a rational way.

Added to this, the social worker should have the ability to create the environment wherein individuals and groups can actively participate. The interventions should be developed keeping in mind the pressing need, resources (human and material) and socio-cultural milieu of the community. They should be able to improvise situations for targeted interventions.

**Managerial skills:** The social workers also need the knowledge and ability to handle organization, which may be the outcome of the institutionalization of people's participation. They should be able to coordinate and collaborate with various groups and local leaders so as to unite the clientele for the required intervention. They should be skillful to make policies and programmes, programme planning, coordinating, recording, budgeting and elementary accounting and maintenance of various records. They should be able to mobilize internal/external resources in terms of money, men, materials, equipment, etc. The social workers also require the skills of supervising human and material resources and their effective utilization for the welfare and development of the targeted community.

**Communication skills:** These skills are highly crucial for social action. The social worker should have the ability to develop effective public relations with local organizations and leaders. They should be able to effectively communicate verbally (including public speaking) and in writing as well. The social workers should be able to deliver or identify adequate people to deliver powerful speeches. They should be able to devise programme media for effectively communicating with the target audiences. The social worker should be able to evaluate and use folk and mass media suited to diverse groups. These skills are used for developing slogans and motivational songs, speeches and IEC materials for mass mobilization. The social workers

should have skills to educate, facilitate, negotiate and persuade for necessary actions at needed places.

**Training skills:** The social workers should be able to train local leaders and identified leaders for taking up the charge of mass mobilization and confrontation with the authorities. They should be able to train selected people at the local level aimed at imparting knowledge about the social issue taken up for action and the modalities of carrying out the intervention including the 'confrontation process'. These people should be trained for creating public opinion for or against the social issue taken up and identify and involve people in social action. They should also be trained to utilize social action strategies and tactics (confrontation, persuasion, negotiation, boycott, etc.) without the use of violence.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, you have studied various strategies and tactics that are used in the social action. In the background of various stages through the process of social action, strategies and tactics have been described. In the planning stage, strategies like stakeholder analysis, SWOC analysis, resource analysis and problem analysis have been described at length. For mobilization and management of social action process, various types of advocacy strategies like legislative advocacy, judicial advocacy, bureaucratic advocacy, network and coalition, media advocacy have been delineated. Importance of communication and communication strategies at various stages of social action have also been dealt with. In the end, skills needed for successful social action have been given in detail.

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## **Social Action: A Method of Social Work**

*\*Archana Kaushik*

### **Introduction**

Social Action as a method of social work profession has attracted much of debate and discussion. The reason for this may be attributed to the origin of social work concept and practice as charity and religious and moral obligation. Social workers are, more often than not, expected to take a softer approach and provide ameliorative and welfaristic measures to the down-trodden and marginalized. Paradoxically, emergence of social work in India can be traced back to struggle for equality and social justice (i.e., social action) while in the western world, case work and group work were more prominent. In the western countries, mental health movements gained momentum and case work and group work as methods of social work practice became more popular. In India, burning issues have been pathetic condition of peasants, sub-human treatment of people belonging to lower caste, marginalization of women, illiteracy, poverty, denial of access to developmental opportunities to certain sections of population etc. Merely providing relief work to downtrodden and marginalized sections of the society could not have ameliorated such conditions, and only structural adjustments and re-distribution of power and resources would have made an impact into the situation.

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Social action has a great historical relevance. At the same time, in the present context too, its significance can in no way be undermined. India is still facing immense challenges in terms of poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, child labour, trafficking of women and children and the like. These problems demand advocacy and social action. Rampant corruption and red-tapism often pose hurdles in reaching the benefits at the grassroots.

After independence, the Constitution of India endowed the responsibility to uplift the downtrodden and marginalized to the 'welfare-state'. In the beginning, government initiated many programmes for the poor but these programmes did not make any change in the situation as 'no structural changes' were done. Planning was done by the top officials who 'assumed the problems of the poor', which, more often than not, did not prove right. Poor themselves were mere passive recipients of benefits.

With empowerment perspective, social action has become all the more relevant as a method of social work practice. In this chapter, we would be learning about the ethical and value base of social action and the principles employed by social workers practicing social action. Let us first understand why social action is and should be considered a method of social work in the professional arena.

### **Social Action: A Method of Social Work**

It may be noted that every profession has a tested body of knowledge, which includes principles, techniques, methods, procedures, tools and terminology and theories of its own. This is applicable for social work profession too. Though social work is interdisciplinary in nature borrowing a lot of concepts from psychology, sociology,

anthropology, and other social sciences, there are certain core concepts, theories and principles that are exclusive to social work profession. In this, methods of working with people (case work, group work, community organization, social action, social welfare administration and social work research) and related values, ethics and principles are involved. These methods are the approaches and techniques of enabling the people to improve their life-conditions and enhance their social functioning.

Why is social action considered a method of professional social work? A method of professional social work is an approach based on the philosophy of social work, with value base, having an established process with easily recognizable stages, principles, theoretical framework, guidelines and well recognized skills, techniques and strategies. Siddiqui (1984) has maintained that social action, as a method of professional social work practice, is an organized effort to change or improve social and economic institutions through organization and mobilization of the community people. Unlike other social work methods, social action emphasizes on essential changes in established social institutions, which are long term. In a broader sense, social action covers movements of social, religious and political reform, social legislation, racial and social justice, human rights, freedom and civic liberty. When seen in the context of empowerment and human rights, social action is the most apt method that helps a large section of the population to benefit from its efforts. It is directed for long-term changes, finding and ameliorating the root cause of problems affecting the masses and hence tend to ensure sustainability.

Further, like any other method of social work, social action, too, follows a process with recognizable and systematic stages. Initially, critical analysis with

scientific methods of research, minimizing the biases, are undertaken to find out the real cause(s) of the problem at hand along with enlisting contingent and precipitating factors. In this regard, new scientific strategies like problem analysis, stakeholder analysis, SWOC analysis and the like are taken up, details of which would be delineated in the next unit. This is followed by communicating the causes of problem at hand to the community people, which requires careful designing of message, channels of communication keeping in mind the socio-cultural background of the people (receivers) with the aim to ensure collective and collaborative action to solve the problem. Third stage is of organizing people for coordinated and directed intervention and designing appropriate strategies and techniques for action to achieve the goals and lastly, take the action. Social work professionals or actionists are well-equipped with knowledge and skills, process, strategies, theoretical base required in different stages.

Despite the fact that social action is likely to come in conflict with existing social institutions, systems and structure, it still has a strong adherence to values, ethics and philosophy of social work profession. Believing in the worth and dignity of every human being, it strongly idealizes with democracy and social justice. It does not blame people for the deficiencies or problems that they are encountering. It strongly believes that human beings have capabilities to solve the problems that affect them. Social action rejects the doctrine of laissez faire and survival of the fittest and maintains that the unfit person has the same fundamental rights as does the more fit or the rich or the powerful. People's participation in their own development is an important assumption in social action. Details of values, ethics and principles would be given in the next sections of this unit.

Social action has well-defined sets of goals and objectives. Prime aim of social action is redistribution of resources and power to provide social justice to all sections of the population. Its objective is the proper shaping and development of socio-cultural environment in which a richer and fuller life may be possible for all the citizens. Social action intends for real solutions of the mass problems. For instance, from social action perspective, poverty is taken as not merely lack of income but the denial of availability of opportunities for growth and development, of leading a meaningful quality life — a derivative of human right to life and liberty. In that context, casework, group work would become irrelevant to achieve the goal of giving decent standards of life to masses living below poverty line. Social action would call for participation of affected citizens (say, poor people) in the planning and execution of intervention for their own upliftment and bringing about necessary changes in the social institutions aimed at more equitable resource distribution and share in decision-making process.

The uniqueness of social action, as a method, lies in the fact that it is likely to employ certain strategies and tactics like competition, disruption, strikes, boycotts, fasts, tax-refusal, sit-ins, picketing, marches, fraternization, haunting, leafleting, reversal strike, obstruction, renouncing honours, etc. to attain its goals, which makes it different from other social work methods. Here, it may be stressed that violence and blood-shedding are not at all included in strategies used to confront the authorities, rather peaceful protests and non-violent ways to record dissent form the key thread of social action.

Social action is a method of social work, which is, used for/with/by unprivileged sections of the society. It is an organized effort to change or improve social and

economic institutions, as distinguished from other methods of social work, which do not characteristically cover essential changes in established institutions through confrontation with the authorities. It may be described as organized group effort to solve mass problems or to further socially desirable objectives by attempting to influence or change basic social and economic conditions or practices. It aims to bring about necessary changes in the social legislations and policy initiatives for mass betterment. Thus, social action, as a method of social work profession, is a powerful tool of bringing about positive changes in the social system for the betterment of large sections of deprived population.

### **Values Aand Ethics of Social Action**

Though social action comes in conflict with the existing social institutions, systems and even social structure, deals with power equation in the political arena, it strongly roots itself to the ideology, values and ethics of social work profession. It commits itself to the cause and has complete faith in democratic processes and dignity and worth of human beings.

The prime goal of social worker is to reduce suffering and enhance social functioning. As stated earlier, social action does not believe in social Darwinism or survival of the fittest. You may recall that overall goal of social work profession is to facilitate increase in social functioning by solving conflicting issues, enhancing the capacity of the clients to resolve their problems themselves and establish an egalitarian social system. Establishing an egalitarian system is also the goal of social action. In fact, social action as a method of social work is used where inequality in terms of resource distribution is seen in the social system that puts a section of population to marginalization. For instance,

country is recording high economic growth but at the same time nearly a half of the population is living below poverty line or in poor economic condition. This means that resources and opportunities for development are in the hands of a few and there is hardly any representation from weaker sections of the population in the decision-making process. In this context, social action is aimed at influencing and modifying policies and social legislations so that people from all sections of the society are represented in the decision-making process regarding distribution of resources. Enactment of 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments that provided one-third reservation to women and proportionate reservation (as per the configuration in general population) to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is one such effort directed to provide equitable share in decision-making process.

Values of social work profession are described as equality, social justice, equity, liberty and dignity of human beings, social action also indeed rests on these values. It addresses inequality that leads to vulnerability, marginalization, destitution, oppression and exploitation. Ensuring human rights in every individual is the basic goal of social action as well as social work (Empowerment perspective). A look at Human Rights as per the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) would be quite beneficial in understanding the value and ideological base of social work in general and social action in particular as these Rights form the backbone of social action and provide conceptual framework for intervention. These include:

- Right to freedom and inequality (no discrimination on the basis of caste, class, race, etc.)
- Right to Live (life, liberty, security)
- Right to Health

- Right to live without being subject to torture
- Right to Marry and Found a family
- Right to Education
- Right to Cultural Practices
- Right to Religion
- Equality and Protection of Law
- Right to Vote, Citizenship
- Right to Expression
- Right to Property
- Right to Work

You would see a link between Human Rights and values on which social action rests. This also derives the tasks of social worker who aims to protect and ensure human rights to all individuals — any violation of the above mentioned Human Rights calls for the intervention of social actionists. So, gender discrimination, stigmatization and oppression based on caste, class, exploitations with people belonging to specific regions, religion, etc., demand advocacy and social action.

Social action believes in the inherent worth, dignity and integrity of individuals. It has strong conviction in democratic functioning and equal opportunities for all. Social action is based on the assumption that it is the duty of the state to ensure distributive justice and fairly equitable social change. The state should be accountable and transparent for protection of human rights of common man. The social change, in real sense, is initiated from the grassroots and policies are just the medium of that social change. People and civil society should be united to raise their concerns against violations of human rights. It is the duty of the state to ensure human rights of each and every citizen. General public is not the receptive beneficiary of state's doles and obligations.

Social justice and Human rights form the moral fiber of social action. It commits itself to protect the rights of marginalized sections of the society. Fully believing in democratic values and inherent dignity and rights of each and every individual, it envisages preparing downtrodden to raise voices for their own self. Social action has a vision of creating a just society where all the people get equal opportunity for optimum growth and development. Social Action believes in creating a social environment where common man's political, economic, social and cultural rights are realized. Social action believes in promotion of democracy and empowerment of civil society.

Let us now pay attention to ethics of social workers/ social actionists. First, they should have complete trust and faith in basic human dignity (social action is initiated where a particular group/community is denied of rights and opportunity of dignified life and entire focus is on restoring/providing/ensuring/protecting dignity and rights to disadvantaged people). Second, social workers/activists have responsibility towards clients and community (this binds the social workers with a moral/ethical obligation to work for the cause of downtrodden; social workers, ethically, cannot close eyes from any form of exploitation, deprivation, marginalization of masses). Third, ethical consideration is social workers' responsibility towards employing agency (though social workers are expected to adhere to the aims and objectives of the employing agency, this, sometimes, may put them into dilemma if the agency opts to keep away from raising the voice against injustice done to downtrodden). Fourth and last, the responsibility towards profession of social work (the social worker is morally and ethically indebted to abide by the values and ideologies of social work profession).

From the above discussion, let us derive the goals and objectives of social work professionals engaged in social action. Objectives of social action can be described as —

- To introduce structural changes for equitable redistribution of resources available in society,
- To promote the realization of potentials of the target population,
- To eradicate social evils as against human dignity,
- Curb abuse and exploitation,
- Conserve physical, social mental and moral health, and
- Strengthen the existing social institutions conducive for promoting people's well being.

### **Principles of Social Action**

The efforts of desired social change and political action are important ingredients of social action. Social action deals with power equations and decision-making process that results in skewed or equitable resource distribution. Though social action has a wide canvas and may include entire gamut of activities from relief, charity and welfare to reform, the term has a clear socio-political connotation. This feature of social action has been well articulated by Sharma (1991) as "Social action is a conscious collective action against exploitation and oppression at a local level. It is at once critical and constructive. It is critical in that it offers a critique of the structures of exploitation and oppression, their micro mechanisms and operative forms in a local situation. It is constructive in that it involves positive strategies of alternate development for the poor and the deprived. It is social in the sense that it is a joint action as also in that it is aimed at transforming the situations of the

underprivileged...” (1991:2). After understanding the values and ethics of social action, let us pay attention to the principles that act as guidelines in the process of social action. These principles are given by Britto (1984) and are well grounded to Gandhian ideology of social action. Following principles of social action have been delineated:

**The Principle of Credibility Building:** Building credibility is most important factor for mobilizing people and initiating social action. It is a very crucial task of creating positive public image regarding the leadership, ability to stand firm for the cause, reliability of worker’s efforts and the organization. People should have trust and confidence in the participants of the movement as champions of justice, rectitude and truth. It helps in securing due recognition not only from the primary stakeholders or disadvantaged people (the reference public) for/with whom social action is initiated but also from opponents and the peripheral participants of the movement.

Credibility can be built through one or many of the following ways:

- 1) **Gestures of goodwill towards the opponent:** For instance, when Gandhiji was in England, World War I broke out. He recruited students for service in a British Ambulance Corps on the Western Front. These gestures of goodwill towards the opponents built up the image of Gandhiji as a true humanitarian personality. His philosophy of non-violence facilitated the credibility-building process among his opponents, the British.
- 2) **Example setting:** Example setting is important to show to reference public as well as all the stakeholders that conviction and commitment, values and ethics for which you are raising voice

are not utopian and can be practiced in real life. It ensures credibility of your message and action. Gandhiji's entire life was the reflection of what he preached — non-violence, tolerance and insistence on truth. There was no difference in practice and praxis. This has set the example that a life of non-violence, truth can be lived successfully. Similarly, Dr. Rajendra Singh, the Magsaysay award winner of 2001, had set examples of water conservation in many villages of Rajasthan, by making check-dams, through mobilization of village resources (manpower, cash and kind) before starting water-conservation movement on a much larger scale.

- 3) **Selection of typical, urgently felt problems for struggles:** The leader/social actionist gains credibility if s/he focuses on the felt-needs of the people. Scarcity of water has remained one of the pressing problems for the people of Rajasthan. When Dr. R. Singh initiated his intervention on this issue, his credibility was automatically established. You can very well imagine if Dr. Singh would have taken any other problem like women exploitation or illiteracy, then generating the felt need for these would have taken ample time slowing down the process of credibility building.
- 4) **Success:** Successful interventions help in setting up credibility of the leader as well as the philosophy he/she is preaching. Seeing the successful work of Dr. R. Singh in certain villages of Rajasthan, State government also came forward to extend its support. Local leaders from various other villages and NGO professionals also approached him for help.

**Principle of Legitimization:** Legitimization is the process of convincing the target group and the general public that the movement-objectives are morally and

ethically right. If leaders present the cause they are fighting for as a moral imperative, it legitimizes the movement or social action initiative. Social actionists may give justification with theological, philosophical, legal-technical base to legitimize the goal of social action. The example of **theological and religious approach** to legitimization is reflected when Gandhiji, during freedom movement, appealed to serve *dharma* by revolting against injustice of British. **Moral approach** to legitimization would be when you, as social actionist, try to create a public opinion that a particular behaviour is morally right or wrong. For instance, people in the Campaign Against Child Labour, have through peaceful rallies, persuasive speeches, media usage, have made efforts in creating an environment in the country where employing children in any occupation is considered morally wrong. There was an appeal made to public for awakening their moral conscience, to make sure that all children below the age of 14 years go to school instead of earning a livelihood. Thirdly, **Legal-technical approach** to legitimization is seen when Ms Aruna Roy and later on Mr. Arvind Kejriwal initiated campaign for Right to Information that resulted in RTI Act of 2005. This was based on the argument that it is our fundamental right to get the information on matters, affecting us and transparency and accountability are pillars of efficient democratic functioning.

It may be noted that legitimization is a continuous process. Before launching the programme, the leaders justify their action. Subsequently, as the conflict exhilarates to higher stages and as the leader adds new dimension to their programme, further justification is added and fresh arguments are put forth. Such justification is not done by leaders alone, but followers also contribute to the legitimization process in the course of their participation.

**Principle of Dramatization:** Principle of Dramatization is directed for mass mobilization by which the leaders of a movement galvanize the population into action by emotional appeals to heroism, sensational news-management, novel procedures, pungent slogans and such other techniques. Almost every leader mobilizing the masses, uses this principle of dramatization. Gandhiji, Vinoba Bhave, Subhash Chandra Bose, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, and other leaders resorted to this principle.

- 1) **Use of songs:** Catchy songs, which put forth the cause of a movement, create a dramatic effect. In a village of West Bengal, child-activists have made parody songs and rhymes giving messages on girl child education, on keeping houses and surroundings clean, anti-alcoholism and the like, which they would collectively sing. Also, during freedom struggle, at Bardoli, local talent was tapped to compose songs to stimulate the enthusiasm of the people. Several choirs were trained and they traveled from village to village in a bullock cart to sing satyagrahic hymns at numerous meetings.
- 2) **Slogans:** *do boond zindagi ki* (for pulse polio campaign) *ho HIV avastha ka gyan toh bani rahe muskan* (for HIV testing), *sab padhen sab badhen* (for Sarva Sikhsha Abhiyan), etc., are some of the slogans used to give dramatic effect to various social movements. In the next unit, concept and strategies of social marketing would be described, that are newer strategies and approaches to draft appropriate messages and chose relevant channels of communication.
- 3) **Powerful speeches:** This is also a crucial way of motivating the masses and creating dramatic-effect. Gandhiji's appeal to sacrifice and martyrdom was

thrilling and it had a special appeal for the youth to work for the cause.

- 4) **Role of women:** Making prominent women lead marchers was a technique, which gave a dramatic effect to the movement. At Rajkot, Kasturba Gandhi herself inaugurated the civil disobedience movement by courting arrest first.
- 5) **Boycott:** Boycott is a dramatic way of influencing public opinion both when the effort is successful and when it is crushed. It means excluding a particular group from enjoying the privilege of social interaction, status and social prestige. Picketing and 'hartals'- voluntary closure of shops and other organizations, were used by Gandhiji to dramatize the issue.

**Principle of Multiple Strategies:** Also known as basket principle, this indicates the adoption of a multiple strategy, using combined approaches and also a combination of different types of programmes. So, conflictual and non-conflictual approaches can be simultaneously used. Based on the main thrust of programmes, they can be classified as political, economic or social. Zeltman and Duncan have identified four development strategies from their experience of community development, which are:

- 1) **Educational strategy:** As one of the basic requirements of social action, this strategy is used to educate/inform the prospective participants about various relevant dimensions of the issue(s) at hand at the individual, group and mass level. People or target groups are given information about the issue, awareness is created and people are motivated, persuaded to participate in the action/movement. During campaign for Right to Information, NGOs, civil society organizations,

teachers, students at university level, media and others were educated about the required details who in turn created awareness in their respective areas through educational strategy. Education by demonstration is an important aspect of this principle. Demonstration has proved its impact on the knowledge retention of the target population.

