

Research study on  
**Participatory Decentralised Planning and Inclusive  
Development of Marginalised**  
Sections – An Analysis of selected better Performing Gram Panchayats

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**2016**

**Title: Participatory Decentralised Planning and Inclusive Development of Marginalised Sections – An Analysis of selected better Performing GPs**

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Published by: National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj

Publisher's address: National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj (Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India) Rajendranagar, Hyderabad- 500030, India

Printer's details: National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj

Edition:1

Copyright: National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj

Date: December, 2021

ISBN: 978-93-91412-07-4

## CONTENTS

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter - 1 Introduction</b> .....	<b>10</b>
1.1 Background of the Concept of Participatory Planning and Inclusive Development	
<b>1.2 Excluded/Marginalised Groups in India</b>	
1.3 Democratic Decentralisation in India	
1.4 PRIs and Participatory Decentralised Planning	
1.5 Panchayats and SDGs	
1.6 Concept of Inclusive Growth	
1.6.1 Elements of Inclusion	
<b>1.6.2 Origin of Inclusive Planning</b>	
<b>1.6.3 Inclusive planning and its importance</b>	
<b>1.6.4 Approaches for Inclusive Planning</b>	
1.7 Concept of People Participation	
1.7.1 What is People Participation	
1.7.2 Importance of People Participation	
1.7.3 Objectives of People Participation in planning	
1.7.4 Key Elements in Participatory Process	
1.7.5 Conclusion	
<b>CHAPTER - 2 METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY</b> .....	<b>20</b>
2.1 Background of the Study	
2.2 Statement of the Problem	
2.3 Literature Review	
2.4. Methodology	
2.5 Objectives of the study	
2.6 Data Collection Methods	
2.7 Format of Report	
<b>CHAPTER - 3 GPs PROFILE AND PERFORMANCE OF THE RD PROGRAMMES</b> .....	<b>26</b>
3.1 West Bengal GP 1. Durgapur Gram Panchayat	
3.2 West Bengal GP -2 Jhamtia Gram Panchayat	
3.3. Madhya Pradesh GP -1 Jamra Gram Panchayat - Guna District	
3.4 Madhya Pradesh GP - 2. Rampur - Sagar District	
3.5 Karnataka GP – 1 Bevoor Gram Panchayat – Koppal District	
3.6 Karnataka GP – 2 Bannur Gram Panchayat Dakhsin Kannada District	
3.7 Tamilnadu GP – 1 Nallur Gram Panchayat – Thirunelveli District	
3.8 Tamilnadu GP – 2 Bearhatty Gram Panchayat, Nilgiri District	

**CHAPTER - 4 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION-----47**

- 4.1 Personal Particulars of the Sample population
- 4.2 Family Particulars of the Sample Populations
- 4.3 Status of Household basic Amenities
- 4.4 Land Holding status of the Sample Households
- 4.5 Status of Special initiatives for the Development of Marginalized
- 4.6 People Participation in the GP Meetings
- 4.7 Process of Planning
- 4.8 Services Access, awareness level and Impact of Gp activities on peoples livelihoods
- 4.9 Factors influenced for Exclusion
- 4.10 Conclusion

**CHAPTER - 5 FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS-----96**

- 5.1 Findings
- 5.2 Field Observations
- 5.3 SUGGESTIONS
- 5.4 Appropriate Tools for Inclusive planning
- 5.5 Enabling Management Practices in the selected Panchayats

### Background of the Study

- The deprived and disadvantaged section of the society constitutes a group of people who were denied the opportunities to fully explore and utilise their abilities and thus enjoy a quality life. In the Indian context, the disadvantaged sections constitute SCs, STs OBCs, and minorities of Muslim and Christian religions. Further specifically to state that, the groups of people like destitute women, differently abled, resource less and poorest of the poor are facing still worse social and economic problems in the society. The marginalised groups who occupy weak positions in social and economic hierarchy have also found themselves weak even within the local governments. While the representation of weaker sections is officially sought through affirmative action, in the actual practices that take place within the institutions, they are subjected to multiple types of discrimination and exclusion. The present study is being proposed to examine the development opportunities available for marginalised sections through GP and to verify the level of awareness among them on the schemes, and their rights. It also tries to study about the nature of participation of these groups in decision making process of local governance in planning and implementation towards strengthening the livelihoods of poorest of the poor and overall development of the panchayat.
- In India, local governance institutions, called 'Panchayats', in rural areas were given importance through 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional amendment (PRI Act) which came into force from 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1992 to give constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions at the district and below. These institutions are responsible for ensuring economic development and social justice to the rural populace. One-third of the seats in panchayats are reserved for marginalised groups i.e., women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes - to ensure their membership and participation in matters pertaining to local governance and development. Empowerment of Socially Disadvantaged Groups continues to be on the priority list of country's developmental agenda, as they still lagging behind by comparing to the rest of the society due to their social and economic backwardness. Their share in the country's total population is quite substantial, as SCs account for 17.5 per cent and Minorities representing 18.4 per cent.
- Many development programmes especially Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) such as Drinking Water Mission, Nirmal Bharath Abhiyan, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme and Bharat Nirman project assign precise role to panchayats for planning and implementing rural infrastructure aiming to fulfill the local needs. Even though, many schemes focusing all categories, majority has special provisions for disadvantaged sections with reservation of some package of services as mandatory for them. If all these schemes were properly implemented and ensured reaching of the needy would have reduced the major problems associated with poverty in the rural areas.
- The present study examined the development opportunities available for disadvantaged sections implemented through GP and to verify the level of awareness among disadvantaged sections on the schemes, and their rights. It also tries to study the nature of participation of these groups in decision making process of local governance for planning and implementation towards strengthening the livelihoods of poorest of the poor as well as overall development of the panchayat.

### Statement of the Problem

- The recent planned development strategies have given special focus to involve the marginalised people in the mainstream of development through various initiatives by the Central and State governments. The strategies are aiming to empower them by providing special provisions to participate in decision-making process of local

governance in planning and implementation of development schemes and to avail opportunities like wage employment, skill development for self-employment, access and use of basic amenities as well as individual needs, basic education and health care services to improve their socio and economic conditions. In order to involve the excluded sections, Central government made many vital steps through constitutional provisions for strengthening the Gram Panchayats as bottom most planning and delivery mechanism by devolution of powers and functions. But, reality many cases, Gram Panchayats are deprived of resources due to incapable leadership or influence of the local power structure or political hindrances, on the other hand due to lack of good leadership, the panchayat system excludes some sections of people for many well-known reasons. This study made attempt to understand and identify the status of functioning of some of the better performing Gram Panchayats and their role in development of marginalised sections by various rural development programmes.

## **Methodology**

- This study was conducted in four states namely Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. These four states were selected based on the effectiveness of decentralised governance and devolution of powers and functions by the State governments. The study made analysis of efforts of better performing GPs on alleviation of poverty of marginalised sections of people living in the jurisdiction of the selected Panchayats.
- For the purpose of comparison, in each State two better performing Panchayats were selected having population of multi-communities. The study covered eight GPs. The better performing GPs were selected by using few important criterions like utilisation of earmarked funds, revenue collection, creation of infrastructure like water supply, sanitation, education, connectivity, street lighting, generation of employment through employment guarantee scheme, received awards, etc,. Further, in each GP 10 per cent of the marginalised people's households were selected as sample respondents and data was collected. The sample units covered different category of marginalised sections from each GP including 10 per cent households from each category namely SC/ST, MBC, Minorities, Women headed poor households, physically challenged and others.

## **Study Indicators**

- The study was conducted by using indicators like level of awareness on the local self- governance and planning process, level of awareness on the development schemes and special provisions for disadvantaged sections, nature and extent of participation, quantum of opportunities available and percentage of people benefitted, percentage of people excluded and causes for exclusion, nature of benefits availed and level of development attained and factors contributed and problems faced.

## **Objectives of the study**

- To examine the Gram Panchayat initiatives for the development of marginalised sections.
- To understand the process of participatory planning and level of participation by disadvantaged people.
- To study the impact of major RD programmes implemented through Panchayat on the improvement of socio-economic status of the marginalised section.
- To identify the factors contributed for inclusion and exclusion of different sections of the people.

## **Data Collection Methods**

- Sui semi-structured interview schedule was prepared and administered covering all the aspects like awareness level, social, economic and political dimensions of participation, factors contributed and benefitted for availing and not availing the scheme benefits through various opportunities. Level of development attained and deprived also was studied. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), observation techniques were also used to collect adequate data from the selected respondents to understand the overall performance and responsibility of the GP and also identified the

functional difficulties. Targets and achievements of various RD programmes implemented by the GPs during last five years and percentage of benefits reached to the disadvantaged people were verified. FDGs were conducted among beneficiaries in each GP for identification of problems faced in availing of scheme benefits and to identify the factors contributed for exclusion from the government development efforts. The FDGs helped to bring the nature of process of grassroots planning of their respective GP and performance satisfaction.

#### • **Major Findings**

- The study covered marginalised sections benefitted under different rural development schemes with the sample of 947 respondents, 52.3 per cent were males and remaining 47.7 per cent were females.
- It is worthwhile to note that the majority i.e., 36.2 per cent respondents were in the age group of 31-40, followed by 32.3 per cent in the age group of 50-60 and 20.1 per cent were in the age group of 41-50.
- As proportionate to the national religious composition, this study also has high majority of 72.0 per cent belonging to the Hindu religion, another 11.8 per cent belong to Christianity and the remaining 11.8 per cent belong to the Islam.
- Around 40 per cent were women belonging to different social groups, 28.5 per cent are SC&STs, 27.5 per cent represents minority comprising both Christianity and Islam and the study also covered 4.1 per cent physically challenged.
- Over all study responses show that, 37.5 per cent respondents were illiterates. Among the literates, 38.1 per cent have attended school only up to primary level. Around 18.8 per cent respondents studied up to secondary schooling.
- It is clear that 50 per cent were agriculture labourers, followed by 15.7 per cent were engaged in farming during rainy season otherwise basically belong to agricultural labourers' category, 12.5 per cent livestock rearing as the main source of income.
- Having ration card is an important subsistence tool for the poor, providing proof of identity and a connection with government databases. Around 95 per cent of the households have the ration cards in the study regions.
- In the study region, around 87 per cent families are having BPL cards, 6.5 per cent have ration cards under the category of Antyodaya Anna Yojana and only around 1.5 per cent families having Annapurna cards.
- Majority of the families i.e., 62.4 per cent in the study region have family size of 5-6 members, followed by 23.8 per cent respondent families have family size of 1 or 2 members, 15.3 per cent have the family size between 3-4 members.
- Majority of the respondents i.e., 65.2 per cent received annual income between Rs. 20,001 – 30,000. Around 17 per cent had annual income less than Rs. 20,000, followed by another 15 per cent of respondents who received between Rs.30,001-40,000. Income poverty is only one of the multiple deprivations that the SC and ST have continuously suffered.
- Majority of the beneficiaries i.e., 63.3 per cent's family expenditure is in the range of Rs. 20,001 to 30,000. Especially, there are, families having expenditure below Rs. 20,000 are (18.0 per cent). Around 13.2 per cent, families have annual expenditure between Rs. 30,001 to 40,000.
- Among study respondents, 92.3 per cent had own house. Only around 4.8 per cent live in rented house. Even though majority own a house, most of them are in damaged condition which reveal their poor socio-economic status.
- It was observed that 41.4 per cent built their house on their own, only 18.6 per cent houses were constructed with the help of government financial assistance and 38.2 per cent received money under different types of housing schemes but they also contributed own money for completion.

- All the panchayats selected for the study have received Nirmal Puraskar Award by fulfilling the condition of construction of sanitary latrines for all the households within the panchayats.
- It is observed, 91.8 per cent of households have toilets. This study shows an encouraging trend that, 94.7 per cent households reported they are using toilets regularly and are accustomed to the behaviour of toilet use because of the scheme called Swachh Bharat.
- The type of material used for cooking, reflects around 50 per cent of the households under the study used firewood as predominant source fuel for cooking, another 19 per cent use the LPG as fuel source. Around 21 per cent of households use agricultural waste, firewood materials available in their own farm or neighbor's farms.
- Supply of drinking water is one of the most important functions of the Gram Panchayat. Around 44 per cent of people bring drinking water from common water taps established by the Gram Panchayat, around 24 per cent use hand pumps as source of water. Around 30 per cent used combined facility.
- In 97.5 per cent of the habitation's drainage facility is available.
- There were 40.0 per cent who respondents were landless. Higher landlessness was reported from the study panchayats of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. In the States like, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal ST population is high comparatively and landholding is hereditary but productivity and utility of the soil is very low.
- Majority i.e., 77.3 per cent land holdings are below one acre across all the States. Majority of the lands are unfertile in nature and cultivation is possible for only one crop under the rain fed condition. Around 40 per cent households received lands under government land free distribution.
- Only around 50 per cent families are holding some kind of consumption supporting assets but majority people do not have any economically valuable assets. Among the assets available in the households, TV was possessed by 83.4 per cent, majority respondents that is 72.1 per cent are having domestic animals like cow, sheep and chicken birds by.
- Although the general performance of Panchayats in promoting inclusive development has not been impressive, there are some cases where they have taken initiatives to ensure better service delivery or promote development in a systematic manner.
- Regarding the initiatives taken for socio-economic development and other aspects of the life of the poor by the Panchayats, majority people (65.2 per cent) were benefitted under health programmes, 56.2 per cent respondents were benefitted through the activities related to the improvement in the agriculture supporting infrastructures, 54.8 per cent are availing the educational initiatives undertaken by the panchayats.
- Similarly, 46.4 households among marginalised sections receive employment with the facilitation of the GPs, further around 40 per cent respondents reported that, they have got benefits under socio-economic initiatives.
- More than 90 per cent households reported in all the study States, the Gram Sabha meetings had quorum. The panchayats made efforts to mobilise one-third representation of women, and their mandatory quorum in Gram Sabha meetings.
- The status of awareness on the conduct of Gram Sabha and effective methods of communication about the conduct of the meetings, only 15.4 per cent have awareness about the communication of the GS meetings. Only around 20 per cent people participate in the meetings and planning process of the Panchayat.
- Due to the prevalence of patriarchal dominance of the decisions, women remain at the periphery. In reality in most of the villages, women and lower caste men would not come to this meeting unless they are prompted to come. Even if they come, they sit in one corner and would not raise their voice unless supported to do so.
- Lack of personal interest among the people for participation in the meetings yields less attendance, it was reported by 78.6 per cent. Similarly lack of awareness on the functioning of GP (84.6 per cent) for the people hinders the people's participation.

- Negligence of GPs as reported by 77.9 per cent respondents, the panchayats put less effort to communicate the purpose of the meetings. Therefore, people are not aware about the dates and purposes of the meetings which lead less percentage of attendance.
- The status of marginalised people's representation in the GP committees shows poor, only 5 per cent were selected as members of various committees. Even though large number of respondents (45.6 per cent) became members of SHG their political representation was only 14 per cent.
- Social *mobilisation* is the cornerstone of participatory approaches in rural development and poverty alleviation programmes. Majority reveals that information regarding meeting was sent to the ward members through written notice and communication through mobile phone and display of information in the panchayat notice board are the prominent methods used.
- In majority of the cases, meetings take place in front of the panchayat offices and in common places.
- Regarding nature of participation in Gram Sabha meetings, around 21 per cent participate with full involvement by discussing in detail about the various activities of the GP, especially implementation of State and Central Government welfare and development schemes.
- Around 50 per cent of women respondents and equal percentage of SC&STs including poorest of the poor, in general not only for the GS meetings, public appearance and participation is very meager among this section of the people.
- Reasons for non-participation are social stigma among women specifically Muslim women, low social status under caste hierarchy prevents them to participate in the public events. If forcefully mobilised, they sit in a corner and not participate in discussion.
- Even successful Gram Panchayats also fail to get real participation of certain section of the people excluded historically. Partial participation was reported by 50.5 per cent overall highest in West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh.
- Around 25 per cent sample population participate in planning, and around 10 per cent participate in all the activities of the Panchayat. Around 36 per cent, respondents participate in planning and monitoring government sponsored projects. Further around 18 per cent, participated in execution of government and panchayat self-works pertaining to the development in their jurisdiction.
- The people participate in the planning process through a number of forums like community forums (54.0 per cent) SHGs (21.6 per cent), political party (11.6 per cent) and members of panchayat committees (6.3 per cent), NGO motivated members or facilitators also show importance in participation of the panchayat activities (22.9 per cent). In addition, individual on their own also participate occasionally, from this study panchayat 52.2 per cent respondents reported, they participated on their own interest without any external intervention.
- Around 7 per cent, are holding membership in anyone of the committees earmarked for different purposes of the GP.
- Only 22.4 per cent, reported as the panchayats follow new planning process majority from Karnataka. But in reality, all the study panchayats still follow the traditional planning approach, the planning is done on ad hoc basis and is primarily supply driven. The plan is basically extracted from the Gram Sabha resolution which consists of the wish list of the Panchayats.
- On the involvement of the local institutions in the planning process, around 55 per cent said the planning is done at the Gram Sabha and around 40 per cent people responded their panchayats involved local formal and informal institutions in capacity building and planning process.
- As per the Constitution, Panchayats in their respective areas would prepare plans for economic development and social justice and also execute them. Opinions of the sample beneficiaries regarding the accessibility, adequacy of

different infrastructure facilities such as drinking water, sanitation, street light, education, health quality of roads, and transport, etc., are furnished. The study reveals that certain social facilities like sanitation and quality of roads were found in adequate. As the extent their adequacy and accessibility vary from village to village, above 90 per cent of the beneficiaries have expressed their satisfaction over the adequacy and accessibility of facilities.

- The suppression of the elite community and rich people continue to dominate and exploit the both elected members from low caste and poor people. Transparency is an important element of good governance where lack of awareness hinders the process of pro-disclosure and demand of disclosure of documents and performances.
- More than 50 per cent of the sample respondents were not aware and not interested in knowing the importance of the Gram Panchayats and their role play.
- Majority of the respondents benefitted under common facility services like drinking water and sanitation, road connectivity, health, education, mid-day meal scheme, etc. Other individual benefit schemes are concerned only to less percentage of families, only benefitted due to mismatch of supply and demand.
- More than 50 per cent of the people could not realise any major changes in their life due to the panchayat interventions. Panchayats improved in the social, economic, health, educational and in the field of agriculture development as well as availing of employment opportunities.

### **Field Observations**

- All the GPs in the study regions improved the performance level due to the effective people's participation which enables to maintain transparency and accountability in delivering services like provision of drinking water, street light, electricity, connectivity, housing for houseless, education for all, anganwadi for the young children, public distribution system, access of market, maintenance of burial ground, provision of employment, selection of beneficiaries under various welfare schemes, etc.
- Many award-winning panchayats by default developed infrastructures and delivered better services till the period of getting awards. But later few panchayats sustained and created self-reliance, which further gained a number of incentives in the form of funds and people support. But few panchayats could not sustain or survive, hence poor delivery of quality services. Rich and better off people reap the benefits from the service providers but poor illiterate still live in the periphery of the poverty and under the clutches of the communal hierarchy.
- Exclusion is seen as the processes by which individuals and population groups face barriers in relation to their access to public goods, resulting in inequal social attainments, capabilities, development, justice and dignity outcomes.
- The evidences from this study, related to different of type of exclusions resulted in low income led poverty, lower community status, illiteracy, belonging to a particular political party or apolitical in nature. These factors continue to make vulnerable to all kinds of atrocities and vanish the feeling of emancipation against suppression.
- The major interventions in addition to the delivery and maintenance of the structures of the basic needs, the panchayats implement major employment scheme like MGNREGS, the contribution of this scheme has been made improvement in terms of increased income, women empowerment, mobility of women, holding bank accounts, credit worthiness, asset creation and ultimately improving the economic life of the marginalised sections in the study areas.
- Panchayats facilitation of another scheme called NRLM also equally contributed for social and economic life of the poor family through women self-help adventures. The PMAY has created permanent housing to a number of families which created social recognition to these sections of people. PMGSY increased the connectivity and people have easy access to the market and other health facilities.

- Swachh Bharat has brought appreciable changes on sanitation behaviour of the people. Other individual pension schemes provide life protection for the senior citizens. Maintaining rural infrastructure supports many dimensions of the life of poor people. Even then, exclusion of certain section of the people lead to problems in accessing the services, schemes and infrastructures created by the governing institutions. Ignorance and lack of awareness on the part of poor people also hinders the access of the services created for them.
- Another equally important change that witnessed in the rural scene after poverty alleviation or rural development programmes is that the poor people who never had any voice in the functioning of the village institutions are now are taking active part in these village institutions.

## **SUGGESTIONS**

- In the study area illiteracy is very high among the sample respondents even drop outs among children were high. The future emancipation endeavours rely on the appropriate education for the young children of the marginalised category.
- Therefore, conducive environment for educating the poor children is inevitable for the government. Inclusive education is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners.
- Inclusive growth needs to be distinguished from welfare programmes such as employment guarantee, public distribution of food grains to the poor at subsidised rates, etc.
- The study reflects that many people have not enrolled under MGNREGS, efforts must be initiated to cover all the families of the marginalised sections. It was observed that majority families have received minimum days of employment due to various technical issues from GP, it has to be looked seriously to provide prescribed days of employment to support income of the families.
- Action towards creating full employment or creating atmosphere for self-employment or adequately remunerated work is an effective method of addressing poverty and promoting social integration and social inclusion. Employment also acts as a source of identity and gives access to a social network.
- The provision of productive employment, especially rural non-farm employment, and access to productive assets, for instance, land, are critical, not only to lift the poor out of the poverty trap, but to also provide a stimulus to growth, as incomes can enlarge the purchasing power of the poor and enlarge the size of the domestic market.
- The lands allotted to the weaker sections are barren or not suitable for cultivation. Priority must be given by the panchayats to guide and facilitate the poor farmers to benefit under different schemes like IWMP, RKVY, Horticulture mission and SC&ST corporation to develop their lands which will increase the economic status.
- The major finding of the study revolves around lack of participation or less motivation to participate in the grassroots democracy and its development initiatives. It is a major hurdle for their betterment. To create and sustain inclusive societies, it is critical that all members of society are able and motivated to participate in civic, social, economic and political activities, both at the local and national levels.
- To be inclusive is a core value of democratic governance, in terms of equal participation, equal treatment and equal rights before the law. This implies that all people – including the poor, women, ethnic and religious minorities, indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged groups – have the right to participate meaningfully in governance processes and influence decisions that affect them.
- Lack of awareness and ignorance are other important lacunae that hinder the participation which are to be checked with the help of locally working NGOs by creating community-based organisations and civil societies. The existence of a strong civil society is fundamental for active participation and making public policies and institutions accountable. There must be freedom for people to express diverse views and develop unconventional unique ideas.

- As long as both the advantaged and disadvantaged have equal access to or benefit from these public facilities and services, they will all feel less burdened by their differences in socio-economic status, thus alleviating a possible sense of exclusion or frustration is essential at present. Communal harmony and eliminating inequalities in all forms will lead to happy and peaceful society.
- Equal access to public information plays an important role in creating an inclusive society. Information that pertains to the society, such as what a community owns, generates, or benefits from, should be made available to all. Awareness on RTI act has to be given priority.
- Collective participation, through accepted representations of all classes and backgrounds, in the planning, implementation and evaluation of community activities should be sought after.
- Social inclusion of the excluded groups can only happen if everyone becomes "part of the group" that defines the culture, values and standards of the society in which they live. Actions used towards this purpose include education, dialogue and public awareness campaigns.
- Effective local governance is key to promoting social inclusion and combating social exclusion, as it improves access to basic services, mobilises human and financial resources, and strengthens social and human capital. Likewise, broad-based participation, contributes to good local governance, to fostering transparency, accountability, legitimacy and to making quality decisions.
- The leaders of the marginalised sections particularly elected members of the PRIs have to be sensitised towards their roles and responsibilities in the democratic institutions towards safeguarding people's rights. Effective leadership is crucial to the development of an inclusive society.
- Strengthening greater access to various elements of inclusion i.e., access to clean and safe places for living, work and recreation, access to information and communication, access to public spaces, access to resources, access to basic services, including education, healthcare, clean water and sanitation, access to transportation, transparent and accountable decision-making processes, adequate income and employment opportunities, affirmation of human rights, opportunity for personal development, respect for diversity, freedom (of choice, religion, etc., Participation in decision making is vital).
- Economic assets are essential if the marginalised are to move beyond exclusion. In addition to alleviating institutional discrimination, providing physical assistance and removing barriers to communication, increasing representation of persons with physically challenged and reducing economic barriers through socio-economic empowerment programmes. Local social service organisations to be encouraged to partner with the GP work against physical discrimination and protect the rights of the differently challenged.
- Building partnerships and coalitions to promote inclusive governance through applying a human rights-based approach to development programming.

### **Conclusion**

Economic and social inequalities are interlinked. The power structure is concentrated in the hands of the dominant castes, and people with political or muscle power. They dominate the activities of the village as well as their own community. These people control the flow of resources and technology coming from outside, and appropriate all the benefits meant for the weaker sections. The phenomenon of the dominant caste and dominant personalities among all castes is a common feature to all villages in this region. The lower castes face constant discrimination in their day-to-day life. Among them the women are worst victims. Without any asset base and several social disabilities, they are unable to sustain any economic activity, and have to depend on others for means of livelihood. Consequently, they are exploited, and live at subsistence levels without any savings. Poverty is directly related to land holdings as

agriculture and its allied sectors are the main source of income. There are some small-scale industries which provide employment to a limited workforce.

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Concept of Participatory Planning and Inclusive Development

India has proved its identity as a super power in the global arena by achieving commendable status in the field of economic and technological development. The policies and strategies implemented from the planning era have made considerable progress in few fields and comfortable improvement in many sectors. It is essential to appreciate the efforts of various governments' brave initiatives in bringing liberalisation and globalisation policies and those made better results in socio-economic development of the major sections of the society. Improvement in global trades, flow of FDI, increased private partnership in public enterprising contributed to increasing the GDP and national income of the country. It also increased the consumerist culture which enabled the production and consumer-oriented industries further contributed to the urban employment. The increased expenditure in the infrastructural facilities nationwide has encouraged capitalists to increase their income multi-fold. Invasion of multinational companies (MNC) in the field of retail trade has shrunk the avocations of retail vendors and agro farms. The various reforms of the union government have achieved tremendous economic development in the country. It also created tangible impact on the livelihoods of the people. But, whether the fruits, the benefits of the policies, programmes and welfare measures were penetrated to the bottom of the society? Whether real needy of the country have received the benefits or their share of rights of the economic dividends delivered? Whether poor people's life standard have made improvement adequately? These are the important questions arising to any researcher of the Indian economics. Even though the government of India made precautions to protect the interests and rights of the all the citizens of the nation, due to the open opportunities, people use muscle and money power to the opportunities for their self-development. The majority of the poor are being neglected historically in terms of low social status, sex, clan, region and religious discrimination. Prevailing low literacy, ignorance, lack of assets, belonging to a minority group or religion have hurdled the poor people to access the process of economic opportunities and welfare measures available in the socio-economic and political institutions. These groups of socially and economically disadvantaged are continuously excluded from the majority of the development initiatives and not allowed to participate in the mainstream of the nation. The efforts and protective policies of the government have made lot of improvement only from the last two decades. Vibrating the Panchayat Raj Institutions by strengthening the democratic local governing institutions, making constitutional provisions enabled the excluded communities to participate in the process of political, administrative and developmental decision-making made positive impact in the society and recognition of the historically unrecognised. Implementing centrally sponsored schemes through Gram Panchayat, integration of people views in the regional development initiatives and making the bottom most people institutions as the prime body created options for the disadvantaged sections involvement at certain extent.

With the interest and intervention of the political willingness to address the different forms of inequality and exclusion from constitutional protection and provisions for political participation in the form of reservations were made. Inclusive strategies in education, allocation of certain jobs and other economic opportunities encouraged the excluded category of people to get their share and join in the mainstream of development. But it is miniscule when compared as majority of the poor people from Dalits, women, minorities, physically challenged are facing acute poverty and vulnerable to the all sorts of violence and manmade and natural calamities. (Inclusion Home Issue: Delivering Equality, Growth & Social Justice, July-September 2010)

#### 1.2 Excluded/Marginalised Groups in India

In the Indian context the marginalised are categorised as the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, denoted tribes, nomadic tribes and other backward classes.

i) **Women:** Under different economic conditions and under the influence of specific historical, cultural, legal and religious factors, marginalisation of women can be seen from their exclusion from certain jobs and occupations. Women belonging to lower classes, lower castes, illiterate, and the poorest region have been marginalised more than their better off counterparts.

ii) **People with Disabilities:** The stigmatisation of disability resulted in the social and economic marginalisation of generations with disabilities, and thus has left in a severe state of impoverishment.

iii) **Elderly:** Being past middle age and approaching old age; rather old. Ageing is an inevitable and inexorable process in life. Elderly women form the majority of marginalised groups among them.

iv) **Ethnic minority:** – A group that has different cultural traditions from the majority of the population. The term ethnic minority refers to marginalised people of the same race or nationality who share a distinctive culture. It may include any group that is subnormal with respect to a dominant group, in terms of social status, education, employment, wealth, and political power. They may be migrant, indigenous or landless nomadic communities, or religious minorities that have a different faith from the majority.

v) **Caste Groups:** The caste system is a strict hierarchical social system based on underlying notions of purity and pollution. Dalits or the Scheduled Castes constitute the bottom of the hierarchy. The marginalisation of Dalits influences all spheres of their life, violating basic human rights such as civil, political, social, economic and cultural rights. Literacy rates, purchasing power and poor housing conditions among Dalits are common phenomenon. Physical segregation of their settlements is common. However, in recent years due to affirmative action and legal protection, the intensity of caste-based marginalisation is reducing.

vi) **Tribes:** In India, the population of Scheduled Tribes is around 84.3 million and is considered to be socially and economically disadvantaged group. They are mainly landless with little control over resources such as land, forest and water. They constitute agricultural, casual and plantation labourers. This has resulted in poverty, low levels of education and poor access to health care services (**V.K. Maheshwari, Former Principal, K.L.D.A.V (P.G) College, Roorkee, India**).

The Eleventh Five Year Plan of India stressed more on the strategy of the 'Inclusive Growth'. It liberalised the industrial policy and implemented a number of economic reforms resulted in accelerated growth on sustained manner. Yet, notwithstanding the considerable space given to Panchayati Raj, it benefitted rich to become rich but real poor could not reap the benefits. Much worry fact given by the Arjun Sengupta Committee in August 2007 that, 836 million Indians – over 75 per cent of our people – as being 'poor and vulnerable', living with the meagre amount of Rs.20 Per capita per day. More than 300 million people in India still live in deep poverty at less than a dollar a day, while another 350 million live on less than two dollars a day. In this sense, the rich-poor divide has increased and poverty reduction figures for India are rising. India ranked 60<sup>th</sup> among the 79 developing countries in 2017 Inclusive Development Index (IDI) released in World Economic Forum's (WEF) 'Inclusive Growth and Development Report'. The index is based on 12 performance indicators and countries are ranked on IDI scores based on a scale of 1-7. It has three pillars Growth and Development, Inclusion and Intergenerational Equity, and Sustainability in order to provide a more complete measure of economic development than GDP growth alone. (<http://currentaffairs.gktoday.in/india-ranks-60th-inclusive-development-index-01201739812.html>)

### **1.3 Democratic Decentralisation in India**

The democratic decentralisation brings a lot of changes at the bottom level where village people have easy access to various services. Democratic Decentralisation refers to the devolution of powers, finances and functions to the local institutions from the Central and State subjects and allows these institutions to take participatory decision-making. It further encourages planning programmes and strategies by involving all the sections of the dwellers and implement the regional development aiming towards improving the life of the poorest of the poor. Reforms in the structure of the administration

by creating people's institutions are called 'Panchayati Raj System'. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Amendment of the Indian constitution paved ways for the process of democratic decentralisation. It allows certain important subjects dealing with basic necessity of the people transfer from the State government to the PRIs. It includes range services like creation and maintenance of basic infrastructures namely drinking water, roads, communication, street lights, drainage, water bodies, village markets, health and sanitation, education, irrigation sources, burial ground or cremation centres, public utilities, etc. This enables Gram Panchayats to develop close and better relations among the communities. Democratic decentralisation stands for people's right to initiate their own projects for local well-being and the power to implement on their own. It is expected to work for the building up of an administrative space at the cutting-edge level where the felt needs of the poor could be fulfilled.

One of the major policies for inclusion of marginalised people is giving reservation for SC& ST, Women in the local administration in the form of elected representatives at various levels. The recent report on Panchayati Raj reflects around 44 per cent of women were elected to the panchayats. There are about 23 per cent PRI elected representatives from SC&STs and 10.01 per cent are from other vulnerable communities. No doubt, physical representation exists due to the constitutional provisions but the quality of participation and lack of leadership lead to the exploitation by the traditional leaders as well as by the socially and economically rich in the rural areas. Panchayats have become centre of attraction to poor in the rural areas based on its services in supporting the people specifically marginalised people. Panchayats have been implementing various centrally sponsored Schemes through the State governments. Panchayats are being recognised as implementing institution for the plan schemes of line departments. The important programmes sponsored by the union government with the participation of respective State governments are Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), National Rural Health Mission, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY), Sawachh Bharat, etc. (C.Pratheep, Financial Analyst, TAGS)

#### **1.4 PRIs and Participatory Decentralised Planning**

In the developing countries marginal and small farmers and the people living in slum areas are non-participants in the process of development decision-making. Their resources are very minimal and productivity is limited. Majority are poverty ridden and suppressed by the rich, educated, and politically well dominant. They are powerless even to claim their rightful share of society. These are the basic problems of development before introduction of democratic decentralisation in India. But the initiatives under the new Panchayati Raj Act created immense opportunities to even to the poor to raise their voice against injustice and pressure to claim their rights through Gram Sabha.

In India, the process of decentralisation resulted in creation of people's institutions, local self-governments known as *Panchayat*. Local governing institutions are granted constitutional legality as local government bodies are responsible for socio-economic development in the rural areas. There are 29 subjects for which the *panchayat* is responsible with the help of Standing Committees to cover all subjects. Each standing committee has the responsibility for the financial and executive administration of the schemes and programmes within the budgetary provisions of the *panchayat*. The budget includes both resources mobilised locally and funds devolved by the State government. Through the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment, Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) is strengthened with clear areas of jurisdiction, authority and funds. PRIs have been assigned several development activities including health and population stabilisation. The Gram Sabha acts as a community level accountability mechanism to ensure the functionary's of the PRI respond to people's needs. While fiscal devolution is a significant issue, lack of institutional modalities and clear guidelines on PRI participation and variable capacity among PRI are key lacunae.

