

# Business Sharing its Progress with Villagers Towards Developing Model Villages

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## Abstract

In a developing country like India, village centric development is very critical for improving Human Development Index of the country. In this direction, corporate contribution assumes significance for rehabilitation and resettlement of project affected people and overall intervention under its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative. Since India is a country of villages, CSR has to be more sensitive towards the economic, social and cultural needs of rural society of the country.

In this paper, it is proposed to gear all interventions for promoting model villages. Model village presents a credible vehicle for bringing about sustainability of a village community unit. A model village must have three significant components of infrastructure development, livelihood promotion and provision of services. Infrastructure development must cater to creating basic physical as well as social infrastructure like approach road, school building, community centre and social capital. Promotion of livelihood includes skill training, self-employment, employment opportunities and village enterprise development, while provision for services for the villagers includes health care, education, sanitation, recreational and other community services. Model village plan envisages a self-contained village community at the apex of all the pillars of sustainability, namely, livelihood, infrastructure and services. The future of Indian economy and the prospect of industry are going to depend largely on building sustainable and self-maintained smallest self-governing units called model villages.

**Keywords:** Model Village, CSR, Social Development, Village, Corporate Social Responsibility, Participatory, India, NGO, CBO

sustainable development or corporate citizenship (Garain, 2001). Moving away from the traditional approach, corporate rather than following top to bottom mechanism, are increasingly bearing stakeholders' perspectives in mind, thereby considering CSR as a comprehensive set of policies, practices and programmes that are integrated throughout the business operations. CSR assumes critical significance in a scenario where the corporate responsibility towards society starts at the behest of an individual at the company and gradually gets institutionalised across the corporate arena. One is reminded of the famous words of late John F Kennedy, former US president, who had said "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for the country". As our economy is growing at a rapid speed, the means becomes as important as the end, if not more. No business should flourish at the cost of the society. Business houses must behave ethically and contribute to the economic development of the country while improving the quality of life of the employees and that of the society at large. Experts argue that CSR and even philanthropy can be a source of competitive advantage for a company. In a country like India, where more than seventy percent of the population reside in the country side, doing a bit of good to them makes a big business sense as huge volumes and large potential exist there for market expansion for any company. CSR means not only investment of funds for social activities but also integration of business processes with social processes.

## CSR Scenario in India

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has in recent years found a place on the global agenda. CSR has manifold spectrum including a number of areas as human rights, work place, consumer protection, climate and environment protection and sustainable management of natural resources. In India, CSR has evolved to encompass employees, customers, stakeholders and

## Understanding CSR

In the name and domain of CSR, corporate are contributing to provide basic services to the deprived and disadvantaged, to create social infrastructure, to promote ethical work practices, to implement the principals of Global Compact, and facilitate active participation and interaction of the community in enhancing their quality

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of life. Various CSR programs on health care, drinking water, literacy and education, women empowerment, etc., are making deep impact on the sustainable development of the community. With the increasing emphasis on CSR on the part of the government as well as the various chambers of commerce, the perspective and concept of CSR relating to changing face of CSR from voluntary to mandatory, corporate continuing to raise the bar towards its contribution to society, and striving to make the world a better place to live. Corporate are forming collaboration and linkages to sustain CSR initiatives through leveraging funds for increasing outreach and impact of its development initiatives. In brief, CSR activities, perspectives, domains and concepts are undergoing changes in the company, industry and country.

There is not universally accepted or legally mandated definition of CSR. Different people and organizations perceived the concept of CSR differently and found it to be “highly contextual in terms of corporate and national environment” (Broomhill, 2007: 6). The concept of CSR varies in the context of developing and developed countries. While employee welfare or statutory obligations is part of CSR in developed countries, CSR in developed country context refers to corporate contribution benefiting those having no direct economic stake in the company. Different corporate within and across countries and industries at times assumes different perspectives, while deliberating on CSR. Even a corporate having global operations found to be having different outlook while undertaking CSR in different continents/countries. The issues rotate around what gets included in CSR. There is a lack of consensus or standardisation. The debates on CSR domain may include statutory versus non-statutory engagement in non-business activities, employee versus non-employee benefits, direct (having economic stake) versus indirect stakeholders, R&R versus community work, work-centre neighbourhood engagement versus social cause promotion elsewhere, etc. In this context it may be useful to quickly review some of the definitions of CSR.

