

This Working Paper was prepared in 2001 and presented in a Seminar organized by BK School of Management Gujarat University Ahmedabad in 2001. It remains unpublished. However some ideas from this paper has found reflections in another paper of the author Innovating for Competitiveness published in 2002.

Re-inventing the Developmental Process

We are entering the internet age and yearning for a great India, with 40% out of the total population caught in the web of poverty and illiteracy. This segment is in no position to access the benefits of this new era. This is a matter of grave concern for every right thinking Indian. We are emerging into two 'India's – one linked to the globe with all the amenities of the millennium lifestyle and the other India mired in poverty, with the lifestyle of the dark ages. India cannot be a developed nation as long as we are unable to pull the latter out of this morass. All the developmental efforts will be nullified if we do not direct efforts and resources to bring up this segment. This article is an attempt to outline an action plan in this direction.

Where do we begin?

Economists have looked at the relationships between poverty, literacy, population growth and development. They also tell us that social poverty and backwardness are bigger barriers to development than mere economic poverty. Can we identify and locate the poor, the backward and focus all efforts of poverty alleviation and development at them?

With this in view we have initiated a project to identify and locate the poorest of the poor. This project looks at various parameters like literacy, per capita income, infrastructure availability, life expectancy, birth rate, death-rate, infant mortality etc. at the district level and rank them for the levels of poverty. We hope to come out with our observations shortly.

Focus

The main thesis of this article is that we must focus on the poorest of these districts and bring them up in the shortest span of time by directing all our resources.

The article presumes that we are able to identify the poorest segments in terms of the district as a unit and based on the ranking of the poorest districts attempts to suggest a structure that will, *inter alia*,

- ◆ Direct all resources and skills to develop these districts in the shortest span of time.
- ◆ Explore ways to mobilize the resources and skills
- ◆ Identify the players in the transformation.
- ◆ Help catalyse the transformation.

There are a couple of other premises too. ***First:*** We believe that development is not the prerogative of the government alone; nor is the government in a position to bring about the required transformation in a short span of time. We believe that all of us – intellectuals, social workers, executives, industrialists have a responsibility to bring up this second India. ***Second:*** the

40% of the population, once awakened, will bring up the purchasing power of the nation tremendously. Seen in this perspective the industrialists and the corporate sector will not be

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indulging in any act of philanthropy if they deploy part of their resources towards development; they will only be creating new markets for their own products and services. We have tried to weave a plan that involves symbiotic and collective effort of government, NGOs ,the corporate sector and a host of others.

Action Plan

Fig. 1. Gives a pictorial representation of what is envisaged in this action plan. The villages need to be connected to the world outside. For this we envisage that motorable roads are a must. The villages need to be given free-healthcare through health centres. Sending children need to be developed as a habit. The adult also need to be encouraged towards literacy and wider horizons of knowledge; so we need adult education programmes. In order to make the people more aware of their surroundings we can rely on the power of the media and technology to a large extent. We have envisaged Community Centres for this purpose. Credit facilities, creation markets and employment generation programmes also need to be thought out.

Most of these are already envisaged in the developmental plans of each of the state governments and substantial funds are spent on these schemes. But somehow they have failed to reach the real target audience. So the emphasis here is on creating a delivery mechanism that is viable , credible, authentic and is manned by committed persons.

The project envisages creation of developmental infrastructure in every village of the targeted area. The basic infrastructure identified for these purposes are

a) Education

1. Primary school for every population of 1000.
2. A high school for every population of 1000 families (or 5000 persons)
3. Adult education centres in every village of 1000 persons. These will continue till illiteracy prevails.

b) Health care

1. A primary health centre for every village of 1000 persons.
2. A 10 bed hospital cum maternity home with facilities for surgery, etc. for every population of 5000 persons.
3. Training and deployment of bare-foot health workers in every village. (preference can be given to traditional systems)

c) Communication and other infrastructure

1. Every village to be connected by tar macadam roads. Road building can be through community/ voluntary efforts .
2. Every village to be electrified.

