

# **KILA Journal of Local Governance**

(Bi-annual)

Vol-1, Issue-1

July-December 2014



**Kerala Institute of Local Administration**

Mulamkunnathukavu, Thrissur - Kerala - 680 581

Phone:Office-0487-2201768, 2200244,

Director:2201312; Fax:0487-2201062

e-mail: [kila@md2.vsnl.net.in](mailto:kila@md2.vsnl.net.in); website: [www.kilaonline.org](http://www.kilaonline.org)



**KILA Journal of Local Governance**

Vol-1, Issue-1  
July-December 2014

***Editorial Board***

Chief Editor

**Dr. P.P. Balan**

Director, KILA

Editor

**Dr. J.B. Rajan**

Members

**Dr. Sunny George**

**Dr. Peter M. Raj**

Associate Editors

**Dr. Biju.S.K**

Assistant Professor

**A.S. Prathap Singh**, MA, MPhil, BEd

Course Co-ordinator

Views expressed in articles are personal opinion of the contributors and are in no sense official; neither KILA nor the Editor is responsible for them.



*Decentralization of power is a formidable task that can be successfully carried out only if the challenges are addressed properly. One such challenge is tailoring it to suit local requirements. Another one is capacity building of Citizens, Elected Representatives and Officials to enable them to work together to perform the functions that they will be assigned as a result of decentralization. Deepening of democracy happens when people participate in the decision making process and the only form of participation that is meaningful is informed participation. A well informed citizen can play an active role in development discourse and contribute to the process of arriving at right decisions. Right decisions produce results. As long as decisions regarding development do not produce results people do not care to participate in the decision making process and they distance themselves away from governments. It is more relevant in the case of local governments. In the local governments every citizen gets opportunity to participate directly in the process of decision making. The future of decentralized governance in India depends on enabling the stakeholders to participate effectively in the process of decision making regarding local governance.*

*KILA has been trying to create a platform to encourage healthy discussion on various aspects of local governance and development. KILA Journal of Local Governance is yet another step in building up a platform for such a discussion. The current volume of the Journal discusses various issues of democracy, inclusion of the excluded, information base for ensuring transparency and issues relating to local governance and development. It is hoped that the journal will generate further discussion that may contribute to deepen democracy in our country.*

**Chief Editor**



## Contents

<i>Editorial</i>	i
<i>Power to the People : The Sociological Conundrum</i>	1
-Dr. George Mathew	
<i>Community Policing and Union Parishad : Shared Obligation in Restoration of Social Peace</i>	7
-Dr. Bashir Ahmed & Mohammad Tarikul Islam	
<i>Dalit Women Panchayat Representatives and Social Exclusion: Myth or Reality?</i>	15
-Dr. Dinesha P T	
<i>Sustainable Development : Challenges of Empowering Local Institutions for People's Participation</i>	23
-Dr. Biswajit Mohapatra	
<i>Perceived Effectiveness of Farmer Participatory Planning in Kerala</i>	31
-P.K.Abdul Jabbar & Dr. M. Sundaramari	
<i>Re-organisation of the Statistical System for Local Governance in Kerala</i>	37
-Dr. M. Kuttappan	
<i>Geo-informatics for Village Development : A Case Study of Palayamkottai Village in Dindigul District of Tamil Nadu</i>	45
-A.Rajeshwari & Dr. N.D. Mani	
<i>Socio Economic Caste Census 2011 : Identification of BPL Persons</i>	51
--Dr. Joseph Abraham	

<i>e-Governance in Local Governments : Aiming Towards Good Governance</i> -Dr. Sabu Thomas	61
<i>Drive Towards TQM in Grama Panchayats, Kerala</i> -Dr.J.B.Rajan & Biju.S.K	71
<i>PURA : Juxtaposition of Essence and Success</i> -Dipak Abhyankar	81
<i>Inter-se Distribution Criteria and the Union Finance Commissions: A View from Kerala</i> -Dr. Shaheena.P	91

## **Power to the People: The Sociological Conundrum**

*The bureaucracy is rarely happy to see Panchayats emerge as institutions of self-government or the third stratum of governance. As the case of MPs and MLAs majority of them also fall in the attitudinal category of bureaucrats and use the local area development fund to create their vote banks through patronage and clientelism. The centrally sponsored schemes are implemented not as envisaged. On the same time the judicial response has all along been in favour of local bodies and reflects a clear acknowledgement of treating local governments according to the true spirit of the Constitution. The principle of subsidiarity can be upheld by strengthening local governance. Monopolisation of power and building of colonies and empire are to be neutralized through strengthening people participation and grass root governance.*

**Dr. George Mathew\***

---

\* Chairman, Institute of Social Sciences (ISS), New Delhi. E-mail: gemathew@yahoo.co.in

## **1. Power Brockers**

Even after India has entered the 7<sup>th</sup> decade of Independence and nearly two decades of the new generation of Panchayats, the upper castes, the zamindars, capitalists (corporate sector) and *newavatars* (incarnations) of Rajas hold sway on Indian society and politics. In many a situation, local governments have become a victim of these forces. The greatest threat is the resistance put up by the traditional social forces and their manifestations at various levels of society and government. It is a social reality that there is resistance from dominating class to share power with the disadvantaged groups. (The Hindu, 2002; Jagaran Dainik, 2002).

The Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) are eager to act as micro development agents. When five crores Rupees per year is allocated to a Member of Parliament in the name of local area development, the local governments are starved of funds. The MPs and MLAs use this money to create their vote banks through patronage and clientelism. The MPs/MLAs would like to see their names on a bus stand, a culvert, a temple stone or a toilet block while the local development is the mandatory role of local governments. In most cases, the MPs and MLAs put strong resistance against devolving powers as well as finances to the local governments. Very few elected representatives in the state assemblies or Parliament are change agents. Most of them have vote banks and keeping that intact will be possible only through maintaining status quo.

The bureaucracy is rarely happy to see Panchayats emerge as institutions of self-government or the third stratum of governance. Our administrative culture is to retain the powers of the line departments and not to give power to the people. Their structure and procedures are deeply mired in the imperial model of governance and they retain their distrust of local governments. There is a strong belief that the nexus between politicians and officials at various levels needs to be eradicated; otherwise power to the people will remain a pipe dream.

## **2. Manifestations of Power Brockers**

The power-brokers continue to hold sway. They appear in various ways as contractors, middlemen, lobbyists, mafia and so on. They always prefer centralised corridors of power and not decentralisation. In Parliament and State Assemblies in India, there are 4,962 elected members. It is much easier to deal with them and the officials in the national and state capitals than nearly



32 lakhs Elected Representatives and Presidents in 2.5 lakhs Local Governments. The contractors are omnipresent. The much-acclaimed Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme (MNREGS) which is to be implemented by Panchayats has banned contractors. But the collusion between officials and contractors has given sizeable space to the latter.

The corporate sector is also working without respect to the hopes and aspirations of the ordinary people in the villages. Since profit is their main concern, corporate social responsibility takes a back seat. Whether it is about the use of natural resources – forests, water, farm land, etc. – or human resources – skilled or unskilled workers – the corporate sector seldom takes the view of the local governments. The case of Dupont in Goa and Coca Cola in Plachimada in Kerala are cases in point. The corporate sector in cooperation with the officials and elected members of Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies works against giving power to the people.

### **3. Big Sociological Conundrum**

Although the 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment to Indian Constitution envisages Panchayats as local self-governments, in every sense of the term. But in many states, the governments treat them as low-level administrative units to be kept under strict bureaucratic control. There is very little autonomy, no sufficient funds and no sufficient functionaries, in spite of the fact that all experts on the subject have stated that Panchayats are the third stratum of governance. Every attempt to give power and prestige to Panchayats is being thwarted by vested interests. This is the big sociological conundrum today.

After Independence, the main concern of our leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Jayaprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, EMS Namboodiripad and many others was bringing about social change so that every Indian can live with freedom and dignity. But when our people become active players to bring about that social change, instead of society changing, society removes them with impunity.

When the power to the people programme began to move from a concept to reality, hundreds of men and women have lost their lives. In 1978, Karpoori Thakur was the Chief Minister of Bihar, Panchayat elections were held in the State and more than 750 people lost their lives because of the violence during the Panchayat elections. (Majundar, 2005). After the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional

Amendment when the first election was held in the same state in 2001, 136 people were killed. In the neighbouring state of Tamil Nadu, Keeripatti, Pappapatty, Natarmangalam, Melavalavu and the Madurai town witnessed bloodshed because of the movement for giving power to the people. In many states, this has been the story. The latest was in a state which was a role model at one time - West Bengal. There 31 persons lost their lives in the Panchayat elections which concluded a few days back, on 25 July 2013. Perhaps the only exceptions are Karnataka and Kerala. The stories of the killings and dishonouring of women and Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Scheduled Tribes (STs) bring to the fore the question: In spite of being the world's largest democracy, when democracy is at work, what it means for the poor and the oppressed? Are these hundreds of men and women, who lost their lives for bringing power to the people, martyrs? Does anyone remember them? The answer is: 'No'. This is the sociological conundrum the socially concerned citizens, think tanks and social institutions must ponder over.

#### **4. Role of Judiciary**

The judiciary in India has been playing a critical and positive role in upholding the interests of the people through the institutions of local governments. Since the Panchayats are to protect the interests of the local people, the people at the grassroots feel frustrated by the concerted efforts of vested interests. The judicial response has all along been in favour of local bodies and reflects a clear acknowledgement of treating local governments according to the true spirit of the Constitution. The courts have taken a very strong stand against state governments, which have made all-out attempts to withhold and postpone elections to the local governments and place them under administrators. It has played a pro-active role whenever the concerned citizens have sought its intervention in saving the institutions of local government from becoming defunct and lifeless by the callous attitude of state governments. Due to this, people have been frequently approaching the courts for justice. However, in many states justice is delayed and thus justice is denied. (Mathew George, 2007).

#### **5. Future**

For many in our country, giving power to the people is the mantra. How do we see its future?. Today people's demand, which is slowly but steadily emerging, is based on the principle of subsidiarity. That is, what could be done at the local level must be done there.

Only those matters which cannot be done at the lower level must go to the higher levels. Moreover, there is a strengthening of the relationship between the civil society and local governments, with the former increasingly coming to the fore to strengthen grassroots democracy.

Monopolisation of power and building of colonies and empire have brought about strong centralized administrative systems. In modern times, the tendency of the governments is: they are urban-centric, pro-elite, supportive of free market economy and militarization. Their policies are oriented towards middle class, rich and powerful, sidelining the rural people and urban underclass. Spread of democracy, pluralism and appreciation of diversity as both principles and values must become compelling factors for national and sub-national governments to pay attention to revival and strengthening of local governments.

But our society has a long way to go. Some of the challenges of elite capture within local government system, failure of the last mile service delivery system and lack of transparency and accountability are seriously eroding the confidence of the poor or marginalized in local governments. Suffice it to say that we may have all the necessary institutions or mechanisms in place but those by themselves do not create a successful cohesive local government system. The people at the fringes, those citizens of our country who are 'missing' from the grand reports and analysis of the Planning Commission of India and who are treated with scant respect by those who govern this country - they are the ones who have to take up the reins and demand their share. But when and how it will happen? How many more have to be killed or maimed or have their livelihoods destroyed, their family and loved ones wiped out before they can begin to live with dignity? The noble ideals of "institutions of self-government" as expounded in the famous 73rd Constitutional Amendment cannot be translated into reality in the present iniquitous society. We cannot even begin to draw the picture of Panchayati Raj which can give power to the people on a canvas where the caste system is still strong, feudal values hold forth and gender inequality and inhuman poverty conditions continue to exist.

In the Constituent Assembly on 4 November, 1948 Dr. Ambedkar, vehemently criticizing the villages said: "... I hold that these village republics have been the ruination of India. I am, therefore, surprised that those who condemn provincialism and communalism should come forward as champions of the village.

What is the village but a stink of localism and a den of ignorance, narrow-mindedness and communalism?” (Malaviya, 1956).

We were all working hard over the years to prove Dr. Ambedkar wrong. That was through political actions, administrative and policy changes coupled with creating awareness among the people for the need to take democracy down to the grassroots and creating local government system for and by the people. But have we succeeded in this mission? Or can we say that even after 65 years of Dr. Ambedkar’s statement, today it rings true? This is an important question when we have entered the 67<sup>th</sup> year of Independence of our country. Quoting Rajiv Gandhi who said while introducing the 64<sup>th</sup> Constitution Amendment Bill on 15 May, 1989: “To the people of India, let us ensure maximum democracy and maximum devolution. Let there be an end to the power brokers. Let us give power to the people.” (Govt. of India, 1991). Visionaries have shown the way. The civil society, research and study centres, social activists, academics and intellectuals must take it forward. □

### **References**

- Dainik Jagaran, 2002: Panchayati Raj ke dushman, *Mainstream*, Vol. XXXX No. 8, 9 February 2002.
- Govt. of India, 1991: Rajiv Gandhi: Selected Speeches and Writings, Volume V, January to November 1989, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, New Delhi.
- Majundar, 2005: Emerging Grassroots Power, Institute of Social Sciences and Concept Publishing Co., New Delhi.
- Malaviya.H.D, 1956: Village Panchayats in India, All India Congress Committee, New Delhi.
- Mathew George, 2007: Indian Judiciary and Local Governments in B. D. Dua, M.P. Singh, Rekha Saxena (eds.), *Indian Judiciary and Politics: The Changing Landscape*, Manohar Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi, 2007, pp.321-339.
- The Hindu, 2002: Enemies of Panchayati Raj, *The Hindu daily*, 11 January 2002.

## **Community Policing and Union Parishad: Shared Obligation in Restoration of Social Peace**

*The paper intends to substantiate the nexus between community policing and Union Parishad for safeguard of social peace and stability in Bangladesh. Community policing is a relatively new but innovative concept in Bangladesh. In a nutshell, movement of community policing does not get pleasant appearance across the level and leftovers less effective , to some extent although it is perceived as a potential force to be flourished as an effective force to resolve community level problems and promote social justice. Collaborative effort between the community police and Union Parishad have essence to identify problems of crime and disorder as this innovative approach involves all elements of the community in the search for solutions to these problems. The paper is ended up with a variety of recommendations to expand the concept of community policing across level so as to ensure a society from criminality, volatility and discord.*

**Dr. Bashir Ahmed\***  
**Mohammad Tarikul Islam\*\***

---

\* Associate Professor and Chair, Department of Government and Politics, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh, email: bashirju@gmail.com

\*\* PhD Researcher, Department of Government and Politics, Jahangirnagar University, Savar, Dhaka, Bangladesh, email: tarikul.islam81@gmail.com

## **1. Introduction**

Community-oriented policing (COP) reshapes traditional police management and operational strategies through facilitation of collaborative working relations between citizens and police. It is based on a problem solving approach that is both responsive to the needs of the community and sensitive to the challenges that police face in performing their duties (Bayley, 1994). Community policing or community oriented policing has been the main theme of policing over the last two decades (Crawford, 1997).

Community policing is a relatively new concept in Bangladesh. Police along with United Nations, NGOs and Community Based Organizations are on frank attempt to bring the community and the police together in resolving problems prevailing at the community level aimed at ensuring social peace and stability. Although community policing does not get momentum across Bangladesh, but given the prevailing unrest and unsteady scenario in the community, community policing deserves utmost precedence across level.

Union Parishad, the lowest tier of the local government is mandated to ensure peaceful resolution and amicable settlement of inter ward disputes as well as promote social resistance over violence against women, terrorism, all types of crimes and cooperate with administration for maintenance of law and order. Union Parishad could facilitate successful execution of community policing for promotion of social peace and stability.

This paper intends to analyze the prominence of community policing in Bangladesh towards establishment of peace and stability in the society as well as establishment of interplay between community policing and Union Parishad for attaining a just based society.

## **2. Community Policing Concept in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh Police is primarily a reactive force with a philosophy of public control rather than community service. There is considerable emphasis on solving crime after it occurs, rather than preventing it from happening in the first place. This can largely be attributed to a lack of awareness and understanding, but also to a lack of leadership on the part of various stakeholders, including the police. There has been a limited assessment by Bangladesh Police to analyze and treat the underpinning causes of crimes. Because of this lack of analysis, and the lack of police guidelines

or policy on crime prevention, police are unable to provide advice to the public on what preventative actions they can take.

In fact police themselves lack training and experience in crime prevention and community safety. Beyond the economic reform measures required to meet the poverty reduction objectives set by the government of Bangladesh, improved human rights and security standards play an equally important role in stimulating economic growth, reducing poverty, and enhancing a sense of national identity and genuine voice in public affairs among the poor. The public security environment in Bangladesh has deteriorated in recent years, with an increase in robbery, extortion, assault and intimidation, crimes of violence against women, and extremist violence. Despite the recent decline in politically motivated crimes with the introduction of emergency rule, a widening gap in mutual understanding, trust, and communication continues to exist at the community level between police and citizens, undermining public security (Westergaard, 2000).

A baseline study of community-police relations conducted by The Asia Foundation found that citizens have little trust or confidence in the police and that they prefer to exhaust alternative remedies before seeking police assistance when threatened or affected by crime—a situation affirmed by subsequent research. A key initiative involving the police are the police initiated community based policing in Mymensingh. This innovative approach was initiated by senior police officials posted at Mymensingh District Police Headquarters in the early 1990's in response to the poor law and order situation existing in the area (Asian Foundation, 2004). In 1992 a, community-based policing in a form of Town Defense party (TDP) activities commenced and still continue today as a model of proactive policing. The strategy is based on the principle of the police and the community finding solutions together not only in response to current problems, but also as a pre-emptive measure.

### **3. Community Policing Strategy in Bangladesh**

The overall objective of the Community Policing strategy of Bangladesh Police is; making communities a better and safer place for all citizens. This is ensured through a measurable reduction in crime by enhancing community confidence and trust in a more community focused police service (UNDP, 2012). Achieving this objective, this proposed document develops policies and programs that incorporate leadership commitment; customer based organizational transformation, change in the structure and management of police organization and unlimited partnerships.

Goal of the strategy is a Safer Bangladesh for our children, families, schools and communities where everyone is working together to prevent crime while purpose of the strategy is to working together with community to build safer communities, free of fear, through partnership.

#### **4. Community Policing and Union Parishad: Interplay**

In Bangladesh, there is a three-tiered local government system where the elected Union Parishad (UP) constitutes the base. Each UP constitutes nine wards. Bangladesh police have taken up the wards as the basic units to implement community policing. The Community Policing Forums (CPF) set up at the ward level have been performing the core functions of the community policing system in Bangladesh. There are two types of committees at the ward level- the executive committee and the other is the advisory committee. The ward committee and CPFs are overseen by a coordination committee at the UP level. At the police station, there is a Thana coordination convening committee and in the district, there is a district-coordination committee. The numbers of the members of the committees formed in each level should not exceed 21. Community members from all walks of the society have been included in the CPFs.

Community policing works as a vehicle to build peace and ensure safety and stability in the society. In many respects, it presents goals, values, and practices that are consistent with restorative justice ideals. Community policing purports to resolve problems and prevent crime and expects that crime will more likely be solved by intimate knowledge of the community. There are many conundrums embedded in these beliefs. Although members of a community may be willing to work with police to ensure that problems are resolved and even that offenders are apprehended and brought to justice, as arrests increase in communities, may communities become destabilized and residents' attachments to communities weaken. On the contrary, Union Parishad as the elected and lowest body of the local government is responsible to ensure social peace and stability by the way of resolving local disputes. Hence, there should be a collaborative effort between the police and the community represented by the Union Parishad that identifies problems of crime and disorder and involves all elements of the community in the search for solutions to these problems.

Bangladesh is a peace-loving nation and it is manifested in our constitutional commitment to the general and complete disarmament. Since its emergence as an independent nation in



1971, Bangladesh has always been a pioneer in the South Asian Region for the cause of global peace and disarmament. The most fundamental reason for community policing and problem-solving is acknowledging that the police can't solve all community problems by themselves. Community policing requires the majority of the community to accept personal responsibility for personal safety and solving problems in their neighborhoods with the support of the police and other government agencies.

By creating space and opportunities for citizens and police to discuss their respective views, expectations and matters of common interest, Community policing helps to make police more responsive to citizen interests. Improved police services in turn nurture mutual trust and respect between police and members of the communities that they serve, promote improved communication and collaboration, and contribute to increased public satisfaction with police services— all of which translates into safer communities.

In general, the demand for social peace and stability often exceeds the state's capacity to provide it. Although state strength is relative, it is often measured on a range according to the state's ability and willingness to provide political goods associated with statehood such as physical security, legitimate political institutions, economic management, and social welfare, and its capacity to control its territory. In weak, failing or collapsed states the threats to security are more amplified. Their inherent structural weakness often causes of the proliferation and expansion of private security actors.

Community policing initiatives attempt to make peoples access to justice more accessible, regardless of their social or economic status by bringing law enforcement organizations closer to the population (US Department of Justice, 2010). While overlapping economic development activities with security sector activities such as police reform might be mutually beneficial, more research needs to be done in this area to understand the root causes of crime and the precise links between social peace restoration and stability issues. Most communities, particularly, those located in remote areas of the country, still have serious reservations about working with a police service which has not proven itself to be either accountable, or efficient in dealing with local issues regarding safety and security.

