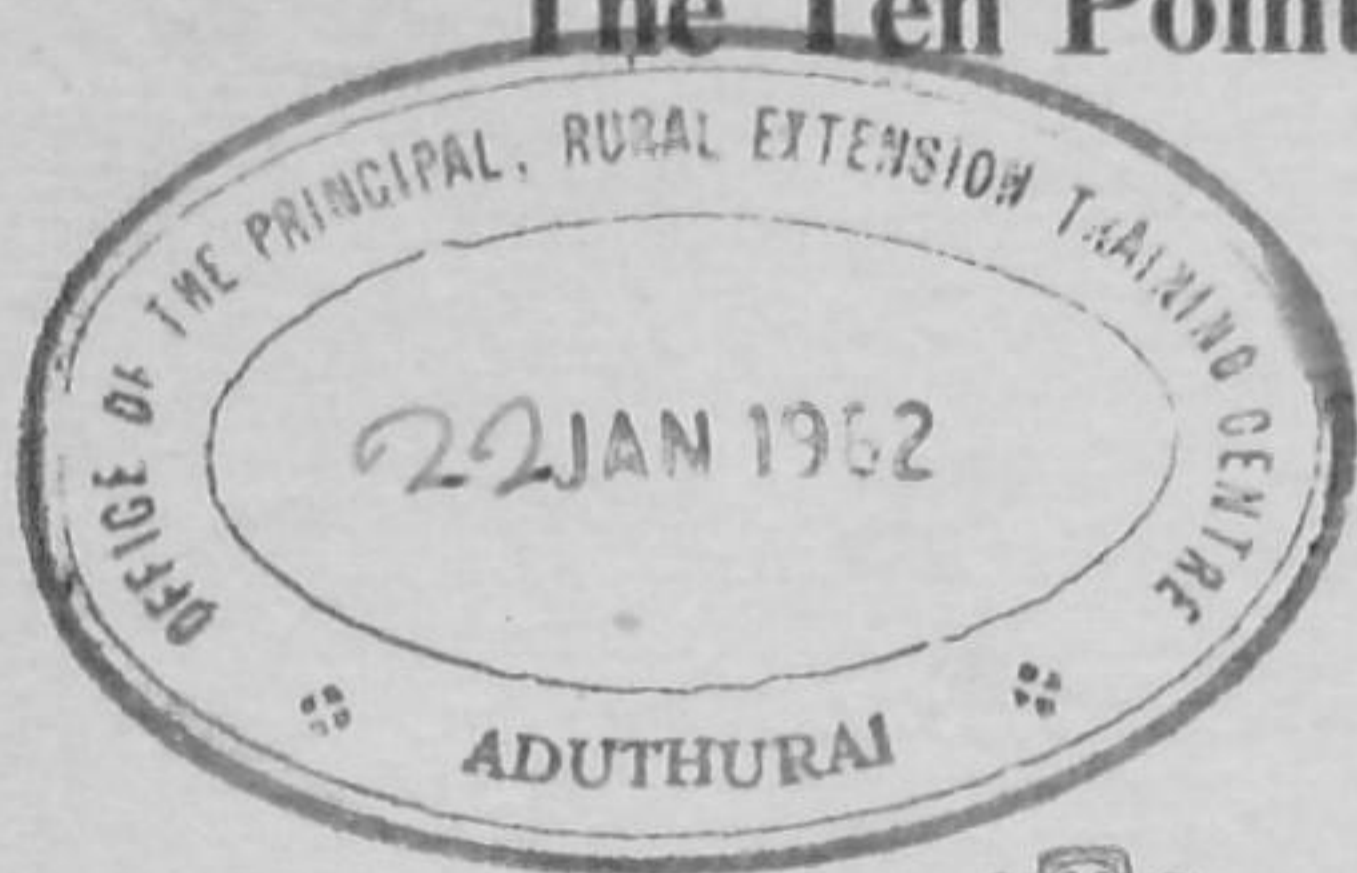


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PANCHAYATI RAJ

The Ten Point Test



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MINISTRY OF
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & COOPERATION
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PANCHAYATI RAJ

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Concept

1. Community Development has been described as “a *process* of change from the traditional way of living of rural communities; as a *method* by which people can be assisted to develop themselves on their own capacity and resources; as a *programme* for accomplishing certain activities in fields concerning welfare of the rural people; and as a *movement* for progress with a certain ideological content”. This definition is specially applicable in the case of an underdeveloped country like India. The First Five Year Plan defined Community Development as “The method and rural extension the agency through which the Plan seeks to initiate a process of transforming the social and economic life of the villagers”. For the Second Plan the N. E. S. & C. P. provided the setting “in which the National Plan approaches the needs and aspirations of the countryside”.