3. Every village to be wired and a PCO to be established in every village at a central / appropriate location. Local person/entrepreneur to be encouraged. Next stage will be a cybercafe.
4. A community centre to be setup in every village with TV facilities and a small library cum reading room. This could be used as the adult education centre also. Initially all these will be free. But after sometime maintenance of the centre and development of the library will be through contributions. Induct and train local persons in managing these facilities.

d) Employment Generation

1. Create a market in every village with a cluster of pucca shops and an open ground for a Hat.
2. Encourage a weekly market in every village. [Monday in village 1, Tuesday in village 2 and so on]
3. Bring a Bank to the village [Co operative Bank/Rural Bank/any other Bank] Encourage co-operatives.
4. Bring in entrepreneur development agencies into the village.

e) Others

1. Encourage sports, encourage formation of clubs, organize competition.
2. Encourage cultural activities, organize fairs and competitions along with local festivals.

How do we create and manage these ?

To create an effective delivery system in every village and manage it effectively we will need

- a. substantial resources
- b. expertise and skills
- c. dedicated/committed manpower and finally
- d. an effective organisation

It is in this context that we have thought of involving NGOs , the corporates and professional bodies in addition to the Government agencies for specific capabilities that these players possess. For every district an NGO will be identified to manage the developmental activities , a company will be identified to provide the financial and managerial thrust, a professional body will be identified to monitor and facilitate the developmental activities .All these and the government represented by the District Collector will form the Governing Council for the district' s development. This is the Command Structure shown in Fig.2.

Participants in the Project

The major players in this act will be government, NGO's, Industrialists (or corporates) and professional bodies. Their roles have also been identified.

Government's active support is required to successfully implement the developmental work in these poor and perhaps remote districts. The only machinery available in these areas are those of government and their support and co-operation is essential for successful execution. It could be in the form getting land for a school, health centre, community centre, road etc. The land needs to be

on lease basis only. Government's participation lends legitimacy and acceptance to the project. It could fulfil the regulatory requirements also.

NGO's form the backbone of the project. The schools (primary and adult education) the health centre, community centre etc. will be created and managed by the NGO's. They will involve the local population in the day to day management and eventually over a period of time the management will rest with the local population. NGO's are chosen for this role because of their prior experience in these fields and because of their ability to bring in dedicated people to manage these projects.

Industrialists'/Corporate's role is to provide the financial resources. A company will adopt a district and provide all the funds required for its development. Professional agencies can play a supervisory and supportive role. They can also help channelise funds from various agencies other than the corporates; they will monitor the execution of the project, make mid-course corrections and ensure that the targets are achieved in time.

Organisation

The district level command structure is shown in Fig.2. Above this there will be a National co-ordination Council. This can be manned by a set of eminent persons representing a wide spectrum of the society but with a definite commitment to the rapid transformation of India. This body will give the directions to the District level Governing Councils, liaison with the central and state governments and make decision like which district to be included for adoption and which districts should exit from the scheme [on achieving certain specified level of development]etc.

At the district level there is the Governing Council which will have representatives of each of the players – government, NGO, corporate entity identified as the adopter of the district and the professional bodies. This body will be responsible for full implementation of the project in the district.

Finances

On a rough estimate we envisage Rs 20 crores will be required to create the developmental infrastructure in every district; Later on about Rs 5 crores will be required to maintain and manage the system of a district every year. This amount will have to come from the Corporate that is adopting the district. Govt of India may provide 100 % tax exemption for such deployments. We expect that this commitment from the adopter will be for a period of 10 years. In the initial period of 3 to 5 years all the facilities will be absolutely free to the inhabitants of the district/village. After the initial period there will be gradual introduction of prices to the facilities. This will gradually reduce the financial burden on the adopter. In any case at the end of 10 years the period of adoption will be over; the infrastructure created will revert to the local bodies created therein in every village.

Conclusion.

The programme is intended to take the districts forward in a short span of time. When it has achieved reasonable level of development and the facilities created therein have begun to be self-reliant the programme gets closed in a phased manner. The Governing Council can take a decision on this aspect. The NGO, the corporate [the adopter] and the professional body can move out to other districts with this experience. Concerted efforts of this nature will transform the

villages – reduce illiteracy, increase awareness , open up the villages for employment and entrepreneurship, increase the income level of the population. We expect that a 10 year horizon will have a significant impact on the profile of these villages The project should continue in various districts for quite some time to come.