- 2) **Persuasive strategy:** Persuasive strategy is the adoption of a set of actions/procedures to bring about change by reasoning, urging and inducing others to accept a viewpoint. Students of social work, in their field work at one of the resettlement colonies of Delhi used this strategy with the opinion leaders, officials at Municipal Corporation of Delhi at various levels, to ensure that the designated sweepers collect garbage regularly and cleanliness is maintained in the community. In fact in every rally, protest demonstrations focus is laid on winning new converts by oratory and gentle presentation of arguments.
- 3) **Facilitative strategy:** This refers to a set of procedures and activities to facilitate the participation of all sections of society in the mass movement. The programme Gandhians devised was often so simple and devoid of any risk that even illiterate children could do them and participate in the National Liberation Movement. In salt-satyagraha, Gandhiji did not go to the technicalities of salt making. He simply asked the followers to make consumable salt by boiling the sea-water. Its simplicity did facilitate greater participation.
- 4) **Power strategy:** It involves the use of coercion to obtain the objectives of social action. The forms of coercion may vary ranging from social exclusion or ostracism, denial of opportunity to smooth functioning to defaming, protests, moral pressure

by hunger strike and sit-ins. Medha Paketar's hunger strike unto death during Narmada Bachao Andolan was one of the techniques of power strategy. Media's role in defaming top-shot personalities and police during Campaign: Justice for Jussica (Jussica Lal Murder Case) is another example of usage of this power strategy. In a village of West Bengal, Gauri, a nine years old girl, locked her father in the room despite repeated requests and persuasions he would not give up alcohol. After two days, when she opened the door, her friends, the child activists, sang songs on devastating effects of alcoholism. Her father knew that he should give in as social situation has changed along with power equation in his family.

**Principle of Dual Approach:** In social action, it is important for activist to develop counter-systems or revive some moribund system, meeting some of the felt needs of the reference group. Since, in social action, there is an attempt to destroy the established/maintained system, it is important that simultaneously constructive systems may be developed. Gandhian constructive work programme performed such a function, in a small measure, together with conflictual programmes of satyagrahis. This cooperative effort indicates that Gandhians adopted or attempted a dual approach in their mobilization. In villages of West Bengal, child activists, through their bal vahinis, balika vahinis, initiated social action against a number of social evils present in their community like alcoholism, denial of right to education of girl child, corruption, apathetic attitude of panchayat to carry out any developmental work in the village, to mention a few. Simultaneously, they built approach road for their village through shrum daan where small and elder children collectively, in scorching sun built the road brick by brick, showing to

their elders that dependence on others (including government) for their own development is not at all required.

**Principle of Manifold Programmes:** It denotes developing a variety of programmes with the ultimate objective of mass mobilization. These can be broadly categorized into three parts: Social, Economic and Political programme. Dr. Rajendra Singh has taken up the issue of water conservation as a composite of Manifold Programmes. His conservation helped the villagers, particularly women, who had to go miles to fetch water. It helped in better development of crops, better animal husbandry, implying the economic benefits. During the movement, there were direct and indirect conflict resolutions with the local leaders, panchayat bodies and state government.

### **Relation with other Methods of Social Work**

Social Action being one of the methods of social work practice shares striking similarities with other methods. Added to this, it does utilize other social work methods in the process of attaining its goal of community empowerment. In fact, we observe that social workers/activists, in the process of social action, make use of other methods of social work so much so that at times social action is considered the amalgamation of different methods of social work. This section is intended to increase your understanding of the relation of other methods of social work with that of social action. Let us first pay attention to social casework.

It may be reiterated that social casework is a method of social work to help individuals to cope more effectively with their social problems. There is a strong interdependence between the society and issues

influencing individuals, so is the micro-macro relation between social matters. Ecological approach looks at problems or issues at hand as dysfunctional interaction between family or individual in the family and the social system like neighbourhood, workplace, legal system, education system in the society. Social activists may come across a social problem affecting a client during casework process and may realize that the most apt way of intervention would be social action. Psycho-social problem, say, acute anxiety or depression, identified during casework, may have links with communal riots in the community followed by insensitive measures of rehabilitation adopted by the state. Similarly, casework with an unemployed rural man, where National Rural Employment Guarantee Act is functional, may drive caseworker to take up social action to resolve the problem. Also, the client may be having the same social problem, which the social worker is addressing, at the macro level through social action. In such a situation, caseworker needs to build confidence and faith among the client and prepare him/her to be a part of social action process.

Further, during initial process of credibility building in the community, the social worker may take up casework in dealing with those members of the clientele group or may use this method later on if some opinion leader/leader/core member is showing deviant behaviour adversely affecting the process of social action. Added to this, the skills a social worker uses for social investigation and diagnosis during casework process, learning human behaviour, psycho-social problems, using case-worker-client relationship for building confidence and courage in the client for solving his/her problems becomes quite handy in the process of social action when the social worker has to deal with not only one individual but many types of personalities

simultaneously and keep them integrated for the targeted social goals.

Let us study relation between social action and social group work, which is a method through which the individuals develop the ability of establishing constructive relationships with each other through group activities. Group experiences are the essential needs of human beings. Social group work helps build in the process of social action. Group members learn organization, cooperation, coordination, interdependence and democratic values and working together for specific goals, through participation in activities of group process. Further, group work process provides a learning ground to take criticisms positively, respecting each other's views, emotional control and tolerance, empathy and sympathy, shedding away prejudices and biases thereby enhancing capacity of problem solving. It teaches members to keep their personal likes-dislikes, aspirations, perceptions, ego-hassles aside and work towards the goals planned by the group as a whole. Such a learning opportunity prepares the individuals for a social change and chances of failure of a movement due to internal conflicts are substantially minimized. Social group work also explores leadership qualities among its members. These leaders, in turn, take up the responsibility of mass mobilization and targeted activities in social action process. All this learning becomes handy in social action process when community is mobilized for a social cause.

Added to this, social group work also helps the social worker to refine his/her skills of dealing with different personalities to work for common goals, resolving intra-group conflicts and personality clashes. These skills and experiences become handy while dealing with conflicting situations between different groups during the process of social action. The group worker makes

use of programme media in social group work. It contributes to programme planning and management in a better way while dealing with many groups during social action process. Experiences of social group work with one group help a lot in managing many groups when the whole community is mobilized for a common social cause.

In the same way, social action shares many similarities with community organization. In fact, many social workers consider social action a model of community organization itself. The debate has connecting threads in differential usage of term — community — to some it is merely a geographical one, to others, it may have functional connotation. Community organization is an integral part of social action. It is the precursor or pre-requirement to social action. In fact, many of the social work professionals consider social action as an extension of community organization. This implies that organizing community is backbone of social action. This makes many strategies and techniques in common especially those related to mass mobilization.

Thus, we observe that 'organizing people or community or target population' is the common thread between community organization and social action. In both the methods of social work, people are helped to realize their needs or problems and in finding out the solutions to their felt needs. People organize themselves, collaborate and cooperate and work together for a commonly accepted goal. An environment is created in which the community people feel confidence and gain faith that together they would be able to solve their pressing problems or meet their needs.

So, we see that social action is community organization with the aim of bringing about or preventing long lasting social problems where confrontation with the existing

authority is involved. When merely mobilizing the community to work together by identifying required resources, the development is not sufficient for achieving the set goals, as resources or power to use resources are in the hands of a few people. Social action comes into play when people's participation is the key term common in both the methods of social work.

A brief look at social welfare administration as a method of social work would now be essential. It is the process by which professional competence is applied for transforming social policy into social action. Ingredients of administration are planning, implementing, direction, monitoring, organization, coordination and evaluation. It is the process of service delivery meant for welfare and development of weaker and marginalized sections of population. If the agency is working for abolition of child labour system and rehabilitation of working children, then social worker has to opt for social action to achieve this organizational goal. Similarly, social problems like female foeticide, exploitation and abuse of women, alcoholism and drug addiction, poverty, require adequate change at the policy level along with complimentary social legislations and supportive programmes, which, at times, may require advocacy at various levels — micro, meso and macro, if we intend to have long term sustainable impact of our intervention, which is undoubtedly social action.

Skills learnt as an administrator also becomes handy in social action. Adequate conscious planning is almost half the battle won. Nowadays, newer techniques like stakeholders' analysis, problem analysis, SWOC analysis, creative search of options and such others are used for social action too. Managerial skills are a must — the ability to place right person for the right job, conflict management, effective use of authority and power, training and dealing with burnouts — are a few

skills of administrator/manager that go a long way in ensuring success of social action. Social action requires whole gamut of activities like identification and adequate representation of problem at hand, maintaining motivation, delegating responsibilities and taking feedback, dealing with deviants and opponents, management of diverse personalities in the process of mass mobilization, framing adequate workable strategies at various stages that require communication with various stakeholders, handling human, financial and material resources and many more — managerial/administrative skills go a long way in realizing the goals of social action.

Next, social work research is the systematic study of social problems, and its objective is to produce knowledge that can be used in planning and carrying out social work programmes including social action. Social work research is a very powerful tool in social action. It helps in 'knowing' the social problem, its intensity and extensiveness, its causal factors, its impact on the target population and its repercussions on social life of the people. It also gives understanding of the factual ground realities (and not mere perceptions) of the social situations, which in turn helps in conceptualizing the pros and cons of various possible social interventions. So, a systematic study of a social problem, and looking for remedies through social work intervention, is a must for the attainment of goals through social action.

Social planning and social action would be ineffective without proper research. Social work research enables social workers to satisfactorily assess the needs of the community and make their interventions and programmes very effective, useful and worthwhile. The social worker shares the findings of social work research with the community people through groups and then with people's participation, careful and meticulous

interventions are chalked out for social action. It helps the social worker to observe and record the relationship of individuals and groups in actual operating situations. Through social work research, the social worker or social activist gets the right perspective or picture of the social problem, which is so very essential for the success of social action in attaining its goal.

Nowadays, social workers/activists are increasingly making use of integrated approach to social work, details of which are discussed in this unit of this block.

### **Relation with Social Movement**

Indian history has a rich heritage of inspiring social movements. It shares strong resemblance with social action, in terms of its goal as well as process. Marginalized communities have mobilized themselves to raise their voice against exploitation and violation of their rights, whenever the state has failed to safeguard their livelihood and rights. Blumer (1957) defines social movement as collective enterprises to establish a new order of life. This definition reflects that social action and social movement, both have similar goal — that of bringing change in the existing system/structure to ensure equality and social justice. Both the processes focus on equity or fair play, social justice and empowerment of the downtrodden/marginalized/exploited sections of the society. Mass mobilization forms the crux of both the processes under review. Women's movement, tribal movement, dalit movement, students' movement, and the like are some of the examples of social movement.

Prominent social movements can be traced back to Bhakti movement when Kabir, Nanak, in their preaching condemned a lot of the then existing social evils. Social reform movement made efforts to bring improvement in

status of women and downtrodden communities, as they addressed sati abolition, widow remarriage, women's education, caste discrimination, untouchability, rigidity of practicing profession based on caste and many more. Gradually social reform movements, during that period, merged into freedom movement. After Independence too, many social activists have taken up various issues related to injustice and exploitation on specific sections of population and initiated movements. Chipko movement, in 1968, in Tehri Garhwal, the then Uttar Pradesh, was recorded as the first environmental movement in India. There were certain issues like rampant commercial exploitation of timber in that area and state policy seemed to be hostile and indifferent towards the needs of poor hilly habitants whose subsistence was dependent on forest products. Private contractors, individual businessmen, wood merchants and owners of forest based industries exploited forests for decades. This excess deforestation resulted in overflow of Alaknanda river in 1970, washing away of fields, crops, property and human settlements, massive devastation in hills. This led to protests against timber contractors where hill women saved large numbers of trees from felling by physically embracing them with a slogan, 'Chop me before you chop my tree', saving them from the axe of contractors.

Other notable movements have been fishermen's movement in Kerala, students' movement after Mandal Commission, Medha Patkar's initiative to stand by the villagers affected by building dam on Narmada river in Gujarat, when in the name of development villagers inhabiting near the banks of Narmada were evacuated without proper rehabilitation. She sat on fast unto death for the cause of people affected by Narmada.

Let us now look at some of the common factors, differentiating between social movement and social

action. Though social movement appears to be quite similar to social action, it has many differentiating features. Wilkinson (1971) has stated that a social movement is a deliberate collective endeavour to promote change in any direction and by any means, not excluding violence, illegality, revolution or withdrawal into 'utopian' community. This gives the differentiating point between social action and social movement. Social action, strictly denies usage of any illegal, violent means in their strategies. Despite the fact that social action comes in conflict with the existing configuration and functioning of social system/institution/structure, it rejects violence and blood-shed and resorts to peaceful means of expressing protest and dissent. The professional social worker acts as a facilitator rather than leader and shows firm conviction in the values, ethics and principles of social work. Contrarily, social movement, more often than not, led by local leaders who may or may not route their movement to violent and unlawful activities to achieve the goal. Personal ego clashes in a disguised way in ideological fights which may hamper social movement as we see in the case of Chipko movement between two leaders, Sunderlal Bahuguna and Chandi Prasad Bhat. Social worker has expertise to mobilize the public and maintain sustainability, which leaders (often non-social work professionals) in social movement do not have.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, we gained better understanding of social action as a method of social work. Its objective is to achieve social justice and empowerment of the community, particularly the marginalized sections of the society. It rests on values of social justice, equality and fair play and aims to protect the rights of disadvantaged sections of the society.

In this chapter, principles of social action (the principle of credibility building, principle of legitimization, principle of dramatization, principle of multiple strategies, principle of dual approach and principle of manifold programmes) have been described at length with suitable examples indicating the relevance and specificities of principles.

Being one of the methods of social work, social action shares similarities with other methods of social work as well as makes use of these methods at various stages in the process of action. Social case work and group work can be taken as the base to social action where people are mobilized to confront authorities. Social action is considered to be a step forward to community organization. Social work research helps in objective and critical perception of the social problem. Social welfare administration prepares the ground to social workers to launch the community for social action. Social workers utilize skills of other methods of social work in the process of social action.

Social action also shares striking similarities with social movement. The chapter also describes the areas of differences between the two processes. The chapter portrays a comprehensive picture of social action as a method of social work practice.

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## **Social Welfare Administration: Concept, History and Nature**

*\*Beena Antony*

### **Introduction**

In earlier times, social welfare was performed by a select few individuals or small groups of individuals who were inspired by compassion and concern for the poor, the needy and the destitute. These people were either the elite of the society or the common men, who believed in the qualities of humanism and selfless service to the community. In modern times, most of the countries have adopted the concept of a welfare state that makes welfare services the responsibility of the state. The encyclopedia of social sciences describes a welfare state as a state that takes up the responsibility to provide a minimum standard of existence to its citizens. In a welfare state, the administration enters into economic, political, social and educational life of individuals. The citizens of the country are taken care of from their birth to their death. The state provides service to the old, sick, orphans, widows, helpless, oppressed and the disabled people whenever they are in need of services.

The progress and prosperity of any country can be observed by the socio-economic positioning of its citizens mainly the deprived sections of the society that are the women, children, scheduled castes, tribal and the disabled population who suffer from poverty, disease,

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unemployment and many other social deprivations. It is essential that such sections of our society must be noticed by the state, policy makers, planners, social welfare administrators, social scientists and academicians, so that legislations, policies and programmes are formulated in line with the Constitution of our country. As a result the country progresses as a whole, not just some sections doing well and others being left behind.

In the context of the present day social problems, the size of welfare services provided by an increasingly large number of organizations make administration very important. Social welfare services, schemes, projects and programmes, are becoming increasingly complex. Since, it is no longer accepted that any normally intelligent person with good intentions can administer the welfare work, a sound administration is vital. It is increasingly realized that social welfare programmes require qualified and trained social welfare personnel to perform social welfare functions efficiently. So, it is argued that for serving the people effectively it is necessary to be professional, as professionalism can increase the ability of social welfare personnel to solve the pressing social problems confronting our society. The training of a social worker to be a professional would be incomplete without social welfare administration. Thus, we can say there are six methods of social work practice — case work, group work, community organization, social action, social research and social welfare administration. Social welfare administration aims to apply professional competence to achieve social work goals. Social work's aim is to provide service to individuals in the society and social welfare administration is the 'business' of social work. Social welfare administration helps in professionally doing social work in the society.

## **Concepts Related to Social Welfare Administration**

In this section we shall introduce you to some of the concepts that must be understood before we get to understand what Social Welfare Administration is all about.

### **Social Work**

It is based on a systematic body of knowledge derived from research and practice, from different fields of social work. Social work acknowledges the complexity of interactions between human beings and their environment, and the capacity of people both to be affected by and to alter the multiple influences upon them including bio-psychosocial factors. The social work profession is derived from theories of human development and behaviour and social systems and works for individual, organizational, social and cultural changes for the betterment of the society. Social work is committed to the pursuit of social justice, to the improvement of the quality of life and to the development of the full potential of each individual, group and community in the society. It seeks to address and resolve social issues at every level of society and economic status, but especially among the poor and sick. Social workers are concerned with social problems, their causes, their solutions and their human impacts. Social workers work with individuals, families, groups, organisations and communities. Social workers need to equip themselves with social welfare administration to work better in the field of social work.

### **Social Development**

Is the process of focused change to meet objectives and goals desired in the society. Development means

progressive change in the living conditions and qualities of life of the members of the society. The process of social development is growth in the direction of modernity, nation-building and socio-economic progress. Development has to be a whole, value laden, cultural process, including the natural environment, social relations, education, production, consumption and well being of the whole nation. When we talk social development we do not mean just the infrastructure development of the country we mean development of the people of the country, all human beings must have a satisfying material, cultural and spiritual life. Thus social development is the transformation of the society. It is very essential that social welfare administration be practiced to bring in the required social development in our country.

### **Social Welfare**

It is a dynamic process that circles around social problems and ways in which society responds to these problems. Social problems affect individuals and the society at large. Social problems come from unfulfilled individual needs. Individuals have a variety of needs, some more basic like food, clothes and shelter, some more sophisticated like dignity and status, some are intangible like love and affection. These needs are usually met by the individuals themselves or their family or the society in which they live. But when these needs are unfulfilled they lead to social problems. Some of the social problems present in our society are poverty, inadequate housing, unemployment, loneliness and crime. The whole body of remedial and ameliorative services for the weaker sections of our society are covered by social welfare. These include curative and preventive services. Social welfare contributes to change and adjustment of social institutions to the creation of the

required infrastructure of community services and can enable people to accept and provide social change for over all development.

Social welfare is also understood as those formally organized and socially sponsored institutions, agencies and programmes that operate to improve and maintain the economic conditions, health or inter-personal competence of some sections of the population or of all the population. Thus social welfare implies reordering of socio-economic relations in the present society, which is undergoing rapid transformation. Social welfare can be defined as “The organized system of social welfare institutions designed to aid disadvantaged individuals and groups to attain satisfying standards of life and health. It aims at personal and social relationship which permits individuals to develop their full capacities and the promotion of their well-being in harmony with the needs of the community” (Titmus, 1968).

### **Social Welfare Agency**

It is an organization or an institution that provides treatment and preventive services in social welfare. These agencies practice social work, according to the objectives laid down by the agency. Social welfare agencies are of three kinds. First the governmental agencies which function according to the governmental setup, run and controlled by the government and funded by the taxes collected. Second are the voluntary agencies financed by the members of the community with local contributions and donations. Third are the non-governmental and autonomous agencies promoted and funded by the government. The daily activities of these agencies are performed by voluntary workers and full-time paid employees.

### **Administration**

Before discussing the meaning of social welfare administration, it is necessary to know the meaning of the term administration. Administration is a cooperative human effort towards achieving some common goals. Thus every group activity involves administration, whether it is a family, factory, hospital, university, or a government department. Whenever two or more people cooperate in view of doing a thing that cannot be taken up alone, the concept of administration appear. The word administration has been derived from the Latin words 'ad' and 'ministrate' which means to serve. In simple language, it means the 'management of affairs' or 'looking after the people'. To administer is to manage, direct and serve.

Some of the definitions of administration are listed below:

L.D. White (1948) views that "the art of administration is the direction, coordination and control of many persons to achieve some purpose or objective".

E.A. Nigro (1951) defines "administration as the organization and use of men and materials to accomplish a purpose".

According to Herbert A. Simon (1960) "in its broadest sense, administration can be defined as the activities of groups co-operative to accomplish common goals".

Pfiffner defines "administration as the organization and direction of human and material resources to achieve desired ends".

Thus, it is clear from above definitions that administration is concerned with proper organization of men and material to achieve desired ends. It consists of doing the work or getting the work done by others.

### **Social Administration**

To achieve the aims and objectives of social welfare, the government formulates social policies and programmes and in pursuance thereof enacts social legislations, allocates financial assistance and provides organizational and administrative linkages in the form of ministries and departments. It also seeks the partnership of non-governmental organizations for the effective implementation of various social welfare programmes. Administration of all these activities being undertaken in the sphere of social services and social welfare is considered as falling in the realm of social welfare administration.

According to Richard M. Titmus, 1948, “social administration may broadly be defined as the study of social services whose object is the improvement of conditions of life of the individual in the setting of family and group relations”.