Birth of Community Development Movement

2 India witnessed the birth of Community Development movement on October 2, 1952. It was a Government sponsored programme with people's participation, the N. E. S. forming the new pattern for the administrative organisation down to the village level. While sporadic and rather feeble attempts were made even in the early years of Community Development to promote and involve people's representative institutions and organisations, the inter-dependence of Community Development and growth of “grass root” democracy was but dimly

perceived. It was the Balwantray Mehta Committee, which reviewed the working of the Community Development programme in 1957-58, that focussed attention on the need for and importance of having decentralised local Government with a truly democratic character. 'Democratic Decentralisation' was the remedy suggested, for revitalising and invigorating the Community Development programme as also for making Community Development a truly people's movement.

Democratic Decentralisation

3. The National Development Council in its meeting on January 12, 1958 endorsed the recommendations of the Balwantray Mehta Committee on Democratic Decentralisation and the Central Council of Local Self-Government in its fifth meeting at Hyderabad in 1959 recommended: "While the broad pattern and the fundamentals may be uniform, there should not be any rigidity in the pattern. In fact, the country is so large and Panchayati Raj (Democratic Decentralisation) is so complex a subject with far reaching consequences, that there is the fullest scope of trying out various patterns and alternatives. What is most important is the genuine transfer of power to the people. If this is ensured, form and pattern may necessarily vary according to conditions prevailing in different States." This recommendation has largely determined the policy of the Government of India in the matter.

4. Panchayati Raj, the three-tier democratic structure, is really a culmination of the recognition given by our Constitution to the role of Panchayats. One of the Directive Principles of our Constitution enjoins that the "State shall take steps to organise Village Panchayats and endow ~~them~~ with such powers and authority as may be necessary

to enable them to function as *units of self-Government*". The devolution and decentralisation of powers already made in some States is in implementation of this Directive. The transfer of responsibility and power to people's institutions at the three levels aims not only at making our democracy broad-based but also at making these institutions responsible for achieving certain well-defined objectives and targets of planned development.

Performance Tests

5. It is against this background that a certain clearly identifiable test by which every tier in the Panchayati Raj system can be judged in regard to its performance has been suggested. This Test (The Ten-point Test) should act as the guiding principle for the various workers functioning in these bodies so that a proper direction and purpose may be given to their energies and efforts and will help the nation to assess the performance of these bodies. The pages that follow deal with this Test. Village Panchayats/Panchayat Samitis/Zilla Parishads all over the country may with advantage discuss this Test with special reference to the suggestions for its fulfilment enumerated under each point and its wider implications and significance for Panchayati Raj. Such discussion, it is hoped, would result in a fuller understanding among all concerned of the true role and functions of Panchayati Raj institutions for promoting the rapid development of rural areas and for helping the growth of democracy.

6. One of the principal tasks set out in the Third Five Year Plan is to ensure the growth and working of Panchayati Raj institutions. That will call for the maximum utilisation of resources—in men, money and material—based on cooperative self help and community effort. The extent

to which the Panchayati Raj institutions have actually been utilising the available resources is the issue which has been engaging the attention of those connected with the programme. As a result the possible tests that could be applied to judge the working of these institutions have been discussed from time to time.

II. TEN POINT TEST

7. These tests were defined by the Annual Conference on Community Development & Panchayati Raj held in Hyderabad in July, 1961.

