

Local
Governance

A Tool Kit

Facilitating Local Governance



Supported by:



Lalita Joshi



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Abbreviations

APL	Above Poverty Line	PDS	Public Distribution System
BDO	Block Development Officer	POA	Program of Action
BPL	Below Poverty Line	PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
CBO	Community Based Organization	PRIs	Panchayat Raj Institutions
CSS	Centrally Sponsored Schemes	PS	Panchayat Samiti
DPEP	District Primary Education Programme	PTA	Parents-Teachers Association
DWSS	Drinking Water and Sanitation Sector	PWSS	Piped Water Supply System
ESR	Elevated Storage Reservoir	RCC	Reinforced Cement Concrete
FGDs	Focused Group Discussions	SAC	Social Audit Committee
GOI	Government of India	SCs	Scheduled Castes
GOM	Government of Maharashtra	SHGs	Self Help Groups
GP	Gram Panchayat	SKP	Shiksha Karmi Project
GR	Government Resolution	SMS	Samyukta Mahila Samiti
GS	Gram Sabha	SSA	Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
GSR	Ground Storage Reservoir	STs	Scheduled Tribes
GW	Ground Water	TSC	Total Sanitation Campaign
HH	Household	TSP	Technical Service Provider
LPCD	Litres Per Capita Per Day	VDWSC	Village Drinking Water & Sanitation Committee
LJP	Lok Jumbush Project	VEC	Village Education Committee
MJP	Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran	VDC	Village Development Committee
MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly	VWSC	Village Water Sanitation Committee
MoPR	Ministry of Panchayati Raj	WOTR	Watershed Organisation Trust
MREGS	Maharashtra Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme	WDC	Women's Development Committee
MTA	Mother-Teacher Associations	WB	World Bank
NFE	Non Formal Education	w.r.t.	With respect to or with reference to
No.	Number	WSC	Water and Sanitation Committee
NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act	WSM	Watershed Management
NRWSP	National Rural Water Supply Programme	ZP	Zilla Parishad
O & M	Operation and Maintenance		
PAD	Project Appraisal Document		

Preface

The concept of decentralization has rapidly occupied an important place in international discourse on local governance over the past few decades. This concept has different attributes, including political, economic, administrative and fiscal decentralisation. Yet, in the Indian context, the political decentralisation has been at the core of rural developmental governance. The 73rd amendment has provided the necessary pace and constitutional backing for the process of devolution of powers to Panchayati Raj Institutions, especially the Gram Panchayat. Thus participation became a right, and Gram Sabha an accessible forum for citizens to make known their opinions in the process of decision-making at a local level.

However, despite the 73rd amendment, practicing its provisions and enjoying rights of participation has a decade-long trajectory of impediments at the levels of policy and implementation. This has many complex reasons, rooted as they are in various socio-political realities at the policy as well as at the grassroots' level. One such reason (at the grassroots level) has been the absence of elaborate and robust 'governance systems' to steer village level decision-making. However, the voluntary sector has increasingly stressed upon the need to encourage and facilitate the practice of local governance based on the principles of 73rd amendment.

It has been believed that practices coupled with voluntary local initiatives will be instrumental in leading to two things – (a) bring foreword newer models of local governance, and (b) create a strong basis for making appropriate policy and legal changes at state level to support 73rd amendment. These tools are a modest effort to begin with primary work systems for Gram Sabha sub-committees. In fact, developing detailed governance systems at the Gram Panchayat level is a continuous task, and needs to be carried out in a “praxis” mode. Keeping this fact in view, these tools have been developed with certain 'generic' elements of structure and functions of the Gram Sabha sub-committees.

Similarly, considering the organic relationship between the governance systems and local decision-making, the tools try to provide an objective methodology for transparent and participatory decision-making at local level. It goes without saying that these tools should not be used as textbooks. Rather, it is expected from practitioners to add to the tools substantially while evolving context-specific methodologies and systems for steering local governance. We hope that Gram Panchayats, government representatives, NGOs and other grassroots level actors would increase the utility of these tools by using them on a wider scale.

Acknowledgements

I express gratitude towards the villagers of Dhondbar and Kumbharde (Nashik district) as also Dongargaon and Kumbhari (Jalna district) for demonstrating incessant interest and commitment towards the realisation of local governance, because of which development of the tool kit was possible. Sincere thanks are also due to Thomas Padghalmal for his earnest interest in field implementation that provided many insights and eventually helped in improving the tool kit.

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I am indebted to Dr. Marcella D'Souza for the constant encouragement and guidance and to Crispino Lobo for his unstinting support.

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Section I: Background and Rationale

Introduction

1) The 73rd Amendment Act and the Decentralisation

During 1990, decentralisation emerged as a dominant trend in world politics. At the heart of this transformation were a number of complex yet inter-related themes. One was an ideological shift, in which the legitimacy of central/state-led development was challenged on the grounds that it produces systems of governance that undermine national economic performance and effective public policy (Gore, 2000; Johnson and Start, 2001). The second was an agenda (remarkably widespread) which asserts the decentralisation of public administration and introduction of locally elected bodies which will produce systems of governance that are better able to meet the needs of poor and politically marginalised groups in society.

A third and related theme suggests that democratic decentralisation is a political strategy that national elites have used to maintain legitimacy and control in the face of political disintegration (Johnson, 2003). In the Indian context, there have been two influential factors that led to the policy change towards decentralisation. One was pressure from state governments and sections of the electorate to devolve power. The other was pressure from international donors for the state to scale down direct implementation of development programmes. Donors insisted that India decentralises management and works towards good governance, described as “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources” (World Bank, 1997: 1).

The agenda for good governance includes a reformed public sector to ensure efficiency and transparency. The main objectives of decentralisation are: To enable communities to meet their basic needs

to ensure physical well-being and the realisation of civil and political freedom, democracy and autonomy (Baumann-1998). Thus, in the context of the above policy changes, decentralisation of development planning and implementation became central to Panchayati Raj. Sixteen years have passed since the 73rd Amendment Act came into force in April 1993. In the context of the villages, this act has had a critical and decisive place as it accorded legal status to the local government institutions (i.e. Gram Panchayats) as a third tier of government, the other two being the Central and State governments.

Another significant contribution by this act was the space for participation it guaranteed to women and marginal communities by making reservations legal and also by according highest status as a decision-making body to the Gram Sabha (GS). Thus, this act created conditions conducive to greater decentralisation whereby Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) have been bestowed with the responsibility of the village development. To put it simply, the PRIs now have the authority to take decisions, make plans regarding development (mainly pertaining to economic development and social justice) of the village and implement them.

In the post-2000 period, in continuation with the decentralisation policy, various government programmes and schemes like Hariyali guidelines for watershed development (2003), Jalswarajya (drinking water and sanitation) project in Maharashtra, National Rural Water Supply Programme (Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission, 2008), National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 and a number of water conservation and sanitation programmes have accorded a key role to the Gram Panchayat. These programmes emphasize on building the capacities of village level committees to plan, implement, operate

and maintain various facilities and development activities through a participatory process of informed decision-making and collective action within the ambit of the Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat.

Thus, the Gram Sabha and the Gram Panchayat are in a crucial and a strategic position to determine the development of a village. Another noteworthy factor is that the Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat are institutions having a sustainable nature (due to the constitutional status and mandatory election after every five years) and hence should be in a position to take care of the sustainability aspects of various development programmes that are undertaken in the village.

2) Challenges to Decentralisation

It is evident that given this legal backing, the PRIs can act as the institutions of local self-governance. However, Watershed Organisation Trust's (WOTR) practical experience of working in the villages with respect to watershed development has a different tale to tell when it comes to PRIs. Our experience of village level PRIs has not been very positive as the Gram Panchayats have not played any effective role in the development of the villages. In fact, the case of Maharashtra should have been far stronger, considering that much before the enactment of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, the Panchayat Raj system came into existence from May 1, 1962 (as per the directive principles of the Indian Constitution).

However, it needs to be mentioned that they did not enjoy the legal backing provided by the 73rd Amendment. Thus, despite having a long history, not much progress has been made as far as development of villages and participation by marginalised sections or people is concerned. The reviews of literature on the state of PRIs (both State as well as Centre level) also reveal that the translation of the spirit of this law is still a distant dream. Though there are some laudable examples, both at the state as well as the national level, they are very few and far between. The reviews further highlight that while both democratic institutions and democratic practices are important

for good governance, the latter is not guaranteed by the former (Dreze and Sen, 2002).

Though substantive devolution of power has taken place after the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, operationalisation of this devolution has resulted in power struggles, centralisation and appropriation of scarce resources by a few people who are powerful. This has resulted in the Gram Sabhas slowly getting alienated from the participatory democratic process (Nambiar, 2001). Hence, practicing direct or grassroots democracy is a challenge and this can be met if people are mobilised and empowered to actively participate in the decision-making, planning, implementing monitoring and management process, thereby contributing towards the development of their villages.

3) Relevance of Tools

In order to seek active participation of the village community (irrespective of caste, class or gender category they belong to) in the development of a village, it was thought to be critical to begin with important issues which are common to any village. Another important factor considered for achieving participation by all was the platform of Gram Sabha. The Gram Sabha is the statutorily mandated institutional mechanism for community participation. This platform was thought to be the most appropriate one for initiating this process.

However, given the fact that the Gram Sabha has a wider base and also from the feasibility point of view, it is neither possible for the Gram Sabha to study the issue in detail nor to look into the nitty-gritty of various management aspects. Hence, the sub-committees of Gram Sabha, which have existent space given by the law, provided an obvious focal point around which these tools were built. The sub-committees of the Gram Sabha are selected from the members of the Gram Sabha and care is taken that all communities are provided due representation. The role of these sub-committees is to manage (plan, implement, monitor) the scheme/programme so that the programme goal is achieved as per the planning made.

Therefore, these tools were thought to be playing an important role in enabling the functioning of these committees and also in making them more effective and efficient. Apart from this, the findings of the baseline study conducted in four villages where WOTR was to implement the Panchayat Raj project (project aim was to implement development activities through PRIs) also pointed out that the Gram Sabha sub-committees are non-functional and even non-existent in some villages.

Thus, these tools were evolved with a purpose to initiate the process of local governance in the villages by providing support to the village level committees in management, decision-making, and monitoring development processes. It was envisaged that the tools will facilitate the process of transparent decision-making whereby the village level stakeholders (Gram Panchayat and more importantly, Gram Sabha members) begin to participate and gradually take charge of various village development activities (decision-making, planning, implementation, monitoring, operation and maintenance).

4) Function of the Tools

The tools aim at steering development activities through effective functioning of village level PRIs. The primary objective behind preparing the tools is to train, guide and enable the Gram Sabha level sub-committees for planning, executing, monitoring and operating village level development activities in the respective fields/subjects. The key issues identified which demand urgent attention in most of the villages were drinking water and sanitation, education, and women's development. Additionally, the tool for other sub-committees, viz. the Social Audit Committee (SAC) was also designed as it caters to various critical aspects. The SAC was thought to be crucial as it can act as a pertinent mechanism to ensure transparency and accountability in various village development activities. These sub-committees and more specifically the SAC can be looked at as a means of continuous process of public vigilance.

These tools will provide knowledge support to the committees in the form of perspectives and methodologies to design and implement the activities. Essentially, the tools will reflect the two elements of 'content' and 'process'. The content will provide a perspective to understand and address key village level issues of the concerned subject. It will try to bring out various perspectives and will highlight issues of different sections within the local community in decision-making by facilitating participatory processes. This will help understand community perceptions and generate a common understanding about a particular issue.

In the tools given below, an effort has been made to cover the various constraints or issues that the village might face with regard to the specific topic in question. However, it needs to be remembered that the issues given here are not necessarily exhaustive in character, as there could be village-specific or community-specific issues/problems that might be in play. Hence, the issues presented here should be considered as guiding points and clues, which give an idea about the nature of problem and how one can go about it. As each individual village is a unique case, it is important to try to identify specific issues or problems and then accordingly take up the exercise of planning, execution, and monitoring appropriate to the situation.

Tools for Monitoring:

As mentioned earlier, apart from planning, these tools also serve the vital purpose of monitoring. Monitoring is a process of examining whether a project is being implemented as planned. Monitoring is carried out on a continuous basis to provide various stakeholders, such as sub-committee and Gram Panchayat, Gram Sabha members and beneficiaries, an ongoing intervention with early indications of progress, or lack thereof, in the achievement of results.

Monitoring has three important elements:

- It is the systematic collection and analysis of information as a project, programme or scheme progresses.

- It is based on targets set and activities planned during the planning phases of the work.
- The purpose is not to find fault, but to give advice and help so that the project can fulfil its objectives efficiently and effectively.

Monitoring is mainly an internal process carried out by those implementing the project. Preferably, monitoring should involve all stakeholders. The results need to be shared with relevant stakeholders and fed back into implementation. Monitoring is believed to enhance political participation and sustainability of development programmes (UN-HABITAT-2008). There are two types of monitoring viz. process monitoring and impact monitoring. Process monitoring focuses on the implementation of planned actions and it allows governments

and communities to track how programmes are implemented and to identify ways of improving them. Impact monitoring focuses on the changes that have taken place as a result of the implemented action. This is usually where success and failure are measured according to initial goals and objectives.

Thus, these tools are sample guiding tools for respective committees for fulfilling the main function (for example, equitable supply of safe and potable drinking water). With the help of these, exercises can be conducted at the village level for developing their own tools and while doing so the help of the external facilitator (such as NGO) can also be taken if required. It needs to be remembered that once the tools are developed they need to use or apply them in the field

Sub-Committee of the Gram Sabha or Village Development Committee (VDC)

Article 49 of GP Act 1958 was revised on August 1, 2003 with the following amendments:

- 49(1): GS in coordination with GP can form one or many sub-committees or village development committees and these committees comprise citizens of the village.
- 49(2): The terms of such committees are same as that of the GP.
- 49(4): The minimum number of members in these committees can be 12 and maximum can be 24.
- 49(4ka): In these committees, minimum 1/3rd members should be GP members.
- 49(4kh): In these committees 50 per cent members should be women.
- 49(4ga): The members of the deprived sections (SC/ST/NT) should be selected on these committees in proportion* of their population in the village.
- 49(5/1): The sub-committee should be considered as the committee of GP and this committee will be entirely under the supervision and control of GP. The administrative mechanism of the GP will provide assistance to these committees also.
- 49(6): For the purpose of daily convenience, the annual accounts as well as the work records of these committees should be separately maintained and preserved. However, this will be an integral part of the GP records or audit as well as routine work of GP. The above mentioned records of the village development committees will be presented in the special GS. This GS is called with the purpose of approving the annual budget proposal as well as annual accounts statement.

49(7): In special circumstances, if the sub-committee is to be dissolved then GP has to call the GS. In this GS, majority of 2/3rd voters have to pass the resolution in favour of dissolving the committee and then only such an action can be taken.

49(8ka): The VDC membership of an individual can be cancelled by passing the resolution in the GS.

49(8kh): In case the post of the member is vacant due to death/resignation/dismissal, that post can be filled by the GS.

49(9): After the formation of the new GP body, the new sub-committees should be formed within a period of 45 days. In the new sub-committees which are to be formed, there should be no restriction on old members becoming members anew.

Thus, as per Article 49(1), the GS has the right to appoint the sub-committees or VDCs.

* *Example:*

- In a village, if there are 30 per cent SC, 10 per cent ST and 5 per cent NT, then in these committees they will have reserved posts in the same proportion.
- In a village, if the proportion of ST and NT is very less, say not even 1 per cent, then it will be the right of the GS to either give them representation on the committee or not.
- In case there are no SC/ST/NT people in the village, there will be no reserved post for them.

situation. Updating is also required on a regular basis. After one or two years, as they become familiar with the tools there is a possibility that they would not require them and therefore it serves only as an initial platform.

However, its importance as guiding tools continues when new sub-committee members are taken in to the fold. Therefore each sub-committee should have institutional memory of their tools and experiences of using them, which will be useful for the new members. Hence, by taking into account broader macro level issues these tools are made. As mentioned before, they are generic in nature and in a diverse situation the applicability of the tool remains intact. Therefore, these tools should not be looked at as watertight compartments but as broader, flexible guidelines.

5) Limitations of the Tools

We acknowledge that the issues or priority needs that the tools attempt to address may be inadequate. Perhaps it needs to be clearly stated that though uniformity could be found in the village level priority needs and aspects that were attempted to be covered in the tools, they are unique in the local village context. Hence, these tools only provide the guidelines, ideas or clues which can be made applicable while activating the Gram Sabha sub-committees in the villages. Besides, we are aware that these tools do not cover many important village level issues like food security, livelihoods, health, watershed development, common property resources, natural resource management, and so on. Thus, there is much scope for developing the tools for a wide range of village issues.

Section II: Gram Sabha Sub-Committees: Introduction and Tools

1: Village Education Committee

1a. INTRODUCTION

Context and Background

The policies regarding education have changed rapidly in the last few years. The universalization of education has been accepted as a national goal in India since Independence. The policy directives of the Central government envisaged free and compulsory education for all in the country. The 86th Constitutional Amendment of 2002 led to inclusion of a new article 21-A in Part III of the Constitution that made free and compulsory education to all children of 6 to 14 years of age a fundamental right (Economic Survey of India, 2007-08). The National Education Policies (1968, 1986 and latest revised in 1992) so far have reiterated the constitutional directive. The National Policy on Education 1986 (as revised in 1992) resolves to provide free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality to all children up to 14 years of age before the commencement of the 21st century.

The revised policy has emphasized on many issues other than universalization. It has recognised the need for improving the quality of education including life skills. It has emphasised the need for various measures such as alternative schooling, inclusive education, and community ownership to achieve the goal of universalization of education. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the flagship programme of the GOI to achieve elementary education has introduced these fundamental changes in the primary education system along with huge funds' inflow focusing on every aspect of schooling. These aspects include scholarships, increasing the teaching staff, alternative schooling facility, classrooms construction, free textbooks, uniforms, civil works as and when necessary, maintenance grants, repairs, additional school and teacher

grants, trainings and so on. SSA has also included institutional reforms at the state level educational institutions and has provided huge funding for strengthening the existing educational institutions.

Decentralisation and Community Mobilisation

The National Policy on Education, 1986 visualises direct community involvement in the form of Village Education Committees (VECs) for management of elementary education. The Program Of Action (POA), 1992 emphasized micro-planning as a process of designing a family-wise and child-wise plan of education by which every child regularly attends a school or a Non Formal Education centre (NFE), thus continuing his

Excerpts from the POA-1992 (GOI)

Under the Constitution Amendment Bill, Panchayats will be formed for a village or a group of villages. The Panchayat will have elected representatives. Besides, each Panchayat may constitute a Village Education Committee (VEC) which would be responsible for administration of the delegated programmes in the field of education at the village level. The major responsibility of the VECs should be operationalisation of micro-level planning and school mapping in the village through systematic house to house survey and periodic discussion with the parents. It should be the endeavour of the committee that every child in every family participates in the primary education. In these activities they will be provided expert guidance and support by District Institute of Education and Training.

The State Governments may consider entrusting the following functions to the VEC: Generation and sustenance of awareness among the village community ensuring participation of all segments of population; and developing teacher/instructor and community partnership to oversee and manage the effective and regular functioning of the schools and centres.

In view of the critical role and function of VEC, it should be vested with appropriate statutory and necessary financial and administrative authority.

or her education at a place suitable to him/her and completes at least eight years of schooling or its equivalent at the NFE centre.

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments have hastened the process of community management of elementary schools. These amendments have created a congenial ambience for the Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) to play a more dynamic role. These institutions now provide a greater voice to women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The platform of Gram Sabha, in the form of its various sub-committees, one of this being VEC, provides the best opportunity for direct participation in the development process. Increasingly, PRIs through VECs are involved in social mobilisation, planning, and supervision for 'universalization of elementary education. The introduction of micro-planning and school mapping have brought the schools closer to the community while sensitising people to issues and problems in their local schools. Programmes like SSA call for community ownership of school-based interventions through effective decentralisation. The objectives of it are spreading or widening of primary education with the active participation of local community, enrolment of children in the age group of 6 to 14 years in the school and retention of these children up to minimum 8th standard, and capacitate with qualitative and life-centred education.

Recent trends in community participation indicate a greater thrust on empowerment of communities. Mobilising the communities to take responsibility to ensure quality education for every child is the core strategy of several innovative initiatives in elementary education including District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Lok Jumbush Project (LJP - Andhra), Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP - Rajasthan) and the Bihar Education Project. Genuine community involvement was the key factor for the success of LJP in Andhra Pradesh and SKP in Rajasthan. LJP has had a positive effect on the empowerment of locally elected people, especially women at village level who are often active members of the LJP core teams and Mahila Samoohs. The VECs, carefully formed and trained through environmental building activities in the LJP, are actively involved in school matters. SKP has constituted VECs in 2,000 villages to promote community involvement in primary education and

encourage village level planning. DPEP is making useful investments in orientation and training of VEC members. An important role of the VEC is to mobilise resources for maintenance, repair and construction of school buildings. The VECs also help in determining the school calendar and school timings in consultation with the local community.

The Current Scenario

Maharashtra pioneered the Village Education Committees much before the Central government made it mandatory under different schemes. In fact, grassroots level planning and monitoring units in Maharashtra have been in place long before SSA came into existence (SSA Joint Review Committee Report). The majority of the government-funded schools in the state are under the management of Zilla Parishads. The Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat is the head of the VEC and the other members are community leaders, social activists, local functionaries and the head teacher of the school. Mother-Teacher Associations (MTAs) and Parents-Teachers Association (PTAs) have been constituted and are at the village level.

The primary review of the provisions regarding mandate and functioning of VECs reveal that the mandate given to VECs is important but insufficient. It only revolves around the issues of school management and school monitoring to some extent. However, it should be mentioned that the VECs need to be empowered to influence the functioning of the school, ensure equitable benefit of education sector schemes and more importantly, be able and authorised to hold accountable Gram Sabha for school management. This tool envisages introductory exercises which enable VECs to expand their scope towards the same.