D.V. Donnison, 1961 defines social administration “as the study of development, structure and practices of social services”.

According to Forder (1974) “social administration is concerned with study of the welfare system, and particularly the government sponsored social services”.

Thus, social administration is concerned with the study of welfare system of government’s sponsored social services.

### **Definition of Social Welfare Administration**

**Social welfare administration** is a process through which social policy is transformed into social services. It involves the administration of government and non-government agencies. The following definitions will elaborate the meaning of social welfare administration.

John C. Kidneigh (1950) defines social welfare administration as the “process of transforming social policy into social services.... a two way process: (i). ...transforming policy into concrete social services and (ii) the use of experience in recommending modification of policy. The definition here emphasis is that administration is the process of transforming policies into action programmes for the betterment of the society.

According to Walter A. Friedlander (1958) “administration of social agencies translates the provisions of social legislation of social agencies and the aims of private philanthropy and religious charities into the dynamics of services and benefits for humanity.

According to Arthur Dunham (1962) “administration is the process of supporting or facilitating activities which are necessary and incidental to services by a social agency. Administrative activities range from the determination of function and policies, and executive leadership to routine operations such as keeping records and accounts and carrying on maintenance of services.

Herleigh Tracker (1971) interprets social welfare administration as a “process of working with people in ways that release and relate their energies so that they use available resources to accomplish the purpose of providing needed community services and programmes.”

The American Council of Social Work Education in its curriculum study has given a comprehensive definition of social welfare administration. It states “administration is the process of transforming community resources into a programme of community services, in accordance with goals, policies and standards which has been agreed by those involved in the enterprise. It is creative in that it structures roles and relationships in such a way as to alter and enhance

the total product. It involves the problem solving process of study, diagnosis and treatment”.

On the basis of above definitions, we find that social welfare administration is a process that includes definite knowledge, understanding, principles and ways of interaction. Its main focus is on the sustainability and accessibility of social services to the needy. Social work enables the process of administration through guidance, planning, stimulation, organization, creating structure, coordinating research. To accomplish the well defined objectives of administration, policies are suitably amended; programmes are formulated, and budget, and finance provided, personnel and selection procedures are made available.

Rosemary Sarri (1971) has outlined the activities of social welfare administration as follows:

- i) Translation of social mandates into operational policies and goals to guide organizational behaviour;
- ii) Design of organizational structures and processes through which the goals can be achieved;
- iii) Securing of resources in the form of materials, staff, clients etc. for goal attainment and organizational survival.
- iv) Selection and engineering of necessary technology.
- v) Optimizing organizational behaviour directed towards increased effectiveness and efficiency; and
- vi) Evaluation of organizational performance to facilitate systematic and continuous solution to problems.

### **Features of Social Welfare Administration**

Although the concept of administration is applicable in a broader sense to areas including social welfare,

business and government, there are certain distinctive features of social welfare administration. Some distinctive features of social welfare administration are given below:

- Social welfare administration deals with social welfare agencies and helps them to achieve their objectives for the target groups for which they are working. It is specifically concerned with identification of social objectives, the formulation and implementation of proposed programmes to achieve the objectives laid down.
- From functional point of view, social welfare administration includes three perspectives of social problems: (i) restoration of impaired social functioning; (ii) provision of resources, social and individual, for more effective social functioning; (iii) prevention of social dysfunction.
- Despite variations in size, scope, structure and types of programmes, every agency has a governing board as an apex body for final decision-making. The board is generally represented by the community it intends to serve.
- Social welfare administration requires optimum utilization of its available resources together with active community participation, so that the ultimate goal of programmes can be achieved properly.
- Social welfare agencies have to allocate certain portion of their resources for survival so that the organization can continue to exist. But this should not limit their capacity to achieve quantitative and qualitative growth.
- Social welfare agencies generally function in a cooperative manner and ensure participation of all the members in administration of their activities.

- There is a growing trend in these agencies to recruit professionally qualified manpower. It has helped in introducing professional approach in their functioning.

## **History of Social Welfare Administration in India**

Mutual aid has been part of every community. The desire to help one's fellowmen has been in existence from society to society, depending upon the social, economic and political factors. People help the persons in need thus provide mutual aid to the society. Indian traditional view of social welfare is based on the concepts of *daya*, *dana*, *dakshina*, *bhiksha*, *samya-bhava*, *swadharma* and *tyaga*, the essence of which are self-discipline, self-sacrifice and consideration for others. Well-being of all depends on these values upheld by people individually and through community action. All the religions urges upon their devotees to put aside a portion of their income to be utilized for charitable purposes, which will provide them happiness in this world and salvation in the next world. The kings and the royal families of earlier days extended help to the affected population during emergencies like floods, earthquakes, fires, droughts and other natural calamities.

From the administrative angle, in India, the reigns of king Ashoka, Harsha, Chandra Gupta Maurya, Akbar, Sher Shah Suri and Feroze Tuglak, were the landmarks of administration who took care of the social needs of the people. The British government also established an administrative set-up intended mainly for maintaining law and order. Some social reform measures were taken up by banning *sati* and permitting widow remarriage by acts passed in 1829 and 1856 respectively.

After Independence of our country in 1947 the old administrative pattern was more or less continued with necessary changes to suit the social, political and economic set-up that had evolved.

In the field of social welfare, during the First Five Year Plan, Government of India realized that the government alone can not manage the enormous range of social problems across the length and breadth of our country and sought the help of voluntary organizations to help them in the process, so created a unique administrative machinery consisting of an autonomous board named CSWB (Central Social Welfare Board) in August 1953. Similarly, social welfare advisory boards were established at state level. The main purpose of the Board (CSWB) has been to provide financial and technical assistance to voluntary organizations working in the field of social welfare. If we look at the history of administrative organization, we find that before 1964 social welfare programmes were being managed by different ministries such as education, home, industries, health, labor. The Renuka Ray Committee in its report submitted in 1960, recommended the establishment of the Department of Social Security. Under the Prime Ministership of Lal Bahadur Shastri, a social security department was established and located in the ministry of law on 14<sup>th</sup> June 1964. Subjects, namely, social security, social welfare, backward classes and khadi and handicrafts were allocated to the Department of Social Security. In 1966, it was renamed as Social Welfare Department. It was located in the Ministry of Education and Social Welfare created in 1971. Its status was raised to a ministry in the year 1979. Its name was further changed to the Ministry of Social and Women Welfare in 1984. With the creation of a separate Department of Women and Child Development in the Ministry of Human Resource Development, it was recognized and its nomenclature

was changed to the Ministry of Welfare in 1985 and subsequently it was renamed as the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.

Thus, the central government has set up a full-fledged ministry and organizations subordinate to it, like National Commission for Scheduled Castes/Tribes, Minorities Commission, National Institute of Social Defense, National Institute for the Handicapped, Department of Women and Child Development, Central Social Welfare Board, National Institute of Public Co-operation and Child Development, etc., under its administrative control.

Besides the execution of social welfare projects, schemes, and programmes sponsored and financed wholly or partly by the central government; the state governments and union territory administrations formulate and implement welfare service programmes on their own in their respective jurisdictions. The state government/union territory administrations carry out their welfare obligations and programmes mainly through their Department of Social Welfare and voluntary organizations. In most of the states, either there is full time secretary for social welfare or it is one of the main portfolios of a secretary. Thus, social welfare schemes are still spread over more than one department/directorate. The pattern of implementation of some of the schemes, like old age pension, widow pension, and supplementary nutrition programmes also vary from state to state. Though most of the states now have district social welfare officers, there is no social welfare functionary at block level.

### **Nature of Social Welfare Administration**

There is a debate whether social welfare administration is science or art, with the passage of time the question

is still unresolved. There are conflicting views and opinions on this issue and each appears to be justified in its own way. Social welfare lends itself to two usages. It stands for the process of administering the social welfare programmes. It is also an area of intellectual enquiry. The first is practice and second is study. As a practice, social welfare administration is decidedly an art.

### **Social Welfare Administration as an Art**

Social welfare administration as an art, have been supported by the following arguments

- i) Social welfare administration can be acquired: no doubt art is a natural gift. Music, dance, drama or painting is the examples of this category of art. But natural gifts can find their best expression by proper training, without which even the best artists will die unknown. On the other hand, a painter making a painting and a potter shaping a beautiful piece of pottery are also the examples of art. It is so because they possess the following elements:
  - a) Personal skills
  - b) Practical know-how
  - c) Result orientation
  - d) Creativity and
  - e) Constant practice aimed at perfection.

Similarly, the art of social welfare administration can be acquired. Talented persons become the best administrators under proper training. Thus so far acquisition is concerned social welfare administration is also like other arts.

- ii) It is subjective in nature:

A chef makes a dish with personal passion for food.  
A carpenter adds beauty to his creation with his

tools. A social welfare administrator with the application of knowledge and skills can make wonders by combining and bringing together available human and material resources to change the very face of the nation. Today success of every welfare programme depends on how a social welfare administrator performs the job.

- iii) Practical application of knowledge: art is the practical application of systematic knowledge. It is not merely theory but putting that into practice. Similarly, social welfare administration is not merely theory but it is application also. And the best knowledge can be gained by practice alone. Managing human resource needs a lot of skill, experience and balanced personality traits.

### **Social Welfare Administration as a Science**

Science is the systematic study of knowledge. Those who believe that social welfare administration is a science point out that there are certain specific and clear principles on which day to day administration of social welfare programmes are being run and managed. They also argue that these principles are based on sound and rational principles, which are also considered universal.

The following arguments have been put forward to justify that social welfare administration is a science:

- Application of scientific methods: the claim of a discipline to be called a science depends on whether the scientific method of study is applicable to it. Social welfare administration can be called a science, because the scientific method of study equally is applicable to it, as in the case of other social sciences.

- **Critical examination:** critical examination and study of evidence is the prime requisite of any scientific study. This is possible in social welfare administration also.
- **Universal guidelines:** universal principles of social welfare administration also provide the coloring of science. Even if we cannot use all the guidelines in a similar manner, these guidelines certainly help the administrator in proper implementation of social welfare programmes.

However, the nature of social welfare administration as a science has been criticized on the basis of experimentation, and objectivity. Thus, it may not be an exact science, but it is a science in its own way. It is also an art, because it is connected not only with formulation of general principles of social welfare programmes but also with actual running of the administration of social welfare programmes.

### **Interdisciplinary Nature**

Social welfare administration requires the interdisciplinary knowledge and constant interaction with other social sciences to know the human beings in totality, such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, political science and economics to solve their problems in appropriate manner.

### **Administrative Structure**

Social welfare administration is based on the organizational and administrative structure of social welfare programmes at each and every level of implementation stage. Similarly, it is also important to know the role and set up of non-governmental organizations for effectively carrying out their functions.

### **Financial Administration**

The scope of social welfare and social security is increasing day by day and more and more people are coming under the coverage of these programmes, and so the need for additional financial support increases. In order to make out proper and effective budgeting of such programme, the knowledge of financial administration is highly essential. Thus it is important that persons must be trained in the techniques and principles of administration.

### **Personal Management**

In order to provide effective social welfare services to the needy and suffering, it is essential to have committed, trained and motivated social welfare functionaries at different levels. Thus social welfare administrators need the knowledge of human resource management which includes knowledge from the very beginning, that is recruitment policies, job classification, training and development, staff evaluation, advancement and transfer so that the personnel understand the need and importance of the work they are doing, and they would be effective in implementing the social welfare programmes.

### **Public Relations and Participation**

The social welfare administrator needs to be convinced of the importance of public relations with regard to both their own agency and its services, and the community as a whole. The welfare administrators must be comfortable to use mass media, such as TV, radio, newspaper, brochures, books and personal contacts, to interpret their agencies' programmes to the public and reaching community members. It is also required to get associated with the government and non-

governmental agencies working in the field, the people or the beneficiaries, whose co-operation and support will add to the effective planning, formulation and implementation of policies and programmes intended for their welfare.

### **To Conduct Research and Evaluation Studies**

Research and evaluation studies provide useful information and feedback on impact of on-going projects and about the different dimensions of existing social problems. Research also facilitates effective planning, policy formulation and implementation of programmes.

### **Social Welfare Administration as a Profession**

Before answering the question whether social welfare administration is a profession or not, one must know the essential features of a profession and determine how far these features are found in social welfare administration. In general, people do not raise objection when a doctor is called as medical professional, teaching as a profession or for that matter law as profession. The simple dictionary meaning of profession indicates one who has acquired specialized knowledge, which is used for instructing, guiding or advising others. An operational definition of profession may be given as follows:

Profession is an occupation for which specialized knowledge, skills and training are required and the use of these skills is not meant for self-satisfaction but are used for larger interests of the society and the success of these skills is measured not in terms of money alone.

Thus all professions are occupations in the sense that they provide means of livelihood. However, all

occupations are not professions because some of them lack certain characteristics of a profession. The various characteristics of a profession can be mentioned as:

- Existence of an organized and systematized body of knowledge;
- Formal method of acquisition of knowledge;
- Existence of an association with professionalisation as its goals;
- Formulation of ethical goals; and
- Service motto.

Let us discuss the extent to which all these characteristics are found in social welfare administration to determine whether it is a profession or not.

### **Existence of Knowledge**

Social welfare administration has developed a distinct body of knowledge, in response to the need for managing the complex social problems in a better way. In India, almost all courses of social work offer a course on social welfare administration to the students. Thus, it satisfies the requirement of a profession in the form of existence of knowledge. However, the social welfare administration is still evolving and new guidelines are being developed though this does not affect its status of being a profession.

### **Acquisition of Knowledge**

An individual can enter a profession only after acquiring knowledge and required skills through formal training. For example, only formally trained persons can enter the professions of law, engineering or medicine. Thus social welfare administration may be called a profession because schools of social work and schools of public administration provide training in this discipline.

### **Professional Association**

An occupation which claims to be a profession should have an association. Such a representative body of professionals regulate and develop the profession's activities. The professional associations may also prescribe the standards for individuals who want to enter the profession. But we are still struggling for an apex body, which would regulate the terms and conditions for Social Welfare Administration like Bar Council of India etc.

### **Ethical Code**

Every profession has a code of ethics. Codes provide proper guidance when the situation at hand is choice between a good and a bad decision. Thus code of ethics serves several functions for a profession, including guiding, decision making, assessing competence, regulating behavior and evaluating the profession. In social welfare administration, the code of ethics provides a guide for professional roles and relationships at various levels of responsibility in relation to clients, colleagues, employers, employing organizations and the society. Therefore, the social welfare administration is a profession and its code of ethics is based on the fundamental values of the social work profession that includes the worth, dignity and uniqueness of all persons as well as their rights and opportunities.

### **Service Motto**

In modern times, all human activities are concerned with money. But in a profession, an effort is made to see that service motto should prevail over monetary considerations. Professionals should keep social interest in their mind while charging fees for their professional services. For example, a doctor helps the patient, even

when he charges fee. But he also serves humanity in the process. A lawyer helps the client. Not to charge fee is a help, but to provide justice to the client is most important. Similarly, a social welfare administrator administers the social welfare programmes, not only for money and personal satisfaction, but use his/her knowledge and skills to serve the larger interest of the society.

Thus, on the basis of the above discussion, it can be summarized that social welfare administration is yet to achieve the status of a profession. To become an independent profession, it requires attaining social sanction, professional commitment, governmental approval, a professional association to regulate the profession and involvement of trained personnel in the field of welfare administration, instead of being controlled only by bureaucrats.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter, introduces us to a method of social work that is social welfare administration. The concept of social welfare administration is discussed with other concepts like social work, social welfare, social service, social security and administration,

Social administration helps to understand all these above discussed concepts better.

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## **Functions, Principles and Scope of Social Welfare Administration**

*\*Beena Antony*

### **Introduction**

In every occupation, institution and organization, skills and competence are applied to meet the objectives set, and to obtain the results expected. In all areas of health, medicine, education, law and manufacturing, administration and management is very important in order to carry out services in the expected manner. Be it school, college, hospital or offices there is need for people to follow rules, regulations and administrative practices for the effective running of the institution or organization. So also, every social welfare agency establishes a mechanism to work successfully, and to achieve its objectives to work for the downtrodden and the deprived sections of our society. This mechanism is called social welfare administration.

### **Functions of Social Welfare Administration**

The main function of social welfare administration is to organize the energy of like-minded persons to accomplish the objectives they have set in order to improve the society.

The functions of social welfare administration to achieve the objectives set up by the agency would include:

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- a) To formulate the appropriate objectives and programmes of the agency, it is very important to get the required information and to understand the total situation. The agency generally focuses on a particular problem in a particular geographical area.
- b) To analyze the collected information so as to plan appropriate measures to solve social problems. Social welfare agency's work is to address social problems of the society in that given area.
- c) To recognize, screen and opt for an appropriate plan of action to tackle problems and handle the initiatives of the social welfare agency.
- d) Formulating policies, programmes and plans for effectively carrying out the objectives of the social welfare agency in a planned manner.
- e) To identify appropriate personnel for the social welfare agency with proper orientation and supervision so that they understand the objectives and how to implement the programmes in order to achieve the goals of the agency.
- f) To inspire volunteers who can involve themselves in the aims, objectives and goals of the social welfare agency.
- g) The administration has to delegate work to various departments under supervisors who will be accountable for the assigned work, in the various departments which has to be coordinated so that maximum results are obtained.
- h) Rules, regulations, practices and procedures have to be set up so that there is uniformity and accountability among all staff in the agency so that the objectives of the agency are easily accomplished.
- i) The agency must keep proper records and reports. These records and reports must be analyzed and

interpreted to find out the progress of the agency's work.

- j) The financial practices must be very economically and strictly laid down so that there can be no misappropriations. The finances must be accurately utilized and accounted for finance is the backbone of any organization. So finances must be properly managed.
- k) Every agency has to lay down certain standards of work and work towards meeting those standards at all times. The personnel from highest level to the lowest level must understand and maintain the standards and work for it with great care.
- l) One of the main threads that binds the whole agency together is communication. The communication must be clear and smooth from all sectors of the agency be it horizontal from department to department, or vertical from top to bottom or bottom to top. The agency must also have an open communication channel with the community people.
- m) Social welfare administration must also see to it that the agency has suitable coordination within the various departments of the agency and at various levels in the agency. The agency when it works as a whole, it becomes most effective to meet its objectives. The social welfare agency must also have proper coordination with other agencies working in the same field. There must be networking with agencies with similar themes, in same geographical areas.
- n) Social welfare administration has an important role in monitoring and evaluation of the agency's programmes and in assessing overall work.

## **Principles of Social Welfare Administration**

Principles are guiding assertions or statements that come from experience or research and help us understand the concept. Principles of social welfare administrations are generalizations based on past experiences of different organizations that help in conducting social welfare administration in a particular manner. The principles of social welfare administration are enlisted below.

- i) The social welfare administrator has to run the social welfare agency. So it is necessary that he or she must have a proper understanding of the agency's aims, goals and objectives. They must know the content of the various programmes, and have the technical knowledge and skills required for conducting the programmes of the agency.
- ii) The administrator must aim at delegating responsibility among various staff, volunteers and beneficiaries of the agency. The administrator should delegate responsibility in a way he or she is involving and encouraging participation among different segments of population involved with the work.
- iii) The administrator must be efficient in formulating proper rules, regulations, practices and procedures for conducting work in the agency. These rules, regulation, practices and procedures must be uniform for all personnel in the agency and at all levels.
- iv) The administrator must be extra careful to bring in efficient and dedicated personnel in the agency so that there is congenial environment in the agency. This in turn will help to conduct the programme well and fully accomplishing the targets. Each

person associated in the agency must feel the importance of his work and how his work is going to help meet the agency's aims and goals. In this way the agency persons entrusted with the responsibility will do a better and efficient job.

- v) The administration should organize regular monitoring and evaluation. All the processes, procedures, practices and achievements must be evaluated well so that they are all done in proper way and the targets are fully achieved.

India is a welfare state and the government formulates various policies and programmes for the welfare of the weaker sections of the population. The social welfare agencies work at the field level with the general population, as it is difficult for the government to reach out to all in our vast country. The social welfare administrator is actually the person who executes the programmes favouring the common man. If the administrator is efficient, skillful and resourceful, then he will be effective in meeting the goals of the agency and bringing about social change and development.

Some points that must be kept in mind, and which are necessary to make social welfare administration achievable, are that socio-economic change has to be guided by social justice. Decentralization in administration is required at different tiers of the government and there has to be integration in the planning for welfare and development of the country, with proper personnel policies, programmes and administrative procedures to cater to well-organized flow of goods and services to all the people of our country.

### **Scope of Social Welfare Administration**

Social welfare administration is basically the execution of social policies, social programmes and social

legislations by philanthropic, religious and charitable organizations, which provide services and benefits for the general population in need. It is the conversion of social policy into social action, and how welfare state virtues are translated into action and implemented by social welfare agencies. A very comprehensive understanding on the scope of social welfare administration that has been put forth by Titmus (1958) is: "Social welfare administration may be defined as the study of social services whose object is the improvement of conditions of life of the individual in the settling of family and group relations. It is concerned with the historical development of these services, both statutory and voluntary, with the moral values implicit in social action, with the roles and functions of the services, with their economic aspects and with the part they play in meeting certain needs in the social process. On the one hand, then we are interested in the machinery of administration which organizes and dispenses various forms of social assistance, on the other, in the lives, and needs, and the mutual relations of these members of the community for whom the services are provided by reason of their belonging to that community."