8. The Conference recommended the following ten point test:

- (i) Production in agriculture as the highest national priority during the Third Plan.
- (ii) Promotion of rural industries.
- (iii) Development of co-operative institutions.
- (iv) Development of local resources including the utilisation of man-power.
- (v) Optimum utilisation of resources available to Panchayati Raj institutions such as money, staff, technical assistance and other facilities from higher levels.
- (vi) Assistance to the economically weaker sections of the village community.
- (vii) Progressive dispersal of authority and initiative, both vertically and horizontally, with special emphasis on the role of voluntary organisations.
- (viii) Understanding and harmony between the people's representatives and the people's servants through comprehensive training and education and a clear demarcation of duties and responsibilities.

- (ix) Progressive increase of competence both in officials and non-officials.
- (x) Cohesion and co-operative self-help in the community.

9. In the following paragraphs suggestions have been made for applying these tests to different tiers of Panchayati Raj.

(i) Production in Agriculture as the highest national priority during the Third Plan

10. In respect of agriculture production, the different tiers of Panchayati Raj will have to discharge certain specific duties. Zilla Parishads, for instance will review the District segment of State Agricultural Plan and communicate to the Panchayat Samitis the block segments together with an indication of the likely availability of external assistance for the purpose of implementation of the production plans. The Panchayat Samitis will similarly take action to communicate to village Panchayats an indication of the likely availability of external assistance for the village plans.

11. Panchayat in its turn reinforced by the information transmitted by the Panchayat Samiti will have the village production plans worked out and implemented in each village. As a normal practice, village production plans should be formulated in meetings of village farmers with active participation by the members of Panchayat and Village Cooperative and Gram Sahayaks and Gram Sevak. The plan will list the activities of agricultural development to be undertaken in the village. (Details of preparation and implementation of the village production plans are given in Chapter IV of this pamphlet). The Gram Sabha

should be associated actively in the preparation of the village production plans. (The role of the Gram Sabha in this and other matters is described in Chapter III of this pamphlet).

12. The Panchayati Raj institutions should utilise the services of technical agency in planning and ensuring the technical soundness of agricultural demonstrations. They, together with technical officers will have to regularly review the results of these demonstrations. In particular, the Panchayat through its Agricultural Production Committee should see that successful practices established by such demonstrations are adopted and continued by the farmers concerned.

13. Panchayats will be required to eliminate, with the assistance of the higher level bodies and the District Officers, such difficulties and problems which hamper the enthusiasm and participation of village community in production efforts.

(ii) Promotion of Rural Industries

14. In the field of rural industries the performance of Panchayati Raj institutions will be judged by the extent to which they successfully formulate and implement the Small Scale & Village Industries Programme.

15. The Zilla Parishad and the Panchayat Samiti will have to contact the State Industries Department to formulate and execute such schemes which need funds and other assistance from higher levels.

16. The Panchayat Samitis and Panchayats will have to initiate programmes which can be implemented without much external assistance.

17. Further a suggestion has been made that in order to overcome the absence of entrepreneur ability in rural areas the Panchayats, wherever possible, should themselves consider the feasibility of establishing and running certain industries, such as processing and servicing, etc., principally catering to local needs. Having regard to the limited funds available to the Panchayat Samitis, such industries are best organised by Cooperatives. Panchayat Samitis can play an important role in promoting such Cooperatives.

18. The Panchayats and Panchayat Samitis should, wherever feasible, sponsor the programme of Gram Eka and organise village communities to execute selected Khadi & Village Industries programme and decide to consume a sizeable portion of articles locally produced by these industries.

19. The Panchayati Raj institutions should assist the training programme of artisans by helping in the selection of trainees and their systematic follow-up.

(iii) **Development of Cooperative Institutions**

20. Panchayati Raj institutions will have to take steps for promoting and strengthening service cooperatives as the success of production plans will depend on the credit and supplies made available by them. Revitalisation of service cooperatives will, therefore, be an important task.