Another important issue is that the current policy guidelines also limit the role of the village education committees up to the monitoring of the public schools, especially the schools run by the Zilla Parishad, tribal departments and the municipalities or corporations. However, in many states, schools operated by the private societies are functioning as well. In many villages such schools are situated in the vicinity of the

village, whereas public schools are located at a distance. Such private schools that charge lesser fees also need monitoring by the VECs as the state monitoring is very weak in these schools. Generally, it has been found in many schools that the staff and the teachers are accountable to the upper level officials and board of directors and therefore seldom respond to village level issues and student problems. Hence, there is a great need to expand the role of the VECs.

However, the VECs which have been constituted in Maharashtra have the mandate to monitor any school which exists in the village boundary. Unfortunately, these committees have not been so effective in terms of impact. Even though the surveys undertaken by the Ministry of Human Resources and Education Department award credit for high percentage of girl education in the state to the VECs to some extent, the problems remain. The major failure of the VECs is that they were unsuccessful in contributing to resolving many problems such as 'out of school children', 'drop out percentage', 'quality of food and other facilities provided in residential schools for tribal students', 'awareness building in parents', 'forming and facilitating the parent/mother teacher associations' and so on.

The major reason behind the mediocre performance of the VECs is said to be their ignorance and low capacities to absorb knowledge to be able to monitor the schools. VECs are considered to be extremely important to be able to solve the problems in the primary and secondary education sector including the objective of universalization. Taking cognizance of these needs, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan also offers a two-day comprehensive training module for VEC members for a mere Rs 30 per participant. However, the joint review mission's reports of SSAs are silent on the progress of component of community mobilisation, especially the trainings of the VECs.

With this background it can be concluded that the policy has provided enough legal basis and mandate for the VECs to function effectively. However, the real challenge lies in making them functional so that the goals of universalization along with the quality of education can be achieved.

Rules and Regulation for Village Education Committee

The Objectives:

The objective of the Village Education Committee shall be to assist the Gram Panchayat and the Gram Sabha in monitoring the functioning of the schools through different mechanisms and forums to achieve the universalization of education and ensuring the quality of education.

Composition:

- The Gram Sabha will appoint the members of the VEC in consultation with the Gram Panchayat.
- As per the National Education Policy and Maharashtra government's GRs of February 1990 and September 1991, VECs were formed. As per the revised GR of April 2003, there was restructuring of these committees and accordingly a minimum of five and a maximum of 15 members are to be selected in the GS for a period of three years in the village.
- There should be 50 per cent representation of women on this committee.
- In this committee, members are selected from 10-11 categories representing all sections of the society. These categories include parents, teachers, women, village youths, gram sevak, head master, members of the village cooperative society, members of SC and ST community, members from differently-abled (disabled) villagers.
- The Sarpanch will be president of the committee and deputy president will be elected from among the members.
- The head master/head teacher will be the secretary of this committee.

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. To undertake responsibility for the primary school, hamlet school, non-formal education, adult education, continuous education centre in the village.
2. To undertake a campaign for enrolment of children in the age group of 6 to 14 years.
3. To reduce the school drop out rate and retain the enrolled children.

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MLA	Member of Legislative Assembly	VWSC	Village Water Sanitation Committee
MoPR	Ministry of Panchayati Raj	WOTR	Watershed Organisation Trust
MREGS	Maharashtra Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme	WDC	Women's Development Committee
MTA	Mother-Teacher Associations	WB	World Bank
NFE	Non Formal Education	w.r.t.	With respect to or with reference to
No.	Number	WSC	Water and Sanitation Committee
NREGA	National Rural Employment Guarantee Act	WSM	Watershed Management
NRWSP	National Rural Water Supply Programme	ZP	Zilla Parishad
O & M	Operation and Maintenance		
PAD	Project Appraisal Document		

Preface

The concept of decentralization has rapidly occupied an important place in international discourse on local governance over the past few decades. This concept has different attributes, including political, economic, administrative and fiscal decentralisation. Yet, in the Indian context, the political decentralisation has been at the core of rural developmental governance. The 73rd amendment has provided the necessary pace and constitutional backing for the process of devolution of powers to Panchayati Raj Institutions, especially the Gram Panchayat. Thus participation became a right, and Gram Sabha an accessible forum for citizens to make known their opinions in the process of decision-making at a local level.

However, despite the 73rd amendment, practicing its provisions and enjoying rights of participation has a decade-long trajectory of impediments at the levels of policy and implementation. This has many complex reasons, rooted as they are in various socio-political realities at the policy as well as at the grassroots' level. One such reason (at the grassroots level) has been the absence of elaborate and robust 'governance systems' to steer village level decision-making. However, the voluntary sector has increasingly stressed upon the need to encourage and facilitate the practice of local governance based on the principles of 73rd amendment.

It has been believed that practices coupled with voluntary local initiatives will be instrumental in leading to two things – (a) bring foreword newer models of local governance, and (b) create a strong basis for making appropriate policy and legal changes at state level to support 73rd amendment. These tools are a modest effort to begin with primary work systems for Gram Sabha sub-committees. In fact, developing detailed governance systems at the Gram Panchayat level is a continuous task, and needs to be carried out in a “praxis” mode. Keeping this fact in view, these tools have been developed with certain 'generic' elements of structure and functions of the Gram Sabha sub-committees.

Similarly, considering the organic relationship between the governance systems and local decision-making, the tools try to provide an objective methodology for transparent and participatory decision-making at local level. It goes without saying that these tools should not be used as textbooks. Rather, it is expected from practitioners to add to the tools substantially while evolving context-specific methodologies and systems for steering local governance. We hope that Gram Panchayats, government representatives, NGOs and other grassroots level actors would increase the utility of these tools by using them on a wider scale.

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Section I: Background and Rationale

Introduction

1) The 73rd Amendment Act and the Decentralisation

During 1990, decentralisation emerged as a dominant trend in world politics. At the heart of this transformation were a number of complex yet inter-related themes. One was an ideological shift, in which the legitimacy of central/state-led development was challenged on the grounds that it produces systems of governance that undermine national economic performance and effective public policy (Gore, 2000; Johnson and Start, 2001). The second was an agenda (remarkably widespread) which asserts the decentralisation of public administration and introduction of locally elected bodies which will produce systems of governance that are better able to meet the needs of poor and politically marginalised groups in society.

A third and related theme suggests that democratic decentralisation is a political strategy that national elites have used to maintain legitimacy and control in the face of political disintegration (Johnson, 2003). In the Indian context, there have been two influential factors that led to the policy change towards decentralisation. One was pressure from state governments and sections of the electorate to devolve power. The other was pressure from international donors for the state to scale down direct implementation of development programmes. Donors insisted that India decentralises management and works towards good governance, described as “the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources” (World Bank, 1997: 1).

The agenda for good governance includes a reformed public sector to ensure efficiency and transparency. The main objectives of decentralisation are: To enable communities to meet their basic needs

to ensure physical well-being and the realisation of civil and political freedom, democracy and autonomy (Baumann-1998). Thus, in the context of the above policy changes, decentralisation of development planning and implementation became central to Panchayati Raj. Sixteen years have passed since the 73rd Amendment Act came into force in April 1993. In the context of the villages, this act has had a critical and decisive place as it accorded legal status to the local government institutions (i.e. Gram Panchayats) as a third tier of government, the other two being the Central and State governments.

Another significant contribution by this act was the space for participation it guaranteed to women and marginal communities by making reservations legal and also by according highest status as a decision-making body to the Gram Sabha (GS). Thus, this act created conditions conducive to greater decentralisation whereby Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) have been bestowed with the responsibility of the village development. To put it simply, the PRIs now have the authority to take decisions, make plans regarding development (mainly pertaining to economic development and social justice) of the village and implement them.

In the post-2000 period, in continuation with the decentralisation policy, various government programmes and schemes like Hariyali guidelines for watershed development (2003), Jalswarajya (drinking water and sanitation) project in Maharashtra, National Rural Water Supply Programme (Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission, 2008), National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 and a number of water conservation and sanitation programmes have accorded a key role to the Gram Panchayat. These programmes emphasize on building the capacities of village level committees to plan, implement, operate

and maintain various facilities and development activities through a participatory process of informed decision-making and collective action within the ambit of the Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat.

Thus, the Gram Sabha and the Gram Panchayat are in a crucial and a strategic position to determine the development of a village. Another noteworthy factor is that the Gram Sabha and Gram Panchayat are institutions having a sustainable nature (due to the constitutional status and mandatory election after every five years) and hence should be in a position to take care of the sustainability aspects of various development programmes that are undertaken in the village.

2) Challenges to Decentralisation

It is evident that given this legal backing, the PRIs can act as the institutions of local self-governance. However, Watershed Organisation Trust's (WOTR) practical experience of working in the villages with respect to watershed development has a different tale to tell when it comes to PRIs. Our experience of village level PRIs has not been very positive as the Gram Panchayats have not played any effective role in the development of the villages. In fact, the case of Maharashtra should have been far stronger, considering that much before the enactment of the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, the Panchayat Raj system came into existence from May 1, 1962 (as per the directive principles of the Indian Constitution).

However, it needs to be mentioned that they did not enjoy the legal backing provided by the 73rd Amendment. Thus, despite having a long history, not much progress has been made as far as development of villages and participation by marginalised sections or people is concerned. The reviews of literature on the state of PRIs (both State as well as Centre level) also reveal that the translation of the spirit of this law is still a distant dream. Though there are some laudable examples, both at the state as well as the national level, they are very few and far between. The reviews further highlight that while both democratic institutions and democratic practices are important

for good governance, the latter is not guaranteed by the former (Dreze and Sen, 2002).

Though substantive devolution of power has taken place after the 73rd Constitutional Amendment, operationalisation of this devolution has resulted in power struggles, centralisation and appropriation of scarce resources by a few people who are powerful. This has resulted in the Gram Sabhas slowly getting alienated from the participatory democratic process (Nambiar, 2001). Hence, practicing direct or grassroots democracy is a challenge and this can be met if people are mobilised and empowered to actively participate in the decision-making, planning, implementing monitoring and management process, thereby contributing towards the development of their villages.

3) Relevance of Tools

In order to seek active participation of the village community (irrespective of caste, class or gender category they belong to) in the development of a village, it was thought to be critical to begin with important issues which are common to any village. Another important factor considered for achieving participation by all was the platform of Gram Sabha. The Gram Sabha is the statutorily mandated institutional mechanism for community participation. This platform was thought to be the most appropriate one for initiating this process.

However, given the fact that the Gram Sabha has a wider base and also from the feasibility point of view, it is neither possible for the Gram Sabha to study the issue in detail nor to look into the nitty-gritty of various management aspects. Hence, the sub-committees of Gram Sabha, which have existent space given by the law, provided an obvious focal point around which these tools were built. The sub-committees of the Gram Sabha are selected from the members of the Gram Sabha and care is taken that all communities are provided due representation. The role of these sub-committees is to manage (plan, implement, monitor) the scheme/programme so that the programme goal is achieved as per the planning made.

Therefore, these tools were thought to be playing an important role in enabling the functioning of these committees and also in making them more effective and efficient. Apart from this, the findings of the baseline study conducted in four villages where WOTR was to implement the Panchayat Raj project (project aim was to implement development activities through PRIs) also pointed out that the Gram Sabha sub-committees are non-functional and even non-existent in some villages.

Thus, these tools were evolved with a purpose to initiate the process of local governance in the villages by providing support to the village level committees in management, decision-making, and monitoring development processes. It was envisaged that the tools will facilitate the process of transparent decision-making whereby the village level stakeholders (Gram Panchayat and more importantly, Gram Sabha members) begin to participate and gradually take charge of various village development activities (decision-making, planning, implementation, monitoring, operation and maintenance).

4) Function of the Tools

The tools aim at steering development activities through effective functioning of village level PRIs. The primary objective behind preparing the tools is to train, guide and enable the Gram Sabha level sub-committees for planning, executing, monitoring and operating village level development activities in the respective fields/subjects. The key issues identified which demand urgent attention in most of the villages were drinking water and sanitation, education, and women's development. Additionally, the tool for other sub-committees, viz. the Social Audit Committee (SAC) was also designed as it caters to various critical aspects. The SAC was thought to be crucial as it can act as a pertinent mechanism to ensure transparency and accountability in various village development activities. These sub-committees and more specifically the SAC can be looked at as a means of continuous process of public vigilance.

These tools will provide knowledge support to the committees in the form of perspectives and methodologies to design and implement the activities. Essentially, the tools will reflect the two elements of 'content' and 'process'. The content will provide a perspective to understand and address key village level issues of the concerned subject. It will try to bring out various perspectives and will highlight issues of different sections within the local community in decision-making by facilitating participatory processes. This will help understand community perceptions and generate a common understanding about a particular issue.

In the tools given below, an effort has been made to cover the various constraints or issues that the village might face with regard to the specific topic in question. However, it needs to be remembered that the issues given here are not necessarily exhaustive in character, as there could be village-specific or community-specific issues/problems that might be in play. Hence, the issues presented here should be considered as guiding points and clues, which give an idea about the nature of problem and how one can go about it. As each individual village is a unique case, it is important to try to identify specific issues or problems and then accordingly take up the exercise of planning, execution, and monitoring appropriate to the situation.

Tools for Monitoring:

As mentioned earlier, apart from planning, these tools also serve the vital purpose of monitoring. Monitoring is a process of examining whether a project is being implemented as planned. Monitoring is carried out on a continuous basis to provide various stakeholders, such as sub-committee and Gram Panchayat, Gram Sabha members and beneficiaries, an ongoing intervention with early indications of progress, or lack thereof, in the achievement of results.

Monitoring has three important elements:

- It is the systematic collection and analysis of information as a project, programme or scheme progresses.

- It is based on targets set and activities planned during the planning phases of the work.
- The purpose is not to find fault, but to give advice and help so that the project can fulfil its objectives efficiently and effectively.

Monitoring is mainly an internal process carried out by those implementing the project. Preferably, monitoring should involve all stakeholders. The results need to be shared with relevant stakeholders and fed back into implementation. Monitoring is believed to enhance political participation and sustainability of development programmes (UN-HABITAT-2008). There are two types of monitoring viz. process monitoring and impact monitoring. Process monitoring focuses on the implementation of planned actions and it allows governments

and communities to track how programmes are implemented and to identify ways of improving them. Impact monitoring focuses on the changes that have taken place as a result of the implemented action. This is usually where success and failure are measured according to initial goals and objectives.

Thus, these tools are sample guiding tools for respective committees for fulfilling the main function (for example, equitable supply of safe and potable drinking water). With the help of these, exercises can be conducted at the village level for developing their own tools and while doing so the help of the external facilitator (such as NGO) can also be taken if required. It needs to be remembered that once the tools are developed they need to use or apply them in the field

Sub-Committee of the Gram Sabha or Village Development Committee (VDC)

Article 49 of GP Act 1958 was revised on August 1, 2003 with the following amendments:

- 49(1): GS in coordination with GP can form one or many sub-committees or village development committees and these committees comprise citizens of the village.
- 49(2): The terms of such committees are same as that of the GP.
- 49(4): The minimum number of members in these committees can be 12 and maximum can be 24.
- 49(4ka): In these committees, minimum 1/3rd members should be GP members.
- 49(4kh): In these committees 50 per cent members should be women.
- 49(4ga): The members of the deprived sections (SC/ST/NT) should be selected on these committees in proportion* of their population in the village.
- 49(5/1): The sub-committee should be considered as the committee of GP and this committee will be entirely under the supervision and control of GP. The administrative mechanism of the GP will provide assistance to these committees also.
- 49(6): For the purpose of daily convenience, the annual accounts as well as the work records of these committees should be separately maintained and preserved. However, this will be an integral part of the GP records or audit as well as routine work of GP. The above mentioned records of the village development committees will be presented in the special GS. This GS is called with the purpose of approving the annual budget proposal as well as annual accounts statement.

- 49(7): In special circumstances, if the sub-committee is to be dissolved then GP has to call the GS. In this GS, majority of 2/3rd voters have to pass the resolution in favour of dissolving the committee and then only such an action can be taken.
- 49(8ka): The VDC membership of an individual can be cancelled by passing the resolution in the GS.
- 49(8kh): In case the post of the member is vacant due to death/resignation/dismissal, that post can be filled by the GS.
- 49(9): After the formation of the new GP body, the new sub-committees should be formed within a period of 45 days. In the new sub-committees which are to be formed, there should be no restriction on old members becoming members anew.

Thus, as per Article 49(1), the GS has the right to appoint the sub-committees or VDCs.

* Example:

- a) In a village, if there are 30 per cent SC, 10 per cent ST and 5 per cent NT, then in these committees they will have reserved posts in the same proportion.
- b) In a village, if the proportion of ST and NT is very less, say not even 1 per cent, then it will be the right of the GS to either give them representation on the committee or not.
- c) In case there are no SC/ST/NT people in the village, there will be no reserved post for them.

situation. Updating is also required on a regular basis. After one or two years, as they become familiar with the tools there is a possibility that they would not require them and therefore it serves only as an initial platform.

However, its importance as guiding tools continues when new sub-committee members are taken in to the fold. Therefore each sub-committee should have institutional memory of their tools and experiences of using them, which will be useful for the new members. Hence, by taking into account broader macro level issues these tools are made. As mentioned before, they are generic in nature and in a diverse situation the applicability of the tool remains intact. Therefore, these tools should not be looked at as watertight compartments but as broader, flexible guidelines.

5) Limitations of the Tools

We acknowledge that the issues or priority needs that the tools attempt to address may be inadequate. Perhaps it needs to be clearly stated that though uniformity could be found in the village level priority needs and aspects that were attempted to be covered in the tools, they are unique in the local village context. Hence, these tools only provide the guidelines, ideas or clues which can be made applicable while activating the Gram Sabha sub-committees in the villages. Besides, we are aware that these tools do not cover many important village level issues like food security, livelihoods, health, watershed development, common property resources, natural resource management, and so on. Thus, there is much scope for developing the tools for a wide range of village issues.

Section II: Gram Sabha Sub-Committees: Introduction and Tools

1: Village Education Committee

1a. INTRODUCTION

Context and Background

The policies regarding education have changed rapidly in the last few years. The universalization of education has been accepted as a national goal in India since Independence. The policy directives of the Central government envisaged free and compulsory education for all in the country. The 86th Constitutional Amendment of 2002 led to inclusion of a new article 21-A in Part III of the Constitution that made free and compulsory education to all children of 6 to 14 years of age a fundamental right (Economic Survey of India, 2007-08). The National Education Policies (1968, 1986 and latest revised in 1992) so far have reiterated the constitutional directive. The National Policy on Education 1986 (as revised in 1992) resolves to provide free and compulsory education of satisfactory quality to all children up to 14 years of age before the commencement of the 21st century.

The revised policy has emphasized on many issues other than universalization. It has recognised the need for improving the quality of education including life skills. It has emphasised the need for various measures such as alternative schooling, inclusive education, and community ownership to achieve the goal of universalization of education. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the flagship programme of the GOI to achieve elementary education has introduced these fundamental changes in the primary education system along with huge funds' inflow focusing on every aspect of schooling. These aspects include scholarships, increasing the teaching staff, alternative schooling facility, classrooms construction, free textbooks, uniforms, civil works as and when necessary, maintenance grants, repairs, additional school and teacher

grants, trainings and so on. SSA has also included institutional reforms at the state level educational institutions and has provided huge funding for strengthening the existing educational institutions.

Decentralisation and Community Mobilisation

The National Policy on Education, 1986 visualises direct community involvement in the form of Village Education Committees (VECs) for management of elementary education. The Program Of Action (POA), 1992 emphasized micro-planning as a process of designing a family-wise and child-wise plan of education by which every child regularly attends a school or a Non Formal Education centre (NFE), thus continuing his

Excerpts from the POA-1992 (GOI)

Under the Constitution Amendment Bill, Panchayats will be formed for a village or a group of villages. The Panchayat will have elected representatives. Besides, each Panchayat may constitute a Village Education Committee (VEC) which would be responsible for administration of the delegated programmes in the field of education at the village level. The major responsibility of the VECs should be operationalisation of micro-level planning and school mapping in the village through systematic house to house survey and periodic discussion with the parents. It should be the endeavour of the committee that every child in every family participates in the primary education. In these activities they will be provided expert guidance and support by District Institute of Education and Training.

The State Governments may consider entrusting the following functions to the VEC: Generation and sustenance of awareness among the village community ensuring participation of all segments of population; and developing teacher/instructor and community partnership to oversee and manage the effective and regular functioning of the schools and centres.

In view of the critical role and function of VEC, it should be vested with appropriate statutory and necessary financial and administrative authority.

or her education at a place suitable to him/her and completes at least eight years of schooling or its equivalent at the NFE centre.

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendments have hastened the process of community management of elementary schools. These amendments have created a congenial ambience for the Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs) to play a more dynamic role. These institutions now provide a greater voice to women, scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. The platform of Gram Sabha, in the form of its various sub-committees, one of this being VEC, provides the best opportunity for direct participation in the development process. Increasingly, PRIs through VECs are involved in social mobilisation, planning, and supervision for 'universalization of elementary education. The introduction of micro-planning and school mapping have brought the schools closer to the community while sensitising people to issues and problems in their local schools. Programmes like SSA call for community ownership of school-based interventions through effective decentralisation. The objectives of it are spreading or widening of primary education with the active participation of local community, enrolment of children in the age group of 6 to 14 years in the school and retention of these children up to minimum 8th standard, and capacitate with qualitative and life-centred education.

Recent trends in community participation indicate a greater thrust on empowerment of communities. Mobilising the communities to take responsibility to ensure quality education for every child is the core strategy of several innovative initiatives in elementary education including District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Lok Jumbush Project (LJP - Andhra), Shiksha Karmi Project (SKP - Rajasthan) and the Bihar Education Project. Genuine community involvement was the key factor for the success of LJP in Andhra Pradesh and SKP in Rajasthan. LJP has had a positive effect on the empowerment of locally elected people, especially women at village level who are often active members of the LJP core teams and Mahila Samoohs. The VECs, carefully formed and trained through environmental building activities in the LJP, are actively involved in school matters. SKP has constituted VECs in 2,000 villages to promote community involvement in primary education and

encourage village level planning. DPEP is making useful investments in orientation and training of VEC members. An important role of the VEC is to mobilise resources for maintenance, repair and construction of school buildings. The VECs also help in determining the school calendar and school timings in consultation with the local community.