As the government is deeply concerned about social crime, local government institutions particularly Union Parishad has to be

empowered with concrete responsibilities to supplement the efforts of community policing at rural area of Bangladesh. Interconnection between Union Parishad and community policing could trigger social peace and stability. Unfortunately, persistent political and administrative interference in the Union Parishad affairs has made it ineffective particularly in maintaining law and order situation in the rural Bangladesh. An effective institutional set up within the organization is necessary for an effective and expanded response of Community Policing. Following activities to be taken in order to make community policing more functional at community level:

- o Awareness campaign;
- o Formation of community level committee;
- o Regular meeting between policy and community;
- o Provide equipment facility to the community police;
- o Provide training to the community police;
- o Open day at community on law and order;
- o Inform the people about the nature of punishment of the crime;
- o Committee of the community policing at ward level should have adequate fund;
- o Committee of the community policing at ward level should be represented by the non-political, qualified and honest person having good reputation across level;
- o Concerned Police station should value the person involved at ward level community policing committee and respond positively to their inputs and activities in order to ensure stabled law and order situation in their jurisdiction;
- o Complementary role of Union Parishad in realizing the goals of community policing in rural Bangladesh;
- o Lack of clarity in understanding of the Community Policing among the community may hold back the process of implementing community policing in our country. To this end, police and general people are supposed to meet one another at the different meetings, so that civilians will know who is working in their area and police will learn who the “good people” are in their area; and
- o Above all, Union Parishad should shoulder the responsibility to advocate for popularizing the concept of community policing and encourage community to participate for social harmony.

## 5. Conclusion

It is apparent that, community policing is a dedicated force working towards a society which guarantees dignity and protection for everyone who resides in Bangladesh. Together with other collective bodies in the police service, can help develop much needed unity within the community police service while at the same time setting an example before the global community about the potential for restoration of peace and stability. To be effective community policing needs a democratic environment to flourish in. This can only happen if the community and the police form a partnership of equality. They must also learn to trust each other with the understanding that whatever the one does will also be in the best interest of the other.

In an attempt to make an effective Union Parishad to deliver favorable services for promotion of community policing, respective jurisdictions of MPs, central government and local government have to be urgently redefined in a clear and specific manner to free the UP from political interference. The UP has to perform many other functions related to socio-economic affairs of the community. Therefore, decentralization in UP functions is essential. Each ward member will be delegated with certain functions to be performed within his/her ward for the sake of social peace and stability. Holding of progress meetings between community policing committee and the Union Parishad has to be made mandatory. Union Parishad has to be capacitated with monitoring and evaluation of the performance of community policing at local level. □

### References

- Bayley, D. H. 1994: *Police for the future*, Oxford University Press, London.
- Crawford, A. 1997: *The local governance of crime: Appeals to community and partnership*, Oxford University Press. Oxford, UK.
- The Asia Foundation 2004: *A baseline study of community-police relations*, Asian Foundation.
- UNDP, 2012: *PRP Factsheet*, UNDP Dhaka.
- US Department of Justice, Community Oriented Policing Services, 2010.
- Westergaard, Kirsten, 2000: *Decentralization in Bangladesh: Local government and NGOs*, Center for Development Research, Copenhagen, Denmark.

**Kerala Institute of local Administration**

Mulamkunnathukavu P.O., Thrissur -680 581

**KILA Journal of Local Governance**

(Bi annual of KILA)

**Subscription Form**

(Subscription Rate: One year -Rs.100/- Two years -Rs. 200/-  
Three years- Rs.300/-)

Please enter our One/Two/Three year(s) subscription to KILA Journal of Local Governance to the Following address:

Name :.....

Address :.....

.....PIN.....

Mobile No..... email .....

An Amount of Rs.....  
enclosed by demand draft in favor of the Director, KILA, payable at  
Thrissur, Kerala DD No..... Bank Drawn.....  
Dated.....

OR

An Amount of Rupee..... has been  
transferred by online to the Bank Account of the Director, KILA,  
A/c No. 6089779851, IFS Code – IDIB000T054, Branch Name –  
Indian bank, Main Branch, Swaraj Round East, Thrissur.

Send this Order Form together with Demand Draft or with print  
out of online transfer to :

“The Editor, KILA Journal of Local Governance, KILA,  
Mualmkunnathukavu P.O.,  
Thrissur -680 581, Kerala, India.

**KILA Journal of Local Governance**

**SUBSCRIPTION**

Annual Subscription - Rs. 100.00

Payment can be made only by demand draft in favour of the  
Director, KILA and addressed to the Editor, KILA Journal of  
Local Governance, KILA, Mulamkunnathukavu P.O.,  
Thrissur-680 581, Kerala, India.

For enquiries, e-mail : kilajournal@gmail.com

## **Dalit Women Panchayat Representatives and Social Exclusion: Myth or Reality?**

*The political reservation, through the 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment of the Indian constitution, has been given to women in general and dalit women in particular to enable them to participate in the decision making process at the grass root level. It is well truth that recently considerable number of women including Dalit women is being elected to the Panchayats. However, it is found various types of caste based discrimination on Dalit women representatives; even sexual and harassments while performing their public roles. Studies reveal that upper castes often persuade elections by propping up Dalit women as proxy candidates and exploit these vulnerable women in many cases. This paper deals the social exclusion faced by the Dalit women elected representatives from Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka State.*

**Dr. Dinesha.P.T\***

---

\* UGC – Centre for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy, University of Mysore, Mysore -570006, Ph: 09481381263, email: ptdinesha@yahoo.com

## **1. The Context**

Scheduled castes (SCs) and Tribes (STs) are the most vulnerable and backward social groups in India. They are socially, economically, and politically marginalized and excluded since time immemorial and facing different kinds of problems like discrimination, exclusion, poverty, social prejudice, inaccessibility to resources, lack of participation in decision making, etc. Despite different government's programmes, policies and efforts since independence the status of both SCs and STs not improved up to a satisfactory level due to many confronting issues and inhibitions. If, this is the situation of dalits in general status of dalit women still pathetic.

Governments at various levels both at central as well as state level introduced several policies and programme to empower women. Among this 73<sup>rd</sup> amendment of the Indian constitution have made way for the Empowerment of women including SCs and STs women through the political institution of Panchayati Raj (local self-government in India). It has made a noteworthy gift to the practice of democratization. As a result, it is having enormous influence on the formation and functioning of local government in the whole India. There is mounting demand for growing presence of women and their empowerment primarily to decision-making. It is well truth that recently considerable number of women including Dalit women is being elected to the Panchayats. However, it is found that various types of caste based discrimination on Dalit women representatives even sexual and harassments in performing their public roles effectively have become a common event in certain rural part. It is worrisome that bureaucrats also treat such elected Panchayats representatives with ignore and indifference. Hence, such attitudes and practices additionally draws perimeter regarding effectiveness of elected Panchayats representatives from Dalit community. Studies reveal that upper castes often persuade elections by propping up Dalit women as proxy candidates and exploit these vulnerable women in many cases. In many cases dalit women were pressed into Panchayat politics by members of the dominant caste or their husbands, the former mostly working through the women's husbands (Radha Sharma, 2010). In some case they are facing trouble even during nomination, campaign and result announcement by the higher caste people. It is argued that majority of elected Dalit women feel they are treated discriminated from other local government representatives largely due to being Dalit.

## 2. Methodology

The study is based on both secondary and primary sources of data. The secondary source data related to number of dalit panchayat representatives in the Panchayat records and other secondary information's regarding dalit representatives was collected from Grama panchayat and Talluk Panchayat offices and from other Government Departments and publications, journals and newspapers. The primary source data was collected by holding detailed personal interviews. multi-stage simple random sampling methods were used. To have representative sampling, Dalit women members from various gram panchayats spread all five taluks from Dakshina Kannada district of Karnataka State was selected. Eight Grama Panchayats from each taluk was selected for the Study. From the 40 grama panchayats 76 SCs and 32 ST and totally 108 dalit women representatives was selected for the in-depth study. Care was also taken to interview some dalit women members who were holding offices of presidents/vice presidents etc, with an intension to measure their leadership and other qualities in the extension of their empowerment. The quantitative data was analyzed using simple percentages and tables.

## 3. Results and Discussion

Panchayat Raj or grass root level institutions have come into existence as a constitutional obligation of decentralization of power and this has ensured the empowerment of those collectivities which were socially, culturally and politically excluded from the mainstream of societal processes. The political reservation has been given to women in general and dalit women in particular to enable them to participate in the decision making process at the gross root level. and air their grievances. Further it opened up new avenues of political power, which was hitherto, the monopoly of men is now transferred partly to the women and a new leadership in rural areas is emerging with the women being operators in it. Panchayath Raj institution is an effective tool for political representation. However, it is found that Dalit women representatives are being discriminated in various issues. Because of the caste factor they are not involving in fullest possible way in any discussion making process and some time they are being failed in exercising their constitutional power (Baghel, 2009; Jayshree, *et. al*, 2009). Reservations have ensured election of Dalits to the new panchayats. But, they have not ensured the effective representation of disadvantaged groups in the panchayats with

respect to participation of elected members (Narendra Kumar and Manoj Raj, 2006).

Reservation of Seats for women including dalits in rural local governance proportionate to their population is a design created through the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment to the Indian constitution with a purpose of building the Dalits as part in the practice of governance and development at the grassroots. More specifically Dalit Women have been given particular shield by reserving one-third seats in the institution of local governance. It is reported that In Karnataka 30 Zilla Panchayats, 176 Taluka Panchayats, and 5627 Grama Panchayats are functioning and in Dakshina Kannada District there are 203 Grama panchayat is functioning. Every year in house election will be conducted to elect Chairmen (or President) and Vice chairman from amongst its member. And it is largely guided by the reservation system for the various communities by the State Government. As discussed earlier dalit women face different problems compared to other women. Hence, there is a dire need to understand the impact of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment Act on the rural power structure and the emergence of leadership and its patterns among the marginalized groups.

### **3.1. Identification**

It is an interesting factor that the women particularly dalit women are less educated and i.e. respondents normally marry at early age and deliver the children before 30 years. The trend of elected representatives in the study area indicates that majority of the women have chosen politics after attending to the family responsibilities of bearing, raising and caring children. Data also reveals that about 19.44% of respondents belong to the age group of 20-30 and 29.63% of respondents belong to the age group of 41-50. But most of the respondent's i.e. 48.15% of respondents belongs to the age group of 31-40 and only 2.78% of the respondents belongs to the age group of 51 and above. The age profile of the Dalit women respondents indicates that majority of them belong to the young and middle-aged group and which influence in their decision making.

Education is an essential element of human resource development as it improves the knowledge and develops required skill base among the individuals. Regarding the educational status is concerned, 36.11 % of the respondents are illiterates and 22.22% of respondents were completed primary education. About 12.04% of respondents finished high school education and 18.52% of respondents saw the steps of middle school and only 12 persons out



of 108 respondents studied PUC and above. Thus, the data reveal that most of the dalit women representatives are illiterates and lack skills to take independent decision in many issues and lack of initiative in the panchayat raj system. Dalit women largely spend their time in earning their livelihood as agricultural labourers or workers in unorganized sector. The lack of education has serious implications to the level and pattern of participation in the panchayat activities. Sunita and Rajbir (2005) in their study also found that most of the elected representatives of Dalit Women are illiterate, and live in joint families. Lack of awareness of PRI's structural and functional arrangements is a major obstacle for them.

The occupational status of the population reflects their relative dependence on the various economic, social and political activities. A perusal of details in the data provides us the reality with regard the respondent's occupational position that majority of the respondents are landless agricultural labourers i.e. 35.19% and about 17.59% are labourers. About 8.33 percent are home makers. About 21.30% are engaged in non-farm activities and 13.89 % are engaged in petty business in the village. Hence, the data clearly shows that most of them are labourers and they hardly get time to involve in panchayat work. This is a major inhibiting factor which limits the participation of Dalit women representatives in decision-making process. Poor economic conditions also force them heed to the dominant caste rural elites instead becoming a political force.

### **3.2. Involvement in Decision Making**

Importantly, decisions in the panchayat are taken on the basis of consensus emerged in the meetings. Table 1 indicate that a great majority of decisions regarding panchayat matters like, village development, scholarship and financial help to students, water, common property resources etc, are undertaken by other upper caste and members belonging to minority. And even among upper caste members, male members are involved and dominate much. Dalits women opine that while taking important decisions sometimes their opinion not at all considered or given least importance by giving reasons like illiteracy and lack of experience. In the study area some of the SCs and ST members are economically poor and they are not in a position to impact decision regarding panchayat. As far as the meetings of the panchayat are concerned, a very large percentage of members of dalit women's have said that they attend these meetings regularly. However, when it comes to interacting with any important issues, it is the President of the Panchayat and other upper caste members

influence much. Among interviewed, only 16.67% of members opine that their views are considered. While 38.89 % of respondents reveal that their views are considered partially. Interesting fact is that more than 25.00% of member's views are not at all considered in important decisions.

### **3.3. Discrimination Faced**

It is found that 11.11 percent of Dalit women Members are being underestimated and 15.7 percent of them are facing the problem of using abusing language and other allegations by the other members. However most pathetic problem is that 43.52 percent of are respondents views and ideas are not considered. And 21.30% of dalit women representatives are facing the problem of non cooperation. Besides this, Dalit members are underrepresented in various subcommittees like Health, Literacy, and Cleanliness etc because of caste factor.

Further, sometimes the Schedule Caste president of the Panchayat is only nominally a president who cannot function independently and has to strictly comply with the views of the dominant individual/s of the gram panchayat. Further researched has viewed factors such as education, economic position, i.e., the relative position of these representatives in terms of presumably "non-caste" attributes, we also find that even with higher education and with better economic condition the panchayat president or vice presidents, who is a member of a Scheduled Caste or tribe is not able to function independently. Due to roster system Dalit members will also get a provision to serve as a women Chairperson (head) of the Panchyat for one year. Here also they are facing discriminations in one way or other like the heat of non-cooperation. Sometimes other members will create unnecessary complex issues /hurdles so that chairpersons had to face some tough time/uncertainty over the issue. Besides this many times Dalit Chairperson felt other caste members will often create in intentional quorum problems so that decision cannot be taken on-time and may required to postpone to an indefinite time.

Women members from the SCs suffer a double disadvantages women and as SCs. Many times they are not allowed to speak or sometimes male members dominate in the meetings. Data reveals that 25.93% of respondents speak or express their opinions freely in the panchayats. Whereas 33.33% opine that they speak only when issues related to SCs/ STs are discussed. However, only

14.81% of the respondents argue that they express their opinions always.

### **3.4. Attitude Towards SCs/STs**

Similarly, when we assess the attitude of higher castes people towards SCs/STs elected women Panchayat members, it was found that 20.37 % of the respondents said that higher castes attitude towards SCs/STs elected women was good though 37.96% said it was indifferent or no change, 35.19% said it was bad. And Only 6.48% respondents have said it was good.

## **4. Suggestions**

To improve the living and working condition of dalit panchayat women representatives all over India, there is a need to set an agenda for their overall transformation. Based on the findings of the study, the following policy prescriptions can be suggested for the improvement in the conditions and bring them on mainstream development;

- i. Dalit women need to be oriented for their better educational and economic attainments which will in turn ensure their participation in all areas of activities including political decision making.
- ii. The Dalit women elected to local bodies used to be provided with a thorough orientation and be given adequate political capacity building programmes frequently in order to ensure their effective participation in decision making in PRI's.
- iii. Political socialization has to be intensified for Dalit women as they have to play their role as elected representatives, movers of political activities and importantly as voters.
- iv. It is also important to note that the villagers, particularly, the elites have to be sensitized about the constitutional provisions of decentralization of power, reservation for the excluded groups including the women and thereby create an atmosphere of cohesiveness among various groups competing for power and avoid the conflicting situations in villages.
- v. It is also suggested that the male members are to be sensitized about the procedures and provisions of the representation of women in the constitutional bodies like PRI's and make them aware of the need for restraints in proxy representation. For this there is a urgent need of need of value orientation for them.

- vi. The women must be provided with the congenial atmosphere and environment to voice their issues that concern the community they represent without hesitation and hinge at the Grama Panchayat meetings for which a mechanism need to be evolved.
- vii. The voice Dalit women is voice of the marginalized among the marginal groups. Hence there is a need of forming groups among marginalized for interactions on political matters.
- viii. Finally, there is need to execute and scrutinize firmly Government sanctions against proxy candidature as well as gender and caste discrimination.

It can be concluded that a large number of women, particularly Dalit women, have gained their entry into the PRI's all over the country which indicates phenomenal shift in women's participation in decision making. However, despite making *Panchayati-Raj* a constitutional body and implementation of a large number of development schemes, they have not achieved much needed success in empowerment of the excluded sections of the society. Hence, there is a need to make marginalized people more active and participatory in Panchayat Raj System. □

### **References**

- Baghel, 2009: *Dalit Women in Panchayati Raj*, Jnanada Prakashan , New Delhi,
- Jayshree Mangubhai, Aloysius Irudayam, Emma Sydenham. 2009: *Dalit women's right to political participation in rural panchayati raj: a study of Gujarat and Tamil Nadu*, Institute of Development Education, Madurai .
- Narendra Kumar and Manoj Raj, 2006: *Dalit Leadership in Panchayats -A Comparative Study of Four States*, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, p. 13.
- Radha Sharma, 2010: *Proxy-politics plagues 85% women dalit representatives*, *Times of India*, Sep 6,
- Sunita Dhaka and Rajbir S Dhaka, 2005: *Behind the Veil – Dalit, Women in Panchayat Raj'*, Abhijeet Publications, Delhi.

## **Sustainable Development: Challenges of Empowering Local Institutions for People's Participation**

*Many developing countries, including India have long suffered due to their failure to adopt sustainable development strategies as their model of development. The tackling of these challenges for ensuring economic growth and development surely calls forth adoption of a multi-faceted approach which would successfully combine both macro-and-micro-economic interventions besides empowerment of people and local institutions for addressing both the quality of anti poverty alleviation and economic growth policies which are the much desired national development goals. This paper argues about the importance about the various strategies that can be undertaken for enhanced people's participation in democratic governance structures in the rural areas and ensuring sustainable development in the rural areas.*

**Dr. Biswajit Mohapatra**

---

\* Assistant Professor (Senior Grade), Dept. of Political Science, North Eastern Hill University, Shillong 793022, Ph : 09436334734, e-mail : biswajitml@gmail.com

## 1. Introduction

Sustainable development, according to the World Commission On Environment and Development (WCED) as Development that meets the needs of the people today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (WCED, 1987). It is a broad concept referring to the need to balance the satisfaction of near-term interests with the protection of the interests of future generations, including their interests in a safe and healthy environment. As expressed by the “Brundtland Commission”, Sustainable development also implies economic growth together with the protection of environmental quality, each reinforcing the other. The essence of this form of development is a stable relationship between human activities and the natural world, which does not diminish the prospects for future generations to enjoy a quality of life at least as good as our own (*Ibid.*). Many observers believe that participatory democracy, undominated by vested interests, is a prerequisite for achieving sustainable development (Mintzer, 1992). It also calls for such practices in agriculture, economic development, health and education that would lead to progress and meet the needs and desires of the current generation without decreasing the ability of future generations to meet their needs (WCED, 1987).

Sustainable development does not mean a return to a pre-industrial era, but calls for continued economic growth, with business and industry acknowledging and taking responsibility for their impact on society and the environment (*Ibid.*). This is also described as “economic and social changes that promote human prosperity and quality of life without causing ecological or social damage” making it possible for a real increase in well-being and standard of life for the average person maintainable over the long-term without degrading the environment or compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It advocates for use of an area within our capacity to sustain its cultural or natural significance, and ensure that the benefits of the use to present generations do not diminish the potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations. The term as such refers to achieving economic and social development in ways that do not exhaust a country’s natural resources... a process of change in which the exploitation of resources, the direction of investments, the orientation of technological development, and institutional change are made consistent with the future as well as present needs”. (Ashford, 1995).

## **2. The Johannesburg WSSD Summit**

When the United Nations General Assembly authorized holding the World Summit on Sustainable Development, it was all known that progress in implementing sustainable development has been extremely disappointing since the 1992 Earth Summit (UNCED, 1992), with poverty deepening and environmental degradation worsening. The General Assembly said “What the world wanted was not a new philosophical or political debate but rather, a summit of actions and results” (WSSD, 2002).

By any account, the Johannesburg Summit was successful in having laid the groundwork and paved the way for action. Yet among all the targets, timetables and commitments that were agreed upon at Johannesburg, there were no quick solutions in sight to aid the fight against poverty and a continually deteriorating natural environment. In fact, there was no magic and no miracle—only the realization that practical and sustained steps were needed to address many of the world’s most pressing problems.

In this summit some important new targets were established, such as: to halve the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation by 2015; to use and produce chemicals by 2020 in ways that do not lead to significant adverse effects on human health and the environment; to maintain or restore depleted fish stocks to levels that can produce the maximum sustainable yield on an urgent basis and where possible by 2015; and to achieve by 2010 a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity.”(WSSD 2002). The question that stared in everyone’s face is, Will Johannesburg make a genuine difference?.