There are broadly two views about the scope of social welfare administration. These are: **The POSDCoRB view.**

The POSDCoRB view: this view of social welfare administration takes into account mostly the execution of the government's sponsored programmes. In other words this view corresponds with managerial view. Henri Fayol, L. Urwick, Fercey M. Ovean and Luther Gulick are advocates of this view.

According to Henri Fayol the main categories of administration are:

- (i) Organization
- (ii) Command

(iii) Coordination and

(iv) Control

P.M. Queen says that the study of administration deals with the three 'm' that is 'men, material and methods'.

L. Gulick has given a magic formula in a word 'POSDCoRB' that is very popular. In POSDCoRB each letter describing one technique. These letters stand for:

P Planning

O Organising

S Staffing

D Directing

Co Coordinating

R Reporting

B Budgeting

In the recent years both academics and practitioners in India have added two more meaningful words to complete the techniques namely:

E Evaluation

F Feedback

Gulick's approach is 'technique-oriented' rather than 'subject-oriented'. Each of these techniques are very important for social welfare administration. The social welfare administrator has to be well equipped with each of these techniques. To be a good administrator it is important to understand these techniques well and to practice them with extreme skill and proficiency.

### **Planning**

Planning means working out broad outline of the things that need to be done and the method to be adopted to accomplish the purpose set for the enterprise. Trecker

in his book *Group Process in Administration* expressed that “Unplanned administration is haphazard, scattered, disorderly, and confusing. Planning is simply the introduction of orderly thinking into the areas of life which have hitherto been ruled by unconsidered judgments. Planning is the conscious and deliberate guidance of thinking so as to create logical means of achieving agreed upon goals. Planning always and inevitably sets priorities and calls for value judgments. Planning is a basic and fundamental approach or way of dealing with the human problems which beset us. Planning is a point of view, an attitude, an assumption that says it is possible for us to anticipate, predict, guide and control our own destiny.”

Social planning helps us to be efficient, effective and accountable. Planning is important to meet our desired goals. It is important that before any social welfare programme is initiated or any research is started, proper planning with constructive information with knowledgeable professionals is essential. Answers to ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘why’ must be well contemplated in respect of the schemes and programmes of social welfare.

Even before planning the welfare services the objectives of the service should be considered. So all welfare services are to be planned and organized according to the policy of the agency. The planning procedure is connected to the policy of the agency. A policy is a statement of objectives, purpose, practice of organizing the programmes and the fundamental viewpoint underlying a service. The statement of policy of the organization must cater to the programmes, methods, principles and the beneficiaries. Policy should be evolved after consideration by all the stakeholders.

Planning for social welfare is strongly based on the nature and extend of social problems existing in the

society. The resources of the community are always limited and the number of social problems that need to be tackled are numerous. Thus the social problems need to be prioritized. The social welfare planning needs to choose the best alternative, with maximum benefit at minimum cost. Social planning also needs to look into social development.

The process of planning needs to follow the following steps:

1. To formulate appropriate objectives,
2. To identify the problem,
3. To collect and understand the existing facts,
4. To analyze the available facts,
5. To devise a suitable method,
6. To organize the goals and ascertain the priorities,
7. To locate the resources,
8. To look for other options,
9. To predict results of the several options thought of,
10. To prepare the plan,
11. To execute the plan,
12. To evaluate the results and reformulate the methods for increased effectiveness.

Planning is very important to social welfare administration, just as it is important in other fields like health, education or industry. Proper planning only can yield optimum results.

### **Organization**

Organization is the establishment of the formal and/or informal structure of authority through which the work is sub-divided, arranged, defined and coordinated for

the defined objective. The formal and/or informal organization are designed to achieve social welfare objectives by systematically coordinating the work of numerous personnel, consciously or unconsciously, covertly or overtly directed by some theoretical framework appropriate to meet the welfare needs of the target groups.

Dimock & Dimock (1964) defined: “Organization is the systematic bringing together of interdependent parts to form a unified whole through which authority, coordination and control may be exercised to achieve a given purpose.... Organization is both structure and human relations.”

Organization can also be compared to the human body. Just like in the human body there are various systems, the respiratory system, the nervous system, the reproductive system all have separate functions and duties, and they work independently, but they are all interdependent too, and they all form a whole and keep the body fit and fine. So also the organizations have separate units and departments which work independently, and interdependently to be more effective in the functioning of the organization as a whole to meet its various objectives.

Herbert (1960) proposes that organization affect the persons who work for it in five different ways, these are:

- i) The organization divides work among the staff. The personnel are delegated specific work in the organization according to their capacities.
- ii) The organization creates standard practices and elaborate procedures to help the employees to work better.
- iii) The organization follows authority upward, downward and crossways, this helps in smooth flow of decision making.

- iv) The organization follows a system of communication to reach all.
- v) The organization guides and teaches its members by providing knowledge, skills and loyalties. The training helps the members to work better and take decisions according to the needs of the organization.

Organization is therefore not just a structure, it actually accepts a structure for the human beings who directs, organize and who actually do the work in order to achieve the objectives of the agency.

Criteria of planning an organization so that the agency runs smoothly are:

- a) Authority and Responsibility
- b) Delegation and Decentralisation
- c) Public Relations
- d) Communication
- e) Coordination
- f) Monitoring, Appraisal and Evaluation
- g) Supervision and Control
- h) Personnel Management
- i) Financial Management
- j) Community Participation

### **Staffing**

Staff is an important component in social welfare administration. For social welfare agencies to function properly it is very important to manage the staff properly. The appropriate trained staff with aptitude and attitude for social work ideology is important in social welfare agencies. Staffing is the process of filling all positions in the organization with adequate and qualified personnel.

In India we have different kinds of agencies like Government, Non-Government, Voluntary, Religious, Co-operative that work in different areas of social work. In our Constitution the Directive Principles of State Policy talks of equitable socio-economic development for all the sections of our society, independence from all social problems faced by our country, ensuring social justice for all. The different agencies at all levels that is Central, State and local are all working in this direction, with the support and backing of the government to improve the plight of all citizens in the country. The work output of these agencies is highly dependent on the quality of the personnel involved in this work. The personnel affect the social welfare administration and the progress of social development is greatly dependent on the personnel.

The three important components for the development task are men, money and material. Out of these three M's, men is the most important component, as men determine the quality and quantity of the output. It is the personnel who will use the money and the material to work for the objectives of social welfare. It can be said that effective administration is a combination of organization, resources and qualified and dedicated personnel. If the staff in the organization is good, then even with limited money and material, the organization can do a good job but if the staff is not effective even with the best material and enormous money the desired objectives may not be accomplished.

Staff planning or manpower planning means personnel management in social welfare administration. Staff planning plans for the requirement of the organization for work and its corresponding need for personnel. This requires specific personnel policy for social welfare. Some of the important components in Staff Planning that needs to be done by social welfare administration are:

**a) Organizational Planning and Development**

The social welfare administration needs to establish organizational objectives, goals and targets so as to ensure focused working of the organization. The organizational structure needs to be designed to facilitate maximum productivity by building of inter-personnel relationship within individual agency and the total system.

**b) Career Development**

The social welfare administration requires careful procurement of appropriate staff for the organization. So the process of recruitment and selection needs to be undertaken with utmost care, as the staff at all levels together help in achieving the objectives of the organization. The placements, promotion and transfer of staff need intelligent and careful supervision. The staff at all levels needs briefing, orientation, training and refresher courses so that they improve in their day-to-day working and promoting the organization to higher levels of productivity.

**c) Terms of Employment**

The staff will be efficient if they are satisfied and comfortable in life. Thus it is the responsibility of the organization to make its employees comfortable, for which the organization should provide required salary to the employee for the work he puts in and according to his educational qualification and experience. The administration should also plan incentives, fringe and retirement benefits so that the employee gives his total dedicated service to the organization.

**d) Employee Welfare**

The social welfare administration should look into the welfare measures of the employees like medical facilities,

leave rules, recreational activities, housing, leave travel concession, children's education etc. to take care of all the employee requirements.

**e) Personnel Records**

The employee's personnel files must be properly maintained. The performance appraisal should be according to their work output. This will make the employees output oriented and accountable about the work. Thus the efficiency of the organization will go up.

**f) Morale and Motivation**

Social welfare administration must work to improve the morale and motivation of the staff of the organization by financial and non-financial incentives, by good conduct and discipline and by encouraging higher professional standards. The employee's social and psychological needs are to be taken care of by social welfare administration.

**g) Management-Staff Relations**

The social welfare administration requires to follow measures that will establish healthy relationship between all levels in the staff structure of the organization.

There is need to look into the professional associations and unions and to encourage participative management in the organization by involving the staff in decision making at the organizational level.

**h) Personnel Research and Review**

The administration needs to develop more appropriate personnel programmes and policies, because if the staff improves, the organization will also improve. There is need to plan and decide programme areas with proper

analysis and interpretation, to identify and implement follow-up improvement action for the progress of the organization

Proper handling of personnel system in social welfare agencies is an essential administrative activity in present times and it is recognized as a very important area too. Personnel policies in social welfare agencies are designed to motivate the staff to secure, develop and utilize manpower resource effectively in order to meet the organizational needs.

### **Directing**

Directing is an integral part of social welfare administration and is the continuous task of making decisions and embodying them in specific and general orders and instructions thus guiding the enterprise. Directing can be explained as a process to help the staff members to learn according to their needs, to utilize their knowledge and skills and improve their capacities and abilities so that they perform their responsibilities and duties of their job efficiently.

The components of directing are listed below:

- i) Identifying the right person for the right job,
- ii) Encouraging the staff to develop interest in his work,
- iii) Teach the work to the new staff members,
- iv) Evaluate the performance by observing the staff member's understanding,
- v) Administrative changes to observe and put staff to the jobs that they can do best,
- vi) Rewarding staff for completing work well with in time and helping others to work better,
- vii) Establishing good spirit and teamwork so that staff work skillfully, intelligently, enthusiastically to finish delegated works.

Directing is an important tool for programme development and implementation. With proper direction the organization can perform well and accomplish its targets. Thus direction increases efficiency and productivity.

### **Co-ordination**

Co-ordination ensures prevention of duplication and overlapping of work so that administrative efforts, resources, staff work in the social development sector is not wasted. Co-ordination is most important to ensure the efficient and economical functioning of social welfare agencies. The social welfare agencies in India have shown a tremendous increase in numbers since independence. India is a large country, spread out over a large area, with diverse languages, religion and culture. Thus it has a large variety of problems too and these problems cannot be dealt with by the government alone, because these social problems need personal touch as social problems are complex in nature. It has also been observed that there is unequal distribution of the social welfare agencies. In some areas there are heavy concentration of these agencies, while in the interior parts of the country, in the difficult terrain and regions in the border areas there is paucity of social welfare agencies. Thus in some areas there is overlapping of services and in some areas services are not available. Social welfare agencies are spontaneous and voluntary in nature, and voluntary services are democratic. Any effort to co-ordinate will mean application of external pressure, which will not encourage the voluntary spirit. Co-ordination must be by mutual consent. Co-ordination between agencies and state is easy, but co-ordination among different agencies is very difficult. There has been no effort by the government to co-ordinate all the social welfare agencies.

Co-ordination can thus be defined as the process of getting into a harmonious relationship. It means co-operation and adjustment to achieve desired goals. Co-ordination means the integration of several parts into an orderly whole, to achieve the purpose of the undertaking. In other words, coordinating means the all-important duty of inter-relating the work of various divisions, sections and parts of the undertaking. When there is no co-ordination between groups and communities there is social maladjustments and the community cannot progress further. Thus we have to work in co-ordination with all agencies to arrest the social problems of the country. There has to be networking among all government and non-government agencies.

The main objectives of co-ordination are:

- i) Co-ordination avoids duplication of work and overlapping of work.
- ii) Co-ordination helps to remove the obstacles that come in the working in the social welfare sector.
- iii) It helps in economizing on the resources utilized by the social welfare agencies. The sharing of resources help in better utilization and better output.
- iv) Expenditure can get minimized in sharing resources.
- v) Co-ordination will result in minimizing competition among social welfare agencies.
- vi) Co-ordination will help in joint efforts in tackling social problems and this will result in better understanding of the social problems as there will be more manpower involved. This can also result in generating public opinion and passing new social legislations.

Co-ordination can be at two levels. One is that there has to be co-ordination within the agency. The different departments and the different staff members must be well coordinated. There must be open communication among all within the agency so that the results and output of the agency are as per desired objectives. At the second level there must be co-ordination among the different social welfare agencies.

Thus we can say that co-ordination will improve the working of social welfare agencies and their impact on the society. Co-ordination is an important component in social welfare administration. Co-ordination among different agencies could have a very positive affect in solving the social problems of the society. It could improve the standards of work and also help in better networking among different agencies.

### **Reporting**

Reporting is the keeping of proper records and keeping those people informed. The executive is responsible for keeping both the supervisors and subordinates informed of what is going on and for arranging for collection of such information through inspection, research and records.

The social welfare administration is responsible to maintain all kinds of records. All files are maintained by the administration. Records of all functions, programmes, meetings and the day-to-day functioning are kept by the administration. These records and reports help in evaluation and monitoring the work of the agency. Thus these reports are very important for the agencies that provide the funds to them. Reports are important for the community to understand the objectives and functioning of the agency. Thus it is the responsibility of the administration to carefully maintain all reports and records.

### **Budgeting**

Budgeting involves the financial administration of a social welfare agency. Financial administration is the system that revolves around the finances of the agency. This concerns with the raising, regulation and distribution of the resources for the growth of the agency. The agency collects funds from the community by means of donations, subscription or taxes and these funds are used for the organizational programmes and the running of the agency. A budget is a complete statement prepared showing the various sources of the money raised for a particular period and the activities and programmes conducted with that money. Financial administration is one of the most important responsibilities of the social welfare administration and if this responsibility is not properly taken up, it can have serious consequences on the administration of the agency.

The purposes of the budget are:

- a) To understand the financial requirements of the agency. The budget puts forth the estimates from the grant giving agencies and the fund raising activities.
- b) Elaborates on how the money received will be utilized.
- c) It is a guide for all staff members on how the money needs to be utilized under the various sub-heading.
- d) Highlights to the community and beneficiaries, the source of the funds and how the money has been spent.
- e) To evaluate the objectives of the agency and the plans for meeting these objectives.
- f) To develop better budget formulation, review and decision-making.

POSDCoRB activities are common to all large scale organizations. They are the common problems of management found in the different agencies, regardless of the peculiar nature of the work they do. Like public administration, social welfare administration is also an instrument with two blades. One blade is knowledge of the subject matter and the other is the techniques that are applied. Both blades must be good to make it an effective tool. Thus, the proper scope of social welfare administration should include both the views i.e. POSDCoRB and subject matter.

Let us also briefly describe evaluation and feedback.

### **Evaluation**

Evaluation can be done at different time periods – weekly, monthly, half yearly and annually. Evaluation can be done by different teams: intra – agency evaluation, funding agencies and outside evaluation teams.

Evaluation is an exercise which will show whether the programmes and projects are going in the desired direction. Periodical evaluation will help in identifying hurdles and areas that require special attention. It is always helpful in successfully completing any project well within the time frame. The report writing exercise by a student of social work is one such example. As a student, you also must help the agency in its evaluation work, which is a learning activity for you.

### **Feedback**

Periodical feedback is an essential aspect of any programme and project. Feedback helps the organization to re-examine the success and failures and take appropriate action to rectify the wrong, if any. Feedback will only help in strengthening the project/organization. It will also enable in re-appropriation of funds for better

results. Feedback will ultimately ensure the sustainability of any project/agency.

### **The Integral View of Social Welfare Administration**

Another view of the scope of social welfare administration has come into vogue during the last few years. Due to emergence of new social problems, the subject matter of Social Welfare Administration is expanding day by day. The already overburdened administrative machinery of the government itself, not being able to successfully tackle these problems, involves various non-governmental organizations for this purpose. Therefore, this view incorporates not only the subject matter of social welfare administration but the implementation aspect as well, which is primarily the focus of POSDCoRBEF view.

The scope of social welfare administration is quite diverse in nature. With the emergence of new social problems of entirely different nature, a new strategy needs to be evolved for their solution. It may require optimum utilization of available resources e.g. human, institutional, financial, technological, etc. in a changing context. The social welfare administration incorporates a number of factors that are significant in the entire process of successful solution of social problems.

### **Conclusion**

In India the social welfare agencies cater to lakhs of beneficiaries spread all over the country. Thus it is important to follow continuous and systematic planning in the organization. The resources and capacities of the organization has to be appropriate according to the desired objectives of the organization. A well-planned strategy needs to be formulated for future opportunities, values and aspirations. If the social welfare

administration functions are well understood and implemented then it will benefit maximum beneficiaries and social development for the country will not be a difficult dream.

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## Social Welfare Organizations

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### Introduction

A 'Service' is termed a 'Social' if its aims the enhancement of the welfare of the individual or the community either through personal effort or by collective action. Social Services are the organized philanthropic actions to promote human welfare. Social services are understood differently in different countries. It is mainly more of relief services only among the European countries, whereas in Great Britain and Commonwealth Countries it has a wider connotation and includes areas like health, education, housing, welfare. In India, social services are usually meant as those activities which are for furthering the people's welfare and these include education, public health activities, social security measures, social insurance, social assistance, child welfare, corrections, mental hygiene, recreation, labor protection and housing.

India has had social welfare programmes, social service organizations, social reformers and social workers in the cause of social welfare since early times. Right through the centuries, this have been observed in the reign of King Ashoka or going back even to the days of Buddha, there have been many rulers and common people of India who trod the path of service to their fellow beings and adopted it as a life mission. Mahatma Gandhi's work in this sphere constitutes a continuance

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in the present century of the national tradition. The ideal of social welfare is thus not new to us; it is an integral part of our national history and culture.

## **Types of Social Welfare Organizations**

Social welfare organizations play a vital role in rendering Social Services in every country, especially in developing and underdeveloped countries. There are various kinds of social welfare organizations that differ in ownership, kind of service providers, source of funding and other characteristic differences. In this unit we will discuss about these various types of Social Service Organization and their working.

### **Formal Organizations**

Formal Organizations refer to a structure of well-defined jobs, each bearing a definite measure of authority, responsibility and accountability. Formal Organization lays down the pattern of relationship between individuals and the rules and regulations, which guide the behavior of individuals. Formal organizations follow the functions of POSDCoRBEF in its working.

### **Informal Organization**

Informal Organization is an outcome of social interaction between individuals in a formal organization. Whenever people work together, they evolve informal groups bound together by common, social, technological interest. Such groups constitute informal organization. Informal organization represents relationships between individuals in the organization based on interest, personal attitudes, emotions, prejudices, likes, dislikes, physical location and similarity of work. These relations are not developed according to the procedures, rules and regulations laid down in the formal organizational structure.

Informal Organization comes into existence because of limitations of the Formal Organization. It represents, “natural grouping of people at work”. The birth of small groups in an organization is a natural phenomenon. These groups may also overlap because an individual may be a member of more than one informal group. In many cases, informal groups come into being to support and supplement the formal organization.

The informal Organizations have the following characteristics:

- Customary and not enacted.
- No written rules and regulations.
- Does not follow an organizational charts in its working.

It must be noted that the informal organization is based on formal structure and cannot exist without it. The informal organization allows an organization a measure of flexibility, which is a functional necessity. However, the greatest weakness of the informal organization is its instability; its changeability and its unpredictability.

### **Structured Organizations**

It is important to note, “An organization is a group of people who are cooperating under the direction of a leader for the accomplishment of a common end”. The need for an organization arises when two or more persons unite together to achieve some common objectives.

Organization is one of the basic functions of social welfare administration. Its importance lies in the systematically evolved pattern of relationships designed to set in motion the process of managerial functions. Structured organizations are those, which are formed, and functioning with a clear structure or framework of relationship. As structure, organization is a network of

internal authority, responsibility and relationships. It is the framework of relationships of persons, operating at various levels, to accomplish common objectives. Thus, a structured organization has got three major elements:

- Formal structure
- Definite authority
- Clear responsibility

When we think about structured organizations in a social work context, there are many organizations falling under this category. All these organizations have a clear structural framework, be it formal or informal organization. For example, registered social service organizations, social welfare departments and cooperative societies all have a defined structure.

### **Unstructured Organizations**

Unstructured organizations do not have a clear structure or framework. Various committees, community organizations, social action groups are some of the examples of unstructured organizations. They may be formed as per the requirement or given purpose, in order to achieve certain limited goals and objectives. Groups of people come together with the similar objective or ideology to accomplish a specific goal. They work in an unstructured manner, as all of them are equal in the role and duties. These organizations are formed for a short duration and they disintegrate when goals are met or cease to exist due to adverse factors.