The Current Scenario

Maharashtra pioneered the Village Education Committees much before the Central government made it mandatory under different schemes. In fact, grassroots level planning and monitoring units in Maharashtra have been in place long before SSA came into existence (SSA Joint Review Committee Report). The majority of the government-funded schools in the state are under the management of Zilla Parishads. The Sarpanch of the Gram Panchayat is the head of the VEC and the other members are community leaders, social activists, local functionaries and the head teacher of the school. Mother-Teacher Associations (MTAs) and Parents-Teachers Association (PTAs) have been constituted and are at the village level.

The primary review of the provisions regarding mandate and functioning of VECs reveal that the mandate given to VECs is important but insufficient. It only revolves around the issues of school management and school monitoring to some extent. However, it should be mentioned that the VECs need to be empowered to influence the functioning of the school, ensure equitable benefit of education sector schemes and more importantly, be able and authorised to hold accountable Gram Sabha for school management. This tool envisages introductory exercises which enable VECs to expand their scope towards the same.

Another important issue is that the current policy guidelines also limit the role of the village education committees up to the monitoring of the public schools, especially the schools run by the Zilla Parishad, tribal departments and the municipalities or corporations. However, in many states, schools operated by the private societies are functioning as well. In many villages such schools are situated in the vicinity of the

village, whereas public schools are located at a distance. Such private schools that charge lesser fees also need monitoring by the VECs as the state monitoring is very weak in these schools. Generally, it has been found in many schools that the staff and the teachers are accountable to the upper level officials and board of directors and therefore seldom respond to village level issues and student problems. Hence, there is a great need to expand the role of the VECs.

However, the VECs which have been constituted in Maharashtra have the mandate to monitor any school which exists in the village boundary. Unfortunately, these committees have not been so effective in terms of impact. Even though the surveys undertaken by the Ministry of Human Resources and Education Department award credit for high percentage of girl education in the state to the VECs to some extent, the problems remain. The major failure of the VECs is that they were unsuccessful in contributing to resolving many problems such as 'out of school children', 'drop out percentage', 'quality of food and other facilities provided in residential schools for tribal students', 'awareness building in parents', 'forming and facilitating the parent/mother teacher associations' and so on.

The major reason behind the mediocre performance of the VECs is said to be their ignorance and low capacities to absorb knowledge to be able to monitor the schools. VECs are considered to be extremely important to be able to solve the problems in the primary and secondary education sector including the objective of universalization. Taking cognizance of these needs, the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan also offers a two-day comprehensive training module for VEC members for a mere Rs 30 per participant. However, the joint review mission's reports of SSAs are silent on the progress of component of community mobilisation, especially the trainings of the VECs.

With this background it can be concluded that the policy has provided enough legal basis and mandate for the VECs to function effectively. However, the real challenge lies in making them functional so that the goals of universalization along with the quality of education can be achieved.

Rules and Regulation for Village Education Committee

The Objectives:

The objective of the Village Education Committee shall be to assist the Gram Panchayat and the Gram Sabha in monitoring the functioning of the schools through different mechanisms and forums to achieve the universalization of education and ensuring the quality of education.

Composition:

- The Gram Sabha will appoint the members of the VEC in consultation with the Gram Panchayat.
- As per the National Education Policy and Maharashtra government's GRs of February 1990 and September 1991, VECs were formed. As per the revised GR of April 2003, there was restructuring of these committees and accordingly a minimum of five and a maximum of 15 members are to be selected in the GS for a period of three years in the village.
- There should be 50 per cent representation of women on this committee.
- In this committee, members are selected from 10-11 categories representing all sections of the society. These categories include parents, teachers, women, village youths, gram sevak, head master, members of the village cooperative society, members of SC and ST community, members from differently-abled (disabled) villagers.
- The Sarpanch will be president of the committee and deputy president will be elected from among the members.
- The head master/head teacher will be the secretary of this committee.

Roles and Responsibilities:

1. To undertake responsibility for the primary school, hamlet school, non-formal education, adult education, continuous education centre in the village.
2. To undertake a campaign for enrolment of children in the age group of 6 to 14 years.
3. To reduce the school drop out rate and retain the enrolled children.

4. To provide basic facilities such as educational material, drinking water, toilets, furniture through peoples' participation.
5. To begin special coaching classes for children who are weak in studies with the help of the teacher.
6. To monitor daily attendance and administrative work of the teachers.
7. To recognise and to encourage the persons who are doing excellent work in the field of education.
8. To ensure that backward caste students studying in primary school benefit from government schemes.
9. To plan and manage mid-day meal programmes in the school.

To monitor the overall functioning of the school(s) in the village surrounding irrespective of their ownership.

- a. Monitoring of school calendar.
 - Qualifying the admission process, campaigning for enrolment, assisting school staff for undertaking the admissible (potential) students in the village.
 - Holding regular discussions with the school administration.
 - Supporting the efforts of the school staff in improving the overall functioning.
 - Checking illegal practices such as collective copying during the examinations, misuse of funds sanctioned etc.
- b. Monitoring of the implementation of education schemes with special focus on SSA (Major schemes: SSA, mid-day meals, ashram schools, scholarships).
 - Understanding the different components under SSA.
 - Monitoring the constructions, scholarships, school grants, teacher grants under SSA.
 - Monitoring the activities for quality of education under SSA.
 - Monitoring of food provided in *Anganwadis* and residential schools for tribal students under the mid-day meals programme

- c. Promoting community involvement in the educational activities.
 - Organising households visits by each basti/hamlet representative.
 - Listening to the students, support to poor student for getting scholarships.
 - Efforts for hostel admissions for the children of families who migrate seasonally.
 - Building support structures for the students and families as per the necessity.
- d. Involving Gram Panchayat, Gram Sabha and Social Audit Committee at appropriate levels to solve the recurrent issues in the functioning of the schools.
 - Compilation of major issues on a bi-monthly basis.
 - Facilitating discussions on the issues in Gram Sabha, Gram Panchayat and Social Audit Committee meetings.
 - Seeking help to take appropriate decisions to influence the school's functioning towards solving the issues.

Rights of the committee:

1. To visit the schools and education centres.
2. To check the attendance register at least once in three months.
3. To sanction the casual leave of the head master of the school and to give recommendation for long leave.
4. To recommend the yearly budget of the school and education centre to the block education officer.
5. To monitor construction of the school building and other constructions as well as repairs and maintenance related to the school.
6. To be present at the time of disbursement of attendance allowance to the girl students.
7. To submit reports to the higher authorities with respect to irregularity in work, misbehaviour, frequent absenteeism.
8. To approve school building, repairs and maintenance cost of the school, and teachers' grant under Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan.

Functioning of the committee:

1. The meeting of the committee will be conducted once in two months.
2. The agenda of the meeting will be decided in consultation with the president (Sarpanch).
3. The secretary will be responsible for sending the invitation for the meeting, maintain the proceeding book and implementing resolutions passed in the meeting.
4. The secretary will report the gaps and lacunae in the daily work, about illegal work and misbehaviour to the president and accordingly the report will be sent to higher authorities if necessary.

Functions of VEC:

The basic approach adapted while developing this tool is that VEC should develop functions for its own conduct of business using the tools given in this kit. The various tools incorporated in this kit provide the generic framework which can be used by the VEC for developing its own function list. As a guideline, the following functions are envisaged in this tool:

Function A: Monitoring of School Calendar:

Monitoring should be the central function of the VEC to ensure accountability of the school towards the parents of students enrolled. Since the primary function of teaching rests with the school administration, and generally school administration maintains accountability as per the hierarchical structure (i.e. accountability to their immediate boss or officer under whom they work or report), third party monitoring becomes essential. This can be effectively performed by the VEC.

Monitoring of the school calendar provides a list of the tasks to be performed by the VEC as well as the school according to a generic academic calendar of the school. A virtual calendar has been created for the sake of this tool which provides for listing of the tasks.

Function B: Monitoring of Government Schemes

This function will include monitoring the various government schemes in the education sector, especially for primary and secondary schooling. The objective of the function is both, to monitor and follow-up of the sanctionable schemes for the village schools and monitoring the implementation of the schemes which have already been sanctioned and are being implemented in the school.

Function C: To Promote Community Involvement in the Educational Activities

The objectives are to form PTAs/MTAs, facilitate dialogue between PTAs and organise events for PTAs.

1B. TOOLS FOR VILLAGE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Index of Tools	
Function	Tools
1. Background Matrix	1. Getting started: Understanding the issues w.r.t. village level education (exercise for general orientation)
2. Function I: Monitoring the year-round activities of the school	
2i Developing an overview	2. An activity calendar for monitoring based on school-functions
2ii Inspecting physical infrastructure facilities	3. Checklist of inspecting physical facilities
2iii Inspecting the staffing requirements	4. Checklist of issues in village level school staffing and performance
3. Function II: Monitoring of government Schemes	
3i. Collecting information on government schemes	5. Sample RTI application form
3ii. Monitoring of sanctioned schemes for village schools	6. Format of a letter for official request for obtaining the information of schemes
4. Function III: Promote community involvement in educational activities	7. Exercise sheet for developing monitoring checklist
4i. Forming of PTAs	8. Exercise sheet for formation of PTAs
4ii. Facilitating dialogues in the PTAs	9. Checklist of issues and role matrix
5. Function IV: Coordinate with other institutions in the village with reference to educational issues	
5i. Coordination with Village Panchayat, Gram Sabha and SAC for review and monitoring purpose	10. Checklist of issues for which GP, GS & SAC is to be contacted

Function 1: Background Matrix

Tool 1: Getting Started: Understanding The Issues With Respect To Village Level Education

Problem	Reasons (Basic, Broad)	Action
1. Lack of awareness about education	1. Insufficient exposure	Awareness building
2. Migration	1. Lack of livelihood opportunities (employment) in the village	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness and motivation to discourage migration (especially sugarcane cutting) 2. Creation of livelihood opportunity/employment generation by accessing various government schemes 3. A possibility should be tried whereby residential schools can be set up for the children whose parents have migrated to sugar factories or for sugarcane cutting (government provides subsidy for such schools)
3. Absenteeism (students)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No interest in studying (no teaching aids that would make studying interesting) 2. Disinterested teachers 3. Inadequate facilities (no classroom, unsafe classrooms, no drinking water/toilet facility, no water in toilets) 4. Household responsibilities (fetching water, cooking, collecting fuel, taking care of siblings, working in the farm, taking livestock for grazing etc) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Household visits 2. Parents meetings 3. Increase the school enrolment/reduce school drop out rate 4. Involve children in various school-related activities, such as cleanliness committees, environment-friendly school by developing gardens within the school campus consisting of fruit trees, flowering shrubs and medicinal herbs, thus motivating them to participate, own the processes run in the school and increase their interest 5. Introduce incentives for motivating students to attend school regularly 6. Follow-up with education officers and BDOs as well as PS and ZP members for adequate facilities and filing complaints w.r.t. disinterested teachers
4. Absenteeism (teachers)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Less number of teachers who are residents of the village 2. No one to monitor their daily attendance 3. Apathy of teachers 4. Apathy of villagers (w.r.t. performance of teachers, no reporting to sub-committee regarding planning, implementation, constraints, progress) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness meetings of parents as well as village community to pressurise teachers 2. Follow-up with education officers and BDOs as well as PS and ZP members for disciplinary action to be taken by the department 3. Monitoring of daily attendance of teachers by the committee on which signature of five committee members are mandatory as per GR of December 2006 4. The committee should ensure that the teacher is residing in the village and if not this should be reported to the PS so that his house rent allowance/special allowance for tribal areas will be withheld (GR December 2006)

Problem	Reasons (Basic, Broad)	Action
		5. The committee is authorised to prepare a confidential report with regard to daily work, teaching, enrolment, attendance, drop-out and submit it to the BDO
5. High drop-out rate after secondary level specifically amongst girl students	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack/loss of interest 2. Teachers do not take interest in students as well as in teaching 3. Distance 4. Apathy of parents towards educating the girls 5. Support in agriculture/domestic work 6. No toilets/no separate toilet for girls/toilet with no or inadequate water and are unclean 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involving teachers for creating awareness and motivating parents 2. Organising for conveyance by facilitating the process of obtaining cycles for SC/ST girls, free pass (bus) for all students 3. Accessing various government schemes for SC/ST/girls/BPL (uniform, books, scholarships) 4. Ensuring that each school has a balwadi/anganwadi/creche facility so that care is taken with respect to baby-sitting 5. 50 per cent of the teaching staff should consist of women 6. Separate schools for girl students after secondary and higher secondary level 7. Organising village level campaigns for ensuring enrolment of all children in the age group of 6-14 years 8. Ensure that the toilet facility is satisfactory (separate toilet for girls with enough availability of water, cleanliness)
6. Lack of facilities and infrastructure (class rooms, furniture, drinking water, latrines/toilets, play ground, library)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of initiative from teachers 2. lack of initiative by villagers/the committee 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness meetings of parents as well as village community to pressurise teachers 2. Involving school children (along with the teachers) in the maintenance of cleanliness in toilets 3. Follow-up with education officers and BDOs as well as PS and ZP members for disciplinary action to be taken by the department
7. Lack of quality education	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Non-motivated teaching staff (absenteeism) 2. Apathy of parents 3. Non-functioning of education committee 4. Lack of capability amongst teachers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review in GP and giving instructions 2. Bringing the issue in the GS meetings 3. Understand the difficulties/constraints faced by the teachers at the village level and help in solving the same 4. Efforts should be taken so that parents will take interest in education of the children 5. With the help of teachers organise extra classes for weak students 6. Monitor daily attendance as well as daily performance of teachers 7. Sending teachers for training programmes/refresher trainings so that their capabilities/skills are upgraded
8. Anganwadi and Balwadi: • Low attendance • School drop-out	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ignorance amongst parents about importance of education 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Creation of awareness 2. Ensure availability of adequate facilities (classroom, drinking water, toilets, educational aids, quality of mid-day meals) 3. Monitor functioning of Anganwadi and Balwadi (including sevikas) and submit quarterly report on the same to GS and GP

Problem	Reasons (Basic, Broad)	Action
9. Hamlet/Vasti School: Lack of school facility in the hamlet	1. Lack of awareness/apathy/initiative on the part of hamlet residents as well as villagers	1. Demanding a hamlet school where there is a minimum strength of 20 students and follow-up with PS and ZP members
10. Adult and non-formal education • High illiteracy rate in women and tribal people • Lack of response to literacy drive	1. Low level of awareness and motivation 2. Unsuitable timings of classes	1. Conduct campaigns at the village level in an interesting manner 2. Conduct special classes, specifically for women in various hamlets, wards 3. A possibility should be explored whereby the labour payments are made and SHG loans are distributed only with the signature of the concerned persons 4. Involving school-going children of the illiterate women and tribal people so that it is possible to teach them at the household level or at least do revision at home with the help of children

Function 2: Monitoring the Year-Round Activities of the School

Function 2a: Taking an overview

Tool 2: An activity calendar for monitoring based on School Functions

Month	Activity/Event	Role of School	Role of Village Education Committee	Ways to Involve School	Engaging Other platforms
June	Campaigns for enrolment of all children who are in the school-going age (it includes identifying out of school children)	Admissions	Cross-checking, supporting & convincing the families for admissions, special attention to girls.	Taking the Head Master/ Mistress or appointed person for HH visits	Making appeal on the Gram-Sabha platform
July	Inspection (including facilities and school environment) Imparting the benefit under various government schemes	Maintaining the physical facilities up to date Preparing the list of needy students	Scanning and checking the facilities, its status, and overall operation and maintenance Understanding the exact benefit & beneficiaries (teachers, students, etc), Ensuring SC, ST, girls, differently-abled get their due benefit	Joint visits by School involving representatives and VEC members Making it mandatory to school to get Gram Sabha sanction before finalizing the list	As per the necessity GP members and raising issues in GS Social Audit Committee and VEC collectively Facilitate the process

Month	Activity/Event	Role of School	Role of Village Education Committee	Ways to Involve School	Engaging Other platforms
August	Unit exams	Preventing the copying Sharing the result with VEC Helping VEC to fill up the report card Supporting weak students	Monitoring for illegal, (mass-individual) copying Encouraging bright students, Identifying weak students Taking initiative for preparing report card for the exam result Supporting weak students, giving special attention to girls	Schools Resolution to prevent, joint monitoring Class-teachers prepare the list and handover to VEC Joint filling in the report card for sharing information in 15 Aug Gram Sabha Organizing special classes, & educational activities	Intensive involvement of Social Audit Committee Contacting PTAs for sharing and support Review of the planned activities in 15 August Gram Sabha & joint sharing of efforts made Only if school staff is not willing to cooperate
September	Joint Review of schemes (especially major, in which work goes on for longer duration e.g. construction of a water-tank)	Providing the list of tasks to be done to the VEC	Reviewing the list and conducting the joint review and inspection of the ongoing works/visiting the students who have benefited.	Head master to prepare the list of the schemes sanctioned and tasks performed for the VEC members	For Critical Issues under each scheme to be
October	Organizing co-curricular activities	Organizing competitions such as sports, elocutions, essay writing, drawing etc.			
November	Term End Exams		Preparing the list of Late-joiners	Contacting the parents and monitoring the joining, removing the hurdles/ difficulties in joining	
December	Follow-up with the student to ensure that all join back after Diwali vacations, special watch on migrant families Monitor the result of mid-term exam	Take lead in ensuring continuation by all enrolled children Ensure good performance of students	Take stock to ensure that there are no school drop outs after re-opening of school Review the performance	Taking up measures from the beginning itself so that students perform well	Review of the planned activities in 26 Jan Gram Sabha
February	Unit Exams	As Above	As Above	As Above	
April	Annual Exams	As Above	As Above	As Above	
May	Protecting school property, assets and other resources in absence of sufficient staff due to summer vacations	Administration Make plan	Patrolling visits in the school premises, cross-checking with the watchman (if appointed)		

Function 2ii: Inspecting Physical Infrastructure Facilities

Tool 3: Checklist for Inspecting Physical Infrastructure Facilities

Classroom and School	Remarks	Action Points
✓ School should have adequate supply of potable drinking water, with appropriate chlorination whenever necessary		
✓ School should have adequate supply of water in the toilets, so that hygiene is maintained		
✓ The exterior of the classroom, which includes the veranda or the school campus should be neat, clean and pleasant		
✓ Use of school premises (outside classroom areas) as an effective learning space		
✓ Interiors of class rooms (roof-leakages, closable windows, tub-lights, fans, sufficient sunlight, locks, blackboards, educational charts, graphs, maps and information displays)		
✓ Library, Number of books, type of books, at least one news paper		
✓ Educational Aid (Chalks, Graphs, Stencils, Laboratory, etc.)		
Hostel Facilities		
✓ Classrooms as living rooms? Separate rooms (stay facility)		
✓ Separate rooms conditions: Fans, electricity connections, lights, ratio of students per room comfortable with gender balance, separate toilets for girls and boys		
✓ Maintenance of the assets, arrangements and monitoring		

Classroom and School	Remarks	Action Points
Food		
✓ Square meal, cooking and serving of meals should be done with strict regard to hygiene.		
✓ Storage and kitchen should be separate		
✓ Cooked meal is tested by adults sufficiently prior to being served to children so that contamination, if any, is detected in time		
Land and surrounding		
✓ The total usable Land of the school (if available)		
✓ Possible Uses (Gardening, Horticulture, students experiments, Herbal Garden, Playground, other sports Grounds)		
Sports		
✓ Sports facilities and equipment		
✓ Sports Teacher - guide and Special Coach		
✓ Physical training, Gymnasium, Coach and related facilities		

Function 2iii: Inspecting the Staffing Requirement

Tool 4: Checklist of issues in village level school staffing (adequacy) and performance (efficiency)

Checklist and Action Points

Teachers	Remarks	Action Points
✓ One teacher for every 40 students in primary and upper primary		
✓ At least two teachers in a primary school		
✓ One teacher for every class in the upper primary		
✓ Of the three teachers sanctioned under SSA for every new upper primary school, one each will need to be a teacher with mathematics and science specific educational background		
✓ Primary schooling facility within 1 km. of a habitation		
✓ Teachers are trained and committed		
Support Staff (For Secondary School and hostel)		
✓ Peon/s		
✓ Laboratory		
✓ Laboratory Assistants		
✓ Main Cook		
✓ Cooking Assistants		
✓ Rector		
✓ Warden		
✓ Clerk		

Function 3: Monitoring of Government Schemes

Function 3i: Collecting Information on Government Schemes

Tool 5: Sample RTI application format

RTI Application Format

To: The Public Information Officer,
_____ (Name and address of the concerned department)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Full Name of Applicant: | Chairperson of the SAC or VEC |
| 2. Address: | Address of the Chairperson |
| 3. Particulars of Information Required | |
| (i) Subject matter of information: | Educational Schemes |
| (ii) Period to which the information relates: | The current Year |
| (iii) Description of information required: | (a) The schemes available for pre-primary/primary secondary/Higher Secondary schooling
(b) The qualification eligibility criteria for getting the scheme sanctioned (for school) |
| (iv) Whether information is required by post or in person: | By Post |
| (v) In case by post (Ordinary, Registered or Speed): | Registered Post |
| 4. Whether the Applicant is Below Poverty Line:
(If yes, attach a photocopy of the proof thereof) | No/Yes |

Place and Date:

Signature of the applicant

Function 3i:**Tool 6: Format of a letter for official request for obtaining the information of schemes**

Date:

To,
Chairperson,
Concerned educational Department
District: -----

SUB: Getting information of sanctioned schemes for the school: (Name of the school)

Respected Sir/Madam

We, the body of the Gram Panchayat, (name of the Village) along with the body of the VEC, hereby are applying for getting the information of all the government schemes which have been sanctioned for the school located in our village premises. This information collection processes are undertaken by the Village education committee as part of the learning process. We wish to assess the situation of the school as a part of our responsibility and help the school-management to improve its performance.

Yours' faithfully

VEC Members

VP members

SAC members

CC: Head-Master of the Village School

Function 3-ii: Monitoring for Sanctioned Schemes for Village Schools**Tool 7: Exercise sheet for developing monitoring checklists for schemes**

S. N.	Nature of Benefit	Extent of Funding	Eligibility criteria available	Name of the scheme	Cross-checking points
1.	Uniforms distribution				
2.	Text-books and Notebooks				
3.	Shoes, Chappals				
4.	Teachers Fund				
5.	VEC's Fund				
6.	Scholarship Type I				
7.	Scholarship Type II				
8.	Grant for Construction of Physical Facilities (Compound, Water tank, colouring, etc.)				
Total Yearly Budget of the school		Rs.			