It’s now being emphasized that there is the need and continuation for a new level of dialogue as happened in Johannesburg between all the stakeholders, especially between governments, civil society and the private sector to generate political commitment, momentum and energy for the attainment of the goals if we are to deliver on expanding access to water and sanitation, on energy, improving agricultural yields, managing toxic chemicals, protecting biodiversity and improving ecosystem management etc. (UNCSD, 2012).

## **3. Development of New Partnerships**

If we are to go by what’s said earlier each of the national governments, NGOs, intergovernmental organizations and private businesses is required to mobilize additional resources to support

the efforts to implement sustainable development. These partnerships, tied to the government commitments, then provide a built-in mechanism to ensure implementation of the Johannesburg declaration where we have agreed on a 10-year programme on production and consumption, a concept that not only will affect the developing countries, but the development of the richer countries as well (Pavey and Williams, 2003). In other words it calls for a New Partnership amongst all the existing institutions for laying a firm foundation of Balanced Development by creating a positive nexus between Agriculture and Environment within the respective countries such as ours.

“Some people often say that the partnerships are corporate-led,” as Nitin Desai, Secretary- General of Johannesburg Summit, underlined during the said summit (UNCED, 2002). To quote him, “This is not true. The vast majority are led by non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations. But even if there is corporate involvement, that is not a bad thing. We will not be credible if we don’t have the participation of business. We need to bring the energy of corporations into our agenda if we are going to make good on our commitments.”(*Ibid.*).

It will serve us well if we remember that the partnerships are not a substitute for government responsibilities and commitments and that these partnerships are solely intended to deepen the quality of implementation of the strategies for conservation and sustainable development emphasizing on human rights, such as the right to housing, health, drinking water, life.

The real challenge before the developing countries like India, is not just what is said in the statement, but the actions that we can undertake both at the level of government and at our level in the months and years ahead without depending much on the promised global deal recommending free trade and increased development assistance. There is the need to be steadfast in our commitment to good governance as well as a better environment to assure each one of us our wellbeing and prosperity. It’s time for us to deliver the goods.

When we dwell upon our own region we see a harrowing prospect as the majority of people live in abysmal poverty being located in the remote and rural areas. The magnitude of social disparities in primary education, geographical location and family income and absence and mismanagement of our abundant natural resources like land and water in the context of any development initiative poses a lot of challenges for the policymakers both at the policy



planning and implementation level as well. The rural regions not only suffers from lack of awareness about the advanced way of producing agricultural crops and little on the livestock, fisheries and allied forests sectors even though these sectors have been known to play a central part of food supply as well as an important source of income in our rural areas. As such the region is said to suffer from abuse of natural resources like land and water as the people are engaged in jhum cultivation for their survival.

Yet we are far from acknowledging the key role that increased agricultural productivity and proper land use planning can play, driven by widespread adoption of improved technology and targeted investment, in poverty reduction and putting our villages on the path of self-reliant sustainable development. The present situation calls for early adoption of such policies as would represent the vision and collective determination of our society to espouse the goal of fostering a broad-based agricultural-led economic growth in the rural areas by focusing on improving agricultural productivity and competitiveness.

To attain this vision, a Comprehensive Development Policy is perhaps needed which would aim at *inter alia*, putting agricultural growth and natural resources conservation and management competitiveness back on top of our regional development agenda. This can be achieved if we aim to do this by focusing investments in some key areas: (a) expansion and maintenance of the area under sustainable land management (FAO, 2005); (b) encourage and facilitate investment in rural infrastructure specifically to address the socio-economic development of rural communities and vulnerable groups (UNCSD, 2009).

The role of local institutions is of enormous significance in the context of the need for imminent reduction of several vulnerabilities of people and to save them from recurrent natural disasters and in sustainable livelihoods development (APO, 2002). There is an increased recognition that natural disaster management strategies will have to be more focused on reducing the vulnerability of local communities to natural hazards, through the implementation of more effective prevention and preparedness measures, and integration of risk management into long-term development planning. The FAO clearly emphasizes that in the long-term development objectives of the countries such as India, that are especially prone to natural hazards must have to ensure that disaster risk management (DRM) remains a key

consideration within the proposed sustainable agriculture and rural development (SARD) policies and programmes of such countries (FAO, 2004). On the basis of our experience in local rural institutions, the necessary initiatives are required to be undertaken to focus on recurrent events and reducing the vulnerability of people livelihoods systems.

Amongst all, the three key strategies of the DRM and rural development integration appear to be important to be taken into our consideration: a) increasing local communities' and groups involvement; b) building on local knowledge and traditions for resource management as an opportunity to initiate longer term development; and c) improving vertical and horizontal institutional linkages and building strategic and technical partnerships with external partners within the identified framework for complementary action (*Ibid.*). In this proposed sustainable utilization and management of our natural resources and sustainable development of the rural areas, it's needless to say that a broad public participation of people in decision-making at all levels but more particularly at local levels is unavoidable (Karl, 2000).

When we look at this specific context of environment and development, the need for these new forms of participation cannot be underestimated any more. This includes the need of individuals, groups and organizations to know about and participate in decisions, particularly those which potentially affect the communities in which they live and work. Individuals, groups and organizations should have access to information relevant to environment and development held by national authorities, including information on products and activities that have or are likely to have a significant impact on the environment, and information on environmental protection measures (UNEP, 2002).

#### **4. Need for Development Planning and Institutional Reforms**

Participation of people as such is key to sustainable development in any region. The Rio Conventions that represent the legal outcome of the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED); clearly emphasizes that empowerment of women and men is indispensable for sustainable development (*Ibid.*). The Agenda 21 recognizes this in Section III, which describes the specific roles and responsibilities of nine major groups of civil society, in distinct chapters on Women, Children and Youth,

Indigenous People, Non-governmental Organizations, Local Authorities, Workers and Trade Unions, Business and Industry, Scientific and Technological Communities and Farmers (*Ibid.*). The consequent empowerment of such groups at various levels would prove beneficial if we are to realize the vision and shared programmatic structure framework and the partnerships to help meet this urgent need. It would also offer a way to get away from the donor-driven frameworks of the past, and allow us to sit down together to formulate plans when something has to be done.

The possible approaches to facilitate their involvement calls for reforms in the existing institutional framework for development at three broad levels, which is categorized as three D's viz. Democratisation, Decentralisation, Devolution (Rwanda, 2011). The various local level bodies as they exist at the village level need to be made more representative of the local interests and aspirations by providing for representation of all these aforesaid interests and groups instead of the present ones. The membership in these bodies should be so structured where the major groups of civil society, like Women, and Youth, Indigenous People, Non-governmental Organizations, Workers and Trade Unions, Business and Industry, Scientific and Technological Communities and Farmers are able to be represented on the basis of election from within their respective constituencies unlike the present level of representation available. The government must provide for a new type constitutional framework of financial autonomy for the local bodies which must have the autonomy to utilize the amount of development assistance allocated for their local area development. Further the nature of appointments and deputation of bureaucrats to such village level institutions need to be changed so as to provide for lateral appointments to such positions by professionals, from wider range of society from fields of education, business and international and national NGOs for a fixed tenure in the manner of Build, Operate, Improve and Transfer (BOIT) so as to make these institutional mechanisms lively, vibrant and productive to serve. □

### **References**

- WCED, 1987: World Commission On Environment and Development (WCED), Our Common Future, Oxford University Press, USA; 1st Edition .
- Irving M. Mintzer, 1992: Confronting Climate Change: Risks, Implications and Responses, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. xiv + 382.

- Lori Ashford, 1995: *New Perspectives on Population: Lessons from Cairo*, Population Bulletin, Vol. 50, No. 1.
- UNCED, 1992: United Nations Conference on Environment & Development, Brazil.
- WSSD, 2002: World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), Johannesburg.
- UNCSD, 2012: United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development. , 2012
- Bronwyn Pavey and Tim Williams, 2003: *Canada and The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development*, Government of Canada Publications, Canada.
- UNCED, 2002: *UN Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED)*, Johannesburg.
- FAO, 2005: *Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme*, FAO, Rome.
- UNCSD, 2009: UN Commission on Sustainable Development, 17<sup>th</sup> th session.
- APO, 2002: *Report of the Asian Productivity Organization (APO) Seminar on Role of Local Communities and Institutions in Integrated Rural Development, 15-20 June*.
- FAO, 2004:., *The Role Of Local Institutions In Reducing Vulnerability To Recurrent Natural Disasters And In Sustainable Livelihoods Development*, FAO, Rome.
- Marilee Karl, 2000: *Monitoring and evaluating stakeholder participation in agriculture and rural development projects, SD Dimensions*, FAO, Rome.
- UNEP, 2002: *Agenda 21 Environment and Development Agenda*, UNEP.
- Rwanda, 2011: *Rwandese Association Of Local Government Authorities, Decentralization Implementation Plan 2011-2015*, Ministry Of Local Government, Rwanda.

## **Perceived Effectiveness of Farmer Participatory Planning in Kerala**

*Participation of farmers in planning synergizes development initiatives because of the efficiency, effectiveness, self reliance, coverage and sustainability it imparts to the system. A study to analyze the effectiveness of grass root level participatory planning process in agricultural development on going in Kerala as perceived by the farmers was initiated. This article deals different dimensions and effectiveness of farmers participation in planning. Areas to be concentrated and the strategies for effective participation is also discussed.*

**P.K.Abdul Jabbar\***  
**Dr. M. Sundaramari\*\***

---

\* Assistant Professor (Agricultural Extension), Kerala Agricultural University, KVK, Ambalavayal P.O, Wayanad, Ph : 9447228022, e-mail : karshikam@gmail.com

\*\* Professor, Faculty of Agriculture & AH; Gandhigram Rural Institute, Dindigul, Tamil Nadu.

## **1. Introduction**

Participation of farmers in planning synergizes development initiatives because of the efficiency, effectiveness, self reliance, coverage and sustainability it imparts to the system. Development as an official activity resulted in large scale corruption in rural development sector through reduced transparency and accountability. Self respect of farmers was jeopardized as they were not seen as development participants. In this context a study to analyze the effectiveness of grass root level participatory planning process in agricultural development on going in Kerala as perceived by the farmers was initiated.

## **2. Review of Literature**

Effectiveness is the capability of a material or non-material object to produce something or to lead to some consequences. Perception is the expressed opinion about a particular object by the individuals in relation to the set criteria (Parvathi, 1995). It indicates the extent to which the participatory planning arouses the desire of farmers and induces them to accept it. Perceived effectiveness of participatory planning (PEPP) was operationalised as the degree to which the stake holders of Participatory planning perceived the process as effective. The traits of participatory planning formed the basis for working out the Perceived Effectiveness Index (PEI).

While analyzing the leadership in peoples planning programme it was revealed that the perceived roles of non officials in planning stage were helping the beneficiaries on the basis of eligibility criteria, influencing the people to suggest the felt needs of the locality, collection and analysis of information about the availability of the resources prior to allocation of resources, conducting a general survey before the preparation of resource mapping and creating enthusiasm for the involvement of people in the planning process, to plan viable projects.( Anjana, 2001).

In the study on perceived effectiveness of indigenous practices, it was found out that 42.72 per cent of respondents had medium level of perceived effectiveness followed by low (28.15%) and high (29.13%) categories. Above all majority of respondents were old aged. (Sundaramari, 2005). The perceived effectiveness of indigenous practices is medium or low among the aged farmers.

A study on perceived effectiveness of public sector extension under decentralised agricultural extension system in Punjab revealed that due to devolution of power plan of agricultural

extension activities under decentralized extension system, crop production activities were disseminated in very good manner. (Lodhi *et al.*, 2006). In a study on personnel participation and receptivity to change, it was found out that personnel from all levels of the organization who participated in the planning process were more receptive and less pessimistic about the plan and more motivated to make the plan success. Participation helped personnel cope with changes as well as build capacity for future changes. (Smith L.Keith and Cynthia B.Torppa, 2010)

A study on decentralization and agricultural development suggested that contribution of farmers can make through participation in Decision-making process has been overlooked in the past. Hence production has come to a standstill or even declined and developmental institution has failed to perform effectively and efficiently. (Gopalappa. *et al.*, 2011 )

### 3. Methodology

The study was conducted in 2011, covering five agro climatic zones of the Kerala - southern, central, northern, high altitude and special zone. Two districts were selected from each of the agro climatic zones of Kerala based on cropping intensity. From each district two Panchayths with high cropping intensity were selected. Eleven working group members from each Panchayath were selected, thus the total sample size was 220.

#### 3.1. Traits of Participatory Planning

A list 78 traits associated with the effectiveness of participatory planning, was identified and used for developing the PEPP index with a five point continuum of relevancy.

The relevancy ratio was defined as the ratio of actual score secured by a trait to the maximum possible score that the trait could secure. Obviously this ratio was between 0.20 and 1.00. This ratio was taken as the relevancy weightage for each trait. Thus symbolically if  $W_1, W_2, W_3, W_4$  and  $W_5$  were the 5 weights on the 5 point continuum and if  $n_1, n_2, n_3$  etc., were to be the number of judges who gave weights of  $W_1, W_2, W_3$ , etc., then the relevancy weightage 'R' of the trait would be:

$$\text{i.e. } R = \frac{\sum n_i W_i}{\sum W_i}$$

The relevancy weights of 78 traits ranged from 0.615 to 0.905. The mean for all the 78 traits was worked out and it was 0.70 with a standard deviation of 0.08 (n=46). Forty eight traits with relevancy weights of less than the mean relevancy weight (0.70) were deleted and thirty with a relevancy weight above the mean relevancy weight were alone selected as followed by Sundaramari (2005 ) in his study. Thus, the final list for measuring the perceived effectiveness participatory planning process consisted of 30 traits.

### **3.2. Perceived Effectiveness Index (PEI)**

The finally selected list of 30 traits was administered individually to each of the respondents and they were asked to rate the statements of participatory planning as perceived by them , on a three point continuum, the points being agree, undecided and disagree with scores of 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

If  $R_1, R_2, R_3 \dots R_{30}$  were to be the relevancy weights of the 30 statements, then the PEI was defined as follows:

$$PEI = \frac{W_1R_1+W_2R_2+W_3R_3+\dots+W_{30}R_{30}}{R_1+R_2+R_3+\dots+R_{30}}$$

Where,  $W_1, W_2, \dots, W_{30}$  were the scores obtained for the traits from a respondent.

The PEI computed as above was actually the PEI obtained by an individual respondent. Hence, to obtain the Overall Perceived Effectiveness Index (OPEI), the PEIs obtained by all the respondents were summed up and the mean was worked out. That mean PEI was taken as the OPEI for all respondents. The OPEI was used to categories the respondents is low, medium and high based on the PEPP.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

From the analysis it is obvious that 18 dimensions were having index values above mean value of 0.773. It could be deduced that majority of working group members assed participatory planning as more effective since it facilitates effective implementation of development plans (0.879) leading to collective and co-operative action by all the sections of the society (0.978), assuring great importance to gramasabha (.974), providing adequate opportunities for social auditing by gram sabha (.928), assuring decentralisation of power at all levels (.917), reducing the misuse and misappropriation of public funds (.91), providing farmers a chance to identify beneficiaries, propose annual plan, fixing priorities,



review budget and audit reports and the progress of local government projects (0.906), increasing the accountability of development functionaries (0.899), Gramasabha providing a framework for planning and continued follow up for agricultural development irrespective of political changes in local administration(0.891), helping to integrate the plans at different tiers of the Panchayat (0.886), providing opportunities for prioritizing, consolidating and finalizing the project ideas from all grama sabhas through annual 'Development seminar' at all levels (0.88), ensuring planning at grass roots level based on felt needs of people (0.879), ensuring transparency in flow and utilization of funds (0.872), providing people more opportunity to represent their needs and problems (0.861), providing for expertise of retired professionals to the local bodies in the planning process through a network of voluntary Technical Advisory Groups (0.86), providing local bodies with institutional mechanisms for planning in agriculture, Animal Husbandry, education, social welfare and infrastructure(0.833), strengthening and widening the roles of district Planning Committees DPCs (0.808), assuring effective people's participation in planning and implementation (0.788).

Dimensions like facilitates participation of youth in planning process, local bodies generating resource maps and data base for agricultural planning by massive people's participation, institutional mechanism for creating a win-win situation for all stake holders involved in agricultural development, participation of farm women in planning process, convergence platform of the "Indigenous knowledge system" and the "scientific knowledge system", measure of people's contribution for their own development, cost effective method of planning and executing development plans, effective method of planning and executing development plans, sustainable and cost effective development interventions, focus on mutual decision making with regard to analysis, planning, implementation and evaluation of the development efforts, helping for capacity building of the elected functionaries and officials, concurrent monitoring by the beneficiaries of any intervention., making an institutional linkage among women collectives, banks, development departments, non government organizations, etc received index values below the mean value. It could be assessed that the above dimensions, though originally conceived under the participatory planning process, were not materialised to a perceivable extent by the members of the working groups.

**Table 1. Overall Perceived Effectiveness Index**

#	Categories of OPEI	Number	Percentage	Mean	Standard deviation
1	Low	85	38.6	1.70	0.62
2	Medium	116	52.7		
3	High	19	8.7		
	Total	220	100.0		

Source: Survey data 2011

It could be observed from the table 1 that majority of the respondents were found to have medium level of PEI.

### **5. Conclusion**

The analysis throws light in to the fact that the ongoing process of participatory planning has to be institutionalised by adopting a campaign mode through focused efforts to enhance the participation of youth and farm women and by increasing contribution of local people to various interventions undertaken under peoples planning programme. The concurrent monitoring mechanism originally conceived was seen not implemented in any study area. Stake holder participation has to be promoted assuring a win- win situation for all in the light of eroding participation of farmers in gramasabha. To foster traditional farmer participation in grama sabhas, special campaign to honour the traditional wisdom and to document such activities state wide seems a better strategy. □

### **References**

Anjana.s, 2001: Leadership in people’s planning programme- SWOT analysis. M.Sc.Ag, thesis, college of Horticulture, Vellanikkara

Gopalappa,V. channaveera gowda,B.N, and K.Rangaswamy, 2011: Decentralization and Agricultural Development.Local government quarterly, Vol.LXXXI,No.2, All India Institute of Local self Government

Lodhi,T E; Muhammad-Luqman; Khan, G A .2006: Perceived effectiveness of public sector extension under decentralized agricultural extension system in the Punjab. Pakistan. : Journal-of-Agriculture-and-Social-SciencesFriends Science Publishers. . 2(3): 195-200

Parvathi. 1995: A field experiment on farm women’s cognitive domain relating to post harvest technologies.Ph.D thesis.Tamil Nadu Agricultural university, Coimbatore, India.

Smith L.Keith and Cynthia B.Torppa, 2010: Creating the capacity for organizational change- personnel participation and receptivity to change.Journal of extension.vol.48:4 article 4FEA1.

Sunadaramari, 2005: Indegenous agricultural practices for sustainable farming.Ph.D thesis. Gandhigram Ruaral Institute. Dindigul, Tamilnadu.

## **Re-organisation of the Statistical System for Local Governance in Kerala**

*As institutions of local self-governments, rural and urban local bodies require dependable data base for carrying out mandated tasks effectively. Though the importance of local level statistics for decentralised planning has been emphasised by various Committees and Study, even today there is no standardised system for the same. Every Five Year Plan documents in Kerala repeatedly states that there would be a thorough revamping of all on-going schemes and institutions, but no significant changes have taken place despite rapid changes in the socio-economic condition. For example, during the last four decades the contribution of agricultural sector in the Gross Domestic Product of Kerala declined from 40 per cent to 10 per cent. Yet even now nearly 40 per cent of the statistical personnel in the state are engaged in the collection of agricultural statistics. Therefore, the State Government and the State Planning Board have to take urgent steps to re-organise the statistical system in the state to build up data base at local government level and for their aggregation at block, district and state levels.*

**Dr. M. Kuttappan\***

---

\* Director (Rtd), Department of Economics and Statistics, Govt. of Kerala & Director, Centre for Tropical Studies, Thiruvananthapuram, Ph: 09446553831, email: mkcentrop@gmail.com

## **1. Introduction**

The 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments and the conformity Panchayat Raj and Municipalities Acts of 1994 and the amendments effected in 1999 provides the statutory frame work for creating functional, financial and administrative autonomy at the level of the third stratum of government in Kerala. (Oommen, M. A., 2004). As the State adopted a 'big bang' approach in transferring functions, functionaries and funds to local governments it has now been accepted as the leader in the devolution index in India. The 978 grama panchayats, 60 municipalities and 5 municipal corporations in Kerala now handle annually around Rs 8000 crores. (Government of Kerala, 2013). As institutions of local-self governments (LSGs) they are mandated not only to prepare plans for economic development and social justice but also to implement, monitor and evaluate the development programmes. For carrying out these tasks effectively it is necessary to build up a reliable data base at local government level. Dependable statistics are also an indispensable element in the information system of a democratic society especially when the right to information is accepted as a fundamental right of every citizen in India. In this context it is important to remember that collection and updating of essential statistics is listed as the first item among the general functions of panchayats as per the Kerala Panchayat Raj Act 1994. (Government of Kerala, 2005).

The National Statistical Commission chaired by C. Rangarajan in its report pointed out that though the importance of local level statistical information for decentralised planning has been emphasised by various committees and study groups, even today there is no standardised system for the collection, compilation and maintenance of local level data and their aggregation at block, district, state and national levels. (Government of India, 2001) In keeping with the recommendations of the Rangarajan Commission, the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation constituted a "High Level Expert Committee on Basic Statistics for Local Level Development." The Committee based on the experiences of the pilot studies carried out in many states, made a number of recommendations, the important among them are the following. (Government of India, 2006).