Even though participatory planning implementation and monitoring of rural development projects is mandatory for all PRI institutions, majority of the institutions have not put full-fledged effort for mobilising people for participation and involve them in the development process. But, a good number of Gram Panchayats in the country have been making good

attempts and also attained success in implementation of development programmes and achieved expected results in the field of provision of basic needs, health and sanitation, strengthening of livelihoods, natural resource management and village self-sufficiency through people participation. Available literature shows participatory planning and implementation yields good results in terms of material benefits to the stakeholders and evolve better transparency and accountability. Study of such good practices, strategies, approaches and factors of people participation in the process of planning will be very important in order to analyse for replication in other places.

### **1.5 Panchayats and SDGs**

In order to bring more inclusive growth on sustained basis, India also one of the signatories among the nations committed for equality and social justice. Therefore, the ministry of Panchayat Raj, Govt. of India is making efforts to sensitise the PRIs to adopt SDG in their perspective plan to achieve within the timeframe agreed. There are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with 169 targets. Panchayats will have a crucial role to play in achieving the SDGs. These are universal goals with local implications and intervention possibilities. The twin objectives of the Panchayati Raj system as envisaged by the Indian Constitution are to ensure local economic development and social justice. Panchayats are expected to play an effective role in the planning and implementation of functions related to 29 subjects enlisted in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution. Many SDG targets are within the purview of these subjects. Gram Panchayats (GPs) across the country have begun preparing Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDP), presenting an opportunity for the GPs to synchronise their plans with SDGs. Resources from various centrally and State sponsored schemes can be leveraged and converged at the GP level. It is important to set GP-level targets with measurable indicators that will have vertical and horizontal linkages, convergence possibilities, resource mobilisation potential and feasible action by the GPs. This document is meant for elected GP representatives and functionaries to use as a ready reference. It provides information on the SDGs directly related to GPs and can be the priority focus in planning the actions the panchayats can take to achieve these goals, as well as the support base and resources that can be mobilised. (Sustainable Development Goals and Gram Panchayats, Govt. of India and UN)

### **1.6 Concept of Inclusive Growth**

Inclusive society means that, it is a society in which all the sections of people irrespective of differences like race, sex, rich and poor, social hierarchy religion and other factors of inability, people have to equally participate, allowed to raise voice in the public forum, full-fledged participation in the governance and planning for welfare of the local commune. (Expert Group Meeting on Promoting Social Integration, Helsinki, July 2008). In reality, the power of participation is dream for many communities neglected over a period of time especially in the poverty ridden regions of north and north eastern regions. People belong to the higher social order even belonging to the poorest of the poor will be treated with high respect but in vice-versa a person coming from lower social status cuffed with poverty have to face multi-faceted attacks which will suppress the life which is already ruined by natural factors. With the passage of time, due to multiple reasons, poor started living with accustomed to the painful life. Women as a category are perceived as marginalised because in the patriarchal framework, historically women suffered denial of all rights. After adopting democratic form of governance, India made effort to enlarge space meant for marginalised groups. There are many groups and social categories which have been termed as marginalised women. Important among these groups are widows, war victims, persons with disability, destitute, lesbians, trans-genders, AIDS victims and so on.

The former union minister for Panchayat Raj Shri Mani Sankar Iyar viewed that, the key component of 'strategy of inclusive growth' must be with the participation of all section's representative governance at the grassroots level. Suitable platform and conducive environment are to be created through Gram Panchayats and capacitated to plan and execute the projects to remove the poverty on their own. Village self-reliance and participatory governance are the important areas for empowerment of rural people. The effective empowerment of the disadvantaged through the effective devolution of functions, finances and functionaries to the representative institutions of local self-government on the principle of subsidiarity, will help to reach inclusive growth. The vital strategies for inclusive development aim to increase investment in the villages on infrastructure supporting agriculture and allied sectors. Expanding credit facilities for small, marginal farmers and also to micro entrepreneurs and ensuring better prices for the rural products will increase the farmers as well as labourers' income. Improving the quality of education and health and also effective support of social safety net strategies improving the quality of life for the poor. (AIYAR & TIWARI: Inclusive Growth through Inclusive Governance in India's North East)

Development can be inclusive and reduce poverty, only if all groups of people contribute to creating opportunities, share the benefits of development and participate in decision-making. Inclusive development follows UNDP's human development approach and integrates the standards and principles of human rights, (participation, non-discrimination and accountability (UNDP)

### **1.6.1 Elements of Inclusion**

Development policies and thinkers of welfare society propagated a number of dimensions of concern as elements of inclusion which are worth to mention here- strengthening the effective implementation of the inclusive policies and legislation, permanent and protected space and dwelling unit for live, work and recreation, access to information and communication, access to public amenities, access to resources, access to basic services, including education, health care, clean water and sanitation. Transparent and accountable decision-making processes, adequate income and employment opportunities, etc.

### **1.6.2 Origin of Inclusive Planning**

The world leaders assembled and agreed on making required strategies for inclusion of the excluded categories of the people in the World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) was held in Copenhagen in the year 1995. It was the stable beginning and recognised effort in this field. The 'society for all' concept was evolved and developed as a concrete approach. The ultimate motto of the concept is that as a right every citizen in the globe has important role to play in shaping the economy and society, at the end even individual in any society. It allows and encourages all sections of people to involve in the process of planning, implementation and monitoring the programmes and projects of the government institutions responsible for development of the people and environment.

### **1.6.3 Inclusive planning and its importance:**

In India, there has been increasing attention on enabling the vulnerable communities to take part and raise voice for their development as well as against the atrocity on them. It is well understood that, the stakeholders of planning especially most vulnerable and marginalised like SC&ST, women, religious minorities, the older people, disabled, indigenous people and other groups like the youths are still not fully represented in the process and therefore the inclusive planning process still remains elusive. It is very important, because these group of people constitute more than 50 per cent of the country's population in India. Moreover, inclusive planning will bring out the real issues and viable solutions represented by the affected people themselves which will bring cost effective planning process. This is achieved through transparent decision-making process that reduces conflict and facilitation to access local knowledge.

## 1.6.4 Approaches for Inclusive Planning:

### i. Identification of Marginalised

Social Inclusion refers to the process that enables equal opportunities to everyone regardless of background. It is not confined to economic opportunities only and transcends to all aspects of human life to ensure individuals can realise the full potentials of their life. Therefore, it is important to have identification of the groups and related data.

### ii. Understanding the Characteristics

Demographic, socio-economic and participation in political process and social/community activities among others are important issues for understanding the group's status and role, which in turn is critical in ascertaining how to integrate them into mainstream development activities through planning process.

### iii. Analysing the legal protective mechanisms for the marginalised:

Appropriate examination of the legal and regulatory framework is therefore required to ensure there are no structural impediments for the usually excluded groups. For planning purposes, it is important to the government to analyse the prevailing constitutional and policy provisions for all to participate in the decision-making process without any hurdles in addition to allocate the resources according to their reservations in the inclusive planning.

### iv. Promoting Participatory Methods in Policy Development and Planning:

**Examine the practice of participatory methods** in regional policy making and planning exercises. Appropriate participatory methods like Gram Sabha are to be employed to enable the poor to participate without hesitation.

### v. Focusing the marginalised Sections within the Planning Resource Envelope:

Usually overriding priorities in the planning process include poverty reduction, eradication of hunger and malnutrition, reduction of mortality for children, women, education for all and such other SDGs related and other global commitments. While most vulnerable social groups are poor and suffer from all other related deprivations, they are usually not thought of in devising the target and thus receive no allocations either. This needs to be ensured to initiate inclusive planning for all. Including the concerns of marginalised not only the components of planning in general. It can be strengthened by allowing standalone initiatives for the vulnerable groups.

## 1.7 Concept of People Participation

### 1.7.1 What is People Participation?

Participation is neither simply communicating, nor participation mere 'doing'. It is not the behavioural response to a compulsion. Moreover, participation is not simply physical presence in the community meetings and it is not simply access to mass media controlled by the urban elite and bureaucratic vested interests. Also, it is not an input to be unilaterally diffused or applied by remote control from the centre to periphery, from sources to 'receivers' or from experts to ignorant.

People's participation is defined as 'employing a strategy where the associated communities are motivated to function and contribute as a group to perform a predetermined task'. It is generally agreed that unless the benefits of the programme or project coincides with the interest of the people will it gets only less participation. From the earlier experiences, it is well understood that mobilising the people for participation will be very easy but carrying forward further in a successful way will be a challenging task. Development will be possible only when all the members of a community participate with interest in all the aspects. Further, people participation is the direct involvement of people in the process of planning, decision making, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all development initiatives.

### **1.7.2 Importance of People Participation**

It has been rightly pointed out by Rajani Kothari “Participation is not some process of involving everyone and reducing all to a common denominator, rather it consists of evolving institutional structure from which diverse individuals get a sense of dignity and self-respect as beings that are able to determine their own destinies”. People participation enriches the quality of planning process of government machineries enabling to verify the reliability of data, ensuring the commitment of people, rationalising proposals, reducing unreasonable pressure of informal channels. It helps to avoid duplication of works, minimise the unwanted delay and ensures easy accountability.

The people can realize their roles and responsibilities in shaping their society as they visualise. People are very well aware about their problems; they are the best judges on their own resources and development. If suitable climate and opportunities are created, they will do changes on their life. Government roll must be as a facilitator of people’s feeling and action. Earlier rural development programmes somehow achieved the targets but failed in many aspects which resulted in dislocation, misappropriation of funds, using inappropriate technologies lead to imbalanced growth. Wrong identification in terms of pro-rich as beneficiaries further widened the gap between rich and poor. Thus, effective strategy on people participation is essential to assess the basic local needs, resources and appropriate planning and action to put of resources to meet the basic needs. India’s development process in the rural areas is still trying to fulfil the basic needs especially in the regions of northern parts, it has long way ahead to reach the next phase of development in the tribal areas.

### **1.7.3 Objectives of People Participation in planning**

The objectives of people participation can be i) Ensuring effective involvement of people in planning and implementation of the development initiatives meant for them, ii) Encouraging people to monitor and evaluate programmes to streamline and strengthen the process and targets, iii) Sensitising and make to own their responsibility to maintain the assets created by the development programmes on conditional use, iv) Empowering people to enrich their life.

### **1.7.4 Key Elements in Participatory Process**

In any development process the implementing agencies have to recognise the role and importance of beneficiary participation and facilitate at all levels. In a country like India with multifaceted and complex problems of backwardness and acute poverty coupled with unemployment hinders the growth resulted in limited output. Securing participatory process must focus on the inclusive nature of vital elements for the successful coverage. For mobilisation of more quantitative and qualitative people participation in planning and monitoring, the strategies of development have to focus on certain core elements which are presented below.

#### **i. Focus on Felt Needs**

Development efforts must focus on satisfying the felt needs of the people. Prioritised problems have to be given immediate attention. Immediate problems should be given priority for its solution. It will secure people cooperation in public as well as private towards any change.

#### **ii. Awareness**

Many government initiatives failed in attaining expected success and the benefits were intangible due to the absence of people participation. Introduction and implementation of rural development programmes were forced on people without giving adequate time to understand the core features and outcomes of the programmes. Creation of awareness on all about like design, strategy, targeted section, plan and programme implementing team are important factors of success. Various medias and appropriate mechanisms have to be effectively used for dissemination of information on the functioning of institutions of local governance and their development packages proposed for the local community.

### **iii. Motivation**

Motivation and stimulation are important factors of people participation. As a citizen, one should realise the role to take part in the nation building as well as shaping their own life. Majority in the rural areas, keep away from the mainstream of the development process because they feel that they are not the targeted beneficiaries of the proposed programmes. In most cases, bureaucrats and elected representatives are reluctant to disclose the entitlements and rights which keep the people away from the development process. Thus, motivation of people in a right way will yield optimum results.

### **iv. Cordial Relationship among service providers and Users**

Constitution of India proclaims our system of governance is democratic decentralised but realisation of the spirit of the concepts 'by the people' 'for the people' and 'of the people' has long ahead. Common man finds difficulty in meeting both elected as well as administrative head of the local development institutions and the neediest are in many cases excluded from the development paradigm.

### **v. Socio-Economic Conditions of the people**

Various research reports reveal that, majority of the people in rural areas living in the condition of hand to mouth existence, non-availability of regular and remunerative employment leads to starvation. At this context expecting people to participate is meaningless. Hence, at the initial stage, some forms of stimulation in the form of wage compensation is very essential to encourage the people involvement.

### **vi. Nature of Participatory Approach**

Access with the government service providers and other departments working for the rural development have not created conducive environment for the people to express their issues for solutions. Prevailing intermediaries and hidden procedures hinder the people in approaching the institutions meant for them. The officials are not having adequate patience in listening to the beneficiaries' voices. But it is essential to listen people's views in planning, respecting the feelings of the beneficiaries by incorporating strategies to solve the important problems and sharing responsibilities to protect the public assets.

### **vii. Group Dynamics**

Measures should be taken to understand the group dynamics and heterogeneous character of the society. It is necessary to understand, how the community views on a particular problem accordingly the strategies have to be framed.

### **viii. Empowerment of people in decentralised Power Structure**

Training and extension services should be geared up to enlist the effective people participation through Panchayati Raj governance to plan and implement the strategies and programmes for their own development. Mere giving of provisions for empowerment will not influence the process, vigilance and continuance monitoring and follow up are necessary components for the empowerment and participation thereto.

### **xi. Institutional Collaboration.**

Various studies have proved the experiences of the non-governmental organisations working in tackling the problems of the poor and attained success in securing confidence among people. Maintaining better relationship and joint efforts with regional organisations will improve status of people's participation and deliver better services.

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### **x. Detailed discussion on the Issues**

Invite people for small focus group discussion prior to planning and implementation in order to identify the existing problems, prioritisation and finding amicable strategies to address the felt needs. Consultation process with community leaders have to be conducted periodically will help to get confidence among the communities. Interacting through the local language will give more opportunities for the people to get involved and to understand the causes and effects of the issues pertaining to them.

### **xi. Community Mobilisation**

Community involvement is an essential component to achieve the goals of any development programme to manage and protect the assets created under various development programmes. Development of rural areas relies on optimum utilisation of locally available resources to satisfy the immediate and long-term needs of the rural communities. People are the most important mechanism to convert the local resources into useable goods and services. Participatory learning methods, such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA) offer ways to open up discussions by focusing on local problems. By actively engaging people in a process of exploring and representing what they know, the participatory research process can validate them as knowledgeable, active subjects capable of interpreting and changing their situations.

### **1.7.5 Conclusion**

In India discussions and action on development are placing more emphasis on good governance and democratic institutions. Good democratic governance, fully accountable to people and providing opportunities for all the people to participate effectively in all debates and decisions that affect their lives alone can respond effectively to the needs of poor people for better living. Though there is no conclusive evidence from studies to believe that the type of government, authoritarian or democratic, is a determining factor of the rate of growth or its distribution, there is evidence to show that democracy not only helps to protect people from economic and political catastrophes such as famines, but also contribute to political stability and participatory development that trigger a virtuous cycle of development.

The assumptions of the present study are that, the panchayats awarded as better or best performing panchayats really follow the democratic decentralisation process and planning for development of the panchayat by involving all the sections of people in its jurisdiction. It examined the development opportunities available for marginalised sections through GP and verified the level of awareness among people on the schemes, and their rights. It also studied about the nature of participation of marginalised groups in decision-making process of local governance in planning and implementation towards strengthening the livelihoods of poorest of the poor and overall development of the panchayat.

## CHAPTER – 2

### METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

#### 2.1 Background of the Study

The deprived and disadvantaged section of the society constitutes a group of people who were denied the opportunities to fully explore and utilise its abilities and thus enjoy a quality life. In the Indian context, the disadvantaged sections constitute SCs, STs OBCs, and minorities of Muslim and Christian religions. Further specifically to state that, the groups of people like destitute women, differently abled, resource less and poorest of the poor are facing still worse social and economic problems in the society. The marginalised groups who occupy weak positions in social and economic hierarchy have also found themselves weak even within the local governments. While the representation of weaker sections is officially sought through affirmative action, in the actual practices that takes place within the institutions, they are subjected to multiple types of discrimination and exclusion. The present study is being proposed to examine the development opportunities available for marginalised sections through GP and to verify the level of awareness among them on the schemes, and their rights. It also tries to study about the nature of participation of these groups in decision-making process of local governance in planning and implementation towards strengthening the livelihoods of poorest of the poor and overall development of the panchayat.

In India, Local Governance Institutions, called 'Panchayats', in rural areas were given importance through 73<sup>rd</sup> constitutional amendment (PRI Act) which came into force from 24<sup>th</sup> April, 1992 to give constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions at the district and below. These institutions are responsible for ensuring economic development and social justice to the rural populace. One-third of the seats in panchayats are reserved for marginalised groups i.e., women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes - to ensure their membership and participation in matters pertaining to local governance and development. Empowerment of Socially Disadvantaged Groups continues to be on the priority list of country's developmental agenda, as they still lagging behind by comparing to the rest of the society due to their social and economic backwardness. Their share in the country's total population is quite substantial, as SCs account for 17.5 per cent and Minorities representing 18.4 per cent.

Many development programmes especially Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) such as Drinking Water Mission, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme and Bharat Nirman project assign precise role to panchayats for planning and implementing rural infrastructure aiming to fulfil the local needs. Even though, many schemes focusing all categories, majority has special provisions for disadvantaged sections with reservation of some package of services as mandatory for them. If all these schemes were properly implemented and ensured to reach the needy then it would have reduced the major problems associated with poverty in the rural areas.

#### ***Special Provisions of Development Programmes for Disadvantaged People Implemented through GP***

1. The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme gives the legislative framework for providing guaranteed unskilled manual labour to rural poor. The Act designates Panchayats as the principal planning and implementation authorities. At least 50 per cent of the works are to take place at the Gram Panchayat level. While providing employment, priority shall be given to women in such a way that at least one-third of the beneficiaries shall be women. If a rural disabled person applies for work, work suitable to his/her ability and qualifications will have to be given. Provision of irrigation facility, plantation, horticulture, land development to land owned by households belonging to the SC/ST. Priority should be given to roads that give access to SC/ST habitations.

2. Under NRLM loans and subsidies for entrepreneurship is earmarked 50 per cent for SC/STs, 40 per cent for women, 3 per cent for disabled and 15 per cent for minorities.
3. Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) is aimed at ensuring a minimum availability of 40 litres of water per capita per day (LPCD) to all rural people. Swajaldhara is a demand driven approach to augment water supply, with a high degree of local participation. ARWSP is now part of the Bharat Nirman approach, with a time bound strategy of tackling all habitations that are deficient in water supply with a preference to the SC and ST habitations.
4. The Swachh Bharat Abhiyan aims at providing subsidised individual and community latrines, so as to completely eliminate open-air defecation. For adequate coverage of the weaker sections and disadvantaged sections of the people while selecting the districts, blocks, villages and demand for sanitary latrines, preference should be given to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Out of the total incentive earmarked for the construction of household latrines, a minimum of 25 per cent should be earmarked for the individual households for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Further, reservation for individual toilets to the disabled persons shall be provided at the rate of 3 per cent of the total numbers in the Project.
5. The Prime Minister Awas Yojana -Gramin (PMAY) is the sole programme that deals with housing for the poor from the Government of India. This programme gives a 100 per cent subsidy, for providing houses to families below the poverty line. At least 60 per cent of the total PMAY allocation during a financial year should be utilised for construction/up gradation of dwelling units for SC/ST BPL households and 3 per cent for physically and mentally challenged persons. Panchayat has the responsibility of selection of the beneficiaries.
6. The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana primarily aims to provide all weather access to unconnected habitations of up to 500 population.

Literature available from various studies shows that the disadvantaged sections due to high illiteracy, lack of awareness and less bargaining power, their intended benefits are diluted or misused by political power structure and rich people. Even the elected members from marginalised sections are side lined by the traditionally ruling community and enjoy the benefits of the fruitful schemes extended by the government institutions.

The present study is proposed to examine the development opportunities available for disadvantaged sections implemented through GP and to verify the level of awareness among disadvantaged sections on the schemes, and their rights. It also tries to study the nature of participation of these groups in decision-making process of local governance for planning and implementation towards strengthening the livelihoods of poorest of the poor as well as overall development of the panchayat.

## **2.2 Statement of the Problem**

The recent planned development strategies have given special focus to involve the marginalised people in the mainstream of development through various initiatives by the Central and State governments. The strategies are aiming to empower them by providing special provisions to participate in decision-making process of local governance in planning and implementation of development schemes and to avail opportunities like wage employment, skill development for self-employment, access and use of basic amenities as well as individual needs, basic education and health care services to improve their socio-economic conditions. In order to involve the excluded sections, Central government made many vital steps through constitutional provisions for strengthening the Gram Panchayats as bottom most planning and delivery mechanism by devolution of powers and functions. But, in reality many cases, Gram Panchayats are deprived of resources due to incapable leadership or influence of the local power structure or political hindrances, on the other hand due to lack of good leadership, the panchayat system excluded some sections of people for many well-known reasons. Therefore, this study is aiming to understand and identify the status of functioning of some of

the better performing Gram Panchayats and their role in development of marginalised sections by various rural development programmes.

### 2.3 Literature Review

The available literatures and studies were grouped under various headings and presented below.

#### ***Success Stories of Various Gram Panchayats in Delivery of Development Functions and strengthening the rural Livelihoods***

- i. *Elapully Panchayat, Kerala.* This *panchayat*, over two years, increased the milk production by small dairy farmers from 2,400 litres a day to 12,000 litres, increasing incomes by Rs. 7.5 crore in 2009-10. The *panchayat* encouraged paddy farmers who were facing unsustainably high costs of cultivation to adopt dairying as a second livelihood option.
- ii. *Adatt Panchayat*, this *panchayat* in Trissur began to convert itself into an organic farming village starting from 2002, by reducing the consumption of toxic pesticides in the paddy fields, which had also contaminated the major water sources in the area.
- iii. *Hivre Bazar:* An exemplary instance of a *Gram Panchayat* playing a lead role in development, is brought out vividly in the case of Hivre Bazaar panchayat. Located in Nagar Taluk of Ahmednagar district in Maharashtra state, the *panchayat* was responsible for transforming the village. This provides an example of the way in which the *panchayat* can act as a catalyst in development.
- iv. *Gendra, Attha and Bari Sirkiri in Madhya Pradesh:* These three *panchayats* constitute the mini-watershed (areas varying between 1,000 -10,000 ha area) at the headwaters of the river Kara (a tributary of Narmada) in Alirajpur district of Madhya Pradesh. These *panchayats* have initiated a voluntary communitarian forest, soil and water conservation initiative even prior to the 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional amendment. This is a case where the *panchayats* adopted the traditional *Dhas* (voluntary community service) in which, the inhabitants who are predominantly tribal, pool their labour and resources for sustainable development.
- v. *Shiruguppi Gram Panchayat:* Shiruguppi *Gram Panchayat* in the Belgaum district in Karnataka State provides another example of a village *panchayat* ensuring efficient water supply.
- vi. *Sanur Gram Panchayat:* Sanur *Gram Panchayat* provides an example demonstrating the people in the villages are willing to pay for water to sustain it in an economically viable manner. The foregoing examples of successful experiences of *panchayats* involved in integrated and sustainable development of the villages, ability to create systems to collect revenues for augmenting the standards of public services and creation of viable system of essential service like water supply provide a number of lessons.

### **Studies on Decentralisation, Planning and Rural development**

- i. **Decentralization in Kerala: Key issues in institutional development** (V. Annamalai 2001) focusing on the campaign mode of decentralisation of power to Panchayat Raj Institutions vis-à-vis functions, functionaries and finances.
- ii. **Local institutions, social capital and decentralization: An exploratory study** (V. Annamalai, 2002) with the objectives of analysing and identifying the major activities of local institutions and to explore and analyse critically the concept and role of social capital in strengthening these institutions.
- iii. **Community empowerment through decentralized governance: A study of gram sabha in Rajasthan** (M. Sarumathy, 2002). **The study** examined the dimensions of Gram Sabha in the process of village development and analysed the effectiveness regard to social audit.

**iv. Status of planning in a Gram Panchayat with focus on peoples participation and resource mobilization: A case study in Andaman and Nicobar Island (UT)** (D. Shanthudu, 2003). The study focused to review the planning process followed in the preparation of plan for a Gram Panchayat with focus on people's participation.

**v. Panchayat Raj system in scheduled areas of Madhya Pradesh: A study with special reference to Gram Sabhas** (Singh, Yatindra, 2000), **having objective** to know the level of awareness among villagers about Gram Sabha; and found the level of participation in Gram Sabha.

**Women in local self-governance: A case study of Tripur, by R. A. Mangathai, 2000** conducted to understand how political empowerment of the marginalised sections is being translated in to development practice and assessed the participation of women as democratic leaders.

**i. Local Self-Governance in Orissa: A study of the functioning of Panchayati Raj system in the post 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment' period** (Praful Kumar Sahoo, 2000). The study pinpointed the strength and weakness of the working of PRI in Orissa.

**ii. Perspective on Decentralized Rural Development:** A case study of Bairai Gram Panchayat in Madhya Pradesh: Chaudhuri's (2007) analysis of Indian decentralization following the 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Amendments brings out that reform was incremental rather than radical and was aimed at eliminating the shortcomings of the previous regime. In his view, the extension of fiscal and functional devolution was low and State bureaucrats continued to retain control in most of the States even after the constitutional amendments. He also records that the participation in village meetings (*Gram Sabhas*) has been sparse except in a few States. He argues that indices of devolution were uncorrelated with alternative indicators of economic performance of human development. The study argues that there is considerable responsiveness and accountability in the pattern of resource allocation in villages. It concluded that decentralisation had a positive impact mainly in the coastal provinces, particularly in spurring competition between the township and village enterprises, which played a crucial role in accelerating economic growth in these areas.

**iii. A Study on status of devolution in PRIs in Orissa' (1999) was conducted by Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD).** The study was carried out to understand the whole scenario and to prepare a status document on post-97 PRI elections.

**iv. A Study on participation of SC members in Panchayati Raj institutions in Andhra Pradesh** by R. Venkata Ravi, **Council for Social Development (CSD).** The study analysed the profile of SC members who participated in decision-making process with managerial perspective; and analysed the extent of SC in general and SC women in particular participate in decision-making process.

**v. Functioning of Panchayati Raj in Haryana: An Analytical Study** by Surat Singh, 1999, **Haryana Institute of Rural Development. This study analysed the** historical background of the PRIs in Haryana and examined the extent of people's participation in decision-making in general and representatives of weaker sections and women in particular.

**Role of PRIs in eradication of untouchability in Maharashtra State (Y. Bhaskara Rao, 2002).** It assessed the impact of implementation of various acts related to removal of untouchability at panchayat level.

Number of studies were carried out by various scholars on different context in different States of India but majority studies were focusing on the statutory nature of devolution of powers and functions of PRI institutions. Few studies attempted to find out the people participation in Gram Sabha and also some are focused on verifying the impact of decentralisation on overall development of the Gram Panchayats. Also, few researchers adequately documented the cases of successful functioning panchayats in delivery of services to the people. It is also found that some of the micro

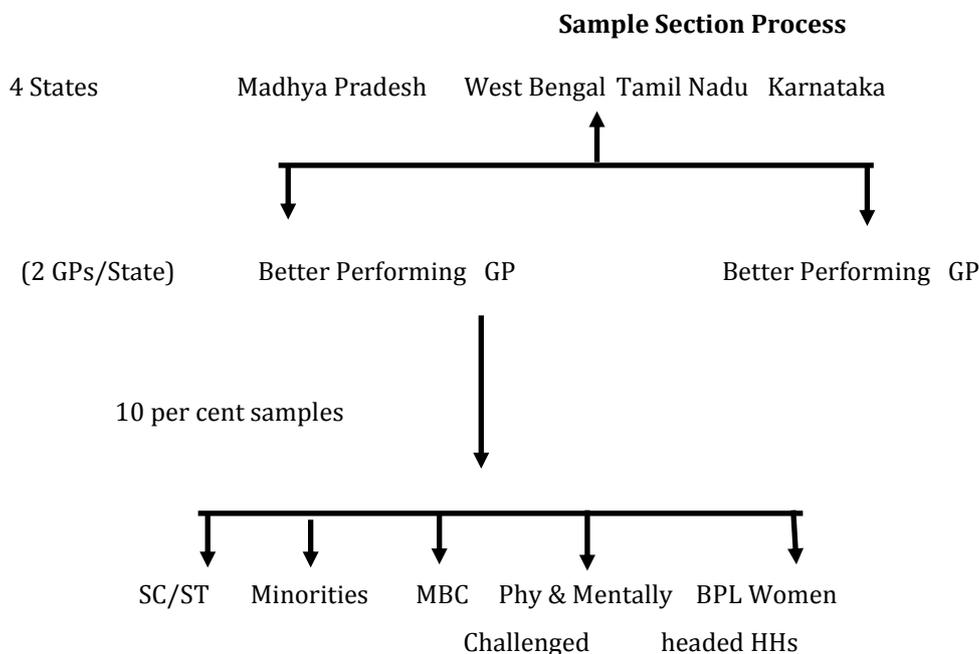
level studies captured the status of decentralised planning at the grassroots level. Based on the available literature, no research is found with the same objectives proposed in this study. Therefore, the present study is proposed to examine the provisions of Gram Panchayats for marginalised sections and their awareness, participation in planning, implementation and overall impact.

## 2.4. Methodology

This study was conducted in four States namely Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. These four States were selected based on the effectiveness of decentralised governance and devolution of powers and functions by the State governments. The study made analysis of efforts of better performing GPs on alleviation of poverty of marginalised sections of people living in the jurisdiction of the selected panchayats.

For the purpose of comparison, in each State two better performing panchayats were selected having population of multi-communities. The name of the GPs selected for the study are Rampur (Sagar District) and Jamra (Guna District) GPs from Madhya Pradesh, Durgapur (Burdwan District), Jhamita (Howrah District) GPs from West Bengal, Nallur (Tirunelveli District) and Bearhatty (Nilgirs District) GPs from Tamil Nadu and Bevoor (Koppla District) and Bannur (Dakshina Kanada District) GPs from Karnataka. Hence, the study covered 8 GPs. The better performing GPs were selected by using few important criteria like utilisation of earmarked funds, revenue collection, creation of infrastructure like water supply, sanitation, education, connectivity, street lighting, generation of employment through employment guarantee scheme, received awards, etc. Further, in each GP 10 per cent of the marginalised people's households were selected as sample respondents and data collected.

The sample units covered different categories of marginalised sections from each GP including 10 per cent households from each category namely SC/ST, MBC, Minorities, women headed poor households, physically challenged and others. In total, the study will cover 947 samples from four selected States. The following diagram explains the mode of selection of study area and sample units.



**Study Indicators :** The study was conducted by using indicators like level of awareness on the local self-governance and planning process, level of awareness on the development schemes and special provisions for disadvantaged sections, nature and extent of participation, quantum of opportunities available and percentage of people benefitted, percentage of people excluded and causes for exclusion, nature of benefits availed and level of development attained and factors contributed and problems faced.

## **2.5 Objectives of the study**

- To examine the Gram Panchayat initiatives for the development of marginalised sections.
- To understand the process of participatory planning and level of participation by disadvantaged people.
- To study the impact of major RD programmes implemented through Panchayat on the improvement of socio-economic status of the marginalised section.
- To identify the factors contributed for inclusion and exclusion of different sections of the people.

## **2.6 Data Collection Methods**

Suitable semi-structured interview schedule was prepared and administered covering all the aspects like awareness level, social, economic and political dimensions of participation, factors contributed and benefitted for availing and not availing the schemes benefits through various opportunities. Level of development attained and deprived was also studied. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), observation techniques were also used to collect adequate data from the selected respondents to understand the overall performance and responsibility of the GP and also identified the functional difficulties. Targets and achievements of various RD programmes implemented by the GPs during last five years and percentage of benefits reached to the disadvantaged people were verified. FDGs were conducted among beneficiaries in each GP for identification of problems faced in availing of scheme benefits and to identify the factors contributed for exclusion from the government development efforts. The FGDs helped to bring the nature of process of grassroots planning of their respective GP and performance satisfaction.

## **2.7 Format of Report**

The tentative format of the report is as follows

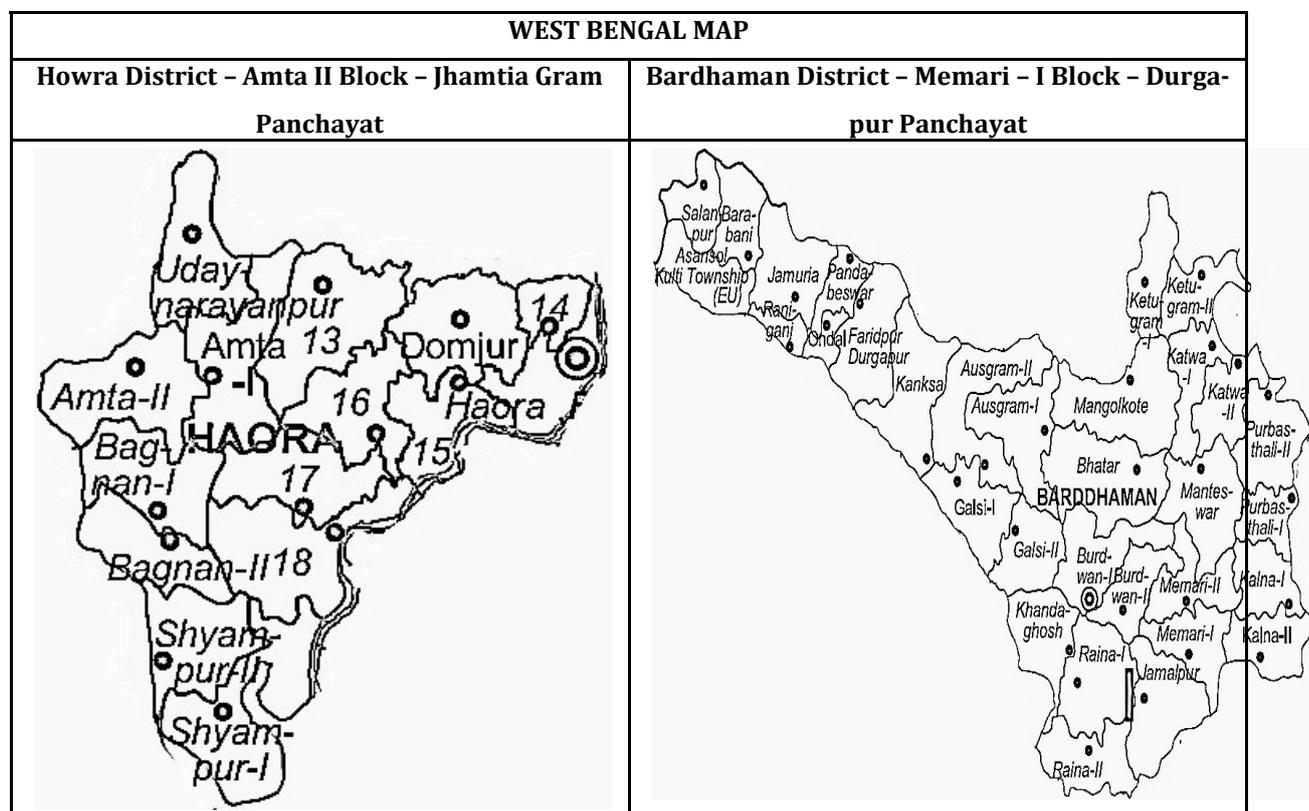
- i. Introduction
- ii. Research Methodology
- iii. Profile of the Selected Gram Panchayats and performance of the rural development programmes
- iv. Data presentation and analysis
- v. Findings and suggestions

**Profile of the Selected Gram Panchayats and Performance of the Rural Development Programmes**

This study was conducted in four states namely Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. The name of the GPs selected for the study are Rampur (Sagar District) and Jamra (Guna District) GPs from Madhya Pradesh, Durgapur (Burdwan District), Jhamita (Howrah District) GPs from West Bengal, Nallur (Tirunelveli District) and Bearhatty (Nilgirs District) GPs from Tamil Nadu and Bevoor (Koppla District) and Bannur (Dakshina Kanada District) GPs from Karnataka. The basic particulars and selected schemes performance of the panchayats are given in this chapter.