Function 4: To Promote Community Involvement in Educational Activities

Function 4i: Forming PTAs

Tool 8: Exercise sheet for formation of PTAs

Process Checklist for VEC members

- Step one: Preparing the Background Information
 - ✓ Collecting the information of the parents of the all students from the Schools
 - ✓ Preparing a list of the Parents
 - Village wise if students from more number of villages are enrolled
 - Level-Wise (Separate Lists for Primary and Secondary as well as SSC if applicable)
 - Sub-lists-Progress-wise (Separate list of the parent of Weak Students, Average Students and Scholars)
- Step two: designating interested teachers
 - ✓ Identifying the teachers' aptitudes for engaging in dialogue with Parents by discussing the lists with them
 - ✓ Allocating Teachers to the Parent list (at least one teacher for each list)
- Step three: Formation of PTA in a Gram-Sabha
 - ✓ Making the HH visits for each type of Parent list
 - ✓ Calling the Gram-Sabha for formation PTA
 - ✓ Calling the Mahila Gram Sabha for forming MTA
 - ✓ Discuss the objectives of formations and declare the formation
 - ✓ Declare the membership fee for Rs. 5 to 20 per year as token of responsible member of the PTA/MTA
 - ✓ Discuss the possible activities, roles and responsibilities of parents/ mothers and teachers
 - ✓ Discuss the Activity Sets

Function 4ii: Facilitating Dialogues in the PTAs

Tool 9: Checklist of issues and role matrix

Common Issues to be monitored (Pre-primary and Primary)	Frequency
Health and Hygiene: Weight, Height, Nutritional Status, immunization/vaccination Nails-cutting, Hair-cutting, Washing and Cleaning and Hygienic practices, clean clothes/uniform Staple Diet needs	Once in three months
School Behaviour: Observation sharing regarding: Concentration, Aptitude, Interests, likings, leadership qualities, team behaviour, natural involvement and participation of the child	Once in three months
Financial Needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Basic: Conveyance to the school, Uniforms, Text-books, shoes, ✓ Advanced: Higher Education, Hostel, Fees, etc. 	While taking Admissions, Before and while school begins, and while finalizing the names for scholarships
Support to weak Students: Participation and monitoring of the child support activities such as practice sessions for - Handwriting, collective reading, mathematical puzzles, memory games	
Participation of Villagers in Co-curricular Activities: Sports Competitions, Elocution Competitions, 15th August-16 Jan Prabhat-ferries, Story telling, Hand-writing Competition, drawing & essay writing competition, exhibition of work/art by students and other extra-curricular activities	
Complaints Resolutions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complaints by teachers: Low attention, Disobedience, Not being Neat, lying, bunking classes, quarrelsome behaviour in classes Complaints By students: Excessive physical beating, torture, misbehaviour with girl students, Asking to do personal work of teacher etc. 	

Function 5: Coordinate with other Institutions in the Village with reference to Educational Issues

Function 5i: Coordinate with GP, GS and SAC for review and monitoring purpose

Tool 10: Checklist of issues for which GP, GS and SAC to be contacted

The planner (For regular communication): Frequency of meeting and the key issues that must be reported and discussed.

	Gram Panchayat	Gram Sabha	Social Audit Committee
Frequency of Meetings	Once in two months	On a quarterly basis	Once in six months
Broad Responsibilities	Assistance as well as Review and follow-up of progress made with respect to Planning and Implementation	Ensuring that activities are performed as per planning made Ensuring transparency in beneficiary selection process	Any Issues related to Budget and expenditure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that expenditure has been appropriately utilised and quality has been maintained in the works performed (infrastructure built) Any Issues related to Social Justice: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Enrolment of children (in the age group 6-14 years) of SC, ST and other marginalised communities ▪ Ensuring the receipt of scholarship and other benefits to the children from these communities
June	Capability & skill development of teachers	Planned activities in education sector (w.r.t. village) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funds available with the school & planning for expenditure ▪ Planning for accessing schemes, funds ▪ Activities for improving the performance of children in the studies ▪ Infrastructure development ▪ Safe drinking water and sanitation ▪ Initiating dialogue to seek involvement of parents 	Annual expenditure statement (of previous year - March)

	Gram Panchayat	Gram Sabha	Social Audit Committee
August (15th)	Status as per age group (girls & boys) & Class in which they are enrolled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Status of total number of children (girls & boys) in the school-going age (6-17 years) and the number of them enrolled ▪ Status of safe drinking water & sanitation facilities in the school 	
November/December		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Status (achievements made, constraints faced, unmet targets) of: ▪ schemes accessed ▪ civil works if undertaken ▪ mid-day meal programme ▪ retention of children ▪ performance of school in studies (results, scholarships), sports, extra-curricular activities 	Status (achievements made, constraints faced, unmet targets) of: receipts and expenditure
The checklist of issues when coordination is necessary (For special conditions)			

Additional Tables

Village Level Educational Information to be put up on Display Board

	Total No. of male children	Total No. of male children enrolled	Total No. of female children	Total No. of female children enrolled
Pre-Primary (Balwadi, Aanganwadi)				
Primary (1st to 4th)				
High-School (5th to 7th)				
Secondary (8th to 10th)				
Higher secondary (11th & 12th)				
State the summary of reasons for out-of school children				

Total population in the age group of 17 to 45 years	Total No. of males	Total No. of literate males	Total No. of males who have passed 10th grade	Total No. of females	Total number of literate females	Total No. of females who have passed 10th grade

Educational achievements made (if any)

2: Village Drinking Water and Sanitation Committee

2A. INTRODUCTION

Background

Maharashtra, one of leading developed states in India paradoxically faces severe problems in ensuring safe and potable drinking water supply and access in rural areas. Statistics say that out of total number of 86,681 habitations in Maharashtra; near about 40% habitations do not have the capacities to ensure the water supply as per the national norm of 40 LPCD (litres per capita per day) for rural areas. Even of those 60% habitations (nearly 62000) many habitations are slipping back to the original status (being unsustainable), which were tackled earlier by implementing various schemes and spending large funds (Project Appraisal Document (PAD), Jalswarajya 2002).

About 80% of rural drinking water sources in India are based on the ground water (National Rural Water Supply Programme - NRWSP, 2008). The primary reasons for un-sustainability of the schemes are the constrained ground water sources of the state due to geological factors as well as spatially variable rainfall with extremes of high monsoon and droughts situation in different areas. These factors have a severe impact on sustainability of sources for water supply, especially during February-May. Secondly, the uncontrolled extraction of groundwater for irrigation and industrial purposes also increases the severity of the problem. The integrated use of surface and groundwater management is not established in rural areas mainly due to issues concerning regulation of the water sources (Project Appraisal Document, Jalswarajya, World Bank 2002).

Most of the habitations which were covered by earlier schemes suffer from yet another problem. The institutions responsible for operation and maintenance of the water supply systems have failed miserably in running the schemes by collecting the water charges (tariff). The recovery of the pending bills of water supply has been mounting and a state institution like Maharashtra Jeevan Pradhikaran which is managing the water supply of many multi-village schemes, has been functioning on the huge subsidies from the state government (Project Implementation Plan, Jalswarajya, GOM, 2003). Additionally, the power crisis of Maharashtra has exacerbated the situation of drinking water supply to the rural habitations resulting in the irregular pumping and water supply through the networks.

Reforms in the Drinking Water and Sanitation Sector

In recent past the rural drinking water sector in India has been undergoing fundamental changes. The Government of India has put a massive thrust on provision of adequate and potable drinking water to rural areas on a sustainable basis by introducing fundamental reforms in the policy, approach and the structure and functioning of institutions. The government has adapted a new policy of “demand driven approach” instead of the “supply driven approach” and has rearticulated its role as a “facilitator” taking a shift from its earlier role as a “service provider” (Swajaldhara guidelines, 2002).

Decentralization has been one of the most emphasized features of the reforms in the drinking water sector. The ‘Project Implementation Plan’ of Jalswarajya and Swajaldhara guidelines and framework for implementation of NRWSP has presented a strong rationale for

decentralization of the drinking water governance. The rationale presents the ‘lack of ownership’ of the drinking water schemes by the PRIs as the central reason for schemes being un-sustainable in the rural areas. According to it the supply driven and non-participatory approach is the root cause to this problem. Therefore, various programme/project guidelines emphasise to implement schemes with a demand-driven and participatory approach.

Different projects such as Jalswarajya and Aaple Paani (Maharashtra), WASMO (Gujarat) and Aapna Paani (Rajasthan) or even the central scheme Swajaldhara and now NRWSP advocate for similar kind of decentralization processes for ensuring participation of the community and PRIs. The decentralization processes include an elaborate and robust village level institutional structure for implementing and managing the schemes. In most schemes a Village drinking water and sanitation committee has been constituted which have a legal foundation of the conformity legislations enacted by the respective states. Maharashtra too, amended the Mumbai Gram Panchayat Adhiniyam 1958/9 in order to support the formation of the village water sanitation committee (VWSC) and Pada Water and sanitation committee, a committee with the same mandate at hamlet level. The amendment supports formation of one or more Village Development Committees or sub-committees of GS. Here, ‘VDC’ is considered as a ‘generic’ structure, which can be adapted to any sector or area such as drinking water, health etc. Furthermore, a special provision of ‘Beneficiary Level Sub-committee’ is included in the amendment as a generic structure, for creating the space for independent hamlet level committee. By using this space hamlet level committee can be formed under any project for the project period. On the basis of this legislation Jalswarajya project included the guidelines for constituting VWSC and PWSCs (Pada water and sanitation committee) for the schemes taken under the project (Amendment in Mumbai Gram Panchayat Adhiniyam 2003).

Importantly, in Maharashtra, the Jalswarajya is the only project which has provided Gram Sabha a prime role in the village level decision making. The conduct of business regulations (Jalswarajya Project implementation plan 2003, hereafter mentioned as PIP) for the Gram

Panchayat/PWSC includes a revolutionary clause for the Gram Sabha, which is “All decisions regarding the project will be “prerogative” to the Gram Sabha”. This vests supreme powers to the Gram Sabha regarding the village level decision making about the project. Till date, such a clear mandate was not given by any state, to the Gram Sabha including the states having scheduled areas which come under the purview of Panchayats’ Extension to Scheduled Areas PESA-1996 amendment.

Mandate of the VDWSC (as per Current Reforms Framework) and the Need for Integrated Perspective

As discussed above, the mandate of the VDWSC (in flagship schemes such as Jalswarajya, Aapna Paani, and Swajaldhara) is to design, plan, implement, monitor and manage the drinking water scheme by using the budget sanctioned under the scheme and also ensure sanitation in the village. VDWSC is constituted under such schemes and they last till the end of the project. As per the mandate, after completion of the works under all these projects, the drinking water schemes are expected to be handed over to the Gram Panchayats. The operation and maintenance of the schemes will be taken over by the committees constituted under the Gram Panchayat. It means the VDWSCs constituted under the project will function for the project period only.

However, the current policy framework does talk a lot about the operation and maintenance of the scheme. These flagship schemes have included a preparatory component of three months for Operation and Maintenance, as a last phase of village level implementation of the project¹. The detailing done in the project implementation plan of Jalswarajya, regarding the project design and implementation procedure is commendable. The efforts were taken in doing detailing of the procedure as well as for defining the functioning of the village level institutions. It has not only defined the functions but has outlined the

¹ The village level project cycle of reform-schemes have four components viz. IEC (information, education, communication) & capability building (3 months) design; (3 months); implementation (9 months), Operation and maintenance (3 months).

whole project cycle with references of project period and planning. It also has developed the clarity in powers, functions and jurisdictions for each institution newly created for the purpose of implementation of the project. This detailing is worth studying thoroughly to understand the nitty-gritty of the implementation process.

Despite such a massive effort, the implementation of such scheme could not gain much credentials during last few years. At present, literature is not available on the analysis of assessing the impact of the reforms in drinking water and sanitation sector; the informal sharing from the WOTR staff has revealed that there are many problems in the field. These problems can be categorised in two broad categories: (a) Problems related to policy framework, such as role of the VWSC in regulating the village level usage of water and protection of drinking water sources, and, (b) Problems related to the process of implementation (such as) delay in implementation of the project due to village dynamics. However, for the purpose of this tool we are considering the first set of problems which deal with the mandate of the VWSC.

The current reform framework is comprehensive and includes all the necessary detailing on minute aspects of the functions and operative procedures of VWSC. However, according to the guidelines, the role of VWSC comes to an end after completion of the project. It is expected that VWSC is dissolved, and scheme is handed over to the Gram Panchayat as soon as the duration is over. It can be said that the VWSC is designed exclusively for the duration in which the scheme is to be implemented. Due to this, the mandate and functioning of the project is remained inadequate, and restricted the scope of the project. In consequence, the designed functions revolve around the activities determined by a typical project cycle such as planning, implementation, monitoring etc. This factor has put constraints on the VWSCs potential role, which in fact, can be extended even after completion of the project, and not kept only around the O&M. However, by ignoring this, the policy framework has not considered the possibility of a regulatory role for VWSC. Such a role would have been instrumental in solving issues related to access to the water due to competitive uses of water, depletion of ground water table, seasonal variation and so on.

This neglect of the ground level issues in the prevailing framework² has resulted due to the project oriented perspective towards envisaging the role of the VWSC. Certainly, this framework is very much necessary, however would prove inadequate in the long run, as it misses many ground level issues.

On this background, an integrated perspective is needed for addressing the local issues which presents a long term vision. The framework for mandate of the VDWSC needs to be based on an integrated perspective towards water management, while giving utmost priority to the drinking water needs of the village. The purpose of this document is to develop a set of tools for an expanded role of the village drinking water and sanitation committee (VDWSC).

Drinking water and sanitation are interrelated issues which have to be dealt in an integrated manner. Lack of adequate sanitation is a pressing challenge in both rural and urban India. Sanitation is linked to reduced burden of disease and illness-related expenditure, improved water quality and a cleaner environment, ultimately resulting in a better quality of life. Everyday, an estimated 1,000 children under five die in the country because of diarrhoea alone, a preventable disease. Child under-nutrition is aggravated by the prevalence of diarrhoeal disease, and is responsible for 22 per cent of the country's burden of disease (World Bank 2005).

Some studies suggest that it affects child cognitive and motor development and undermines educational achievement. In addition to public health implications, lack of adequate sanitation forces households into the continued indignity of open defecation, which is an acute problem especially for women and young girls. This is because

2 The recent framework for implementation of NRWSP, 2008 emphasises the role of PRIs particularly GPs for undertaking measures to sustain sources as well as systems. It focuses on community ownership and initiative in water harvesting/recharge and budgeting. The conjunctive use of groundwater, surface water and rain water (harvesting) and reliance on multiple sources is recommended. The need for drinking water security, quality, and protection of catchment to prevent its pollution is recognised. Thus, more integrated & holistic approach could be noted.

women and young girls often have to wait until after dark to defecate which increases the risk of urinary tract infections, chronic constipation and psychological stress (WASH 2006). Women are also vulnerable to physical and sexual violence if they are forced to wait until early morning or late evenings to look for a secluded space in which to defecate. The absence of sanitary facilities in schools is also linked to female drop-out, especially at puberty. Finally, recruitment and retention of female teachers is also affected by lack of proper sanitary facilities in schools. On the other hand, access to safe sanitation in schools is linked to continued education enrolment by young girls and teenage women, particularly at puberty.

Thus, sanitation is one of the most pressing global development issues and is appropriately included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Out of eight MDGs, three are directly linked to sanitation: reduce child mortality, combat disease and ensure environmental sustainability. Even the first goal, eradicate extreme poverty, is linked to sanitation as high health and coping costs associated with illnesses (waterborne diseases) caused by inadequate sanitation drain productivity and incomes, contributing to poverty.

Field studies have pointed to lower levels of latrine usage because of inadequate awareness of the importance of sanitation, water scarcity, and poor construction standards. Availability of adequate water is a factor that influences demand for sanitation e.g. hand washing after defecation and flushing excreta require sufficient quantity of water. According to WHO 3.3 million people die every year from diarrhoea diseases and at any time there are 1.5 million suffering from parasitic worm infections stemming from human excreta and solid wastes in the environment.

It is necessary to address solid and liquid waste management. Increased slippage in the form of latrines not being used is one of the problems to be addressed. To address this, there is a need for increased community involvement to sustain behaviour change to end open defecation which can be achieved through concerted information, education,

communication (IEC) efforts. Further, this needs to be supported by rigorous monitoring to flag and address slippage in early stages when it is relatively easier to reverse.

Conventional on-site wastewater disposal systems, such as pit latrines or septic tanks, carry the risk of groundwater contamination. Ecological Sanitation aims to promote the development, implementation and dissemination of socially and culturally acceptable, sustainable, hygienically safe and ecologically sound sanitation approaches. The overall objectives of those projects are (i) to introduce the ecological sanitation concept and to identify the appropriate wastewater handling approaches that satisfy technology, cost and institutional framework and enable maximizing the utilization of existing pipes and treatment facilities (ii) to recover the nutrients from urine and faeces for agricultural purposes and (iii) to contribute to the reduction of wastewater discharged to sewers through recycling of grey water. The alternative paradigm of ecological sanitation offers the potential of sustainable sanitation for developing countries.

Conduct of VDWSC: Mandate, Rules and Regulations

The Objective:

To create an institution which takes up the responsibility of managing the village level drinking water and sanitation issues including usage of sources, access to all, water distribution and management, as well as to facilitate the village level policy issues within the realm of the powers vested with Gram Sabha.

The Mandate:

The committee will have to perform two basic roles: (a) of a service provider and, (b) of a regulator. The mandate from both the perspectives can be as follows:

From Service Provider's Perspective

- To ensure supply of 40 LPCD (as per the national norm) to all the households equitably throughout the year, irrespective of caste, class, gender, and location.
- To design and implement water supply schemes as per the government guidelines along with the Zilla Parishad by seeking support through different public and private service providers, such as technical consultants, support organizations, contractors, GSDA etc.

From Regulator's Perspective

- To regulate the water usage in and around the revenue boundaries of the Gram Panchayat to ensure availability and equitable access to the safe drinking water, in consistent with the powers devolved to the Gram Sabha as well as in consistent with the other state and central acts (E.g. Maharashtra Ground Water (Regulation for Drinking Water Source) Act, 1993)
- To draft the guidelines for water usage (including private sources), for protecting the drinking water sources, getting the guidelines sanctioned from the Gram Sabha and to issue them.
- To take necessary actions against the violators on defiance of the guidelines issued.

Powers

- To call Gram Sabha for discussing critical issues regarding access, distribution, protection, conservation and operation, maintenance and management of the sources
- To take the decisions on behalf of the Gram Sabha for operating and managing the sources and water distribution
- To calculate the water tax on the basis of the operation and maintenance costs.

Structure of the Committee

A. Structure for Non-tribal Areas

1. The committee will consist of minimum 12 and maximum 24 members.
2. Of the total members 50% should be women.
3. There should be a representation to the village level youth groups, women's groups, and CBOs in the village.
4. As per requirement 2-3 hamlets can be clubbed and multi-hamlet drinking water and sanitation committee can be formed.
5. The 1/3rd members will be selected from GP members.
6. These committees will be permanent in nature and they will be reformulated as per GP Act (i.e. the term of this committee will be defined as per the term of the GP).
7. After the formation of new GP body, this committee must be formed within 45 days. There is no restriction on re-selecting the ex-committee members on the new committee.
8. The Gram Sevak who is the secretary of the GP and who is also responsible for the GP accounts will be part of this committee from the beginning itself.
9. In case the committee is to be dissolved, the special Gram Sabha has to be called and the resolution has to be passed whereby 2/3rd GS members vote for dissolution.
10. In case of death, resignation or dismissal of any member of the committee, the appointment of the member will be made in the Gram Sabha for the remaining term of the committee.

B. Structure for Tribal Area:

1. The committee will consist of minimum 12 and maximum 24 members.
2. The 1/3rd members will be selected from GP members.
3. Minimum of 75% members will be from tribal communities.
4. Of the total members 50% should be women.

5. Each hamlet in the village as well as the backward castes should have the representation in the committee.
6. There should be a representation to the village level youth groups, women's groups, and all sections of the village.

The Process of Formation

A separate meeting in each ward/hamlet as well as women Gram Sabha has to be conducted before conducting the main Gram Sabha. In these meetings the ward representatives should be selected and these representatives will be ratified in the Gram Sabha and they become the members of this committee. The Gram Sabha should select the president (any member) of the committee, while the committee selects the secretary and treasurer. The committee will be accountable to Gram Sabha as well as Gram Panchayat.

This committee may include women GP member/s, headmistress/female teacher of the primary school, Aanganwadi teacher, one representative from each hamlet, two representatives from Mahila Mandal, the principal of middle school, one representative each of SC/ST and of Youth group. The age of these members should be 18 years and above and except for SC/ST, other members should have passed at least 4th standard.

This committee looks after the drinking water supply and sanitation facilities in the village. Committee is responsible for planning, implementation, operation, maintenance, and management of village drinking water scheme. It is expected that the committee should collect 10% to 15% community contribution (as decided by the village or as per the norm) for drinking water scheme.

Functions of VDWSC

The basic approach adapted while developing this tool is that VDWSC should develop functions for its own conduct of business using the tools given in this kit. The various tools incorporated in this kit provide the generic framework which can be used by the VDWSC for developing its own functions.

In Maharashtra, as per the existing situation, villages can be distributed in three categories on the basis of system for drinking water.

- (a) A village which doesn't have a Public Water Supply System (PWSS) and is dependent on wells, hand-pumps or other surface sources.
- (b) Village having a Water Supply System but do not share the system with other villages, i.e. it is a single village scheme.
- (c) Villages having common scheme for a group of two to three villages.

Functions for VDWSCs are developed considering the above three possibilities. However, in all the three cases, the functions of the VDWSC, which derive from regulators perspective (refer page 29), will be same. However as per the nature of the water supply/access system in place, the functions deriving from service providers' (refer page 29) perspective will differ accordingly. For all the three categories, the broad set of functions is suggested in the following.