21. The primary responsibility of the Panchayati Raj institutions will be to ensure that ultimately every family becomes a member, in its own right, of the village cooperative. Towards the fulfilment of this objective, Panchayati Raj institutions will have to promote the following in a progressively increasing measure:

- (a) Coverage of villages by cooperatives.
 - (b) Coverage of rural families by cooperatives.
 - (c) Total volume of credit given by cooperatives.
 - (d) Improvement in recoveries and reduction of overdues.
 - (e) Supplies and services made available by cooperatives.
 - (f) Volume of produce marketed through cooperatives.
 - (g) Volume of produce processed through cooperatives.
 - (h) Organisation of artisans into cooperatives.
 - (i) Increase in share capital and deposits of cooperatives and small savings.
 - (j) Progress in giving loans against production Plan and recovery of such loans on marketing of produce through cooperatives.
- (iv) Development of local resources, including the utilisation of local man-power**

22. The Panchayati Raj institutions will pay special attention to the development of local resources including the utilisation of local manpower. They should, in particular, undertake programmes for the utilisation of irrigation water, development of local manurial resources, soil conservation, production and distribution of improved seeds, construction of wells and renovation of tanks for pisciculture and other purposes.

23. The following steps are suggested:

- (a) Proper maintenance and development by Panchayats of tanks, village forests, wastelands,

small irrigation sources and orchards, etc., transferred to them by the Government.

- (b) Inclusion of the item "development and maintenance of local resources" as a regular feature in the annual plan of Panchayats, etc.
 - (c) Full utilisation of the grants-in-aid or loans given by Government to Panchayati Raj institutions to enable them to develop remunerative community assets.
 - (d) Full utilisation of unemployed and under employed man power in the area fitted into the over all scheme of development for the area.
- (v) Optimum Utilisation of resources available to Panchayati Raj institutions such as money, staff, technical assistance and other facilities from higher levels**

24. For the optimum utilisation of resources available to the Panchayati Raj institutions in staff, funds, technical assistance, etc., the following administrative requirements will have to be fulfilled.

- (a) Block is developed as the unit of planning and development;
- (b) adequate and timely supplies and services are made available;
- (c) the integrity of the personnel, both official and non-official, connected with Panchayati Raj institutions is maintained;
- (d) there is adequate control over funds; and
- (e) stress is placed on the achievement of physical targets rather than expenditure targets.

25. Allotment of funds by a Panchayati Raj institution should not merely be made on a *pro rata* basis in terms of items of a programme but should, as far as possible, be related to and adequate for the particular requirements.

26. Panchayat Samitis and Panchayats should draw up a plan for each important item of a development programme. While doing so, they should take into account the development and utilisation of their own resources.

27. These resources may be by general taxation, taxation for a specific project, collection of contributions in cash or kind including labour. In all their planning activities. Panchayati Raj units should realise that resources needed over and above the external assistance indicated must necessarily be raised by them by local effort.

28. The Zilla Parishad, the Panchayat Samiti or the Panchayat, through their functionaries, non-official and official, will take care that works and schemes executed in the field are supervised to ensure efficient and economic implementation.

(vi) Assistance to the economically weaker sections of the village community

29. It is desirable to have a sub-committee of the Panchayat Samiti to look after programmes for the Weaker Sections of the Village Community.

30. A certain percentage of the Panchayat Samiti funds should be earmarked for specific programmes for the welfare and development of Weaker Sections.

31. Sufficient funds should be made available through the cooperatives for medium term loans, on easy terms, to

the Weaker Sections for the purchase of bullocks, implements, etc.

32. Cooperative farms in which a majority of members belong to the Weaker Sections should be given preference regarding assistance from block funds.

(vii) Progressive dispersal of authority and initiative, both vertically and horizontally with special emphasis on the role of voluntary organisations

33. Consistent with the principle of maximum decentralisation of power and authority under Panchayati Raj, the Gram Sabha should be built as the base of democracy. This aspect is discussed in greater detail in Chapter III.

34. Steps should be taken to enable the Village Panchayat to shoulder progressively increasing responsibilities. It should be developed as the principal body for execution of development programmes in the rural areas. It must also assume the responsibility for planning to meet the felt needs of the people based essentially on their participation and supplemented by external assistance to the extent indicated.

35. Procedures and conventions will have to be evolved to ensure that the higher local body while assisting the lower bodies to the best of its ability does not interfere with their normal day-to-day working. The State Government will have to keep a vigilant watch over the situation and help in the growth of proper relationship between these bodies.

36. Voluntary organisations of villagers with special aptitudes should be promoted at the village level. These organisations may develop their own programmes to serve

the village community as a whole. The Panchayats/Panchayat Samitis should work their programmes through such organisations to the maximum extent possible.