**3.1 West Bengal GP 1. Durgapur – This GP made efforts to eradicate Tuberculosis and attained success:**

Durgapur is a big village located in Memari - I block of Barddhaman district, West Bengal. This village has 498 families with the population of 2056 of which 1051 were males and 1005 were females as per Population Census 2011. The average sex ratio is 956 females to 1000 males which is higher than state average of 950. The child sex ratio is 910 females to 1000 males against the state average of 956. The literacy rate was 73.21 per cent comprising of male literacy 82.13 per cent while female literacy rate was 63.94 per cent. In Durgapur village, most of the villagers belong to Schedule Caste (SC) constitutes that is 50.58 per cent while Schedule Tribe (ST) were 8.80 per cent of total population. This village out of total population, 81.74 per cent were workers, while 18.26 per cent were involved in marginal activity providing them livelihood for less than six months. A total of 898 workers were engaged in main work, of them 234 were cultivators (owner or co-owner) while 317 were agricultural labourers. Durgapur Gram Panchayat has taken a special initiative to eradicate tuberculosis from its administrative area. A total of 67 candidates were found carrying the deadly bacteria and all measures were taken to cure them. Besides this, frequent tests were carried out to identify new cases.





Particulars	Total	Male	Female
Total No. of Houses	498	-	-
Population	2,056	1,051	1,005
Child (0-6)	212	111	101
Schedule Caste	1,040	511	529
Schedule Tribe	181	91	90
Literacy	73.21 per cent	82.13per cent	63.94 per cent
Total Workers	898	681	217
Main Worker	734	0	0
Marginal Worker	164	78	86

Performance of RD schemes and details of benefits given to the Marginalised Sections Durgapur Gram Panchayat  
 Table – 3. 2 PMAY Housing Scheme Performance during 2011-12 to 2015-16

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	No. of Houses Allotted to the Panchayat	Total No. of people benefited	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of People Benefited						
							Different-lyabled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed Family	Total
1	2011-12	71.55	159	159	71.55	71.55	1	10	11	89	48	Nil	159
2	2012-13	30.6	68	68	30.60	30.60	3	2	2	37	24	Nil	68
3	2013-14	6.3	91	90	90.45	90.00	1	4	4	49	32	Nil	90
4	2014-15	13.06	187	187	130.90	130.90	10	5	2	100	70	Nil	187
5	2015-16	Nil	192	192	Nil	Nil	2	2	2	93	90	Nil	189

Table - 3. 3 MGNREGA Scheme Performance during 2011-12 to 2015-16

Sl. No.	Year	Total Budget	Total Nos of Works	Fund Received (Including OB)	Fund Spent	Nos of people benefited						Total
						Different-ly abled	OBC	Min	SC	ST	Wom- en Head- ed fam-	
1	2011-12	35995678.00	116	7097420.11	7097305.00	4	455	733	122	108	11	3491
2	2012-13	8651187.00	68	13325964.11	13069974.00	6	548	884	147	130	16	4210
3	2013-14	2002308.00	96	10226292.11	10200192.00	6	440	712	118	105	21	3390
4	2014-15	158463166.00	84	14912968.00	14912968.00	7	285	459	766	679	18	2189
5	2015-16	62072400.00	419	10747000.00	10298523.00	9	234	378	629	557	23	1798

Table – 3.4 Scheme Performance Total Sanitation Programme / SWACH BHARAT MISSION during 2011-12 TO 2015-16

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	No. of Houses Allotted to the Pan-chayat	Total No. of people benefitted	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of People Benefitted								
							Differently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed Family	Total		
1	2011-12	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
2	2012-13	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
3	2013-14	Nil	367	367	1688200.00	1688200.00	10	146	0	86	115	10	367		
4	2014-15	Nil	267	267	1989600.00	1989600.00	6	116	0	39	89	8	258		
5	2015-16	Nil	438	438	4380000.00	4380000.00	8	135	60	73	150	12	438		

Table – 3.5 Central Finance Commission grants details during 2011-12 TO 2015-16

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	central Finance Commission grant 13/14th FC	Amount spent	amount utilized from other account	List of works carried out in CFC grant	No. of people Benefitted						Total
							Differ-ently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed Family	
1	2011-12	17,60,00 0.00	12,94,22 7.00	13,67,91 7.00	Nil	Nil	4	995	1821	3066	1753	52	7691
2	2012-13	22,00,00 0.00	17,56,61 4.00	10,05,19 3.00	Nil	Nil	2	881	1623	2418	1581	23	6528
3	2013-14	20,00,00 0.00	7,99,447. 00	11,67,43 0.00	Nil	Nil	5	993	1721	2519	1715	35	6988
4	2014-15	33,50,00 0.00	40,38,11 2.00	13,16,70 0.00	Nil	Nil	3	1121	1898	3466	1812	43	8343
5	2015-16	32,10,00 0.00	73,15,71 3.00	64,41,26 1.00	Nil	Nil	5	2944	4307	6672	3920	92	17940

Table – 3.6 State Finance Commission grants details during 2011-12 TO 2015-16

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	State Finance Commission grant Received	Amount spent	amount utilized from other account	List of works carried out in SFC grant	No. of people Benefitted						Total
							Differ-ently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed Family	
1	2011-12	32,90,000.00	10,03,303.00	7,66,831.00	Nil	Nil	1	323	266	1657	337	27	2611
2	2012-13	38,35,000.00	11,98,107.00	14,60,389.00	Nil	Nil	0	952	714	2712	855	62	5295
3	2013-14	40,30,000.00	32,49,852.00	21,37,908.00	Nil	Nil	2	1012	802	3045	1126	74	6061
4	2014-15	27,00,000.00	7,30,932.00	15,19,666.00	Nil	Nil	3	887	902	2520	1002	51	5365
5	2015-16	28,15,000.00	25,43,924.00	14,83,927.00	Nil	Nil	2	845	844	2240	911	34	4876

### 3.2 West Bengal GP -2 Jhamtia Gram Panchayat - Open defecation free village - Howra District

Jhamtia village is located in Amta II Tehsil of Howra district in West Bengal. It is situated 18.7 km away from sub-district headquarters Amta and 46.1 km away from district headquarters Howrah. The total geographical area of village is 495.91 hectares. Total population of the village was 4,879 peoples with 979 houses. Uluberia is nearest town to Jhamtia which is approximately 10 km away.

Average sex ratio was 928 which was lower than state average of 950. Child sex ratio is 963, higher than state average of 956. Jhamtia village has higher literacy rate of 77.57 per cent compared to 76.26 per cent of West Bengal. Male literacy stands at 82.46 per cent and female literacy rate was 72.28 per cent.

Table – 3.7 Basic particulars of the Gram Panchayat

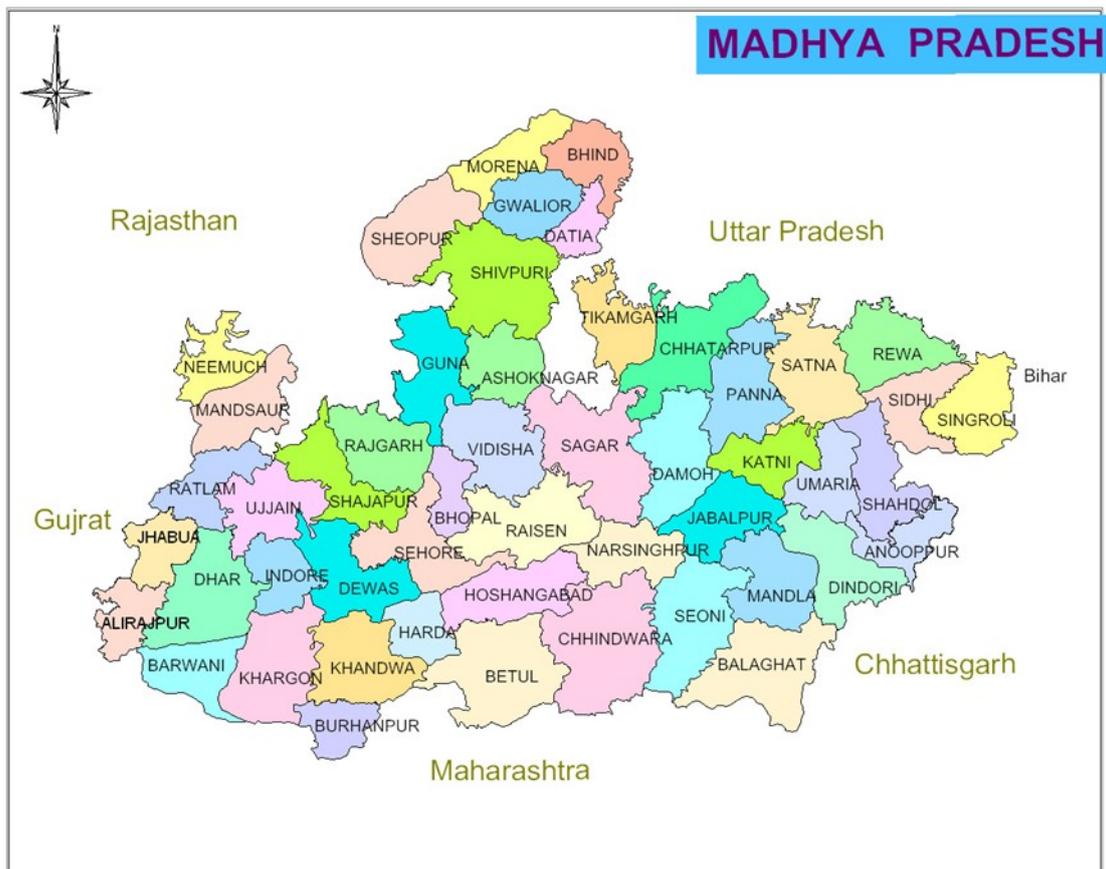
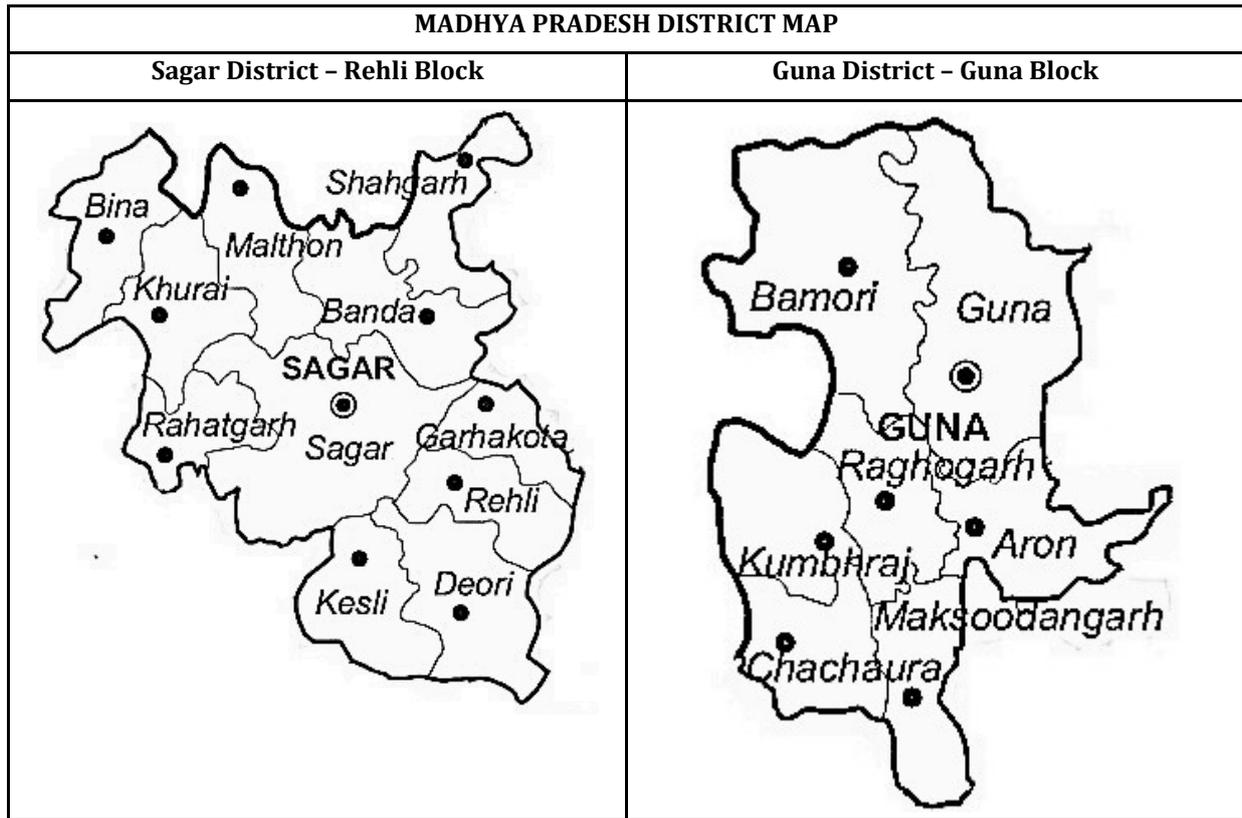
Profile of Jhamtia Gram Panchayat	
Total Population of the Gram Panchayat	15133
Total Female Population	7322
Total Male Population	7811
Total No. of Households	3245
Total number of SC Households	1630
Total number of ST Households	1
Male Literacy Rate (%)	70.85 per cent
Female Literacy Rate (%)	58.46 per cent
<b>Gram Sansad and Member's Profile</b>	11
No. of Gram Sansads	11
No. of elected members to the GP	3

Table 3.8. Details of Institutions (situated within the GP area)

Educational Institution	Number
Primary School	12
Upper Primary (up to Class VIII)	1
High School (up to Class X)	1
Madrassa	10
ICDS Centre	16
Madhyamik Siksha Kendra (MSK)	-
Sishu Siksha Kendra (SSK)	2
<b>Health Institution</b>	
Health Sub Centre	3
<b>Other Institution</b>	
Bank	1
Post Office	2
Co-operative Credit Society	1000
Cluster Building SHG	10000

Schedule Caste (SC) constitutes 24.41 per cent and no Schedule Tribe (ST) population. In Jhamtia village out of total population, 1751 were engaged in work activities, of them 58.14 per cent were main workers while 41.86 per cent

were involved in marginal activity providing livelihood for less than six months. In the 1751 workers engaged in main work, 248 were cultivators and 214 were agricultural labourers.



### 3.3. MADHYA PRADESH GP -1 Jamra (Guna District)

Jamra is a medium size village located in Guna block of Guna district, Madhya Pradesh with total 282 families residing there. The Jamra village has population of 1134 of which 580 were males and 554 were females. The average sex ratio per 1000 males is 955 females and child sex ratio is 921. In 2011, literacy rate was 61.79 per cent, male literacy stands at 73.73 per cent while female literacy rate was 49.36 per cent. Schedule Caste (SC) constitutes 22.13 per cent and Schedule Tribe (ST) were 0.26 per cent.

Table – 3.8 Basic particulars of Jamra Gram Panchayat

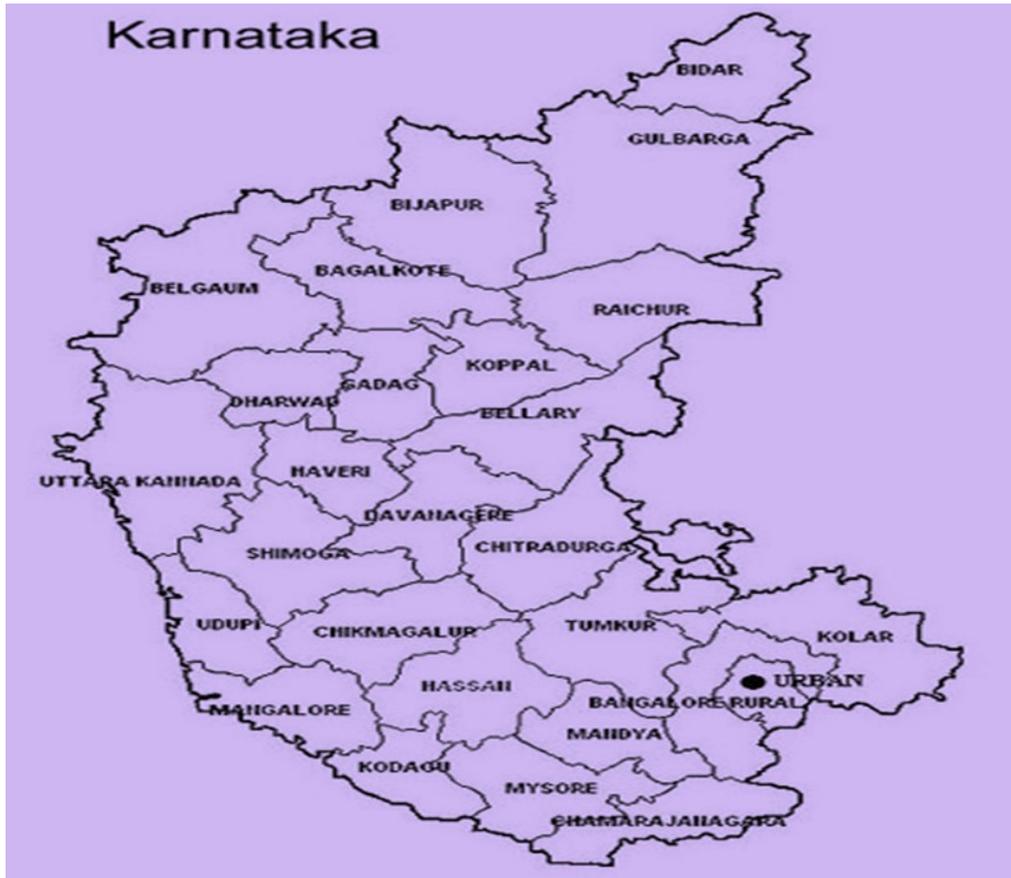
Particulars	Total	Male	Female
Total No. of Houses	<b>282</b>	-	-
Population	<b>1,134</b>	580	554
Child (0-6)	<b>171</b>	89	82
Schedule Caste	<b>251</b>	124	127
Schedule Tribe	<b>3</b>	0	3
Literacy	<b>61.79 per cent</b>	73.73 per cent	49.36 per cent
Total Workers	<b>333</b>	287	46
Main Worker	<b>283</b>	0	0
Marginal Worker	<b>50</b>	35	15

### 3.4 MADHYA PRADESH GP - 2. Rampur (Sagar District)

Rampur is a medium size village located in Rehli block, Sagar district, Madhya Pradesh with a total of 463 families residing there. The Rampur village has population of 1938 of which 1007 were males while 931 are females as per Census 2011. In Rampur village population of children with age 0-6 is 316 which makes up to 16.31 per cent of total population in village. The average sex ratio of Rampur village was 925 which was lower than Madhya Pradesh state average of 931. Child sex ratio was 1107, higher than Madhya Pradesh. Rampur village has lower literacy rate 68.00 per cent, male literacy stands at 80.16 per cent and female literacy rate was 54.38 per cent. Schedule Tribe (ST) constitutes 19.45 per cent and Schedule Caste (SC) were 16.98 per cent. This village has 99.66 per cent of main workers, 223 were cultivators and 550 were agricultural labourers.

Table – 3.9 Basic particulars of Rampur Gram Panchayat

Particulars	Total	Male	Female
Total No. of Houses	<b>463</b>	-	-
Population	<b>1,938</b>	1,007	931
Child (0-6)	<b>316</b>	150	166
Schedule Caste	<b>329</b>	176	153
Schedule Tribe	<b>377</b>	193	184
Literacy	<b>68.00 per cent</b>	80.16 per cent	54.38 per cent
Total Workers	<b>875</b>	566	309
Main Worker	<b>872</b>	0	0
Marginal Worker	<b>3</b>	1	2



Karnataka	
Dakshina kannada - Puttur Block	Koppal District - Yelburga Block

3.5 KARNATAKA GP – 1 Bevoor Gram Panchayat- ODF & RGPSA awarded GP

Bevoor village is located in Yelburga Tehsil of Koppal district in Karnataka. It is situated 27 km away from district headquarters Koppal. The total geographical area of village is 2013.54 hectares. It has a total population of 5,172 peoples consisting of 953 houses. Average sex ratio is 962 and child sex ratio is 928. In 2011, literacy rate was 68.70 per cent, comprising male literacy 80.94 per cent and female literacy rate was 56.03 per cent. Schedule Tribe (ST) constitutes 13.15 per cent and Schedule Caste (SC) was 10.61 per cent of total population in Bevoor village. The total population of the village was 2536, out of which 54.82 per cent of workers.

Particulars	Total No.
OBC House Hold	1429
SC House Hold	202
ST House Hold	221
Total Houses	1935
Primary School	4
Middle School	2
High School	2
College	1
Bus Stand	4
Primary Hospital	1
Veterinary Hospital	1
Market Building	6
Total Wards	4
Total Elected Members	17
Ananganawadi Kendra	10
H Tank	5
Hand Pumps	2
Total Motors Water Sup	13
Street Lamps	358
Solar Lamps	22

Table 3.11 MGNREGA Scheme Information from 2011-12 to 2015-16 - Grama Panchayat Bevoor

Sl. No.	Financial Year	List of Activities	Total No. Benefitted	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of People Benefitted						Total
						PH Dis-able	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women HH	
1	2011-12	38.14	52	23.22	23.22	4	179	5	47	19	566	820
2	2012-13	45.1	49	13.1	13.1	7	103	14	24	7	141	296
3	2013-14	54.8	63	32.96	32.96	5	168	14	34	11	351	583
4	2014-15	31.53	51	23.47	23.47	4	116	18	30	11	229	408
5	2015-16	35.81	68	16.17	16.17	4	51	11	17	8	93	184

Table 3.12 SBM Scheme Information from 2011-12 to 2015-16 Grama Panchayat Bevoor

Sl. No.	Financial Year	List of Activities	Total No. Benefitted	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of People Benefitted						Total
						PH Dis-able	OB C	Minori-ty	SC	ST	Women HH	
1	2011-12	6	6	472100	37400	0	3	0	1	2	0	6
2	2012-13	5	5	27260	27260	0	5	0	0	0	0	5
3	2013-14	95	95	330500	310040	4	64	13	9	5	0	95
4	2014-15	447	465	469100	469100	0	300	60	37	50	0	447
5	2015-16	268	264	338740	301452	0	185	6	30	43	0	264

**Table 3.13 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Financial Commission Grant Scheme Information from 2011-12 - Grama Panchayat**

<b>Bevoor</b>					
<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Financial Year</b>	<b>State Financial Commission Grant</b>	<b>Central Financial Commission Grant</b>	<b>Other Grant</b>	<b>SCP/STP</b>
1	2011-12	34326	34326	0	0
2	2012-13	2831319	2276752	0	0
3	2013-14	3466768	1123685	0	0
4	2014-15	2152671	2896432	0	0
5	2015-16	17517476	547197187	0	0

### 3.6 KARNATAKA GP – 2 Bannur Gram Panchayat:- (RGPSA Awarded)

Bannur village is located in Puttur Tehsil of Dakshina Kannada district in Karnataka. It is situated 4 km away from sub-district headquarters Puttur and 53 km away from district headquarters Mangalore. The total geographical area of village is 249.56 hectares. Bannur has a total population of 1,155 people having 231 houses.

The Bannur village has population of 1155 of which 582 were male while 573 were female. The average sex ratio is 985 and child sex ratio is 1164.

In 2011, literacy rate was 87.62 per cent comprising of 91.84 per cent male and female 83.23 per cent.

**Table – 3.14 Basic particulars of Bannur Gram Panchayat**

Particulars	Total	Male	Female
Total No. of Houses	<b>231</b>	-	-
Population	<b>1,155</b>	582	573
Child (0-6)	<b>145</b>	67	78
Schedule Caste	<b>119</b>	61	58
Schedule Tribe	<b>13</b>	6	7
Literacy	<b>87.62 per cent</b>	91.84 per cent	83.23 per cent
Total Workers	<b>630</b>	394	236
Main Worker	<b>544</b>	0	0
Marginal Worker	<b>86</b>	32	54

Schedule Caste (SC) constitutes 10.30 per cent while Schedule Tribe (ST) were 1.13 per cent of total population in Bannur village. This GP had toilets in all the houses, adequate supply of drinking water, 100 per cent electricity, well connected by 10 km road to NH-48. Villagers of Bannur GP are delighted that the Gram Panchayat is one of the three villages that bagged the Nirmal Gram Puraskar award in 2004, it has bagged the prestigious Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan Award in 2014. The credit goes to GP president who got elected for four consecutive terms. The panchayat has provided complete sanitation. With well-maintained roads, two government schools, six anganwadis, a library, post office and clean environment, the GP is considered a 'Model Village' by Dakshina Kannada ZP and the Central government. The serene green village, 56 km from Mangalore city, is not polluted by factories or industries. Many here work as labourers and beedi workers. The people in Bannur, Chikkamudnur and Padnur villages are cooperative. The GP gets Rs. 8,00,000 per year from the government for development, and there is no other income. The village is well maintained because of an awareness drive in the villages by the 12 elected members, with special emphasis on 'Open Defecation Free'. The GP maintains safe, child-friendly anganwadis and sanctions are provided on time.

**Table 3.14 Central and State finance Commission grants Information from 2011-12 to 2015-16**

Sl.No.	Financial Year	CFC	SFC	SCP	No. of people Beneficiary
1	2011-12	0	0	0	300
2	2012-13	0	1.22	0.24	470
3	2013-14	0	2.02	0.99	520
4	2014-15	0	1.78	0.70	370
5	2015-16	0	1.69	0.29	410

**Table 3. 15 MGNREGA Scheme Information from 2011-12 to 2015-16**

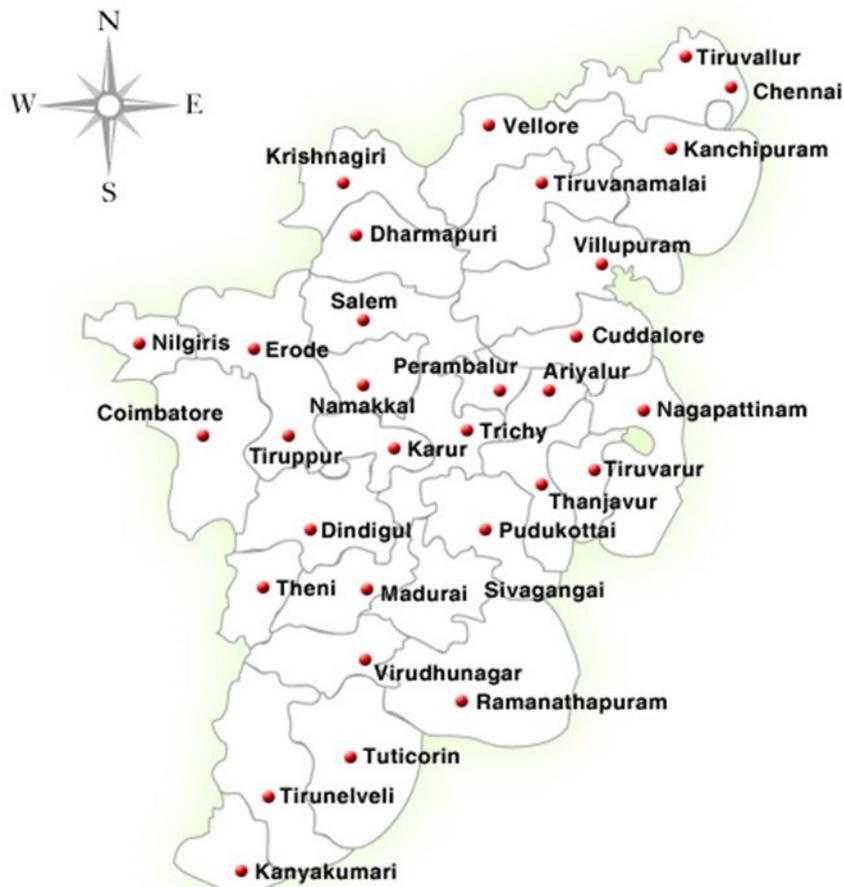
Sl. No	Financial Year	List of Individual Work	List of Community Work	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of people Beneficiary					
						BC	SC	ST	Minority	Women Households	Physically Challenged
1	2011-12	16	5	9.44	8.84	11	3	0	1	1	1
2	2012-13	32	6	5.91	5.90	21	7	0	0	3	0
3	2013-14	62	9	6.86	6.68	45	8	0	1	5	0
4	2014-15	29	1	3.63	3.25	23	3	0	1	2	0
5	2015-16	55	4	12.35	12.06	17	7	0	3	23	0

**Table 3.16 IAY Scheme Information from 2011-12 to 2015-16**

Sl. No.	Financial Year	No. of Houses Allocated	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of people Beneficiary						
					BC	SC	ST	Minority	MB C	Women Households	Physically Challenged
1	2011-12	5	2.50	2.50	3	1	0	1	0	5	0
2	2012-13	5	3.75	3.75	3	0	1	0	0	4	1
3	2013-14	6	7.50	6.25	2	3	0	1	0	5	0
4	2014-15	7	8.75	8.75	2	4	1	0	0	7	0
5	2015-16	5	7.50	1.19	2	1	2	0	0	5	0

3.7 TAMILNADU GP – 1 Nallur Gram Panchayat – RGPSA & Open Defecation Free GP Award

TAMILNADU	
The Nilgiris – Coonoor Block – Bearhatty Gram Panchayat	Tirunelveli District – Alangulam Block – Nallur Gram Panchayat



Nallur village is located in Alangulam Tehsil of Tirunelveli district in Tamil Nadu. Alangulam is nearest town to Nallur village.

The Nallur had a population of 7,828 of which 3,869 were male and 3,959 were female. The sex ratio was 1023 against state average of 996. Moreover, child Sex ratio is around 1027. The literacy rate was 82.86 per cent, male literacy was around 90.64 per cent and female literacy rate was 75.26 per cent. The panchayat has 2,228 houses to which it supplies basic amenities like water and sewerage. It authorises to build roads and impose taxes on properties coming under its jurisdiction.

Schedule Caste (SC) constitutes 2.89 per cent and Schedule Tribe (ST) were 0.17 per cent of total population. Out of total population, 4,217 were engaged in work or business activity, 2141 were males and 2076 were females. In the total 4217 working population, 98.03 per cent were engaged in main work while 1.97 per cent of total workers were engaged in marginal work.

**Table - 3.16 IAY Scheme Details Regarding 2011-12 to 2014-15 Gram Panchayat-Nallur**

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	No. of Houses allotted to the Panchayat	Total No. of People Benefitted	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of People Benefitted					
							Differently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed Family
1	2011-12	1000000	10	10	1000000	1000000	-	6	-	4	-	-
2	2012-13	1100000	11	11	1100000	1100000	-	6	2	1	2	2
3	2013-14	1080000	9	9	1080000	1080000	-	3	-	3	3	3
4	2014-15	2400000	2	2	2400000	2400000	-	1	-	-	1	1
5	2015-16	600000	5	5	600000	600000	-	1	1	-	3	3

**Table - 3.17 MGNREGA Scheme particulars during 2011-12 to 2014-15, Gram Panchayat-Nallur**

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	Total No. of Works	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of People Benefitted						Total
						Differently	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed	
1	2011-12	1650000	3	1200000	1200000	-	14108	-	92	-	-	14200
2	2012-13	1800000	3	1311815	1311815	-	15717	-	98	-	-	15815
3	2013-14	2000000	3	1701135	1701135	-	16544	-	106	-	-	16650
4	2014-15	2500000	4	2059046	2059046	-	17786	-	214	-	-	18000
5	2015-16	3600000	6	3557751	3557751	-	18554	-	196	-	-	18750

**Table - 3.18 Central Finance Commission Grants Details Regarding 2011-12 to 2014-15, Gram Panchayat-Nallur**

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	Central Finance Commission Grant	Scheduled Caste Component Plan (SCP)	Scheduled Caste Component Plan (STP)	No. of People Benefitted						Total
						Differently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed Family	
1	2011-12	-	712296	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2012-13	-	855762	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	2013-14	-	999120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	2014-15	-	745562	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
5	2015-16	-	660470	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		-	538616	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

**Table - 3.19 State Finance Commission Grants Details Regarding 2011-12 to 2014-15, Gram Panchayat-Nallur**

Sl. No.	Financial Year	SFC Grant Received	Amount Spent	Amount utilized by the Pan-	Works Carried out in Panchayat	Beneficiary Details						Total
						Differently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed	
1	2011-12	3027236	902971	-	15	-	-	-	-	-	-	15
2	2012-13	2651729	2765871	114142	31	-	-	-	-	-	-	31
3	2013-14	3280044	5115013	1834969	66	-	-	-	-	-	-	66
4	2014-15	1432579	3562222	2129643	41	-	-	-	-	-	-	41
5	2015-16	1852436	1807500	-	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	26

### 3.8 TAMILNADU GP – 2 Bearhatty Gram Panchayat, Nilgiri District

Bearhatty is situated in Coonoor block of the Nilgiris District in the State of Tamil Nadu. It is situated 14 Km from the district headquarters at Udhagamandalam. It consists of thirteen hamlets and located close to the Wellington Cantonment Area.