### **Governmental Organizations**

The structure of welfare organizations differs in agencies, which are established under public sector from those, which are in voluntary or private sector. Public or

Government agencies are based upon a law, administered within the framework of local, state and central governments and financed by the government. Individuals, or philanthropic, or religious, or humanitarian groups establish private agencies or non-governmental organizations; their management is vested with a board of directors. These organizations are supported mainly by contributions, donations, endowments or trust funds.

Our country has a long tradition of social service. Our sovereign and democratic republic stands committed to ensure social, economic and political justice to the people and usher in a welfare state. After independence, the concept of social justice became part and parcel of our Constitution and is reflected not only in the preamble, but also in the Directive principles of state policy.

Social welfare is defined as those services which are designed for those weaker and vulnerable sections of community who due to some hardship – social, economic, political, mental – are unable to make use of, or are traditionally denied, the use of these services. The scope of social welfare encompasses services relating to women, children, youth, aged, the handicapped, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, community welfare services, social defense, social welfare measures and social welfare services for other weaker sections of society.

In India the Government organizations are by the government and can be at three levels that is local, state and central level organizations. At the **Local level**, the social welfare services are through rural and urban local authorities.

Rural local authorities comprise of the panchayati raj institutions, which were introduced for local governance in the rural areas of the country. The three-tier system

of panchayati raj consisting of gram panchayat, panchayat samiti and zilla panchayat and these are responsible to undertake the welfare activities for their respective areas. In fact, panchayati raj bodies are very much involved in implementing and administering the welfare programmes assigned to them.

The urban local authorities consisting of municipal corporations was created by the Acts of the concerned State legislature are assigned obligatory and discretionary functions in the field of social welfare. For instance, section 43 of Delhi Municipal Corporation Act, 1957 makes it incumbent on the corporation to make adequate provisions for construction and maintenance of drainage work, public latrines and urinals, water supply, pollution control, checking of dangerous diseases, provision of transport facilities, provision of medical relief and establishment of maternity and child welfare centers, etc.

The concept of democratic decentralization is essential in the field of development. The aspect of welfare has come to be understood as the primary responsibility of the individuals. Therefore, through people's participations and decentralization of power, the government is trying to achieve the goal of total development. Besides Government efforts, there are a number of non-government organizations working at the local level with more flexibility and proximity.

At the **State level**, the state governments and union territory administrations formulate and implement various kinds of welfare services programmes on their own in their respective jurisdiction for the benefit of the socially and economically weaker sections of the society.

The state government or the union territories administrations carry out their welfare commitments

and programmes mainly through the departments of social welfare and voluntary organizations. At the state level, the Department of Social Welfare is the responsibility of the welfare minister and the secretary to government is the administrative head of the department. The secretariat helps, guides and advises the Minister in the formulation of policies of the department, in getting the legislation passed by the state legislature, and supervises the execution of the policies, schemes, projects and programmes undertaken by the Directorate.

The Directorate of social welfare is headed by a Director who is assisted by Additional Director, Joint Director, Deputy Directors, Administrative officer and supporting staff. In the field, the Divisional and District Social Welfare Officers function at the district level and execute the various welfare programmes in their respective jurisdictions. The administrative and staffing pattern at all the stages is more or less the same and so are the kinds of welfare services provided in each state except for some minor variations.

The functions of the State Social Welfare Boards are as follows:

- i) To promote the growth of voluntary social welfare agencies, with special reference to development of welfare services in all areas.
- ii) To administer the grant-in-aid programme.
  - a) On behalf of the Central Social Welfare Board for development and capital grants and
  - b) On behalf of the state welfare governments for maintenance grants.
- iii) To assist the Central Social Welfare Board in the provision of a field counseling services for aided agencies

- iv) To administer the programmes of rural welfare projects.
- v) To stimulate effective coordination among voluntary welfare agencies at the States and local levels.
- vi) To assist the Central Social Welfare Board and State Government in the further development of welfare services.

At the **Central level**, also called the Union level although the responsibility of formulating overall policy and planning of social welfare programmes rests with the department of social welfare, the initiation and execution of certain welfare services and stimulating the effective coordination among voluntary welfare agencies especially at the national level will rest with the Central Social Welfare Board.

### **Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB)**

The important landmark in the history of voluntary social welfare was created in 1953, with the provision of Rs.4 Crore for the social welfare sector in the First Five Year Plan. The dilemma before the country's planners was whether this amount should be utilized through government machinery or by voluntary agencies, as at that time there was no independent department of social welfare at the center, nor at the state levels. Under the leadership of Pt. Jawahar lal Nehru our then prime minister, it was decided that social welfare needed a special kind of machinery that had components of flexibility, dedication and closeness to the country's people. It was then felt that it should be handled not by the government machinery but by the voluntary workers who had dedicated their service to the needy. Accordingly, an autonomous board was created which was charged with the responsibility of preparing plans and schemes to be funded from out of the provision

made in the Five Year Plans. An outstanding social worker was made the Chairperson of the Central Social Welfare Board. Dr. (Mrs.) Durgabai Deshmukh was its first Chairperson.

The main function of the Board was to give grant-in-aid and technical guidance to Voluntary Organizations engaged in different types of social welfare activities. One of the functions of the board was also to create organizations in the areas where these did not exist. It was found that in those days in the slum and rural areas, there were no services for women and pre-school children. The Board accordingly launched a scheme named the family and child welfare projects. The present integrated child development services (ICDS) programme was the outcome of these efforts.

Central Social Welfare Board was set up on the recommendations of the Planning Commission as a semi-autonomous body, but the power of the administration was vested in the ministry of education. It was registered as a company from 1<sup>st</sup> April 1969 under section 25 of the Indian companies Act, 1956 in order to have greater autonomy and flexibility.

**Objectives of the Board:**

- Promote the growth of voluntary social service agencies.
- To assist voluntary welfare programmes for the specific groups of persons who need special help, like women, children and the handicapped.
- To coordinate the welfare schemes of various central and state government.
- To develop new programmes of welfare and organize pilot projects that are innovative and closer to the common man.

A cabinet minister, who is assisted by the Minister or the Deputy Minister, heads the Ministry of welfare. The Department has two broad divisions: one headed by the secretary – welfare and the other headed by the secretary, department of women and child welfare. The secretary-welfare is assisted by an additional secretary. In the wing, there are directors, deputy secretary, under secretaries, joint directors and other officers to handle the tasks. The ministry is assisted in its functions by a number of subordinate organizations, national commissions and national institutes over which the ministry exercises its administrative control. These are enlisted below:

- Central social welfare board
- National commission for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes
- Minorities commission
- National institute of social defense
- National institute for the visually handicapped
- National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped
- National Institute of Rehabilitation

#### **Activities of the Ministry**

The Ministry has been taking up large number of subjects and accordingly undertakes multi-dimensional function related to the welfare of various sections in the society like:

- Policy, planning and coordination of programmes
- Operations of central and centrally sponsored schemes
- Guidance and direction to the state
- Association with Planning Commission

- Convening of conference of state minister/secretaries of social welfare
- Constitution of commission, committees/study teams
- Assistance to voluntary organizations
- Informal and mass education activities
- Publications
- Research, education and documentation
- Participation in International Conferences, seminars and workshops.

### **Non-governmental Organizations**

State is not the only association working in the society; there are a large number of non-governmental organizations, also called voluntary organizations, which perform varied functions for the welfare, integration and development of the people in the society.

The term “Voluntarism” is derived from the Latin word “Voluntas” which means “will” of “freedom”. Political scientists defined “freedom of association” as a recognized legal right on the part of all persons to come together for the promotion of a purpose in which they are interested. Article 19(1) C of the Constitution of India confers on the Indian Citizens the right “to form associations”. In the United Nation terminology voluntary organizations are called Non-Government Organizations.

### **Definitions of Voluntary Organizations**

According to Lord Beveridge, “A Voluntary organization, properly speaking, is an organization which whether its workers are paid or unpaid, is initiated and governed by its own members without external control.”.

**Main characteristics of Non-Government Organization/  
Voluntary Organizations:**

- i) It is registered under the Societies registration Act, 1860, the Indian Trusts Act, 1882, The Cooperative Societies Act 1904 or Sec. 25 of the Companies Act, 1956, depending upon the nature and scope of its activities to give it a legal status.
- ii) It has definite aims and objectives and programmes.
- iii) It has an administrative structure and duly constituted management and executive committees.
- iv) It is an organization initiated and governed by its own members on democratic principles without any external control.
- v) It raises funds for its activities partly from the exchequer in the form of grants-in-aid and partly in the form of contributions or subscriptions from members of the local community and/or the beneficiaries of the programme.

Non-government organizations are called by different names by way of the inception. Let us discuss some of them:

**Charitable organizations** are those organizations established for helping the poor or needy people. These organizations are mainly formed to serve the needy through a charitable approach. The Missionaries of Charity is one example of such charitable organizations. Most of its workers are fully dedicated to service and they serve without expecting anything back. These institutions provide institutional care to the poor and neglected. They also provide food, clothing and medical treatment for needy people.

The charitable organizations are registered under the Charitable Endowment Act -1890. Section 2 of the Charitable Endowment Act defines 'charitable purpose'

as including general relief to the poor, education, medical relief and the advancement of any other object of general public utility.

### **Societies and Trusts**

The Voluntary Organization can be registered under the Societies Registration Act - 1860, Indian Trusts Act - 1882 or under Section 25 of the Indian Companies Act - 1956. Most of the non-governmental organizations are registered under Societies Registration Act. 1860.

Societies are formed with some deliberate intention following some system in their day-to-day affairs as well as rules for their governing and proceedings. The following activities should be handled properly, since it is vital for better functioning of any organization.

- Primary study on the attainability of the objectives stated by the organization.
- Recruitment of manpower, right people for the right job, to attain the organizational goals.
- Drafting of a constitution, which consists of memorandum of association and rules and regulations.
- Making sure of the registration of the society by appropriate legal authority.

Memorandum of Association and rules and regulations are two important parts of a society's constitution. While memorandum of association defines the object of the organization recognized and approved by the Registrar, rules and regulations define the internal management principles, which is binding on the members. Societies are more democratic in their setup. Usually elections are conducted to elect the managing committee. In some cases, founder members may be permitted to remain life members of the managing committee.

## **Trust**

Welfare programmes are also run by charitable trusts. The Indian Trusts Act -1882 provides room for registering and running Public, Private, Religious and Charitable Trusts. A Trust is an obligation annexed to the ownership of property and arising out of a confidence reposed in and accepted by the trustee(s), for the benefit of another and the owner. The following are the objects of a charitable trust:

- Trusts for the relief of poverty
- Trusts for the advancement of education
- Trust for the advancement of religion and
- Trusts for other purposes beneficial to the community. (Not falling under any other three heads, e.g., renovation of roads, supply of water, repairing of bridges, etc.)

The government of our country has encouraged the emergence of non-government organizations. In the Seventh Five Year Plan the government emphasized the importance of the role of the non-government organizations to take part in the development process of the country. The government wanted the non-government organizations to take up an important role in social development, these duties and responsibilities are put down below:

- i) To supplement the efforts of the government to provide choices and alternative to the rural population.
- ii) To be the eyes and ears of the village population, so that the laws, legislations, new knowledge and information can be brought to the village people.
- iii) The voluntary organizations must take up pilot projects with innovative ideas which if successful can be implemented on larger scale.

- iv) To stimulate the delivery systems to provide services to the population at the grassroot levels.
- v) To disseminate information.
- vi) To help the communities to become self-reliant and independent.
- vii) To initiate manpower resources in communities for community organization.
- viii) To bring in science, technology and innovations to homes in the community. For example teaching the village population of newer and better methods of cultivation.
- ix) To train grassroot workers to deal with community problems and to encourage volunteerism.
- x) To mobilize resources of the community.
- xi) To encourage community participation, to make the community responsible and accountable of what is happening in the community.

In a democratic, socialistic and welfare society, voluntary/non-governmental organizations play a very important role. Non-government organizations in India have played an important role in the development of the country. They share responsibility with the government to bring in social development with social justice. In recent times we observe a great increase in the number of non-government organizations that are working on the government programmes or have implemented their own programmes for the development of the weaker sections of the population. Let us discuss the main **functions** of the non-government organizations:

- a) Human beings by nature are gregarious: The urge to act in groups is fundamental to them. People therefore form groups and associations voluntarily for their benefit as also of others with a view to

lead a fuller and richer life. This phenomenon is reflected in voluntary associations, which are formed for promotion of recreational and cultural activities, social services and professional interests.

- b) A pluralistic society with a democratic system requires a multitude of independent, non-government organizations to serve as a buffer between the individual and the state and thus preventing the government from developing monopoly in various fields.
- c) Organized voluntary action helps groups and individuals with diverse political and other interests, contributes to strengthening the feeling of national solidarity and promotes participative democracy.
- d) The state does not have the requisite financial resources and manpower to meet all the needs of its citizens. The non-government organizations by raising additional resources locally can meet uncovered needs and enrich local life.
- e) Community participation can be promoted by non-government organization as they are closer to the people. People respond better to them as compared to government agencies.
- f) Creating a sense of responsibility through direct involvement. Non-government agencies due to their personnel touch are in a better position to design and implement programmes in the community.
- g) Correcting planner's mistakes. Non-government organization with people's participation can point out mistakes in planning, policy making, social welfare administration etc.
- h) Creating public opinion. The non-government organization can work for better understanding and positive attitude among the target groups on

particular issues. Like organizations working against stigma and discrimination towards HIV/AIDS people.

- i) Formulating new policy through public opinion. The non-government organizations can make the policy makers aware of ground realities and the exact need and problems faced by the general public. Non-government organization can also work towards promoting new social legislations for betterment of the society.
- j) Flexibility and experimentation. The non-government organization are autonomous and thus have greater freedom to be flexible in their functioning and can experiment new methods and programmes.
- k) To compliment and supplement government initiative. India is an enormous country with diverse issues and problems, non-government organization can help in government programme implementation and in formulating new programmes for the community people.

Thus “Non-Governmental Organizations” give concrete expression to the fundamental rights such as freedom of association and expression and by identifying the needs of individuals, groups and communities, and by initiating projects and programmes to meet their needs. The non-government organizations also aim at sharing the responsibility of the state in providing minimum needs of the citizens, covering the areas of uncovered and unmet needs, preventing the monopolistic tendencies of the governments, and educating citizens about their rights and obligations. They further aim at raising resources through contributions and donations and help to organize activities of non-partisan and non-political nature for the well-being of the society.

## **Bilateral and International Organizations**

### **Bilateral Organizations**

The word bilateral means, "Agreement made between two countries". In these, two countries make agreement to have duty free entry of donated supplies for relief and rehabilitation of the poor and the needy without discrimination of caste, creed or race. Under these agreements, commodities like food grains, milk powder, cheese, processed food stuff, drugs, medicines, multi-vitamin tablets, hospital equipment and supplies like ambulances, mobile dispensaries, agricultural implements, etc., are received by approved organizations, located in respective countries. Government of India encourages such assistance. The Ministry of social justice and empowerment operates the bilateral agreements on gift deliveries entered into by the Government of India with the Governments of Federal Republic of Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and United States of America.

The Food Corporation of India is entrusted with the responsibility of handling the port operations work in respect of gift consignments, coming under the agreements on payment for the services at approved rates. The expenditure on handling clearance and inland transportation of gift deliveries to the approved consignees' destination is borne by the Ministry as per the terms of the Agreement.

### **International Organization**

Though the well being of the people is the concern of the state, it cannot be fulfilled due to the lack of financial resources, manpower and other resources. Therefore the state depends upon the help and support of other nations and countries to ameliorate the lot of its poor

and needy. It is based upon the recognition that the International cooperation in social welfare is needed in order to secure social and economic welfare of human beings everywhere. International social welfare organizations can be classified into five groups:

- 1) Government agencies of international character, e.g. United Nations, World Health Organization, International Labor Organization.
- 2) Private International Organizations, e.g. The International Conference of Social Work, World Federation of Mental Health, The International Union for the Child Welfare.
- 3) Private International Organizations have autonomous organizations in each country, e.g. International Red Cross, the YMCA and YWCA.
- 4) National government agencies extend their help to other countries, e.g. The United States Technical Cooperation programme popularly known as four point programme.
- 5) National Private Agencies extend their social services to other countries, e.g. the Ford Foundation and the Rockefeller Foundations in India.

### **International Organizations in India**

Among the International agencies which first organized their activities in India may be included the Red Cross, the YMCA and the YWCA. These organizations are now working in India through their national organizations, which are autonomous in all respects. After World War I, the League of Nations initiated certain International organizations, which in due course began to work in India. Among these, the most important was the International Labor Organization. Then, came, after the end of the World War II, the United Nations Economic and Social Council, the UNICEF, the WHO, and the FAO

among other agencies, which have recently established their regional offices in India, is the International Union of Child Welfare.

In addition to the agencies mentioned above, the names of some more International Organizations may be added:

- Action for Food Production
- Cooperative for American Relief Everywhere
- Catholic Relief Services
- Indo-German Social Services Society
- International Association of Lion's Club
- Rotary International
- Salvation Army.

## **Donor Agencies and United Nation Bodies**

### **Donor Agencies**

One of the major activities of any Non-Governmental Organization is mobilizing financial support for its activities. A number of national and international organizations are providing funds to the social service organizations. Such agencies are known as donor organizations. They give support to the social service activities on the basis of the project proposals, submitted by the organization. Generally donor agencies are providing funds and other services to the registered organizations for their various social activities for the needy and marginalized. The amount of their support varies from project to project according to the requirements or the gravity of the problems. The donor agencies mainly raise funds from its citizens and the government. Some of the donor agencies are:

- Global Fund
- Bill Gates Foundation

- William J. Clinton Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- CMMB (Catholic Medical Mission Board)
- USAID (United States Agency for International Development)
- AHF (AIDS Healthcare Foundation)
- Caritas India
- Church Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA)
- Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)
- Christian Children's Fund
- World Vision
- Co-operative for American Relief Everywhere (CARE)
- Catholic Relief Services (CRS)
- Indo-Global Social Service Society (IGSSS)
- Cordaid, Germany

### **United Nation Bodies**

The United Nations has set up various organizations for groups needing special help. Their contributions to international welfare may be discussed as follows:

### **United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)**

The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) was established by the General Assembly on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1946. Its purpose is to help developing countries to improve the condition of their children and youth. UNICEF provides assistance in such fields as health, nutrition, social welfare, education and vocational training. It also helps governments to assess the important needs of their children and plan comprehensive programme to meet them. A large part of UNICEF aid is in the form of providing equipment,

drugs, well-drilling rigs, school garden supplies, prototype equipment for day care centers and equipment for the production of the textbooks. UNICEF was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1965 and the Indira Peace Prize in 1989.

### **United Nations High Commission for Refugees**

The office of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) was established on 1<sup>st</sup> January 1951. It provides legal protection, and at the request of a government, material assistance for the refugees. UNHCR was awarded the Nobel Prize in 1954.

There are a number of other U.N. bodies working for the social welfare. Some of these organizations are:

- United Nations Center for Regional Development.
- United Nations Development Programme
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- United Nations Environment Programme
- United Nations Institute for Training and Research
- United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter helped us understand what are social welfare organizations. This chapter in detail explained the different types of social welfare organizations that are operational in our country. This chapter also elaborately explains what are government organizations and how they work at the three levels and minutely explains the functioning of non-government organizations in India.

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## **Management of Social Welfare Services**

*\*Archana Kaushik*

### **Introduction**

Social welfare administration, though considered a secondary method of social work practice, plays a significant role in the service delivery system. Success of any programme meant for the well-being of any population group depends to a large extent on the efficacy of its administration. In this chapter, we would look into various ingredients of social welfare administration like bureaucracy, authority and power, leadership, teamwork and so on. Before looking into these characteristics, let us first understand the constituents of social welfare administration system in India.

In India, welfare activities have traditionally been rendered by religious and philanthropic organizations of voluntary nature. Now-a-days, we see various actors are involved in planning and delivery of social welfare services – the government, the non-profit organizations, philanthropic and charitable organizations, community based organizations, the corporate sector, national and international organizations bound by bilateral and multi-lateral ties and so on. Voluntary organizations are taken as lesser bureaucratic, while government and similar large scale organizations are less flexible and firmly abide by the rules and regulations. Style of leadership is an important ingredient in management and social

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work professionals, in this regard, have to decide whether they would prefer transformational or transactional leaderships.

This multiplicity of actors or constituents of social welfare administration system rules out possibility of any uniformity and homogeneity in terms of organizational characteristics and service delivery. These organizations differ in terms of their level of bureaucracy, leadership styles, financial positions, work culture, authority, power, fund raising abilities, communication skills, and the like. All these factors and many others play crucial role in the management of programmes and projects. Globalization and related factors have resulted in workforce diversity that influence motivation, teamwork, conflict resolution and burn outs. In subsequent sections you would be studying about these aspects of management of social welfare services. Let us first understand about certain crucial ingredients of management like bureaucracy, authority, power, leadership, etc., that, influence the efficacy of service delivery system.