37. The Panchayati Raj institutions should stimulate the growth of voluntary organisations at all levels. The organisations may represent broad groups not based on caste, creed or political groupings. Where such local voluntary organisations are well established and working satisfactorily, Panchayat Samitis may encourage their coming together and forming themselves into an Association/Union at that level.

(viii) Understanding and harmony between the people's representatives and the people's servants through comprehensive training and education and a clear demarcation of duties and responsibilities

38. The Panchayati Raj institutions work necessarily through the elected functionaries and their permanent officials. Officials and the elected representatives are complementary to each other. They are not substitutes for each other. Every one of the functionaries, non-official and official, has a clear role to play. This has got to be appreciated and healthy conventions governing the relationship between officials and non-officials and the conduct of business built up in respect of the working of the various Panchayati Raj institutions.

39. The Heads of Departments should be charged with the responsibility of ensuring that technical officers at the district and lower levels play their part fully in planning, in giving technical content and support to and in implementing the programmes in the field through the Extension agency. Similarly, District Technical Officers should make

their advice and assistance available both to Extension Officers at the Block level and the Panchayat Samitis. The elected functionaries should appreciate and pay due consideration to the technical advice in formulating their plans of work.

40. The Collector should keep in constant touch with the Zilla Parishad with regard to the planning and implementation of the various development programmes.

41. The integrity of the personnel both officials and non-officials connected with these institutions should be kept at a high level.

(ix) Progressive increase of competence both in officials and non-officials

42. Understanding and harmony between the people's representatives and the public servants who are both there to serve the people through comprehensive training and education and a clear demarcation of duties and responsibilities should form the essential foundation on which competence both in officials and non-officials can be built up. There is need for continued and effective administrative supervision by the official agency and collective appreciation and review of work in the field by the Panchayati Raj institutions. The following measures are suggested to achieve this end:

- (a) Systematic and planned tours by District level technical officers to ensure the technical soundness of the programme under execution and for giving on-the-spot guidance to Extension Officers and technical advice to Panchayati Raj institutions.

- (b) The Collector should be responsible for ensuring that technical supervision by District Level Technical Officers is done on schedule and adequately, and that District Technical Officers place their reports before the Zilla Parishad for review.
 - (c) A system of regular inspections of an administrative nature, by Collector, District Panchayat Officer, P.E.O., and B.D.O.
 - (d) Forwarding of inspection reports of administrative officers and similar reports and periodical reviews by District level officers regularly to Zilla Parishad and their review by the latter.
 - (e) Review of progress of work of the immediately lower body by the higher body.
 - (f) Submission by the Collector to the State Government of an objective quarterly report of the progress of the entire development programme in the field and the part played by each Department.
- (x) Cohesion and cooperative self-help in the community.**

43. Economic growth particularly of the Weaker Sections of the community, social justice and equal political rights of all sections of the community are the inherent postulates of Panchayati Raj.

44. It should be the responsibility of the Panchayati Raj institutions to maintain the Community Development movement as a people's movement based on self-aid and self-reliance constantly striving to build up an institutional structure, particularly the cooperative, through which the programme could be accepted and implemented by all families.

45. There is need to promote consensus and unanimity in the elections of Panchayati Raj institutions.

46. Proper emphasis should be laid on the role of Gram Sabha with a view to curbing factionalism, groupism, etc.

47. It would be desirable if the political parties kept themselves aloof from elections to Panchayats.

48. All efforts towards economic growth will be defeated if simultaneously Family Planning does not take place. This is a crucial field in which the Panchayati Raj institutions can make a significant contribution.

III. GRAM SABHA

Important Functions

49. The Gram Sabha has to be built up as the base of democracy as mentioned earlier in this pamphlet. Extension of democracy to the people in the real sense must mean that the Panchayat has to function as the executive body to implement the policies and decisions of the Gram Sabha constituted of all adults in the village. Social sanction of the people would strengthen the hands of the Panchayat. In its efforts to organise manpower for community purposes, in matters of taxation, in the matter of collecting special contributions from the beneficiaries, etc., the Panchayat needs a sanction. The wider the consultation, the greater are the chances of success of community effort. The participation of the people of a village in its business should not begin and end with Panchayat elections. Indeed, the effectiveness of the village Panchayat, its strength and vitality would depend upon the sustained, intelligent and enthusiastic interest and cooperation of the village community in its affairs and activities. In Order that the Gram Sabha may play its role effectively as the base of the three-tier system of Panchayati Raj, it must discharge certain specific functions. The more important of these are:

- (a) To discuss and make suggestions on the draft annual budget and annual programme of the Panchayat.
- (b) To consider and make comments on the Annual Administration Report of the Panchayat.