- (i) The Grama Panchayat should consolidate, maintain and own village level data.

- (ii) The village level information on availability of basic facilities, assets available, distance of the village from nearest facilities, demographic status, educational status, land utilisation statistics, data on livestock and poultry, number of market outlets, employment status of villagers etc. may be collected uniformly in a village schedule
- (iii) Directorate of Economics and Statistics in respective states should play an important role in ensuring statistical quality and standards by providing the necessary guidelines and training to panchayat staff in the consolidation and maintenance of local level statistics.
- (iv) Steering Committees may be set up at the Central and State government levels to look into the operation of compilation of local level statistics and data contents.

Generally statistical data are generated from following sources.

1. Regular decennial or quinquennial census like population census, livestock census, economic census etc
2. Regular sample surveys
3. Ad-hoc census and surveys and
4. Administrative statistics as by-product of administration

Data at Panchayat or Municipality level can be generated from censuses as each unit in the universe is enumerated. For example, from the decennial population census demographic details are available not only at local government level but also at ward level. But census being a time consuming and costly affair most of the data are collected through sample surveys. The National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) conducts nation-wide sample surveys to generate socio-economic data on a regular basis. But NSS data are not generally disaggregated below the state level and as such are not available at local government level. The State government also conduct regular sample surveys to generate state level and district level data. Ad-hoc surveys and censuses are also carried out by various departments to meet their urgent needs for the implementation of various schemes and programmes. Administrative statistics flow as by-products of administration. For the purpose of governance and for the implementation of various schemes and programmes the government offices collect and maintain details of different activities in the form of registers, documents, records etc. and they constitute the basic sources of administrative statistics.

## **2. Initiatives of Kerala Government**

To build up data base for the local governments, a comprehensive census type socio-economic survey was planned in 1995. But in view of opposition from some groups this survey could not be carried out. As such attempts were made in 1995-96 to compile all the available secondary sources of data and the same were published for each district in 1996 by the Department of Economics and Statistics (DES). Later on similar publications for each district were released in 2001 and 2006. These attempts were largely to compile secondary data from various sources and bulk of it was from census reports. The DES made its first attempt to generate data sets based on primary data in 2004 in the Malapattam Panchayat of Kannur district. Here primary data on variables considered important for the identification and prioritization of projects and programmes for the development of the panchayat were collected.

Considering the need for dependable and timely data in the context of the importance for decentralised planning, the Kerala government in 2004-05 initiated a study titled "Action Research on Local Level Statistics" - a UNDP Project on Improving Kerala Statistical System". The project was aimed at critically evaluating the type and quality of data in different sectors, to identify the data gaps and to suggest necessary modifications. The study was entrusted to five agencies, each agency focusing on a particular sector. The agencies reviewed the existing data availability at local government level and found that the statistical information contained in various registers and documents are neither up-to-date nor easily retrievable. There is no mechanism to check the reliability of data and to consolidate them at local government level. All the agencies in their reports recommended the re-structuring of the state statistical system to meet the data requirements for decentralised governance and planning. (Government of Kerala, 2005). The Committee for the Evaluation of Decentralised Planning and Development chaired by Prof. M. A. Oommen in its report critically reviewed the data sources at local level and made the following observation. "The sources of data relating to various aspects of the day to day functioning of the panchayat and municipal offices are numerous and are of good, bad and of indifferent categories". (Govt. of Kerala 2009). The Committee further felt that "government departments, parastatal agencies and LSGs have a poor track record in data compilation, documentation, analysis and application and in keeping data records". The Committee emphasised the need for appointing statistical personnel at the

rate of one person per panchayat and appropriate number of persons for each municipality and corporation.

Recently the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj sanctioned a project to Kerala Statistical Institute (KSI) to conduct a Methodological Study to “Design a System for Collection, Compilation Updating and Maintenance of Statistics for Decentralised Planning in Kerala”. The Report of the Study critically evaluated the existing data availability at LSG level and found that most of the data required for local level planning are either available or can be made available without much difficulty except in the case of agricultural sector. (Kerala Statistical Institute, 2012).

### **3. Case for Re-organisation**

Agricultural statistics in the state since 1975-76 are estimated on the basis of sample survey under the centrally sponsored scheme of “Establishment of an Agency for Reporting Agricultural Statistics” (EARAS). As per this scheme, from 1975-76 to 1986-87 taluk-wise area, yield and production of rice and district-wise data for other crops were estimated and published. The estimates were made on the basis of complete enumeration of 20 percent of the revenue villages every year so that during the course of five year period all wet land and dry land plots in the state were enumerated. The design of the scheme was revised in 1987-88 to generate block level mean yield data for the implementation of Comprehensive Crop Insurance Scheme. As per the revised scheme the entire state was divided into 811 investigator zones based on the strength of investigators sanctioned under this scheme. Each of the 152 Blocks and municipalities with an area of 10 sq.km or more is treated as a stratum. Those municipalities with less than 10 sq.km, are merged with the adjoining Block and treated as a single stratum. Each stratum is divided into a number of investigator zones based on the availability of the strength of the investigators. From each zone 100 clusters are allocated from the dry land and wet land in proportion to the area under these two categories. 100 survey numbers/sub division numbers are selected from the Basic Tax Register by circular systematic sampling method. These plots are the key plots for cluster formation. Investigators identify the survey numbers of key plots and four adjacent survey numbers to the key survey number which constitute a cluster. Wet land and dry land clusters are enumerated separately. While wet land clusters are enumerated during the three seasons – Autumn, Winter and Summer – dry land clusters are visited at least two times for area enumeration. In view of the widespread practice of



mixed and inter-cropping practices area of perennial tree crops are estimated on the basis of the average stand per hectare fixed earlier by a committee. Details of land utilization and irrigation particulars and area under crops are collected by the investigators at the time of enumeration. Simultaneously, the investigator select plots and conduct crop cutting experiments for all major crops and selected minor crops for the estimation of yield rates and production of crops at block level. Since the jurisdiction of an investigator zone is not co-terminus with a panchayat / municipality, local self government level data could not be generated.

Nearly 50 per cent of the statistical personnel of the DES, including 811 investigators are engaged in this scheme. When the scheme was introduced in 1975-76, agricultural sector contributed nearly 40 per cent of the State Domestic Product and seasonal and annual crops accounted for 52 per cent of the gross cropped area of the state. Bulk of the work under this scheme is for the collection of data relating to seasonal and annual crops like rice, tapioca, vegetables, and plantain. Now agricultural sector's contribution to the State Domestic Product is only around 10 per cent and the area under seasonal and annual crops is only 18 per cent of the gross cropped area of the state (i.e., decreased from 14.3 lakh hectares in 1975-76 to 4.9 lakh hectares in 2009-10). (KSI, *op.cit*) As such the work load of investigators has been reduced considerably. Since year to year changes in the area under perennial crops, which now account for 82 per cent of the total cropped area, is only marginal, area estimation of perennial crops needs to be conducted only once in five years preferably along with the quinquennial Agricultural Census. The area under seasonal and annual crops can be estimated by local enquiry if a statistical person is posted at panchayat level. Therefore if the EARAS scheme is restructured in accordance with the changes in the cropping pattern it would be possible not only to generate LSG level data but also to improve the quality of data. Now only district level data are published and as such it is not possible to verify the quality of data. If LSG level data are generated, it would be easy to verify the reliability of data as the area covered is small. Once the Investigators are posted in Panchayats and Urban Local Bodies, complete enumeration of all households and agricultural operational holdings have to be carried out once in five years using the services of Anganwadi workers, Kudumbasree and the staff of other local offices of line departments under the close supervision of the Investigators of DES.



Here it is important to remember that reports of various committees and study groups have become the laughing stock for informed and enlightened observers as most of them were left to gather dust on the shelves of the secretariat. There is no serious attempt on the part of the government to study the recommendations of these reports and to implement them. Instead, the government now as part of a World Bank assisted National Strategic Statistical Plan (NSSP) prepared the Kerala State Strategic Statistical Plan (KLSSSP) and signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. In the World Bank project the task of preparing the KLSSSP was given to the State and I really doubt whether the framers of this plan have carefully studied the recommendations of earlier reports, taking into consideration the urgent need for the building up of data at local government level and their aggregation at higher levels.

#### **4. Conclusion**

Even though the importance of Local Self-government level data for decentralised planning has been emphasised by various committees and study groups constituted by the Central and State governments, the implementation of these recommendations has not been taken up seriously by the Kerala government. As such, even today no standardised system exists for the collection, compilation and maintenance of LSG level data and for their aggregation at block, district and state levels. In this connection it is important to note that the Draft Approach Paper of 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan of Kerala (2012-17) clearly stated that there would be a thorough revamping of all ongoing schemes and public institutions. The paper also stated that PRIs will be strengthened to make them capable to take the 'Next Step' issues in decentralisation. Therefore the State Planning Board and the State Government have to re-examine the recommendations of various Committees and Study Groups and also the KLSSSP to find out a proper strategy to build up a statistical system from the LSG level to the State level. □

#### **References**

- Government of India, 2001: National Statistical Commission, New Delhi.
- Government of India, 2006: Report of the High Level Expert Committee on Basic Statistics for Local Development. Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, New Delhi.
- Government of Kerala, 2005: Action Research on Local Level Statistics – a UNDP assisted project for Improving Kerala Statistical System. Institute of Management in Government, Thiruvananthapuram.

- Government of Kerala, 2009: Report of the Committee for Evaluation of Decentralised Planning and Development.
- Government of Kerala, 2013: Economic Review, 2012, Department of Economics and Statistics, Thiruvananthapuram.
- Kerala Statistical Institute, 2012: Report on the Methodological Study to Design a System for Collection, Compilation Updating and Maintenance of Statistics for Decentralised Planning, Thiruvananthapuram.
- Oommen, M. A., 2004: Deepening Decentralised Governance in Rural India: Lessons from the People's Plan Initiatives of Kerala. Working Paper No.11. Centre for Socio-economic & Environmental Studies, Kochi.

**Geo-informatics for  
Village Development:**  
The Case of  
Palayamkottai Village  
in Dindigul District of  
Tamil Nadu

*The systematic planning need modern technologies and Local governments are responsible to plan for infrastructure, employment and poverty alleviation. This need exact data for planning and implementation. This article argues that there is scope for using the emerging technologies like GIS, satellite images and GPS, in the planning process of Panchayats. The Panchayat leaders, can use the same to assess the gaps and the installed infrastructural facilities such as tube lights, drinking water taps, over head tank, as well as identification of sites for Mahathma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme etc.*

**A.Rajeshwari\***  
**Dr. N.D.Mani\*\***

---

\* Lecturer, M.Sc.Geoinformatics Programme, GRI, Gandhigram, Tamilnadu, email: avrajeshwari@gmail.com, Mobile: 097906 43235

\*\*Professor, MSc.Geoinformatics Programme, GRI, Gandhigram, Tamilnadu.

## **1. Introduction**

The new Panchayat Raj System came into force with the enactment of 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA). Of all elected leaders, Panchayat leaders are elected from among the local community. He / she will be always in close contact with the village community hence they are accountable to local villagers. Many of the village panchayat leaders are elected by the village community based on their acquaintance with the villagers and their reliability. The state government releases funds for the provision of infrastructure facilities by village panchayats. These facilities have to be located at appropriate places meeting the demands of all sections of the people. These decisions at village level are primarily made in many cases arbitrarily without using any data or information. The major problem in decision making at the village level is not only availability of reliable data on people and resources but also maps at hamlet level. This problem is compounded when available data could not be integrated for deriving useful information for decision making. Therefore, there is a need for an approach to efficiently collect, integrate and get required information for decision making at the local level. The tools of Geoinformatics like Geographic Information System (GIS), Satellite data and Global Positioning System (GPS) can be used to facilitate such type of efficient and effective information service.

A study on tribal-oriented and rural-based districts in India had utilized village level spatial and non-spatial data in GIS to assist the decision-makers to generate various socio-economic maps, which can be used for identification of suitable village for watershed management activities and used community GIS tool for grass-root level planning. (Adhinarayana, 2004). GIS and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) were combined to help local organizations to prepare better rural development plans and enhance their ability to make more informed decisions about managing their resources (Frank R. Turyatunga, 2004). Agricultural zoning was prepared by combining PRA mapping, satellite image interpretation and GPS data. (Janet Nackoney *et.al*, 2012). PRA integrated GIS created for the management of mangrove in the Municipality of Panay (Lerio A. Agdalipe and Somsak Boromthanarat, 2003). GIS was used to develop a support system focusing natural resources, socio-economic status, land resource action plan and an interactive module for information retrieval for Naranapuram village, Coimbatore district (Ravindran and Jaishankar, *n.d.*). An online village information system for Muklan village was generated (Sitender *et.al*, 2012).

## **2. Technology**

GIS is a computerized spatial information system; capable of accepting data in any format and displaying the output in a specific spatial format. It requires two types of data i.e., spatial and attribute data. For the present study both these data sets were created with the active participation of the village people.

The raw data received from the imaging sensors contain unwanted details which has to be cleared to make original data usable. Digital Image Processing (DIP) includes three basic stages viz., image restoration, image enhancement, image classification for the manipulation of satellite digital images by software.

Global Positioning System (GPS) is a satellite based surveying/ navigational tool. It provides the information about latitude, longitude and altitude of any location at any point of time, place and environmental conditions.

## **3. Methodology**

The prime aim of the study is to create a digital database in GIS environment for Palayamkottai Revenue Village including its six hamlets. The village is one of the big villages in Athoor Block in Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu State. The extension of the revenue village is 77°50"E to 77°53"E longitude and 10°14" N to 10°17"N latitude. The data such as revenue village map and land parcel related details from the Village Administrative Office (VAO) were collected. Satellite images of the hamlets were downloaded from Google Earth. A schedule was prepared for household-wise data collection and it was pre-tested. Using the schedule the household-wise data from the hamlets was collected. While collecting the household wise data the hamlet maps were also updated simultaneously.

## **4. Procedures**

### ***4.1. Palayamkottai Revenue Village Database Creation***

Palayamkottai Revenue Village covered in 58F/15 and 58F/16 toposheets of Survey of India, Hyderabad, were purchased and rectified in ArcGIS 9.3. The collected revenue village map was rectified using the rectified toposheets as reference. The land parcel boundaries in the map were digitized and survey numbers were added. Similarly other features viz., power line, foot path, wells and contours were digitized.

The collected VAO data were fed in MS-Excel. The data was processed and coded. The coded MS\_Excel file was joined with land

parcel feature class in ArcMap. The feature class was analysed for understanding various crops cultivated such as cholam, pulses, coconut etc.

#### **4.2. Land Use**

Satellite image of Palayamkottai was downloaded from Google Earth. The map was rectified in ERDAS Imagine software. Training sites for various land use type such as cultivable land, waterbodies, settlements, and wasteland created, and edited in signature editor and classified the satellite image using Maximum likelihood classifier.

#### **4.3. Depth of Water Table**

The location of the wells was collected using Global Positioning System (GPS), and downloaded in Map Source software. The latitude and longitude values were converted to point feature and exported to ArcGIS. The depth of the wells was collected and joined with the wells feature class in ArcMap. The isopleth map was generated using Inverse Distance Weighted method to show the depth of ground water table in Palayamkottai Revenue Village.

#### **4.4. Hamlet Database Creation**

Conventional methods of drawing map through physical surveying will consume a lot of time and energy and therefore it is expensive. To quicken the process of updation of the hamlets map, satellite images were used and field checked to verify the data.

The Google Earth images were rectified based upon rectified toposheets. The rectified images were digitized using the feature classes viz., house, tap, drainage, road, schools, water tank etc. The houses were updated during the field visit. The house-hold wise data were collected using the schedule was fed in MS\_Excel and processed. The processed data was joined with the house feature class using the door number as the primary key. Maps such as caste, religion, family size, occupation, literates, type of house, year of construction of the house, availability of toilet, kitchen, drinking water, gender equity, number of eligible voters, household income, expenditure, savings, indebtedness, etc. were generated. From the above listed maps only occupation details and gender equity of Koolampatti hamlet were mapped as an example.

### **5. Analysis and Discussion**

Major crops such as cholam, pulses and vegetables were cultivated in Palayamkottai village in the rainfed first season. Cholam was cultivated in 202.47 ha. of area. The area under cholam

has been classified into four classes viz., more than 75, 50 to 75, 25 to 50 and less than 25 percent of the total area. More than 75 percent was seen in the central and in four land parcels in the southern part of the village. The land parcel in the southern and centre were dominated under the category of 51 to 75 percent. Less than 25 percent was concentrated more in the northern and centre parts of the village.

Pulses cultivation was traced mainly in the centre part of the village with an extent of area of 22.73 ha. in the year 2010. Four land parcels were found to cultivate pulses more than 30 percent. Twenty one to 30 percent of pulses were traced in the many land parcels in the central part of the revenue village. The extent of area under coconut cultivation under well irrigated conditions was 21 ha. and found in few land parcels in the southern part and majority in the northern part of the village. Area under coconut was classified based upon its area occupied in total area of the land parcels. The class of more than 75 percent was found in three land parcels two in the southern and another one in the middle part of the watershed. The class of 50 to 75 percent was seen in southern and north western parts.

The land use/ land cover classification of the village in 2006 was portrayed. To the northern side of the village there was a big tank, which is shared by Athoor and Palayamkottai villages. Majority of the settlements were found in the central area of the village. Most of the land was under wasteland and remaining area was classified as cultivable land. Cultivable lands are concentrated mostly in the northern part of the village as they can get water from the nearby tank. Similarly settlements are found in this area. The data on depth of the ground water was shown through this mapping system. Less than 15 meters of depth was found in southern part of the revenue village. And it increased as it moves towards north. Majority of the area had a depth of 30 to 45 meters. In the eastern part and towards the north a depth of 45 to 60 meters was traced. The highest depth of more than 60 meters was seen in the eastern part of the revenue village.

GIS can be used to map hamlet-wise data. Koolampatti hamlet (is one of the hamlets in Palayamkottai Revenue Village) was used for this. The occupation information of the hamlet is portrayed in it. The occupation was classified into four viz., farmer, agriculture cooli, other cooli and other occupations included own business, employment in an organization, institution, company, teacher, etc. Majority of the respondents in the village were agri.cooli and other cooli and a few were farmers. With the help of GIS gender equity

was assessed by the opportunity provided to girl child towards education, women employment, rights to spend, rights to select the cloth and jewels and harassment towards women. The gender equity was marked out in 52 houses and the remaining 245 houses reported non-gender equity. It was found that if both the men and women were educated than gender equity was prevailing in that house.

## 6. Conclusion

The study clearly reveals that there is scope for using the emerging technologies like GIS, satellite images and GPS. They can be used at the revenue village as well as in hamlet level. The tools of GIS enable the users to manipulate and generate outputs as per their requirements. At present it is being used by the Panchayat leaders for taking decisions to locate infrastructural facilities such as tube lights, drinking water taps, over head tank, as well as identification of sites for Mahathma Gandhi Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme etc. Government officials may also use it for verification of ration cards, distribution of freebees, etc. as the geo-database have been created with household-wise data at the hamlet level. □

### References

- Adhinarayana.J 2004: Village Information System – A Tool for Decentralised Planning at District Level in India, [http://www.csre.iitb.ac.in/adi/projects/village\\_level\\_information\\_system.htm](http://www.csre.iitb.ac.in/adi/projects/village_level_information_system.htm)
- Frank R. Turyatunga. 2004: Tools for Local-Level Rural Development Planning: Combining Use of Participatory Rural Appraisal and Geographic Information Systems in Uganda, World Resources Institute.
- Janet Nackoney, *et.al.* 2012: Coupling Participatory Mapping and GIS to inform Village-Level Agricultural Zoning in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Science Direct, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0169204612003167>.
- Lerio A. Agdalipe and Somsak Boromthananarat, 2003: Application of PRA integrated GIS: Tools to Develop Management Arrangement for the Devolution of Mangrove Management in the Municipality of Panay, Capiz, Philippines, <http://www.gisdevelopment.net/application/nrm/ncoastal/mnm/ma03229.htm>.
- Ravindran. A, Jaishankar: J, *n.d.*: GIS based information system for village level planning, available at <http://www.gisdevelopment.net/application/lis/rural/lisr0007.htm>
- Sitender, *et.al.*, 2012: Village Informaiton System – A Case Study of Muklan Village, Hisar District, Haryana (India), [http://www.ijmra.us/project%20doc/IJRSS\\_MAY2012/IJMRA-RSS981.pdf](http://www.ijmra.us/project%20doc/IJRSS_MAY2012/IJMRA-RSS981.pdf)



## **Socio Economic Caste Census 2011: Identification of BPL Persons**

*The concepts and methodologies used at identifying the poor persons have undergone several changes in the past. While the National Sample Survey (NSSO) estimates provides the percentage of people below poverty line based on consumption expenditure specific caloric norms, the Below Poverty Line (BPL) surveys and the current Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC) 2011 helps in identifying the poor households by using a different set of concepts. The changes introduced at each round of BPL surveys to the currently on going SECC 2011 needs to be recapitulated for the purposes of administrative and policy needs. The introduction of country wide e-governances modules in the SECC2011 at identification of the poor are considered a major breakthrough and the results are awaited. To what extend the e-governance initiatives under taken in the realms of data collection, awareness generation and the involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and Grama Sabhas through a process of Claims and Objections Tracking Systems (COTS) by various states and union territories are helpful in arriving at the BPL list is a concern for all. As in the past but for decentralised efforts at data collection many errors are unlikely.*

**Dr. Joseph Abraham**

---

\* Project Social Scientist, SECC Unit/BPL Cell, Govt. of India, Ministry of Rural Development, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi 110001. Mobile 8130588803, email: josephmepurath@yahoo.co.in, email: jamordbplcu2011@gmail.com

## **1. Background**

The number of people below the poverty line (BPL) is determined at the national and the State level by the Planning Commission of India. This is done on the basis of a large sample survey of consumer expenditure carried out by the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) after an interval of every 5 years. The available figures of poverty ratios released by the Planning Commission, was based on the 61st Round of NSSO of 2004-05; it estimated that 28.3 per cent households in the rural areas were living below poverty line. While estimations of poverty are being done by the Planning Commission, three separate Censuses to identify the BPL households have also been conducted by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India in 1992, 1997 and 2002 in the past. The primary purpose of conducting village wise census of households is to identify the BPL households that could be assisted under various poverty alleviation programmes of the Ministry. In addition, many other Ministries of the Government of India use the BPL list so prepared for targeting benefits, such as Public Distribution System (PDS), health insurance, scholarships, etc. Some State -specific schemes also limit their assistance to this list of the BPL households. This makes the preparation of the BPL list all the more important and central to poverty alleviation.