Fig.2.
Command Structure

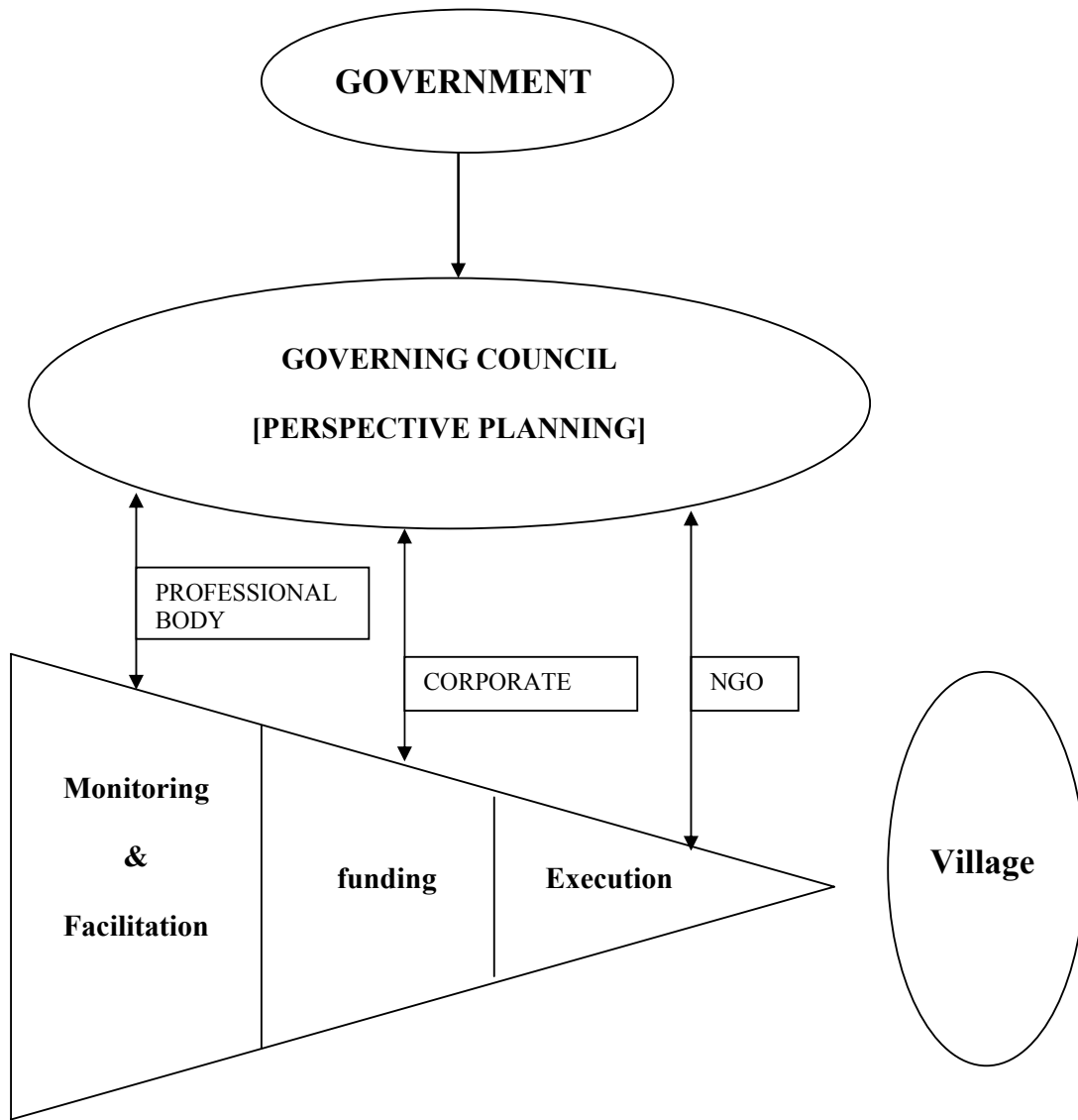
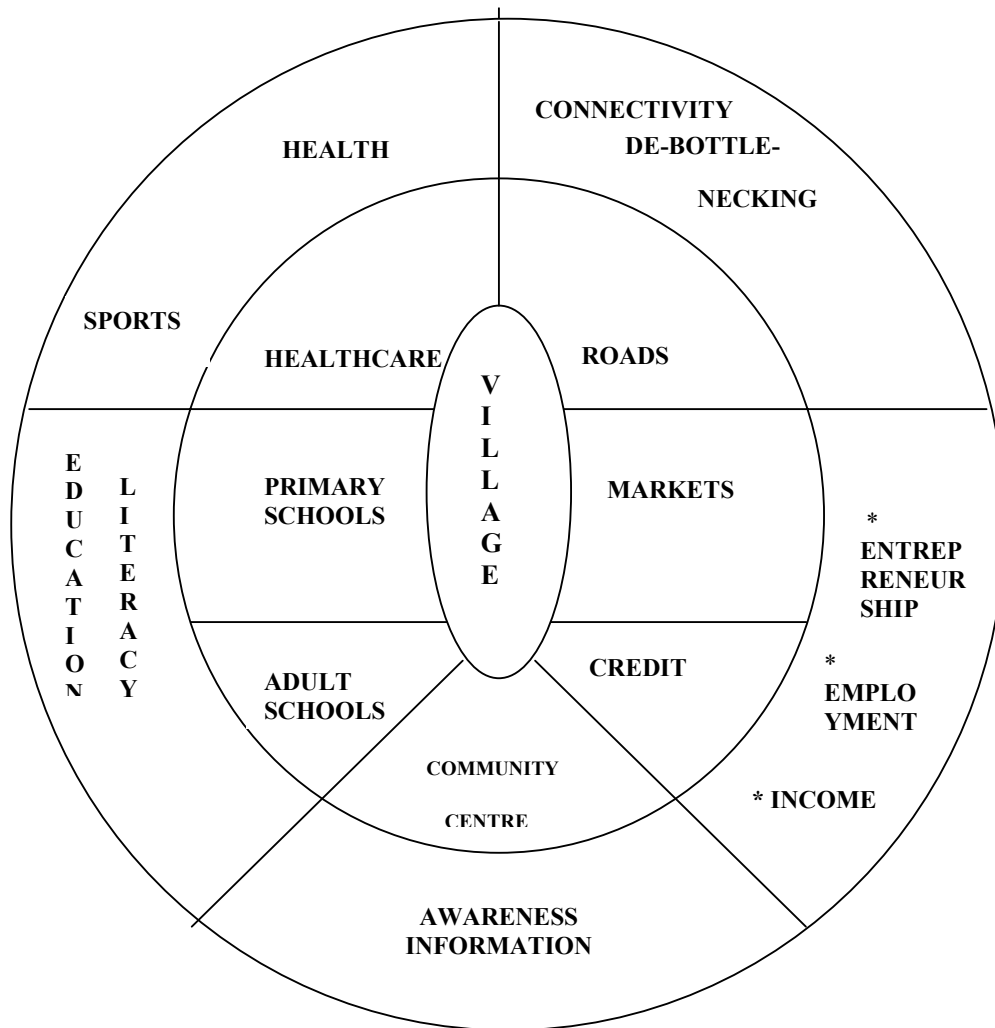


Fig.1
Re-inventing the Developmental process



<u>GOVT:</u>	District Collector, other Govt machinery	Permission, Legitimacy, Land, Locating Regulation, Supervision.
<u>NGO :</u>	Identify a Lead-NGO For a district	Creating and maintaining schools, Healthcentres, Community Centres etc.
<u>Corporate</u>	Identify a specific corporate for a district.	Funding, adoption
<u>Prof. Bodies</u>	CII, FICCI, Institution Of Engineers, Mgt Assn Bar Assn, CAs etc.	Mobilising & Channelling resources Monitoring