- (c) To consider proposals for organising community service, voluntary labour or mobilization of the local people for any specific work included in the annual or supplementary programme.
- (d) To consider proposals for fresh taxation or enhanced taxation and any new programme not covered by the budget of the annual programme.
- (e) Consideration of the Annual Audit Report of the Panchayat.

Village Production Plan

50. The Gram Sabha has a significant role to play in the formulation and implementation of the Village Production Plan. For it has the responsibility to scrutinise and modify the plan so as to make it realistic, to mobilise individual and community support for implementing the plan in detail and to raise the local resources needed.

51. If the Gram Sabha is to discharge the above mentioned functions effectively, it must be accorded statutory recognition and vested with necessary powers. It is equally necessary that the meetings of the Gram Sabha should be held regularly, if possible once a quarter. For the purpose of holding meetings, where the size of the Gram Sabha is unwieldy it may be split up into groups of convenient size and each group may meet regularly to discharge its functions with the Gram Sabha acting as the final, coordinating body.

IV. VILLAGE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION PLANS

52. In the Third Plan, the tasks to be accomplished in the field of agriculture are of formidable dimension. Agricultural production has to be raised by about 30 per cent. This can be achieved only with the cultivators making the most intensive effort. Community Development through Panchayati Raj seeks to attempt this by drawing up composite plans of agricultural work for each village, in place of disjointed and *ad hoc* efforts by individual farmers.

53. Village Agricultural production plans prepared under the aegis of Village Panchayat in a joint meeting of farmers with local or visiting specialists, representatives of cooperatives, etc., will be a written schedule of agricultural activities. They will indicate specific operations to be performed by individuals or groups of individuals together with details, their locations and development of resources.

54. This programme, as part of the Nation's drive to achieve increased agricultural production, needs to be organised on top priority.

(A) Agency to implement plans

55. The agricultural production plan should be prepared for each village. The Village Panchayat in collaboration with the Village Cooperative should be responsible for its preparation and implementation. The panchayat should associate progressive farmers such as Gram Sahayaks in drawing up the plans. While Panchayati Raj institutions

are free to work out their own methods for preparation of the plans, the formation of a Committee called the Agricultural Production Committee in every panchayat is considered useful.

56. The Committee may consist of the following:

- (i) President of the Panchayat and other representative Panches.
- (ii) Chairman/Secretary or two other representatives of the Cooperatives.
- (iii) A few progressive farmers, such as Gram Sahayaks.
- (iv) A school teacher interested in agriculture.
- (v) Patwari/Karnam.
- (vi) Secretary to the Panchayat.

57. There should be elasticity in the formation of the Committee suggested above. Its personnel may vary according to conditions prevalent in each State.

(B) Pre-requisites for Village Plans

58. Basic village agricultural data and reliable information regarding availability of supplies, services and credit are the pre-requisites for the drawing up of village production plans.

59. *Collection of data.*—The Agricultural Production Committee should collect the basic agricultural data. The data should be confined only to such items as are essential for drawing up the plan. The data should be collected from Gram Sevaks, Patwaris, farmers and by local enquiry, in the shortest possible period. Where necessary, State

Governments or other authority *e.g.* Collector, Zilla Parishad, may indicate an illustrative list of data for the guidance of the Panchayat/Agricultural Production Committee. These data should be collected and kept ready sufficiently before the programme is taken up.

60. *Strengthening of the Cooperatives.*—The Panchayat Samiti should indicate to the panchayats an estimate of resources which would be available to them from outside, such as seeds, fertilisers, credit, etc. Together with this they should communicate to the Panchayats a list of improved practices recommended for the area. These practices should have been field-tested and recommended by appropriate subject matter specialists, in consultation with the representatives of Cooperative and Panchayati Raj institutions. Where the local Primary Cooperative Society is weak, urgent efforts should be made to revitalise it since it has to play a vital role in providing facilities of credit and supply, etc., which form an important part of programme planning.