While preserving the profitability of the company for the sake of its stakeholder, they are expected to be socially responsible. It is universally accepted that every business has a responsibility to respond to the concerns of the larger society in which it operates, beyond the interest of its shareholders and its obligations towards adhering to statutory norms (Utting, 2005). Commission

of the European Communities (2001:8) defines CSR as “a concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis”.

As CSR is receiving greater attention in the current socio-political scenario due to media, public and the state, different perspectives and approaches for CSR are emerging. The three frequently referred approaches are transformative, responsive and proactive. While the transformative approach aims at addressing certain grounded issues and bringing in remarkable positive change in the lives of society at large, the responsive approach deals with the needs and demands emerging from communities. The Proactive approach focuses on preventive measures by creating awareness among the society on health issues, environment, and climate change. All the three approaches reflect general perspective towards long term planning.

Keeping in context the societal concern for sustainability, many businesses introduced the triple bottom-line perspective in its business perspective – concern for profit, people and planet. The triple bottom line approach to CSR emphasizes a Company’s commitment to operate in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner. Some business entrepreneurs and leaders took a further step talking about shared values and sharing business benefits. The emerging discussion and perspectives lead to business, under the domain of CSR, working with existing community to create wealth, develop community ownership, and build social capital through corporate-community partnership (Ararat, 2005).

## Rural India Scenario

India with a majority rural population referred to be living in village. The rural areas are still home to nearly 69 per cent of the India’s 1.21 billion people (Ranjan, 2011). From the very first five-year plan period till today, rural development in India has been at the centre of policy making. As per Planning Commission (Ranjan, 2011) estimates, rural poverty is still about 37 per cent of total population. Given the chronic and multi-dimensional nature of poverty in India, it is imperative that the programs of rural development rely on a multi-pronged approach.

For creating an impact that can promote inclusive growth, the focus must be on the villages of India. India's GDP is growing at over eight percent and Rural India is growing at about meagre two percent (2.1%). About 800 million people live in approximately 640,000 villages. About seventy-five percent of the poor are in rural villages and thirty percent live under chronic poverty (Drishtee, 2012). This leads to increasing un-sustainability of a village unit. Most of the rural poor depend on rain-fed agriculture and fragile forests for their livelihoods. And agriculture contribution is only about fourteen percent of India's GDP (Ranjan, 2011).

Country's rural economic and social indicators are still much beyond a satisfactory level. Various government schemes and programs are meant to address some of these issues. According to UNICEF-WHO Joint Monitoring Program Report 2010 (Grameen Bharat, 2012a), nearly sixty percent of India's 1.1 billion people still practice open defecation (against 15% of people in the world openly defecating) and close to fifty-eight percent of all open defecation in the World is in India. For sanitation mission, Nirmal Bharat, government has allocated 1500 crore rupees in the year 2011-12 of the 11<sup>th</sup> five year plan and 3500 crore rupees as budget estimate during the year 2012-13, the first year of the 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan. 'Swachh Bharat Abhiyan' is the latest drive to clean up India aiming at construction of individual, cluster and community toilets, eliminating or reducing open defecation, keeping villages clean among others.

National Rural Drinking Water Program (NRDWP)<sup>1</sup> aims at ensuring safe drinking water supply to the rural poor. In the beginning of 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan (as on April 01 of 2012), out of the 16,64,184 rural habitations in the country, there were 99,380 quality affected habitations in which at least one drinking water source is affected by iron, fluoride, arsenic, salinity and nitrate contamination (Grameen Bharat, 2012b). There is a need to provide potable drinking water to affected habitations. Under the 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana' (PMGSY), the government targets to provide all-weather road

1 Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission of the Ministry of Drinking Water and Sanitation. Bharat Nirman: Rural drinking water. <http://www.mdws.gov.in/bharatnirman/DMU-Report.pdf> viewed on 13/08/2013 at 14.14

connectivity to all eligible unconnected habitations in rural areas of country. Lack of connectivity and approach road is one among various reasons for the backwardness of rural areas.