2B. TOOLS FOR DRINKING WATER AND SANITATION COMMITTEE

The Functions Matrix for Different Categories of Villages

Category A Villages not having PWSS	Category B Villages having PWSS as single village scheme	Category C Villages having PWSS as multi-Village scheme
Function A: Finding Sustainable solutions for the drinking water		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To study the current status of drinking water and sanitation situation in the village and discuss the problems and to suggestions on the solutions suggest the solutions to the same ▪ To identify various possible alternatives for drinking water and sanitation system/facility. ▪ To seek support from the District Level Authorities to implement water supply system. ▪ To search the alternative funding options for financing the capital costs of the water supply system if such options are possible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To study the current status of drinking water service ▪ Discuss the problems and seek suggestions on the solutions ▪ Review the current status of infrastructure and identify problems/faults ▪ To take decisions about the contracting-out the review of the PWSS for assessing repairing needs ▪ Seek support for the public institutions such as MJP and other for repairing support. ▪ To search for the Government and non-government funding sources for repairing the scheme, including the option of raising own revenues ▪ Innovative offers for pending bills collection, metering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To study the current status of drinking water service ▪ Discuss the problems and seek suggestions on the solutions ▪ Review the current infrastructure in own village (including the rising main-pipeline) and identify problems/faults ▪ Communicate the issues to the coordinating committee constituted by selecting representatives from all beneficiary villages ▪ Discuss the village level issues at the appropriate forums (Gram Panchayat, Gram Sabha, SAC) ▪ Follow-up of the actions to be taken Funds Search ▪ Options search for increasing the revenue ▪ Innovative offers for pending bills collection, metering
Function B: Implementing the Solution		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To seek support of the desired NGO, Private Service Provider, Public Institution to design and implement the option selected by the Gram Sabha/VDWSC ▪ To participate in the planning, budgeting, and constructing the new sources/water supply system ▪ To appoint the contractor and accountant and purchase the material required for the scheme ▪ To supervise the implementation work ▪ To manage the funds received from the government 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If funding is organized, to find a suitable agency for planning and implementing the repairing work (major/minor) ▪ To participate in the planning, budgeting exercise done by the agency and understand the work ▪ External support engineer for Gram Panchayat ▪ To monitor the work of the service provider, ensuring creation of employment for skilled and non-skilled labours in the village ▪ Conducting evaluations of the work ▪ Payments ▪ Socially just (e.g. wages), technical checks ▪ Audits (social, techno-financial) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To take initiatives for the joint efforts to repair the schemes (provided that funding is organized for the scheme as a whole) ▪ Joint Committee of GPs for participation in planning and budgeting for the repairs ▪ External Participation of expert engineer ▪ To monitor the work of the service provider with the help of an external support engineer. ▪ Conducting the joint (with contractor and SAC) evaluations of the work ▪ Payments and audits (social, technical, financial)

Category A Villages not having PWSS	Category B Villages having PWSS as single village scheme	Category C Villages having PWSS as multi-Village scheme
Function C: Operation and Management of the sources and water supply systems		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To seek support for technical designs and valuations of the work ▪ To allocate the functions within the committee (e.g., subcommittees for purchase, accounts, monitoring, and so on) ▪ To further decentralize the tasks by forming the beneficiary level sub-committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seek the operational and managerial guidelines from the technical consultant and/or contractor ▪ Setting up a system for operations and maintenance ▪ To further decentralize the tasks by forming the beneficiary level sub-committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting up and activating a multi-village institution for operation and maintenance. ▪ Allocation of the functions within institutions and setting up the systems ▪ To further decentralize the tasks by forming the beneficiary level sub-committees
Common Functions: Operations and Management		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To ensure timely collection of peoples contribution and water tax. ▪ To seek technical support in repairs and maintenance, as per the necessity. ▪ To select, train and appoint a person from the village to do the every day management of the village water supply system. ▪ To coordinate and implement the work related to repairs and maintenance. 		
Function D: Protection, Conservation, and Regulation of Usage of Water		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To develop the database of all private and public water sources (including the dry sources) including wells, bore-wells, small dams, K.T. weirs, bandharas and so on. ▪ To map seasonal water availability of all the sources for the sake of planning water availability during summer ▪ To estimate the daily water outflow and monitor the flows of all the sources including private bore wells for the agricultural purposes ▪ To study the ground water flows and identify the interdependent GW sources (i.e. outflow of one source affects another) and mark them, especially in relation to the drinking water sources. To monitor such sources closely. ▪ To control the exploitation of such sources which affect the drinking water sources directly or indirectly because of aquifer or GW flows. ▪ To inform district collector with the support of Gram Sabha resolution through Gram Panchayat, when all the public sources go dry, to seize private sources for drinking purposes as per the Ground Water Act 1993. ▪ To initiate the demarcation of the drinking water sources and initiate activities for conservation, protection and management of the drinking water sources ▪ To undertake the activities of strengthening of the village drinking water sources and to seek technical support from certified agencies from the government / private sector to ensure the long term sustainability. ▪ To link the water sources conservation activities to the watershed activities or strengthen the water sources by drainage line treatment/area treatment. 		

Index of the Tools

Function	Tool
1. Background Matrix	1. Getting Started - Understanding the village level issues in Drinking Water and Sanitation (Exercise for general orientation)
2. Preparatory Work (2i) Assessing the village water situation (2ii) Collecting Information of schemes (2iii) Follow-up for the funding	2. Summary sheet for presenting the water scarcity scenario 3. RTI application form 4. Schemes comparison chart 5. Application for funding/sanctioning the schemes
3. Finding a Sustainable Solution (3i) Selection of Support Agencies (3ii) Projection of Water Demand (3iii) Analysing the existing PWSS demand (3iv) Selection of appropriate option for upgrading existing system/new PWSS	6. Process guidelines for selection of technical service Providers 7. Analysis chart - A participatory exercise of population projection and water 8. Summary sheet of source ranking 9. A checklist and report Sheet for PWSS analysis 10. Focus group discussion protocol
4. Implementing The Solution (4i) Selection of a contractor (4ii) Monitoring the contractor (4iii) Performing Financial, Technical and Social audit	11. Process guidelines sheet 12. Monitoring checklist 13. A task list for all the audits and protocol for participation
5. Operation, Maintenance and Regulation (5i) Getting prepared	14. Guidelines for joint exercise for developing the O&M Calendar 15. Source outflow monitoring checklist
6. Assessing Status of Sanitation	16. Summary Sheet for assessing current sanitation status

Explanation of Terms Used

Rising main pipeline	=	The main pipelines which carries water from the water source to the ESR
Elevated Storage Reservoir	=	The ESR is the water tank built high on the RCC poles, so that the water can be taken to stand posts and private taps though pipe-network by gravitational force
Ground Storage Reservoir	=	The GSR is the water tank built at high elevation area (e.g. a hill) but in the ground so that the water can be taken to stand posts and private taps though pipe-network by gravitational force

Function 1: Background Matrix

Tool 1: Getting Started - Understanding the issues in Drinking Water & Sanitation (Exercise for General Orientation)

Possible Problem	Reasons (Basic, Broad)	Action
1. Lack of awareness about GPs/sub-committees role w.r.t. drinking water & sanitation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inactive committee 2. Apathy of GP/GS/committee 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To increase awareness 2. To activate the committee
2a. Non-functionality of drinking water supply mechanism (O & M)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technically unsound, faulty design 2. No quality work in various tasks completed (for e.g. laying the pipes in the required depth i.e. underground, no standards followed in installing the pipes, no proper design/specifications of electric engine w.r.t. discharge and height requirement, inferior quality work (construction, water storage tank, stand post, chambers, well) 3. Inadequate water availability due to improper selection of water source/location 4. Non-collection of water tax leads to non-payment of electric bill, major repairs not done in case of break down 5. Attention not paid to water sources present in hamlets 6. Lack of ownership due to non-participation (generally 10% contribution is managed & collected from the contractor) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Involvement of people right from the planning stage to implementation, supervision & monitoring 2. Activating the committee 3. Conducting village level survey, PRA so that alternate strategy can be devised 4. Participation of villagers in the planning so that local know-how is used 5. No compromise to be made in people's contribution (option to be given for Shramdaan, making use of micro-finance facility) 6. GP should supervise/check the condition of taps and repair/replace the faulty devices
2b. Wastage of water/water leakage (taps, pipelines)		
3a. Open defecation 3b. Adjacent area (water source) is unclean {washing animals, clothes, utensils, bathing, defecating, latrines (public/private)}	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of awareness & apathy amongst village communities 2. Negligence/no initiative from GP 3. No latrines (private and Public) at all or due to non-availability of water at the household level (private taps)/due to inadequate 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct awareness campaign 2. Implementation of cleanliness drive in the village 3. Construction of separate washing place (clothes & utensils), animal trough (for the drinking purpose)

Possible Problem	Reasons (Basic, Broad)	Action
3c. Lack of mechanism for garbage disposal or Unsafe disposal of wastes at household level (leaking pits, over-flowing tanks, broken sewers, etc.); unsafe disposal (into land and water bodies).	<p>water people are reluctant to use latrines built in the households</p> <p>4. Constraints in bringing the behavioural change</p>	<p>4. Accessing GP level schemes</p> <p>5. Campaign for free from open defecation and for bringing change in associated behaviours e.g. toilet usage, hand-washing</p> <p>6. Incentives for constructing latrines at the household level</p> <p>7. Convince for construction of soak pit/ promotion of kitchen garden</p> <p>8. Planning, implementation & maintenance of proper drainage system (evolving a system for maintenance of toilets)</p> <p>9. Keeping the public places clean (sewage disposal) and establishing systems for safe management and disposal/re-use of waste</p> <p>10. Learning environmentally safe sanitation measures. For this approaching ZP and get the list of experts</p> <p>11. Organising exposure visit to water scarce village where environmental sanitation is successful</p> <p>12. Explore funding opportunities for financing environmental sanitation project</p>
<p>4a. No measures taken for water purification (TCL powder, OT test)</p> <p>4b. Non-collection of water tax</p> <p>4c. Public well is not cleaned and covered</p> <p>4d. Hamlets do not get potable water and very few sources are available to them</p> <p>4e. No water quality testing</p>	<p>1. Negligence of GP members</p> <p>2. Apathy of the village community</p> <p>3. Unavailability of TCL powder at Panchayat Samiti (PS) and lack of funds for independent purchase of it</p> <p>4. As water is not available for all, especially for hamlets, people are unwilling to pay water tax, which is levied even if they are not using the facility</p> <p>5. Lack of awareness or negligence on part of GP/VDWSC about quality related issues</p>	<p>1. Monitor the work of water distributor</p> <p>2. Follow-up with PS for timely/free supply of TCL powder</p> <p>3. Timely collection of water tax</p> <p>4. Ensure equitable supply of water to all</p> <p>5. At least twice in a year collect samples from all the drinking water sources for testing (chemical and biological parameters) and transfer at the proposed sub-division water testing laboratory (government)</p> <p>6. Based on the quality testing report take the appropriate action</p>

Possible Problem	Reasons (Basic, Broad)	Action
5a. Considerable time spent in fetching water 5b. Loss of working hours 5c. Due to hardship involved health problems such as back-ache etc. 5d. Tankers have to be called from February onwards	1. Inadequate water sources & inadequate availability of water against the total requirement 2. No priority given to drinking water problem & no gender sensitivity 3. Villagers become dependable on government for provision of tankers 4. No efforts taken to conserve & sustain the water sources available 5. No control/regulation on usage of groundwater 6. Priority given to water for irrigation	1. Measures to be undertaken for conservation & strengthening of water resources 2. Accessing drinking water scheme whereby water source could be at a closer distance thus saving the time spent on fetching water

Function 2: Preparatory Work

Function 2i: Assessing the Village Water Situation

Tool 2: A Desk Exercise - Summary for presenting the water scarcity scenario

Objective: To prepare the background for applying for the drinking water scheme or funding from the Zilla Parishad

Report Pro-Forma

SN	Month	Name of the Habitation	No of HHs/Population	Intensity of water scarcity and remarks
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

Function 2ii: Collecting Information on Government Schemes

Tool 3: RTI application form

Objective: Collecting the information of various schemes for upgrading the existing water supply system and/or schemes for creating new water supply system

RTI APPLICATION FORMAT

To: The Public Information Officer,

(Name and address of the concerned department of ZP)

1. **FULL NAME OF APPLICANT:** Chairperson of the SAC or VDWSC

2. **ADDRESS:** Address of the Chairperson

3. PARTICULARS OF INFORMATION REQUIRED

- (i) Subject matter of information: Drinking water Schemes
- (ii) Period to which the information relates: The current Year
- (iii) Description of information required: (a) The schemes available for Gram Panchayats for applying for the new drinking water scheme or upgrading the existing drinking water scheme, (b) The qualification / eligibility criteria for getting the scheme sanctioned
- (iv) Whether information is required by post or in person: By Post
- (v) In case by post (Ordinary, Registered or Speed): Registered Post

4. **WHETHER THE APPLICANT IS BELOW POVERTY LINE:** No/YES

(If yes, attach a photocopy of the proof thereof)

Place & Date:

Signature of the applicant

Tool 4: Schemes Comparison Chart

Objective:

To compare the schemes information to select the suitable scheme from the information/citizen's charters sent by the ZP as an answer to the RTI

Sr. No.	Name of the scheme	Extent of funding available	Eligibility criteria	Other mandatory requirements	Additional indicators to get selected if more number of GPs apply
1	Vardhit Veg Yojana	Rs.			
2	Tribal Sub Plan	Rs.	10% Capital contribution	TSP compulsory	
3	Swajaldhara	As per the necessity	10% Capital contribution, 100% O&M, good revenue conditions, sanitation 100%	SO, TSP, Compulsory, participatory approach, demand driven	
4	Jalswarajya	As per the necessity			
5	ZP's own scheme	Rs.			
6	NRWSP		20 HHs or 100 persons (whichever is more) not having any safe water source	SC, ST habitations with less than 100 persons	
7	Other	Rs.			

Name of the scheme applied for:

Function 2iii: Follow-up for the funding

Tool 5: Application for funding/sanctioning the scheme

Objective: To apply for the suitable scheme

APPLICATION FORMAT

Date:

To,
Chairperson,
Zillah Parishad
District: -----

SUB: Getting the sanction for scheme called “-----”

Respected Sir/Madam

We, the body of the Gram Panchayat, (name of the Village) along with the body of the VDWSC would like to register our demand for the scheme ----- . We have done the necessary groundwork of village assessment of the current situation of the drinking water (summary sheet attached). We declare that the information submitted hereinafter is correct to the best of our knowledge and the decision taken to demand for the scheme is supported by the Gram Sabha resolution (date -----, resolution attached). We assure you that we will abide to the rules and conditionalities of the scheme provided that the scheme gets a sanction.

Kindly consider our request and do the needful.

Yours' faithfully

Function 3: Finding a Sustainable Solution

Function 3i: Selection of Support Agencies

Tool 6: Process guidelines for selection of technical service providers

Status of the Committee: The scheme has been sanctioned and money has been released to the account of the VDWSC.

Objective: To select the Technical Support Agency for helping the designing of the scheme.

- **Step one:** Collecting the information of Panchayat/District level (govt.) registered TSPs who accept drinking water related contracts of designing the schemes.....
OR
Choose a few names from the list provided by the Zilla Parishad (if the scheme covers it)
Output: A list of agencies, contact details as well as the address of the sample work done by them.
- **Step two:** Engage in the dialogue, visit the schemes designed by the TSPs earlier, and ask for the experience of the VWSC/GPs in the respective villages. Ask for the Fees and assess the feasibility.
- **Step three:** Comparing the estimates given by the TSPs, Involve the TSP in a Gram Sabha meeting, get the Gram Sabha opinion. Understand the views of the TSPs in enabling the villages in technical understanding as well as ability and willingness to support the VWSC in technical quality monitoring.
Output: A comparison chart displaying a ranking of the TSPs (at least three)
- **Step four:** Make the contract with the best offer and make the agreement using the pro-forma provided by the Zilla Parishad.

Function 3ii: Projection of Water Demand

Tool 7: Analysis Chart - A participatory exercise of population projection and water demand

Activity: Collecting the data and calculation matrix

Data Requirements:

- Population data of 1981, 1991 and 2001 census
- No. of Households
- Other Establishments in the village (School, Gram Panchayat office, cooperative/private poultry farms, farm-houses, horticulture farms etc.)
- Other users if any

Participants: Village drinking water and sanitation committee members, VDC and SAC representatives. GP members, interested citizens (optional)

The Exercise (An example)

Census 1981	Census 1991	Growth in percentage	Census 2001	Growth in percentage	Average population growth	Population projection 20 yrs
1354	1894	40%	2461	30%	35%	4183

1354	1894	40%	2461	30%	35%	4183
------	------	-----	------	-----	-----	------

Projected population	LPCD norm	Total projected daily demand
4183	40	167320 LPCD

4183	40	167320 LPCD
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Current Availability of Water:

Current Gaps:

Future Total Need:

Function 3iii: Analysing the Existing Public Water Supply System (PWSS)

Tool 8: Summary Sheet of Source Ranking (for category 'A' villages)

Activity: Field visit for mapping and assessing all the drinking water sources in the village

Process: A team of selected VWSC and SAC/GP members (optional) would survey the drinking water sources in the village and interact with the people on following questions

- The physical situation of the source (good construction, bad construction)
- If the source is well/pond its dimensions (perimeter, depth, water storage)
- User's observations regarding recharge and seasonal availability
- Number of Households dependent on the source
- Physical accessibility of the source (elevation, distance, procure-ability, etc)
- Principle use (exclusively drinking, exclusively non-drinking other domestic, mixed use)
- Type: Ground/Surface
- Water quality (water testing kit)

Summary sheet: Ranking of the sources (an example, drinking water point of view)

Name of the Source	No. of HHs Dependent	Physical Situation	Physical Accessibility	The month when dries up	Principal Use
Rank I: Well	100	bad	easy, 100 meters	April	Drinking
Rank II: Hand pump	50	good	easy .5 km	Never	mixed
Rank III: Pond	All-275	worst	easy, 1.5 km	January	non-drinking, cattle

Action Points

In case of emergency

The list of sources to be utilized

Rama Patils private open well for 'Datta Aali' residents (25 HHs)
Patrya Warghude's borewell for the "Motha Pada" residents (40 HHs)
(Bore-well's electricity bill will be paid either by Gram Panchayat/by collecting user's contribution)

Function 3iii:

Tool 9: A Checklist and Report Sheet for Analyzing the Village/Multi-village PWSS (for category 'B' and 'C' villages)

Objective: To assess the present condition of the water supply system including its main components and also techno-economic efficiency and equitable access

Activity:

- (a) Inspection of the functioning of the technical aspects of the PWSS
- (b) Inspection and surveying the water access to the HHs in the village
- (c) Inspection of the financial status of scheme

Tool subtype 1: A checklist (for each village in case of a multi-village scheme)

Subject: Inspection of the functioning the technical aspects of PWSS

✓ The condition of the source	(Outflow measurements, water levels if it is an open well, Physical situation in case of open and jack-well/s)
✓ The Pump-House and motor	(Its condition, servicing schedule, electricity connections)
✓ The condition of the rising main	(Laying, gravity status, leakages, rusting etc)
✓ The functioning of the filter	(Water testing, filtration, water quality- if filter installed)
✓ The condition of the ESR	(The condition, cleaning schedule)
✓ The pressure valve	(Lock, keys management, the valve operator's regularity and sincerity, leakage from the valve)
✓ The network	(Leakages, joints, stand-posts and private water taps, meters (if any), No. of illegal connections)

Summary Table and Action Points			
Sr.No.	Observations	Action Points	Financial Requirements
1.	Leakages at rising main	Repairing	_____
2.	ESR not cleaned	Immediate cleaning	_____
3.	Number of illegal connection high	Action on illegal connection (fine), Repairing the damage (cost recovery from people/GP)	Legalize the connection by giving suitable offers (E.g. Nirbhay Yojana - in which illegal connection holder pays a certain amount, penalty is waived off and legalizes the connection)
4.	3 stand posts not working, due to illegal diversion	—”—	_____
5.	_____ No. of HHs have no access to drinking water due to fault in the technical design, for e.g. location of the HHs at higher elevation	Extension of the pipeline at the appropriate level/distance	By accessing either GP, ZP or MLA funds
6.	Despite providing tap connections to the individuals HHs, some HHs do not fix taps so during the water timings water keeps flowing (as there is no tap one can not put it off)	It should be mandatory for each HH to fix tap so that wastage of water is avoided	Each HH should bare the cost of fixing the tap
7.			
8.			
	Total Costs		

Tool subtype 9.1: An Exercise tool (for each village in case of a multi village scheme)

Subject: Inspection and surveying the water access to the HHs in the village

The total No. of Households in the village: caste wise break ups

Caste A	Caste B	Tribe A	Tribe B
—	—	—	—

The total number of the HHs holding a private connections

Caste A	Caste B	Tribe A	Tribe B
—	—	—	—

What are the access issues for stand-posts as well as the private connections?

- ✓ Illegal connections have caused leakages, as well as perverted the pressures causing the low water to HHs located on high elevation areas.
- ✓ Purposeful leakages to the pipelines which connects water to tribal hamlets and Dalit habitations
- ✓ People using motor-pumps directly to the taps/stand-posts disturbed the pressure setting causing imbalance in water delivery
- ✓ Other

Tool subtype 9.2: An exercise tool (for each village in case of a multi village scheme)

Subject: Inspection of the financial status of scheme

Issues	Pending amount	Consequences if not paid	Immediate actions
The electricity bill	20,000.00	Power-cut	Part payments? Negotiations? Instalments?
The raw water charges to the irrigation department			
The amount for pending bills			
Repairing bills			

Action points on long term or recurring issues

- Stringent measure for HHs who are not paying the water tax? Involve Gram Sabha.
- Serious rethink on the alternative sources which are being used by the HHs who did not pay the bills but do use the water (involve GP, SAC, Women’s Development Committee).
- Minimum system maintenance fees to be charged to each HH for rainy season when PWSS is not used as rain water and alternative sources are accessible by each HH in the village.
- Provide drinking water through individual water meter so that in case of default (water charges not paid) by the individual household, water connection would be discontinued.
- Any Other.