In the past there has been no comparable surveys of the urban poor households and no directions given for this by the Government of India. In view of the inadequacies pointed out by the State Governments and others about the methodology followed in BPL 2002 survey for identifying the poor, the Ministry of Rural Development constituted an Expert Group in August 2008 to recommend a more suitable methodology to identify the poor in the rural areas. (Govt. Of India,2009a) The Planning Commission constituted a 'Task Force on Projection of Minimum Needs and Effective Consumption Demand' which on the basis of a systematic study of nutritional requirements recommended a national norm of 2,400 calories per day and 2,100 calories per day for rural and urban areas (the difference being attributed to the lower levels of physical activity needed in the urban areas) respectively. (Govt of India,2009b) These figures were derived from age-sex-occupation-specific nutritional norms by using the all-India demographic data from the 1971 Census.

The national-level official poverty lines for the base year (1973-74) were expressed as monthly per capita consumption expenditure of Rs 49 in rural areas and Rs 57 in urban areas, which

corresponded to a basket of goods and services that satisfy the calorie norms of per capita daily requirement. The cut-off line has been updated for price rise for the subsequent years. However, the new poverty lines do not correspond to the minimum calorie norm, as according to the NSSO data; to reach the minimum calorie requirement the poor would need far more consumption expenditure than the monthly cut-off line so arrived at by just adjusting Rs 49/57 for inflation. However, the price updated methodology as used by Planning Commission in arriving at the poverty line was indicated as erroneous. (Deaton and Dreze, 2008).

## **2. Unidimensional V Multidimensional Approach**

The measurement of poverty has largely dealt with economic deprivation in the income or expenditure space. The official estimates of poverty since mid 1970's have been based on nationwide household consumption surveys conducted quinquennially adopting more or less common methods and procedures. There is by now a growing recognition that poverty is not simply a matter of inadequate income but also a matter of low literacy, short life expectation and lack of basic needs such as adequate shelter, clothing and safe drinking water. The data required for identification of the poor at the village level is multidimensional in nature and consists of both quantitative and qualitative information.

The unidimensional or income poverty builds on the proposition that the living standard of a household depends on the level of consumption expenditure. The basic step in the income poverty approach is to identify a critical value of expenditure that can serve as a poverty line. The Multidimensional Poverty have been worked out as a measure of poverty by pooling two different sets of unit level data namely the NSS 61st round consumer expenditure data and National Family Health Survey (NFHS-3) unit level data, following the methodology given in Radhakrishna *et al* (2005,2010), Alkire, S and S Seth,(2008) . Such pooling of data has enabled them to estimate per capita total expenditure for each NFHS sample household. Thus, the NFHS unit level data has been utilized for multidimensional poverty analysis. The percentage of households either poor or with at least a stunted child (union of income poverty and child malnutrition) is estimated to be 72.6 per cent in rural and 60.9 per cent in urban (Radhakrishna, 2010).

### **3. Methodology of BPL Surveys**

#### **3.1. BPL Survey 1992**

In 1992, for the 8th Five Year Plan, a detailed procedure was prescribed by the Ministry of Rural Development to identify BPL families in the rural areas. The 1992 survey used income as criterion, and guidelines were issued to assess the annual income of the family; the annual income cut-off was Rs 11,000 per household, below which all were poor. The BPL families were classified into income ranges of Rs 0-4000, Rs 4000-6000, Rs 6000-8500 and Rs 8500-11000. The number of poor identified in the BPL survey was almost twice of that estimated by the Planning Commission. Besides, there was a mix-up of poor and non-poor as a result of the switch over from consumption to income to track the level of living of the population. The family based fixed poverty line created problems for large families with small income per head resulting in exclusion of these ostensibly poor families from the BPL Group. A problem of the opposite kind was encountered with smaller families having relatively large income per head getting included in the BPL Group. Therefore, in the 1997 Census the income criteria was dropped, since it was felt that there is always an inherent bias among the population to under-estimate income so as to be included in the target group.

#### **3.2. BPL Survey for the Ninth Plan (1997-2002)**

In practice, the BPL survey of 1997 was conducted in two stages. First, on the basis of several exclusion criteria such as, threshold level of income and ownership of land, building, consumer durables and agricultural implements, some of the families are declared as non-poor. Five exclusion criteria were used:- i. operating more than 2 hectares of land; ii. having a pucca house; iii. any resident member of the household having an annual income from salary/self-employment exceeding Rs 20,000 per annum; iv. households' owning the following consumer durable TV, Refrigerator, Ceiling Fan, Motorcycle/scooter, three-wheelers; and v. households owning the farm implements: - tractor, power tiller, and combined thresher/harvester. These exclusion criteria were used for weeding out those families from the Census which was *prima facie* not poor.

In the second stage, the total consumption, both purchased from the market and home grown, were gathered from the remaining families (who were not declared as non-poor by the exclusion criterion) by interview method. This total consumption of the family was divided by the total number of persons in the family, treating all the members, adult, adolescent and children as identical units.

This yielded the per capita consumption of the family. This per capita consumption of the family was compared with the poverty line (worked out at the State level by the Planning Commission using the Expert Group methodology and used to derive the official estimates of the poverty ratio), and the family was counted in the BPL group if its per capita consumption was below the norm set by the Planning Commission.

This methodology was criticised mainly due to the application of the exclusion criteria. The criticism was mainly articulated by the rich and powerful rural lobby, because the exclusion criteria made it difficult for them to enter the list. Its removal must have facilitated their entry, as the NSSO 61st round data for 2004-05 shows that 16.8 per cent of the richest quintile and 30.5% of the next richest quintile possessed BPL cards.

### **3.3. BPL Census for the Tenth Plan (2002-07)**

The Ministry of Rural Development constituted an Expert Group for identification of BPL households, which comprised professionals, academicians, senior bureaucrats and the State Government officials directly engaged in the implementation of poverty alleviation programmes in rural areas. The Expert Group recommended a methodology of Score Based Ranking of each household on thirteen socio-economic indicators including size of land holding, type of house, availability of clothes, food security, sanitation, literacy, means of livelihood and indebtedness, reflecting the quality of life of the rural population.. The respondent will tick any one of the options and indicate a score of zero to four for each sub category out of the thirteen items listed. These criteria have been widely criticised on a number of grounds (Hirway, 2003, Sundaram K, 2003).

### **3.4. BPL Surveys of Gujarat and Kerala**

The state governments of Gujarat and Kerala conducted BPL Censuses more or less on the lines of the recommendations of the Expert Group (Govt. Of India, 2002), making some adjustments to suit their specific needs and prepared BPL lists. In the implementation of the BPL survey the government of Gujarat was able to target the poorest of the poor with less discretion by field functionaries in selecting beneficiaries. The website based information helped the PRIs to choose the beneficiaries on the basis of their genuine needs.

Kerala has a long history of experimenting with identification of the poor even prior to the BPL surveys. The State Poverty

Eradication Mission of Government of Kerala, 'Kudumbasree', used the following nine indicators called 'risk factors' to identify the poor: i) kutcha house; ii) no access to safe drinking water; iii) no access to a sanitary latrine; iv) illiterate adult in the family; v) family having not more than one earning member; vi) family getting barely two meals a day or less; vii) presence of children below five years in the family; viii) alcoholic or drug addict in the family; and ix) Scheduled Caste (SC) or Scheduled Tribe (ST) family. If any four or more of the above risk factors were affirmative/positive in a family, it was identified as poor under the State Poverty Eradication Mission (SPEM). A family with at least eight out of the above nine risk factors positive was identified as destitute. Obviously, equal weight was given for all the nine indicators considered, which attracted criticism. In view of this, the government of Kerala issued modified guidelines in 2007 adding some more indicators to the list and assigned weights/marks to each indicator. The indicators considered were broadly divided into two groups: a) indicators based on capabilities, and b) indicators based on entitlements, and each indicator was given a weight/score between 5 and 20. All the surveyed households were ranked on basis of the total scores obtained by each household. The destitute households were given priority for assistance under the 'Asrya' programme that is being implemented by the Local Self-government Department in Kerala using the network of Neighbourhood Groups (Self-help Groups) of the *Kudumbasree*.

A positive aspect of the procedures adopted by Gujarat and Kerala is that their survey design covered multi-dimensional poverty. Some of the indicators considered were qualitative in nature, and they could capture the degree of deprivations in the capabilities space. Above methodology ensured transparency since the list of beneficiaries was approved by the Gram Sabha.

### **3.5. Approach to BPL Census 2011**

In view of the inadequacies pointed out by the State governments and others about the methodology followed in 2002 for identifying the poor, the Ministry of Rural Development constituted an Expert Group under the Chairmanship of Dr.N.C. Saxena, in August 2008, to recommend a more suitable methodology to identify the poor in the rural areas. The Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Expert Group were:-

- I). To recommend a more suitable methodology for conducting the next BPL Census with simple, transparent and objectively measurable indicators for identification of BPL for providing

assistance under the programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development.

- II). To recommend institutional system for conducting survey, processing of data validation and approval of BPL list at various levels.
- III). To recommend institutional mechanism of addressing grievances of public on exclusion/ inclusion in the BPL list.
- IV) To briefly look at the relationship between estimation and identification of poor and the issue of putting a limit on the total number of BPL families to be identified.
- V). Any other recommendation to make the exercise of BPL Census simple and acceptable.

The Expert Group submitted its Report to the Government in August 2009. The report was duly considered by the Government and the methodology for SECC 2011 finalized.

### **3.6. Methodology of the SECC 201 (Rural)**

The methodology to conduct the door to door census of rural households for identification of BPL households is as below: -

The Census would be conducted by State Governments / UTs with the technical and financial support of the MoRD. The Census would be based on a self-declaration model of the respondents. The enumerator/ data entry operator would record the declaration of the respondents and where he finds that the response is prima facie incorrect, record observations separately in the space provided for in the enumeration box. The Supervisor would mandatorily visit of these households and verify the veracity of the dissent. The supervisor would also monitor and randomly check the filled up questionnaires on a sample basis. The information would be verified and approved by the Gram Sabha. The procedures for filing claims and objections and its disposal are prescribed separately by the Ministry. The Ministry would also provide detailed guidelines for finalization of BPL list.

The classification of households would be done in three steps.

Step 1. **Exclusion Criterion:** The exclusion criteria would be that any household satisfying any of the following criteria would be excluded:-

- 1). Households owning Motorized Two/Three/Four Wheelers/ Fishing boats (which require registration);
- 2). Households owning mechanized Three / Four wheeler agricultural equipments such

as tractors, harvesters etc; 3). Households having Kisan Credit Card with the credit limit of Rs.50,000 and above; 4). Households with any member as Government Employee: gazetted and non-gazetted employees of Central government, State government, Public Sector Undertakings, Government-aided autonomous bodies and local bodies. This will exclude incentive and other honorarium based workers; 5). Households with Enterprises registered with the Government for any purpose: any non agricultural enterprise registered with the Central or State Governments; 6). Households with any member in the family earning more than Rs. 10,000 p. m; 7). Households paying income tax or professional tax; 8). Households with three or more rooms with pucca walls and pucca roof; 9). Households owning Refrigerator; 10). Households owning landline phones; 11). Households owning 2.5 acres or more irrigated land with at least one irrigation equipment such as diesel/ electric operated bore well/ tube well; 12). 5 acres or more land irrigated for two or more crop seasons; 13). Households owning 7.5 acres or more land with at least one irrigation equipment such as diesel / electric operated bore well / tube well;

Step 2. **Compulsorily / automatically included**:-i). households without shelter; ii). Destitute living on alms; iii). Manual Scavengers; iv). Primitive Tribal Groups; and v). legally released bonded labourers.

Step 3. **Deprivation Scores**: The remaining households (subjected to exclusion criteria and compulsory inclusion) would then be assigned *deprivation scores* depending on the number of deprivation indicators they satisfy. The following are the deprivation indicators used for inclusion:- i). Households with only one room with kucha walls and kutcha roof; ii). Households with no adult member between age 16 to 59; iii). Female headed households with no adult male member between age 16 to 59; iv). Households with any disabled member and no able bodied adult member; v). SC/ST households; vi). Households with no literate adult above 25 years; vii). Landless households deriving the major part of their income from manual casual labour.

### **3.7 Inclusion Priority**

Households eligible under compulsory inclusion will have highest priority. For the households eligible for ranking under deprivation indicators, a deprivation score would be derived for each household by adding up the number of deprivations satisfied by the household. This score would vary from a minimum 0 to maximum 7. The order of priority for inclusion of households in the BPL list



would be from largest number of deprivations to smallest number of deprivations. For the purpose of coverage under welfare schemes of the Government, households eligible for compulsory inclusion would have highest priority, followed by households with higher deprivation scores. For such welfare programme where universal coverage is not permissible, the system would be capable of generating a ranking of priority household till poverty caps prescribed by the Planning Commission are attained.

Use of Handheld Electronic Enumeration Device for SECC 2011. Low cost handheld device are used for collection of data in Socio Economic and Caste Census 2011. The use of Tablet PCs would reduce the time required for processing the data after collection from the field.

National Informatics Centre (NIC) developed the Management Information System (MIS) for the database of Socio Economic Census 2011 and to facilitate its subsequent use by the MoRD, other Ministries and State Governments for their own requirements.

#### **4. Data Collection and Processing**

The field tested questionnaires were used and data entered into an electronic hand held device the tablet personal computer (TPC). The respondents were not required to show documentary proof in support of the information they are giving. On completion of the data collection, the respondent household would be given a duly signed acknowledgement slip. The elected people's representatives were required to accompany and guide the Enumerators in the data collection efforts. Instruction manuals and e governance software were made available in the public domains for all stake holders to ensure transparency and accountability.

The draft list would be placed in the Grama Panchayat/ Gram Sabha and Claims and Objections (COTS) disposed off through the application software and with the involvement of PRIs functionaries and final list uploaded on to the MoRD/State/UT website through the NIC servers.

#### **5. Conclusion**

The efficient and successful execution of poverty alleviation programmes calls for a vivid understanding by the political executives, bureaucrats and civil society of the various concepts and methodologies used in poverty identification surveys and censuses. It is hoped that the present decentralised participatory

execution of the e governance modules in the SECC 2011 through the PRIs will overcome BPL data errors. The involvement of local people in arriving at own poverty status and in devising schemes and projects through democratic decentralised development calls for strengthening of local e-governance initiatives. The introduction of e- governance modules at estimation and in assisting the eligible target population for poverty alleviation has come to stay as it helps eliminate corruption and mismanagement at all levels. The stakeholders engaged in these activities need to perform assigned duties diligently and overcome past mistakes to contribute towards better governance. □

### **References**

- Alkire, S and S Seth.2008: “Multidimensional Poverty and BPL Census in India: A Comparison of Methods”, OPHI Working Paper Series.
- Deaton and Dreze. 2008, “ Nutrition in India: Facts and Interpretations”. Princeton University, <http://www.cedeseorg/pdf/work170.pdf>, accessed on 10/01/2014
- Govt. of India, 2002: Report of the Expert Group on Identification of household below poverty line (BPL census 2002) Guidelines, Ministry of Rural Development.
- Govt. of India, 2009a: Report of the Expert Group to address the Ministry of Rural Development on the Methodology for Estimating the Blow Poverty Line Census (BPL) Census for the 11th Five Year Plan. MoRD
- Govt. of India, 2009b: Report of the Expert Groups to Review the Methodology for Estimation of Poverty, Planning Commission.
- Govt of India, 2011.”Instructions Manual on SECC 2011”.
- Hirway, Indira. 2003: “Identification of BPL Households for Poverty Alleviation Programmes”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 38 (45), 4803-38.
- Radhakrishna, R. et al 2010, Can We Really Measure and Identify the Poor When Poverty Encompasses Multiple Deprivations? “*Indian Journal of Human Development* Vol.4.No.2,
- Sundaram K .2003, “On Identification of Households below Poverty Line in BPL Census 002: Some Comments on the proposed Methodology”, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.38 (9), pp 896-901.

## **e-Governance in Local Governments: Aiming Towards Good Governance**

*The use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is a major innovation of modern governance systems. It is argued that the introduction of ICT in governance provided for a participant and vibrant democratic culture. It follows that the digital culture automatically retains its foot prints in the local governance environment. Thus local governance is facing a digital transformation. The necessity of transformation being accredited, the imminent issue is the implementation and management of these transition. In this background the paper examines the use of e-Governance in local government and its implications in the decentralization process in the state of Kerala.*

**Dr. Sabu Thomas\***

---

\* Assistant Professor, Post Graduate Department of Political Science, Government College Madappally, Vadakara, Calicut, Kerala, Mob: 9447113183, email: savempeny@gmail.com

## **1. Introduction**

The term e-Governance, implies the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) at various levels of the government and the public sector for the purpose of improving governance. e-Governance can bring forth new concepts of citizenship, both in terms of citizen needs and responsibilities. Its objective is to engage, enable and empower the citizen. Marche & McNiven (2003) defines e-Governance as, “a technology-mediated relationship between citizens and their governments from the perspective of potential electronic deliberation over civic communication, over policy evolution, and in democratic expressions of citizen will”. In the course of time it became an inevitable future of modern governance (Gasco, 2003). It is argued that the internet and new technologies possess a vulnerable potential to revitalize the political communications in democracy (Coleman & Blumer, 2009:9).

The importance of internet and new social media is well acknowledged by major state actors all over the world. With over Two Billion internet connections and an amazing growth rate of 480% (During 2000-2010) the internet is becoming a popular tool in developing social contacts and in organizing social actions. According to International Telecommunication Union (ITU) estimates, 45% of the world’s Internet users are below the age of 25. This provides further rationality for the acceleration of e-Governance initiatives.

The introduction of E-Governance in local governance brings in better governance (Odendaal, 2003; Garretta & Jensen, 2011). To them Internet can play an important role in linking individuals and groups of stakeholders outside the regime with political authorities, promoting a more communication- centric vision of local governance. e-Governance also ensures smooth organizational management.. Secondly elected officials can become more self sufficient and independent with the digital personal aids and the resultant data sources. Their constituency relations remains vibrant and active as people establish online contacts with the representatives. This facilitates better democratic

deliberations. With regards to delivery in policies, ICT can enhance decision making process by providing ample data and better resources.. Physical service delivery competencies were also enhanced with New ICT.

## **2. e-Governance and Local Governance in Kerala**

The state of Kerala has always been a role model for all other states in the use of ICTs. Various e-Governance initiatives in the state including IT@School, Akshaya and e-Krishi won international recognition. It has been observed that technology is considered as a crucial engine of economic growth and as a tool for increasing productivity, speed and transparency in governance (Kurian, 2006).

A government is well evaluated by the results it produces. The results in the receivers perception immediately depends on the quality and quantity of services offered. This is very particular to the Kerala scenario where local governments are in charge of majority of citizen services. The Panchayats are given due powers for the planning, coordination, implementation and evaluation of these welfare programmes (Gangadharan, 2010). But the problem is with delivery mechanisms and policy commitments. The traditional delivery channels seem to be ill equipped to meet the new demands. This was further complicated by the social transformation initiated by neo liberalism and globalization.

The vast potential of ICT in local governance is already recognised by the state and central governments. The government of Kerala made it mandatory that all the Panchayats in the state should have at least five computers installed (Govt. of Kerala, 2011). Later, the government issued sanction to purchase a maximum number of nine computers for the use of local bodies (Govt. of Kerala, 2010). In the state of Kerala the government developed a number of softwares and products to promote e-governance in local bodies. The department of local self government in the state initiated a web portal, [www.lsg.Kerala.gov.in](http://www.lsg.Kerala.gov.in). The site provides complete information about the department and decentralization initiatives in the state. Details of all local self government institutions in the state are incorporated in more than one lakh web pages. Alongside with the government initiatives some Panchayats created their own blogs. These blogs provide an interactive space for citizen.