'Mahila Kissan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana' (MKSP) of the government of India has an ambitious mission of bridging the gender imbalance in rural areas. In the early nineties of the last millennium, the Regional Expert Consultation on Gender Issues in Agriculture and Rural Developmental Policy in Asia and the Pacific organized by the FAO<sup>2</sup> noted that "Women have had almost two decades since the International Women's Year in 1975 to 'integrate into development', but it has not happened yet. Rural women are lagging behind by ages, and are plunging into poverty faster than their male counterparts". Women have visibly lagged behind men by most social and economic criteria. Women's work day is longer than men's, and most have reached the limits of endurance in stretching their day, yet women's work and toil goes unnoticed, invisible and uncounted (Shankar, 2011). Women harbour specialized knowledge, and represent a pool of highly-skilled labour in many areas of agricultural and rural development, which men lack. Women increasingly head rural households, and are the chief economic providers for the families. Small farm production is increasingly unattractive to males who too frequently abandon agriculture in favour of better remunerated work in other sectors, leaving women to eke out a living on often degraded land (Grameen Bharat, 2012c).

The above is the real and true picture of rural India and its population. There is still a wide gap between the programs and benefits of initiatives taken either by government or through CSR. It is the time to be proactive in taking up the responsibility and be responsive to the needs of rural India and draw transformative programs for the rural India. Rural development may be a simple task theoretically but it is not in reality. Particularly, India, being the one of the fastest growing economies of the world, with the second highest population, is one of the nations with extremes of economic classes. Given picture of rural India where country's population is still fighting for the basic requirements of survival, with time, there have been number of non-governmental organisations

2 FAO Regional Expert Consultation on Gender Issues in Agricultural and Rural Development Policy in Asia and the Pacific held on 1-5 November, 1993 at Bangkok, Thailand. Page 1.

(NGOs) that are development oriented and playing a very important role in the lives of poor, especially rural poor. NGOs are supplementing the rural population with various requirements in all spheres of day to day lives.

In India, the scope of development is not narrow but very wide, as it includes not just the economic development but the growth on social front, quality of life, empowerment, women and child development, education and awareness of its citizens. The task of development is so huge and complicated that just implementing government plans is not sufficient to fix the problem. To achieve this, a holistic vision and collaborative efforts involving various departments, agencies and NGOs is required. Owing to such a great need, the number of NGOs in India is increasing rapidly and, at present, there are about 25,000 to 30,000 active NGOs in India (Kaur, 2013).

With the concept of CSR strengthening and speeding up, companies are taking proactive interest in rural India. With the help of NGOs, lot of programs and projects are taking shape in building the rural India. The central public sector enterprises are holding the forefront of implementing CSR activities very well, even before the implementation of two percent mandatory spending as per the new Company Act of 2013 (Ministry of Corporate Affairs, 2012). The companies are thus making commendable contribution in building our nation.

## CSR and Indian Villages

The concept of CSR in large companies in India is in synchronisation with the definition of World Business Council for Sustainable Development (Holme and Watts, 2000), being “The continuing commitment by business to behave ethically and contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the local community and society at large”. CSR activities are guided by company’s CSR Policy, which is an important document like a bible for the CSR department. It has evolved in the company over the years. It defines company as a corporate citizen and lays principles for carrying out its social and community level intervention.