Most of the villagers are employed as agricultural labourers in the surrounding tea plantations. In the block, the main source of employment is plantations of tea, coffee, pepper, sandalwood, cardamom and clove. Given its locations on the hills and heavy forest cover, wild animals such as bison, elephant and cheetah are frequently sighted in the area. The Badaga community is the dominant population in the GP as well as in the district. The GP has five Adi Dravida (SC/ST) colonies. The GP has three primary schools within its jurisdiction. However, there is only one playground available at the Bearhatty Panchayat Union Primary School. Children have to go to neighbouring villages or taluk headquarters for middle and high schools. The GP has two public distribution shops. The Panchayat is headed by President and comprises nine ward members.

#### Awards and Recognition

The Panchayat has received a number of awards. The following Table provides information about the awards received the Central and State governments. In addition, the panchayat president has also received awards from private bodies in recognition of her efforts in various areas. The panchayat president has recently been nominated to be a member of the Central Steering Committee constituted under the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA) with the objective of providing overall policy direction and monitor the progress of the scheme.

**Table – 3.20 Details of the awards received by the Bearhatty Gram Panchayat**

Name of the Award	For	Awarded by	Year of Award
Nirmal Gram Puraskar	Total Sanitation	The President of India	2008
Uthamar Gandhi	Gram Panchayat Award - Best Panchayat	Chief Minister of TN	2008-09
Award for Effective and Efficient Work Done for Eradication of Child Labour	Eradicating Child Labour	Department of Labour, Government of Tamil Nadu	2008
District Collector's Award	Upliftment and welfare of the Panchayat	District Collector	2008
Rashtriya Ekta Samman Award		Governor, Tamil Nadu	2010
Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore Samman		Governor, Tamil Nadu	2011
PanchayatSashakti Karan Puraskar	Panchayat Performance	Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of In-	2012

**Table - 3. 21 MGNREGA Scheme Details during 2011-12 to 2014-15 Bearhatty Gram Panchayat**

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	Total No. of Works	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of People Benefitted						Total
						Differently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed Family	
1	2011-12	20.00	8	20.00	19.98	15	650	20	40	1	340	
2	2012-13	41.00	11	41.00	38.99	20	610	18	38	1	380	
3	2013-14	44.36	21	44.36	37.66	25	580	15	40	1	410	
4	2014-15	39.08	150	39.08	37.82	27	515	17	39	1	560	
5	2015-16	94.67	229	94.67	65.96	29	640	15	43	1	545	

**Table - 3.22 IAY Scheme Details during 2011-12 to 2014-15**

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	No. of Houses Allotted to the Panchayat	Total No. of People Benefitted	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of People Benefitted						Total
							Differently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed Family	
1	2011-12	7,00,000	7	7	7,00,000	7,00,000	4	-	-	3	-	0	7
2	2012-13	7,00,000	7	7	7,00,000	7,00,000	4	-	-	3	-	0	7
3	2013-14	7,20,000	6	6	7,20,000	7,20,000	3	-	-	3	-	0	6
4	2014-15	36,000	3	3	36,000	36,000	-	-	-	3	-	0	3
5	2015-16	94.67	3	3	36,000	36,000	-	1	-	2	-	0	3

**Table – 3.23 Swachh Bharat Mission Scheme Details during 2011-12 to 2014-15 Bearhatty Gram Panchayat**

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	List of Activities	Total No. of People Benefitted	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of People Benefitted						Total
							Differently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed	
1	2011-12	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2012-13	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	2013-14	-		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
4	2014-15	11,65,000		111	11,65,000	11,65,000	5	46	1	38	-	21	111
5	2015-16	22,80,000		190	22,80,000	22,80,000	6	76	2	83	-	23	190

**Table – 3.24 Central and State Finance Commission Grants Details during 2011-12 to 2014-15 Bearhatty Gram Panchayat**

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	State Finance Commission Grant	Central Finance Commission Grant	Scheduled Caste Component Plan (SCP)	Scheduled Tribe Component Plan (STP)	No. of People Benefitted						Total
							Differently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed Family	
1	2011-12	-	11.201	3.213	-	-	24	550	13	25	1	320	-
2	2012-13	-	10.885	3.526	-	-	17	595	12	31	1	336	-
3	2013-14	-	9.395	0.248	-	-	19	630	11	34	1	407	-
4	2014-15	-	25.484	4.195	-	-	20	673	10	41	1	585	-
5	2015-16	-	11.80	-	-	-	17	712	13	38	1	562	-

Table - 3.25 NRLM Schemes Details during 2011-12 to 2014-15 Gram Panchayat Bearhatty

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Total Budget	No. of Programmes/ Activities	Total No. of People Benefitted	Fund Received	Fund Spent	No. of People Benefitted						Total
							Differently abled	OBC	Minority	SC	ST	Women Headed	
1	2011-12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	2012-13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	2013-14	-	VPRC Members Training	27	4,04,814	28,730	1	-	18	6	-	2	27
4	2014-15	-	CDF Training book keeper salary, VPRC 3-	60	3,76,084	2,93,854	6	-	19	26	-	9	60
5	2015-16	-	SHG Training, SAC Training	69	6,81,700	6,56,615	11	-	34	19	-	5	69

## Chapter – 4

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter presents the field data collected from the respondents selected for the study, 10 per cent samples were selected from each GP of selected four States, namely Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. The respondents were the members of Gram Panchayats, marginalised groups living in the panchayat were exclusively covered. The major groups selected for the study were SC, ST, religious minority, differently abled and women. In each group 10 per cent sample were covered for detailed data collection. This chapter makes critical analysis of field data and presents inferences based on the field observations and outcome of FDGs.

#### 4.1 Personal Particulars of the Sample population

**Table 4.1: Sex-wise Distribution of Respondents**

Sex	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Male	159 (64.4%)	137 (56.4%)	88 (40.4%)	111 (46.4%)	495 (52.3%)
Female	88 (35.6%)	106 (43.6%)	130 (59.6%)	128 (53.6%)	452 (47.7%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population

The Table 4.1 presents sex-wise distribution of respondents of the present study. The study focused to cover marginalised sections benefitted under different rural development schemes of the study region. It includes women as one category of study respondents; therefore, the study represents almost equal percentage of men and women as respondents. Since the study selected 10 per cent of the households of the selected study panchayats from each State, varied numbers of beneficiaries were interviewed for detailed data collection. Out of 947 respondents, 485 (52.3 per cent) were male and remaining 452 (47.7 per cent) were female. State wise data distribution shows, among four sample States, in Karnataka and MP females were outnumbered. It shows that, in majority cases more men used to receive the benefits under government schemes but due to purposeful inclusion of women for the study, it reflects more women respondents.

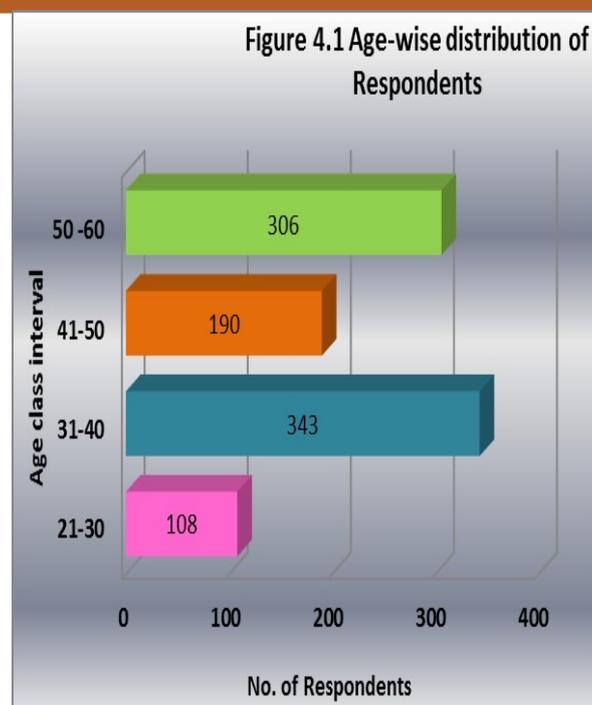
**Table 4.2: Age-wise Distribution of Respondents**

Age class interval	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
21-30	5 (2.0%)	89 (36.6%)	10 (4.6%)	4 (1.6%)	108 (11.4%)
31-40	31 (12.6%)	66 (27.2%)	69 (31.7%)	177 (74.1%)	343 (36.2%)
41-50	59 (23.9%)	38 (15.6%)	64 (29.4%)	29 (12.1%)	190 (20.1%)
50 -60	152 (61.5%)	50 (20.6%)	75 (34.4%)	29 (12.1%)	306 (32.3%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population

The study purposely covered the age group of above 20 years, because they used to be very active in participation in the process of development. As revealed in the Table 4.2, the study has respondents aged between 20 to 60 years. It is worthwhile to note that, the majority, i.e., 343 (36.2 per cent) respondents were in the age group of 31-40, followed by 306 (32.3 per cent) in the age group of 50-60 and 190 (20.1 per cent) were in the age group of 41-50. Larger majority respondents are in the age between 31-60 years. There was much dissimilarity among the sample States regarding age classification, viz. in TN majority were above 50 years, but in the State of MP majority were in the age group of 31-40 years. In the case of West Bengal majority respondents are in the age group of 21-40. It reflects in West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh youngsters getting benefits compared to other States.



**Table 4.3: Religious Status of the Sample Population**

Religion	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Hindu	116 (47.0%)	227 (93.4%)	180 (82.6%)	159 (66.6%)	682 (72.0%)
Muslim	2 (0.8%)	15 (6.2%)	16 (7.3%)	79 (33.1%)	112 (11.8%)
Christian	128 (51.8%)	0.0	20 (9.2%)	0.0	148 (15.6%)
Others	1 (0.4)	1 (0.4%)	2 (0.9%)	1 (0.4%)	5 (0.5%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population

As proportionate to the national religious composition, this study also has majority of 682 (72.0 per cent) belonging to the Hindu religion, another 148 (11.8 per cent) respondents belong to Christianity and the remaining 112 (11.8 per cent) belong to the Islam religion. This study purposely selected 10 per cent of different marginalised groups, hence it has good number of representations in both minority groups of Muslims and Christians.

Indian constitution recognises socially marginalised communities based on the caste they belong to. On the basis of caste, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC) and the religious minorities, and also women are considered as marginal sections. People who are marginalised have relatively little control over their lives, and the resources available to them. The table reflects the number of respondents selected from each category of marginalised groups, i.e., out of total 947 respondents selected for the study, 378 (39.9 per cent) were women belong to different social groups, 270 (28.5 per cent) are SC&STs, 260 (27.5 per cent) represents

minority comprising both Christianity and Islam and the study also covered 39 (4.1 per cent) physically challenged persons belonging to different communities and religions.

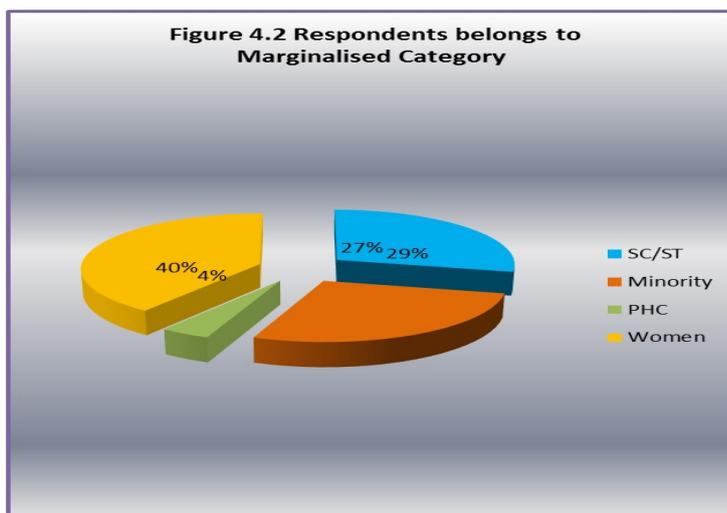
**Table 4.4: Respondents belongs to Marginalised Category**

Marginalised Category	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
SC/ST	16 (6.5%)	161 (66.3%)	50 (22.9%)	43 (18.0%)	270 (28.5%)
Minority	93 (37.7%)	68 (28.0%)	35 (16.1%)	64 (26.8%)	260 (27.5%)
PHC	4 (1.6%)	0 (0.0)	24 (11.0%)	11 (4.6%)	39 (4.1%)
Women	134 (54.3%)	14 (5.8%)	109 (50.0%)	121 (50.6%)	378 (39.9%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population

Indian constitution recognises socially marginalised communities based on the caste they belong to. On the basis of caste, Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Other Backward Classes (OBC) and the religious minorities, and also women are considered as marginal sections. People who are marginalised have relatively little control over their lives, and the resources available to them. The table reflects the number of respondents selected from each category of marginalised groups, i.e., out of total 947 respondents selected for the study, 378 (39.9 per cent) were women belong to different social groups, 270 (28.5 per cent) are SC&STs, 260 (27.5 per cent) represents minority comprising both Christianity and Islam and the study also covered 39 (4.1 per cent) physically



challenged persons belonging to different communities and religions.

**Table 4.5: Respondents belongs to Different Communities**

Community	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
SC	174 (70.4%)	146 (60.3%)	183 (83.9%)	112 (46.8%)	615 (64.9%)
ST	2 (0.8%)	71 (29.2%)	29 (13.3%)	50 (20.9%)	152 (16.0%)
MBC/OBC	71 (29.4%)	26 (10.7%)	6 (2.8%)	77 (32.2%)	180 (19.0%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Based on the available data, the respondents are classified under three major caste groups, viz. Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Most Backward Caste (MBC) or Other Backward Caste (OBC). In general, the marginalised groups predominantly belong to SC&ST and MBC communities in India. Tamil Nadu State has less ST population and in the selected two panchayats, out of 10 per cent population selected for the study only two households were found from the ST group but more were from West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. The Scheduled Caste (SC) respondents were very high, i.e., in Tamil Nadu (70 per cent), Karnataka (84 per cent) and in West Bengal (60 per cent) and also significant numbers from Madhya Pradesh (46.8 per cent). The category of MBC and OBC are belonging of same economic group but those people are called MBC in North Indian States but they are named Other Backward Community (OBC) in Tamil Nadu. The studies found that, majority of the marginalised people are in SC&ST.

**Table 4.6: Educational Status of the sample population**

Education	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Illiterate	71 (28.7%)	168 (69.1%)	88 (40.4%)	28 (11.7%)	355 (37.5%)
Primary	87 (35.2%)	48 (19.8%)	92 (42.2%)	134 (56.1%)	361 (38.1%)
Secondary	54 (21.9%)	26 (10.7%)	30 (13.8%)	68 (28.5%)	178 (18.8%)
Hr. Sec.	12 (4.9%)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.9%)	3 (1.3%)	17 (1.8%)
College	23 (9.3%)	1 (0.4%)	6 (2.8%)	6 (2.5%)	36 (3.8%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The right to education is universal and does not allow for any form of exclusion or discrimination. However, developing countries face challenges guaranteeing equal opportunities to all in accessing education and within education systems. Marginalised groups are often left behind by national educational policies, denying many people their right to education. Understanding the status of educational attainment of the study population gives some clue, why those people became marginalised and discriminated. The differences in the levels of education among the different social groups are examined on the basis of the data collected from field. It presents area-wise educational levels among the social groups in the study region The Table 4.6 gives educational particulars of the respondents. Over all study responses show that, 355 (37.5 per cent) respondents are illiterates. Among the literates, 361 (38.1 per cent) have attended school only up to primary level. Around 18.8 per cent respondents studied up to secondary schooling and only 36 (1.8 per cent) respondents attended higher education up to college level. Discussion from respondents revealed that low socio-economic condition in general and lack of interest and encouragement in particular resulted to high illiteracy. Moreover, it was noted that, even among the literates, people who attended formal schooling up to primary school find it difficult in reading and writing. Only a very few respondents expressed confidence of reading and writing. Lack of formal or vocational education has led to lack of skills; it further shrunk, the awful or gainful employment avenues, and ultimately ended as low paid agricultural labourers. Among illiterates' higher percent-

ages prevail in the State of West Bengal (69 per cent) comparing to other States followed by around (40 per cent) in Karnataka. Better literacy rate available in the state of Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh.

**Table 4.7: Marital Status of the Respondents**

Marital Status	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Married	235 (95.1%)	229 (94.2%)	195 (89.4%)	228 (95.4%)	887 (93.7%)
Not married	12 (4.9%)	14 (5.8%)	23 (10.6%)	11 (4.6%)	60 (6.3%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population

Regarding marital status of respondents, the table 4.7 shows, 887 (93.7 per cent) were married and 60 (6.3 per cent) are unmarried. In India, early marriage and child marriages are very common, especially in rural areas and particularly among the poor and poorest of the poor. Moreover, majority of the development services delivered by the government institutions consider 'family' as unit of beneficiary, therefore, respondents supposed to be married.

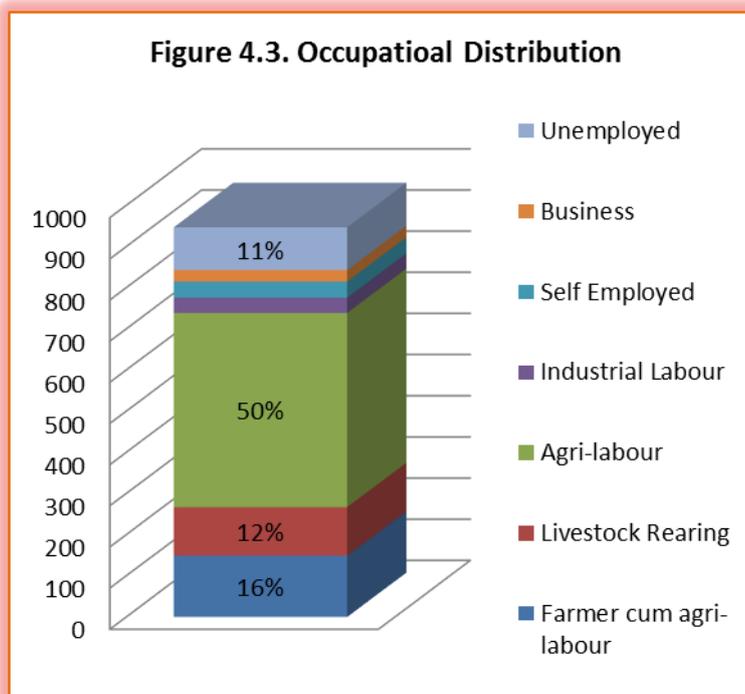
**Table 4.8: Distribution of data based on Occupation**

Occupation	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Farmer cum agri-labour	15 (6.1%)	38 (9.5%)	33 (5.0%)	63 (2.5%)	149 (15.7%)
Livestock Rearing	31 (12.5%)	72 (29.7%)	10 (4.6%)	5 (2.1%)	118 (12.5%)
Agri-labour	104 (42.1%)	124 (51.0%)	107 (49.1%)	137 (57.3%)	472 (49.8%)
Industrial Labour	25 (10.1%)	3 (1.2%)	6 (2.8%)	3 (1.3%)	37 (3.9%)
Self Employed	22 (8.9%)	0 (0.0%)	12 (5.5%)	5 (2.1%)	39 (4.1%)
Business	16 (6.5%)	5 (2.1%)	3 (1.4%)	4 (1.7%)	28 (3.0%)
Unemployed	34 (13.8%)	1 (0.4%)	47 (21.6%)	22 (9.2%)	104 (11.0%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population

Economic condition in general is an outcome of the occupational structure. Most SCs and STs continue in their traditional hereditary occupations, mostly agriculture, which is the principal source of livelihood for these communities. In general, poor people in rural areas may not stay ideal, except disabled. Data on the present occupational statuses of the respondents are given in the Table 4.8. From the data, it is clear that among the total of 947 respondents of study, 472 (50 per cent) were agriculture labours, followed by 149 (15.7 per cent) were engaged in farming during rainy season otherwise basically belong to agricultural labour category, 118 (12.5 per cent) were engaged in livestock rearing as main source of income. There were around 4 per cent each engaged in industrial labour and doing a kind of self-employment, remaining 3 per cent were in business. The study has around 11 per cent unemployment among respondents. They are classified as labourers because their major portion of income comes from wage. As agriculture is a seasonal activity both farmers and agricultural workers had to face problem of acute unemployment during drought. Even, people who engaged in animal husbandry also face difficulties due to non-availability of fodder and unsuitable weather. Many families sold their animals to avoid loss on starvation death.



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**Table 4.9: Possession of Ration Card**

Responses	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Yes	244 (98.8%)	218 (89.7%)	213 (97.7%)	226 (94.6%)	901 (95.1%)
No	3 (1.2%)	25 (10.3%)	5 (2.3%)	13 (5.4%)	46 (4.9%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Possessing a ration card is an important subsistence tool for the poor, providing proof of identity and a connection with government databases. India's Public Distribution System (PDS) is based on the ration card, it uses to establish identity, eligibility and entitlement. Marginalised sections being poor and poorest of the poor, it is essential to obtain ration card, majority cases of families survive with the food materials supplied free or on subsidised prices under PDS system. It protects poor people from starvation deaths. According to the table, around 95 per cent of the households have the ration card in the study regions. But unfortunately, 5 per cent families do not have this very important document, migrant settlers and newly emerged families could not get the ration cards because this card is issued by the State governments.

#### 4.2 Family Particulars of the Sample Populations

**Table 4.10 : Possession of type of Ration Card**

Type of Ration Card	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
BPL	220 (89.1%)	200 (82.3%)	200 (91.7%)	205 (85.8%)	825 (87.1%)
AAY	24 (9.7%)	18 (7.4%)	11 (5.0%)	9 (3.9%)	62 (6.5%)
Annapurna	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.9%)	12 (0.4%)	14 (1.5%)
No	3 (1.2%)	25 (10.3%)	5 (2.3%)	13 (5.4%)	46 (4.9%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population

State governments in India issue different types of ration cards. They are provided according to the economic status of the families; for instance: BPL (Below Poverty Line), APL (Above Poverty Line), Antyodaya Families, Annapurna and High Income Group people. The groups may be different in each State. **Antyodaya ration card** is issued to the poorest families having no stable income. Old age men, women, unemployed people and labours come under this category. **BPL ration card** is issued to the families that live below the poverty line who have annual income of Rs.27,000 or less. APL ration card is issued to the people who live above the defined poverty line and there is no annual income limit under this category. Under Annapurna scheme, 10 kg of rice is distributed free of cost to the old indigent citizens of 65 years of age and above who are not getting benefitted under Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme. In the study region, around 87 per cent families had BPL cards, 6.5 per cent have ration cards under the category of Antyodaya Anna Yojana and only around 1.5 per cent families have Annapurna cards.

**Table 4.11 : Presentation of data related to type of Family of the respondents**

Type of Family	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Nuclear	184 (74.5%)	166 (68.3%)	203 (93.1%)	183 (76.6%)	736 (77.7%)
Joint Family	63 (25.5%)	77 (31.7%)	15 (6.9%)	56 (23.4%)	211 (22.3%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

**Table 4.12 : Size of the Family of the Sample Households**

Family Size class interval	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
1-2 members	108 (43.7%)	28 (11.5%)	21 (9.6%)	12 (5.0%)	169 (17.8%)
3-4 members	48 (19.4%)	40 (16.5%)	25 (11.5%)	32 (13.4%)	145 (15.3%)
5-6 members	84 (34.0%)	166 (68.3)	162 (74.3%)	179 (74.9%)	591 (62.4%)
Above 6	7 (2.8%)	9 (3.7%)	10 (4.6%)	16 (6.7%)	42 (4.4%)
Total	247 (100.0)	243 (100.0)	218 (100.0)	221 (100.0)	929 (100.0)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Data related to family size of the respondents are furnished in the table 4.12. According to the table, majority of the families, i.e., 591 (62.4 per cent) in the study region have family size of 5-6 members, followed by 169 (23.8 per cent) respondents' families are having family size of 1 or 2 members, 145 (15.3 per cent) are having family size between 3-4 members. Only 42 (4.4 per cent) are having more than 6 members. The reason for having bigger family size was informally enquired; they strongly believe that more hands will fetch more income. Illiteracy, lack of knowledge on family planning practices and lack of knowledge on the importance of having small family size in the earlier days, lead to have more number of children. Many research studies which dealt with marginalised groups are of similar opinion that majority of poor families prefer to have more number of children to bring more earnings to supplement their family income. This study also shows majority had more number of family members.

**Table 4.13: Annual Income of the Sample Households**

Income Class interval (in Rs)	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
< 20,000	69 (27.9%)	20 (8.2%)	60 (27.5%)	13 (5.4%)	162 (17.1%)
20,001<30,000	104 (42.1%)	184 (75.7%)	120 (55.0%)	209 (87.4%)	617 (65.2%)
30,001<40,000	69 (27.9%)	37 (15.2%)	22 (10.1%)	12 (5.0%)	140 (14.8%)
40,001<50,000	4 (1.6%)	2 (0.8%)	9 (4.1%)	5 (2.1%)	20 (2.1%)
50,000<	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0)	7 (3.2%)	0 (0.0)	8 (0.8%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Higher average annual income will lead to higher expenditure especially on buying of comfort needs to lead a better life. Hence, any study on the human nature has to investigate level of income under various sources. The present study also collected the income particulars of the sample households and data were reported in the Table 4.13. Majority of the respondents, i.e., 617 (65.2 per cent) received annual income between Rs. 20001 - 30000. Around 17 per cent have got annual income less than Rs.20,000, followed by another around 15 per cent of respondents received between Rs.30001-40000 and 2 per cent of the respondents received annual income between Rs. 40001 - 50000. State wise income earning pattern also reflects similar scenario, in all sample States majority households, annual income was between Rs. 20001 - 30000.

High level of illiteracy, particularly among women, has been a crucial factor not only in perpetuating economic backwardness but also for high population growth. The persistence of high illiteracy has created a situation where poverty and population are feeding each other. It is well understood that, income and expenditure are the most important criteria to measure the economic status of any individual or a family. Income poverty is only one of the multiple deprivations that the SC and ST have continuously suffered, even after nearly six decades of development planning. Across social groups, the percentage of population living below the poverty line is the highest among the ST and SC communities.

**Table 4.14: Annual Family Expenditure**

Expenditure class interval (in Rs.)	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
< 20,000	60 (24.3%)	37 (15.2%)	52 (23.9%)	21 (8.8%)	170 (18.0%)
20,001<30,000	114 (46.2%)	167 (68.7%)	132 (60.6%)	186 (77.8%)	599 (63.3%)
30,001<40,000	36 (14.6%)	34 (14.0%)	26 (11.9%)	29 (12.1%)	125 (13.2%)
40,001<50,000	36 (14.6%)	5 (2.1%)	6 (2.8%)	3 (1.3%)	50 (5.3%)
50,000<	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.9%)	0 (0.0)	3 (0.3%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The annual family expenditure of the study regions was examined and collected data are depicted in the Table 4.14. Data shows, the study respondents having a compelled pattern of expenditure managed to spend within the income earned by them. It shows, majority of the respondents, i.e., 599 (63.3 per cent) family expenditure is in the range of Rs. 20001 to 30000. Especially, there are, families having expenditure below Rs. 20,000 were 170 (18.0 per cent). Around 125 (13.2 per cent) families have annual expenditure between Rs. 30001 to 40000, followed by 50 (5.3 per cent) families fall in the category between Rs. 40001 to 50000. It seems, comparison between income and expenditure reflects majority respondents were able to manage their family expenditure within the limit of their family income and also some respondents saved money to meet the unforeseen events. It is possible due to supply of food grains and other commodities with subsidised rates through PDS system. It was observed that, respondents are able to restrict themselves to purchase only basic necessities not even the next level of comfort needs. It was told that, they cannot borrow due to the reasons that they could not pay back and no money-lender or landlords extend financial assistance due to our deprived conditions.

**Table 4.15: Type of House Ownership**

Ownership	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Owned	202 (81.8%)	242 (99.6%)	212 (97.2%)	218 (91.2%)	874 (92.3%)
Rented	24 (9.7%)	1 (0.4%)	3 (1.4%)	17 (7.1%)	45 (4.8%)
Others	21 (8.5%)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.4%)	4 (1.7%)	28 (3.0%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field. # Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Table 4.15 provide the status of house ownership particulars of respondents in the study area. Among total study respondents, 874 (92.3 per cent) are having own house. Only around 4.8 per cent lived in rented house. Even though majority are having own house, most of them are in damaged condition which reveal their poor socio-economic status.

### Sources of fund for house construction

A house is an economic asset and contributes to upward social mobility with salutary impact on health and educational achievement. The tangible and intangible benefits flowing from a permanent house are numerous and invaluable to both the family and the local economy. Housing is a basic necessity and government across the country have been struggling to provide it to every section of the society. Providing housing to its people becomes even more critical for a social-welfare state such as India. This is why housing has been the prime focus of all the governments since Independence. The rural housing scheme of (Earlier IAY) Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana – Gramin and also special programmes of the State governments are trying to meet the housing demand of their population every year. Under IAY/PMAY, financial assistance is provided for construction of pucca house to all houseless and households living in dilapidated houses.

**Table 4.16 : Sources of fund for house construction**

Source of Fund	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Own Money	170 (81.3%)	38 (15.6%)	82 (38.5%)	76 (34.9%)	366 (41.4%)
Government Support	22 (10.5%)	115 (47.3%)	19 (8.9%)	8 (3.7%)	164 (18.6%)
Own & Govt.	13 (6.2%)	83 (34.2%)	112 (52.6%)	129 (59.2%)	337 (38.2%)
Parental Property	4 (1.9%)	5 (2.1%)	0 (0.0)	4 (1.8%)	13 (1.5%)
Other Organization Help (specify)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.5%)	3 (0.3%)
Total	209 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	213 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	883 (100.0%)

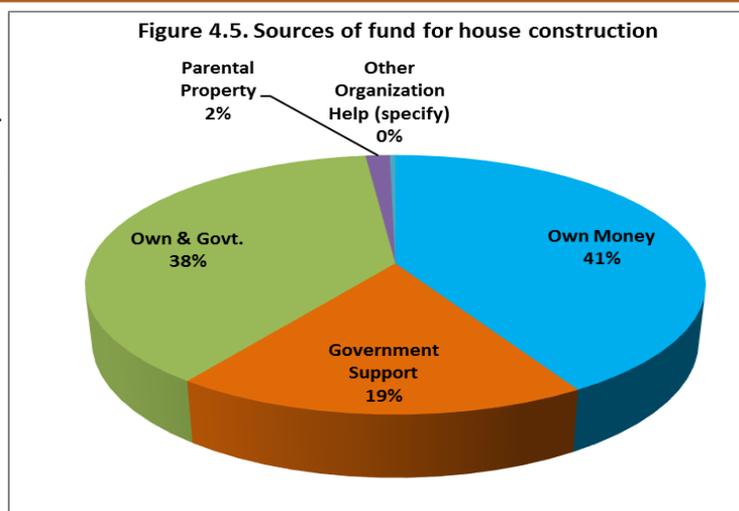
Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Every family in the country put almost care and effort to build own house through personal money or with assistance of the Central and State government. Due to the conditions for eligibility and non-availability of own homestead area and also lack of additional money required to complete the house, many real poor and needy people could not get the benefits of the housing schemes. Even the government is unable to fulfil the ever increasing demand of the housing need due to the increasing population and breaking of joint family system.

It was enquired on the efforts put on the construction house by own money or assistance received among the respondents of the present study. It was observed that 366 (41.4 per cent) respondents built their house on their own, only

164 (18.6 per cent) houses were constructed with the help of government financial assistance and 337 (38.2 per cent) were received money under different types of housing schemes but they also contributed own money for completion of house due to the inadequacy of the grant given under the housing scheme.



### 4.3 Status of Household basic Amenities

**Table 4.17: Type of Housing**

House Types	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Hut	28 (11.3%)	7 (2.9%)	17 (7.8%)	13 (5.4%)	65 (6.9%)
Mud wall with thatched roof	58 (23.5%)	15 (6.2%)	40 (18.3%)	54 (22.6%)	167 (17.6%)
Tiled	95 (38.5%)	57 (23.5%)	74 (33.9%)	65 (27.2%)	291 (30.7%)
RCC	60 (24.3%)	65 (26.7%)	87 (39.9%)	93 (38.9%)	305 (32.2%)
Others (specify)	6 (2.4%)	99 (40.7%)	0 (0.0)	14 (5.9%)	119 (12.6%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

In the previous table, people who do not have permanent structure in the own homestead area were considered as 'others' category. The nature of housing structures was identified and status is reported in the Table 4.17. Majority people (32.2 per cent) have pucca houses built with RCC roof and 291 (30.7 per cent) have built houses with brick wall and tiled roof. It is understood that, only 17.6 per cent having mud wall with thatched roof. More than 12 per cent mostly migrant labours settled in the villages were live in other type of houses made up with mud wall with thatches and other agricultural waste materials for wall as well as for roof. The pucca and semi-pucca houses were built under the government schemes.

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

**Table 4.18: Status of Electricity in respondent's households**

Electricity	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Yes	229 (92.7%)	234 (96.3%)	211 (96.8%)	229 (95.8%)	903 (95.4%)
No	18 (7.3%)	9 (3.7%)	7 (3.2%)	10 (4.2%)	44 (4.6%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Regarding, availability of electricity in the respondents' households noticed that, majority 903 (95.4 per cent) were electrified. Only 44 (4.6 per cent) houses were not electrified.

**Table 4.19: Source of fund for Electricity Connection**

Type of Connection	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Free Connection	22 (9.6%)	66 (28.2%)	29 (13.7%)	30 (13.1%)	147 (18.7%)
Own Expenditure	207 (90.4%)	168 (71.8%)	182 (86.3%)	199 (86.9%)	756 (81.3%)
Total	229 (100.0%)	234 (100.0%)	211 (100.0%)	229 (100.0%)	903 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The table gives the particulars related to the nature of electricity connection availed by the study sample respondents in the study area and details on the connections are obtained through government assistance. It reflects that, out of 903 electrified houses, 756 (81.3 per cent) obtained electricity through own expenditures and only 147 (18.7 per cent) together in all the sample States used the government assistance and connections on free of cost.