## **Ingredients of Management**

**Authority, power and status:** An organization is considered to be a web of inter-relationships, which are more often than not, coloured with authority, power and other formal and informal patterns of communication. In common parlance, authority and power are taken as synonymous. In fact, authority is defined as the decision-making right -when a right to take a decision with regard to a particular matter is vested in a particular position, that position is said to possess the said authority. On the other hand, power is one's ability to influence other's behaviour. It may so happen that an individual influencing others' behaviour is at a very low level in the organizational hierarchy.

Thus, authority is legal or legitimate while power is non-institutional. As each position in the organizational structure is entrusted with a certain responsibility, authority given should be adequate to handle that responsibility. No employee can work effectively if he/she lacks the requisite authority. Authority may be traditional (derived from tradition or norms), charismatic (derived from personal charisma or divine or exceptional powers) and legal authority (derived from principles, rules, regulations laid down by an organization). Status, on the other hand, is the location of people in comparison to others. It is some type of prestige grading that is in consonance with authority vested in a person. It influences motivation levels of employees and must be used by managers effectively.

Likewise, distribution of work in itself contains seeds of power-generation. There can be many bases of power as proposed by French and Raven – legitimate (power-holder enjoys legal/legitimate authority), reward (power-holder has the power to grant promotion, rewards, etc.), coercive (power-holder has the power to hire, fire), expert (power holder possesses specialized knowledge, which others lack) and referent (power-holder has amicable attractive personality or connection with high-ups in the organization). It may be possible that a person with authority may not be having matching personality to command respect and acceptance from his/her subordinates and a person with power may not possess legitimate authority.

Authority, power and status are significant ingredients of administration that play crucial role in motivation, job satisfaction, politicking, and other aspects of organizational behaviour.

**Bureaucracy** is frequently used and abused word, which in common parlance connotes mindless application of

the letters of the rules without any compassion, judgment or empathy. In olden times, organizations were smaller and there was face to face contact with the owner and the workers/employees. With establishment of large sized organizations and employment of huge number of people dispersed over wide geographical locations, bureaucratic administrative framework was considered an ideal type. Certain salient characteristics of bureaucracy are – division of labour (division of work based on specialization and efficiency), hierarchy of authority (unity of command pattern between scalar and hierarchal pattern of subordinates and superiors), maintenance of formal written documents and extensive filing system, strict abidance of procedures, rules and regulations, expert training (on job orientation and refresher courses for employees), impersonality of interpersonal relations (interpersonal dealings are formal, impersonal and wholly devoid of emotions and sentiments) and rational programme of personnel administration (person's expertise and caliber as criteria for recruitment rather than ascriptive factors and fixed system of salary scale and promotion).

Max Weber, considered as Father of Bureaucracy, and his followers have maintained that these (above mentioned) characteristics of bureaucracy would bring rationality, uniformity, and efficiency in an organization. In modern times, no organization is wholly free from bureaucratic characteristics, though the degree may vary depending upon the type, size, structure and purpose of the organization. A critical look at present day organizations, especially those engaged in social welfare activities, bring out that over-conformity to rules stifles initiative, innovation and flexibility, and leads to delayed decision-making and red-tapism. At times, long hierarchy and cumbersome procedures defeat the very purpose for which the organization is set up.

Specifically, in the case of social welfare administration, these negative outcomes of bureaucracy affect the service delivery system to a great extent.

**Motivation** is crucial factor to determine the health of the mind of the employees as well as organizational health. It is the process that accounts for an individual's intensity, direction and persistence of efforts towards attaining a goal. Only the ability or dexterity of employee is not sufficient, rather the will to work plays vital role in his/her performance. So, the job of managers or administrators does not end by recruiting suitable professionals for the job at hand, but retaining and maintaining their motivation and morale is also their duty.

Motivation is a highly dynamic and complex variable in organizational behaviour. The advocates of scientific management and classical theories thought that if basic needs of employees (food, shelter, security, etc.) are taken care of and productivity is linked to rewards, their motivation levels remain high. However, contemporary concepts of motivation take into account significance of informal groups, participative leadership, open communication, etc. A quick look at relevant theoretical propositions would be beneficial (since you already have read about most of these theories in psychology, here, they are not elaborated upon). Abraham Maslow's Need Priority model (an individual attempts to satisfy needs in an order – physiological needs, safety security needs, social affiliation needs, esteem needs and self-actualization needs) gave the managers idea to take care of basic needs of employees so as to maintain their motivation to work. In his Theory X & Theory Y. Douglas Mc Gregor proposed two distinct views of human beings – one basically negative (labeled theory X) and other basically positive (labeled Theory Y). In theory X based on assumptions that employees, by nature, dislike work,

are indolent and self centred, passive and resistant to change. So, economic incentives, reward, punishment, persuasion, control and direction are required to keep employees motivated. Contrary to this Theory Y maintains that employees are self-directed, motivated and responsible and management has to provide opportunity for development and advancement. Next, Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory of Motivation delineates two sets of factors that act as motivators (possibility of growth, responsibility, advancement, recognition) and hygiene or dissatisfiers (interpersonal relations with superiors, subordinates, job security, salary, etc.). As administrator, one should be careful about presence or absence of these factors to ensure conducive working environment. On the other hand, we have a wide range of contemporary theories on motivation, some important ones are mentioned here. ERG (Existence, Relatedness and Growth) theory is modified version of Maslow's theory based on empirical evidences which postulates that three sets of needs – existence (physiological and safety needs), relatedness (social affiliation needs) and Growth (esteem and self-actualization) are highly inter-related and more than one set of needs may be operative at the same time or gratification of higher level needs may give rise to desire to satisfy lower level needs. Goal setting theory says that specific and difficult goals with feedback lead to higher performance. Reinforcement theory maintains that behaviour is environmentally caused. Equity theory says that individuals compare their job inputs and outcomes with those of others and then respond to eliminate any inequalities. Relevance of these theories would be discussed in subsequent sections.

**Leadership** is the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of goals. In the social service sector, it is very crucial. It rests upon leaders and managers to

get the organization realize its objectives. However, the primary task of the leadership also varies according to the stage of the organizational development. It varies from the early leadership which is primarily focused on demonstrating the usefulness of the new organization to the donors and the community – to the leadership which is more mature and which mainly involves expanding the scale of operations, mobilization of funds, organizational procedures and networking, etc.

Let us review some of the salient theories on leadership. Trait theories consider that certain inherent personal qualities determine leadership traits among certain individuals. On the other hand, behavioural theories of leadership maintain that people can be ‘trained’ in leadership. In contemporary times, there are two main types of leadership styles in use – transactional leadership and transformational leadership. Transactional leaders are those who guide or motivate their followers in the direction of established goals by clarifying role and task requirements. In contrast transformational leaders are those who inspire followers to transcend their own self-interests, and who are capable of having a profound and extraordinary effect on followers. It is maintained that transformational leadership style has an edge over transactional leadership.

## **Organizational Climate**

In this section, we would be studying about organizational behaviour and work culture in the backdrop of globalization with special emphasis on social welfare administration. The field of organizational behaviour is concerned with the study of employees’ behaviour in an organization and its effects on the performance of the organization.

In the advent of globalization, numerous changes have occurred in work culture and the organizational climate. Now, more than ever before, employees are from different socio-cultural background and with diverse personality types, values and priorities. Social work paradigm has also changed from welfare to empowerment orientation. Beneficiaries are no more passive receptors, rather active actors in their own development and well-being process. Perspective and process of service delivery have also changed remarkably. Service providers are becoming more heterogeneous in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and other factors. Likewise, certain categories of workforce diversity, say, religious and caste minorities, SC/ST/OBC, disabled persons, displaced persons, gender issues, age factors, temporary/casual contracts and so on influence work culture much more in social work than in any other profession. Let us take a look at some of the knotty issues you may have to deal with in creating an encouraging work culture.

**High Job Turnover:** Social welfare administration system, in India, is dominated by voluntary sector that is, along with many positive aspects is also characterized by adhocism, regional imbalance, social Darwinism, where programmes are, more or less, fund driven rather need driven. Social work professionals for jobs do not enjoy preference in welfare administration and have to compete with candidates from psychology/sociology and other social science background. There is often job dissatisfaction because of low salaries, insecurity because of ad-hoc/temporary project based jobs and not much independence for implementation of creative and innovative ideas and so on.

**Social Darwinism:** In common parlance, cut throat competition between organizations and also among colleagues is termed as Social Darwinism that leaves lesser scope of team work, coordination and cooperation.

The system of funding at the macro level also promotes competition and conflict situations arise in the voluntary sector. Within the organization, ego-clashes, divergent personality factors, informal group cohesiveness, politics and rumors, different styles of performing tasks all tend to hamper inter-dependence and team work and also service delivery.

**Personal-professional Self:** This issue is quite pertinent to welfare administration and social work professionals. During formal and informal interactions at workplace, employees tend to develop likes and dislikes regarding their colleagues. Added to this, increasing conflicts, tensions and stressful situations in modern times, in personal life of social workers may hamper their 'professional self' that demand them to be compassionate, empathetic and devoid of their own tensions, pains and frustrations, which is not true at all the times.

**Positive Relationship:** We may infer that creating a positive climate for nurturing positive professional relationship characterized by feeling of mutual respect, trust and interdependence is vital for social welfare administration in order to realize its objectives. It contributes to the success of total enterprise. Persons who are well related to one another seek for even higher standard of performance. Trustworthiness, responsibility, articulating sound philosophy for personal growth, good channels of communication, etc., ensure positive climate. A positive climate is created when agency procedures and policies are clear. Positive climate is also created when sharing of work together happens. Social workers occupying the position of managers/administrators have a role and a responsibility for the creation of such a positive work culture.

**Healing touch:** In the field of welfare administration, employee's behaviour is all the more crucial as, more often than not, it requires 'healing touch' so as to have soothing effects on clients' problems, crises, pains and frustrations. Lack of human touch and compassion on the part of service providers is likely to defeat the very purpose of the programmes and services meant for welfare and well being of the disadvantaged sections of the society. On the other hand, when staff members and volunteers work in harmony there seems to be greater likelihood that the agency would attain its goals and that the clients and care providers would have a good experience together. Working together in harmony, with devotion and conviction would lead to meaningful endeavours. Bureaucratic characteristics may be necessary for large sized organizations but it is important that inflexibility, too much emphasis on rules and procedures, red tapism, and the like may be avoided so as to maintain human touch and caring attitude in service delivery.

Maintaining **morale and motivation** of staff, regular training, equality of opportunity for career development, democratic decision-making processes and smooth intra-organizational communication is very vital for harbouring positive work culture.

Next crucial function is **coordination** within the organization. The work atmosphere of an organization can be assessed from the relationship and coordination that exists between the various departments of the agency, among staff members and between the staff and the management.

Another aspect is the **participative decision-making**. Similarly, all staff should have an equal opportunity to contribute to the decision-making - which would lead to an enhanced feeling of commitment and a joint sense

of responsibility. It also creates a congenial atmosphere for creativity.

The social workers as managers need to be dexterous in handling problems and issues that come in the way of a positive work climate. They should keep in mind the practical implications of conceptual and theoretical understanding of ingredients of management discussed above. They need to be skillful in dealing with work force diversity based on certain biographic characteristics like age (researches bring out that age is directly proportional to job satisfaction and inversely proportional to job turnover), gender (women more often adhere to authority, rules), tenure, ability and skills, stamina, dexterity, strength, values, attitudes and burnouts. Another aspect of work culture involves little emphasis on hierarchy and rules. Management by Objectives (a technique that involves participative decision-making of dividing work responsibility and fixing deadlines), maintaining flexibility (but not laissez faire style of leadership) and free flow of communication within the organization.

Good management practices are essential to improve organizational climate. Some of the important management practices include fulfillment of defined social needs, finding out growth opportunities and solutions to problems, handling of conflict, equitable allocations of resources, determining priorities, assigning duties and functions, social diagnosis, making estimates and projections for future, provision and selection of alternatives, organization of division of work, scientific approach based on facts, innovation and modification of services, evaluation of results and making improvements, ensuring economical and wise utilization of public funds and improving the quality of life of beneficiaries and care providers. Application of

methods, techniques and skills of social work is essential at every stage of management practice to improve organizational effectiveness. The ten most frequently cited skills of effective managers are verbal communication, managing time and stress, managing individual decisions, recognizing, defining, and solving problems, motivating and influencing others, delegating, setting goals and articulating a vision, self-awareness, team building and managing conflict.

Some of the dimensions of the organizational climate are individual autonomy, direct supervision, better performance, rewards, team spirit, honesty and openness on individual differences, fostering of development, application of new ideas and methods, taking risks and freedom to regulate individual behaviour. Managerial values include autonomy, equity, security and opportunity.

Most often, the effective and efficient delivery of services is determined to a large extent by the high motivation, and commitment of the staff and their identification with the organizational goals. The managers must develop group feelings and cooperation among staff of the organization. The climate requires overall progress of the organization, sustainable human relations and staff development programmes. In addition, effective supervision is also essential. Employees should get an opportunity in work situations to accept challenges, serve others, earn money, enjoy prestige and status and can be creative and independent. Initiative taking behaviour leads to high level of activity and experimentations. Happy and peaceful employer-employee relations can provide better beneficiary relations are the core of successful organizational climate.

## **Communication and Social Marketing**

Communication is the most vital ingredient in an organization. In fact, an organization cannot be conceived of without communication. It would not be wrong to claim that communication is the life-blood of an organization. Efficient communication is essential for all aspects of effective administration. Staff must be adequately and currently informed about plans, methods, schedules, problems, events and progress. It is necessary that instructions, knowledge and information be passed on for application to all concerned and that they be so clearly presented as to make misinterpretation or misunderstanding impossible. Proper and adequate communication is not just in one direction. It is two way passage. Communication must flow from the bottom to upwards, as well as from the top to down.

In an organization, there are different types of communication, each with its own sets of advantages and disadvantages. The methods of transmitting and receiving communication are - oral (which is primarily face to face situation), written (it includes letters, memoranda, agenda, manuals, handbooks, newspapers, magazines, etc.) and other communications (combinations of spoken words and usage of media like posters, flip charts, power-point presentations, etc.). In the organization, communication is categorized into three sets of dimensions - downward communication (communication from superior to subordinates related to plans, programmes, procedures, rules, and may be in the form of command, suggestion, advice, seeking information, details, explanations), upward communication (it is from subordinates to superior and in the form of giving information, feedback, clarifying doubts and the like) and horizontal or lateral communication (refers to communication across

departments or between colleagues in the same/similar ranks). Further, the structures of lines of communication can be formal (this kind of communication is along the lines prescribed by the organization) and informal (also called grapevine, is not along the planned lines of interaction). All those communications – downward, upward, and horizontal, which organization provides for in order to achieve organizational objectives are formal communications. Generally, when formal/informal interactions take place between employees, they develop their own communication system called the informal communication. Now-a-days, we have faster means of communication in the form of computer aided communication, say, emails, internet (intranet as well as extranet), videoconferencing and so on.

Let us now briefly discuss current issues in communication with regard to organizational behaviour, which should be kept in mind by the administrators/managers. Selective perception plays a crucial role in sending and understanding messages and meanings. Researches show that gender (women use language to create connection while men use it to emphasize status and power), cultural contexts (there may be cultural barriers because of interaction between people coming from high context cultures that rely heavily on non-verbal and subtle situational cues in communication and those from low context cultures that rely heavily on words to convey meaning in communication), emotions and feelings (diffuse ability to receive message in a barrier free state) and similar factors may influence effective communication. The manager should choose adequate channels of communication as per the requirement such as memos, letters, bulletins, emails, telephone conversations, face to face interactions, etc. You would be studying different contours of communication in organizational functioning in social

marketing, conflict management, public relations, fund raising and so on. Let us now briefly look at the concept and relevance of social marketing.

**Social Marketing (SM)** is the planning and implementation of programs designed to bring about social change using concepts from commercial marketing. Kotler (1975) defines social marketing as the design, implementation, and control of programmes seeking to increase the acceptability of a social idea or practice in a target group(s). It utilizes concepts of market segmentation, consumer research, idea configuration, communication, facilitation, incentives, and exchange theory to maximize target group response. Andreasen (1995) defines social marketing as the application of commercial marketing technologies to the analysis, planning, execution, and evaluation of programmes designed to influence the voluntary behavior of target audiences in order to improve their personal welfare and that of their society.

The principles of social marketing can be arranged in five Ps, which are as follows:

**Product** unlike commercial marketing where product is a tangible item, here, in SM, product is the behaviour or idea that the campaign planners would like the targeted individuals/ consumers to adopt. The product can be an action (e.g., immunizing children) or material item (e.g., condoms).

**Price** includes the costs associated with 'buying' the product, which is sum total of economic cost as well as psychological cost (embarrassment, say, in buying condoms for safe sex) and social cost (e.g., possibility of losing face).

**Place** comprises of the distribution channels used to make the product available to target audiences. When

the product is a physical item, it must be easily obtainable by consumers (e.g. condoms available at paan-shops). In the case of product being an idea, say, education of girl child, it must be socially available and supported within the consumers' social sphere.

**Promotion** includes the efforts taken to ensure that the target audience is aware of the campaign. These publicity efforts should be designed to cultivate positive attitudes and intentions regarding the product that pave the way for behavior change.

**Positioning** means that the product must be positioned in such a way as to maximize benefits and minimize costs. Positioning is a psychological construct that involves the location of the product relative to other products and activities with which it competes. For instance, using condom would bring peace of mind plus freedom from STIs/HIV and pregnancy while not using it would lead to many health consequences with social and psychological underpinnings.

## **Public Relations**

Public relation (PR) is one of the important functions of social welfare administration which ensures the development of cordial and harmonious relations with the stakeholders. It is the practice of managing flow of information between the organization and the public. PR is an essential and integrated component of public policy or service. The public relations activities are meant to ensure the benefits to the citizens, for whom the policies and services are meant for. The Institute of Public Relations, USA, has defined Public Relations as "the deliberate, planned and sustained effort to establish and maintain mutual understanding between an organization and its publics". Likewise, Edward L. Bernays has given definition of Public Relations as "the

attempt by information, persuasion and adjustment to engineer public support for an activity, cause, movement or institution". Public relations and publicity are not synonymous but many PR campaigns include provisions for publicity also. Publicity is the spreading of information to gain public awareness for a product, person, service, cause or organization, and can be seen as a result of effective PR planning.

You may wonder, what is the need for organizations to engage in PR activities? Investing on PR helps the organization to achieve its objective effectively and smoothly. PR does not mean creating good image for a bad team, since false image cannot be sustained for a long time. Even if the organization's services/programmes are good, it needs an effective Public Relations campaign for attracting, motivating the public to utilize the services, creating awareness about policies and programmes and publicizing the work of the organization. It not only encourages people's participation but also helps in building credibility and better image in the public eye. An effective PR can create and build up the image of an individual or an organization or a nation. At the time when an organization is under crisis an effective Public Relations can remove the 'misunderstanding' and help in developing reciprocal understanding and goodwill between the organization and the public. The PR includes analysis of public perception, modifying/designing organization's policy/programmes in consonance with public interest and then executing the programmes for communication with the public.

PR is a planned effort or management function. It is an execution of communication programme for rapport building, creating goodwill, understanding and acceptance as the chief end results sought by public relations activities. It is very important to understand

the two components of PR - **'Public'** and **'Relations'**. It is essential that socio-demographic and cultural characteristics, values, attitudes, perceptions of the 'public' (that includes employees in the organization as well as the community that the organization is serving) be studied objectively. 'Relations' means conscious decision of the kind of relation or image the administrators want to create in the eyes of the public. Let us look at the process of public relations.

The process of public relations is categorized into seven phases for better understanding: The first phase includes identifying and listing out the information or message to be disseminated. The second phase of PR process is to ascertain the existing image or awareness level about the issue in the target group or common public. The third phase is developing communication objectives and priorities. The fourth phase of PR deals with developing the message and choosing appropriate media to transmission. The fifth phase of PR is the implementation of 'communication campaign' designed in the fourth phase and coordination or the dissemination of message. In the sixth phase, communication campaign is checked whether message has reached properly and the expected action or behaviour or knowledge on image factors emerged. The seventh phase of PR includes rectification of the communication campaign, in case the message does not reach properly after identification of reasons for the ineffectiveness. It is followed by dissemination of the revised message.

The Image building exercises start with understanding the present image and to chalk out, the desired image and to channalize all the PR activities towards it. Some possibilities that would call for PR are promotional opportunity (to inform about new service / policy which require wider publicity), competition (to overcome the

resistance or pre-set mind condition), controversy (To eliminate the contradictory conditions in between the organization and the public), adverse publicity (to inform about the truth or correct issues and thereby removing the misunderstanding), catastrophe (announcement of any unfavourable issues) and crisis (whenever threats arise). Among the many channels, blogs are the most recent and economical means.