CSR has its historical roots in the Gandhian Trusteeship, Vinoba Bhave’s Bhoodan Movement and the path charted out by Tatas and Birlas in India. Tata Steel, starting about 100 years ago, evolved an encompassing culture of social

responsibility that not only sustains but also enriches the lives of the people and communities it touches and supports. The CSR strategy of the company was inspired by Jamsetji Tata’s conviction that, “In a free enterprise, the community is not just another stakeholder, but is, in fact, the very purpose of its existence.” With 1000 crore Indian rupees spending in 2013-14, Tata Group, being salt-to-software enterprise, has emerged as biggest CSR spending group in the country. This diversified Indian multinational spends well above 2% of its net profit, a minimum requirement for an Indian company under the Companies Act of 2013 (India CSR News Network, 2014). Similarly, the footprint of the Aditya Birla<sup>3</sup> Group’s CSR spans 3,000 villages in India, reaching out to seven million people annually. Believing trusteeship concept, the Group, reaches out to underserved communities for making a meaningful difference to them.

The CSR policy of all Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSE) has been mandated, directed and governed by the Directorate of Public Enterprises (DPE) guidelines for CSR (DPE, 2012). The Companies Act of 2013 provide statutory directive for CSR intervention by companies fulfilling certain criteria. The companies are modifying their CSR policy as per the Companies Act of 2013. Public Sector Enterprises (PSE) believe that it has a responsibility to fulfil towards the people and the environment in shaping a better future for the nation. Overall CSR is seen to be very intrinsic to a company’s business philosophy, starting with rehabilitation and resettlement program for project affected people, followed up with on-going corporate-community partnerships and also adhoc emergency disaster intervention elsewhere. CSR overall has been strategically reaching newer heights. The main objective of CSR in PSEs has been to operate its business in an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable manner, and to take up programmes that benefit the communities.

CSR encourages catering to the national plan objectives of the government of India as well as the Millennium Development Goals so as to ensure gender sensitivity, skill enhancement, entrepreneurship development and employment generation. The corporate CSR thrust areas in general includes environment protection, infrastructure development, drinking water and sanitation, health care, community development, education and empowerment.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.adityabirla.com/csr/overview>

CSR projects are typically executed through implementing agencies including community based organisations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), social enterprises, private firms and national and state level institutions of the central and state governments.

As most companies have presence in the villages either for production or for supply chain, company's CSR makes a direct connect with the villages, either for adhoc support of some events like health camp or planned intervention. However, it is the high time to channelize the resources and put concentrated focus on developing our villages, Indian villages, starting from the ones, remotely located and connected, around the company's work centres to anywhere in the country. Companies must engage in strategic alliance with local partners to promote model villages around its plant sites and work centres.

The emergence of CSR and sustainable development as important concerns of business activity is the result of realization that any business conducted with the sole motive of profit maximization for the shareholders, in disregard of societal and environmental concerns is bound to fail in the long run. The companies are increasingly recognizing that CSR is the way to build trust in business. CSR has moved from the periphery of business to centre stage. To advance CSR, we must root it in a broad understanding between the company and society by anchoring it in strategies and activities of grassroots. We are still in the initial phase of CSR implementation and are taking baby steps towards fulfilment of the objective of total village development. With increased resource availability and institutionalized approach to CSR, professional intervention in terms of need identification, planned program, periodic monitoring and impact assessment for developing the villages will bring in gradual shift towards charting a new path for CSR in improving the quality of life of its target population, mainly the villagers.

### Rationale for Building Model Villages

Given the current scenario of Indian villages, infrastructure, livelihood and services support are very essential to a village community. These three are interdependent and interlinked. Poor connectivity and approach road deprives the remotely located communities of several opportunities, facilities and services. Developing infrastructure will resolve some of the issues and in doing so the process is as beneficial as the ends, since the local villagers will get

livelihood during the course of developing infrastructure. The efforts will also help mitigating problem of migration from village due to absence of job opportunities. However, lack of a sustained livelihood opportunity keeps the rural poor stuck in the vicious cycle of poverty. Some of the livelihood opportunities could be labour work in infrastructure development projects. Thus, these two complement each other and serves great purpose for the rural community.