(C) Working of a Draft Plan

61. On the basis of the village agricultural data and the information regarding supplies, etc., which have been assured from above, the panchayat (the Village Agricultural Production Committee) will work out a Draft Village Production Plan. The plan will first specify realistic items of work, practices and demonstrations to be adopted in the village. These programmes will be of two types:

- (i) Programmes largely based on self-aid and village community effort; and
- (ii) programmes based on outside resources supplemented by the resources of the farmers.

These programmes will be selected keeping in view the "package" of improved practices recommended for the area and found generally acceptable by local cultivators. These should, however, be within the capacity of cultivators and the village and should not in any case involve outside resources in excess of what have been assured from above. The programme will be categorised as those that could be executed by the individual farmer in his own farm, *e.g.* improved agricultural practices, multi-cropping, better management of land, etc., and those that could be undertaken by groups of farmers or the village community as a whole like maintenance of field channels, building and utilisation of irrigation potential, soil conservation, contour bunding, etc.

62. The plan will then specify the cultivators who are keen to adopt improved production techniques and better land management practices and who are willing to work (individually or where necessary in groups) in association with Gram Sahayaks and other progressive farmers to implement the programmes included in the Village Agricultural Production Plans.

63. The Panchayat/Agricultural Production Committee might have to hold one or two sittings to select the programme to be included in the plan and allocate responsibility to individuals and groups of individuals. It should be made sure that each participant fully understands his role and responsibilities, the nature of the work to be done and the broad time table of work. What the Cooperative and the Panchayat will have to do to help the cultivators in implementation of the plan should also be clearly laid down. These stages of work should be completed at least one month before the crop year. The exact time schedule

will, however, vary from State to State in accordance with the crop season.

(D) Finalisation of the Plan

64. Having framed the draft production plan, the village panchayat should call for a general meeting of the Gram Sabha with a view to mobilising support and ensuring full participation by the people. To this meeting all the heads of families, particularly the cultivators, should be invited. The Gram Sabha will then take up for discussion and finalisation the draft plan prepared by the Agricultural Production Committee. It is expected that the Sabha will discuss the data and draft plan in detail and suggest such changes as they may deem necessary. Thus the plan finally approved will have been accepted by the village as a whole as also by the Cooperative and individuals or group of farmers in respect of the parts assigned to them.

(E) Publicity of the Plan

65. Village Agricultural Production Plans prepared and approved by the Panchayat and Gram Sabha should be exhibited at prominent places in the village, preferably at the village chavdi, Panchayat office, Cooperative office, school, etc.

Copies of the final plan may be sent to the Panchayat Samiti/Union and village level worker, who will assist the Agricultural Production Committee in its implementation.

(F) Implementation of the Plan : Responsibilities

66. At the village level, the Agricultural Production Committee under the guidance of the village Panchayat assisted by the Village Cooperative will be responsible for the imple-

mentation of the plan. The Agricultural Production Committee may in its turn entrust follow up of different aspects of village Agricultural Production Work to selected individuals—members of the Committee, Gram Sahayaks and other according to the responsibilities accepted by them. The panchayat may meet at least once a month to take stock of the situation and assess the progress made in implementing the approved programmes. It will also suggest such correctives as may be necessary and seek guidance of the Agricultural Extension Officer and the B. D. O. The Gram Sevak will attend the monthly meetings of the Panchayat (Agricultural Production Committee). He will also send reports to the panchayat and the B.D.O. every month on the work being done.

67. The Gram Sevak should help the Village Production Committee to get its requisite supplies, services and credit in time by seeing that requisitions for these are processed promptly. He will bring to the notice of the B.D.O./Panchayat Samiti the difficulties he cannot solve. He will contact individuals entrusted with the implementation of various items, where necessary, and assist them.