The advent of e-Governance in the arena of local government is promising for covering the service delivery crisis in local governance structures. It ensures smooth, transparent and speedy transactions at lower costs (Edmiston, 2003). Once the documents are digitalized and information entered, the system goes on a sail. Issue of certificates and documents becomes a matter of seconds against the traditional 'apply and wait' pattern. e-Governance ensures transparency and accountability in transactions and thereby reduces corruption. The information is posted in the public domain and irregularities can be checked by vigilant public. The digital transactions are well archived and digital footprints erase any chances of future manipulations.

### **3. e-Governance and IKM**

The Information Kerala Mission (IKM) is a key player in the e-Governance initiatives in Local Self Government in Kerala. IKM was established in June 1999 with the objective of implementing e-Governance in 1209 local government institutions in the state. This is the largest local body computerisation project in India. (Krishnan, 2013). The functions of IKM includes providing connectivity between local government institutions and state and district planning offices, development of application softwares for deployment in various local government institutions, provide hardware and software training to employees, maintain and update database for e-Governance system in local government and arrangement of technical assistance to the concerned institutions in the field of e-Governance. The major objective of IKM is a phased transformation of the existing systems to electronic systems. This transformation trajectory is characterized with human centric innovations and modalities. Process reformation and modernization is the top most agenda of the organization and this is supposed to bring in faster and objective decision-making, more citizen-friendly interfaces and better accountability in local governance. With these objectives IKM developed 17 softwares for e-Governance applications in local government. Out of these 17 softwares 12 are ready to be rolled out.

**Table 1. Deployment of Softwares in Local Government  
(As on September 2013)**

#	Software application	Deployed	Functional	Coverage
1	Sulekha-Plan Monitoring System	1209	1209	100
2	Sevana-Civil Registration System	1043	1043	100
3	Sevana-Social Welfare Pension	1043	1043	100
4	Sevana-Common Marriage	1043	1036	99
5	Saankhya- Entry Accounting	1209	1209	100
6	Sthapana-Establishment	1056	1037	98
7	Soochika-File Tracking System	1001	981	93
8	Sachithra-Asset Management	1209	1209	100
9	Sachithra-Map Suite	821	821	79
10	Sugama-Cost Estimation Tool	1208	187	15
11	Sanchaya-Revenue and Licence	75	75	7
12	Sanchaya-e Payment	18	18	2
13	Common Marriage-e filing	1027	1027	98
14	Sanchitha-Act and Rule	1209	1209	100
15	Samveditha-LSGD Portal	1209	1209	100
16	Sanketham-Building permits	61	1	2

Source: <http://www.infokerala.org/status/softwares-pris-and-ulbs-status-sept-2013>, Accessed on 21-01-2014).

#### **4. Serving with Technology-The Sevana Solution**

The E-Governance initiatives in the local government in Kerala is revolutionalising the concept of service delivery. It can be rightly remarked that service at fingertip has already become a reality. This has been made possible with the help of citizen friendly software solutions developed and deployed by IKM in the local government institutions.

Sevana is a major software solution developed by IKM. The Sevana civil registration is utilized to register deaths and births in Panchayats and municipalities. Sevana kiosks were installed in 455 hospitals in the state. Through these kiosks, deaths and births are registered instantly. Citizen can download birth/death certificates within 24 hours of registration at the kiosk<sup>2</sup>. These certificates are approved as official documents by the chief registrar of births and deaths, Kerala. Marriage registration can also be done through sevana civil registration software. In 2009-10 Sevana won Bronze medal of National Awards for e-Governance under the category "Outstanding performance in Citizen-Centric Service

Delivery”. The sevana pension software provides information about social security pensions disbursed through local bodies. It contains the list of beneficiaries and the pension allotment details. As such it provides more transparency and convenience in the disbursal of pensions. Digitisation has been completed for distributing pension to 14.5 lakh people. The processes of providing death and birth certificates online have almost been completed in the local bodies. E-payment of property tax is available in 20 local bodies. Projects worth 10,000 crores were processed through web based application in 2013-14. All these figures signals a more positive trends for E-Governance in local government in Kerala.

## **5. Sulekha - Swift Planning**

Sulekha software was developed to monitor the annual plans of local government institutions in the State<sup>3</sup>. Annual plans are prepared, evaluated and approved in a time bound manner through this software. Sulekha is installed in all local government institutions in the state. In the year 2009-10 Sulekha won the Gold Medal in National Awards for e-Governance by Government of India under the Category “Excellence in Government Process Re-Engineering”.

In the year 2012 Sulekha registered a phenomenal growth. During this period 1,45,290 projects worth 3,175 crores were processed through Sulekha. (Narikkatteri,2012). Previously plan processing was a hilarious task to the officials and representatives. There was considerable time lag in the approval process. Transparency was minimum and chances of corruption was maximum. But with Sulekha transparency and accountability was established. Citizens got freedom to verify the proposals and subject the same to public scrutiny. Thus planning became participatory in flesh and spirit.

## **6. Other Softwares**

‘SAANKHYA’ is another major software successfully implemented in local government. It is an accrual based double entry accounting software to smoothen the office transactions. It has provisions for entering of daily transactions, generation of monthly statements, and preparation of annual financial statements ( Rajan J B & Biju S K, 2013). With this financial planning and reporting is made easy and smooth. It also provides for better financial monitoring of the local government institutions



The Sanchaya software is used to enumerate and deliver licenses. Sakarma Software aims to prepare agenda of Panchayat meetings, documentation of minutes, etc. The decisions of the committee should be published in Panchayath websites and should be made available to public through touch screens installed in offices. Sanketham software is developed for issuing building construction permit. Soochika software is developed for file management and tracking in panchayat administration. Now majority of GPs mainly using it for front office management. It is expected that the same will be connected with the main office shortly, and then tracking of the status of application becomes easy. Applicants can avail computer generated receipts from soochika..

Other major IKM softwares include Samoohya-Citizen database software, Subhadra- financial management system, Sthapana-Payroll, PF accounting, Sugama-Cost estimation tool for public works , Saphalua- Human resource package, Sachithra-Map suite (GIS) and asset register for local governments.

The success of any e-Governance project depends on training and updation of skills. For this purpose KILA imparts periodic training to the local self government employees. For effective citizen delivery e-payment provisions are incorporated in a handful of local bodies. Now the citizen can directly pay taxes at the comfort of their home or through Akshaya centres. With the effective intervention of IKM, almost universal connectivity was attained in the local self government institutions in Kerala. With regard to the software deployment it was found that out of the 15 softwares deployed in local self government Institutions six softwares achieved 100% operational status and four softwares crossed the 90% functionality rate. These are Sulekha, Saankhya, Sevana civil registration, Sevana social welfare, Sachithra asset management, Sanchita acts and rules and Samveditha LSGD portal. It is to be acknowledged that most of these softwares focus on citizen service delivery. If the current tempo can be retained, e-Governance in local Government can become a reality very soon.

## **7. Concerns of Good Governance**

e- Governance is an effective tool for ensuring good governance in local governance. The local government institutions in the state are well equipped with ICT infrastructure to smoothen the digital transitions. However there is still a wide gap between the concept and actualization of E-Governance. Training shortage is a major

barrier in the usage of ICT in local government. The problem of security is another major concern for the successful operation of E-Governance. The acceptance of E-Governance systems is highly obstructed by the absence of trust in e-Governance systems. It is found that none of the local government sites in Kerala contains a security declaration.

The government is providing a number of ICT solutions for smoothening local governance. Computers were installed, softwares developed and connectivity assured. But the offline reality is far away from the online promises. With regard to e-Governance, the acceptance level of the general public is still beyond satisfactory levels.

It was found that even though independent web space is provided for each local body, the updating processes is very slow and still a forgotten policy for majority of the players. The websites follow a general pattern with no provision for innovation and aesthetics. Even though computerisation of local bodies is completed, touch screens in front office and effective online services still remain a wish list for majority of local bodies. The use of unofficial online channels for public interaction is also rare. However it is proved that ICT possess large potentials to ensure smooth governance and service delivery.

## **8. Local Governments for ISO Certification**

Complete transformation to electronic mode of service delivery is not the end of governance innovations in local government. The Government of Kerala proposes a plan for ISO 9001: 2008 certification to every local body in the state<sup>5</sup>. Thus the LSGIs become institutions of quality of service delivery to citizen and the steps through ICT for paperless local government offices will soon be upgraded to international standards of organization and management. It is argued that the ISO certification will bring more professionalism in service delivery and administration. Further it provides for more transparency and commitment in the system. Continuous evaluation and upgradation will keep the administration modern and effective.

## **9. Support from the Government**

The local bodies in the state should approach E-Governance with a more serious concern. It is suggested that a standing committee on ICT/e-Governance can be constituted for implementation of e-Governance in local bodies. Local government should also focus IT

development in their budgets and policy documents. The State's Akshaya project can become a prospective partner in the implementation of specialised training for e-Governance in local government.

The Kerala Government issued free mobile connectivity to all Panchayat presidents in Kerala. It is suggested that this move should be followed by free or subsidised laptops and internet connectivity to all elected representatives of local bodies. The E-district project implemented in Kerala provides efficient and economic channels of service delivery for the citizens. However at present only revenue services are available through this project. Government is looking for motivation the Local governments to move in this direction. If the e-district project can also accommodate local government services, it will enhance delivery capacity of local governments and may result in higher levels of citizen satisfaction. Once the data and services are shifted to online mode, local bodies can devote much of their time for developmental activities.

## **10. Conclusion**

The state of Kerala is far ahead of its counterparts in implementing e-Governance programmes in local government. All the news and figures signals a more positive trends for E-Governance in local government in Kerala. At the same time there are some issues and concerns that should be seriously attended by the stake holders including the government. The computerisation process in the local bodies is understood in terms of computerisation of office work. The representatives should also be connected. In connection with the online political participation, it is recommended that the present local body websites should be completely revamped and content management power should be vested with local bodies. In the website of local bodies, there should be effective feedback provisions to elicit public response and comments.. Service delivery in local government institutions is facing many problems. Absence of informed planning and strong policies also results in high delivery costs and public sufferings. These issues can be well addressed with effective deployment of ICT in governance. In order to create awareness of e-Governance in the grass roots, ICT tools should be introduced in Gram Sabhas. SMS and e-Mail can be used for informing the public about Gram Sabha meetings. It is hoped that this will pave way for good governance. □

### Notes

1. Coleman & Blumer (2009) suggests that the internet promote democratic debates by providing an active audience, inexpensive public access and greater symmetry of communicative power.
2. All the Corporations, Municipalities, District Panchayats and Block panchayats in the state of Kerala attained connectivity. Among the 978 Grama panchayats 977 Panchayats attained connectivity. Source, <http://www.infokerala.org/status/connectivity-local-bodies-status-report-april-2013>, Accessed on 26-05-2013.
3. Online registration facility is available in five corporations, 42 municipalities, 65 Gram Panchayats and in Kannur cantonment.
4. The government of Kerala made it mandatory for all local government institutions to prepare their annual plan through Sulekha software vide G.O. (M.S) No.7/2004/Planning, Dated 03-02-2004.
5. The process of ISO 9001: 2008 certification is already started in the State. Kumbala Panchayath in Kasargod district got ISO certification in 2010.

### References

- Coleman, S., & Blumer, J. G. 2009: *The Internet and Democratic Citizenship: Theory, Practice and Policy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Edmiston, K. D. 2003: State And Local E-Government : Prospects and Challenges. *The American Review of Public Administration*, 30 (1), pp.20-45.
- Govt. of Kerala, 2010: Circular No.16993/IB1/2010/LSG, Dated, 09-03-2010, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram.
- Govt. of Kerala, 2011: G.O (Ord) No.1972/2011/LSG, Dated, 22-08-2011, Government of Kerala, Thiruvananthapuram
- Gangadharan, T. 2010: *Panchayath Bharana Sahayi*. Thrissur: Kerala Institute of Local Administration.
- Garretta, R. K., & Jensen, M. J. 2011: E-Democracy Writ Small. *Information, Communication & Society*, 14 (2), pp.177-197.
- Gasco, M. 2003: New Technologies and Institutional Change in Public Administration. *Social Science Computer Review*, 21 (1), pp.6-14.
- Krishnan, C. 2013: E-Governance in Local Governance: The Case of Kerala. *Information Technology in Developing Countries*, 23 (2), pp.13-19.
- Kurian, P. H. 2006: Responsible and Responsive E-Governance. *Kerala Calling*, 26 (3), pp.10-13.
- Marche, S., & McNiven, J. D., 2003: E-Government and E-Governance: The Future Isn't What It Used To Be. *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences*, 20 (1), pp.74-86.
- Narikkatteri Soopy, 2012: *Assothranam Viralthumbiloode, Panchayathi Raj*, 52(9),9
- Odendaal, N. 2003: Information and Communication Technology and Local Governance: Understanding the Difference Between Cities in Developed and Emerging Economies. *Computers, Environment and Urban Systems*, 27 (1), pp.585-607.
- Rajan.J.B & Biju.S.K, 2013: Towards Scientific and e-Accounting in Panchayats of Kerala, *KILA Journal of Local Governance*, 1 (2), pp.9-18

## **Drive Towards TQM in Grama Panchayats, Kerala**

*There is a general drive for quality in service delivery mechanism of Local Self Government Institutions (LSGIs) in Kerala. The Cheruvannur-Nallalam Grama Panchayat in Kerala has implemented TQM during 2007. With the learnings from initiative on TQM by the Panchayat, Kerala Government has launched Front Office Management (FoM) in the GPs during 2009. A recent study by KILA reveals the issues FoM. In order to resolve the issues and to ensure quality in service delivery mechanism, Kerala is in the process of introducing TQM in the GPs of the State. With the backdrop of Cheruvannur-Nallalam experiments and the study findings on FoM, this paper looks into the TQM initiative in the State.*

**Dr.J.B.Rajan\***  
**Biju.S.K\*\***

---

\* Assistant Professor, KILA Mulamkunnathukavu PO, Thrissur-81. email: jbrajan07@gmail.com

\*\* Assistant Professor, Govt. College, Kanjiramkulam PO, Thiruvananthapuram-695 581. email: bijubodheswar@gmail.com

## **1. Quality Focus in Local Governance**

There is a general drive for ensuring quality in service delivery mechanism. The 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan (FYP) approach paper of Central Government for Local Self Government Institutions (LSGIs) states that the ability to organize and get things done on time and without waste of resources is central to effective implementation. The approach paper suggests the Japanese experience with Total Quality Management (TQM) is particularly relevant in Local Governance context. A fundamental requirement for achieving quality is that the responsibilities for management must be effectively devolved to local bodies responsible for implementing public programmes and they must be suitably empowered, and also learn how to manage and produce results (Govt. of India, 2011). By corroborating this, the Kerala State Planning Board also in their Approach Paper for 12<sup>th</sup> FYP provides suggestions for good governance (Govt. of Kerala, 2012). The Report of Working Group for Modernisation of Governance and Project Implementation in Kerala states that priority should be given to good governance for improving service delivery (Govt. of Kerala, 2011). Guideline on planning for LSGIs in Kerala during 12<sup>th</sup> FYP states that in order to assure and evaluate the effectiveness of project implementation, the DPC may appoint quality monitors in district level (Govt. of Kerala, 2013a). This indicates the focus on quality aspects in local governance. By recognising the need for quality in service delivery mechanism, Governor of Kerala has assured in the budget speech a provision for Grama Panchayats to avail ISO 9001: 2008 certification through quality management (Govt. of Kerala, 2013b). Also the State Government has issued a guideline to implement TQM and availing ISO 9001: 2008 for Grama Panchayats (Govt. of Kerala, 2013c). The initiative of TQM in Local Government dates back to 2007, a humble beginning by a Grama Panchayat in Kerala. The learning of which was resulted in introducing Front Office Management (FoM) in 2009. By realising the gaps in FoM, now there is a drive towards TQM for improving the service delivery mechanism of LSGIs. This paper, taking stock of initiatives, provides a vivid account of drive towards TQM in GPs of Kerala.

## **2. The Trend Setter**

Cheruvannur-Nallalam Grama Panchayat in Kozhikode district of Kerala keeps its unique position in Local Governments for implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) in 2007. The impetus for the same was from the Certificate Course conducted by KILA for the Elected Representatives (KILA, 2005; Rajan.J.B,

2005). Mr. K.P.A.Hashim, one of the participants of the course, being the Welfare Standing Committee Chairman of Cheruvannoor-Nallalam Grama Panchayat was highly inspired by the concepts of TQM and initiated the same. As a result of series of discussions at various levels including the Standing Committees, Steering Committee, Panchayat Committee and that of the Employees, the Panchayat implemented TQM in 2007. The activities and initiatives in connection with improving quality of service delivery on a continuous basis are as follows:

### **2.1. Service Counter**

A Service Counter named *Jana Sevana Kendram* was opened in front of the Grama Panchayat to ensure the smooth delivery of various services. The Officer at the counter receives the applications from the citizens and issues acknowledgement receipts showing the proposed date of delivery of the service. *Saksharatha Preraks* were deputed as the front officer-in-charges for the purpose. Proper registering of all applications was done by receiving them after scrutiny. The counter worked as a single window for receiving application, delivery of services and providing information. The applications collected from the public were handed over to the main office at the earliest. The services/ certificates were collected from the officials and delivered to the public at the promised time.

### **2.2. Infrastructure Facility**

Essential seating arrangement and tables were ensured in front of the *Jana Sevana Kendram* for the public to prepare necessary applications and requests comfortably. Other requirements like paper, pen, application forms prescribed for various services, gums, pins, clips, tags, drinking water, reading corner for the public and children, neat and tidy toilets separately for men and women, first aid kit, complaint box and an application box for depositing the applications and requests during out of office hours were arranged.

### **2.3. Office Arrangement**

The seating arrangement within the office was rearranged in such a manner ensuring interface between the staff. Cell phone numbers and address of elected representatives, government offices, transferred institutions, *Kudumbashree* office bearers and other persons of importance were made available in the *Jana Sevana Kendras*, in addition to the Citizen's Charter (*Pauravakasa Rekha*). Necessary mechanism was ensured for the speedy movement of applications received in the counter on proper



registration in the Personal Register and Distribution Register as per the Manual of Office Procedure (MOP). Effective arrangements for the easy tracking of files as and when required were ensured. The system of keeping a 'File Movement Register' was maintained.

#### **2.4. Office Renovation**

The Panchayat office building was renovated with new and attractive painting, necessary repairing and polishing of office furniture, cleaning the office premises and improved the efficiency of computer section so as to make it a real Management Information System (MIS). Name Boards of officials with designation and sections were exhibited in front of their seats. Record room was re-arranged systematically in such a manner to get any document or record at the fingertips, within no time and entrusted the employees to maintain this system without fault.

#### **2.5. Renewal and Exhibition of Citizen's Charter**

The Citizen's Charter (*Pauravakasa Rekha*) was renewed incorporating the suggestions of the citizen. The renewed Citizen's Charter was publicly displayed. And copies of Citizen's Charter was distributed among the offices of political parties and related organizations, transferred institutions, Trade Union Offices, households, Grama Sabha, village office, etc.

#### **2.6. Display of Functional Map**

A functional map of personnel, showing their designations and responsibilities, was exhibited in front of the Panchayat Office on a Cine Board; which ensured the sense of ownership of staff in the process and made them more responsible. Notice Board and Meeting Boards pertains to Gramasabhas, Panchayat Committee, Steering Committee, Standing Committees and Staff Meetings were also displayed in front of the Panchayat Office. Other information related to the Ombudsman, Appellate Tribunal, *Jagradha Samithi*, formalities of registration of births and deaths, Officials under Right to Information Act, notice and address of vigilance and Anti-corruption bureau were also displayed at the Panchayat office premises. These display boards helps the citizen to have a better understanding and access with the Panchayat. The GP took initiative for continuous monitoring and evaluation for the updation and sustainability aspects.

#### **2.7. Quality Circle (QC)**



The GP formed Quality Circle (QC), a group of Officials doing similar tasks in the Office to discuss and solve work related problems. The Quality Circle is an informal mechanism to build team work and to create friendly atmosphere in the GP. The QC solved many office related as well as personal problems of officials, arranged continuous training for capacity building, and created responsible and law abiding officials. Those problems which cannot be solved among themselves or need more support are reported to the Panchayat Committee through Financial Standing Committee.

### **2.8. Grievance Redressal**

Citizen's complaints related to administrative, developmental and welfare activities were effectively addressed by the Panchayat Committee in a time bound manner and maintained proper records for the same. The grievances arising from Officials and Elected Representatives were addressed by the Joint Committee formed for the purpose. While the complaints between the Officials and citizens were rectified through the Quality Circle. Thus the timely intervention, continuous efforts of monitoring and caring of the Panchayat Committee ensured the smooth mingling as well as functioning of the Elected Representatives and Officials in the Panchayat.

### **2.9. Continuous Training and Recognition**

Continuous Training sessions on the first Friday afternoon of every month was organized for the Officials and Elected Representatives so as to enhance their functional efficiency and empower them to implement novel ideas and thoughts. Best performing employees were highly appreciated and rewarded by the Panchayat Committee.