## **Fund Raising**

**Fund raising** is the process of soliciting and gathering money or other gifts in-kind, by requesting donations from individuals, businesses, charitable foundations, or governmental agencies. Although fund raising typically refers to efforts to gather funds for non-profit organizations, it is sometimes used to refer to the identification and solicitation of investors or other sources of capital for-profit enterprises.

Common sources of funds are (1) local, International donors and government. In this section, we would concentrate only on local sources of fund raising. Now the scenario is changing and even international NGOs are looking for fund raising, e.g. Plan International has targeted 30% of funding from local sources. Often in times of natural/manmade calamities like Tsunami/Kargil war, organizations engage themselves in fund raising.

Why we would raise funds? Obviously, it is impossible for any organization to implement activities and projects without certain human, technical and financial resources. Fund raising increases the amount of resources and even helps in development of corpus funds. It also reduces dependence on international and national donor organization, which, often times, may reduce flexibility of implementing innovative/creative

ideas and targeting those needs that a community finds important. Fund raising brings sense of ownership among community people and helps organization build social capital and community linkages. Mobilizing local resources increases the sustainability of community initiatives.

Before initiating fund raising endeavour, organizations must check their tax situation. There are two main provisions regarding this – Sec. 80G and Sec. 35 A© of the tax Act. Under Sec. 80 G non-profit organizations working in specified areas (which are deemed to be charitable) can register with income tax authority under this section, which enables the donors (whether individuals or companies) to claim relief up to 50% of the amount donated. The Sec. 35 A © is a more recent one where contributions are 100% tax exempted. It is applicable to specified projects rather than to registered organizations. Approval has to be sought from the National Committee for Promotion of Social and Economic Welfare, Delhi and NGOs generally have to undertake project for 3 years.

Another important issue in fund raising is to develop an ethically sound fund raising policy. It is crucial to list down socially inappropriate activities and not to accept any funds/resources from tainted sources, which may hamper organization's own image and credibility. For instance, taking money from cigarette/liquor manufacturing company/people with criminal background for any social cause would do more harm than any good. Further, it is also unethical and unsought for to exaggerate data/information, project beneficiaries as victims, accentuating their vulnerability (whereas in reality they are not so) while appealing for funds.

Next, understanding psychology of prospective donors on why people give is also necessary. People donate

because – (i) they may be concerned about the problem; (ii) may have personal experience of the problem; (iii) peer pressure (iv) guilt feeling (v) duty (vi) name/fame/ as memorial and (vii) tax benefits. For a successful fund raising campaign one needs to identify likely people, create the right message and communicate that right message.

Another point is how much to ask for - it depends on the situation. In crisis situations like earth quack, flood, etc., cash and kind donations are asked for. Asking people to contribute 'generously' often confuses them. Instead, people respond better if a range of options is provided to them. For instance, divide the work into units: 1 sapling planted = Rs.5; 10 saplings planted = Rs.50; one cataract operation = Rs.500. Also linking the amount being asked with cause gives better results, say, sponsoring child's education/nutrition, etc.

Approaching the prospective donors has many ways – face to face, addressing groups, telephonic conversation, personal letter to known/unknown and circular letter. One may organize house to house or office to office collection, organize fund raising events, invite celebrity on exhibition/fair/mela, frame appeal, produce occasional newsletters, pamphlets for fund raising, tap religious resources (zakaat appeal before Ramzaan for donation) and so on and so forth. Tapping corporate donors is also one of the important strategies for fund raising. Companies generally donate to create goodwill in the local community, to generate publicity and for tax benefits. Certain examples of corporate giving are - cash donations, sponsoring an event, free office space, free space for workshops, making company facilities available including meeting rooms, printing, designing, lending a staff member, providing expertise/advice and so on. Many times employees agree to have regular amount deducted each month from his/her salary for

donations as seen in the case of Helpage in Chennai. In fact, fund raising strategies are becoming increasingly more creative and innovative.

## **Social Auditing**

Social audit is a comparatively new subject, particularly in the development sector in India. It is a tool to empower community people and demand the accountability of position-holders in the development and related works. It is corollary to 'financial audit'. Social audit is a process wherein the community does an inspection, openly in public, of the quality, income expenditure, profit loss of a project, development work or a programme being carried out in its area. Social audit is based on the principle that democratic local governance should be carried out, as far as possible, with the consent and understanding of all concerned. It is thus a process and not an event.

Social audit is a way of measuring, understanding, reporting and ultimately improving an organization's social and ethical performance. It helps to narrow gaps between vision/goal and reality. It is a technique to understand, measure, verify, report on and improve the social performance of the organization. Social auditing values the voice of stakeholders, including marginalized/poor groups whose voices are rarely heard and is taken up for the purpose of enhancing local governance, particularly for strengthening accountability and transparency in local bodies/organizations. Social audit trains the community on participatory local planning and encourages democracy and community participation. It promotes collective decision making and develops human resources and social capital.

The most appropriate institutional level for social audit is the *Gram Sabha*, which has been given 'watchdog'

powers and responsibilities by the *Panchayati Raj* Acts to supervise and monitor the functioning of *panchayat* elected representatives and government functionaries, and examine the annual statement of accounts and audit reports. These are implied powers indirectly empowering *Gram Sabhas* to carry out social audits in addition to other functions. Members of the *Gram Sabha* and the village *panchayat*, intermediate *panchayat* and district *panchayat* through their representatives, can raise issues of social concern and public interest and demand an explanation. The *Gram Sabha* has the mandate to inspect all public documents related to budget allocations, list of beneficiaries, assistance under each scheme, muster rolls, bills, vouchers, accounts, etc., for scrutiny; examine annual statements of accounts and audit reports; discuss the report on the local administration of the preceding year; review local development for the year or any new activity of the programme; establish accountability of functionaries found guilty of violating established norms/rules; suggest measures for promoting transparency in identifying, planning, implementing, monitoring and evaluating relevant local development programmes; and ensure opportunity for rural poor to voice their concerns while participating in social audit meetings.

Another powerful tool in social audit is the 'Right to Information Act' that specifies the modalities for obtaining information and providing penalties or failing to furnish or supplying false information. The Act paves the way for public debate on government development projects and works.

The process of social audit can be divided into following steps - (i) listing the expected goals/objectives of the project/activities that is to be audited; (ii) identifying stakeholders with a focus on their specific roles and duties; (iii) Defining performance indicators that are

understood and accepted by most members participating in the process of social audit; (iv) regular meetings to review and discuss data/information on performance indicators; (v) follow-up of social audit meeting and reviewing stakeholders' actions and agreeing on future action as recommended by the stakeholders; and (vi) establishing a group of trusted local people, who are committed and independent, to be involved in the verification, and to judge if the decisions based upon social audit have been implemented. The findings of the social audit should be shared with all local stakeholders. This encourages transparency and accountability. As social workers, we should expand and popularize the concept and process of social audit, which would help in enhancing the objectives of democracy, social justice and empowerment of community people.

### **Conflict Resolution and Dealing with Burnouts**

There is need for the social work administrator to understand conflict resolution. There can be numerous situations at workplace leading to arguments and disagreements among colleagues. Some of this conflict is relatively easy to recognize, may not necessarily be easy to resolve. It can show itself through obvious enmity between individuals or in disputes between organized groups of people. Conflict may manifest itself in a number of ways including angry shouting, in always making contrary points to another person, or even in sullen withdrawal from all interactions. Conflict can also be between departments, agencies, organizations, groups and individuals or vice versa.

However, it is important to understand that conflict in itself is neither good nor bad. Conflict is the natural result of competitive environment that exists today.

Conflict has a positive role too. It makes people better able to cope with further stressful situations and even envisage new breakthroughs and help create a collaborative culture. In fact, managers/administrators need to nurture constructive conflict dedicated to finding new solutions, new services and new understanding of the social situation. Diversity of personalities, perceptions, values, working style and coping patterns cause conflict at workplace.

The administrator should understand the conflict from its very preliminary stage and should take measures to resolve it. Conflict resolution denotes final solving of the conflict. There are a number of ways to resolve a problem, argument or difficulty by applying social work methods, techniques and skills. Emphatic, active and attentive listening, on the part of a team-leader/administrator/manager goes a long way in conflict resolution. It is followed by helping the aggrieved party nullify emotions as they can inhibit or distort communication which is critical to resolving dispute. Exploring the reasons for conflict, identifying misconceptions about the issue at hand, if any, cultural or value related issues, personality conflicts and level of resistance to change would be the next step. After this, there should be weighing of various alternative solutions followed by agreement on the most appropriate one. Agreement may involve some amount of negotiation, bargaining and compromise. The satisfaction of needs, cooperation and success underlie each negotiation. Negotiation is the usual method of conflict resolution through consensus. In most of the social work contexts, negotiations should continue until it is reconciled, as failure is usually not acceptable. Conflict can be managed as individuals work out differences. Conciliation is another method of conflict resolution in which the settlement is reached in the presence of third party

usually a conciliation officer. Arbitration is yet another method of conflict resolution in which the decision of the arbitrator is binding on the parties.

**Burnouts** means “become extinguished through a lack of fuel”. In our profession there are many situations which put us down and we lose motivation to work. Some of the probable reasons can be – the success rate of intervention may not be at desired levels, clients may not choose seemingly right alternative and our efforts in intervention appear to go in drain, conflicts, work pressures, tensions and stresses at the workplace and so on and so forth. It is necessary to deal with burnouts and some of the suggested ways are as follows:

1. The social worker/employee should maintain awareness of the changing social climate and a realistic evaluation of its impact on people, including themselves. This would help in widening of the perspective and dealing with burnouts in a better way.
2. Learning helps to avoid burnouts. Looking each challenge/work as an opportunity to learn and grow is required.
3. Working in the field of one’s own interest and about which they are motivated to learn more, is the best antidote against burnouts.
4. Time management and stress management are of vital importance in today’s work environment. Learning to manage their individual work loads effectively and responsibly may help social workers/employees in keeping their motivation and morale high.
5. It is important to possess and maintain a personal value system consistent with the value system of human service, even if its tenets may run contrary to accepted social values.

6. For social workers/employees, find a personal life style sufficiently satisfying to enable them to distance themselves from their work is required against burnouts. In other words, keeping professional and personal life separate is needed.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, you studied about a lot of issues influencing service delivery in welfare administration. Bureaucracy tends to bring inflexibility and red-tapism, while leadership styles have their own pros and cons. Authority and power influence behaviours of colleagues towards each other as well as have overall impact on service delivery. Work culture and organizational climate are dynamic concepts and a wide range of variables influence these – diversity of work force, nature of social work profession, fast competitive life, stress, tension, formal informal relations with colleagues, career advancement, office politics, competition, teamwork and collaboration and so on. Communication is considered as life-blood of any organization. Various types of communication and their impact were discussed. We also learnt about concept and principles of social marketing. Public relation as an important function of management was delineated. You also learnt about various strategies of fund-raising. Social auditing is crucial for maintaining transparency. Conflict is inevitable feature of our workplace and resolving it successfully is a skillful activity which you studied in the chapter. Likewise, burnouts severely affect service delivery and the very nature of social work profession may lead to burnout situations frequently. You learnt about the ways of dealing with burnouts in the chapter.

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## **Social Policy and Social Welfare Administration**

*\*Archana Kaushik*

### **Introduction**

The Constitution of India is the source of most of the social policies formulated and executed in the country. The Indian government has implicitly committed itself to be a welfare-state. In order to fulfill its obligations as a welfare-state, the government has formulated several policies and plans of action for the welfare of marginalized and weaker sections of the society. Social policy related to guidelines for the changing, maintenance and creation of living conditions that are conducive to human welfare. Social policy aims to improve human welfare and meet human needs for education, health, housing and social security. Formulation of social policy would have no meaning unless it is executed promptly and effectively. The scope of social welfare administration is implementation of the social policy.

Kidneigh has stated that social work administration is 'the process of transforming social policy into social services.....a two way process: (1) ...transforming social policy into concrete social services, and (2) the use of experience in recommending modification of policy. In this unit, through three main areas - health, education and social welfare - we would understand the policy

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guidelines and administration of these policies in the form of programmes and services. This would also help in evaluating macro-micro level linkages. As social work professionals, not only we should be aware of the salient points of the related social policy in the area in which we are working but also should develop critical appraisal of the contents of the policy guidelines in the light of social justice, equality and empowerment. Let us first try to understand the theoretical and conceptual framework of social policy with regard to social welfare administration.

### **Social Policy and Social Welfare Administration**

The most common social and political use of the term 'policy' refers to "a course of action or intended course of action, conceived as deliberately adopted, after a review of possible alternatives, and pursued or intended to be pursued". Social Policy is thus, "a statement of the programmes, methods and principles of social agency". The older concept that the policy formulation is the function of politics is hardly tenable today. Earlier it was considered that policy-making is a higher order activity than administration and social planners have recommended that policy-making should be distinctly separated from administration or execution of the policy. Wilson has claimed that administrators were not only subordinate to policy-makers but were presumably value-neutral and efficient. They carried out policy and do not make policy. Regarding execution, bureaucracies are generally the instruments which implement public policy. Bureaucracies are necessary for policies to be carried out with some predictability, equity, and due process. Nonetheless, the negative connotations of bureaucracy (like, red tapism, inflexibility, over-

emphasis on rules and regulations, to mention a few) may contribute to withdrawal of public confidence in the efficacy of public policy.

Currently, the essence of administration is policy formulation. The role of administrators is not confined to execution of the policy as they are increasingly taking active part in the formulation of new policies and reviewing and modifying the older ones. Along with this, the administrators are playing crucial role in the execution of the policy. Administrators also participate in another way in the making of policy for the future - they formulate recommendations for legislation and this is a part of the function of policy making. In modern times, the relationship between policy and administration has become so much blurred that it is difficult to say where policy ends and administration begins or vice versa. Therefore, no study of administration could be complete without including the study of policy in it.

Policy gives direction for programme planning and execution at the ground level. Formulation of social policy is, therefore, essential for the successful working of any system of social administration. Unless social administration is assisted by an adequate system of social legislation and sound social policy, it cannot attain its true purpose. Absence of a clear cut social policy often proves to be a major handicap to the development of a sound system of social administration. Hence it would be no exaggeration to say that there can be no successful system of social administration without a social policy.

Next, even a well formulated policy is of no use unless it is implemented effectively. Thus, factors influencing administration (as you have studied in previous units) play crucial role for policy execution. Organizational

efficacy has direct and strong bearing on the successful implementation of public policy.

Social policy is vital for social planning. It must be conceptually clear and simple, theoretically sound, and stated in terms of desired changes achieved among target groups. The policy with clear designation of roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders, clear directives and organizational structures, goes a long way in effectively realizing its set goals. Social policy reflects the government's commitment for the particular cause for which the policy has been formulated. It implies the government's priorities and resource distribution. Hence, technical and budgetary means as well as time frame should be delineated clearly in the policy. However, it may be reminded that policies are merely guidelines and do not enjoy legal sanctity as in the case of social legislations.

Since Independence, the government of India has formulated many policies and reviewed and modified them from time to time. National Health Policy, National Policy on Education, National Policy on Empowerment of Women in India, National Policy for Persons with Disability, National Youth Policy, National Policy on Children and so on and so forth. Many of these policies have been reviewed and revised (say, National Health Policy, National Policy on Education). These policies are comprehensive documents covering the vision and mission of the State, plan of action, targets to be achieved, stakeholders, expected outcome, etc. Though the State cannot be sued if it fails to keep its promises mentioned in the policy, however, in this largest democracy of the world, votes of the common man prove to be a driving force for politicians to try their best in policy execution. Further, in India, social policy plays crucial role in formulation of Five Year plans.

It may be reiterated that without proper execution, social policy, doesn't matter how ambitious and fool proof it is, remains a paper tiger. In administration, committed leadership, inter-ministerial coordination, central-state relationship, political will, representation of various stakeholders including the grassroots people are some of the crucial factors that influence implementation of social policies. In the subsequent sections, you would study about Health policy, education policy and policies in social welfare and associated programmes and schemes administered by the respective Ministries and State machineries.

## **Health Policy and Programmes**

'Health is wealth' – this old proverb has all the more significance for the government of any nation like India as only healthy citizens can contribute fully for the national growth and development. In this regard, the government has formulated its National Health Policy in the year 1983 that talked about setting up of a well-dispersed network of comprehensive primary health care services, with referral system, specialty and super-specialty facilities in a decentralized and integrated manner. The NHP-1983 had envisaged providing 'Health for All by the year 2000 AD', through the universal provision of comprehensive primary health care services, which we could not achieve for several reasons. Again, in the year 2002, another National Health Policy was formulated where an attempt has been made to maximize the broad-based availability of health services to the citizenry of the country on the basis of realistic considerations of capacity. The current policy also stressed on establishing more public health institutions at a decentralized level. As per the population projected for the year 2000, it is estimated that there is a shortfall of 16% in the number of SCs/PHCs/CHCs, which in

the case of CHCs is only 58%. The NHP-2002 has also identified the gap between the various States, as also the gap across the rural-urban divide. National health programmes are designed with enough flexibility to permit the State public health administrations to integrate their own programme package according to their needs. Also, the implementation of the national health programme can only be carried out through the State Governments' decentralized public health machinery.

There is dearth of funds for medical facilities, shortage of medical and para-medical personnel, with further disproportionate shortfall in less developed and rural areas, obsolete and unusable equipment in many public hospitals, dilapidated state of the buildings, minimal availability of essential drugs, and the capacity of the facilities is grossly inadequate, which leads to overcrowding, and consequentially to a steep deterioration in the quality of the services. The NHP-2002 addresses all these issues making specific recommendations in these matters.

The NHP-2002 looks into the possibility of using vast reservoir of practitioners in the Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy, who have undergone formal training in their own disciplines, in the implementation of State/Central Government public health programmes, so as to increase the reach of basic health care in the country. Different levels of Panchayati Raj Institutions are involved in programmes and funds in the health sector. The NHP-2002 also suggests initiatives to rectify disparities in geographical spread of Medical and Dental colleges and the uneven quality of education in these institutions. It also focuses on unequal facilities available in urban areas causing disadvantage to communities living in slums and unplanned habitations. This Policy recommends measures to ensure the future

Health Security of the country, with the advent of globalization and its impact on availability of indigenously manufactured generic drugs and vaccines.

Mental health disorders are actually much more prevalent than is apparent on the surface. While such disorders do not contribute significantly to mortality, they have a serious bearing on the quality of life of the affected persons and their families. Mental health institutions are woefully deficient in physical infrastructure and trained manpower. NHP-2002 examines these deficiencies in the public health sector and makes suitable suggestions.

IEC initiatives are important for creating awareness about preventive and curative healthcare. It is especially vital for disseminating curative guidelines for the TB, Malaria, Leprosy, Cataract Blindness Programmes, and to prevent HIV/AIDS and other life-style diseases. The Policy, while projecting an IEC strategy, fully addresses the inherent problems like high illiteracy rate in the country. The policy attempts to target school and college students to improve the general level of awareness in regard to 'health-promoting' behaviour. It stresses on better facilities and financial outlay for Medical Research in the country and a comprehensive system of compilation and documentation of data base on health statistics. The policy recognizes problems (like uneven quality, financially exploitative) with private health services and suggests establishment of regulatory mechanisms in this regard. It also talks about involvement of individuals and civil society institutions in implementation of public health programmes.

One of the main components of NHP-2002 is to apply the alternative systems of medicine – Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Homoeopathy – in the umbrella of national healthcare framework. The main objective of this policy

is to achieve an acceptable standard of good health amongst the general population of the country. Overriding importance would be given to ensuring a more equitable access to health services across the social and geographical expanse of the country.

### **Administrative Aspects**

After brief discussion on the health policy in India, let us briefly look at the administrative aspects of the health services. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is the nodal agency that implements various national health programmes. Healthcare system in India, involves a huge web of primary health centres and sub-centres, community health centres and district hospitals. National Rural Health Mission (2005-12) is one of the very crucial campaigns of the government that seeks to provide effective healthcare to rural population throughout the country with special focus on 18 states having weak public health indicators and/or weak health infrastructure. The Mission is an articulation of the commitment of the Government to undertake corrections of the health system and promote policies that strengthen public health management and service delivery in the country. It has as its key components provision of a female health activist in each village; a village health plan prepared through a local team headed by the Health and Sanitation Committee of the Panchayat; strengthening of the rural hospital for effective curative care; and integration of vertical Health and Family Welfare Programmes and Funds for optimal utilization of funds and infrastructure and strengthening delivery of primary healthcare. It aims at effective integration of health concerns with determinants of health like sanitation and hygiene, nutrition, and safe drinking water through a District Plan for Health. It seeks decentralization of programmes for district

management of health. It seeks to address the inter-State and inter-district disparities, especially among the 18 high focus States, including unmet needs for public health infrastructure. It shall define time-bound goals and report publicly on their progress. It seeks to improve access of rural people, especially poor women and children, to equitable, affordable, accountable and effective primary healthcare.