By creating necessary infrastructure so as to change the outlook of village and overall development of a village can be endorsed as a model village and it can serve as an example for carrying out developmental activities in other nearby villages in a phased manner. The critical factors for developing model villages are (a) minimize the rural – urban divide, (b) check the migration of population, (c) improve the quality of rural life, (d) demonstration of latest technology, (e) integrated development of area, based on local resources, and (f) optimum utilization of resources available under various schemes.

Model village development programme is essentially a plan of action for the development of an area or areas which are lagging behind in socio-economic development due generally to prevalence of very low level of literacy and education and heavy dependence on primary production, viz. agriculture, animal husbandry, fishery etc. and wherein the distribution of productive assets, such as land, is highly skewed (giving rise to serious disparities in income levels), and development of social and physical infrastructure is lagging behind. To promote the development of an area, or any section of the population living therein, higher result can be achieved only by giving due attention to the development of human resources and the production potential of the area and build-up of basic physical and social infrastructure required. Technology has changed the entire world in which we live but the villagers and their quality of life did not change much in India. A great vision about an ideal "model village" is creating villages as productive centres, using appropriate technologies and having skilful workers and excellent environment.

The present Indian development scenario indicates that even after 66 years of independence, illiteracy, hunger, unemployment, inadequate infrastructure and medical facilities, poor housing, over population and poverty continued to exist in the rural, tribal and urban areas of

the country. The basic needs of the people could not be met in spite of abundant natural resources, cattle wealth, workforce and large pool of technocrats and scientists available in the country. About 40% of our villagers do not have proper roads; 1.8 lakh villages do not have primary schools; 4.5 lakh villages have drinking water problems; there is a shortage of 140 lakh rural dwelling units; and the rural infrastructure suffers from large deficiencies. Nearly 500 million people remain illiterate and 80% students' dropouts at 8th standard level itself and 50 percent of the students invariably fail at secondary school examination level. Adding to these, continuous population explosion and environmental degradation have been the major problems in India. The rural people still suffer from indigence, ignorance and illiteracy. As Mahatma Gandhi opined that India lives in villages, till today there are inadequate roads, transportation, communication, health and sanitation facilities. In spite of so many developmental schemes, projects introduced by the state and central government agencies, even today basic needs of villages such as food, shelter and clothing have not been successfully addressed.

Realizing the critical socio-economic status of villagers residing in remote villages, the concept of designing Model Village Development program has evolved. Often rural community are found to be unsecured continuously struggling for their survival and deprived of all rights which they deserved. This clearly showcases need for their development which is due to ignorance, remoteness of the area and corrupt and failure of government program delivery system. Social and developmental initiatives in an integrated approach on wider scale by any government or non-government agencies is the need of hour to work effortlessly to bring improvement in the rural socio-economic strata and rural community empowerment.

So, a conceptual model village is proposed where the villagers act as decision makers, partners, and beneficiaries with multi-sartorial, multifunctional and integrated development to achieve the holistic and sustainable development backed up by futuristic and progressive skills, leading to higher levels of productivity and improvement in overall quality of life.

### **Model Village Concept**

Model village is the smallest self-governing, self-maintained and self-sustainable village community

unit. It is self-reliant, independent and peaceful unit. Model village plan envisages for a self-contained village community on the apex of all the pillars of sustainability namely infrastructure, livelihood and services.

Infrastructure development, livelihood promotion and provision of services are regarded as the essential elements for development of a village to a model village. Infrastructure development must cater to creating basic physical as well as social infrastructure like approach road, school building, community centre and social capital. Promotion of livelihood includes skill training, self-employment, employment opportunities and village enterprise development, while provision for services for the villagers includes health care, education, sanitation, recreational and other community services.

Authors like Brayne (1937), promoted the idea of self-help and model villages, where villagers were urged to expend their time and labour, without remuneration, for improving rural life. These nascent ideas of rural development did not crystallize into structured programmes for extensive application until they were backed with the needed resources and official support. The most prominent were: Community development programmes, integrated rural development programmes, and infrastructure development programmes.