## **3. Front Office Management (FoM): Derailed Vision**

Tacking clues from the initiative of TQM at the Cheruvannur-Nallalom Grama Panchayat, KILA has piloted few components of TQM in the name of Front Office Management in the Grama Panchayats of Wayanad district. On successful launching of FoM in Wynad, KILA requested the State Government to issue necessary Order for implementing FoM State-wide. Accordingly, the Government Order was to this effect in 2009 (Government of Kerala, 2009), which envisages to arrange adequate infrastructure facilities in all Grama Panchayats in the State. KILA has organized rigorous trainings programs to ensure the effective implementation of FoM. The FoM introduced in GPs in Kerala received much appreciation, but the initial enthusiasm did not sustained for long.

KILA has conducted a study on FoM that reveals that it has failed to fulfil the envisaged objective and depicts only the cosmetic beauty (Rajan.J.B & Biju.S.K, 2013). The average score computed based on 46 indicators relating to the facilities of FoM is 61%; reflecting the gap in facility to the tune of 39%. The findings that GPs are not aware of the need for renewal of CC and those done are for the sake of renewal only. The slogan 'Front office is friends' office' is not seen materialised, while visiting Front Office (FO). The initial vibrancy and enthusiasm on FoM have lost. The functioning of it has become mechanistic. The envisaged regular and systematic job rotation within the office, for avoiding monotony and creating motivation, is not happening so that the officials are not well versed with all the functional areas of the Panchayat. This has been badly affecting the functioning of FoM such that the Officials in FO most often rush to main office for clarification. The official of highest rank in the clerical level is supposed to be in the FO. However the junior officials are placed in FO; reflecting apathy towards the system.

The sole aim of the system was to receive the applications without any errors so as to provide timely service. Whereas FO has simply reduced to become a collection office of applications. The public relation is the heart of FoM, but the arrangements of FO reduce the face to face communication between the staff and public; thus leads to break or misunderstanding in communication. Also FO is seen as a device to avoid public to enter into the main office. At the same time, those who have acquaintance with the officials or elected representatives may get services through main office; thus the slogan of equity to all through FO becomes futile. Delay is another issue. It is generally understood that the Officials delay the work according to the maximum time available; justifying the Parkinson's Law 'Work expands with the expansion of time'<sup>1</sup>.

As against the guideline on FoM which suggests providing acknowledgement slip as a proof of applications received, no acknowledgement slip is issued by the GPs. This is the main cause of loss of application and record management inefficiency. The parable 'Army without armoury' is apt as far as FO is concerned. The lack of simple things like relevant orders, citizens charter, checklist, address book, etc. creates unnecessary delay in service delivery and badly affecting efficient functioning.

Queuing system introduced as part of FoM is often broken with the unfair intervention of Elected Representatives (ERs); as against the 'first come first served' (FCFS)<sup>2</sup> principle. The ERs and Officials

have also not conceived FoM in its letter and spirit. The effective functioning of FO depends on its organic linkage with the main office. It seems that there is no organic linkage between front office and main office.

While e-governance is the crux of transparent and accountable local governance vis-a-vis FoM, GPs are poor on it. The fact that literate states like Kerala is poor in e-literacy, is quite evident from the functioning of e-governance system in GPs. The e-Governance drive for Local Governments through IKM softwares has yet to reach its desired results, with the exception of mandatory softwares like *Sulekha* and *Saankya*.

The record room facility is the crux of the record management, but 30% of the GPs have no record room. There are no personnel specifically entrusted for record management. Also no separate - record room is available in the GPs.

There is a general tendency of finding fault with elected representatives by officials and vice versa, and also senior officials to juniors, HC to Accountant, etc. It is interesting to note that all are blaming each other. TQM process avoids blame game and binds all stakeholders together with shared vision and commitment which have been missed in FoM. There is no team work among the officials for effective performance on FO. Also effective coordination between the elected representatives and officials is generally absent. The hierarchical relation is more pronouncing, weakening the team work and synergy. There is no delegation of activities between staff, perhaps 'I'm OK, you are not OK complex'<sup>3</sup> deter delegation. This affects smooth functioning of office management too. The saying 'efficient will be taxed, inefficient will be punished' has to be re-set in the context of Panchayat administration that 'efficient are taxed, but inefficient are escaped'. The later is not only escaped from punishment but also from the work. There are some sections/personnel having more workload and there are sections/personnel having less work. The work assignment in most of the cases depends on their level of contribution and involvement.

Citizen related facilities have accorded low priority by the Panchayats, showing least concern for people. At the same time facilities arranged for officials are in a better position than that of the public. Display boards are installed for name sake, without understanding their utilities. Some are placed on the reverse side

of the office such that it is not visible. The boards are congested with notices, totally defeating the purpose too.

There are no regular meetings and even if meetings held they are ritualistic. Same is the case of Monitoring Committee that too is not constituted in many of the cases. The crux of TQM, i.e. the continuous training to enhance the capacity of all those concerned, is missed in FoM. There are no follow up trainings on FoM other than the initial trainings by KILA. The deliberations in the monthly meetings under the auspices of the Deputy Director of Panchayats, is not disseminated back to the other officials in the Panchayats. Hence the officials in FO are not capable of handling situation.

#### **4. Towards TQM and ISO 9001: 2008**

The search of KILA about why the TQM, a successful venture in Cheruvannur-Nallalam GP, was failed while transformed as FoM? Why the initial vibrancy of FoM has lost in due course of time? It was revealed by the study that the transmission of TQM into FoM has missed the core process and spirit. (*ibid.*, 2013). This missing has impacted on the FoM that would have spiralled to a robust management system, but has miserably declined into mechanistic. The formation of Quality Circles (QCs) and continuous training and recognition for performance improvement are hubs of TQM that ensure not only continuity and change management but also sustained involvement of all stakeholders. The shared responsibility through QCs ensured and maintained the vibrancy of the system. Also shouldering the responsibility of continuous training by the GP itself is envisaged in TQM. In short, the essence of TQM that brings all stakeholders together towards holistic approach of quality management is missed while translating its components into FoM. This necessitates a revisit into the learnings of TQM in Cheruvannur-Nallalam GP and replicate in the GPs of Kerala without losing its letter and spirit.

TQM has two elements namely 'Hard' and 'Soft' (Christos.B.F & Evanjalose.L.P, 2008). The 'Hard' part of TQM deals with the infrastructure facility, benchmarking of services, preparation of checklists etc. The 'Soft' part envisages initiatives for continual improvement, continuous evaluation and monitoring, involvement of all employees, continuous training, support from all sections, unity, integrity and teamwork ensuring quality circle of employees etc. The soft factors of TQM are not being considered with due importance in the implementation of FoM. The Cheruvannur-Nallalam GP has implemented TQM undertaking continuous and

energetic efforts with the help of QC, empowerment of employees and Elected Representatives through continuous training, energizing the Panchayat for continuous monitoring and evaluation etc. Infrastructure arrangements are just a single factor of TQM.

The Order issued by the Kerala Government details the steps to be followed for TQM and availing ISO 9001: 2008. (Govt. of Kerala, 2013c). It includes, *inter-alia*, infrastructure facilities, record management system, e-Governance, etc. KILA has designed training on TQM-ISO and the programme is in progress. This will be a leap towards better service delivery mechanism in the Panchayats and citizen satisfaction.

### Notes

1. Parkinsons Law – “work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion”. (Parkinson, 1960).
2. Similar principle adopted in corporate sector for inventory management is FIFO, stands for First In First Out.
3. According to Eric Berne, there are four life positions that a person can hold and holding a particular psychological position has profound implications for how an individual operationalise his or her life. Position 1 I’m OK and you are not OK. In this position I feel good myself but I see others as damaged or less than and its usually not healthy. The other positions are I’m OK and You are OK, I’m not OK and You are OK and I’m not OK and you are not OK. (Berne, Eric, 1964).

### References

- Berne, Eric, 1964: Games People play- The Basic Hand Book of Transactional analysis, Ballantine Books, New York.
- Christos.B.F & Evanjalose.L.P, 2008: Impact of Soft and hard TQM Elements on Quality Management Result, International Quality Reliability Management, Vol.26, No 2, Emerald Group Publications.
- Government of India, 2011: Faster, Sustainable and More Inclusive Growth- An Approach to 12<sup>th</sup> FYP, Planning Commission Government of India, New Delhi P-126
- Govt. of Kerala, 2011: Twelfth five year Plan (2012-2017)- Report of the Working Group of Modernisation of Governance and Project Implementation, State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram.
- Govt. of Kerala, 2012: Approach Paper of Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-2017), State Planning Board, Thiruvananthapuram..
- Govt. of Kerala, 2013a: Twelfth Five Year Plan (2012-17): Project Plan Guideline for Local Self Government Institutions, G.O. (M.S) No. 168/12/LSGD, Trivandrum; dated 15/6/2012.
- Govt. of Kerala, 2013b: Budget Speech (2013-14), Government of Kerala; paragraph No. 130.
- Govt. of Kerala, 2013c: Guideline for Availing ISO 9001: 2008 Through Total Quality Management in Grama Panchayats, G.O. (MS). No. 373/2013/LSGD, Thiruvananthapuram dated 02-12-2013.
- KILA, 2005: *Pradesika Bharanam*, Hand Book of Certificate Course for Elected Representatives in Kerala, KILA, Thrissur, Vol. I.

- Parkinson, C. Northcote, 1960: *Parkinson's Law or the Pursuit of Progress*, John Murray, Albermark Street, London.
- Rajan.J.B, 2008: *If There is a Will, There is a Way: A Case of Cheruvannoor-Nallalam Panchayat*, *Vox Populi, A Sasanet Monthly*-Vol. 1, Issue 1, Centre for Good Governance, Hyderabad.
- Rajan.J.B & Biju.S.K, 2013: *Front Office Management of Grama Panchayats in Kerala: Issues and Challenges*, Working Paper No. 16, Kerala Institute of Local Administration, Thrissur.

## **PURA: Juxtaposition of Essence and Success**

*Provision for Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) is a scheme initiated by Government of India (GoI) intended to provide quality infrastructure and amenities in rural India through public-private partnerships (PPP). PURA scheme and its expected deliverables are extremely essential. For this purpose, horizontal planning process instead of vertical channels of the schemes is necessary. Present PURA structure has addressed the essence. However as it is standing on three pillars of innovative administration viz., convergence, PPP and Private sector development; all of which are just evolving; has resulted in slowing down the progress of the projects. At least for the pilot projects it may be necessary to accumulate funds in an institutional mechanism; thereby simplifying the funds flow.*

**Dipak Abhyankar**

---

\* PhD Scholar, TERI University, New Delhi, Ph: 022 -23856215, email: dipakabhyankar@yahoo.com

## **1. Introduction**

Provision for Urban Amenities in Rural Areas (PURA) is a scheme initiated by Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India (GoI) intended to provide quality infrastructure and amenities in rural India through public-private partnerships (PPP). Holistic and accelerated development of compact areas around a potential growth centre in a Panchayat (or group of Panchayats) through Public Private Partnership (PPP) by providing livelihood opportunities and urban amenities to improve the quality of life in rural areas, is the mission of PURA (Gangwar D., 2010).

Structure of PURA encompasses some of the conceptual initiatives adopted in last two decades by many Governments across the world, including Government of India. Convergence of Resources (CoR), Public Private Partnership (PPP) and Private Sector Development (PSD) are three prime pillars of the present structure of PURA.

## **2. Foundation of PURA**

Around 70 per cent of the Indian population is living in rural areas. People in rural areas should have same quality of life as is enjoyed by people living in sub-urban and urban areas. Furthermore, the cascading effects of poverty, unemployment, poor and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas on urban centers is leading to socio-economic tensions manifesting in economic deprivation and urban poverty (Ganiee.F.A., 2014). The disparities between rural and urban areas at the macro level get reflected in terms of GNP, incidence of poverty, and level and composition of consumption expenditure. There is a clear distinction between urban and rural areas in terms of the quantum and access to better facilities and services. Since the existence of regional disparities affect the process of economic development, efforts aimed at economic development and equitable distribution of gains to the hitherto neglected regions have been made since the beginning of planning in India. Yet, regional disparities persisted due to the hiatus between policy and practice (Rajasekhar.D and Sahu.G.B., 2004).

Rural development cannot be left to the economics of agricultural sector. According to Chatterjee S (2004); we cannot afford to leave the agriculture sector to the vicissitudes of an imperfect market. Apart from ensuring short-term measures such as remunerative support prices and cheap agricultural credit, the state should make substantial long term investments in minor



irrigation, water conservation, building rural roads and markets, electrifying villages, providing robust primary education and health facilities in the rural areas. The developmental challenge in rural India is not about making a choice between the imperatives of industrial development and the compelling need for agricultural growth; it is essentially about helping the rural sector realize its own potential for development by using the gains of modern science and technology and industrial development as such. It does not make good economic or political sense to reduce the whole issue to one of a choice between one sector or the other.

Since the schemes are formulated by the Ministry; the structure is general, is 'fit-to-all'. The rural development programme should identify the problems of the poor and address the local needs, instead of forcing them to accept preconceived plans. Also, in the absence of well planned development programmes and efficient delivery systems, most of these resources do not benefit the target groups. It has been reported that only 18% of the rural development budget reaches the target families, while the rest is wasted due to inefficient delivery systems or drained out (Hegde N, 1998).

In case of an old scheme of the Ministry viz., Jawahar Gram Samridhi Yojana (JGSY); Karuppaiyan E (2002) says that through this programme, the Government created various physical assets for the use of common people. The question which arises in the context is as to how these infrastructures are being maintained by the Panchayat Raj institutions / elected members / collective action. One is inclined to suggest that in order to manage and preserve the common property resources in the village, a collective action is required.

As stated in a report published by NIRD; in the past, attempts have been made by some departments, officials and institutions to overcome some of the above mentioned constraints. However, these efforts are isolated and sporadic and organized attempts are needed to institutionalize the same. Such initiatives have paved way for the emergence of 'convergence planning' concept and this planning process aims at achieving maximum and sustainable benefits (outcomes) to community and the poor from various development programmes.

Sub-Committee of National Advisory-cum-Review Committee on Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) states that in order to use resources efficiently and involve the local governments actively, vertical planning process needs to be transformed into a horizontal planning process, where local governments and other planning

entities work together and plan development together. Central Ministries and state government departments are implementing various rural development programmes through a set of guidelines and by separate set of administrative and institutional mechanisms. In order to facilitate the horizontal planning process at various local governments' level, the present guidelines of sectors departments needs to be modified to bring uniformity in planning, sanctioning, release of funds, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of the programmes.

Resource Convergence to optimize financial and human resources has been well recognized in policymaking. A conscious effort has been made to underline its importance in the Twelfth Five Year Plan which has established a time line to merge schemes with similar objectives. Equally, it has been recognized that there are some objectives that are unique by their very nature and cannot be addressed under the existing plethora of schemes. The term Resource Convergence has now become a common parlance in the development agenda. The serious efforts to merge the Centrally Sponsored Schemes will go a long way in easing out duplication and enabling better convergence. Each of the schemes independently provides the scope for convergence. The state and district administrations have also been innovative in creating systems to facilitate convergence (Sharma A., 2013).

Public resources for external assistance are scarce, and so, the private sector is increasingly looked at as an important additional source of funding for development and partner in development cooperation. Private sector should be effectively engaged as a development partner to create jobs, income opportunities for the poor, and to leverage additional funding for sustainable and inclusive growth. Engaging the private sector as a development partner is not a completely new concept for bilateral donors and multilateral organizations. In 2000, the United Nations called for a new role for the private sector to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and in 2003, the then Secretary-General Kofi Annan initiated a Commission on the Private Sector and Development (UN Millennium Project, 2005).

According to the report of planning commission (2004), the Government of India has been extending the requisite grants-in-aid for its Centrally Sponsored Schemes, which are routed through the State Governments. The public private-partnership (PPP) brings in greater professionalism to bear on this association through introducing meaningful concepts. One of the persuasive arguments

in favor of PPP is the promise of better quality of service through clear customer focus. It is also argued that introduction of PPP would reverse the years of chronic under-investment through mobilizing public and private capital. A good many schemes being implemented in the PPP mode in the social sector are in the nature of public funded with private service delivery and private management. It is now necessary to attract private funding as well. PPP is, however, a business model with certain characteristics. It ought to be introduced in the different sectors with adequate understanding.

The structure of PURA scheme as adopted in 2010 encompasses following proven and acceptable features discussed so far:

- (1) Substantial long term investments in minor irrigation, water conservation, building rural roads and markets, electrifying villages, education and health facilities in the rural areas.
- (2) The rural development programme should identify the problems of the poor and address the local needs, instead of forcing them to accept preconceived plans.
- (3) Issue of maintenance of village infrastructure needs to be addressed conclusively.
- (4) Vertical planning process needs to be transformed into a horizontal planning process, where local governments and other planning entities work together and plan development together. This may be achieved by convergence planning.
- (5) The public private-partnership (PPP) brings in greater professionalism and would introduce meaningful concepts. Hence the scheme may be implemented in the PPP mode in the nature of public funded with private service delivery and private management. It may be augmented with private funding as well. PPP based scheme would be structured as a business model with certain characteristics.

### **3. PURA Project: Structure and Features**

A typical PURA project as conceived in 2010; is divided in 3 baskets of project-components. Components for which the scheme funds (grant-in-aid) are likely to flow from the Ministry of Rural Development (MORD) or from Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation (MDWS); is the first basket. The components are: Water Supply; Sewerage and Solid Waste; Drainage; Village Streets, skills development and development of economic activities. All of these components are mandatory. Second basket is of minimum two

components which are likely to receive scheme funds from any other Ministries. The choice is open. Commonly chosen components are: solar village street lighting, non-conventional power generation, refer vans, peak houses, etc. Third and the last basket consists of at least one component, which would not receive any grant and will be operated purely on commercial basis.

The mission of the PURA scheme is holistic and accelerated development of compact areas around a potential growth centre in a Gram Panchayat (or cluster of contiguous Gram Panchayats) through Public Private Partnership (“PPP”) framework for providing urban amenities and livelihood opportunities to improve the quality of life in rural areas. The project is formulated by a private developer; in consultation with the stakeholders viz., Grama Panchayats, other Panchayati raj institutions, State government officials / elected representatives and the Ministry of Rural Development. No revenue is collected from the beneficiaries of the schemes. MORD supports Operation and Maintenance of the assets and adequate returns to the developer through disbursement of PURA grant.

Private sector developers are selected through an Expression of Interest (EOI) followed by Request for Proposal (RFP). Bidding is technical, non-financial. The selected private sector developer is concessioned for three years to construct and for 10 years to operate and maintain (total 13 years); for the PURA project.

#### **4. Cases of PURA Projects**

Phase of PURA projects initiated by the Ministry in 2010 finally narrowed down to nine pilot projects. First project to commence construction may be from Krishna District in Andhra Pradesh. Construction may start by June 2014.

Two projects in Kerala viz., Thalikulam and Thirurangadi have not been able to get state government clearances for some of the components even after signing the concession agreement with the developer. The reasons are multipronged. In case of water supply scheme, the state agency is not in a position to relinquish its privilege of construction to the private sector developer.

Out of two projects in Andhra Pradesh, in one case the concession agreement has been signed. It is waiting for appointment of independent engineer and disbursement of first installment of PURA grant. The other project is yet to get state clearance for some components. Similarly for two projects in Rajasthan, state clearances are awaited for some of the components. Uttarakhand

has approved the components that can be, but the subsequent progress is unseen. In Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, the private sector developer has backed out, either officially or virtually.

This disappointing status is despite the fact that many of the giant corporate have expressed interest in investing in rural development and had seen PURA as a key to such investment.

## **5. Observations and Analysis**

PURA project structure is unique and first in many respects. This is the only scheme that endeavors to converge more than two or three schemes from more than three Ministries for each project. It is a commercially viable PPP; however neither there is a revenue nor is there any annuity payment. Substantial portion of capital outlay of each component is supported by grant-in-aid of the respective schemes. It is a Private Sector Development (PSD) initiative as well.

Concessionary is the Grama Panchayat and the private sector developer is the concessionaire. However, the concessionary is not involved in bidding and selection process. It is consultatively involved in project formulation.

As can be observed in cases of the projects being currently pursued by the Ministry, that most of the delay is in the process of approval. It is noteworthy that PURA is by convergence of more than three to four schemes per project. Convergence of MGNREGS with some other schemes of other ministries is convergence of two schemes per project or activity. In case of PURA; even if approval of any one component is withheld because of budgetary or administrative reasons, the project would not progress. As NIRD report on convergence says; it is difficult to ensure inter-departmental coordination and resource pooling and facilitate convergence at the district level, as the line departments are under different line of command and control. The report further says that; in the absence of institutional platform for convergence, departmental functionaries are raising questions on how to monitor that the planned convergence takes place as the resources may be under the control of some of the agencies outside the fold of the main programme seeking convergence.

Also, in case of convergence with MGNREGS, the anchoring Ministry i.e. MORD contributes substantial part of funds under the scheme. However, in case of PURA, the Ministry's share of funds in a project is below 20% to 30%. The number has reduced also on account of split of MORD and MDWS. Further, Joint Convergence

Guideline issued by MGNREGA and Ministry of Water Recourses stipulates that no contractor will be engaged for the work undertaken with convergence of schemes. In contrast, PURA is a PPP structure scheme. It is a combination of PPP and convergence.