Function 3iv: Selection of Appropriate Option for Upgrading Existing System or New PWSS (Category ‘A’ Villages)

Tool 10: A Focused Group Discussion Protocol

Objective: Taking Decision on the Basis of Village Drinking Water Assessment

Participant Groups

Participants (round one): VDWSC, GP, SAC, and WDC members

Participants (round two): Women’s Gram Sabha

Participants (round three): Gram Sabha

Guiding Questions:

Issues to be Discussed	Discussion Points	Decision Points
Upgrading the source	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Weak Sources ➤ Sources that can be upgraded (Wells: deepening, recharge structures) (Hand-pumps: Hydro-fracturing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Setting the priority habitation ✓ The department/ NGO to be contacted
The kind of water supply system?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The merits and demerits of PWSS (probes: safe drinking water, reduction in drudgery, capacity to pay water charges, audits, maintenance costs, maintenance bills) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ PWSS? Or current system?
Qualifying for the criteria for government schemes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Revenues, capital contribution (10-15%) ➤ Seeking employment opportunities for capital contribution (e.g. MREGS) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Consensus over the Capital Contribution ✓ Consensus over the modes of payment
Other local issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ ----- ➤ ----- 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ -----

Function 4: Implementing the Solution

Function 4i: Selection of a Contractor

Tool 11: Process Guidelines Sheet

Status of the Committee: The scheme has been sanctioned and money has been released to the account of the VDWSC.

Objective: To select the contractor for assigning the construction work of the scheme (The construction work can be of two types, the repairing or a new well/hand pump or an entire system of PWSS. Such types of powers are vested to committees only under the Jalswarajya project, in Maharashtra and similar projects in other states. The government functionaries have created detailed tools on these aspects which are much more comprehensive than this tool. However, in such projects, which does not offer such comprehensive support these tools will be useful)

Activity: Selection of contractor

➤ **Step one:** Collecting the information of Panchayat/District level (govt.) registered civil contractor who accept drinking water related contracts

OR

Choose a few names from the list provided by the Zillah Parishad (if the scheme covers it)

Output: A list of contractors, contact details as well as the address of the sample work done by them.

➤ **Step two:** (option a: If work is small) Demand the quotations for the work (by sending the letter and design provided by the Technical Service Provider). (Option b: If the work is sizable) Introduce a tendering process for the work

Output: Quotations or tender-bids (letters if pre-bids) from at least three

- **Step three:** Comparing the estimates given by the contractor with the help of the Technical Service Provider (bidding documents or quotations)
Output: A comparison chart
- **Step four:** Assigning the contract to the lowest offer quoted (in the tender or quotations) and make the agreement using the pro-forma provided by the Zilla Parishad.

Function 4ii: Monitoring Progress of the Work

Tool 12: A Monitoring Checklist

Objective: To monitor the work of the contractor

Activity: Monitoring visits at the workplace, site observations and discussions

Checklists of Tasks {Monitoring visit (after every two days)}

- ✓ Checking the material quantity and quality (as per the norms mentioned in the estimated), (Cements, sand, pipes, motor-pump, bricks, taps, steel for RCC and other sundry items)
- ✓ Muster Checking and Muster reading of the workers
 - If the workers employed are from village, then muster names,
 - Man-days worked and timings should be read in front of the Gram Sabha or Village level meeting
- ✓ Taking the measurements
 - Measurements of the work done,
 - Crosschecking the measurements with estimated measurements,
 - Procurement of the raw material, its quality and quantity, bills
- ✓ Listening to workers and Contractor's queries
 - Contractors: Availability of water for construction
Availability of electric connection
Other...
 - Labour: Working hours
Timely payments
Labour employed matching the needs exactly (not more/not less)
- ✓ Monitoring the expenses status (material rates, labour rates, labour availability, to ensure that the estimated costs does not increase)

Function 4iii: Performing Technical, Social and Financial Audits

Tool 13: A Task List for All the Audits and Protocol for Participation

Objective: To communicate relevant agencies to conduct the technical, social and financial audit (of the money spent by the VDWSC) and getting it done.

Sr. No.	Activity one: Technical Audit	Activity Two: Social Audit	Activity Three: Financial Audit
1.	Send the formal request letter to the agency or the TSP (if appointed) to conduct the technical audit	Contact the SAC to perform the Social Audit	Contact the Auditor selected for your village by ZP
2.	Plan the date and time of the technical audit and convey the details to the stakeholders (including the SAC, WDC, GP, and Gram Sabha)	Plan for the joint date for social audit	Plan the date and timings
3.	Participate in the joint field visits with the TSP and cross check the measurement, try to understand the way of checking and assessing the quality of the work	Participate in the process, understand the tools of SAC, understand caste/gender/tribal issues and answer the queries	Make available all the details and documents, try to understand the method of checking and queries, understand the anomalies
4.	Ask to TSP for a simple sharable report of the audit which can be communicated to the Gram Sabha	Prepare a joint report with the SAC which have two components (a) sharable report and (b) action points	Ask auditor to prepare two reports viz a checklist for future correction for VDWSC and a report sharable in the Gram Sabha
5.	Hold Gram Sabha, share the report and conclude	Hold Gram Sabha, share the report and conclude	Hold Gram Sabha, share the report and conclude

Function 5: Operation, Maintenance and Regulation

Function 5i: Getting Prepared

Tool 14: Guidelines for joint exercise for developing the O&M calendar

Objective: Getting prepared for the operation and maintenance

Activity One: Joint visits to learn the operation and maintenance tasks

Participants: VDWSC members, water supply operator (to be appointed) and technical service provider

Sr. No.	Exercise	Criticality	Input to Maintenance Calendar, Identify Repairing Needs	Frequency of the Calendar Task
1.	Understanding the function of the source	The only source which provides water	Need protection, repairs and cleaning	Check the necessity of repairs at least once in a month
2.	Understanding the function of the motor and pump house	Pumps the water in to ESR	Protection is needed, frequent threats of theft for wire, other parts, servicing/rewinding needs	Check the system neatly once in a month
3.	Understanding the function of the Valve	Regulation of water flow and pressure Helpful in ensuring water in all areas	Is very important for daily water supply, needs to be locked	Weekly checking, daily operations
4.	Understanding rising main	The main pipelines that takes water to the ESR/GSR	The only single channel which carries water to the main storage tank (ESR), leakage will result in loss of water and less water to all	Weekly checking for leakages, instant repairing system should be in place
5.	Function of ESR/GSR	Storage, lets the water flow to taps by gravitational force, acts as a balancing storage between the source to tap	Its good condition is critical, overflows to be avoided	Once after every three months
6.	Understanding network points	The distribution points which let the water flow to different directions	Need to be protected, generally tampered by anti-social elements in order to cut the water supply (e.g. to the Dalit Vasti) or to appropriate more water	Weekly checking is a must
7.	Stand posts and private connections, meters	Most important to calculate the water flow, as well as tampering	People tamper the meters as well as take illegal connections	Weekly checking is a necessity

Tool 15: Source outflow monitoring checklist

Objective: (a) Monitor the sources and its capacity to deliver the water
(b) Usage for the purpose of better planning of the water sources and its regulation for avoiding exploitation

Tool: (Objective a): Monitoring checklist and summary sheet
(Objective b): Actions on cognizable conducts

Activity: Monitoring of the technical data
(a) Weekly levels of the wells (water levels) (especially in summer)
(b) Observation of the Hand-pumps (minutes needed to fill a 20 litre bucket)
(c) Monthly Observations of tank/s

Data Summary Sheet

Sources	Water levels (wells/meters)/minutes taken (Hand-pump)/min/hr (stand-post)									
	April 2009					May 2009				
	week 1	week 2	week 3	week 4	week 5	week 1	week 2	week 3	week 4	week 5
Well 1										
Well 2										
Hand pump 1										
Hand pump 2										

Output: To identify the weak sources, sharing the data with GSDA/NGO and rethinking about the recharge structures, afforestation programmes/ JFM/regulation of other GW sources which affect these sources... etc.

Function 6: Assessing Status of Sanitation

Tool 16: Summary Sheet for Assessing Current Sanitation Status

In this summary sheet the current status of toilets/latrines and its usage has been mainly dealt with so that the action plan can be accordingly planned out.

Activity: For this purpose data is to be collected by visiting each household in the village. The information about presence or absence of private toilets/latrines in the house, its usage status is to be collected and information about kitchen garden is to be collected. Based on this data following summary sheet is to be prepared.

Summary Sheet 1: Status of Toilets/Latrines

HH Level & School Level Data	With Toilets	Without Toilets	HHs with Toilets & its Usage		If not Using Reasons* of it
			Yes	No	
Total Number of HHs in the village					
APL SC HHs					
BPL SC HHs					
APL ST HHs					
BPL ST HHs					
APL Open category HHs					
BPL Open category HHs					
Any other category HHs (pl. specify)					
Govt. school					
Aanganwadi					
Balwadis					
Non-govt aided schools (pvt. Schools)					

Village Level Data	With Toilets		Bastis/Hamlets/Main village that are using toilets	Bastis/Hamlets/Main village with toilets if not using, reasons* of it	
	Yes	No			
Main village (settlement) having public toilets					
No. of Bastis & hamlets having public toilets					
* Reasons for not using toilets					
It is not clean & healthy	1	It smells badly	2	It is inconvenient	3
Not accustomed to using it	4	Not functioning properly	5	No water in the toilet	6
Use it as a store room	7	It is too small	8	Religious & cultural reasons	9
Other, specify	10				
Summary Sheet 2: Status of Sanitation					
Sanitation Facilities					
1. Disposal of wastes flow generated in the households	Soak pit 1; Kitchen Garden 2; Cess pool 3; Drainage 4; Fields 5; Road 6;				
1a. From toilets	Surface water body 7; Other (specify) 8				
1b. Kitchen refuse					
1c. Bathing water					
1d. Waste water after washing clothes, utensils					
2. Presence of waste (solid & liquid) disposal/management mechanism	Yes	1	No	2	
3. Presence/Absence of water-borne/water-based diseases (specify during the last 3 years)	2008 - No	If Yes, specify			
	2007 - No	If Yes, specify			
	2006 - No	If Yes, specify			
4. Provisions made for sanitary protection of all drinking water sources & catchments					

3: Social Audit Committee

3A. INTRODUCTION

The Social Audit Committee (SAC) is one of the key sub-committees of the Gram Sabha. The SAC has a pivotal role to play in translating the issues of local governance at the village level as it emphasizes transparency and accountability in each aspect of the development programme/project/scheme/activity. Under the purview of this committee come all the development schemes/projects that are implemented by the Gram Panchayat.

Amongst the various sub-committees of the Gram Sabha, this committee is the most comprehensive as it covers all the programmes/schemes. However, there are certain schemes like Jalswarajya in which it is mandatory to form a SAC. Social audit is expected to be conducted for various schemes like Sarva Siksha Abhyan, Integrated Child Development Scheme, Indira Aawas Yojana, Sampoorna Gram Rojgar Yojana, watershed development programme and so on.

As the committee's name suggests, it obviously deals with the inspection of accounts, i.e. money received and expenditure incurred, but it does not limit itself to financial audit as it covers broader issues pertaining to social, economic, technical and process-related aspects of that particular programme/scheme.

What is a Social Audit?

Social auditing is the term used to describe techniques for understanding, measuring, verifying, reporting and improving the social performance of an organisation or activity/programme. A social audit focuses on the

neglected issue of social impacts. It aims to listen to the voices of both the strong and weak stakeholders and in itself is an attempt to redistribute power - giving stakeholders a voice in decisions that previously had been the sole role of managers, officials or representatives. Social auditing can impact upon governance, encouraging new relationships between the powerful and the less powerful. It is built upon valuing the voice of stakeholders, including the marginalised groups whose voices are rarely heard (Lingayah and Gillivray, 1999).

A social audit is a process in which the people work with the government to monitor and evaluate the planning and implementation of a scheme or programme, or indeed of a policy or law. The social audit process is critically dependent on the demystification and wide dissemination of all relevant information. It is conducted over the life span of a scheme or programme, and not just in one go or at one stage. It audits the process, the outputs and the outcome. One simple form of social audit is a public assembly where all the details of a project are scrutinised. Social audit can be described as checking and verifying a programme/scheme implementation and its results by the community with the active involvement of the primary stakeholders.

It covers the quantity and quality of works in relation to the expenses incurred/disbursement made, number of works/materials used and also selection of works and location of works. Social audits are conducted jointly by the government and the people, especially by those people who are affected by, or are intended beneficiaries of, the activity being audited. The aim is effective implementation and control of irregularities (Social Audit and The NREGA: A User's Manual - Centre for Equity Studies). Social Audit, by definition, is carried out by the community of stakeholders. This will include beneficiaries/participants,

implementing agency, Gram Panchayat representatives etc. The entire Gram Sabha is expected to participate in a social audit.

Social Audit: Evolution, Types and Principles

Over the centuries, audit functions have grown and evolved starting from the most ancient kind which may be called vigilance audits which were concerned mainly with the detection of frauds. Then came - in more or less a chronological order - regularity audit, propriety audit, value for money audit, performance audit and lastly, social audit. The last three may be regarded as audit functions representing economy, efficiency and effectiveness audit. As far as value for money audit and performance audit are concerned, they examine areas internal to government agencies. In social audit, it goes beyond these areas and examines the impact of specific governmental activities on certain sections of the society which are in contact with the government agencies (M Parthasarathy).

There are at least three types of audits: 1) Government Audit 2) People's Audit and 3) Social Audit. Government audit is usually done by professional auditors without the significant involvement of affected people. It assesses primarily procedural integrity and outputs and has little ability to get public perceptions or verify outcome. People's audits are conducted by the people, sometimes with assistance from movements and NGOs, with a standing invitation to the government. It can get public perception, local knowledge and public verification. It can also assess outcomes and priorities. However, it has low acceptance of findings among governments.

Social audit is conducted jointly by the government and the people, especially by those people who are affected by, or are the intended beneficiaries of, the scheme being audited. It can bring on board the perceptions and knowledge of the people, can look at outcomes and not just outputs, and can involve the people in the task of verification. Another important characteristic of it is that it finds greater acceptability by the government.

The basic principles of a social audit include:

- **Transparency:** Complete transparency in the process of administration and decision-making, with an obligation on the government to suo moto (voluntary disclosure of information) give the people full access to all relevant information.
- **Participation:** A right-based entitlement for all the affected persons (and not just their representatives) to participate in the process of decision-making and validation.
- **Accountability:** Immediate and public answerability of elected representatives and government functionaries to all the concerned and affected people on relevant actions or inactions. (Social Audit And The NREGA: A User's Manual - Centre for Equity Studies. With support from the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sanghatan).

A Tool with Multiple Roles

Social audit can act as an effective tool having multiple roles. It has an important role to play as a pedagogic tool for community mobilisation and community learning as it generates awareness amongst the various stakeholders. It also contributes for increasing the efficiency in governance by increasing transparency and making the institutions accountable to citizens and by ensuring public participation in decision-making.

In order to increase efficiency in governance, monitoring the progress of the project/scheme with a view to identifying shortfalls, deviations and problems, and also the reasons becomes crucial as this enables the project management team to take appropriate corrective action so as to ensure that the project implementation is proceeding according to the action plan.

Monitoring should review both, the physical and financial aspects of the projects in terms of quality as well as quantity against the plans. It has a critical role by ensuring social 'justice space' for voicing the concerns

of the marginalised groups and by providing a platform to influence decision-making for reaping equal benefits.

Being Different

There are many ways in which a social audit committee is different from other committees. These include:

- Functions of the social audit committee either can be cross-sectoral or sector-specific.
- The core competencies of the social audit committee members are different than other committee members such as VEC or VWSC.
- Social auditing techniques can be generic.

Approach

We are adopting here a cross-sectoral approach for SAC. This will involve application of generic monitoring, vigilance and auditing techniques to the sector-specific schemes.

Functions

By default, the active role of the social audit committee is episodic. The social audit committee is expected to become active when a scheme gets sanctioned and is being implemented in a village. Generally, before a scheme starts the committee is formed and trained in the beneficiary villages. When the implementation of the scheme is completed, the SAC becomes defunct automatically as the process of implementation comes to an end and the purpose of the SAC is over.

It is a well known fact that villages or hamlets in rural areas never get schemes serially, one after another. Sanctioning of a scheme is always a difficult and long-awaited process for the villagers and is affected by the entire range of factors related to village and/or taluka level political

economy. Thus, the sanctioning and nature of the schemes is an episodic activity in the village rather than a continuous process. In consequence, the active role of a social audit committee is ensured only when any of the schemes is sanctioned and being implemented.

However, the SAC has a vital role to play to conduct social audit during the long-term projects such as state and central government-sponsored watershed projects (Hariyali, Adarsh Gaon Scheme etc), bilateral/foreign-funded watershed projects etc. Considering the above constraints, the functions of the social audit committee should be evolved in such a way that it can keep functioning in both phases i.e. during the implementation process as well as during the period when implementation of any scheme is not being undertaken.

(a) Long-Term Functions (When a Scheme Is Not Being Implemented)

- Understanding core development activities at the village level.
 - Watershed-based and natural resource management-based development.
 - Its potential, contributions and limitations.
 - Key schemes (integrated as well as others).

(b) Functions Specific to Social Audit (When Scheme Is Sanctioned)

- Understanding the scheme.
 - Getting the information.
 - Understanding the stakeholders and their roles.
 - Key responsible roles and institutional mechanism.
 - Rules and norms.
 - Developing a checklist with the help of implementing or support agencies.

Member Eligibility

- One third GP members, who are not members of any sub-committee, should be selected as members of the SAC. A preference should be

given to those members who are educated and have some knowledge of accounting.

- One or two women representatives from SMSs/SHGs, who are not members of the sub-committees, should be given preference.
- A school/high school teacher or staff member who is a citizen of the village and has knowledge of accounts and auditing may be given preference.
- A retired officer/servant who has knowledge of accounting and auditing may be given preference.
- Preference should be given to representative(s) of a youth group, preferably a commerce graduate.
- The SAC members should select a president and the secretary from its members. A commerce graduate or a person having an experience of accounting and auditing should be given preference for the post of secretary of the SAC.

Rules and Regulations

Objectives:

- Enhance transparency in financial matters related to various village development programmes.
- Ensure better management of the project funds as well as better management of all the required records/documents.
- Enhance the quality of the project or the development work undertaken (in terms of both physical as well as involvement of people/level of participation).
- Ensure that there is discriminative justice to the marginalised and disadvantaged sections such as scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, minorities, poorest of poor, single women, elderly persons without support, and the disabled.

Structure:

It is mandatory to establish a social audit committee under the government's drinking water projects such as Swajaldhara, Aaple Pani, Mahajal, Jalswarajya and Bharat Nirman as per their respective guidelines. However, despite absence of the above mentioned projects in the village, this committee has to be formed in the Gram Sabha. The revised (01.08.2003) Act 49(1) of the Gram Panchayat Act, 1958 is regarding the formation of sub-committees of Gram Sabha.

1. The term of the committees will be defined as per the term of the Gram Panchayat.
2. The committee must consist of a minimum of 12 and maximum of 24 members.
3. One-third members of this committee will be selected from GP members.
4. There will be representation of the SC/ST communities.
5. There will be 50 per cent women representation on this committee.
6. While selecting the members, priority should be given to persons having knowledge and experience of accounts and persons having a good track record with respect to understanding as well as transparent and effective implementation of the development schemes.
7. While selecting the secretary of the committee, priority should be given to retired persons having knowledge and experience of accounts or a youth who is a commerce graduate.
8. The members of other sub-committees of GS should not be members of this committee.
9. After formation of the committee, the members will select the president and the secretary.

Rights and Responsibilities:

1. To ensure the implementation of a project as per the village development action plan.
2. To ensure proper utilisation of project funds.
3. To ensure transparency in the purchase of required material under various projects as well as during the various development stages of the project.
4. To ensure that benefits of various activities of the development projects reach the marginalised, deprived sections and women.
5. To ensure participation of women, SC, ST and vulnerable households in all stages of the decision-making process.
6. To ensure that all the books of accounts and related records are updated and maintained in a proper order.
7. To ensure that quality (physical and active participation) is achieved while implementing the project
8. To submit the required reports in the Gram Sabha regarding the above mentioned tasks at least once in three months.

3B. TOOLS FOR SOCIAL AUDIT COMMITTEE

Index of Tools	
Functions	Tool
1. Background Matrix	1. Getting started: Understanding the issues w.r.t. SAC (exercise for general orientation)
2. Understanding the Development Schemes 2a. Understanding Intensive Infrastructure Schemes, Doll Type Subsidy Based Schemes, and Knowledge Support Schemes	2. One Matrix each for three types of schemes
3. Assessing the Next Year's Budget for the Village	3a. RTI application form 3b. Scheme information classification matrix
4. Learning Financial Audits	4. Frequently asked questions
5. Social Audit - Monitoring Points for Intensive Infrastructure Schemes	5. Guidelines
6. Social Audit Process - Doll Type Subsidy Based Schemes	6. A Checklist
7. Social Audit Process - Knowledge, Dissemination Schemes	7. A Checklist

Function 1: Background Matrix

Tool 1: Getting Started - Understanding the Issues w.r.t. SAC (An Exercise for General Orientation)

Problem	Reasons (Basic, Broad)	Action
<p>1a) Lack of transparency in the village development work leading to lack of ownership, confidence and participation.</p> <p>1b) Mismanagement and misappropriation of funds by the person in power and by the subordinates and bureaucrats.</p>	<p>1) Existing SAC is inefficient or inactive and community does not have a say or direct involvement in it.</p> <p>2) Influential people/leaders in the village manage the power nexus.</p> <p>3) Apathy of the community towards participation in various development projects.</p> <p>4) People are unaware that GP is accountable/answerable to them and hence do not utilise their right to question or utilise the Gram Sabha platform.</p>	<p>1) Formation and activation of SAC as per the guidelines.</p> <p>2) Capacity building and training of SAC so that they become efficient and act as a 'watch dog' on the community's behalf with regard to various development projects undertaken.</p> <p>3) Community awareness regarding RTI Act.</p> <p>4) SAC has the full right to ask for explanations from the members of various sub-committees as well as the Gram Panchayat members.</p> <p>5) If the beneficiaries/villagers are interested to get such information, then it can be provided by payment of fees decided by the GS.</p> <p>6) To monitor the display board showing the updated expenditure.</p> <p>7) To monitor and review all the financial matters handled by the GP and sub-committees at least once in three months (will inspect all the vouchers, musters, cash book, ledger, MB register, passbook, cheque book and all the related registers).</p> <p>8) To check that all households receive the annual income and expenditure statement of village development before the 1st GS of the financial year.</p> <p>9) To ensure maintenance of records and its access to the GS members.</p> <p>10) SAC being a financial expert committee should approve/disapprove the accounts and submit the financial report to the GS at least once in three months. This report should be passed in the GS by a 2/3rd majority.</p> <p>11) To be present at the time of authorised monitoring visits and to give explanations related to financial matters, if required.</p>

Problem	Reasons (Basic, Broad)	Action
2) Inferior quality of work.	1) Inferior material used. 2) Due to vested interest, contract given to a specific contractor. 3) Technical aspects are not followed. 4) No vigilance/monitoring is done of the work undertaken.	1) If required, and as far as possible, contract should be given to a local person. 2) Supervision of ongoing work from time to time by concerned sub-committees and GP members. 3) Involve the beneficiary/user groups and village community at every stage while implementing the project. 4) Wherever technical support is required it must be taken.
3) Lack of social equity in allocation of financial and other resources.	1) Lack of concern for the marginalised and vulnerable communities/households and women lead to inequitable distribution of benefits. 2) Marginal and deprived sections in the village are not empowered enough to voice their views, concerns or are not equipped enough to fight for their rights.	1) SAC should assess the benefits received by the community, especially the disadvantaged and vulnerable sections and women and submit report to GS twice in a year. 2) They should ensure that equity concern is addressed in all the development projects that are undertaken. At the decision-making and planning stage of the project they should ensure that the selection of beneficiaries is equitable. 3) SAC should see to it that there is at least a provision of basic and essential needs/services to poor, marginalised, and disadvantaged in the village by accessing various government schemes. 4) For addressing social and gender issues, frequent meetings of the SAC should be organised. 5) SAC should collect and display data regarding name of the scheme, nature of the benefits received, percentage and number of beneficiaries as per each caste category and gender category against their respective population (and percentage) in the village or as per the marginalised category and their population (such as single women, SC, ST, elderly, disabled and so on).