Responsibilities at the Block Level

68. At the block level it will be the responsibility of the B. D. O. and his Block Team to indicate to the Village Panchayats, through Gram Sevak, the quantum of supplies and services to be made available to them and transmit to them the "package of practices", etc., recommended for the area. In the light of these, Village Panchayats (Agricultural Production Committees) will be able to draw up their production programmes. Members of the Block Team should also try to attend the meeting of the village panchayat (Agricultural Production Committee) called to formulate

and discuss the village agricultural production programmes. As a rule, the B. D. O., the Extension Officer (Agriculture), and the Extension Officer (Cooperative) among them, must attend at least one such meeting in every village and another meeting called to discuss the implementation of the programmes. The Pradhan should ensure that this is adhered to. The B.D.O. may also allot such duties as may be necessary to other Extension Officers, if their load of work justifies it. The block staff will ensure technical advice for the village plans and also see that these are tied up with the block and other schemes drawn up for the area by higher authorities.

At the District Level

69. In order that the District Agricultural Officer may become fully conversant with all issues involved in planning, he will be directly responsible for supervising the preparation of village production programme of at least one village in his area and its execution. The village production plan should be worked out comprehensively and in detail under his immediate guidance so that it can serve as an example and be the basis for discussion and exchange of views amongst people from other villages in his jurisdiction. He will also be responsible to provide the type of technical knowhow needed in the field and arrange for training programme, supplies, etc. The Zilla Parishad and the Collector should see that this programme is planned and adhered to by the District Agricultural officer.

At the State Level

70. At the State level, the Department of Agriculture and the concerned Departments should take

steps necessary to indicate in advance the quantum of supplies and services likely to be made available to the districts and see that these reach the villages or other distribution points in time.

(G) Training and study for participants

71. The village production plans are ultimately to be broken up into individual plans. If the farmers at the village level are to participate intelligently in the preparation of village production plans and then to prepare their own plans, it is necessary to arrange some training and study courses for them. Wherever a village desires such training, the State, through the block, should arrange it.

72. In any area, the yield of farmers employing the same resources often varies. It is, therefore, necessary that there is exchange of farmers within a block, State or even beyond so that they are able to study improved agricultural practices followed by other farmers similarly situated. In the first instance, each selected Gram Sahayak should organise in his own field demonstrations of selected improved practices which are likely to have a direct impact on income and production in the village. Farmers organising such demonstrations should invite other cultivators to their fields so that they may learn from result-demonstrations and adopt the practices in their turn. Secondly, Panchayat Samitis should arrange for exchange of farmers within the Block and the Zilla Parishad in the District. Thirdly, progressive higher training should be arranged for Gram Sahayaks who have played a prominent part in the preparation and implementation of Village Production Plans.

V. GRAMDAN

73. The objective of Community Development programme for purposes of coordinated work in Gramdan areas has been defined as follows:

“The objective of the Community Development programme is to promote the all-sided development of the village community, including their economic, political, social, cultural and moral development; in particular,

- (a) to develop a spirit of community life among the people by promoting cooperation and mutual sharing, leading ultimately to voluntary community ownership of the basic means of production, such as land, and fulfilment by the village community of responsibility for the welfare, employment and livelihood of all members;
- (b) to make the village self-sufficient, in the primary needs of life, such as food, clothing and shelter and to promote the development of such village along with the development of the local area of which it forms part; and
- (c) to develop self-reliance in the individual, and initiative in the community so that the people are able to manage and run their affairs themselves and make the village self-governing units of the larger Indian democracy.”

Panchayat Raj and Gramdan

74. Panchayati Raj is the means to achieve the objectives of Community Development. Under Gramdan concept, people of a homogeneous community living as such should

all actively participate in matters pertaining to community life. The Gram Sabha under this conception will be a single village institution which will deal with all aspects of community life—their development and welfare. Thus the role of the Panchayati Raj institutions in Gramdan villages has certain special features, particularly so in the pilot project area where a joint programme of Community Development and Gramdan is proposed to be implemented during the Third Plan.

75. The Gram Sabha, constituted of all the adults of the village, will manage land and other resources to the best interests of the community. It will look after all programmes for the development of the community through the Panchayati Raj institutions. Village community as a whole will act as a joint family. Cooperation and equitable sharing will be the guiding principles of the Gram Sabha and all its activities, economic, social or political will be based on love and non-violence.