**Goals of NRHM are:**

- Reduction in Infant Mortality Rate (IMR) and Maternal Mortality Ratio (MMR)
- Universal access to public health services such as Women's health, child health, water, sanitation and hygiene, immunization, and nutrition.
- Prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases, including locally endemic diseases
- Access to integrated comprehensive primary healthcare
- Population stabilization, gender and demographic balance.
- Revitalize local health traditions and mainstream AYUSH
- Promotion of healthy life styles

Core Strategies of NRHM are to train and enhance capacity of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) to own, control and manage public health services; promote access to improved healthcare at household level through the female health activist (ASHA); health plan for each village through Village Health Committee of the Panchayat; strengthening sub-centre through a untied fund to enable local planning and action and more Multi Purpose Workers (MPWs); strengthening existing PHCs

and CHCs, and provision of 30-50 bedded CHC per lakh population for improved curative care to a normative standard (Indian Public Health Standards defining personnel, equipment and management standards); preparation and implementation of an inter-sectoral District Health Plan prepared by the District Health Mission, including drinking water, sanitation and hygiene and nutrition; integrating vertical Health and Family Welfare programmes at National, State, Block, and District levels; developing capacities for preventive health care at all levels for promoting healthy life styles, reduction in consumption of tobacco and alcohol etc.; and promoting non-profit sector particularly in under served areas. Supplementary strategies include regulation of Private Sector including the informal rural practitioners to ensure availability of quality service to citizens at reasonable cost; promotion of Public Private Partnerships for achieving public health goals; mainstreaming AYUSH – revitalizing local health traditions and reorienting medical education to support rural health issues including regulation of Medical care and Medical Ethics; and effective and viable risk pooling and social health insurance to provide health security to the poor by ensuring accessible, affordable, accountable and good quality hospital care.

Major National health programmes are as follows:

- National Water Borne Disease Control Programme
- National Filarial Control Programme
- National Leprosy Eradication Programme
- Revised National TB Control Programme
- National Programme for Control of Blindness
- National Iodine Deficiency Disorders Control Programme
- National Mental Health Programme

- National Aids Control Programme
- National Cancer Control Programme
- Universal Immunization Programme
- National Programme for Prevention and Control of Deafness
- Pilot Programme on Prevention and Control of Diabetes, CVD and Stroke
- National Tobacco Control Programme

### **Education Policy and Programmes**

The constitution of India is the ultimate document which guides State policy in all sectors including education. Details of provisions contained in the Constitution having a bearing on Education, have been listed as:

- provision of free and compulsory education to all the children up to the age of fourteen years
- Education, in general, is the concurrent responsibility of the Union and the States.
- Local authorities (Panchayats and Municipalities) are to be assigned a suitable role in education (especially schools, Adult and non-formal education) through individual state legislations.

State governments and local authorities are expected to provide facilities for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage of education.

#### **National Policy on Education**

There have so far been mainly two comprehensive statements of the NPE, viz. those of 1968 and 1986 and the latter policy was then reviewed and modified in 1992.

The NPE aims to promote national progress, furthering the goals of socialism, secularism and democracy

enshrined in our Constitution, a sense of common citizenship and culture, and to strengthen national integration, laying stress on the need for a radical reconstruction of the educational system, to improve its quality at all stages, and give much greater attention to science and technology, the cultivation of moral values and a closer relation between education and the life of the people. The national system of education envisages a common educational structure and a national curricular framework with strict conformity with secular values.

The NPE lays special emphasis on the removal of disparities and to equalize educational opportunities by attending to the specific needs of those who have been denied equality so far such as Women (redesigning of curricula, textbooks, training and orientation of teachers to foster values of women empowerment) Scheduled Castes (pre-matric scholarships, free books, uniforms, subsidized fees, recruitment of SC teachers, location of school buildings, Adult Education Centres in such a way as to facilitate enrolment of SCs), Scheduled Tribes (opening primary schools, anganwadi centres, Adult Education Centres in tribal areas, develop curricula and devise instruction materials in tribal language, establishing residential/Ashram schools for tribal children), other educationally backward areas (suitable incentives and institutional infrastructure for rural, hilly, desert, remote areas) minorities (review of textbooks objectively and all possible measures to promote national integration) and handicapped (emphasis on inclusive education, opening of special schools with hostels for severely handicapped, training and orientation of teachers).

The policy also stresses on adult education through mass literacy campaigns, comprehensive programmes of post-literacy and continuing education, workers' education

through employers, wide promotion of books, libraries, reading rooms and usage of IEC materials and programmes of distance learning, to mention a few.

The NPE also lays emphasis on Early Childhood Care and Education in the formative years of a child. It puts thrust on universal access and enrolment, universal retention of children up to 14 years of age and a substantial improvement in the quality of education at the elementary level. Under Operation Blackboard, it talks about improving school facilities, availability of minimum of three teachers per school and at least 50 percent of teachers to be women. The policy also focuses on non-formal education (NFE) for school drop outs, working children and girls who cannot attend whole-day school by establishing NFE centres and having tailor-made, need based educational programmes with flexible hours. The policy further has talked about vocationalisation of education, open-university and distance learning, setting up of rural universities and technical and management education as its focal areas.

The institutions which will be strengthened to play an important role in giving shape to the National System of Education are the University Grants Commission, the All India Council of Technical Education, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and the Indian Medical Council. Integrated planning will be instituted among all these bodies so as to establish functional linkages and reinforce programmes of research and post graduate education. These, together with the National Council of Education Research and Training, the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, the National Council of Teacher Education and the National Institute of Adult Education will be involved in implementing the Educational Policy.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development, established in 1985, is responsible for providing educational opportunities to the citizens of India. It has two departments – Department of school education and literacy and Department of Higher Education. The salient schemes under the Department of School Education and Literacy are:

**Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA)** is an effort to universalize elementary education by community ownership of the school system. It is an attempt to ensure quality basic education all over the country. The aim of SSA programme is to provide useful and relevant elementary education for all children in 6 to 14 age group by 2010. There is also another goal to bridge social, regional and gender gaps, with the active participation of the community in the management of schools. Its aim is to allow children to learn about and master their natural environment in a manner that allows the fullest harnessing of their human potential both spiritually and materially. SSA has brought a framework for implementation that allows states to formulate context specific guidelines within the overall framework thereby encouraging districts in States and UTs to reflect local specificity and promote local need based planning. 2010 is the outer limit for such achievements. The emphasis is on mainstreaming out-of-school children through diverse strategies, as far as possible, and on providing eight years of schooling for all children in 6-14 age groups. The thrust is on bridging of gender and social gaps and a total retention of all children in schools.

Broad strategies of SSA include Institutional Reforms, Sustainable Financing, Community Ownership with community based monitoring with full transparency, Institutional Capacity Building for national, state and district level institutions like NIEPA / NCERT / NCTE / SCERT / SIEMAT / DIET. It gives priority to education

of girls and focuses on Special Groups (children from SC/ST, minority groups, urban deprived children, disadvantaged groups and the children with special needs) in the educational process.

**Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya (KGBV)** scheme was launched by the Government of India in August, 2004 for setting up residential schools at upper primary level for girls belonging predominantly to the SC, ST, OBC and minorities in difficult areas. The scheme was applicable since inception in 2004, in Educationally Backward Blocks (EBBs) where the rural female literacy is below the national average (46.13%: Census 2001) and gender gap in literacy is more than the national average (21.59%: Census 2001).

National Programme of Nutritional Support to children of primary school commonly known as **Mid Day Meal Scheme** was introduced to improve health condition of children belonging to poor economic status particularly girls who remain unfed, underfed has been an important scheme to attract and retain children in schools.

District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) is another scheme initiated in 1988 for training of teachers.

**Mahila Samakhya Programme** is 'Education for Women's Equality' that was launched in 1988-89 and has covered more than 10,000 villages in 10 states. Through women's groups (mahila Sanghs), it enables women to use education as a path for their empowerment.

District Primary Education Programme is to ensure education of children at district level. It stresses on gender training and has constituted Village Education Committees (Mother Teacher Motivator Groups).

Schemes under the Department of Higher Education are with respect to University and Higher Education and Technical Education.

## **Social Welfare: Policies and Programmes**

In India, there is no comprehensive policy on social welfare covering a range of issues affecting various disadvantaged sections of the society like Scheduled Castes, destitutes, street children, aged, disabled and so on. However, most of these issues are covered under the gamut of the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE). Since the history of this creation of this Ministry from Ministry of Welfare and even before that has been covered in earlier units, we do not discuss it here again. The MSJE is entrusted with the welfare, social justice and empowerment of disadvantaged and marginalized sections of the society viz, Scheduled Caste, Backward Classes, Persons with Disabilities, Aged Persons, and victims of Drug Abuse, etc. The basic objective of the policies, programmes, law and institution of the Indian welfare system is to bring the target groups into the main stream of development by making them self-reliant.

The Organization's structure is as follows:

Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment as the name suggests is to ensure equitable treatment to such sections of society suffering social inequalities, exploitation, discrimination and injustice. The Ministry is headed by Cabinet Minister and Minister of State. Next, are the Secretary and then Additional Secretary of the MSJE. The activities of the Ministry are under taken through Bureaus as the Bureau of Scheduled Castes Development, Backward Classes Bureau Coordination, Media, Administration, Disability Bureau, Social Defence Bureau and Project, Research, Evaluation and Monitoring Bureau, each Bureau is headed by Joint Secretary. Let us now examine the salient issues covered by the MSJE:

### **Scheduled Caste Development**

It is responsible for all round development of Scheduled Castes and to bring them in the mainstream of national life and ensure their full participation in socio-economic development of the country. It has initiated a lot of schemes for people belonging to SC community. A few salient ones are – Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatravas Yojna; Central Sector Scholarship Scheme of Top Class Education for SC students; Self Employment Scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers; Central Sector Scheme of 'Rajiv Gandhi National Fellowship' for providing scholarships to SC students to pursue programmes in higher education such as M.Phil and Ph.D.; Post-Matric Scholarship for SC/ST students; Pre-Matric Scholarship for the children of those engaged in unclean occupations; Central Sector Scheme of National Overseas Scholarship for SC candidates; Special Education Development Programme for SC Girls belonging to Low Literacy Levels; Book Banks for SC/ST students; upgradation of merit of SC Students; Central Sector Scheme of Free Coaching for SC and OBC students; National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSCFDC); Assistance to Scheduled Castes Development Corporations; Supporting Projects of All India Nature of SCs (under the scheme, financial assistance is provided to reputed research institutions including universities to conduct purposeful studies for the welfare of SC community); and National Commission for Safai Karamcharis.

### **Backward Classes Development**

The Backward Classes are those castes/communities that are notified as socially and educationally Backward Classes by the State Governments or those that may be notified as such by the Central Government from time to time. The affairs of Backward Classes were looked

after by the Backward Classes Cell (BCC) in the Ministry of Home Affairs and shifted to the then newly created Ministry of Welfare (now called MSJE). The Backward Classes Division in the Ministry looks after the policy, planning and implementation of programmes relating to social and economic empowerment of OBCs. It also looks after matters relating to two institutions set up for the welfare of OBCs: National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC; meant to promote economic and developmental activities for the benefit of Backward Classes and to assist the poorer sections of these classes in skill development and self employment ventures) and the National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC; The National Commission for Backward Classes Act, 1993 was enacted on the direction of the Supreme Court to set up a permanent body for entertaining, examining and recommending upon requests for inclusion and complaints of over-inclusion and under-inclusion in the central lists of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) of citizens for the purpose of making reservation in civil posts and services under Government of India).

**Salient Programmes for Other Backward Classes** are Pre-matric Scholarship for OBC Students (students from families of below poverty line are given the scholarship and its funding is shared by State and Centre in the ratio of 1:1, while in UTs 100% grant is given by Central Government); Post-matric Scholarship for OBC Students (100% central assistance is provided to State Government/Union Territory Administration for the purpose.); Hostel for OBC Boys and Girls (Out of the hostels set up under this scheme at least one third will be exclusively for girls. 5% of the total seats in these hostels shall be reserved for disabled students); Assistance to Voluntary Organizations for Welfare of OBCs.

NBCFDC has launched **Swarnima Scheme** to make women of Backward Classes self reliant and **Swayam Saksham Scheme** for professionally unemployed youth for their self-employment. It has also initiated **Education Loan Scheme** to provide loans at concessional rate of interest to the student of Backward Classes living below the poverty line for pursuing general/professional/technical courses or training at graduate and higher levels. Under its **Margin Money Loan**, the loans are given up to 40% of the cost under various sectors viz. Agriculture and Allied, Small Business/ Artisan and Traditional Occupation, Service and Transport. The corporation has initiated certain micro finance schemes like **Micro Credit Financing** women through accredited NGOs either directly or through self help groups, **Mahila Samridhi Yojna** to provide micro finance to women entrepreneurs in rural and urban areas and **Training Grant Scheme** to provide financial assistance to the members of the target groups for up-gradation of their technical skill.

### **Persons with Disabilities**

Let us first take a look at the salient features of the **National Policy for Persons with Disabilities**. The National Policy recognizes that Persons with Disabilities (PWD) are valuable human resource for the country and seeks to create an environment that provides them equal opportunities, protection of their rights and full participation in society. The policy focuses on prevention of disabilities (awareness and early detection camps) and rehabilitation measures (physical, educational, vocational and economic rehabilitation for a dignified life in society). It talks about awareness, early detection and intervention, counseling and medical rehabilitation, provision of suitable and modern aids and appliances through DDRCs and Accredited Social Health Activist

(ASHA) of National Rural Health Mission, National institutes mentioned above and their outreach work. The policy talks about development of Rehabilitation Professionals by giving training to Anganwadi workers, Auxiliary Nurse Midwives, NGO workers and creating awareness among teachers, panchayat members and community people. Special emphasis is given on education of PWDs in Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Integrated Education for Disabled Children (IEDC) scheme. Further, 3% reservation in educational institutions and employment in government institutions and PSUs has been provided. The policy also reinforces the need for barrier free environment in public buildings and transport amenities.

The constitution of India ensures equality, freedom, justice and dignity of all individuals and implicitly mandates an inclusive society for all including persons with disability. According to the Census 2001, there are 2.19 crore (2.13% of the total population) persons with disabilities. The government has enacted three legislations for persons with disabilities viz. (i) Persons with Disability (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, which provides for education, employment, creation of barrier free environment, social security, etc. (ii) National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities Act, 1999 has provisions for legal guardianship of the four categories and creation of enabling environment for as much independence as possible, (iii) Rehabilitation Council of India Act, 1992 deals with the development of manpower for providing rehabilitation services. In addition to the legal framework, extensive infrastructure has been developed in the form of following institutions:

- Institute for the Physically Handicapped, New Delhi

- National Institute of Visually Handicapped, Dehradun
- National Institute for Orthopaedically Handicapped, Kolkata
- National Institute for Mentally Handicapped, Secunderabad
- National Institute of Hearing Handicapped, Mumbai
- National Institute of Rehabilitation, Training and Research, Cuttack
- National Institute for Empowerment of Persons with Multiple Disabilities, Channai.

There are five composite rehabilitation centres, four Regional Rehabilitation centres and 120 District Disability Rehabilitation centres (DDRCs) providing various kinds of rehabilitation services. Several other institutions, under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare – National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences, Bangalore; All India Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Mumbai; All India Institute of Speech and Hearing, Mysore; Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi, etc., also provide rehabilitation services. National Handicapped and Finance Development Corporation (NHFDC) has been providing loans for self employment ventures of persons with disabilities.

Number of schemes, programmes and projects are implemented supported by an infrastructural network of the Disability Division in the Ministry. The infrastructure includes National Institutes, Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI), Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO), National Trust for Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities, office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities

and District Disability Rehabilitation Centres. Funding schemes of the Division are - Scheme to promote voluntary action for persons with disabilities; Scheme of Assistance to Disabled Persons for Purchase/ Fitting of Aids and Appliances; Science and Technology project in Mission Mode on application of Technology for the welfare and rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, Scheme of National Award for the Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities; Scheme for providing Employment to the Persons with Disabilities in the Private Sector - Incentives to employers and Audio Book Production Centres.

### **Social Defence**

The Social Defence Bureau of the Ministry caters to the requirements of neglected and marginalized people, abandoned destitute, neglected and delinquent juveniles who need care and protection for want of support or are in conflict with the society or the law, the drug addicts and offenders, the aged and host of others who need special care, protection and support. For services provided for the care and rehabilitation of juvenile delinquents, Juvenile Justice Act should be read. Likewise, policy on girl child, as well as policies for women empowerment should be read that, among other things, also deal with girls and women in need of care and protection. The programmes and the policies of the Bureau aim at equipping this group to sustain a life of respect and honour and to become useful citizens. In this process, the Bureau plays the role of a catalyst and has promoted voluntary action. The State Governments, autonomous bodies, NGOs and even the corporate world are involved in formulating and implementing the policies. All the programmes are meant to aid, prevent neglect, abuse and exploitation and provide assistance to those deprived and mainstream them.

### **Elderly Care**

In response to increasing vulnerability of elderly, the Ministry of SJE formulated a National Policy on Older Persons (NPOP) in January 1999 to reaffirm its commitment to ensure the well-being of the older persons in a holistic manner. It assures financial security through Old Age Pension Scheme for poor and destitute older persons, better returns on earnings/savings of people in organized sector, skill upgradation, self-employment, continued employment and income generation. The NPOP meeting health needs of elderly through strengthening and reorienting public health system from primary to tertiary levels, as well as implementing health insurance. The policy ensures provision of standard institutional services for the destitute and needy elderly. It further says that the State has to gear up security network to save older persons from criminal offences and police is required to keep friendly vigil. It also maintains strict and effective implementation of social legislations related to elderly. The NPOP further describes the positive roles expected from various stakeholders like Media, community people and mainly the family. It envisages training of human resource in geriatric care.

In pursuance of the announcement of the National Policy, a National Council for Older Persons (NCOP) headed by the Minister of SJE was set up to advise and aid and give feedback to the government on implementation of the policy and programmes for older persons. There is an inter-ministerial committee headed by the Secretary, Ministry of SJE for monitoring and ensuring the proper implementation of the action taken on the recommendations of NCOP.

The MSJE supports programmes for the welfare of the elderly through financial assistance to NGOs under its

scheme - Integrated Programme for Older Persons and another one is Scheme of Assistance to Panchayati Raj Institutions/VOs/SHGs under which funds are provided for construction of Old Age Homes.

### **Grants in aids**

In keeping with its mandate, the MSJE supports and assists a number of projects in the field of Disabilities, Social Defence, welfare of the Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes etc, which are implemented through various Voluntary Organizations.

### **Planning, Research, Evaluation and Monitoring (PREM) Division**

The MSJE is implementing a number of schemes for various vulnerable and disadvantaged groups they cater to. Therefore, it is important that the impact of these schemes/programmes should be assessed and evaluated from time to time, so that these can be suitably modified/ revised to make them more effective or phased out if their utility is found to be doubtful. It is also necessary to identify through research, areas where social problems are likely to arise in future so that the Ministry can plan timely interventions. The Ministry, therefore, sponsors research and evaluation studies under PREM division.

Let us list associated organizations with MSJE:

- Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped (AYJNIHH)
- Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO)
- Dr. Ambedkar Foundation
- Institute for the Physically Handicapped (IPH), rechristened as Deen Dayal Upadhyay Institute of Physically Handicapped

- National Commission for Safai Karamcharis
- National Commission for Backward Classes (NCBC)
- National Commission for Scheduled Castes (NCSC)
- National Institute of Mentally Handicapped (NIMH)
- National Institute of Visually Handicapped (NIVH)
- National Institute for Orthopaedically Handicapped, Kolkata
- National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCFDC)
- National Safai Karamcharis Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC)
- National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation
- National Handicapped Finance and Development Corporation (NHFDC)
- National Trust for the Welfare of Persons with Autism, Cerebral Palsy, Mental Retardation and Multiple Disabilities
- National Institute of Social Defence (NISD)
- National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped (NIOH) rechristened as Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee National Institute for Orthopaedically Handicapped
- Officer of the Chief Commissioner for Disabilities
- Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI)
- Swami Vivekanand National Institute of Rehabilitation, Training and Research (SVNIRTAR).

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, we studied about social policy and its relation and relevance for social welfare administration.

National Health Policy, National Policy on Education, National Policy for Persons with Disabilities and National Policy for Older Persons have been delineated in the unit. You also learnt about various administrative details and programmes meant for social service and social welfare of the citizens. By now, you might have developed a clearer idea of translation of social policies into implementation of programmes and services. For further developments and recent updates it is recommended that you visit websites of various ministries mentioned in suggested readings.

## **References**

- Hill, M. (2003): *Understanding Social Policy* 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
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- Moroney, R.M. & Krysik, J. (1998): *Social Policy and Social Work: Critical Essays on the Welfare State*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.
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- [www.socialjustice.nic.in](http://www.socialjustice.nic.in)
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