Function 2: Understanding the Development Schemes

1. Intensive, budgeted-infrastructure building schemes
2. Subsidy-based - Doll type schemes (social security schemes, educational schemes)
3. Knowledge and process support schemes.

Getting the information on the schemes through RTI applications and through other sources (offices in ZP, PS, Gram Sevak etc.).
Assorting the schemes in above types.

Tool 2A: Example of Understanding the Intensive Infrastructure Schemes - A Matrix

No	Type of Benefit	Sector	Component for Socially Weaker Sections	Name of the Department
1.	Farm pond scheme	Water, agriculture	Special reservation at district/taluka/village level	Irrigation or Agriculture
2.	Hariyali/Watershed project	Water, agriculture	5 per cent contribution from landless and SC/ST community, BPL HHs	Project Director, DRDA/ZP/PS
3.	Land terracing, Land levelling	Watershed, agriculture	Special funds for SC, ST, BPL HHs	Agriculture Department, Tribal Development Corporation and related government schemes (NREGS/MREGS)
4.	Irrigation dam/K T weir/ check dams	Watershed	Priority to marginalised and weaker sections. For example, special rights to the landless or BPL HHs, fish rearing	Irrigation Department, Executive Engineer - ZP, MREGS
5.	CCT, contour bunds and soil and water conservation measures	Watershed	Excluding landless from shramdaan, 5 per cent contribution from SC/ST and BPL as per the government norms	DRDA/ZP (for Hariyali), Forest Department, Social Forestry, MREGS
6.	Drinking water supply and infrastructure schemes	DDWS	5 per cent contribution from SC/ST and BPL HHs	Executive Engineer - ZP (Drinking Water Project)
7.	Constructing school compound wall or water storage system in school	Education		ZP/PS
8.	Afforestation, social forestry, JFM	Forest	Usufructary rights to landless and weaker sections	Forest Department, Social Forestry
9.	Different government schemes meant for the SC, ST, BPL HHs	Social welfare	Proper selection of the beneficiaries	Social Welfare Officer, State Government/ZP
10.	Food security	Food	Ration (grains, sugar, kerosene) to the BPL and Antodaya beneficiaries with subsidised rates	Supply Department (Tehasildar Office)

Tool 2B: Example of Understanding the Doll Type Subsidy Based Schemes - A Matrix

No	Type of Benefit	Sector	Component for Socially	Name of the Department Weaker Sections
1.	Vaccination, polio eradication, ANM and PHC medical services	Health		Health Officer, ZP/PHC
2.	Distribution of seeds, seedlings, saplings	Agriculture		Agriculture Officer, Agriculture Department/ ZP/PS
3.	Subsidy for the fertilisers, pesticides, subsidised crop insurance	Agriculture		Agriculture Officer, Agriculture department/ ZP/PS
4.	Subsidised or low interest loans for agriculture	Agriculture	For SC (Mahatma Phule Backward Corporation)	Commercial/Cooperative Banks (Society), Agriculture Department, Mahatma Phule Backward Corporation
5.	Subsidised or low interest loans from Khadi Gramodyog for small business, SHGs	Self-Employment		Khadi Gramodyog Department
6.	Housing grant-in-aids (For example: Indira Awaas Yojana)	Rural Housing		DRDA/ZP/PS
7.	Monthly pensions to the older people, widows and other weaker sections	Revenue		Tehsildar
8.	Financial support for the differently abled	Social Welfare		
9.	Other 1			

Tool 2C: Example of Understanding the Knowledge Support Schemes - A Matrix

No	Type of Benefit	Sector	Component for Socially Weaker Sections	Name of the Department
1.	Periodic schemes for technology propagation and dissemination related to cultivation such as 4 part (charsutri) rice cultivation	Agriculture		Agriculture Officer, Agriculture Department/ Agriculture Campaign Officer, ZP & PS
2.	Sant Gadge Baba Gram Swacchata Abhiyan	Sanitation (Public & private)		ZP/PS
3.	Mahatma Gandhi Tantamukta Gaon	Social, Law and Order		Police Department, ZP / PS
4.	Different composting schemes, organic pesticide promotion schemes, vermi compost, herbal gardening, suggesting suitable cropping patterns	Agriculture		Agriculture Officer, Agriculture Department/ Agriculture Campaign Officer ZP & PS
5.	Marketing support for agricultural produce	Agriculture		Agriculture Officer, Agriculture Department, Agriculture Campaign Officer, ZP & PS
6.	Supportive schemes for small businessmen, finance and marketing support	Business, Finance and Marketing		Khadi Gramodyog Department, DRDA/ZP, Zilla Udyog Kendra, Government of Maharashtra
7.	Other 1			
8.	Other 2			

Function 3: Assessing the Next Year's Budget for the Village

Step One: Getting information about the sanctioned schemes and respective budgets for the year _____

Tool 3a. RTI Application Format

To:
The Public Information Officer/Department
(Name and address of the concerned department of Panchayat Samiti)

1. FULL NAME OF APPLICANT: Chairperson of the SAC
2. ADDRESS: Address of the Chairperson

3. PARTICULARS OF INFORMATION REQUIRED:

(3i) Subject matter of information: (A) All the schemes and budget sanctioned to the Gram Panchayat (B) The list of applicants for individual beneficiary schemes from the village

(3ii) Period to which the information relates: The current year

(3iii) Description of information required: For (A) _____, (a) the names of the schemes (b) the type of benefit (c) qualification/eligibility criteria for getting the scheme sanctioned (d) budget of the scheme
For (B) _____, (a) list of applicants - scheme-wise, (b) nature of benefit

(3iv) Whether information is required by post or in person: By post

(3v) In case by post (ordinary, registered or speed): Registered post

4. WHETHER THE APPLICANT IS BELOW POVERTY LINE: No/Yes (If yes, attach a photocopy of the proof thereof)

Place:

Date:

Signature of the applicant:

Step Two: Classification of the scheme information obtained from RTI and other means and calculating the budget of the scheme

Tool 3b. The Scheme Information Classification Matrix: Example Sheet

No	Name of the Scheme	Category	Type of Benefit	Executing Agency	Budget
1.	Maharashtra Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (Village Planning Component)	Intensive infrastructure building scheme	Road (500 meters, kuccha)	Gram Panchayat with PWD-ZP	Rs 5 lakhs
2.	Farm Pond Scheme (two beneficiaries)	As above	Farm pond	Irrigation Department	Rs 30,000 per pond (Total Rs 60,000)
3.	Gram Panchayat scheme for toilet constructions (fund sufficient for 10 beneficiaries this year)	Doll type but infrastructure building	Grant-in-aid for toilet	Gram Panchayat and construction	Rs 1,000 each (Total Rs 10,000) Panchayat Samiti
4.	New sanctions of the old age pensions (2)	Doll type	Grant-in-aid	Social Welfare Department	Rs 500 per month (Total 500x2x12 = Rs 12,000)
5.	Joint Forest Management	Knowledge support and infrastructure building	Trainings and samplings cultivation	Forest Department and Village JFM Committee	Trainings cost - Rs 20,000 + Cultivation cost - Rs 1,00,000 (Total - Rs 1,20,000)
6.	Others				Rs 18,000
	Total Budget				Rs 7,20,000

Function 4: Learning Financial Audits: Understanding the Nitty-Gritty of Accounts Keeping

Tool 4: Frequently Asked Questions

What is an accounts system?

An accounts system is a method of keeping records with respect to money received (credits) and expenses or money spent (debits) and other financial matters. Accounts' keeping is compulsory for all public institutions which contain a bank account, including the Gram Panchayat.

What are the records or documents that need to be maintained in the accounts system?

Cash book, ledger, stock register, asset register, vouchers file, bank passbooks, contracts, agreements, deposits, valuation sheets (of the assets created through schemes), muster, measurement books (of the asset created) and most importantly, income-expenditure statement, balance sheet, and bank reconciliation statement.

What does a voucher signify?

Voucher is a proof of expenses submitted by the person who spent the money for a particular type of need which is permitted as per the financial planning of the concerned project or scheme. Voucher contains the amount spent, and a supporting document, generally a receipt and/or a quotation.

What are the ways of corruption?

One of the most common ways of corruption is through obtaining false support documents to the voucher, such as receipt and/or quotation. Similarly, violating the norms of payment (e.g. violation of the norm that all payments above Rs 1,000 should be paid through account payee cheques) may also involve corruption or leaking the quotation information for favouring a particular contractor for contracting the construction of any infrastructure is also violation of the norm and can be called corruption.

What is a financial audit?

Financial audit is a detailed inspection of all the entries related to credits, debits, withdrawals, expenses in all the account books by a certified auditor. The auditor also checks the physical assets and other belongings created through a public fund as s/he deems fit.

Who conducts the financial audit?

A person who has passed an exam conducted by the Chartered Accounts Association of India, and holds a certificate and is called a 'Chartered Accountant' conducts the financial audit.

What does an auditor inspect?

Mainly an auditor inspects whether any violation of the rules and norms of accounting has been made by the concerned agency.

What does s/he inspect, specifically?

Fund inflows, expenses, whether the expenses have been done according to the guidelines and stipulated norms and whether the vouchers are supported by proper receipts, quotations etc.

What if s/he finds malpractices?

The auditor mentions all the malpractices, irregularities and other serious findings in the audit report and submits it to the appropriate authority. The higher authority is expected to take an appropriate action against the involved persons.

What are the benefits of the financial audit?

If done properly and in a detailed way, it controls the expenses and checks the malpractices.

What are the limitations of the financial audit?

There is always the possibility that the auditor may get involved in the corruption racket. SAC needs to keep an eye on his work. To do this, at least two members should understand the ways of accounts keeping and how to check it.

Function 5: Social Audit - Monitoring Points for Intensive Infrastructure Schemes

Tool 5: Guidelines

Part A: Planning of the scheme

- ❖ What data is collected for the planning of the scheme...?
 - Measurements of the work site (e.g. for any work which involve physical construction activity needs measurements e.g. tank, road, well, etc in the planning stage itself. These measurements give the basis for costing of the scheme.
Imp: It is found that in all above measurements corruption occurs at a large scale just because of lack of proper monitoring
 - **Land Acquisition** (Forcing poor to donate, no proper costing, a big loss to the holder? **Alternatives?**)
 - Labour requirement? Procurement plan (e.g. how much labour is considered from the beneficiary village? How much is expected from the other surrounding villages? Is an informal labour contractor/an agent in action? Is he necessary? Is any outside, migratory labour coming in? such questions need to be paid attention.)
- ❖ Purchase plans (If village committee is managing the business)
 - Need to know the cost considerations for each item to be purchased (e.g. Cement, sand, pipes, labour payments rates, transport costs)
 - Compare the costs with other vendors in the market
 - Monitor the negotiations with the dealer/supplier of the material
- ❖ Budget (Check all the items budgeted, understand the cost margins kept thereof and rationale behind, cross check the budget with the observations noted while monitoring measurements and purchases, if necessary an engineer-NGO can be consulted from outside to inspect the budget and explaining it).

- ❖ Organize the Gram Sabha, call respective agency that is planning the scheme and conduct “Question & Answers”, and facilitate the discussion.

Part B: Implementation of the scheme

- ❖ **Justice to the local labour**
 - Is proper notice given to Gram Sabha before commencement of the Work?
(Prior notice to the labour to be employed from the beneficiary village)
 - Weekly muster checking
(Muster reading in front of all the labour employed and checking the attendance, facilitating the grievances from both sides)
- ❖ **Quality checks**
 - Checking the ISI marks on the material purchased and following other quality standards.
 - Monitor the quality of the construction (for example - The ability of the skilled labour, following construction norms and rules such as mixing of cement with the sand in proper ratios, etc.)
- ❖ **Corruption Checks**
 - Checking the *purchase, storage* as well as *Usage* of the material against planned quantities
 - Checking BULK orders, payments and receipts
 - Checking the excess material, savings and other possible gains
- ❖ **Organizing gram sabha to discuss issues in implementation periodically as discussed by gram sabha**
 - Organize Gram Sabha to see if any of the decision taken while planning is to be changed
 - Organize Gram Sabha for all kind of decisions which have to be taken for the people
 - Muster reading before gram sabha in the end is a must

Monitoring the Outputs

- ❖ **Transact walks and Joint visits with the Agency**
 - Conducting the joint assessment of the work done in front of the Gram Sabha
 - Assessing the work done against the planned measurements
 - Assessing the work and MUSTER
- ❖ **Desk-Monitoring**
 - Checking the financial Audits
 - Monitoring the documents/papers
- ❖ **EXIT Checks and Exit Gram Sabha**
 - Joint Presentations by Agency/Department representatives and SAC members before Gram Sabha
 - Answering queries and clarifying doubts
 - Orienting further actions (If any, such as O&M)
 - Exit.

Function 6: Social Audit Process for Doll Type Subsidy Based Schemes

Tool 6: A Checklist

- ❖ **Selection criteria**
 - **The income criteria**
 - Income range defined for the beneficiaries
 - Method of assessment of income used by the government officials for potential beneficiaries
 - Other non (cash) income indicators (if used)
 - **The Non income criteria**
 - Caste or tribe or the backward group
 - Land-holding (if applicable)
 - Recommendations (if expected, say Panchayat, Gram Sabha, MLA)
- ❖ **Benefit**
 - **Individual** (e.g. Uniform, S.T. pass, scholarships, Health services etc)
 - **Family** (agricultural subsidies, interest subsidies, animals insurance, etc)
 - **Group** (SHGs loans, Group loans, etc)
- ❖ **Selection Process - focal checks**
 - Perversions in the eligibility criteria
 - Interventions, pressure from MLAs
 - Corruption while finalizing selection
 - Perverting the benefit

Involve Gram Sabha wherever necessary, but especially in the process of finalizing the beneficiaries.

Function 7: Social Audit Process for Knowledge Dissemination Schemes

Tool 7: A Checklist

- ❖ **Understand the message**
 - Understand the central message of the dissemination scheme/ campaign
 - Assess the relevance of the message (if yes why and if no why not)
- ❖ **The Knowledge dissemination Guidelines**
 - Understand the methodology adopted
 - The guidelines for the Coverage, reach out
 - The skill set required for the extension worker, campaigners, etc.
- ❖ **The Knowledge Dissemination - the need for and forms of participation**
 - Individuals
 - Families
 - Women
 - Groups
 - CBOs
 - SHGs
- ❖ **The knowledge dissemination - Medium for Communications**
 - Check for the most suitable tool for knowledge dissemination for the village community
 - Focus on language, expression style and the appealing factors
 - The possibility of individual communication, dialogue, group discussions, and hamlet-wise special programmes
- ❖ **The Knowledge Dissemination - generating community interests**
 - Household visits
 - Ensuring discussion prior and after the campaign/dissemination event
 - Gram Sabha

Function 8: Ensuring Equitable Access to the Schemes/Programmes by all the Sections of Population in the Village

Tool 8: Equitable Accessibility Matrix

In the beginning of the project itself, SAC would collate the data with regard to each development scheme or project accessed by the Gram Panchayat and the list of its beneficiaries and the nature of the benefit. They would ask other sub-committees of the Gram Sabha to submit this information. They would display this information at public places so that all citizens would have free access to this information.

Name of the Development scheme	Nature of the benefit received	Total No. of beneficiaries	Classification of beneficiaries as per caste status and gender status & other specific status such as single women, elderly, disabled AGAINST THEIR TOTAL POPULATION in the village	Against the total audit population in the village
MREGS	1. Provision of employment to the unemployed for 60 days 2. Wages at an individual level 3. Creation of public asset: Water conservation work	50 persons	Open category Men SC Men ST Men OBC Men NT Men In each category of women, sub-category of “single women” who have benefited Open category Women SC Women ST Women OBC Women NT Women	If possible sub categorisation could be done as Against the total number of unemployed Adult population

4: Women's Development Committee

4a. INTRODUCTION

Women constitute almost 50% of the population. The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt measures of positive discrimination in favour of women (National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001). However, an overview of development of women sharply point towards gender inequality which is apparent in various areas such as access to education, health, food security, employment/livelihoods, political participation, and ownership of assets. The other disturbing manifestations of gender disparity are continuous declining female ratio (922 females for 1000 males in Maharashtra) in the population and violence (domestic and societal) perpetuated against women.

In the background of this dismal picture of status of women, the 73rd amendment act has given the golden opportunity to women to enter the mainstream as it reserved the posts for women in the Panchayat Raj structure. It provides them with a platform to articulate, participate, and play key role in the village level decision-making process. More than 10 lakh women have been elected in the Panchayat Raj Institutions, constituting some 37 percent of all those elected (website MoPR). Apart from the 73rd act, which is a milestone towards achieving women's development, there are various other efforts in the form of women's policy, schemes, and programmes undertaken by government to bring women at the centre stage. The Maharashtra State Women's Policy of 2001 has identified certain areas as relevant and basic to the development of women. Some of the important areas in the context of the villages are:

- 1/3rd representation for women in all cooperative, aided and non-aided institutions,
- 50% of government funded agriculture related trainees to be women,
- Women to have decisive role in water supply management,
- Retrospective effect to government orders regarding joint ownership in name of husband and wife on all house plots and flats allotted by government,
- Legislation to be introduced for ownership rights for wife in house property acquired by husband,
- Village Mahila Sabha to be held the day before the Gram Sabha, for active participation by women in village activities,
- Strict implementation of rules regarding closure of country liquor shops on demand by 50% of women in an area,
- Special efforts to increase female literacy (Website of Maharashtra State Commission for Women).

Thus, an optimal utilisation of various opportunities provided by the government for women's development should be made.

Women's Development Committee (WDC) at the Village Level

The Women's development committee (WDC) is the village level sub-committee of Gram Sabha which is mainly formed to further the development interest of women in that particular village. This committee has 100 percent women membership. Ideally the WDC should comprise of women members from various self-help groups (at least 75% of the

total) as this is one of the key community based organisation solely operating for women in many villages.

The objective of WDC is to steer the process of comprehensive development of women in the village by identifying the priority needs, by facilitating women's participation in various village level PR institutions and also by ensuring that women's needs/concerns are addressed. The WDC should aim at making continuous progress towards gender equality. Gender is defined as the economic, social, political, and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being man or woman. Gender differences, arising from the socially constructed relationship between men and women, affect the distribution of resources between them and cause many disparities in development outcomes. Gender equality, means equal access to the "opportunities that allow people to pursue a life of their own choosing and to avoid extreme deprivations in outcomes," highlighting gender equality in rights, resources, and voice (World Bank, FAO, IFAD, 2009).

The various village development activities that require an active participation of women are supply of safe and potable drinking water, community health (includes reproductive and child health) and sanitation, housing and food security, education, livelihoods creation and enhancement, natural resource management, management of common property resources, livestock development, micro-enterprises, and social audit etc.

The WDC thus can play the role of a catalyst in empowering women and changing the status of women in the village. They have to perform the twin task of motivating women to participate in women Gram Sabhas, village Gram Sabhas, various sub-committees and Gram Panchayat on one hand and on the other of building their capacities, knowledge, and skills so that they become assertive and can assume influential and active role in the village development processes. In order to realize this WDC can organize and facilitate exposure visits, workshops, gender trainings, entrepreneurship trainings, personality development workshops, and skills development trainings. Another critical responsibility of WDC as mentioned earlier is to come up with development priorities of women

in the village and to ensure that these priorities get place in the village development plans (annual as well as long term). This committee should also give specific attention to the women who belong to marginal communities and poorest households (SC, ST, OBC, single women, landless poor, and BPL households).

While identifying beneficiaries of the project, the WDC can take care that following individuals or groups get priority:

- The poorest of poor women and single women, especially widows, deserted, divorced, unmarried women,
- Women belonging to scheduled castes/scheduled tribes
- Women belonging to the minority communities and other socially backward communities
- Women working in the unorganized sector
- Landless women having no livelihood source (apart from working as wage labourer)
- Migrant women labourers
- Elderly women without support
- Adolescent girls
- Women suffering from HIV/AIDS, other chronic diseases, mental illnesses, and physically and mentally challenged women

Thus, the conscious efforts on part of the WDC are required to integrate gender issues in various village development programmes that village plans to take up or has already undertaken. Gender analysis of Gram Panchayat plan and budgets is an important tool for assessing the place and resources given to the needs and priorities of women. Gender budget work focuses on the impact of government budgets, on women/ girls and men/boys and different sub-groups within them (Eapen, 2004). However, the concept of gender budget can be applied to the local self government, i.e. Gram Panchayat, as well.