**Table 4.20: Status of availability of Toilet Facility at respondent's households**

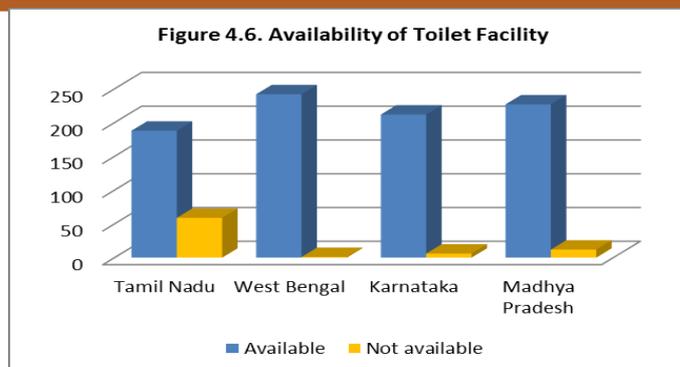
Toilet Facility	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Available	188 (76.1%)	242 (99.6%)	212 (97.2%)	227 (95.0%)	869 (91.8%)
Not available	59 (23.9%)	1 (0.4%)	6 (2.8%)	12 (5.0%)	78 (8.2%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Poor health in developing countries is largely due to diseases like cholera, dysentery, gastroenteritis and worm infections carried by contaminated food, water and ground due to open defecation.

Effective sanitation is an important way of reducing the incidence of such diseases. In order to ensure sanitation facilities in rural areas with the broader goal to eradicate the practice of open defecation, a comprehensive programme called 'Total Sanitation Campaign' presently it is called Swachh Bharat Abhiyan was launched by Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission, Government of India to cover all households with water and sanitation facilities



and promote hygienic behaviour for overall improvement of health and sanitation in rural areas. The programme is demand-driven and people-centered. All the panchayats selected for the study have received Nirmal Puraskar Award by fulfilling the condition of construction of sanitary latrines for all the households within the panchayats. The Gram Panchayats have adopted resolution to ban open defecation within its entire area inclusive of all habitations and villages. Data related to availability of toilet facility among study households are presented in the table 4.20. It is observed, 91.8 per cent of households have toilets.

**Table 4.21: Sources of funds for construction of Toilets**

Source	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Govt. Scheme	131 (69.7%)	208 (85.9%)	140 (66.0%)	211 (93.0%)	690 (79.4%)
Own Establishment	57 (30.3%)	34 (14.1%)	72 (34.0%)	16 (7.0%)	179 (20.6%)
Total	188 (100.0%)	242 (100.0%)	212 (100.0%)	227 (100.0%)	869 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

It was observed, in the study region majority of the toilets were constructed with the help of government funding. At the beginning, the panchayats were in the race of bringing NGP award for the panchayat, later due to a number of initiatives and IEC methods people as well as panchayat representatives realised the importance of use and adhering of the sanitation practices. It stimulated around 20 per cent of the households to build toilets even with their own money. NGP seeks to recognise the efforts made by PRIs and institutions who have contributed significantly towards ensuring full sanitation coverage in their areas of operation.

**Table 4.22: Status of Use of Toilets**

Status	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
In use	218 (88.3%)	240 (98.8%)	216 (99.1%)	213 (93.0%)	887 (94.7%)
Not in use	29 (11.7%)	3 (1.2%)	2 (0.9%)	16 (7.0%)	50 (5.3%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	229 (100.0%)	937 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The country level scenario on use of toilets in India, studies have shown that the vast majority were not being used, especially in rural areas. In some cases, it is because the toilets were not connected to clean water and sewers. But more importantly, there has been no widespread effort to change the country's culture of open defecation and lack of sanitation. But in the case of selected Gram Panchayats in this study show encouraging trend that, 94.7 per cent households reported they are using toilets regularly and accustom to the behaviour of toilet use because of the scheme called Total Sanitation Campaign. Swachh Bharat laid strong emphasis on Information, Education and Communication (IEC), capacity building and hygiene education for effective behaviour change with the involvement of PRIs, CBOs, NGOs, etc.

**Table 4.23: Sources of Cooking Fuel used by the Sample Households**

Cooking Device	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Fire Wood	33 (13.3%)	144 (59.2%)	149 (68.3%)	147 (61.5%)	470 (49.6%)
Gas	131 (53.0%)	1 (0.4%)	41 (18.8%)	32 (13.4%)	181 (19.1%)
Kerosene Oil	10 (4.0%)	6 (2.5%)	25 (11.5%)	5 (2.1%)	46 (4.9%)
Gas and Fire Wood	6 (2.4%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	12 (5.0%)	18 (1.9%)
Kerosene, Wood, Agri-Waste	67 (27.1%)	92 (37.9%)	3 (1.4%)	43 (18.0%)	200 (21.1%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Use of type of cooking devices is one of the indicators determining the socio-economic conditions of the households. An analysis was made to identify the type of material used for cooking, reflects around 50 per cent of the households under the study used firewood as predominant source fuel for cooking, another 19 per cent use the LPG as fuel source. It is a good indication that poor people also understood the benefits of best alternative cooking devices. Around, 21 per cent of households use agricultural waste, firewood materials available in their own farm or neighbour's farms and sometime kerosene also used as material for cooking. Especially, poor people in rural areas unable to purchase luxury type of cooking materials or they accustom to use freely available stakes from the agricultural field. It is to be concluded that, more number of households belonging to SC and ST community use freely available agriculture waste.

**Table 4.24: Source of Drinking Water**

Type of source	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Piped Water	189 (76.5%)	8 (3.3%)	139 (63.8%)	81 (33.9%)	417 (44.0%)
Hand Pump	0 (0.0)	207 (85.2%)	20 (9.2%)	0 (0.0)	227 (24.0%)
Combined Facility	57 (23.1%)	28 (11.5%)	48 (22.0%)	146 (61.1%)	279 (29.5%)
Others (specify)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0)	11 (5.0%)	12 (5.0%)	24 (2.5%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Type and source of drinking water and its access to the study population was enquired and data are presented in the table 4.24. Supply of drinking water is one of the most important functions of the Gram Panchayat. In urban areas, urban local bodies make assured supply of water to their dwellers or they have access to purchase water from the supplying agencies. But it is not possible for the rural dwellers, it is hurdled with many factors viz. lack of money to create own source of drinking water, not understanding the consequences of the adulterated or contaminated water. This has been successfully achieved by all the panchayats on different modes. According to the table, study area has very good system of drinking water supply due to responsible approaches. The table shows around 44 per cent of people bring drinking water from common water tapes established by the Gram Panchayat, around 24 per cent overall and majority in west Bengal use hand pump as source of water. Around 30 per cent were using combined facility, i.e., collecting from both common land post as well as hand pumps. Majority SC population depends on either common piped water source or hand pump.

**Table 4.25 : Drainage Connectivity**

Status	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Connected	236 (95.5%)	217 (89.3%)	217 (99.5%)	230 (96.2%)	900 (95.0%)
Not Connected	11 (4.5%)	26 (10.7%)	1 (0.5%)	9 (3.8%)	47 (5.0%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population

**Table 4.26: Drainage Connectivity for the streets**

Status	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Connected	236 (95.5%)	243 (100.0%)	217 (99.5%)	227 (95.0%)	923 (97.5%)
Not Connected	11 (4.5%)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.5%)	12 (5.0%)	24 (2.5%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The table 4.26 presents responses given by the respondents from the study area on the availability of drainage facility in their houses and connectivity with the street drainage system. The data reflects that, in 97.5 per cent of the habitations drainage facility is available. Availability of drainage system, due to proper connectivity, drainage water flows to its destination safely, which avoided the causes of insanitation to the dwellers. Some of the village roads are brick paved with drains for waste disposal. But these have not served the required purpose due to improper slopes, insufficient maintenance and unpredictable flow of water. Few villages especially in MP, West Bengal and Nilgiri district of Tamil Nadu having their own source of water supply like hand pumps discharge more water on the streets. Furthermore, the agricultural waste and domestic refuse collected in the drains obstructs the flow of water and ultimately, all these things appear on the streets.

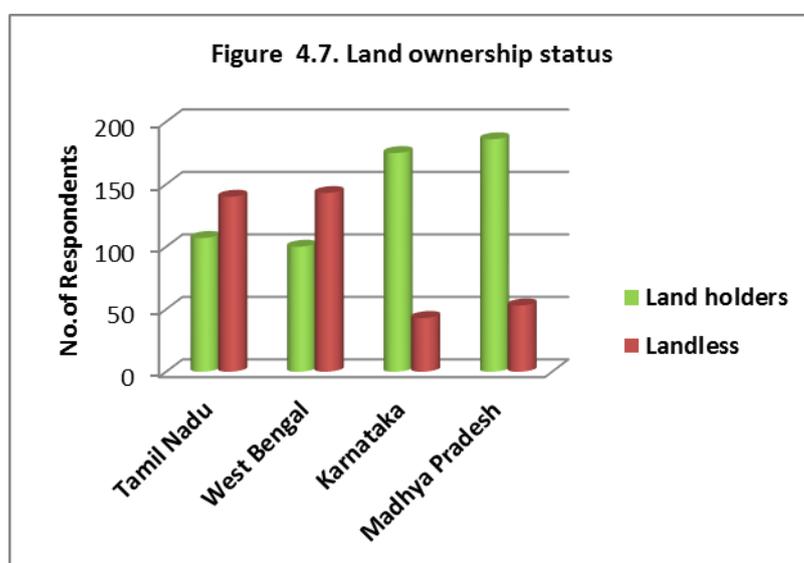
**Table 4.27: Land Particulars**

Status	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Land holders	107 (43.3%)	100 (41.2%)	175 (80.3%)	186 (77.8%)	568 (60.0%)
Landless	140 (56.7%)	143 (58.8%)	43 (19.7%)	53 (22.2%)	379 (40.0%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Access to land is crucial for sustainable livelihoods and food security of a vast majority of India's rural population. They comprise landless labourers and marginal farmers who cannot access non-farm employment opportunities for lack of education and skills are forced to depend rainfed farming and part time wage employment for sustenance. The concept of inclusive growth, as stated in the 12<sup>th</sup> Plan document, focuses on the *growth process* that is broad-based or in which wider sections of the population, especially those hitherto excluded, participate. Inequality as such may or may not be a



problem, but high incidence of landlessness and marginalisation of landholdings pose a threat to livelihood security of millions of rural poor households and consequently, social instability and inequality.

Distribution of members according to size and type of land holding by their family is presented in Table 4.27. As per the data, 379 (40.0 per cent) respondents are landless. Higher landlessness reported from the study panchayats of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the land value and utility is very high in these States. In the States like, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal ST population is high comparatively and landholding is hereditary but productivity and utility of the soil is very

low. The farmers in those States are traditional, not motivated much towards scientific cultivation. Most of the years land was kept idle without any land improvement practices. Therefore, holding land among marginalised community may not bring appreciable economic improvement.

#### 4.4 Land Holding status of the Sample Households

**Table 4.28: Size of Land Holding owned by Sample Households**

Area of Land	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
<1	91 (85.0%)	90 (90.0%)	115 (66.7%)	143 (76.9%)	439 (77.3%)
1-2	9 (8.4%)	6 (6.0%)	43 (24.6%)	41 (22.0%)	99 (17.4%)
2-3	2 (1.9%)	3 (3.0%)	15 (8.6%)	0 (0.0%)	20 (3.5%)
3<	5 (4.7%)	1 (1.0%)	2 (1.1%)	2 (1.1%)	10 (1.8%)
Total	107 (100.0%)	100 (100.0%)	175 (100.0%)	186 (100.0%)	568 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Among the land-holding families, only few are having wet lands but majority have dry lands which are suitable for cultivation once in a year when adequate rainfall is available. As far as land holding respondents, almost all are marginal and small farmers, majority, i.e., 439 (77.3 percent) land holdings are below one acre in across all the States. Medium and large farmers were not available among the marginalised communities of the sample population.

Majority of the lands are unfertile in nature and cultivation is possible for only one crop under the rainfed condition. Land value is very low due to its potential and productivity due to non-availability of assured irrigation and deep groundwater level. Crop failures are common phenomenon in the study regions. Unhappy with the crop production and productivity, people used to cultivate fodder for their animals or sell fodder to the animal holders.

**Table 4.29: Status of Land allotment by Government**

Responses	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Yes	48 (19.4%)	86 (35.4%)	100 (45.9%)	141 (59.0%)	375 (39.6%)
No	199 (80.6%)	157 (64.6%)	118 (54.1%)	98 (41.0%)	572 (60.4%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

While the large landowners invariably belong to the upper castes, the cultivators belong to the middle castes and the agricultural workers largely to the scheduled castes and tribes. Land being the important socially valued asset, its unequal distribution helps maintain the hierarchical structure and strengthen the basis of dominance of the privileged groups by perpetuating inequality and deprivation in various socio-economic spheres. In recognition of the basic proposition that scheduled castes and tribes are the most disadvantaged in respect to land, which largely accounts for their perpetual poverty and makes them vulnerable to injustice and exploitation, attempts have been made by the governments to promote and protect their rights with regard to the control and use of land. Land distribution in India closely follows social hierarchy. The availability of ceiling surplus land and its proper distribution is one of the major routes through which scheduled castes and tribes can improve their holding position. The land obtained and distributed through the Bhoodan movement initiated by Vinoba Bhave helped some landless disadvantaged sections to get some quantum of land. Later State governments have created land distribution schemes and lands up to 3 acres have given to the landless SC and ST poor families.

In the study region around 40 per cent households received lands under government land free distribution scheme. "Even after the land is allotted to the poor, ensuring physical possession of it becomes a major problem, for the landlords often thwart the efforts of the poor by involving them in litigation or used threats or other coercive methods in preventing them from cultivating the land allotted to them.

**Table 4.30: Details of Household Assets**

Type of assets	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Sewing Machine	21 (8.5%)	37 (15.2%)	4 (1.8%)	48 (20.1%)	110 (11.6%)
Bicycle	71 (28.7%)	159 (65.4%)	34 (15.6%)	149 (62.3%)	413 (43.6%)
Motorbike	70 (28.3%)	118 (48.6%)	99 (45.4%)	153 (64.0%)	440 (46.5%)
Refrigerator	45 (18.2%)	74 (30.5%)	40 (18.3%)	96 (40.2%)	255 (26.9%)
Furniture	134 (54.3%)	70 (28.8%)	133 (61.0%)	87 (36.4%)	424 (44.8%)
T.V.	235 (95.1%)	173 (71.2%)	165 (75.7%)	217 (90.8%)	790 (83.4%)
Domestic animals	154 (62.3%)	169 (69.5%)	173 (79.3%)	187 (78.2%)	683 (72.1%)
Small quantity of gold	196 (79.3%)	185 (76.1%)	203 (93.0%)	105 (43.9%)	689 (72.8%)
Crop Product Stock	110 (44.5%)	0 (0.0)	6 (2.8%)	1 (0.4%)	117 (12.4%)
Others	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.9%)	0 (0.0)	3 (0.3%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The assets are stocks of resources which are accumulated over a period of time for comfort life and future consumption security on unpredicted economic suppression. The data on the asset's possession of the marginalised sections especially

SC&ST communities have been improved due to various interventions by the government as well as the benefits of technology advancement aiming for comfort life. But the assets possessed by the marginalised communities do not have much economic value or resale value. The status of household assets possessed by the sample respondents were identified, the Table 4.30 gives data of multiple responses, given by the respondents about their asset's possession. Even though all the respondents were having some kinds of assets supporting their daily life, importance for analysis was given to the assets which are having re-sale economic value. Accordingly, the table shows only around 50 per cent families are holding some kind of consumption supporting assets but majority people do not have any economically valuable assets. Among the assets available in the households, TV was possessed by 790 houses (83.4 per cent), majority respondents are having domestic animals like cow, sheep and chicken birds by 683 (72.1 per cent). Considering the low economic condition, non-availability of better housing, nomadic nature of life and other health issues of marginalised sections they are unable to purchase or maintain the high value household assets. Resulting, majority women do not have supplementary source of income or do not find alternatives during emergency financial requirements.

#### **4.5 Status of Special initiatives for the Development of Marginalised**

The efficacy of a decentralised system in improving governance, achieving empowerment, enhancing efficiency in service delivery and impacting on growth and poverty depends on the nature of the institutions and more particularly the power structure in local areas. Although the general performance of panchayats in promoting inclusive development has not been impressive, there are some cases where they have taken initiatives to ensure better service delivery or promote development in a systematic manner. The experience of the people's plan and evidence of some other successful cases of panchayats are contributing to various aspects of development. The major objective of decentralised development is to promote local economic development by increasing production and productivity of agriculture and allied sectors and traditional and small scale industries with focus on employment and poverty reduction; reduce gender disparities; integrate area development; upgrade the quality of basic services provided by panchayats with special emphasis on health, education, water supply, sanitation including solid waste management and disabled care; improve governance particularly with reference to transparency, participation and responsiveness and bring about an organic relationship between transferred departments and local governments and role clarity.

**Table 4.31: Special initiatives for the Development of Marginalised by Gram Panchayats**

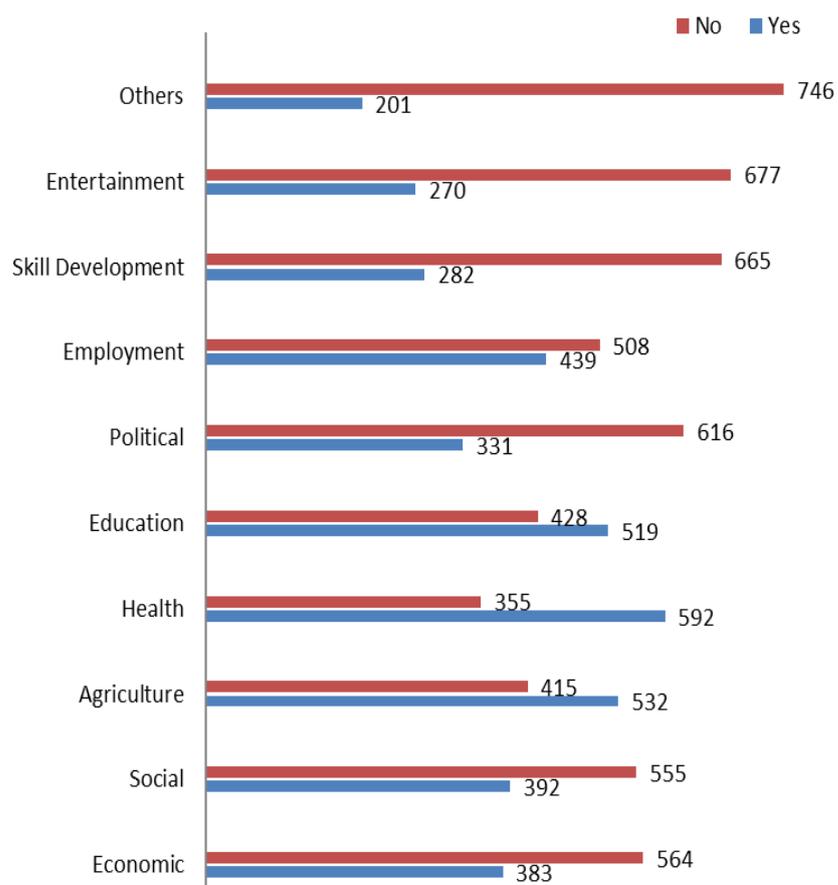
Sectors	States												Total	
	Tamil Nadu			West Bengal			Karnataka			Madhya Pradesh				
	Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No
Economic	156 (63.2%)	91 (36.8%)		48 (19.8%)	195 (80.2%)		102 (46.8%)	116 (53.2%)		77 (32.2%)	162 (67.8%)		383 (40.4%)	564 (59.6%)
Social	162 (65.6%)	85 (34.4%)		52 (21.4%)	191 (78.6%)		102 (46.8%)	116 (53.2%)		76 (31.8%)	163 (68.2%)		392 (41.4%)	555 (58.6%)
Agriculture	172 (69.6%)	75 (30.4%)		68 (28.0%)	175 (72.0%)		159 (72.9%)	59 (27.1%)		133 (55.6%)	106 (44.4%)		532 (56.2%)	415 (43.8%)
Health	208 (84.2%)	39 (15.8%)		82 (33.7%)	161 (66.3%)		154 (70.6%)	64 (29.4%)		148 (61.9%)	91 (38.1%)		592 (62.5%)	355 (37.5%)
Education	183 (74.1%)	64 (25.9%)		71 (29.2%)	172 (70.8%)		143 (65.6%)	75 (34.4%)		122 (51.0%)	117 (49.0%)		519 (54.8%)	428 (45.2%)
Political	168 (68.0%)	79 (32.0%)		21 (8.6%)	222 (91.4%)		83 (38.1%)	135 (61.9%)		59 (24.7%)	180 (75.3%)		331 (35.0%)	616 (65.0%)
Employment	143 (57.9%)	104 (42.1%)		20 (8.2%)	223 (91.8%)		174 (79.8%)	44 (20.2%)		102 (42.7%)	137 (57.3%)		439 (46.4%)	508 (53.6%)
Skill Development	144 (58.3%)	103 (41.7%)		22 (9.1%)	221 (90.9%)		65 (29.8%)	153 (70.2%)		51 (21.3%)	188 (78.7%)		282 (29.8%)	665 (70.2%)
Entertainment	163 (66.0%)	84 (34.0%)		25 (10.3%)	218 (89.7%)		29 (13.3%)	189 (86.7%)		53 (22.2%)	186 (77.8%)		270 (28.5%)	677 (71.5%)
Others	133 (53.8%)	114 (46.2%)		12 (4.9%)	231 (95.1%)		22 (10.1%)	196 (89.9%)		34 (14.2%)	205 (85.8%)		201 (21.2%)	746 (78.8%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Regarding the initiatives taken for socio-economic development and other aspects of the life of the poor by the panchayats selected for the study were discussed and views of the respondents were presented in the Table 4.31, there were different types of responses reported for various parameters, i.e. majority people (65.2 per cent) benefitted under health programmes, 532 (56.2 per cent) respondents were benefitted through the activities related to improvement of agriculture and supporting infrastructures, 519 (54.8 per cent) are availing the educational initiatives undertaken by the panchayats. Similarly, 439 (46.4 per cent) households among marginalised sections receive employment with the facilitation of the GPs, further around 40 per cent respondents reported that, they have got benefits under socio-economic initiatives. Except few sectors mentioned here, panchayat has not taken any special initiatives for the livelihood

**Figure 4.8. Special initiatives for the Development of Marginalized by Gram Panchayats**



development of the poorest of the poor in their region. The panchayats are busy with the routine schedule of delivery and maintenance of the basic services. They did not feel that the responsibility of the panchayats also includes all round development and ultimate empowerment of the community.

#### 4.6 People Participation in the GP Meetings

**Table 4.32: Gram Sabha Meetings and Marginalised sections Participation**

Events	States								Total	
	Tamil Nadu		West Bengal		Karnataka		Madhya Pradesh		Yes	No
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Quorum of Meeting	247 (100.0%)	0 (0.0)	243 (100.0%)	0 (0.0)	200 (91.7%)	18 (8.3%)	230 (96.2%)	9 (3.8%)	920 (97.1%)	27 (2.9%)
Representation of different sections	246 (99.6%)	1 (0.4%)	243 (100.0%)	0 (0.0)	218 (100.0%)	0 (0.0)	239 (100.0%)	0 (0.0)	946 (99.9%)	1 (0.1%)
Equal chance of voice raising	247 (100.0%)	0 (0.0)	243 (100.0%)	0 (0.0)	209 (95.9%)	9 (4.1%)	238 (99.6%)	1 (0.4%)	937 (98.9%)	10 (1.1%)
Voice of marginalised in decision making	243 (98.4%)	4 (1.6%)	227 (93.4%)	16 (6.6%)	125 (57.3%)	93 (42.7%)	207 (86.6%)	32 (13.4%)	802 (84.7%)	145 (15.3%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field. # Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

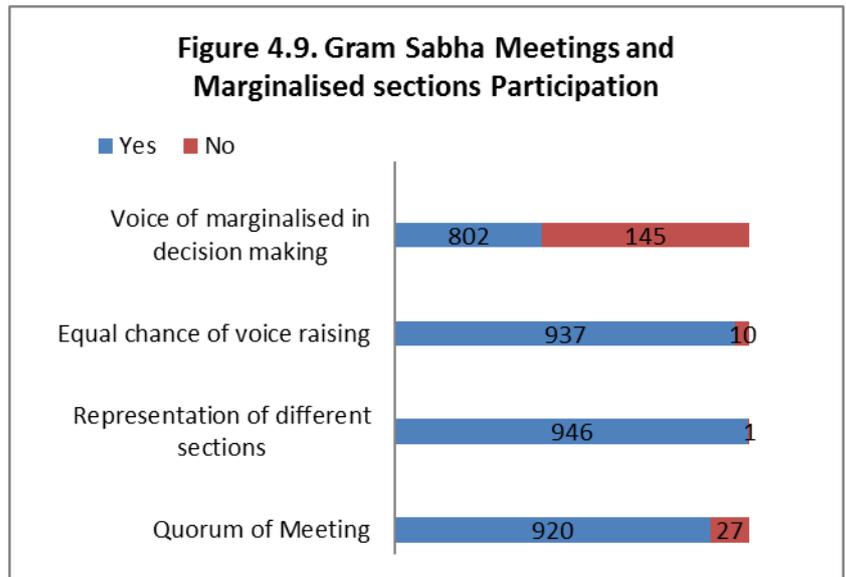
Gram Sabha is a constitutionally mandated mechanism through which grassroots' constituencies hold Panchayats accountable. Gram Sabha constitutes all the adult citizens of a village who have the right to vote. Accordingly, intensive Gram Sabha mobilisation campaigns have to be conducted by the GPs with the help of the elected representatives, CBMs and partner organisation.

The factor determining rural people's participation is the level of awareness of different programmes and their perceived benefits in their lives, which in turn is

determined by the level of education especially functional education of the people. It is clear from data and analysis of the Table 4.32, majority of more than 90 per cent households reported in all the study States, the Gram Sabha meetings had quorum. The panchayats made adequate efforts to mobilise one-third representation of women, and their mandatory quorum in Gram Sabha meetings. Not only women, other sections of social and low economic groups, minorities, physically challenged also are encouraged to participate in Gram Sabha meetings.

The panchayats were not put any hurdle for the participation and raising issues pertaining to the poorest of the poor and other marginalised groups. Due consideration has been given to the concerns of the under privileged and marginalised in panchayat decision- making related to the development. Higher participation of Scheduled Castes in the panchayat activities is partly due to the fact that most of the rural development programmes have special provisions for them. Here too, they remain mere spectator. It was observed in most cases that the Mukhia (Village President) or a member of the dominant caste decides who will get what. No one pays attention to economically and socially marginalised members, and women.

The dominant class and caste in the rural society controls poor and deprived sections. Though the constitution attempted to change the situation, and minimise the political and social divide in the villages, there is no sign of change in the mindset of the dominant classes and castes in rural society.



**Table 4.33: Status of marginalised sections participation in GS and panchayat activities**

Activities	States												Total	
	Tamil Nadu		West Bengal		Karnataka		Madhya Pradesh						Yes	No
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No				
Communication for GS meeting	21 (8.5%)	226 (91.5%)	39 (16.0%)	204 (84.0%)	38 (17.4%)	180 (82.6%)	48 (20.1%)	191 (79.9%)	146 (15.4%)	801 (84.6%)				
Participation in GS meeting	66 (26.7%)	181 (73.3%)	42 (17.3%)	201 (82.7%)	36 (16.5%)	182 (83.5%)	59 (24.7%)	180 (75.3%)	203 (21.4%)	744 (78.6%)				
Participation in Planning	39 (15.8%)	208 (84.2%)	37 (15.2%)	206 (84.8%)	65 (29.8%)	153 (70.2%)	68 (28.5%)	171 (71.5%)	209 (22.1%)	738 (77.9%)				
Implementation of development strategies	57 (23.1%)	190 (76.9%)	38 (15.6%)	205 (84.4%)	22 (10.1%)	196 (89.9%)	35 (14.6%)	204 (85.4%)	152 (16.1%)	795 (83.9%)				

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Only active involvement of people and community through participation can bring about a sustainable rural transformation. The socio-economic and political realities of Indian villages are not so conducive that just passing of legislation will bring desired changes. Even today almost two-third of villagers are functionally illiterates. Their illiteracy is crippled with prevailing caste and gender bias. The rigid caste hierarchy has traditionally excluded Dalits and other backward castes from the realm of political decision-makings. The powerful patriarchy norms still restrict women to participate in public arena. That is, on average, almost three quarter of population in every village had been traditionally excluded from socio-political decision-making.

In the context of study region, the status of awareness on the conduct of Gram Sabha and effective methods of communication about the conduct of the meetings, out of 947 households interviewed from four States, only 146 (15.4 per cent) have awareness about the communication of the GS meetings. Only around 20 per cent people participate in the meetings and planning process of the panchayat. Further, 16 per cent reported they participated in the implementation of the development schemes as beneficiaries as individual and community. Majority villagers claim non-participation because their plans and demands are not considered, and everything is decided by the Mukhia/Sarpanch, officials and dominant personality of major castes and communities.

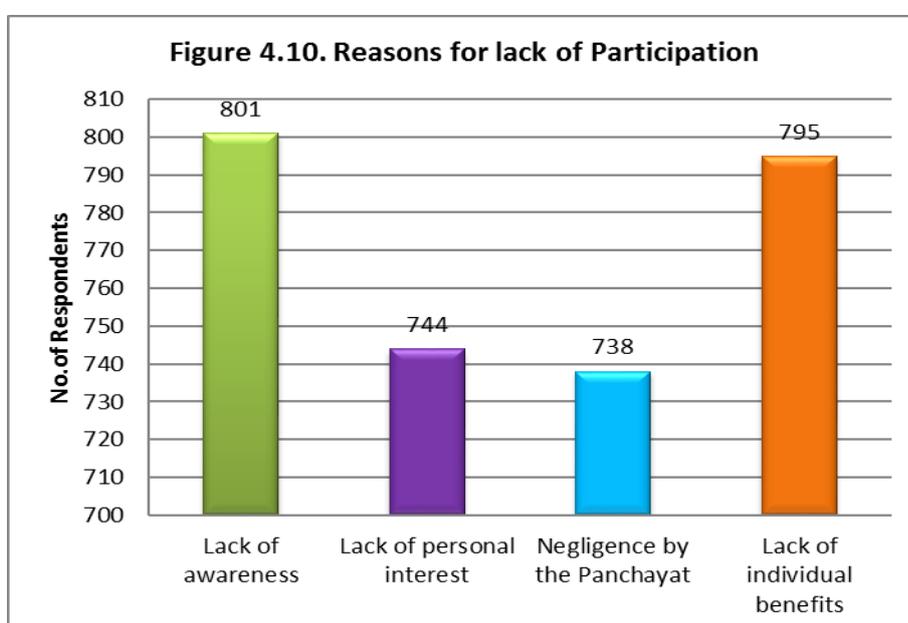
**Table 4.34: Reasons for lack of Participating**

Reasons	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Lack of awareness	226 (91.5%)	204 (84.0%)	180 (82.6%)	191 (79.9%)	801 (84.6%)
Lack of personal interest	181 (73.3%)	201 (82.7%)	182 (83.5%)	180 (75.3%)	744 (78.6%)
Negligence by the Panchayat	208 (84.2%)	206 (84.8%)	153 (70.2%)	171 (71.5%)	738 (77.9%)
Lack of individual benefits	190 (76.9%)	205 (84.4%)	196 (89.9%)	204 (85.4%)	795 (83.9%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

In most of the States, size of the village panchayat is fairly large. It is difficult to mobilise and conduct a single Gram Sabha for many revenue villages. Even, big gatherings are mobilised with greater efforts will certainly affect the quality and levels of participation. Moreover, villages are highly politicised, divided on caste and class lines. Prevalence of patriarchal dominance of the decisions and women remain at the periphery. In reality in most of the villages, women



and lower caste men would not come to this meeting unless they are prompted to come. Even if they come, they sit in one corner and would not raise their voice unless supported to do so. Dependence syndrome and ignorance about importance of participation in Gram Sabha meetings make citizens apathetic. The people feel, their presence or absence will not create any significant impact and attending meeting losing a day's wage is meaningless for them. It has been found in almost all States that just after Panchayat elections when first Gram Sabha takes place more people participate with new expectations. However, with the passage of time, when they realise that Gram Sabha is unable to deliver, the participation level dwindles down.

The reasons for less attendance in the Gram Sabha meetings of the selected study panchayats were analysed and the data on the responses were presented in the Table 4.34. The views of the sample respondents report that lack of personal interest for the people for participation in the meetings yields less attendance, it was 78.6 per cent. Similarly lack of awareness on the functioning of GP (84.6 per cent) for the people hurdles the people's participation. In general, the GP has to make adequate efforts to propagate the date, timing, venue and agenda of the meetings well in advance through appropriate methods aiming to reach all the households of the GP. But in reality, negligence of GPs was reported by 77.9 per cent respondents, the panchayats put less effort to communicate the purpose of the meetings. Therefore, people are not aware about the dates and purposes of the meetings which lead less percentage of attendance. In some circumstances illiterates and low caste people especially, women are reluctant to participate in the meetings due to their innocence and suppression by the elite community or local powerful people. It is appreciable that, in the study area due to the interventions of NGOs and leadership of GP Sarpanch played very important role in getting better attendance and mobilisation of more participation in the meetings by the Gram Panchayats.

**Table 4.35 Membership status of the Respondents in the panchayat**

Membership	States								Total	
	Tamil Nadu		West Bengal		Karnataka		Madhya Pradesh		Yes	No
	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No		
Member in GP committee	7 (2.8%)	240 (93.2%)	15 (6.2%)	228 (93.8%)	16 (7.3%)	202 (92.7%)	10 (4.2%)	229 (95.8%)	48 (5.1%)	899 (94.9%)
Member in SHG	88 (35.6%)	159 (64.4%)	106 (43.6%)	137 (66.4%)	122 (56.0%)	96 (44.0%)	116 (48.5%)	123 (51.5%)	432 (45.6%)	515 (54.4%)
Member in Political Party	83 (33.6%)	164 (66.4%)	2 (0.8%)	241 (99.2%)	4 (1.8%)	214 (98.2%)	46 (19.2%)	193 (80.8%)	135 (14.3%)	812 (85.7%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Every Gram Panchayat constituted some committees as notified by the State Government to assist the Gram Panchayat in the performance of all its functions and delegated powers. The committees like 'standing committees for Finance, development and welfare', in addition to a number of committees for specific purpose or subject. Every committee consist of a chairman and six other members, who were elected by the members of the Gram Panchayat themselves in the

prescribed manner; each such committee must have at least one-woman member, one-member belonging to the Scheduled Castes or the Scheduled Tribes and one-member belonging to backward classes.

The status of marginalised people's representation in the GP committees shows limited entries, the Table 4.35 reflects, out of 947 respondents only 48 (5 per cent) were selected as members of various committees. Even though a large number of respondents (45.6 per cent) became members of SHG their political representation is only 14 per cent. Further discussion revealed that, even membership in various forums does not create any impact on the social status of the marginalised sections. They are still silent spectators in the meetings; these people were called for the sake of quorum of meetings.