Concept of model village is developed with the objective of adding value to socio-economic aspects of the villages, mostly the farming community. Focus is on the three key aspects as mentioned above – Livelihood, infrastructure and services. The idea is expected to bring changes in the rural practices and improve the conditions of rural village by great miles. A Model Village is a self-sustainable rural community that is able to generate and maintain the resources necessary to improve its level of wellbeing and happiness without depleting economic, social & environmental values. In doing so, the Model Village strengthens the sustainability pillars of "Livelihood", "Infrastructure" and "Services". Model Village presents a credible vehicle for bringing about sustainability of a village community unit. Model village is to engage rural communities and develop village based micro-enterprises that enable the increase of assets, income generation opportunities, provision of adequate services and advancement of social equity and sustainability.

A model village is also a modern, secular, democratic system empowered with prosperous and harmonious life

suffused with human values sublimated with spiritual inspiration. Model village should also have a self-propelling model for ensuring growth with equality and social justice within the participatory framework. The crux and pivot of village development will be a villager who is both a partner and beneficiary simultaneously. This scenario needs a suitable social and psychological environment to foster cooperative and voluntary spirit among people; a pragmatic people centred development policy and setting up of appropriate people's institutions by aiming at knowledge society in the 21st century with effective people's participation and partnership. In this context, model villages will play a vital role and transform all the present form of villages into self-dependent and supporting units which ultimately augment the overall development of the country. The making of a model village entails ensuring self-reliance in all aspects — education, Community Health, Self-employment & Sustainable Livelihood as well as easy access to avail the benefits of government program and scheme for the populace to ensure all round development of village community with better and sustainable approach. In the context of model villages, sustainability can be considered through three different lenses: sustainability of livelihood, sustainability of processes, and sustainability of services. Sustainability of outcomes refers to the extent the improvements in quality of life or standard of living of villagers will endure beyond the project completion. The model village initiative seeks and expects viability of institutions and their capacity and potential for survival and continued function. The activities promoted by the project will preserve rather deplete the natural resource base for the village. Any lucrative activity that gradually exhausts the resources upon which it depends will not be sustained (CSVBD, 2014).

Characteristic of a model village is different from the present rural character, dominated by agriculture, to semi-urban, with a larger share of the income from secondary and services sectors than the primary sector. Within the primary sector the share of allied agricultural activities would increase, which would help in providing employment opportunities for people involved in agriculture as casual workers. Non-farm activities would also encourage contract arrangements in employment and not the casual one. It would further increase women's participation in work and slow down the out-migration process from villages to urban centres.

An Action Plan, designed by CRRID<sup>4</sup> in consultation with the representatives of GramPanchayat/Gram Sabha for building a model village is given below: (a) meeting of Gram Sabha, (b) identification of village problems, (c) prioritization of needs at village level, (d) preparation and approval of plan, (e) technical consultation with the department of rural development for resource mapping, (f) operational plan preparation by Gram Panchayat, and (g) identification and mobilization of resources,

Also a model village will have all requisite physical and social infrastructures for their socio-economic development. Disparity between SC and non-SC population in terms of common socio-economic indicators (e.g. literacy rate, completion rate of elementary education, IMR/MMR, ownership of productive assets, etc.) is eliminated, the indicators are raised to at least the level of the national average. Untouchability, discrimination, segregation, and atrocities against SCs are eliminated, as are other social evils like discrimination against girls/women, alcoholism and substance (drugs) abuse, etc., and all sections of society are able to live with dignity and equality, and in harmony with others. All BPL families, especially those belonging to SCs, have food and livelihood security, and are enabled to cross the poverty line and earn an adequate livelihood (Riddell, et al., 1995). All the children complete at least eight years of education, and Incidence of malnutrition, especially among children and women, is eliminated.