WDC is the main actor with regard to women development activities.

The Structure

Number of WDC Members and criterion for selection:

All members of this committee will be women. There will be minimum number of 12 members and maximum number of 24 members in the WDC. These members will be selected from SHG groups as well as 1/3rd members will be selected from GP members. The number of SHGs in the village will determine the number of members of WDC. For e.g. in Village X, the WDC will comprise of women GP members and 12 SHG members who will represent 6 SHGs in the village (2 representatives from each SHG). The care will be taken to give representation to women belonging to marginal/deprived sections of the community such as SC, ST, NT, OBC, landless, and single women etc.

Formation Process:

The members will be selected from SHGs as well as GP, and if required an external agency for e.g. NGO staff would attend the meeting.

This committee will be ratified by women GS and general GS. The Gram Sabha passes the resolutions in favour of the formation, status, roles and responsibilities of WDC. The WDC meets to accept the mandate given by GP and Gram Sabha and selects chief functionaries like Chairperson and Secretary. The portfolios can be created and allotted to the members to undertake different responsibilities.

Membership Period:

The period for term of the WDC will be determined by the Gram Panchayats term.

Accountability:

The WDC as an organization is accountable for its functions and finances to the Gram Panchayat, women GS and Gram Sabha. The functionaries of WDC may be called by the Gram Panchayat in its' monthly meeting with all the reports. The WDC will present all the reports with respect to its performance, finances and activity progress once in three months to the women Gram Sabha and general GS. The Gram Panchayat and

Gram Sabha approve or disapprove the efficiency and effectivity of WDC.

Each WDC member is accountable to the SHG, which she represents. She will report to the concerning SHG about the entire functioning of WDC from time to time and at least once in three months compulsorily. The SHG may approve the functioning of their representative or else if not satisfied with her, calls back and selects new member/s at any time in presence of WDC Chairperson and Sarpanch. The Gram Panchayat and subsequent women GS as well as general Gram Sabha will ratify the replacement of the member.

Roles and Responsibilities of WDC:

1. It is the principal actor and implementer of the women development activities.
2. This committee will work under supervision and control of the GP and will be accountable to the GP and GS as well as women GS.
3. They will be responsible for identifying and discussing women related key issues in the women GS.
4. They will be responsible for enhancing the participation of women in general GS and thus be more assertive in bringing women issues on the GS platform. They will make efforts to gradually become part of the various decision making processes related to women development as well village development through general GS.
5. They will be responsible for preparation of annual women development plan. They will also try to identify the possible financial sources (from GP, PS, ZP, various departments, State and Central government, private funders) that can be tapped.
6. They will assist in creation of gender awareness, women's mobilization, and formation of SHGs.
7. Implementation of women development activities related to social issues [drinking water and sanitation, drudgery reduction, health, food security (public distribution system), housing, prohibition of alcohol etc.] and economic development (livelihood creation

- and enhancement, employment opportunities, natural resource management).
8. Responsible for need identification and prioritisation of women development activity as well as its planning, implementation and monitoring under “10% budgetary provision of GP’s for women and child development”.
 9. They will take initiative to build the new leadership and hence capacitate women in the village so that there will be representation of active women members on various sub-committees of GS as well as GP. For this they will provide the necessary support required.
 10. Responsible for collecting peoples contribution for various women development activities.
 11. Conducting monthly meetings of WDC and maintain the proceeding books.
 12. Take initiative in conducting women GSs and to present progress report in the quarterly GS and women GS.

13. Submission of monthly physical and financial achievement report of WDC to the GP.
14. Coordination for collecting data related to current status of women in the village so that it can be readily utilised while making women development plan or while deciding the indicators for project output/outcomes.

The tools designed for women’s development committee try to assess the current status of women with regard to various village level development aspects. The tools entirely focus on assessing present status and thereby identifying the issues that needs urgent attention. However, it needs to be stated that they do not elaborate on how to address the issues once identified. Thus, these tools try to address only first level aspect of the issue in question. Given the complexity of each issue or problem it was thought that each issue/problem identified will require a whole set of different tools.

4b. TOOLS FOR WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Index of Tools

Functions	Tool
1. Getting started: Understanding the issues w.r.t. WD	1. Background Matrix (exercise for general orientation)
2. Assessing Health Status of Women	2. Questionnaire
3. Assessing Drudgery Status of Women	3. Checklist
4. Assessing Asset Ownership Status	4. Summary Table
5. Assessing Status w.r.t. Decision Making at the Family Level	5. Summary Table
6. Assessing Status w.r.t. Political Participation	6. Checklist
7. Assessing Status w.r.t. Livelihood Creation/Equal Income Earning Opportunities	7. Checklist
8. Assessing Status of Women in the Village	8. Checklist
9. Assessing Status of Violence against Women	9. Report Card
10. Assessing budget allocation to women w.r.t. development programmes in the village & utilization of 10% fund for women	10. Summary Sheet

Function 1: Getting Started: Understanding Issues w.r.t. Women's Development

Tool 1: A Matrix for General Orientation

Problem	Reasons (basic, broad)	Action
1. Low/lack of awareness about gender equality and development of women	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No exposure 2. Influenced by patriarchal social values/beliefs, whereby women are in subordinate position and men are in dominant & powerful position 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building awareness about gender and gendered division of labour in rural context (confined to household duties and even if they work outside it is either on own farm or as wage labourer, no control on income earned) • Raising consciousness about why women have no power in family as well as in society (lack of ownership of productive assets like land, house, money/income etc., lack of decision-making power w.r.t. household, children, their own self) • Building awareness of men as well towards gender issues so that their cooperation is sought
2. Women do not have any say in matters related to family or society. No role in decision making processes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Control is exercised by men (father, brother, husband, son) on women in terms of their mobility as well as on their bodies 2. Due to patriarchal social values women are in a subordinate position & their views/opinion is never considered or not even heard 3. Specifically in the society (outside home) women are not articulate, they are not used to speak in front of men 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initially organising women in village based all women's forums such as SHGs, women gram Sabha, mother-teacher associations etc. and encouraging them to speak out • Building capacities of women or encouraging women to voice their views & concerns in public forums • Considering views, needs & concerns of both men & women while planning any development activity
3. Women are dependent on male family members or male relatives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Women are not independent in terms of earnings & are mainly engaged in household work 2. No training/capacity building for enhancing their knowledge & skill set 3. Lack of livelihood opportunities (employment) created for women 4. Women often have to face wage discrimination even for the equal amount of work done by them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efforts/activities taken up for reducing the drudgery • Breaking gendered stereotypes & involving men in household responsibilities & child care • Creation of livelihood opportunity/employment generation by accessing various government schemes • Encourage women to be part of SHGs, which will provide them opportunity to save & become independent • Encourage women to be part of micro-finance & micro-enterprise activities • Village level institutions like GP should take initiative & ensure that there are equal wages for the equal work done by men & women, for this WDC should do follow-up in the village

Problem	Reasons (basic, broad)	Action
4. Despite being either members or in position of power (as Sarpanch, Chairperson etc.) lack of participation in GP or various village level institutions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Due to socialisation which results in internalisation of patriarchal values they are taught not to speak in front of men, specifically men not belonging to their family 2. Lack of formal education is one of the constraint leading to inactive participation 3. Discouragement from male members in the institutions leading to getting pressurised, lack of interest, and even fear. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exposure visits to institutions or villages, where women have demonstrated leadership role, are change agents in development, have gained control over assets & resources • Identification of women with leadership qualities & enhancing their skills in gender analysis (assessing present status, identifying needs & priorities) and in improving status of women in society as well as in management • Providing capacity & skill building training • Convince male members to provide support and cooperation to women who are part of various village level institutions • Encourage women to participate & speak up in various formal as well as informal village level platforms such as Gram Panchayat, women Gram Sabha, Gram Sabha, VDWSC, VEC, SAC, SHGs, and WDC • Ensuring that women's needs and priorities get addressed while making development plan of the village
5. Multiple forms of violence (mental & physical) faced by women <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Domestic violence (including dowry related) • Alcohol abuse • Sexual harassment at workplace • Child abuse • Unfavourable sex ratio (practice of female foeticide, sex selection) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subordinate status of women in the society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prohibiting liquor • GP to take lead for preventing atrocities against women in family & society by taking strong action against the perpetrators • Campaign against the practice of female foeticide
6. Women are amongst the poorest of the poor in the villages	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Single women (deserted, widows, unmarried) do not have ownership of productive assets like land 2. Lack of any support system (family, from society) 3. Lack of livelihood opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducting activities for ensuring livelihood security • Building supportive mechanisms by becoming united • Taking up collective activities as women

The broad data collection tools for assessing the present status of women w.r.t. some important aspects have been prepared. Though these tools are very broad in nature, they can be used as a starting point for making women's development plan. These tools are mainly made for some of the basic indicators which give insights into current status of women in the village. However, it needs to be remembered that the issues/ aspects covered in the tools are general and broad and it is very much a possibility that they do not cover the specific aspect or priority area of a particular village. Hence, in such a case tools need to be developed which will address or assess the specific issue in question. The tools which we have presented here will definitely give ideas and clues for developing the tools tailor-made for the local priority issue.

The WDC, with the help of Gram Panchayat can take up this exercise as these tools will provide clear pointers with regard to the specific areas, in which the work needs to be done. The in-depth information on specific issue can be later collected as per the need.

(Please note that while preparing the tools two aspects namely; drinking water-sanitation and education, have not considered as they have been dealt with separately.)

Function 2: Assessing Status of Health Services for Women

Tool 2: A Questionnaire for Discussion in a Village Level Meeting with Women

General Information on Availability of Health Services

- 1. Frequency of visit by ANM in a month (pl. tick one of the following)**
 - 1a. Thrice a week
 - 1b. Twice a week
 - 1c. Once a week
 - 1d. Fortnightly basis
 - 1e. Once a month
 - 1f. Any other (pl. specify)

- 2. Distance at which sub-centre or primary health centre is situated**
 - 2a. Within the village
 - 2b. Neighbouring village (3-10 km)
 - 2c. More than 10 km away (pl. specify)

- 3. Availability of medicines at the sub-centre (on general illness) (pl. tick one of the following)**
 - 3a. Often available
 - 3b. Sometimes available
 - 3c. Not available

- 4. Presence of a trained doctor in the sub-centre or primary health centre**
 - 4a. Daily
 - 4b. Thrice a week
 - 4c. Twice a week
 - 4d. Once a week
 - 4e. Fortnightly basis
 - 4f. Once a month
 - 4g. Any other (pl. specify)

5. Frequency of accessing public health services by women in the village/neighbouring village (for general illnesses)

5a. Often/regularly

5b. Sometimes

5c. Not at all or Rarely

5d. Services of private health providers are sought

6. Specify measures taken to prevent anaemia in women

7. Awareness amongst women (15-50 years) about HIV/AIDS

7a. 15 -20 years

7b. Above 20 - 30 years

7c. Above 30 - 40 years

7d. Above 40 - 50 years

8. Reproductive health

8a. Women's role

- Mostly it is women who take responsibility of family planning measures (tablets, operation or copper T etc.)
- Women rarely take responsibility w.r.t. family planning measures

8b. Men's role

- Men have started taking the responsibility w.r.t. family planning measures
- Men do not take any responsibility w.r.t. family planning measures

8c. Women's say in decisions on family planning

- They have say in it
- They have say to some extent
- No say at all

8d. Pre-natal Care

- Availability of skilled/experienced staff at sub-centre or PHC
- Check-ups during pregnancy:
 - Once
 - twice or thrice
 - More than 3 times

- Provision of iron tablets on a regular basis during pregnancy

- Yes

- No

- Nature of delivery

- Institutional

- At home with the help of trained Dai (non-trained Dai)

- At home without the help of Dai

8e. Post-natal services (pl. specify)

9. Child care services

9a. Immunisation

- Schedule is followed for the age group 0-6 years
- Scheduled is not followed
- Ensured that all children get immunised
- Not ensured that all children get immunised

9b. Measures taken for preventions against malnutrition

- Weight monitoring (measurement)
- Height monitoring (measurement)
- Head Circumference monitoring (measurement)
- Arm Circumference monitoring (measurement)
- Raising consciousness amongst women about nutritional diet (demonstration of recipes using locally grown vegetables, foodgrain, fruits; importance of having kitchen garden and promotion of it)

10. Involvement of women in decisions related to their own health

10a. Men in the family take the decision

10b. Woman herself takes the decision

10c. Decisions are taken jointly

11. Specify awareness efforts undertaken for Adolescent girls (nutritious food, sexual/reproductive health)

Function 3: Assessing Drudgery Status

Tool 3: A Checklist for Village Level Discussion with Women (groups can be formed as per hamlets/*vastis* located away from each other)

1. Distance at which drinking water (& water for domestic needs) is accessed
 - 0 - 100 meters
 - 100 - 500 meters
 - More than 500 meters

2. Daily time spent in fetching water

Time Spent	Monsoon	Winter	Summer
Up to half an hour			
Half hour to 1 hour			
1 hour to 3 hours			
More than 3 hours			

3. Usage of cooking sources

Sr.No.	Cooking source	Mostly used	Sometimes used	Not used
1.	Fuel wood			
2.	Dung cakes			
3.	Coal			
4.	Kerosene			
5.	LPG			
6.	Bio-gas			
7.	Biomass stoves (biomass pallets made from agro-wastes)			
8.	Solar energy			

4. Daily time spent in collecting fuel wood

Time Spent

Up to half an hour

Half hour to 1 hour

1 hour to 3 hours

More than 3 hours

5. Increased workload due to new livelihood activities introduced

Livelihood activities	Time spent Earlier	Time spent Now
1. Agricultural work (due to irrigation, land treatment, change in cropping pattern) please specify		
2. Dairy - taking care of animals (cleaning, feeding, milching etc.)		
3. Fodder collection		
4. Rearing of sheep & goats		
5. Any other (please specify)		

6. Participation by male family members, specifically adults, in household tasks

Sr.No.	Household Task	Often	Sometimes	Not at all
1.	Fetching water			
2.	Fetching fuel wood			
3.	Cooking			
4.	Washing clothes/utensils			
5.	Cleaning the house			
6.	Care of children (bathing, feeding, child upbringing etc.)			
7.	Care of elderly (during illness)			

Function 4: Assessing Status of Ownership of Assets

Tool 4: Summary Table (to be administered at the household level)

Sr. No.	List of Assets/Resources	Owned Independently	Joint Ownership (with husband)	Not Owned
1.	House			
2.	Productive (cultivable) Land			
3.	Unproductive (non-cultivable) Land			
4.	Stree-dhan (gold jewellery received during her own wedding)			
5.	Money/Savings in bank/SHG etc.			
6.	Income earned			
7.	Women are insured (if yes the premium is paid regularly/annually)			
8.	Any other (specify)			

Function 5: Status w.r.t. Decision Making at the Family Level

Tool 5: Summary Table (to be administered at the household level)

Sr. No.	Issues and Level of Independence	Permission not required, can decide independently	Sometimes need to obtain permission from male members	Always Need to obtain permission from male members
1.	Going out for household work or in market			
2.	Visiting friends/relatives			
3.	Meet people, attend gatherings, talk to unrelated persons			
4.	Make small or large purchases; spending as per own desire			
5.	Decisions relating to purchase of jewellery			
6.	Participating in the meeting of village level institutions (SHG, WDC, GS, etc.)			

Function 6: Assessing Status of Political Participation

Tool 6: A Checklist of Indicators

Sr. No.	List of Various Indicators	Yes	No	Not Applicable
1.	Women's concerns, issues are discussed in Gram Sabha			
2.	Women's visibility and participation in public forums (various institutions)			
3.	Discrimination towards women in institutions			
4.	Representation of women in all decision making processes is ensured			
5.	Issues of gender equality are discussed in various institutions			
6.	General acceptance of the notion that women too should have independence and authority is observed			
7.	The WDC enabled the empowerment of women			
8.	Elected women representatives' are aware regarding development programmes and welfare schemes etc			
9.	Remarkable presence of elected women representatives' is noted w.r.t:			
	9a. Active participation in Gram Sabha meetings			
	9b. Nature of issues raised (specify)			
	9c. Specific work/activities undertaken for women and girl children (specify)			
	9d. Involvement in identification of beneficiaries for development schemes			
	9e. Involvement in planning			
	9f. Involvement in implementation of development schemes			
	9g. Encouraging people/women to raise questions and seeking their suggestions			
	9h. Involvement in public affairs, e.g. public distribution system, civic amenities, health, education, drinking water supply etc.			
10.	Training and capacity-building programmes are attended by women (if yes, specify)			
11.	Women interact with government officials, parallel bodies and user committees			
12.	Projects are undertaken exclusively for women			
	Under general category			
	Under programmes designed for women			
13.	Women participate actively in implementing projects (if yes, specify how?)			

Function 7: Assessing Status of Livelihood Creation

Tool 7: A Checklist

Sr. No.	List of Issues	Yes	No	Not Applicable
1.	Women are able to earn better income than earlier			
2.	Women are earning equal wages for equal work			
3.	Women's unemployment is addressed			
4.	Women workers in traditional occupations are given backup and support and training for product diversification			
5.	Training is given in non-traditional areas. Women have been able to take up non-conventional and new areas of work. If yes, please list them			
6.	Women are given training in the storage, processing, and marketing of products. Their negotiation skills are developed now			
7.	Women are able to have access to raw materials			
8.	Women are able to attain technical knowledge			
9.	Women have access to various information			
10.	Project resulted in better income earning capacity, skills, expertise, organizational skills, entrepreneurship, negotiation skills etc for women			
11.	Sustainable livelihoods were evolved for women through ----- and there is betterment of income and earning potential. Specify details			

Function 8: Assessing Present Status of Women in the Village

Tool 8: A Checklist

Sr. No.	List of Issues	Yes	No
1.	Increased mobility of women		
2.	Breaking traditional gender division of labour and engaging in non stereotypical tasks (pl. specify)		
3.	Women gained acceptance in decision making on social issues		
4.	Women gained in terms of personal and economic independence, better self confidence etc		
5.	Increased participation of women, within the family and within the community		
6.	Women's participation increased at the community level decision making forums		
7.	Economic self reliance enabled women to make decisions on controlling their own income		
8.	Women's participation in education, training activities etc increased		
9.	Women have an active presence in social, cultural and political activities		
10.	In the village level institutions women hold leadership positions		
11.	Government schemes or programmes designed for women are implemented in the village (if yes specify)		
12.	Women's needs and concerns are given priority in various development programmes implemented by GP (if yes, specify)		
13.	Women's safety increased and decline in violence against women is noted		
14.	Overall Sex ratio is not very negative		
15.	Sex ratio in the age group of 0-6 years is not negative		

(Vijayan *et al.*, 2006)

Function 9: Assessing Status of Violence against Women in the Village

Tool 9: Report Card

Violence against women (specify the approximate number)	High	Medium	Low
9a. Incidence of domestic violence against women in last 5 years			
9b. Incidence of atrocities against women in the village in last 5 years			
9c. Cases of dowry deaths reported in the village in last 5 years (if yes, please specify)	Yes	No	
9d. Liquor is prohibited in the village	Yes	No	

Function 10: Assessing Resource Allocation to Women in Development Projects Undertaken during Previous Year

Tool: A Summary Sheet

Scheme/Development Project Implemented	Resource Allocation to Women	No. of Women Beneficiaries from Various Caste Categories in the Village							
		Open		SC		ST		Other Marginal Caste (specify)	
		Married	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single	Married	Single

Of the Total (annual) GP Budget, Specify the Utilisation of 10% Fund for Women and Children

Year	Name of the Activity Undertaken	Funds Allocated	No. of Women Beneficiaries as per Caste Category	Funds Allocated	Children
2008-2009					
2007-2008					

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WOTR Publication List

No.	Name of the Books	Language	Authors	Year of Publication
	Panchayat Raj on the Ground Issues in Village-Level Panchayat Raj Operation	English	Ravi Deshpande and Dr. Marcella D'Souza,	2009
	Making Sanitation A "Clean" Habit: Lessons from A School Sanitation Project	English	Dr. Marcella D'Souza, Alpana Bose and Prashant Tambe	2008
	Impacts of Watershed Development Project Management through Labour and Machines: A Comparative Study of Two Villages In Maharashtra	English	Sandeep Jadhav, Dnyandeve Talule	2008
	लोकशाहीचे बलस्थान 'ग्रामसभा'	Marathi	WOTR	2008
	७३ व्या घटना दुरुस्तीमुळे ग्रामपंचायतीच्या कारभारातील बदल	Marathi	WOTR	2008
	चिमणचारा	Marathi	Dr Marcella D'Souza & Savita Pinjan	2007
	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in Watershed Development	English	Crispino Lobo & Abraham Samuel	2005
	Upscaling of Successful Experiences in the Mainstream Watershed Programme in India : Mechanisms, Instruments and Policy Considerations	English	WOTR, WASSAN, WDCU, PLF, MANAGE	2005
	Measurement and Record System for Watershed Activities	English/ Marathi	WOTR	2000
	Operations Manual - Guidelines For Operations in The Indo-German Watershed Development Programme	English	WOTR	1999
	Little Drops of Water Make A Mighty Ocean	English/ Hindi/ Marathi	WOTR	1998
	The Rain Decided To Help Us	English	Crispino Lobo and Gudrun Kochendorfer-Lucius	1995

About WOTR

Established in 1993 to undertake holistic and integrated development activities for poverty reduction in resource-fragile and rain-fed areas in India, Watershed Organization Trust (WOTR) is an NGO based in Ahmednagar, Maharashtra, that actually helps make the water flow where there is none. This is done by trapping the rain to regenerate the forests and enrich the ecosystem, for the people and by the people who live there.

The main focus areas of WOTR are capacity building of village groups and NGOs for participatory watershed development, integrated farming systems (agriculture, horticulture, livestock, organic farming, etc.), self help promotion, direct implementation of watershed projects, micro enterprise promotion, training and extension support for organisations and practitioners, development of concepts, pedagogies, training manuals, awareness generation tools and media aids, policy advocacy, documentation, knowledge capitalization, action research and publications.