**Table 4.36: Methods of Communication for Gram Sabha meetings**

Methods	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
circulation of bit notices and posters	22 (8.9%)	2 (0.8%)	0 (0.0)	13 (5.4%)	37 (3.9%)
Beating drums	3 (1.2%)	16 (6.6%)	0 (0.0)	17 (7.1%)	36 (3.8%)
Oral with ward members	2 (0.8%)	25 (10.3%)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	29 (3.1%)
Display in notice board	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	4 (0.4%)
None of the above	3 (1.2%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.3%)	7 (0.7%)
All of the above	217 (87.9%)	197 (81.1%)	218 (100.0%)	202 (84.5%)	834 (88.1%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Social *mobilisation* is the cornerstone of participatory approaches in rural development and poverty alleviation programmes. It is a powerful instrument in decentralisation policies and programmes aimed at strengthening human and institutional resources development at local level. The local body leaders should have the ability to *mobilise* the *people*. The *panchayats* are engaged in Gram Sabha mobilisation. During the process many methods and strategies have been employed to reach maximum mass of citizens with minimum available resources. Advanced panchayats having enthusiastic leaders in the country used a number of effective social mobilisation methods and strategies like orientation programmes, wall writing, kalajathas, posters and pamphlets, yatra, meetings, audio/video cassettes, panchayat mitras, etc.,

The panchayats of this study also conducted a number of methods to inform the meeting date, venue and agenda of the GS. Even though, the majority people responses reveal on conduct of various methods like circulation of bit notices and posters, beating drums, oral communication through ward members, display in the panchayat notice board but reality reveals that, meeting information sent to the ward members through written notice and communication through mobile phone and display of information in the panchayat notice board were the prominent methods used in the past.

**Table 4.37 : Venue of Meetings**

Venue	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Panchayat Premises	50 (20.7%)	4 (1.6%)	172 (78.9%)	99 (41.4%)	325 (34.5%)
Common place in the vil- lage	8 (3.3%)	146 (60.0%)	8 (3.6%)	57 (23.9%)	219 (23.1%)
In each habitation in rota- tion	118 (48.8%)	6 (2.5%)	0 (0.0)	6 (2.5%)	130 (13.8%)
School Compound	0 (0.0)	87 (35.8%)	0 (0.0)	47 (19.7%)	134 (14.2%)
Panchayat & Common place	66 (27.3%)	0 (0.0)	38 (17.4%)	30 (12.6%)	134 (14.2%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The venue of panchayat meetings especially Gram Sabha have to be conducted either in the panchayat premises or in the common places in order to encourage more people to attend without hesitation. In majority cases (34 per cent) in all the villages of the study areas, the meetings are taking place in front of the panchayat offices. In certain panchayats (23 per cent) GS is conducted in the common places. The panchayat having larger area and huge number of habitations, especially in Tamil Nadu, GS were conducted in each village on rotation. In West Bengal and in Madhya Pradesh some time the GS meetings are conducted in the school premises during school holidays. Nearness of the meeting venue and suitable days like holidays and suitable time are preferably mornings as more people participate.

**Table 4.38: Nature of People Participation**

Options	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Voluntary	66 (26.7%)	42 (17.3%)	36 (16.5%)	59 (24.7%)	203 (21.4%)
No participation /Compulsion	181 (73.3%)	201 (82.7%)	182 (83.5%)	180 (75.3%)	744 (78.6%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Based on the responses of the sample respondents regarding nature of participation in Gram Sabha meetings, around 21 per cent participate with full involvement by discussing in detail about the various activities of GP, especially implementation of State and Central Government welfare and development schemes. They contribute in terms of ideas and chalking of strategies for the benefit of local community in improving the lifestyle of the people. Around 78 per cent of the respondents, Tamil Nadu (73.3 per cent), West Bengal (82.7 per cent), Karnataka (83.5 per cent) and Madhya Pra-

desh (75.3 per cent) reported, they rarely participate in the GP meetings due to low awareness and their lack of capacity to understand the issues.

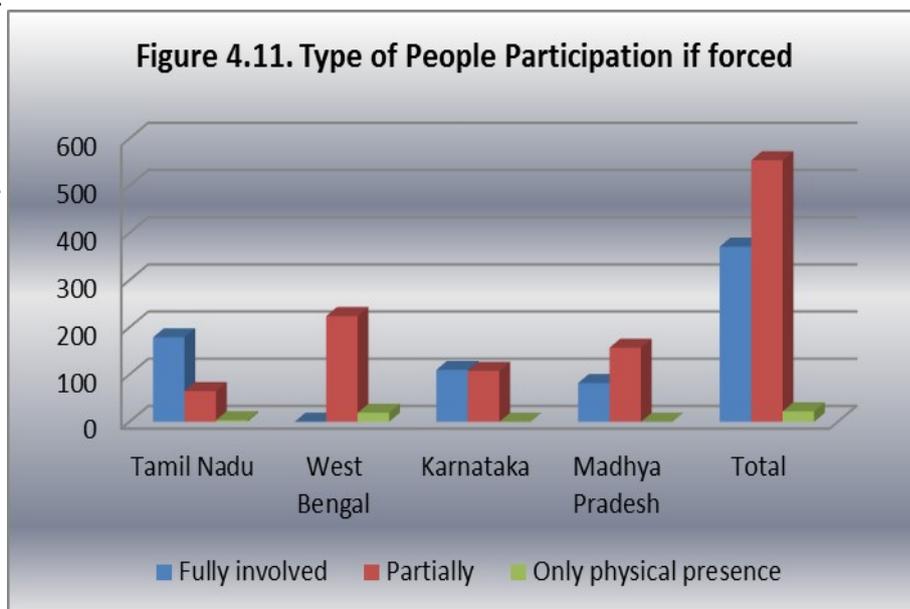
**Table 4.39: On compulsion Type of People Participation**

Type of participation	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Fully involved	179 (72.5%)	0 (0.0)	110 (50.5%)	82 (34.3%)	371 (39.2%)
Partially	65 (26.3%)	224 (92.2%)	108 (49.5%)	157 (65.7%)	554 (58.5%)
Only physical presence	3 (1.2%)	19 (7.8%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	22 (2.3%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Women, SC&STs and other sections of poor were not interested to participate in any public events. Especially women have numerous restrictions for public appearance and participation in any of the government or private gatherings. The investigator during the field data collection discussed with the female respondents regarding reasons for non-participation, it was revealed, social stigma among women specifically Muslim women, low social status under caste hierarchy prevents them to participate in the public events.



If forcefully mobilised, they will sit in a corner and not participate in discussion. Data from the Table 4.39 reveal the same picture, even successful Gram Panchayats also fail to get real participation of certain section of people excluded historically. It is reported that in Tamil Nadu around 72 per cent people responded, if they participate fully in discussion, in Karnataka around 50 per cent respondents were in similar views. Partial participation was reported by 50.5 per cent overall, highest in West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. People participate physically without much involvement in the discussion related to the process of GP decision-making. It reports on the lack of interest for GPs in motivating local people for participation of GP activities.

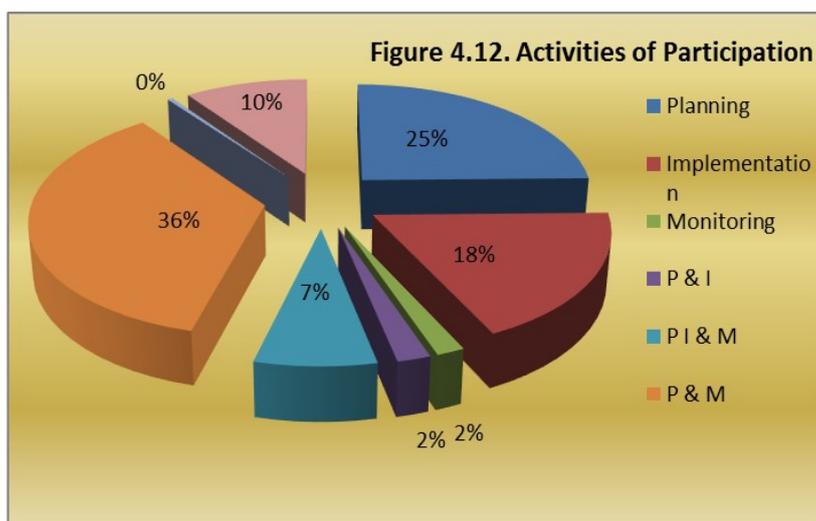
**Table 4.40: Activities of Participation**

Activities	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Planning	47 (19.0%)	70 (28.8%)	56 (25.7%)	61 (25.5%)	234 (24.7%)
Implementation	93 (37.7%)	0 (0.0)	50 (22.9%)	30 (12.6%)	173 (18.3%)
Monitoring	10 (4.0%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (2.5%)	16 (1.7%)
P & I	16 (6.5%)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.5%)	2 (0.8%)	19 (2.0%)
P I & M	2 (0.8%)	0 (0.0)	27 (12.4%)	40 (16.7%)	69 (7.3%)
P & M	70 (28.3%)	173 (71.2%)	20 (9.2%)	76 (31.8%)	339 (35.8%)
I & M	2 (0.8%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	4 (0.4)
All those	7 (2.8%)	0 (0.0)	64 (29.4%)	22 (9.2%)	93 (9.8%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The form and extent of people’s participation in governance processes reflects the level to which, government agencies and citizens have been able to engage constructively for improved outcomes with regard to better service delivery, public policy reforms, redressal of grievances and other such issues. People’s participation in governance can also broadly be seen as the demand side of citizen centric administration.



The Table 4.40 brings responses related to sample population’s areas of participation. According to the table, around 25 per cent sample population participate in planning, and around 10 per cent participate in all the activities of the panchayat. Around 36 per cent respondents reported that, majority people participate in planning and monitoring of government sponsored projects. Further, around 18 per cent respondents reported for participation in execution of government and panchayat self-works pertaining to the development in their jurisdiction. It is important to note that people were not interested in monitoring of implemented activities which was most important area which contributes towards better transparency.

**Table 4.41: Institutions representation for participation**

Institutions	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Community Forum	94 (38.0%)	152 (62.5%)	140 (64.2%)	126 (52.7%)	512 (54.0%)
SHG	11 (4.5%)	86 (35.4%)	44 (20.2%)	64 (26.8%)	205 (21.6%)
Political party	1 (0.4%)	43 (17.7%)	58 (26.6%)	8 (3.3%)	110 (11.6%)
NGO	3 (1.2%)	71 (29.2%)	53 (24.3%)	90 (37.7%)	217 (22.9%)
Panchayat Committee	5 (2.0%)	49 (20.2%)	4 (1.8%)	2 (0.8%)	60 (6.3%)
Individual	108 (43.7%)	86 (35.4%)	166 (76.1%)	134 (56.1%)	494 (52.2%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

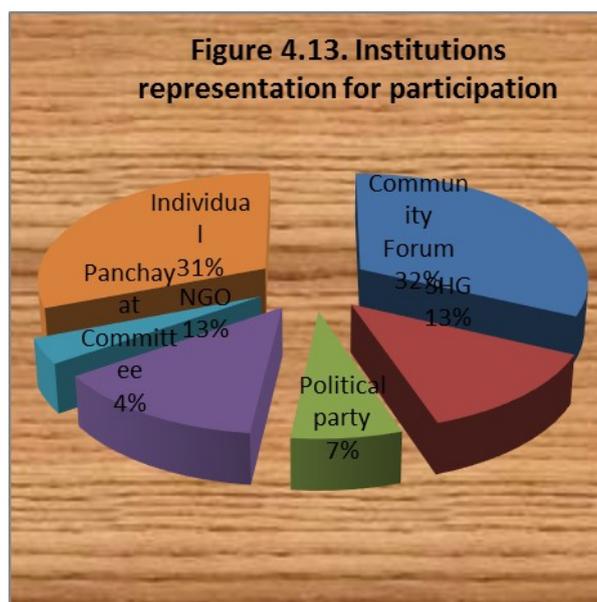
Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Mechanisms for citizens' participation in governance have been conceptualised in the form of citizens seeking information, citizens giving suggestions, citizens demanding better services, citizens holding service providers and other government agencies accountable and citizens actively participating in administration and decision-making processes. Access to information is a fundamental requirement for ensuring citizens' participation in governance.

The present Table 4.41 gives details related to the institutions through which people participate in the process of planning and monitoring of schemes implemented by the GPs. Though there are no prescribed guidelines on the people's institutions to take part in the planning process, lower social or traditionally excluded groups

to be included and marginalised sections representations should be inevitable in the process of decision-making related to the development. Therefore, either the panchayats or the people on their own identify as community representatives. According to the table, the people participate in the planning process through a number of forums like community forums (54.0 per cent), SHGs (21.6 per cent), political party representatives (11.6 per cent) and members of panchayat committees (6.3 per cent), NGO motivated members or facilitators also show importance in participation of the panchayat activities (22.9 per cent). In addition, individual on their own also participate occasionally, from this study panchayat 52.2 per cent respondents reported, they participated on their own interest without any external intervention. Even though, GPs and NGOs played important role at the beginning for mobilising the people, later people participate in the process through different village institutions formed for different purposes. Further discussions reveal, they do not participate in meetings or planning process regularly, they participate in certain occasions subjected to the importance of agenda of works and utility.



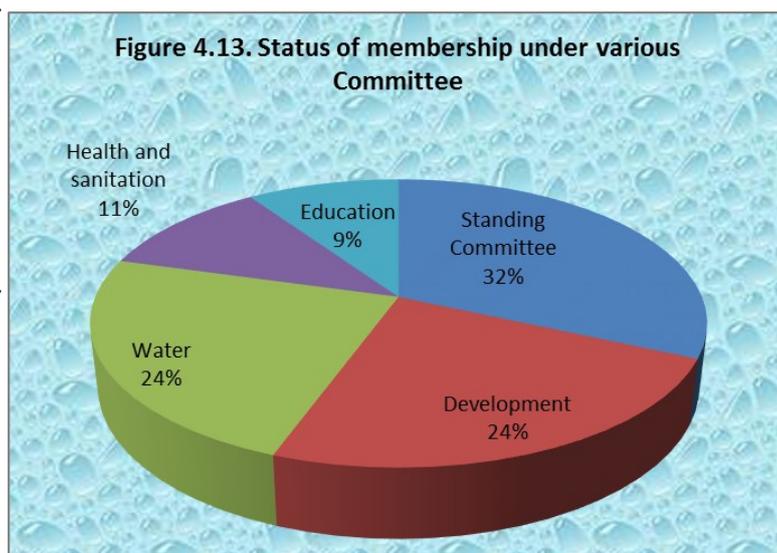
**Table 4.42: Status of membership under various Committee**

Name of the Committee	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Standing Committee	5 (2.0%)	9 (3.7%)	4 (1.8%)	2 (0.8%)	20 (2.1%)
Development	3 (1.2%)	6 (2.5%)	4 (1.8%)	2 (0.8%)	15 (1.6%)
Water	5 (2.0%)	4 (1.6%)	2 (0.9%)	4 (1.7%)	15 (1.6%)
Health and sanitation	2 (0.8%)	2 (0.80%)	1 (0.4%)	2 (0.8%)	7 (0.7%)
Education	1 (0.4%)	2 (0.8%)	1 (0.4%)	2 (0.8%)	6 (0.6%)
Total	16 (6.5%)	23 (9.5%)	12 (5.5%)	12 (5.0%)	63 (6.6%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The above Table 4.22 describes the status of membership of sample respondents in various committees of Gram Panchayats. Out of 947 sample respondents, 63 (6.6 per cent) were holding membership in anyone of the committees earmarked for different purposes of the GP. The new panchayat act has given powers to form a number of committees to plan, execute and monitor the government schemes allotted to the GPs. Accordingly, it was reported, 20 persons (2.1 per cent) were member in standing committees, 15 (1.6 per cent) were member of the development committees. Followed by, 15 (1.6 per cent) have



reported they are in the water committees, similarly seven respondents (0.7 per cent) working as members of health and sanitation committees, around six (0.6 per cent) reported they were in education development committees appointed by the GPs. It shows that, out of 947 households, i.e., 10 per cent sample population of the selected panchayats, only 63 (6.6 per cent) members were given representation under different committees. Moreover, these members were not called for meetings regularly. Even these members were also not much interested to attend the events of the GPs. It was told that the decisions and development activities are pre-determined by the elite communities and Sarpanch, which de-motivate other member's interest.

#### 4.7 Process of Planning

With a view to enable Panchayats to discharge their mandates as enshrined in the State Panchayat Acts to strengthen and give new direction to the decentralised system of governance, the Central government has already insisted the all the State governments to devolve 29 subjects to the PRIs. To enable sector specific, detailed deliberation on strategies and to

formulate projects to be included in the GP plan, each GP should setup 5-7 working groups or more, depending on the requirements of the GP. The working groups should however cover all the issues that the GP wants to address. The current strategy of participatory planning should be demand driven, need based and diagnostic. It should also be perspective in nature and would entail preparation of five-year perspective plan. The new planning methodology also focuses on livelihood issues to target the marginalised (Women/Children)/Below Poverty Line section of the community. Only 22.4 per cent reported as the panchayats follow new planning guidelines but it is doubtful in other States except Karnataka. In Karnataka, somehow, the intervention of SIRD and local NGOs made better attempt to prepare long term perspective plan for the Gram Panchayats.

**Table 4.43: Process of Planning in GP**

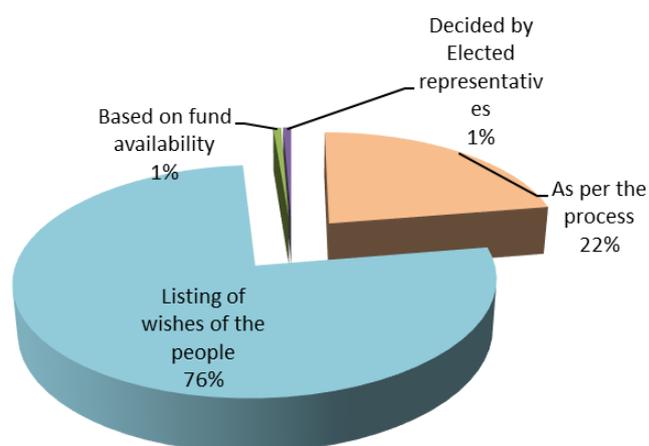
Process of planning in GP	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
As per the process	5 (2.0%)	11 (4.5%)	147 (67.4%)	49 (20.5%)	212 (22.4%)
Listing of wishes of the people	239 (96.8%)	230 (94.7%)	66 (30.3%)	188 (78.7%)	723 (76.3%)
Based on fund availability	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	3 (1.4%)	1 (0.4%)	6 (0.6%)
Decided by Elected representatives	3 (1.2%)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.9%)	1 (0.4%)	6 (0.6%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

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**Figure 4.14. Process of Planning in GP**



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But in reality, all the study panchayats still follow the traditional planning approach, the planning is done on ad hoc basis and is primarily supply driven. The plan is basically extracted from the Gram Sabha resolution which consists of the wish list of the Panchayats and influential people of the village, it was acknowledged by 76.3 per cent from the field of the sample panchayats. Moreover, in the traditional planning approach, voices of the poor and the weak are often not heard which results in lop sided planning.

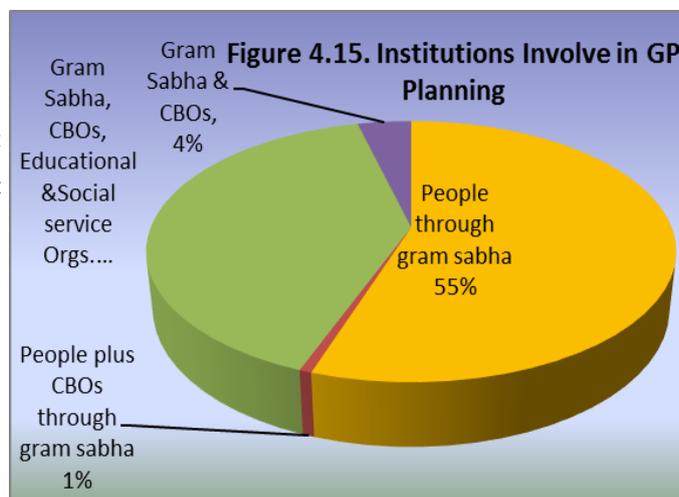
**Table 4.44: Name of Institutions Involve in GP Planning**

Name of institutions involve in GP planning	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
People through gram sabha	2 (0.8%)	180 (74.1%)	196 (89.9%)	144 (60.3%)	522 (55.1%)
People plus CBOs through gram sabha	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	2 (0.9%)	2 (0.8%)	6 (0.6%)
Gram Sabha, CBOs, Educational & Social service Orgs.	213 (86.2%)	59 (24.3%)	20 (9.2%)	90 (37.7%)	382 (40.3%)
Gram Sabha & CBOs,	32 (13.0%)	2 (0.8%)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.3%)	37 (3.9%)
Total	247 (100.0%)	243 (100.0%)	218 (100.0%)	239 (100.0%)	947 (100.0%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The fourteenth Finance commission under the direction of the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India issued broad and exhaustive guidelines to involve various institutions in preparation of Gram Panchayat Development plan for long-term wholistic development of various sections and sectors of the Gram Panchayat. Social or community mobiliasation, situation analysis, problem and needs analysis, resource envelope are important stages of planning process. In order to articulate the resources of all forms through the people thinking, the institutions like SHGs, farmers club, community-based organisations, locally available



educational and research institutions, capacity building institutions like SIRDs, ETCs, line department training institutions roles are very prominent in the planning process. Therefore, a discussion was carried among the study respondents on the involvement of the local institutions in the planning process, the data reveal that, around 55 per cent said the planning is done at the Gram Sabha and around 40 per cent people responded their panchayats involved local formal and informal institutions in capacity building and planning process.

#### 4.8 Services Access, awareness level and Impact of GP activities on peoples' livelihoods

As per the Indian Constitution, panchayats in their respective areas would prepare plans for economic development and social justice and also execute them. To facilitate this, States are supposed to devolve functions to Panchayats and also

make funds available for doing these. Provision of basic infrastructure is a pre-condition for the success of rural development programmes, who have access to infrastructure benefit most and those who do not have adequate access to the infrastructure get by-passed in the process of growth. Opinions of the sample beneficiaries regarding the accessibility, adequacy of different facilities such as drinking water, sanitation, street light, education, health quality of roads, and transport, etc., are furnished. The study reveals that certain social facilities like sanitation and quality of roads were found inadequate. At the extent, their adequacy and accessibility vary from village to village, above 90 per cent of the beneficiaries have expressed their satisfaction over the adequacy and accessibility of the above mentioned facilities. Only non-availability of PDS centres and agriculture markets within the hamlets reported fewer percentages. State wise analysis of the sample, West Bengal shows poor services access to its citizens. Even though sample households having access to a number of basic services, people appealed for quality services. Hence, there is an urgent need of providing those critical facilities on top priority basis. Although the beneficiaries have expressed their satisfaction over some services like drinking water, education and streetlight, etc. There is a greater need for improving the quality and quantity of their services. Therefore, along with extending the infrastructure, quality maintenance and enhancement should be given due care.

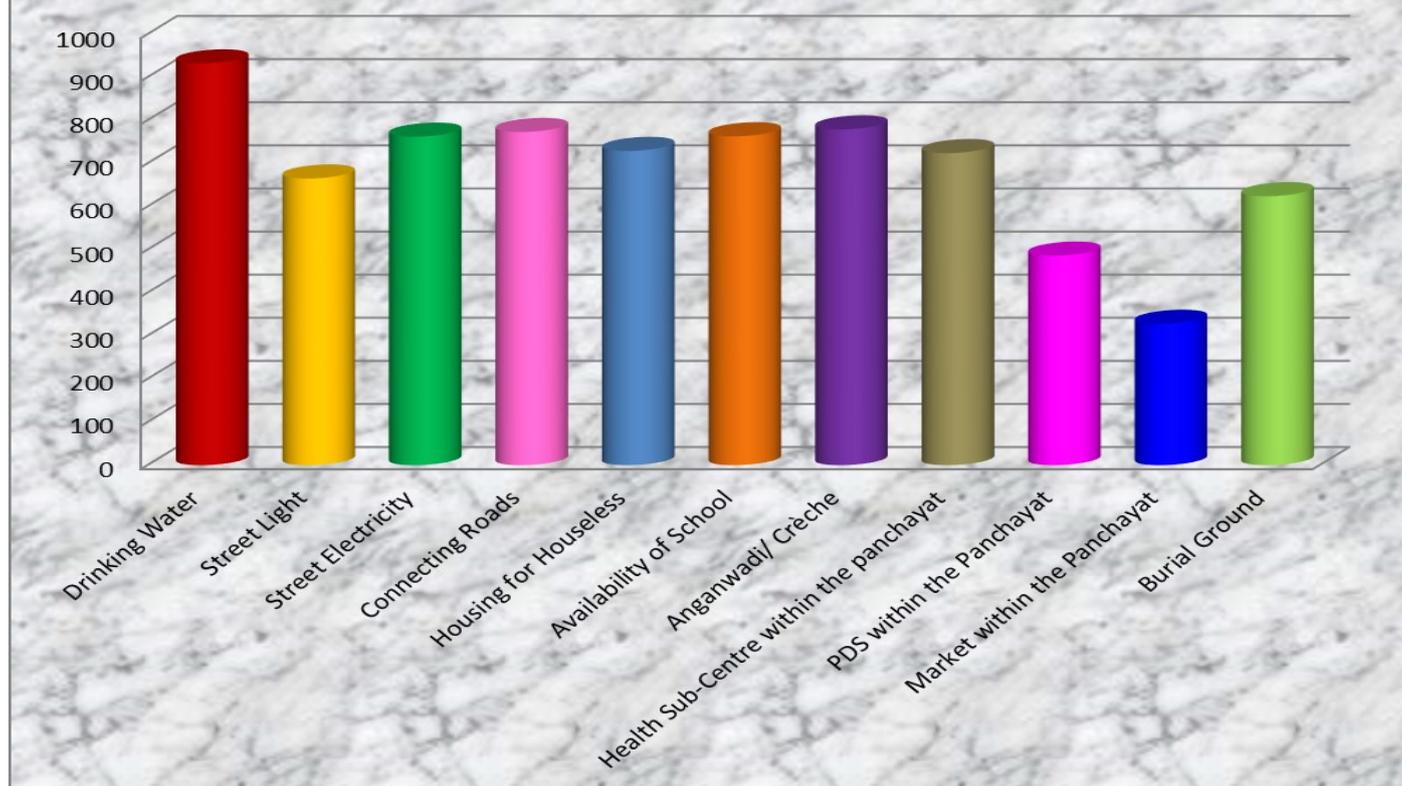
**Table 4.45: Availability of Services and Access**

Status of Services Access	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Drinking Water	245 (99.2%)	238 (97.9%)	212 (97.2%)	237 (99.2%)	932 (98.4%)
Street Light	243 (98.4%)	15 (6.2%)	215 (98.6%)	192 (80.3%)	665 (70.2%)
Street Electricity	244 (98.8%)	88 (36.2%)	216 (99.1%)	214 (89.5%)	762 (80.5%)
Connecting Roads	242 (98.0%)	119 (49.0%)	186 (85.3%)	226 (94.6%)	773 (81.6%)
Housing for Houseless	234 (94.7%)	107 (44.0%)	172 (78.9%)	216 (90.4%)	729 (77.0%)
Availability of School	240 (97.2%)	120 (49.4%)	179 (82.1%)	224 (93.7%)	763 (80.6%)
Anganwadi/ Crèche	235 (95.1%)	106 (43.6%)	212 (97.2%)	226 (94.6%)	779 (82.3%)
Health Sub-Centre within the panchayat	240 (97.2%)	106 (43.6%)	166 (76.1%)	212 (88.7%)	724 (76.5%)
PDS within the Panchayat	235 (95.1%)	105 (43.2%)	41 (18.8%)	105 (43.9%)	486 (51.3%)
Market within the Panchayat	125 (50.6%)	106 (43.6%)	32 (14.7%)	65 (27.2%)	328 (34.6%)
Burial Ground	239 (96.8%)	106 (43.6%)	91 (41.7%)	188 (78.7%)	624 (65.9%)

Source: Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

**Figure 4.16. Availability of Services and Access**



**Table 4.46: Awareness Level on the GP Related Activities**

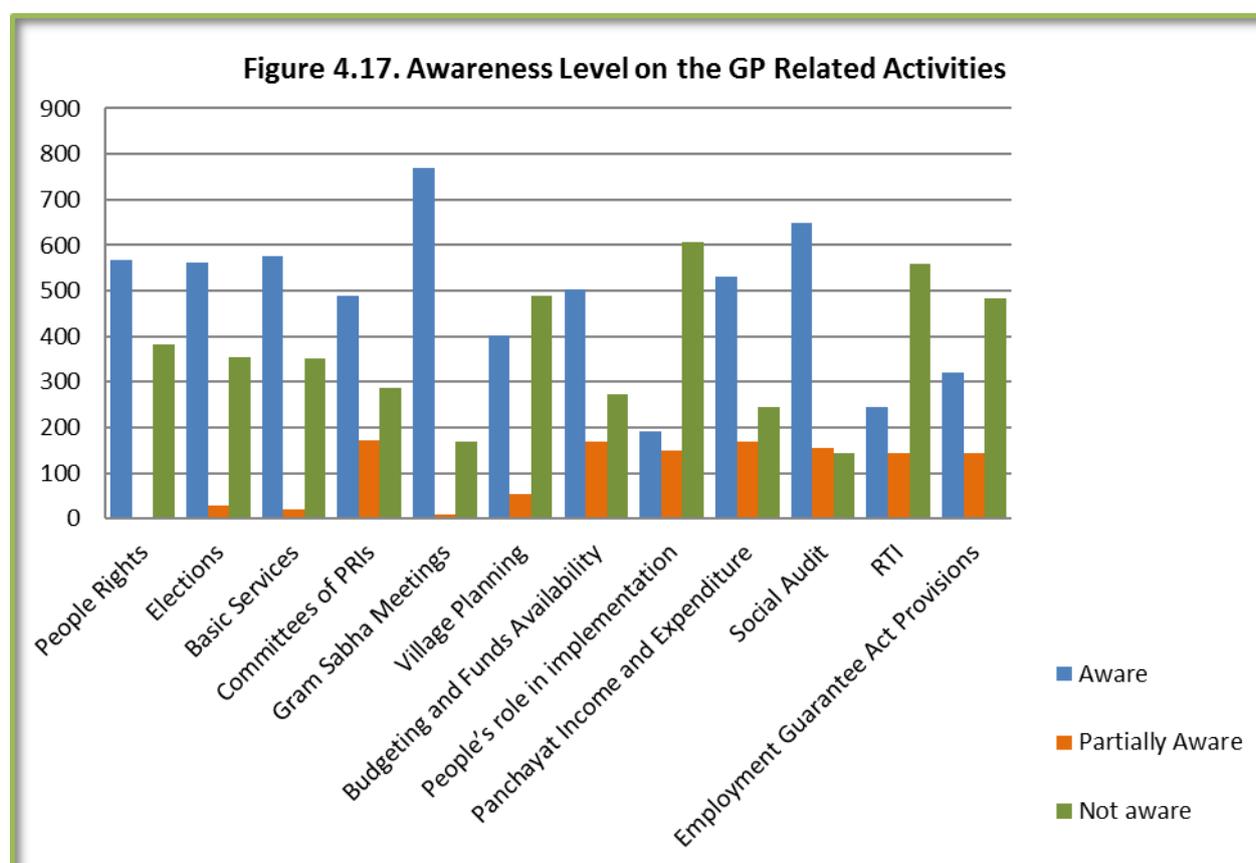
Particulars	Total		
	Aware	Partially Aware	Not aware
People Rights	566 (59.8%)	0 (0.0%)	381 (40.2%)
Elections	562 (59.5%)	30 (3.2%)	353 (37.4%)
Basic Services	576 (60.8%)	21 (2.2%)	350 (37.0%)
Committees of PRIs	488 (51.5%)	172 (18.2%)	287 (30.3%)
Gram Sabha Meetings	769 (81.2%)	8 (0.8%)	170 (18.0%)
Village Planning	403 (42.6%)	54 (5.7%)	490 (51.7%)
Budgeting and Funds Availability	504 (53.2%)	170 (18.0%)	273 (28.8%)
People's role in implementation	191 (20.2%)	150 (15.8%)	606 (64.0%)
Panchayat Income and Expenditure	532 (56.2%)	170 (18.0%)	245 (25.9%)
Social Audit	649 (68.5%)	155 (16.4%)	143 (15.1%)
RTI	244 (25.8%)	145 (15.3%)	558 (58.9%)
Employment Guarantee Act Provisions	320 (33.8%)	144 (15.2%)	483 (51.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

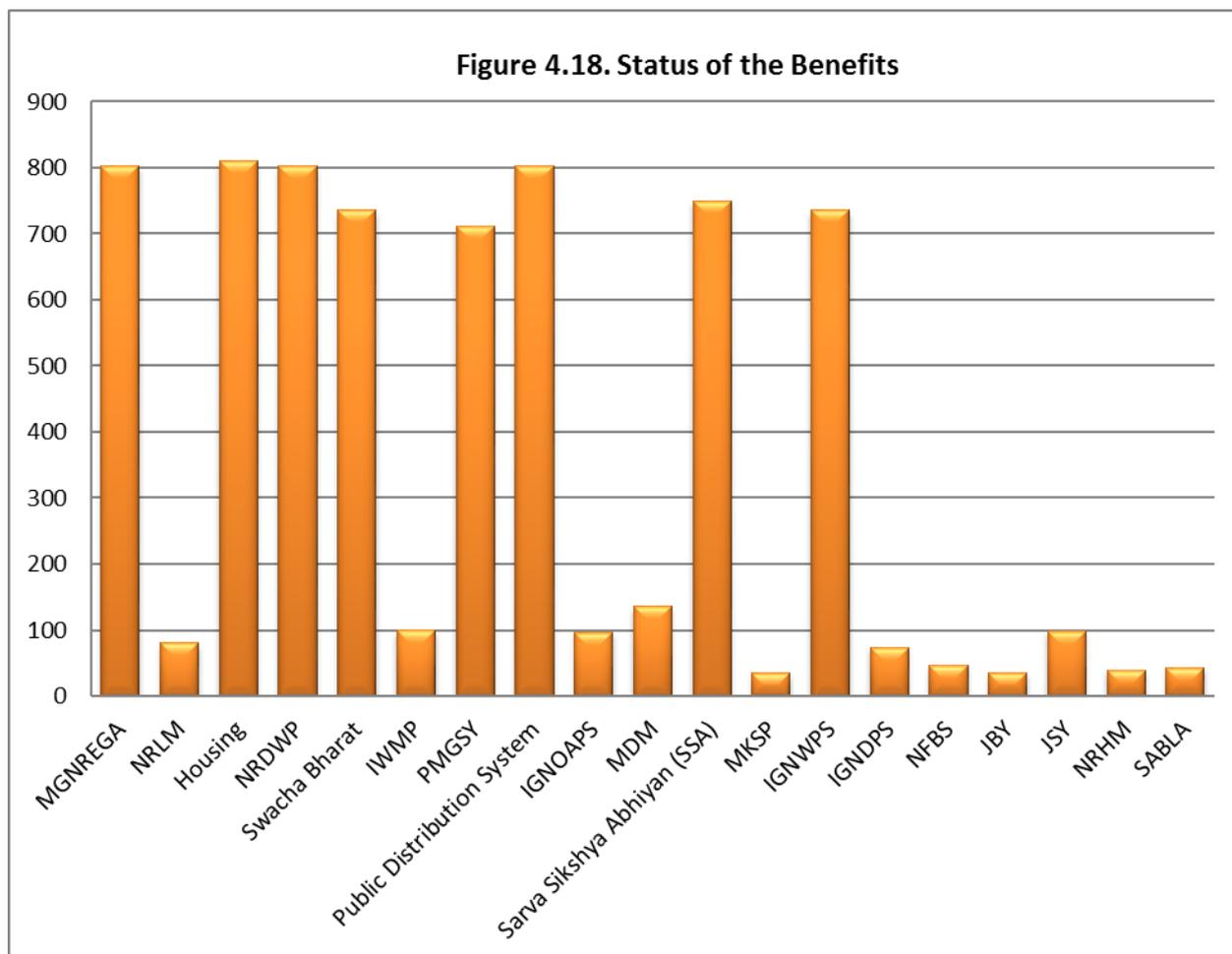
The concept of Gram Sabha as a statutory, political and administrative entity is still new. The awareness level of even elected representatives are in big question in majority of the panchayats in north India and many of south India panchayats. It is still worse the Sarpanches of the GPs are unaware about their powers and functions and responsibilities. People need time to familiarise themselves with the re-emergence of PRIs with some new features - direct elections to the posts of panchayat presidents, reservation for women, members of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. The suppression of the elite community and rich people continue to dominate and exploit both low caste elected members and poor people. Transparency is an important element of good governance where lack of awareness hinders the process of pro-disclosure and demand of disclosure of documents and performances.