## Model Village Experiments in India

Historically, India has seen series of experiments in developing Model Village in various forms. Even before Independence, some of great Indian leaders pay attention to villages and village development. Mahatma Gandhi had dreamt of 'Gram Swaraj' & Model Villages. He had always foreseen self-reliant and peaceful Model Villages. Similarly several great leaders of various Nations including Abraham Lincoln, Nelson Mandela, Nasser and Mao have dreamt of Model Villages in various Countries across the globe.

Going down the history, for several centuries, there was no caste system in India. In the initial period caste was

<sup>4</sup> Source: Government of India Planning Commission. Rural Development: Chapter 5. viewed on 13/08/2013 at 15.14 [http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr\\_punjab/sdrpun\\_ch5.pdf](http://planningcommission.nic.in/plans/stateplan/sdr_punjab/sdrpun_ch5.pdf)

related to avocation in which one is involved. From being peaceful, progressive, and visionary over the centuries the villages are divided on caste, community, land and resources in to fragments both in the mind and on the ground. Just as partition of India had its aftermath repercussions, the divisions and fragmentation of villages had its irreversible damage for several centuries. Hence the concept of Model Villages seen in the contemporary reality with its historical loss of time and resources making a great Nation stagnant, degraded, degenerated, under developed and still developing even after 5,000 years of its history and civilizations. From being powerful people in more or less self-reliant villages, we have become dependents and parasites whether it is World Bank, other developmental agencies, poverty reduction projects or even employment guarantee scheme.

Innumerable efforts have gone into planned process of development, mixed economy, top to bottom and bottom to top approaches, decentralization of Panchayat Raj, 73<sup>rd</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> amendments of the constitution, approaches for employment of poor women, youth, senior citizens, Govt. & NGOs collaboration, external aid, Nationalization of Banks, promoting rural credit, green and white revolutions, second green revolution and second freedom struggle. All these have undoubtedly contributed for revival of economic growth, reconstructions of villages and reversal of degradation of resources in the villages, but the ultimate goal of "Model Villages" still to be achieved (Garain, 1994).

Govt. of India has been playing a vital role since the introduction of Integrated Rural Development Programme in 1981, Drought Prone Areas Programme in 1983, to Establishment of Rural Development, Human Resources Development, Women & Child Welfare, Social Justice & Empowerment and several other Departments concerning the welfare of the people in the villages with required schemes and release of funds directly targeting the poor in the villages, as well as focusing on poverty reduction and economic development of the rural communities. Through the Ministries of Environment & Forest, Waste Land Development Board, Eco Development Board, Human Resources Developments, Agriculture, and Natural Resources, a great fillip to rural development, development efforts attempted so as to focus on integrated development of the villages.

During the last two decades, Govt. of India has taken

up several proactive measures for development of poor resource villages. By initiating National Literacy Mission in the late eighties, the focus was on literacy and education for all. The Govt. of India has brought in campaign approach of promoting education for all. Similarly by launching National Waste Lands Development Board, & Eco Development Boards, impetus was given to Natural Resources Development. Through IRDP and TRYSEM, impetus was given to various rural evocations of providing self-employment ventures with subsidy resulting in several lakhs of people coming out of poverty line. Similarly training for self-employment (TRYSEM) was also given importance which resulted in thousands of people taking up self-employment activities. Through DPAP, there was special emphasis to the Integrated Water Shed Development for the villages affected by drought and low rain fall, which had resulted in participatory Water Sheds Development activities in thousands of Water Sheds in India resulting in increased level of ground water, increased production and increased income level of stake holders in the Water Shed Development activity.

Over the years, the Govt. of India is increasingly funding to Rural Development, Agriculture, and Agriculture related programs. Various new schemes have been introduced for welfare of rural poor. Last 3-4 decades have seen tremendous improvement in NGOs sector working for rural poor. There has been rapid growth of organizations working in rural areas, as well as the levels of funding by government of India and external funding agencies resulting in tremendous growth, yielding results in government & NGO collaborations. During the period of Rajiv Gandhi as Prime Minister, stimulus was given to activities of Panchayat Raj Institutions and on IT & IT enabled services and concept of village knowledge centres was envisaged for information revolution.