PPP on commercial terms with grant disbursement from many schemes is also a complex idea to handle administratively. Furthermore, since each of the schemes has its own supervisory guidelines, departments are finding it difficult to accept 'independent engineer' as an acceptable entity that is not part of official machinery.

A committee of NIRD has raised a question about the stage at which convergence is to take place. The Committee is strongly of the opinion that the exercise of convergence begins with the process of grassroots planning and at the grassroots. However, in case of PURA, at the bidding stage only, there are three levels of approvals. The Ministry is anchoring the process of selection of bidder and cluster, detailed project plan is prepared in consultation with Grama Panchayats and approval is sought from state departments. Onus of consultation and approval from multiple departments and also their respective Ministries is on the private sector developer. Anchoring Ministry can only assist in dialogue with the other Ministries. Unlike other PPP projects where bidding authority fully owns all the approvals and funds, ownership of PURA is scattered over multiple Ministries. Private developer finds it difficult to get approvals from multiple places, especially when the administrative line of order may be missing some links. Despite vital essence the scheme is juxtaposed with marginal success so far.

## **6. Conclusion**

PURA scheme and its expected deliverables are extremely essential. For this purpose, horizontal planning process instead of vertical channels of the schemes is necessary. Present PURA structure has addressed the essence. However as it is standing on three pillars of innovative administration viz., convergence, PPP and Private sector development; all of which are just evolving; has resulted in slowing down the progress of the projects.

At least for the pilot projects it may be necessary to accumulate funds in an institutional mechanism; thereby simplifying the funds flow. As suggested by NIRD, technical level convergence may be sought at grassroots level i.e. at Grama Panchayat level. This may expedite the projects' approval and implementation. □

**References**

- Chatterjee S, 2004: The Developmental Challenge in Rural India, Excerpted from Lok Sabha Speaker Somnath Chatterjee's address, on "Rural India: Developmental Challenges," at the 26th annual convocation of the Institute of Rural Management, Anand, Gujarat, on April 3, 2004. The Hindu, Chennai
- Gangwar D, 2010: Presentation of Ministry Website, Ministry of Rural Development, New Delhi
- Ganiee F A, 2014: A Case Study of Rural Development Programmes In India; International Journal of English Language, Literature and Humanities, Vol 1, Issue 5.
- Hegde N, 1998: Strategy for Rural Development, BAIF Development Research Foundation, Pune
- Karuppaiyan E, 2002: Rural Development Programmes And Externalities: A study of seven villages in Tamil Nadu; Vol. II: Review of Programmes; The Planning Commission, Government of India, New Delhi.
- Planning Commission of India, 2004: Report of the PPP sub-group on Social Sector, Public Private Partnership, Planning Commission of India, New Delhi.
- Rajasekhar D and Sahu G B, 2004: The growing rural urban disparity: some issues; Institute For Social And Economic Change; Working Paper 156
- Sharma A, 2013: Mainstreaming of Resource convergence in policy making, program design and execution; UNDP, India.
- UN Millennium Project. 2005. Investing in Development: A Practical Plan to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals. New York.

## **KILA JOURNAL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

### ***Articles Invited***

Articles of theoretical and empirical nature on local governance and related areas are invited from policy makers, academicians, research scholars, professionals, extension workers, etc. for the bi-annual publication "KILA Journal of Local Governance". Contributors are requested to submit the soft copy of their article together with abstract and CV by e-mail to the Editor at: **kilajournal@gmail.com**

The abstract (containing 120 words on an average) should be attached separately.

The detailed CV of the author (s) should also be attached separately.

The articles submitted for publication will be subject to scrutiny by the experts. The editor reserves the freedom to revise the text.

The articles should:

- be in MS word format, typed in 1.5 space on A4 size paper, times new roman.
- be of around 2500 words.
- Avoid tables, pictures, graphs, etc. Tables can be given only if it is unavoidable.
- number all footnotes serially at the end of the paper.
- provide references to author and year in the text in parenthesis.  
eg. (Santhosh.K.P., 2006)
- have a complete and accurate bibliography, placed at the end of the text in the following order.

Author, year: title of the paper, publisher and place.

Eg. Argyris.G. 1997: Personality and Organisation, Haper and Row, New York.

**All Correspondence, by email, to: [kilajournal@gmail.com](mailto:kilajournal@gmail.com)**



## **Inter-se Distribution Criteria and the Union Finance Commissions: A View from Kerala**

*The Union Finance Commission (UFC) and State Finance Commissions (SFCs) are the constitutional authorities entitled to transfer resources to the third tier. Despite the progress, not only that the share of the state remained low in the UFC dispensations but the share of the state even declined from 4.54 percent of Twelfth UFC (UFC- XII) to 3.11 percent in the awards of Thirteenth UFC (UFC- XIII). Kerala suffered heavily on the inter-se distribution criteria. The paper examines the inter se distribution criteria of the UFCs of India towards LGs, to delineate the criteria that worked against the interests of Kerala.*

**Dr. Shaheena.P\***

---

\* Associate Professor, Department of Development Economics, College of Co-operation, Banking and Management, Kerala Agricultural University, Vellanikkara, Thrissur.  
email : shaheenap@gmail.com

## 1. Introduction

It is universal rule that domain of the lower tiers of government has much restricted scope than that of their upper counterparts. The very 'principles of good taxation' leaves the more elastic resources with the upper tiers of the government leaving the less buoyant revenues to the lower ones. Thus local taxes are less dynamic and do not change with economic activity and prices; and are not anti-cyclical to prices and income. As a consequence local governments are usually dependent on central and state government's financial support to balance their budgets. Here in lies the inevitability of financial devolution from national and sub-national governments to local bodies if the latter are to effectively discharge their functions. The Union Finance Commission (UFC) and State Finance Commissions (SFCs) are the constitutional authorities entitled to transfer resources to the third tier. The UFCs determines the principle of devolution of the state government and therefore the capacity of the state government to devolve to the local governments (LGs). Further, the terms of reference of –Eleventh UFC (UFC-XI) onwards required them “to recommend the measures needed to augment the consolidated fund of the state to supplement the resources of the panchayats and municipalities in the states on the basis of the recommendations made by the State Finance Commissions”.

It is widely accepted that Kerala is far ahead of her counterparts in devolving funds, functions and functionaries and establishing every institutional pre-requisites of decentralized planning and thus bolstering local democracy while most states are still grappling with even the first generation issues. Despite the progress, not only that the share of the state remained low in the UFC dispensations but the share of the state even declined from 4.54 percent of Twelfth UFC (UFC- XII) to 3.11 percent in the awards of Thirteenth UFC (UFC-XIII). Kerala suffered heavily on the *inter-se* distribution criteria. The paper examines the *inter se* distribution criteria of the UFCs of India towards LGs, to delineate the criteria that worked against the interests of Kerala.

## 2. UFCs and Local Governments of Kerala

Awards of UFCs and share of Kerala in the devolution to LGs are presented in Table 1. The UFCs are the constitutional instruments for devolution from the Central to State governments. Even though it was not a part of the mandate, it is to be appreciated that the UFC-X took up the issue of the devolution of the LGst in view of the CAs. The UFC X recommended a grant of Rs. 100 per capita to the rural population as per the 1971 Census for the rural LGs (Rs. 5380 crore in total) and Rs. 1000 crore was the award for Urban LGs. The quanta of devolution by successive UFCs have increased. The share of the third tier which worked out to be only around 1.56 per cent of the total transfer to the states in the case of UFC-X has risen to 27 percent in the case of UFC-XIII. Given the national commitment to the local self-government and to counter the deceleration in the momentum of the decentralisation process in the recent years, the transfers remain low. The transfers have to be enhanced so as to augment the share of LGs total expenditure to GDP ratio to at least 5 percent. The approach of the SFCs has been equally conservative, so much so that the needs for “supplementing Consolidated Fund of the state governments” were very limited, a review of which is outside the scope of the present paper.

**Table 1: Share of Kerala Local Governments in the Awards of Various UFCs**

UFC	Total Devolution			Kerala's Share		
	Rural	Urban	Total	Rural	Urban	Total
X	4380.93	1000.00	5380.93	178.81 (4.29)	25.43 (2.54)	213.24 (3.96)
XI	8000.00	2000.00	10000.00	329.69 (4.12)	75.25 (3.76)	404.94 (4.04)
XII	20000.00	5000.00	25000.00	985.00 (4.93)	149.00 (2.90)	1134 (4.54)
XIII	63050.50	23111.00	87518.60	1950.2 (3.09)	725.9 (3.14)	2676.1 (3.11)

Source: GoI , Reports of XI, XII, XIII UFCs

Note: Figures in paranthese represents percent to total allocation under each category

The inter-se distribution criteria adopted by the UFCs are presented in Table 2. The way weights were assigned turned against the interests of states like Kerala which is in the forefront of decentralized planning and in the provision of basic services. We make a review of the inter-se distribution criteria adopted by UFCs.. The UFC-X used population as the sole criteria for horizontal

distribution. Population still continues to be the most important determinant of a states share in the total devolution. Apart from the population and area, the other criteria that found a place in the distribution are tax effort, Indices of decentralization or devolution etc. Incidentally the components of Index of Decentralisation and Devolution used by various commissions were insufficient to reflect the sincere attempts made by the state in decentralized planning. Further the criteria that slashed the share of Kerala is the way population criteria had been treated.

The Eleventh Finance Commission (XI-UFC) used composite index derived from five point criteria, with a 20 per cent weight to what they called 'Index of decentralization' as inter-se devolution criteria. The components of Index of Decentralisation', (see Appendix I) prima facie did not reveal the scope and intensity of democratic decentralisation in various states. The criteria were too tangential to make a systematic comparison across states. For eg. enactment of state panchayat legislation in conformity with 73<sup>rd</sup> CAA, Assignment of taxation powers as per State Panchayat Act, levy of taxes by to village panchayats, constitution of SFCs and DPCs etc. Kerala was ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in the country below even Bihar, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan and UP. Though Twelfth Finance Commission (XII-UFC) abandoned the 'Index', the index of deprivation used by the Commission had worked against the state, which made concerted efforts in the enhancing the basic amenities to her people. The UFC-XII abandoned the Index of Decentralization to adopt an Index of Deprivation which took into consideration deprivation in terms of sanitation, drinking water facilities etc., Kerala turned a loser with relatively universal provision of basic amenities.

Horizontal distribution under the UFC-XIII was made on a four and five points criteria for urban and rural LGs respectively as given in Table 2. The following are the major criticisms against XIII UFC criteria.

First, the highest weight is accorded to population (to the tune of 50 plus 10 percent for SC/ST population, thus totaling to 60 percent) by UFC-XII. Apart from the fact that the XIII-UFC has assigned disproportionate weight to population criteria, it used 2001 population in the devolution criteria.

Kerala implemented successfully the National population policy of the centre to reduce the total fertility rate to 1.7 which is the lowest in the country. During the decade ending 1970, the state recorded a population growth of 26.3 per 1000 which was above the

national average of 24.8. The state through well designed family planning intervention programmes reduced growth rate to 4.86 in 2011. Consequently, the share of Kerala's population which stood at 3.9 percent of the all India population during the 1970s declined to 2.78 percent in 2011. Had State and Panchayats not implemented National Population Policy successfully through the local level institutional infrastructure (like Primary and Community Health Centres), Kerala would have had a share of 4.8 percent in 2011 and could have had a larger share in the fund allotted to LGs by the UFCs.

Use of 2001 Census population in the inter-se distribution criteria amount to penalizing the state for the successful implementation of a national policy. It is to be noted that the ToR of XI-UFC, XII-UFC, XIII-UFC, XIV, stipulates that "in making its recommendations on various matters, the Commission shall take the base of population figures as of 1971, in all such cases where population is a factor for determination of devolution of taxes and duties and grants-in-aid". All the UFCs had conveniently ignored the above specification in their ToRs in favour of 1991 and 2001 census in the dispensation of grants-in-aid for LGs. This adversely affected a State like Kerala with commendable achievements in demographic front.

Secondly, XIII-UFC used an index of devolution, the components of which were insufficient to estimate the quantum of devolution in the state. The Commission determined the funds flow to the third tier by adding the funds flow through various budget heads (192, 193, 198 for rural and 191, 192, 193 for urban, assistance through 3604). The share of Kerala based on the Index of Devolution was as low as 5.10 where as the share of Karnataka, Maharashtra and UP were 20.93, 16.26 and 14.03 respectively. Estimation of the index of devolution by adding the funds flow through various budget heads are incomparable as salaries of the staff at the third tier occupies the major chunk of the transfers in most other states, where as in Kerala the salaries of the transferred staff still continue to be paid by the state government. Even a rough estimate of the salary flow to the third tier would amount to more than Rs. 12000 Crores per annum. Further it may be remembered that emoluments of the personnel working in the panchayats are paid out of their own revenue. The own revenue and general purpose funds together is unable to cover up the establishment expenditure that more than 300 GPs have been stamped as negative GPs.

**Table 2 Criteria for Inter-se distribution adopted by various UFCs**

Criteria	XI	XII	XIII	
			Rural	Urban
Population	40 (1991)	40 (2001)	50 (2001)	50 (2001)
Area	10	10	10	10
Distance from highest per capita Income	20	20	10	20
Index of Decentralisation	20			
Revenue Effort	10	20	15	15
Index of Devolution				
Index of Deprivation		10		
SC/ST Population			10	
Finance Commission Local Grant Utilisation			5	5
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Reports of various UFCs

XIII-UFC made a departure from the erstwhile practice of providing grants-in aid, by recommending “ a predictable and buoyant source of revenue”, by making it a share of the divisible pool. The XIII-UFC grants to LGs had two components- basic and performance based grant components. While the basic grant was available to all states on the basis of a criteria based upon population, index of devolution and other indicators. The performance grant was accessible to only those ages that satisfied to certain stipulations. The criteria used by the XIII-UFC is not sufficient enough to reflect the performance in democratic decentralization (Oommen, M A, 2013). The criteria for allocation of performance grant should be expanded.

### **3. Conclusion**

The way the criteria for index were determined, Kerala stood to lose despite its remarkable achievement in decentralization, we strongly argue that, in the construction of the index of decentralization the untied plan funds grants given to the LG a should be the single most important criteria. This is the most clearly identifiable item of devolution to local self-governments as in other items such as non-plan grants for staff, non-plan schemes and state or center sponsored programmes there can be considerably window dressing. The non-plan grants for the salary may be given to LGs for disbursement or may continue to be paid directly by the state government to the transferred employees as is the situation in Kerala. As for many of the sponsored schemes

or the so called district sector schemes the devolution is often notional.

Besides plan fund devolution, number of staff under the LGs may be used as a criterion for decentralization. Appointment of the State Finance Commission, and actions taken thereon and conduct of various rounds of elections may also be included in the index. An ideally constructed index can be given higher weight in the overall criteria.

The UFCs assigned heavy weight to population. It also seriously adopted 1991 and 2001 population census as its basis for calculation which is a serious error. The UFCs have to strictly adhere to its ToR to use 1971 population census in all of its calculations. Own revenue effort of the Panchayat measured by the per capita revenue so collected may also be used in the construction of the index. The division of grants into Basic and Performance may be continued but with inclusion of more variables that truly reflects the efforts of the states (Oommen 2013) □

### **References**

- Government of India, 2009: 'Report of the Thirteenth Finance Commission', Vol.1 Report December
- Government of Kerala, 2011: 'Report of the Fourth State Finance Commission', Vol.I, January
- Oommen M.A,2013: 'The Third Tier and the Fourteenth Finance Commission', Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XLVIII, No 45 & 46, November 16

### **Appendix I : Components of the criteria of Index of Decentralization by the UFC-XI**

- a. Enactment of state panchayat legislation in conformity with the 73<sup>rd</sup> CAA
- b. Intervention/ Restriction in the functioning of Panchayats
- c. Assignment of functions to the panchayats in the state Panchayat legislation vis-à-vis the Eleventh Finance Commission
- d. Transfers of functions to the Panchayats by way of rules/ notification / orders
- e. Levy of taxes by the village panchayat
- f. Constitution of the State Finance Commission and submission of action taken report
- g. Action taken on the major recommendation of the SFC
- h. Elections to the Panchayats
- i. Constitution of the District Planning Committee

## List of Latest Publications of KILA

Malayalam    English

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| ➤ <i>12th Five Year Plan - Scheduled Caste Sub Plan : Handbook for the Working Group Members (January 2014)</i>                | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Nattuparanam (Local Administration) For Idamalakkudy Gramapanchayat (December 2013)</i>                                   | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>GramaSabha : Water and Sanitation (December 2013)</i>   | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Decentralisation and Development Experiences and Experiments (December 2013)</i>  |   | ✓ |
| ➤ <i>Local Development Models : Pulamanthole Gramapanchayat (November 2013)</i>  | ✓ | ✓ |
| ➤ <i>Local Development Models : Adat Gramapanchayat (November 2013)</i>  | ✓ | ✓ |
| ➤ <i>Front Office Management of Grama Panchayats in Kerala : Issues and Challenges (September 2013)</i>                        |   | ✓ |
| ➤ <i>Total Quality Management - ISO 9001 : 2008 (August 2013)</i>  | ✓ | ✓ |
| ➤ <i>Finance Management: Helper (July, 2013)</i>   | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Property Tax Rules for the Grama Panchayats (June, 2013)</i>  | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Services and its Conditions of Grama Panchayats (June, 2013)</i>  | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Public Administration: Handbook for Clerks in Grama Panchayath (June, 2013)</i>   | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Becoming Effective Trainers (June, 2013)</i>  | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Students and Local Governance – Handbook for Higher Secondary School National Service Scheme Volunteers (March, 2013)</i> | ✓ | ✓ |
| ➤ <i>Democratic Decentralisation and Welfare (March, 2013)</i>   | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Democratic Decentralisation and Public Health (March, 2013)</i>   | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Performance Audit - Helper (March, 2013)</i>  | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>HIV /AIDS Guidelines for the Local Government Institutions (March,2013)</i>   | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Decentralisation and Public Health : Hand book for the Trainers (March,2013)</i>  | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Decentralisation and Social Welfare : Handbook for the Trainers (March, 2013)</i>   | ✓ |   |
| ➤ <i>Democratic Decentralisation and Development: Handbook for the Trainers (February,2013)</i>                                | ✓ |   |



	<b>Malayalam</b>	<b>English</b>
➤ <i>Democratic Decentralisation and Development</i> (February 2013)	✓	
➤ <i>To Know and Let to Know– Right to Information Act 2005</i> (November, 2012)	✓	
➤ <i>Local Self Governments and Centrally Sponsored Schemes</i> (September,2012)	✓	
➤ <i>Standing Committee Members of Urban Local Bodies: Handbook</i> (September,2012)	✓	
➤ <i>Anthology of Abstracts-International Conference on Democratic Decentralisation and Peoples Participation</i> (December,2012)		✓
➤ <i>Matsya Sabha: Exclusive Assembly of Fisher People</i> (August, 2012)	✓	✓
➤ <i>12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan-Tribal Sub Plan (2012-2017): Hand book for Oorumoopans (Tribal Chief) and Promotors.</i> (August, 2012)	✓	
➤ <i>Grama Panchayaths and Building Rules</i> (July, 2012)	✓	
➤ <i>Guideline for the Preparation of Development Report and Plan Documents: Handbook for Workin Group Members</i> (July, 2012)	✓	
➤ <i>Staff of Urban Local Bodies: Trainers Handbook</i> (June,2012)	✓	
➤ <i>GramaSabha for Special Categories</i> (April,2012)	✓	
➤ <i>Local Governance-Certificate Program for Elected Representatives</i> (March,2012)	✓	
➤ <i>Childrens Grama Sabha : Helper</i> (January,2012)	✓	
➤ <i>Power to the People</i> (December,2011)	✓	✓
➤ <i>Innovative Projects: Adat Model</i> (November, 2011)	✓	✓
➤ <i>Innovative Projects : Nadathara Model</i> (November, 2011)	✓	✓
➤ <i>Local Governments and Comprehensive Child Development</i> (July,2011)	✓	✓

**STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP AND  
OTHER PARTICULARS ABOUT  
KILA JOURNAL OF LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

*Form IV (See Rule 8)*

1. Place of Publication : Kerala Institute of Local  
Administration (KILA)  
Mulamkunnathukavu P.O.  
Thrissur - Kerala - 680 581
2. Period of Publication : Bi-annual
3. Printiers Name & : Dr. P.P.Balan  
Address : Director  
Kerala Institute of Local  
Administration  
Mulamkunnathukavu P.O.  
Thrissur - Kerala - 680 581
4. Publisher's Name : Dr. P.P.Balan  
and Address : Director  
Kerala Institute of Local  
Administration  
Mulamkunnathukavu P.O.  
Thrissur - Kerala - 680 581
5. Editor's Name : Dr. J.B.Rajan  
and Address : Assistant Professor  
Kerala Institute of Local  
Administration  
Mulamkunnathukavu P.O.  
Thrissur - Kerala - 680 581
6. Ownership : Kerala Institute of Local  
Administration (KILA)
7. Printing Press : Co-operative Press  
Mulamkunnathukavu P.O.  
Thrissur, Kerala - 680 581

I, Dr. P.P. Balan, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

S/d  
Dr.P.P. Balan  
(Publisher's Signature)