The study region also shows similar situation on the level of awareness about the various functions for the people of their respective panchayats. More than 50 per cent of the sample respondents were not aware and not interested in knowing the importance of the Gram Panchayats and their role play.



The Gram Panchayat is the direct implementing agency for few centrally sponsored schemes of the ministry of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, namely MGNREGS, PMAY, PMGSY, Swachh Bharat, etc., and nodal agency for selecting beneficiaries for other departmental schemes. Few individual oriented schemes like old age pension, widow pension. It also recommends or certifies few family-oriented benefits schemes implemented by the State governments. The panchayat also acts as responsible in identifying the works and work sites for some common benefit schemes and infrastructure facilities, etc. Some of the important life supporting services are directly or indirectly managed, supervised and coordinated the service providing units like PDS, Health centres primary schools, ICDS centres. The status of benefits received by the sample respondents were reported in the table, which are self-explanatory. Majority of the respondents benefitted under common facility services like drinking water and sanitation, road connectivity, health, education, mid-day meal

scheme, etc. Other individual benefits schemes are concerned only less percentage of families benefited due to mismatch of supply and demand.



It is quite interesting to see the likely change in the structure of rural community. As a result of development and strengthening of infrastructures and effective implementation of poverty alleviation programmes supported the income and employment of the household in the lowest strata of the rural society. For a long time, these households were the victims of exploitation by the elite which had taken deep roots in the rural economy. Now the poverty alleviation programmes have weakened these roots and created many favourable atmosphere for the rural poor to improve their conditions. Another equally important change that we witnessed in the rural scene after poverty alleviation or rural development programmes is that the poor people who never had any voice in the functioning of the village institutions. Now they are taking active part in these village institutions. This shows the confidence gained by the poor in framing the programmes and policies meant for them. This change is predominantly due to the PRIs and their functioning. The flagship programme of MGNREGS certainly increased employment opportunities, reduced migration, improved the income of the family and many other benefits. PMAY has given dignified life to the lower income group beneficiaries by providing protected permanent housing. NRLM empowered women especially lower social and economic groups. improvement among the beneficiaries these programmes with the help of the Gram Panchayats was noticed.

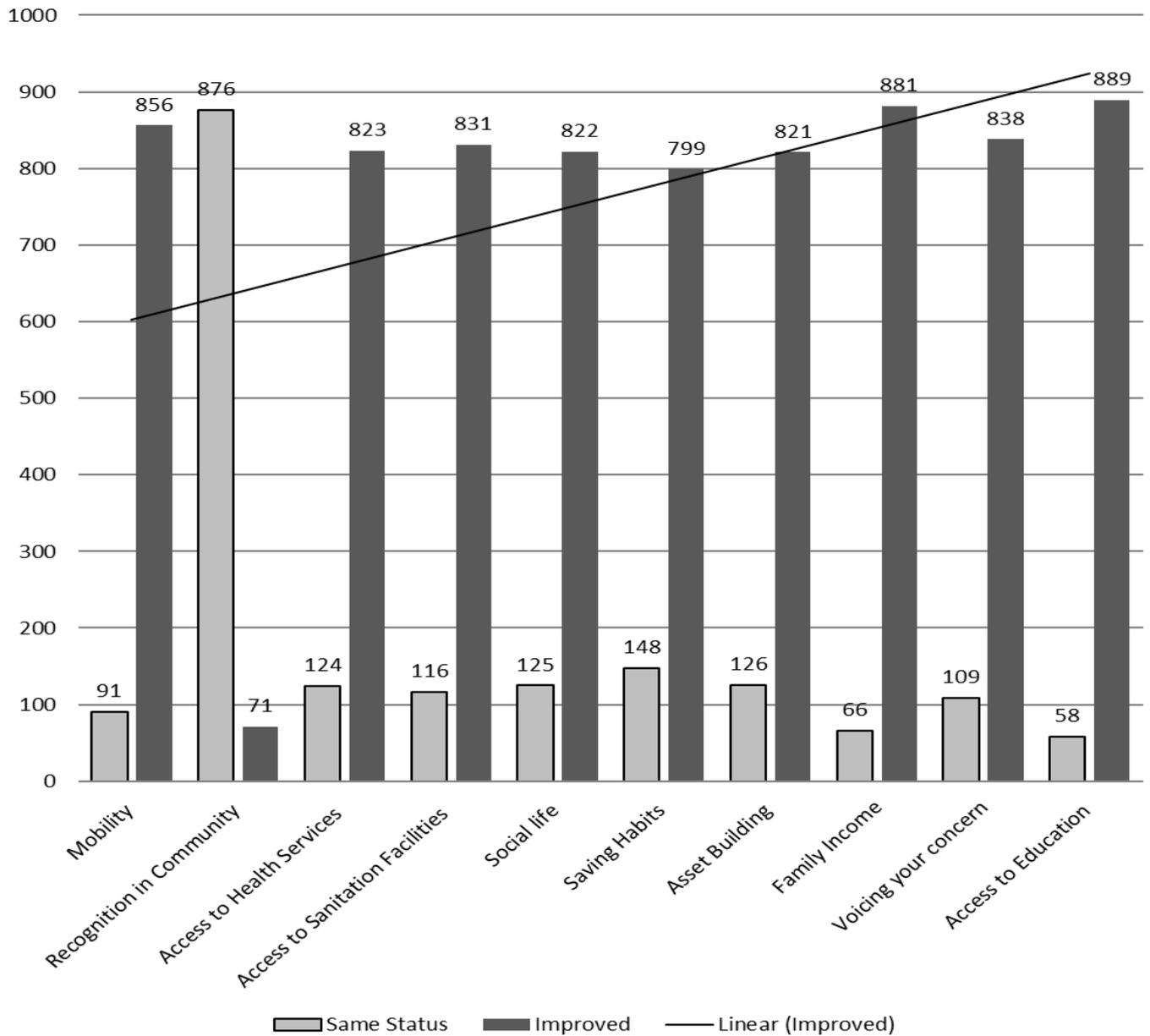
**Table 4.48 : Changes on Socio economic conditions through RD Programmes**

Parameters	States												Total	
	Tamil Nadu			West Bengal			Karnataka			Madhya Pradesh			Same Status	Im-proved
	Same Status	Im-proved		Same Status	Im-proved		Same Status	Im-proved		Same Status	Im-proved			
Mobility	32 (13.0)	215 (87.0)	16 (6.6)	227 (93.4)	4 (1.8)	214 (98.2)	39 (16.3)	200 (83.7)	91 (9.6)	856 (90.4)				
Recognition in Community	213 (86.2)	34 (13.8)	234 (96.3)	9 (3.7)	216 (99.1)	2 (0.9)	213 (89.1)	26 (10.9)	876 (92.5)	71 (7.5)				
Access to Health Services	34 (13.8)	213 (86.2)	29 (11.9)	214 (88.1)	2 (0.9)	216 (99.1)	59 (24.7)	180 (75.3)	124 (13.1)	823 (86.9)				
Access to Sanitation Facilities	28 (11.3)	219 (88.7)	30 (12.3)	213 (87.7)	4 (1.8)	214 (98.2)	54 (22.6)	185 (77.4)	116 (12.2)	831 (87.8)				
Social life	32 (13.0)	215 (87.0)	47 (19.3)	196 (80.7)	4 (1.8)	214 (98.2)	42 (17.6)	197 (82.4)	125 (13.2)	822 (86.8)				
Saving Habits	36 (14.6)	211 (85.4)	42 (17.3)	201 (82.7)	2 (0.9)	216 (99.1)	68 (28.5)	171 (71.5)	148 (15.6)	799 (84.4)				
Asset Building	44 (17.8)	203 (82.2)	27 (11.1)	216 (88.9)	13 (6.0)	205 (94.0)	42 (17.6)	197 (82.4)	126 (13.3)	821 (86.7)				
Family Income	35 (14.2)	212 (85.8)	0 (0.0)	243 (100.0)	2 (0.9)	216 (99.1)	29 (12.1)	210 (87.9)	66 (7.0)	881 (93.0)				
Voicing your concern	32 (13.0)	215 (87.0)	45 (18.5)	198 (81.5)	4 (1.8)	214 (98.2)	28 (11.7)	211 (88.3)	109 (11.5)	838 (88.5)				
Access to Education	27 (10.9)	220 (89.1)	9 (3.7)	234 (96.3)	2 (0.9)	216 (99.1)	20 (8.4)	219 (91.6)	58 (6.1)	889 (93.9)				

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Figure 4.19. Changes on Socio economic status through RD Programmes



**Table 4.49 : Level of changes noticed in the respondent's family through panchayat intervention**

Field of changes	Tamil Nadu			West Bengal			Karnataka			Madhya Pradesh			Total		
	Good	Better	No change	Good	Better	No change	Good	Better	No change	Good	Better	No change	Good	Better	No change
Economic	26 (10.5%)	113 (45.7%)	108 (43.7%)	3 (1.2%)	56 (23.0%)	183 (75.3%)	4 (1.8%)	98 (45.0%)	116 (53.2%)	5 (2.1%)	59 (24.7%)	175 (73.2%)	38 (4.0%)	326 (34.4%)	582 (61.5%)
Political	18 (7.3%)	124 (50.2%)	105 (42.5%)	97 (39.9%)	3 (1.2%)	134 (55.1%)	14 (6.4%)	77 (35.3%)	127 (58.3%)	55 (23.0%)	44 (18.4%)	140 (58.6%)	184 (19.4%)	248 (26.2%)	506 (53.4%)
Social	15 (6.1%)	108 (43.7%)	124 (50.2%)	3 (1.2%)	101 (41.6%)	139 (57.2%)	4 (1.8%)	91 (41.7%)	123 (56.4%)	9 (3.8%)	87 (36.4%)	143 (59.8%)	31 (3.3%)	387 (40.9%)	529 (55.9%)
Agriculture	55 (22.3%)	69 (27.9%)	121 (49.0%)	1 (0.4%)	39 (16.0%)	203 (83.5%)	12 (5.5%)	79 (36.2%)	121 (55.5%)	9 (3.8%)	43 (18.0%)	184 (77.0%)	77 (8.1%)	230 (24.3%)	629 (66.4%)
Health	4 (1.6%)	118 (47.8%)	125 (50.6%)	0 (0.0)	70 (28.8%)	173 (71.2%)	15 (6.9%)	72 (33.0%)	129 (59.2%)	7 (2.9%)	93 (38.9%)	138 (57.7%)	26 (2.7%)	353 (37.3%)	565 (59.7%)
Education	10 (4.0%)	113 (45.7%)	123 (49.8%)	0 (0.0)	37 (15.2%)	206 (84.8%)	11 (5.0%)	80 (36.7%)	124 (56.9%)	11 (4.6%)	55 (23.0%)	172 (72.0%)	32 (3.4%)	285 (30.1%)	625 (66.0%)
Employment	134 (54.3%)	104 (42.1%)	7 (2.8%)	187 (77.0%)	39 (16.0%)	13 (5.3%)	129 (59.2%)	71 (32.6%)	11 (5.0%)	184 (77.0%)	42 (17.6%)	8 (3.3%)	634 (66.9%)	256 (27.0%)	39 (4.1%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

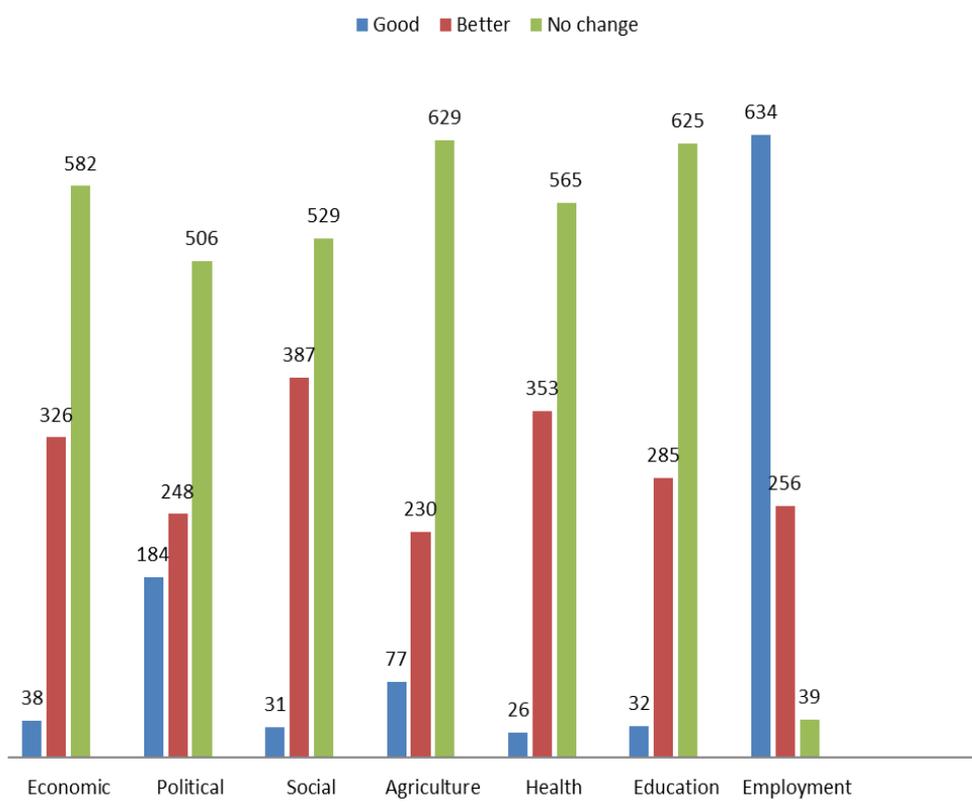
# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

Economic and social inequalities are interlinked. The power structure is concentrated in the hands of the dominant castes, and people with political or muscle power. They dominate the activities of the village as well as their own community. These people control the flow of resources and technology coming from outside, and appropriate all the benefits meant for the weaker sections. The phenomenon of the dominant caste and dominant personalities among all castes is a common feature to all villages in this region. The lower caste faces constant discrimination in their day-to-day life. Among them, women are worst victims. Without any asset base, and several social disabilities, they are unable to sustain any economic activity, and have to depend on others for means of livelihood. Consequently, they are exploited, and live at subsistence levels without any savings. Poverty is directly related to land holdings as agriculture and its allied sectors are the main source of income. There are some small-scale industries which provide employment to a limited workforce.

The study focused on identifying the changes on the socio-economic and political life of the study population based on the interventions made by the panchayats in the study region. The major interventions in addition to the delivery and maintenance of the structures of the basic needs, the panchayats implement major employment scheme like MGNREGS, the contribution of this scheme has been discussed enough by a number of researchers, it made improvement in terms of increased income, women empowerment, mobility of women, holding bank accounts, credit worthiness, asset creation and ultimately improving the economic life of the marginalised sections in the study areas. Panchayat facilitation of another scheme called NRLM also equally contributed for social and economic life of the poor family through women self-help adventures.

The PMAY has created permanent housing to a number of families which created social recognition to these sections of people. PMGSY increased the connectivity and people have easy access to the market and other health facilities, Swachh Bharat has brought appreciable changes on sanitation behaviour of the people. Other individual pension schemes provide life protection for the senior citizens. Maintaining rural infrastructures supports many dimensions of the life of poor people. Even then, careless exclusions of certain section of the people leads to problems in accessing the services, schemes and infrastructures created by the governing institutions. Ignorance and lack of awareness on the part of poor people also hinder the access of the services created for them. The data from the field show, that more than 50 per cent of the people could not be able to realise any major changes in their life due to the panchayat interventions. There was no much change in

**Figure 4.20. Level of changes noticed in the respondent's family through panchayat intervention**



the political carrier of the people due to the panchayats but it created better change in social, economic, health, educational and in the field of agriculture development as well as availing of employment opportunities.

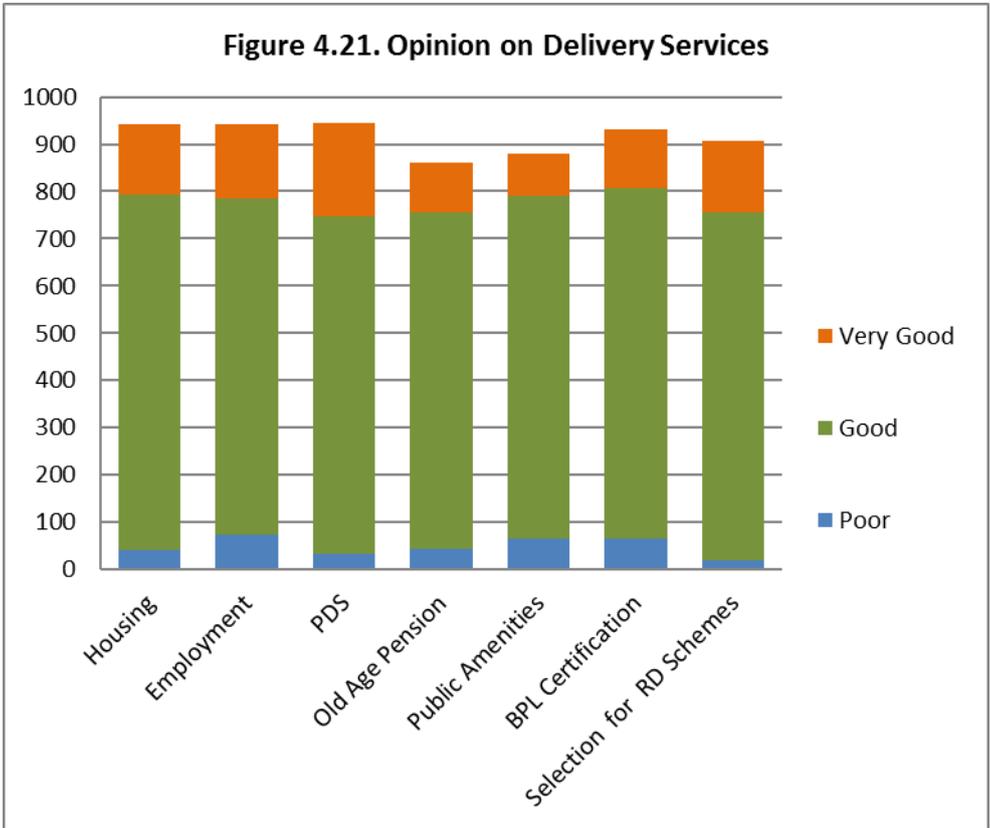
**Table 4.50 : Status of Delivery of Services**

Opinion on delivery services	Tamil Nadu			West Bengal			Karnataka			Madhya Pradesh			Total		
	Poor	Good	Very Good	Poor	Good	Very Good	Poor	Good	Very Good	Poor	Good	Very Good	Poor	Good	Very Good
Housing	10 (4.0%)	180 (72.9%)	57 (23.1%)	21 (8.6%)	181 (74.5%)	40 (16.5%)	0 (0.0)	203 (93.1%)	12 (5.5%)	9 (3.8%)	189 (79.1%)	41 (17.2%)	40 (4.2%)	753 (79.5%)	150 (15.8%)
Employment	6 (2.4%)	181 (73.3%)	60 (24.3%)	31 (12.8%)	180 (74.1%)	32 (13.2%)	23 (10.6%)	185 (84.9%)	6 (2.8%)	13 (5.4%)	165 (69.0%)	60 (25.1%)	73 (7.7%)	711 (75.1%)	158 (16.7%)
PDS	5 (2.0%)	178 (72.1%)	64 (25.9%)	12 (4.9%)	169 (69.5%)	62 (25.5%)	10 (4.6%)	199 (91.3%)	6 (2.8%)	5 (2.1%)	169 (70.7%)	65 (27.2%)	32 (3.4%)	715 (75.5%)	197 (20.8%)
Old Age Pension	13 (5.3%)	174 (70.4%)	44 (17.8%)	9 (3.7%)	190 (78.2%)	24 (9.9%)	2 (0.9%)	183 (83.9%)	6 (2.8%)	19 (7.9%)	166 (69.5%)	31 (13.0%)	43 (4.5%)	713 (75.3%)	105 (11.1%)
Public Amenities	3 (1.2%)	190 (76.9%)	54 (21.9%)	38 (15.6%)	168 (69.1%)	2 (0.8%)	6 (2.8%)	201 (92.2%)	6 (2.8%)	19 (7.9%)	165 (69.0%)	27 (11.3%)	66 (7.0%)	724 (76.5%)	89 (9.4%)
BPL Certification	15 (6.1%)	171 (69.2%)	61 (24.7%)	19 (7.8%)	193 (79.4%)	31 (12.8%)	3 (1.4%)	194 (89.0%)	9 (4.1%)	28 (11.7%)	185 (77.4%)	22 (9.2%)	65 (6.9%)	743 (78.5%)	123 (13.0%)
Selection of beneficiaries for RD Schemes	5 (2.0%)	182 (73.7%)	60 (24.3%)	2 (0.8%)	191 (78.6%)	44 (18.1%)	4 (1.8%)	188 (86.2%)	0 (0.0)	7 (2.9%)	175 (73.2%)	48 (20.1%)	18 (1.9%)	736 (77.7%)	152 (16.1%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

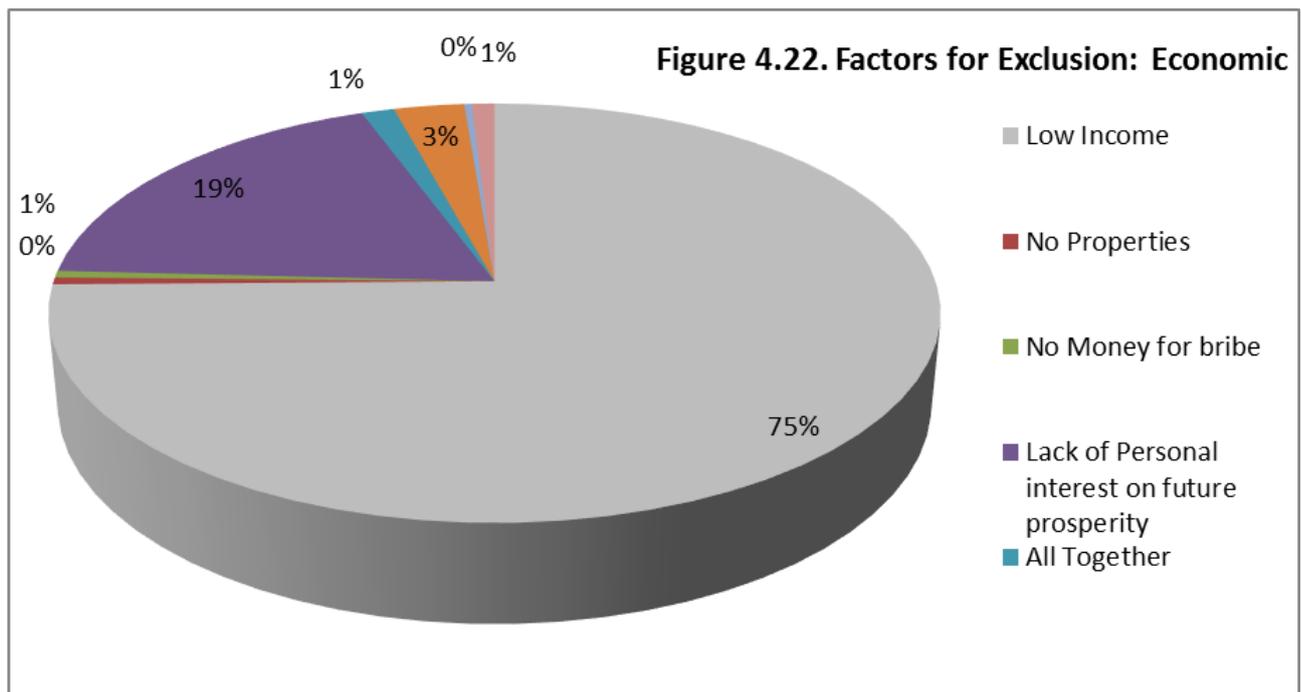
# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

The table 4.50 clearly explains the people opinion about the performance of panchayats in creating the access of services of basic amenities to the people through its strategies. All the GPs in the study regions improved the performance level due to the effective people's participation which enables in maintaining transparency and accountability in delivering services like provision of drinking water, street light, electricity, connectivity, housing for houseless, education for all, anganwadi for the young children, public distribution system, access of market, maintenance of burial ground, provision



of employment, selection of beneficiaries under various welfare schemes, etc. Many award-winning panchayats by default developed infrastructure and delivered better services till the period of getting Awards. But later few panchayats sustained and created self-reliance, which further gained a number of incentives in the form of funds and people support. But few panchayats could not sustain or survive, hence poor in delivery of quality services. Rich and better off people reap the benefits from the service providers but poor illiterate still live in the periphery of the poverty and under the clutches of the communal hierarchy.

**4.9 Factors influenced for Exclusion**



**Table 4.51 : Factors for Exclusion: Economic**

Factors for Exclusion: Economic	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Low Income	221 (89.5%)	221 (90.9%)	83 (38.1%)	183 (76.6%)	708 (74.8%)
No Properties	5 (2.0%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	5 (0.5%)
No Money for bribe	3 (1.2%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	5 (0.5%)
Lack of Personal interest on future prosperity	6 (2.4%)	0 (0.0)	128 (58.7%)	42 (17.6%)	176 (18.6%)
All Together	2 (0.8%)	0 (0.0)	7 (3.2%)	4 (1.7%)	13 (1.4%)
Low Income & no Properties	2 (0.8%)	21 (8.6%)	0 (0.0)	5 (2.1%)	28 (3.0%)
Low Income & Lack of Personal Interest	3 (1.2%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (0.3%)
Low Income & No Money for Bribe	5 (2.0%)	1 (0.4%)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.3%)	9 (1.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

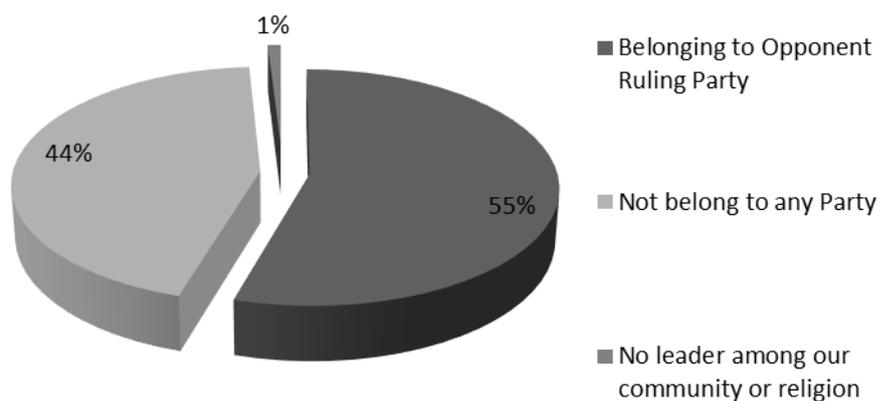
**Table 4.52 : Factors for Exclusion: Social**

Factors for Exclusion: Social	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Belonging to Lower Community	118 (47.8%)	241 (99.2%)	207 (95.0%)	224 (93.7%)	790 (83.4%)
Belonging to Minority	26 (10.5%)	2 (0.8%)	8 (3.7%)	13 (5.4%)	49 (5.2%)
No Identity	3 (1.2%)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.4%)	1 (0.4%)	7 (0.7%)
Distantly Located	100 (40.5%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	1 (0.4%)	101 (10.7%)

**Table 4.53: Factors for Exclusion: Political**

Factors for Exclusion: Political	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Belonging to Opponent Ruling Party	104 (42.1%)	166 (68.3%)	75 (34.4%)	172 (72.0%)	517 (54.6%)
Not belong to any Party	136 (55.1%)	77 (31.7%)	143 (65.6%)	65 (27.2%)	421 (44.5%)
No leader among our community or religion	7 (2.8%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	9 (1.0%)

**Figure 4.23. Factors for Exclusion: Political**



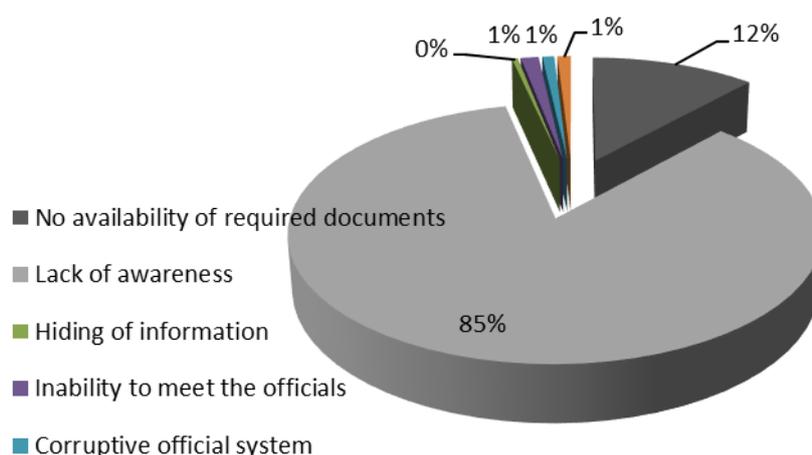
**Table 4.54 : Factors for Exclusion: Administrative**

Factors for Exclusion: Administrative	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
No availability of required documents	61 (24.7%)	7 (2.9%)	8 (3.7%)	35 (14.6%)	111 (11.7%)
Lack of awareness	170 (68.8%)	234 (96.3%)	204 (93.6%)	195 (81.6%)	803 (84.8%)
Hiding of information	2 (0.8%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	4 (0.4%)
Inability to meet the officials	8 (3.2%)	2 (0.8%)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	12 (1.3%)
Corruptive official system	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	6 (2.8%)	2 (0.8%)	8 (0.8%)
Lack of awareness, inability to meet & corruptive	6 (2.4%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	3 (1.3%)	9 (1.0%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

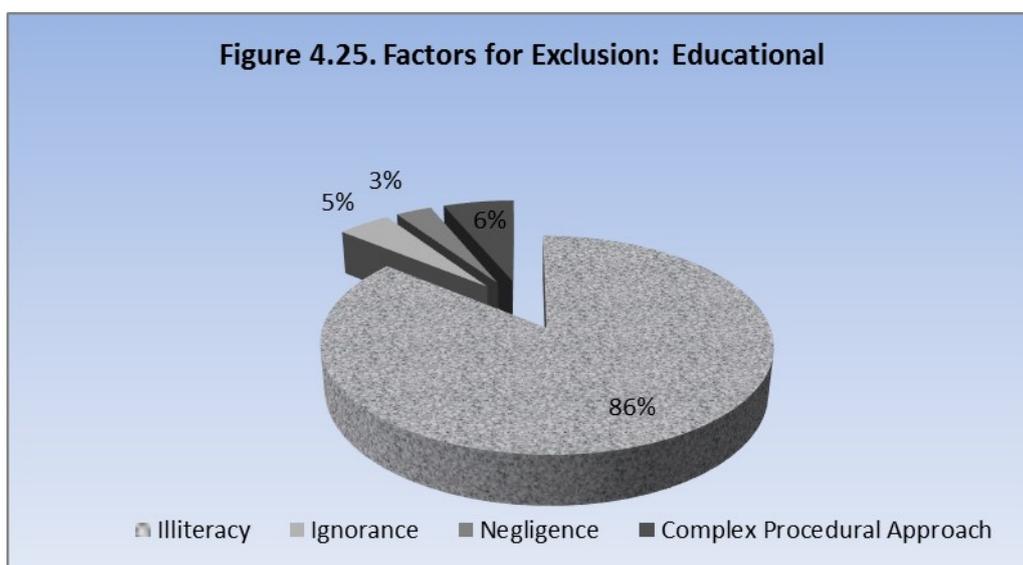
# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

**Figure 4.24. Factors for Exclusion: Administrative**



**Table 4.55 : Factors for Exclusion: Educational**

Factors for Exclusion: Educational	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Illiteracy	147 (59.5%)	234 (96.3%)	212 (97.2%)	221 (92.5%)	814 (86.0%)
Ignorance	29 (11.7%)	1 (0.4%)	6 (2.8%)	8 (3.3%)	44 (4.6%)
Negligence	14 (5.7%)	8 (3.3%)	0 (0.0)	8 (3.3%)	30 (3.2%)
Complex Procedural Approach	57 (23.1%)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	2 (0.8%)	59 (6.2%)



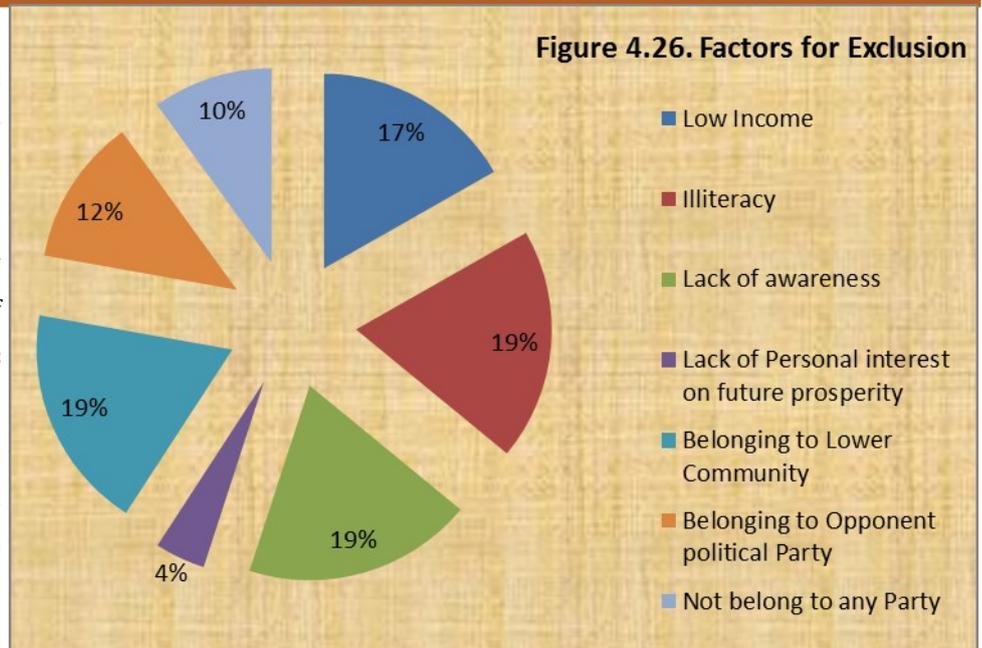
**Table 4.56 : Consolidated factors influencing Exclusion**

Factors for Exclusion	States				Total
	Tamil Nadu	West Bengal	Karnataka	Madhya Pradesh	
Low Income	221 (89.5%)	221 (90.9%)	83 (38.1%)	183 (76.6%)	708 (74.8%)
Illiteracy	147 (59.5%)	234 (96.3%)	212 (97.2%)	221 (92.5%)	814 (86.0%)
Lack of awareness	170 (68.8%)	234 (96.3%)	204 (93.6%)	195 (81.6%)	803 (84.8%)
Lack of Personal interest on future prosperity	6 (2.4%)	0 (0.0)	128 (58.7%)	42 (17.6%)	176 (18.6%)
Belonging to Lower Community	118 (47.8%)	241 (99.2%)	207 (95.0%)	224 (93.7%)	790 (83.4%)
Belonging to Opponent political Party	104 (42.1%)	166 (68.3%)	75 (34.4%)	172 (72.0%)	517 (54.6%)
Not belong to any Party	136 (55.1%)	77 (31.7%)	143 (65.6%)	65 (27.2%)	421 (44.5%)

Source : Data Collected from the Field.

# Figures in the parenthesis in the States column represents percentages to the state total and end column represents percentages to total study population.

As our society speeds forward to new technological and economic heights, it elevates some people and leaves others behind. Individuals who belong to underprivileged groups or minority social groups are at higher *risk* of facing social exclusion. *Poverty* is one of the key factors in exclusion. Exclusion is defined as the processes by which individuals and population groups face barriers in relation to their access to public goods, resulting in inequitable social



attainments, capabilities, development, justice and dignity outcomes. These barriers may arise from a number of causes, including social or State neglect, social discrimination, tacit or State denial, social or State violence and dispossession, customary practices and cultural norms, by faulty design and implementation of State laws, policies and programmes, or a combination of all of these’.

The evidences from the field of this study, details related to different type of exclusions, the data reveals low income, lower community status, illiteracy, belonging to a particular political party or apolitical nature are the major factors influencing the life of marginalised community. These factors continue to make them vulnerable to all kinds of atrocities and vanish the feeling of emancipation against suppression.

#### 4.10 Conclusion

Participatory planning aims to identify the critical problems, joint priorities, elaboration and adoption of socio-economic development strategies. The process mainly involves: appraisal, needs identification, restitution, organisation, planning, implementation and evaluation. Further, participatory planning is the initial step in the definition of a common agenda for development by a local community and an external entity or entities. Over the period, this initial step is expected to evolve for the parties concerned towards a self-sustaining development planning process at the local level. The core aims of participatory development planning are to give people a say in the development decisions that may affect them and to ensure that development interventions are appropriate to the needs and preferences of the population that they are intended to benefit.

Participatory development planning can be undertaken by government agencies or other development agencies and CSOs at the national, regional, municipal or community level. Most of the methods and tools are inexpensive and simple to use and many have been designed for use with or by community members and do not require literacy. The types of stakeholders participating in this approach can range from rural or urban local communities, community-based organisations and other CSOs for local development planning, to larger CSOs, international NGOs, the private sector and the academia, in the case of national or even regional development planning. The level of stakeholder participation varies greatly depending on how seriously the approach is being taken, and can range from minimal i.e. involvement only in information-gathering or consultation to more active forms such as for e.g. in identifying, prioritising and designing the development programme/activities. While participatory development planning is generally initiated by the government or development agency involved, there are also opportunities for CSOs to take the lead. For example, there are many instances where NGOs have organised and facilitated participatory action research to help development decision-makers

learn about local needs and preferences in order to plan locally-appropriate interventions. Other CSO-led approaches that are outlined in the subsequent sections of this article include: awareness-raising and mobilising of communities and citizens to encourage them to get involved in development planning processes; building the capacity of local-level stakeholders to participate in these processes; and campaigning for or against particular development interventions. In the best of instances, long-term working relationships develop between, for example local government offices and NGOs or development agencies and the communities in which they work, to enable the planning to benefit from the knowledge and experience of the different stakeholder groups. These linkages may take the form of formal partnerships between the parties involved or informal arrangements based on mutual trust.

## CHAPTER – 5

### FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Local governing institutions are granted constitutional legality as Local Government bodies are responsible for socio- economic development in the rural areas. There are 29 subjects for which the *panchayat* is responsible with the help of Standing Committees to cover all subjects. The Gram Sabha acts as a community level accountability mechanism to ensure the functionaries of the PRI respond to people’s needs. A vast number of Gram Panchayats in the country have been making good attempts and also attained success in implementation of development programmes and achieved expected results. Study of such good practices, strategies, approaches and factors of people participation in the process of planning will be very important in order to analyse for replication in other places. Therefore, the present case study was conducted in a successful Nalukkottai Gram Panchayat, in Tamil Nadu. The study critically reviewed the approaches and modalities of Grassroots Planning Process and institutional mechanism created to mobilise people participation in implementation of development works.

#### 5.1 Findings

- The study focused to cover marginalised sections benefitted under different rural development schemes of the study region. It includes women as one the category of study respondents; therefore, the study represents almost equal percentage of men and women as respondents. Out of 947 respondents, 485 (52.3 per cent) are males and remaining 452 (47.7 per cent) are females.
- It is worthwhile to note that the majority, i.e., 343 (36.2 per cent) respondents were in the age group of 31-40, followed by 306 (32.3 per cent) in the age group of 50-60 and 190 (20.1 per cent) were in the age group of 41-50. Larger majority respondents are in the age between 31-60 years.
- As proportionate to the national religious composition, this study also has high majority of 682 (72.0 per cent) belonging to the Hindu religion, another 148 (11.8 per cent) respondents belong to Christianity and the remaining 112 (11.8 per cent) belong to the Islam religion.
- Out of total 947 respondents selected for the study, 378 (39.9 per cent) women belong to different social groups, 270 (28.5 per cent) are SC&STs, 260 (27.5 per cent) represents minority comprising both Christianity and Islam and the study also covered 39 (4.1 per cent) physically challenged persons belonging to different community and religion.
- Based on the available data, the respondents are classified under three major caste groups, viz. Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST), Backward Caste (BC) and Most Backward Caste (MBC). In general, the marginalised groups predominantly belong to SC&ST and BC communities in India.
- Over all study responses show that, 355 (37.5 per cent) respondents are illiterates. Among the literates, 361 (38.1 per cent) have attended school only up to primary level. Around 18.8 per cent respondents studied up to secondary schooling and only 36 (1.8 per cent) respondents attended higher education up to college level. Discussion from respondents revealed that low socio-economic condition in general and lack of interest and encouragement in particular resulted to high illiteracy.
- Regarding marital status of respondents, the table 1.6 shows, 887 (93.7 per cent) were married and 60 (6.3 per cent) are unmarried.

- It is clear that among the total of 947 respondents of study, 472 (50 per cent) were agriculture labourers, followed by 149 (15.7 per cent) were engaged in farming during rainy season otherwise basically belong to agricultural labourers' category, 118 (12.5 per cent) livestock rearing as the main source of income. Even, people who engaged in animal husbandry also face difficulties due to non-availability of fodder and unsuitable weather. Few sold their animals to avoid loss on starvation death.
- Having ration card is an important subsistence tool for the poor, providing proof of identity and a connection with government databases. Around 95 per cent of the households have the ration cards in the study regions.
- In the study region, around 87 per cent families are having BPL cards, 6.5 per cent have ration cards under the category of Antyodaya Anna Yojana and only around 1.5 per cent families were having Annapurna cards.
- Members having nuclear families formed the largest proportion i.e., 736 (77.7 per cent) and remaining 211 (22.3 per cent) are living in joint family.
- Majority of the families i.e., 591 (62.4 per cent) in the study region have family size of 5-6 members, followed by 169 (23.8 per cent) respondents' families are having family size of 1 or 2 members, 145 (15.3 per cent) are having family size between 3-4 members. Illiteracy, lack of knowledge on family planning practices and importance of having small family size in the earlier days, lead to have more number of children.
- Majority of the respondents i.e., 617 (65.2 per cent) received annual income between Rs. 20,001 – 30,000. Around 17 per cent have got annual income less than Rs. 20,000, followed by another around 15 per cent of respondents received between Rs.30,001-40,000. Income poverty is only one of the multiple deprivations that the SC and ST have continuously suffered, even after nearly six decades of development planning. Across social groups, the percentage of population living below the poverty line is the highest among the ST and SC communities.
- Majority of the beneficiaries i.e., 599 (63.3 per cent) family expenditure is in the range of Rs. 20,001 to 30,000. Especially, there are, families having expenditure below Rs. 20,000 are 170 (18.0 per cent), around 125 (13.2 per cent) families have annual expenditure between Rs. 30,001 to 40,000, followed by 50 (5.3 per cent) families having annual expenditure between Rs. 40,001 to 50,000. It seems that the comparison between income and expenditure reflects majority respondents able to manage their family expenditure within the limit of their family income and also some respondents save money to meet the unforeseen events. It is possible due to the supply of food grains and other commodities with subsidised rates through PDS system.
- Among 947 total study respondents, 874 (92.3 per cent) had own house. Only around 4.8 per cent live in rented house. Even though majority have own house, most of them are in damaged condition which reveal their poor socio-economic status.
- It was observed that 366 (41.4 per cent) respondents built their house on their own, only 164 (18.6 per cent) houses were constructed with the help of government financial assistance and 337 (38.2 per cent) were received money under different types of housing schemes but they also contributed own money for completion of house due to the inadequacy of the grant given under the housing scheme.
- Majority people (32.2 per cent) have pucca houses built with RCC roof 291 (30.7 per cent) have built houses with brick wall and tiled roof. It is understood that, only 17.6 per cent have mud wall with thatched roof. More than 12 per cent mostly migrant labourers settled in the villages lived in other type of houses made with mud walls,

thatches and other agricultural waste materials, for wall roof. Regarding, availability of electricity, majority 903 (95.4 per cent) are electrified.

- Out of 903 electrified houses, 756 (81.3 per cent) obtained electricity through own expenditures and only 147 (18.7 per cent) used government assistance and connections on free of cost.
- All the panchayats selected for the study have received Nirmal Puraskar Award by fulfilling the condition of construction of sanitary latrines for all the households with in the panchayats. The Gram Panchayats have adopted resolution to ban open defecation within its entire area inclusive of all habitations and villages. It is observed, 91.8 per cent of households have toilets. This study shows an encouraging trend that is, 94.7 per cent households reported they were using toilets regularly and accustomed to the behaviour of toilets use because of the scheme called Total Sanitation Campaign.
- The type of material used for cooking, reflects around 50 per cent of the households under the study uses firewood as predominant source fuel for cooking, another 19 per cent use the LPG as fuel source. Around 21 per cent of households use agricultural waste, firewood materials available in their own farm or neighbour's farms.
- Supply of drinking water is one of the most important functions of the Gram Panchayat. In urban areas, study area has very good system of drinking water supply due to responsible approaches. Around 44 per cent of people bring drinking water from common water tapes established by the Gram Panchayat, around 24 per cent use hand pumps as source of water. Around 30 per cent use Combined Facility i.e., collecting from both common land post as well as hand pumps. In 97.5 per cent of the habitations' drainage facility was available.
- A total of 379 (40.0 per cent) respondents were landless. Higher landlessness reported from the study panchayats of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the land value and utility is very high in these States. In the States like, Madhya Pradesh and West Bengal ST population is high comparatively and landholding is hereditary but productivity and utility of the soil is very low. The farmers in those States are traditional, not motivated much towards scientific cultivation. Most of the years the land was kept idle without any land improvement practices. Therefore, holding land among marginalised community may not bring appreciable economic improvement.
- Majority i.e., 439 (77.3 per cent) land holdings are below one acre across all the States. Medium and large farmers were not available among the marginalised communities of the sample population. Majority of the lands are unfertile in nature and cultivation is possible for only one crop under the rainfed condition.
- Around 40 per cent households received lands under government land free distribution. "Even after the land is allotted to the poor, ensuring physical possession of it became major problem, for the landlords often thwart the efforts of the poor by involving them in litigation or using threats or other coercive methods in preventing them from cultivating the land allotted to them.
- The assets are stocks of resources which are accumulated over a period of time for comfortable life and future consumption security on unpredicted economic suppression. The data on the asset possession of the marginalised sections especially SC&ST communities have been improved due to government interventions.
- Only around 50 per cent families are holding some kind of consumption supporting assets but majority people do not have any economically valuable assets. Among the assets available in the households, TV was possessed by 790 houses (83.4 per cent), majority respondents had domestic animals like cow, sheep and chicken birds by 683 (72.1 per cent).
- Although the general performance of panchayats in promoting inclusive development has not been impressive, there are some cases where they have taken initiatives to ensure better service delivery or to promote

development in a systematic manner.

- Regarding the initiatives taken for socio-economic development and other aspects of the life of the poor by the panchayats, majority people (65.2 per cent) benefitted under health programmes, 532 (56.2 per cent) respondents were benefitted through the activities related to the improvement in the agriculture supporting infrastructures, 519 (54.8 per cent) were availing the educational initiatives undertaken by the panchayats. Similarly, 439 (46.4 per cent) households among marginalised sections received employment with the facilitation of the GPs, further around 40 per cent respondents reported that, they have got benefits under socio-economic initiatives.
- It is clear from the above data and analysis that a majority of more than 90 percent households reported in all the study States, that the Gram Sabha meetings had quorum. The panchayats made adequate efforts to mobilise one-third representation of women, and their mandatory quorum in Gram Sabha meetings. Not only women, other sections of social and low economic groups, minorities, physically challenged were also encouraged to participate in Gram Sabha meetings. The panchayats did not put any hurdle for the participation and raising issues pertaining to the poorest of the poor and other marginalised groups.
- Regarding the status of awareness on the conduct of Gram Sabha and effective methods of communication about the conduct of the meetings, out of 947 households interviewed from four States, only 146 (15.4 per cent) have awareness about the communication of the GS meetings. Only around 20 per cent people participate in the meetings and planning process of the panchayat. Further, 16 per cent reported they participated in the implementation of the development schemes as beneficiaries.
- In most of the States the size of the village panchayat is fairly large. Moreover, villages are highly politicised, divided on caste and class lines. Prevalence of patriarchal dominance of the decisions and women remain at the periphery. In reality in most of the villages, women and lower caste men would not come to this meeting unless they are prompted to come. Even if they come, they sit in one corner and would not raise their voice unless supported to do so. Dependence syndrome and ignorance about importance of participation in Gram Sabha meetings make citizens apathetic.
- The views of the sample respondents report that lack of personal interest for the people for participation in the meetings yields less attendance, it was reported by 78.6 per cent. Similarly, lack of awareness on the functioning of GP (84.6 per cent) for the people hurdles the people's participation.
- Negligence of GPs was reported as 77.9 per cent respondents, the panchayats put less effort to communicate the purpose of the meetings. Therefore, people are not aware about the dates and purposes of the meetings which lead less percentage of attendance.
- The status of marginalised people's representation in the GP committees shows poor representation, out of 947 respondents only 48 (5 per cent) were selected as members of various committees. Even though large number of respondents (45.6 per cent) became members of SHG their political representation is only 14 per cent. They are still silent spectators in the meetings; these people were called for the sake of quorum of the meetings.
- Social *mobilisation* is the cornerstone of participatory approaches in rural development and poverty alleviation programmes. The panchayats conducted a number of methods to inform the meeting date, venue and agenda of the GS. Majority reveals that the meeting information sent to the ward members through written notice and

- In majority cases (34 per cent), the meetings are taking place in front of the panchayat offices, in certain panchayats (23 per cent) Gram Sabha conducted in the common places.
- Regarding nature of participation in Gram Sabha meetings, around 21 per cent participate with full involvement by discussing in detail about the various activities of the GP, especially implementation of State and Central Government welfare and development schemes.
- Around 50 per cent of women respondents and equal percentage of SC&STs including poorest of the poor, in general not only for the GS meetings, public appearance and participation is very meager among this section of the people. Reason for non-participation is social stigma among women specifically Muslim women, low social status under caste hierarchy prevents them to participate in the public events. If forcefully mobilised, they sit in a corner and not participate in discussion.
- Even successful Gram Panchayats also fail to get real participation of certain section of the people excluded historically. Partial participation was reported by 50.5 per cent overall highest in West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh. People participate physically without much involvement in the discussion related to the process of GP decision-making.
- Around 25 per cent sample population participate in planning, and around 10 per cent participate in all the activities of the panchayat. Around 36 per cent respondents participate in planning and monitoring govt. sponsored projects. Further, around 18 per cent participated in execution of government and panchayat self-works pertaining to the development in their jurisdiction.
- The people participate in the planning process through a number of forums like community forums (54.0 per cent) SHGs (21.6 per cent), political party (11.6 per cent) and members of panchayat committees (6.3 per cent), NGO motivated members or facilitators also show importance in participation of the panchayat activities (22.9 per cent). In addition, individual on their own also participate occasionally, from this study panchayat 52.2 per cent respondents reported that they participated on their own interest without any external intervention.
- Out of 947 sample respondents, 63 (6.6 per cent) were holding membership in at least one of the committees earmarked for different purposes of the GP. The new panchayat act has given powers to form a number of committees to plan, execute and monitor the Government Schemes allotted to the GPs. The sample population reported 20 persons (2.1 per cent) were members in standing committees, 15 (1.6 per cent) were members of the development committees. Followed by, 15 (1.6 per cent) have reported they were in the water committees, similarly seven respondents (0.7 per cent) working as members of health and sanitation committees, around 6 (0.6 per cent) reported they were in education development committees appointed by the GPs.
- Only 22.4 per cent reported as the panchayats follow new planning majority from Karnataka. The intervention of SIRD and local NGOs made better attempt to prepare long term perspective plan for the Gram Panchayats in Karnataka. But in reality, all the study panchayats still follow the traditional planning approach, the planning is done on adhoc basis and is primarily supply driven. The plan is basically extracted from the Gram Sabha resolution which consists of the wish list of the Panchayats.
- On the involvement of the local institutions in the planning process, around 55 per cent said the planning is done

at the Gram Sabha and around 40 per cent people responded their panchayats involved local formal and informal institutions in capacity building and planning process.

- As per the Constitution, Panchayats in their respective areas would prepare plans for economic development and social justice and also execute them. Opinions of the sample beneficiaries regarding the accessibility, adequacy of different infrastructure facilities such as drinking water, sanitation, street lights, education, health quality of roads, and transport, etc., are furnished. The study reveals that certain social facilities like sanitation and quality of roads were found inadequate. As the extent of their adequacy and accessibility varies from village to village, above 90 per cent of the beneficiaries have expressed their satisfaction over the adequacy and accessibility of the above mentioned facilities.
- The suppression of the elite community and rich people continue to dominate and exploit the both elected members lower caste and poor people. Transparency is an important element of good governance where lack of awareness hinders the process of pro-disclosure and demand of disclosure of documents and performances.
- More than 50 per cent of the sample respondents were not aware and not interested in knowing the importance of the Gram Panchayats and their role.
- The Gram Panchayat is the direct implementing agency for few centrally sponsored schemes of the ministry of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, namely MGNREGS, PMAY, PMGSY, Swachh Bharat, etc., and nodal agency for selecting beneficiaries for other departmental schemes. Few individual oriented schemes like old age pension, widow pension. It also recommends or certifies few family-oriented benefits schemes implemented by the State governments. The panchayat also acts as responsible in identifying the works and work sites for some common benefit schemes and infrastructure, etc. Some of the important life supporting services are directly or indirectly managed, supervised and coordinated the service providing units like PDS, Health centres, primary schools, ICDS centres.
- Majority of the respondents benefitted under common facility services like drinking water and sanitation, road connectivity, health, education, mid-day meal scheme, etc. Other individual benefits schemes are concerned only less percentage of families only benefitted due to mismatch of supply and demand.
- The data from the field shows that more than 50 per cent of the people were not able to realise any major changes in their life due to the panchayat interventions. There was no much change in the political carrier of the people due to the CBMS but it created better change in social, economic, health, educational and in the field of agriculture development as well as availing of employment opportunities.

## 5.2 Field Observations

- All the GPs in the study regions improved the performance level due to the effective people's participation which enables to maintaining transparency and accountability in delivering services like provision of drinking water, street light, electricity, connectivity, housing for houseless, education for all, anganwadi for the young children, public distribution system, access of market, maintenance of burial ground, provision of employment, selection of beneficiaries under various welfare schemes, etc. Many award-winning panchayats by default developed infrastructures and delivered better services till the period of getting awards. But later few panchayats sustained and created self-reliance, which further gained a number of incentives in the form of funds and people support. But few panchayats could not sustain or survive, hence poor in delivery of quality services. Rich and better off people reap

the benefits from the service providers but poor illiterate still live in the periphery of the poverty and under the clutches of the communal hierarchy.

- As our society speeds forward to new technological and *economic* heights, it elevates some people – and leaves others behind. Individuals who belong to underprivileged groups or minority social groups are at higher *risk* of facing social exclusion. *Poverty* is one of the key factors in exclusion observed from the lifestyle of sample population. Exclusion is seen as the process by which individuals and population groups face barriers in relation to their access to public goods, resulting in inequitable social attainments, capabilities, development, justice and dignity outcomes. These barriers arise from a number of causes, including social or state neglect, social or state discrimination, tacit or active social or state denial, social or state violence and dispossession, customary practices and cultural norms, and/or by faulty design and implementation of State laws, policies and programmes, or a combination of all of these’.
- The evidences from this study, details related to different of type of exclusions resulted in low income led poverty, lower community status, illiteracy, belonging to a particular political party or apolitical in nature are the major influencing the life of the marginalised community. These factors continue to make vulnerable to all kinds of atrocities and vanish the feeling of emancipation against suppression.
- The major interventions in addition to the delivery and maintenance of the structures of the basic needs, the panchayats implement major employment scheme like MGNREGS, the contribution of this scheme has been made improvement in terms of increased income, women empowerment, mobility of women, holding bank accounts, credit worthiness, asset creation and ultimately improving the economic life of the marginalised sections in the study areas.
- Panchayats’ facilitation of another scheme called NRLM also equally contributed for social and economic life of the poor family through women self-help adventures. The PMAY has created permanent housing to a number of families which created social recognition to these sections of people. PMGSY increased the connectivity and people have easy access to the market and other health facilities.
- Swachh Bharat has brought appreciable changes in sanitation behaviour of the people. Other individual pension schemes provide life protection for the senior citizens. Maintaining rural infrastructures supports many dimensions of the life of poor people. Even then, careless exclusions of certain section of the people lead to problems in accessing the services, schemes and infrastructures created by the governing institutions. Ignorance and lack of awareness on the part of poor people also hinder the access of the services created for them.
- It is quite interesting to see the likely change in the structure of rural community. As a result of development and strengthening of infrastructures and effective implementation of poverty alleviation programmes supported the income and employment of the household in the lowest strata of the rural society. For a long time, these households were with the victims of exploitation by the elite which had taken deep roots in the rural economy. Now the poverty alleviation programmes have weakened these roots and created many favorable atmospheres for the rural poor to improve their conditions.
- Another equally important change that witnessed in the rural scene after poverty alleviation or rural development programmes is that the poor people who never had any voice in the functioning of the village institutions. Now

they are taking active part in these village institutions. This shows the confidence gained by the poor in framing the programmes and policies meant for them. This change is predominantly due to the PRIs and their functioning.

### 5.3 SUGGESTIONS

Economic and social inequalities are interlinked. The power structure is concentrated in the hands of the dominant castes, and people with political or muscle power. They dominate the activities of the village as well as their own community. These people control the flow of resources and technology coming from outside, and appropriate all the benefits meant for the weaker sections. The phenomenon of the dominant caste and dominant personalities among all castes is a common feature to all villages in this region. The lower castes face constant discrimination in their day-to-day life. Among them the women are worst victims. Without any asset base, and several social disabilities, they are unable to sustain any economic activity, and have to depend on others for means of livelihood. Consequently, they are exploited, and live at subsistence levels without any savings. Poverty is directly related to land holdings as agriculture and its allied sectors are the main source of income. There are some small-scale industries which provide employment to a limited workforce:

- In the study area illiteracy is very high among the sample respondents even high drop outs among children. The future emancipation endeavour relies on the appropriate education for the young children of the marginalised category. Therefore, conducive environment for educating the poor children is inevitable for the government. Inclusive education is a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners. It involves restructuring the culture, policies and practices in schools so that they can respond to the diversity of students in their locality. For a school to be inclusive, the attitudes of everyone in the school, including administrators, teachers, and other students, are positive towards students from marginalised groups. At the same time, education can empower those who are marginalised or excluded from participating in discussions and decision-making.
- Inclusive growth needs to be distinguished from welfare programmes such as employment guarantee, public distribution of foodgrains to the poor at subsidised rates, etc. Such welfare programmes are, nevertheless, necessary to ensure inclusiveness in development. The study reflects that many people had not enrolled under MGNREGS, effort must be initiated to cover all the families of the marginalised sections. It was observed that majority families have received minimum days of employment due to various technical issues from GP, it has to be looked seriously to provide prescribed days of employment to support income of the families.
- Action towards creating full employment or creating atmosphere for self-employment or adequately remunerated work is an effective method of addressing poverty and promoting social integration and social inclusion. Employment also acts as a source of identity and gives access to a social network.
- The provision of productive employment, especially rural non-farm employment, and access to productive assets, for instance, land, are critical, not only to lift the poor out of the poverty trap, but to also provide a stimulus to growth, as stable incomes can enlarge the purchasing power of the poor and enlarge the size of the domestic market.
- The lands allotted to the weaker sections are barren or not suitable for cultivation. Priority must be given by the panchayats to guide and facilitate the poor farmers to benefit under different schemes like IWMP, RKVY, Horticulture mission and SC&ST corporation to develop their lands which will increase the economic status.
- The major finding of the study revolves around lack of participation or less motivation to participate in the grass-

root democracy and its development initiatives. It is a major hurdle for their betterment. To create and sustain inclusive societies, it is critical that all members of society are able and motivated to participate in civic, social, economic and political activities, both at the local and national levels. A society where most members, if not all, feel that they are playing a part, have access to their basic needs/livelihoods, and are provided with the opportunity to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives, is a society that will best foster principles of inclusiveness.

- To be inclusive is a core value of democratic governance, in terms of equal participation, equal treatment and equal rights before the law. This implies that all people – including the poor, women, ethnic and religious minorities, indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged groups – have the right to participate meaningfully in governance processes and influence decisions that affect them. It also means that governance institutions and policies are accessible, accountable and responsive to disadvantaged groups, protecting their interests and providing diverse populations with equal opportunities.
- Lack of awareness and ignorance are other important lacunae that hinder the participation which are to be checked with the help of locally working NGOs by creating community based organisations and civil societies. The existence of a strong civil society is fundamental for active participation and making public policies and institutions accountable. It fosters a respect for the rights, dignity and privileges of all people, while assuming that they fulfill their responsibilities within their society. There must be freedom for people to express diverse views and develop unconventional unique ideas.
- As long as both the advantaged and disadvantaged have equal access to or benefit from these public facilities and services, they will all feel less burdened by their differences in socio-economic status, thus alleviating a possible sense of exclusion or frustration is essential at present. Communal harmony and eliminating inequalities in all forms will lead to happy and peaceful society.
- Equal access to public information plays an important role in creating an inclusive society, as it will make popular participation possible with well-informed members of society. Information that pertains to the society, such as what a community owns, generates, or benefits from, should be made available to all. Awareness on RTI act has to be given priority.
- Collective participation, through accepted representations of all classes and backgrounds, in the planning, implementation and evaluation of community activities should be sought after. Publication/information sharing and increasing the accessibility of the community's activities will eliminate doubts and suspicions which could otherwise create a sense of exclusion.
- Social inclusion of the excluded groups can only happen if everyone becomes 'part of the group' that defines the culture, values and standards of the society in which they live. Actions can be used towards this purpose include education, dialogue and public awareness campaigns.
- Effective local governance is key to promoting social inclusion and combating social exclusion, as it improves access to basic services, mobilises human and financial resources, and strengthens social and human capital. Likewise, broad-based participation, contributes to good local governance, to fostering transparency, accountability,

legitimacy and to make quality decisions with higher levels of implementation and compliance.

- The leaders of the marginalised sections particularly elected members of the PRIs have to be sensitised towards their roles and responsibilities in the democratic institutions towards safeguarding their people rights. Effective leadership is crucial to the development of an inclusive society, where leadership is not representative of the society, a disconnection between the people and their leaders may eventually result. The most common way of addressing this critical element at the local level is by engaging in open consultations with members of society about village's issues such as the budget, and enhancing the free and timely flow of information to citizens and other stakeholders. Popular participation in decision-making and policy formulation processes could be sought for at all levels of governance.
- Strengthening greater access to various Elements of Inclusion i.e., access to clean and safe places for living, work and recreation, access to information and communication, access to public spaces, access to resources, access to basic services, including education, health care, clean water and sanitation, access to transportation, transparent and accountable decision-making processes, adequate income and employment opportunities, affirmation of human rights, opportunity for personal development, respect for diversity, freedom of choice, religion, etc., participation in decision-making is vital.
- Economic assets are essential if the marginalised are to move beyond exclusion. The presence of an equitable political economy is of primary importance here and it is consequently unsurprising that access to economic development is a central focus.
- In addition to alleviating institutional discrimination providing physical assistance and removing barriers to communication, increasing representation of persons with physically challenged and reducing economic barriers through socio-economic empowerment programmes. Behavioral entry points encompass sensitisation, advocacy, outreach and strengthening of organisations for people with disabilities. Local social service organisations to be encouraged to partner with the GP work towards physical discrimination and protect the rights of the differently challenged
- Building partnerships and coalitions to promote inclusive governance through applying a human rights-based approach to development programming.

### **Appropriate Tools for Inclusive planning**

There is a vast array of tools available for participatory development planning. The following list illustrates some of the more commonly used ones:

- *Information-sharing tools:*  
News and updates on a participatory planning process can be transmitted via traditional media such as newspaper, radio, and television or electronic media such as websites and emails or via meetings and presentations with the communities in a given geographical area.
- *Consultation tools:*  
Stakeholders who are either interested in or likely to be affected by the development decisions can be consulted through discussion forums such as round tables, public hearings, village meetings, community debates, focus groups, or electronic conferencing, surveys, opinion polls etc.
- *Collaborative planning tools:*  
These include: structural mechanisms such as stakeholder representation on decision-making bodies, establish-

ment of local-level planning committees, participatory budgeting, or finance schemes to fund community-managed development; technology-based tools such as participatory GIS such as community mapping, priority ranking and wealth ranking.

### 5.5 Enabling Management Practices in the selected Panchayats

a. **Frequent Gram Sabhas in changing locations:** Gram sabhas are conducted regularly and frequently. These Sabhas are conducted in different hamlets on rotation basis to ensure that people from all parts of the Panchayat get a chance to participate. This has resulted in improving attendance at these meetings as well as increasing awareness levels among the public about the activities of the Panchayat.

b. **Enabling president-member relationship:** The president and ward members share a very cordial and warm relationship which helps in decision-making and delivery of services. According to the members of the GP as well as the records maintained, these meetings are held on a monthly basis and act as platforms to raise issues, discuss and reach consensus that act as the basis of the GPs decisions. The presidents are aware of the needs and situation of different wards, and is also aware of the personal strengths and limitations of the ward members. The attitude towards the ward members has helped to establish a warm relationship.

c. **Regular GP - community communication:** The ward members serve as the medium of communication with their respective wards on behalf of the GP and vice versa. There is a high level of interaction between the elected representatives and the people. Regular communication between the GP members and people serves as a feedback channel helping the GP understand the issues better.

d. **Contextual Planning and Allocation:** An effort to plan and allocate money taking contextual needs of the respective wards was visible in these panchayats. The priorities were decided through Gram Sabha meetings ensuring that communities also had a say in the decision.

e. **Active Media Relationship Building:** The GP presidents have engaged in building relationship with local journalists leading to high visibility in the media. The activities and achievements of the GPs are regularly covered giving the GP a wide publicity, which in turn helps in resource generation and gaining recognition.

f. **Leadership:** The enthusiastic leadership where the GP presidents themselves make a lot of efforts in terms of running around to get permissions and sanctions played major role in the GP performances. However, it has also led to undermining of certain processes such as non-organisation of the Standing Committees meetings. While the Standing Committees have not been constituted as required, no meetings had been organised. As other mechanisms such as monthly ward member meeting and regular Gram Sabha have been taking care of the issues, the absence of Standing Committee meetings have not had any adverse effect on the functioning of the GPs.

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