In contemporary time, various forms of model villages are envisioned and executed in reality. Government of India, some foreign agencies, in-house non-governmental organisations or big corporate houses (government or private) are taking interest in developing model villages. Some of these programs are comprehensive, integrated and sustainable village development and some may be focused on a specific cause or phenomenon. There are numerous programs and schemes run by Govt. of India.

In the following section, a brief review of some of the government and non-government initiatives that aimed at

contributing towards developing one or more components of model villages is being presented:

### Parliamentarian's Model Village Scheme

The Saansad Adarsh Gram<sup>5</sup> Yojana (Parliamentarian's Model Village Scheme) of the government of India launched by the Prime Minister on August 15, 2014 will focus on developing one village in each constituency of every Member of Parliament (MP). While the new model village scheme is unlikely to see any large additional funds being provided by the Centre, it provides for remixing of existing development schemes under the close scrutiny of a MP. The Model Village scheme will draw funding from existing schemes for rural development, health, sanitation, nutrition and other schemes, while focusing on the deliverables. The MPs can also utilise their existing MPLAD scheme grants for this scheme. The scheme requires a MP to adopt a village as a starting point and then achieve the holistic development targets in three villages by the end of 2019. The scheme aims at connecting schools in the model villages to the internet, providing access to internet libraries, ensuring every house in the selected village has a toilet, piped water connection and clean energy source, making sure every family has a permanent house, and roads to walk on. The villages will be turned into 'smart villages' (Sethi, 2014; Government of India, 2014).

### Nirmal Bharat Campaign

One of the most popular campaigns from government regarding 'Nirmal Bharat Abhiyan' (NBA) is to accelerate the sanitation coverage in the rural areas so as to comprehensively cover the rural community. NBA envisages covering the entire community for complete sanitation with the provision of individual household latrine (IHHL) to both below poverty line (BPL) and identified above poverty line (APL) households. There will also be provision of sanitation facilities in government schools and 'anganwadis' in government buildings along with solid and liquid waste management (SLWM).

Under Nirmal Bharat Campaign, Govt. of India has allocated Rs 1500 Crore in the last year of the 11<sup>th</sup> five year plan and 3500 crore Indian rupees as budget estimate

<sup>5</sup> 'Adarsh Gram' refers to model village

during the year 2012-13, the first year of the 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan (Gramin Bharat, May 2012). So, the focus is on total sanitation of each and every village to fight the open defecation which is very unsafe, unhygienic and unhealthy for villagers for various reasons. The campaign is well supported and promoted through print and electronic media.

### National Rural Drinking Water Program (NRDWP)

Another interesting program is on potable water. The National Rural Drinking Water Program (NRDWP) has been a flagship program of the Government and a component of the Bharat Nirman with the objective of ensuring provision of safe and adequate drinking water supply through hand pumps, piped water supply etc. to all rural areas, households and persons. This program was launched by merging three programs on Accelerated Rural Water Supply Program-ARWSP, Swajaldhara National Rural Water Quality Monitoring & Surveillance. Under this Centrally Sponsored Scheme financial assistance is provided to States/UTs for coverage of all rural habitations, including quality affected habitations with safe drinking water provision, sustainability measures for drinking water sources & systems, operation & maintenance of existing rural water supply schemes, support activities like IEC, training, MIS & Computerization etc. and Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance.

Union Minister Rural Development, Shri Jairam Ramesh informed that as on 01.04.2012, out of the 16,64,184 rural habitations in the country, there were 99,380 quality affected habitations in which at least one drinking water source is affected by Iron, Fluoride, Arsenic, Salinity and Nitrate contamination. Potable water needs to be provided to affected habitations. The mission is taken on proactive basis and potable water is being facilitated to villages.

### Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana

Another such program with special focus on infrastructure is 'Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana' (PMGSY), launched on 25th December 2000 as a fully funded Centrally Sponsored Scheme to provide all weather road connectivity to isolated rural areas of the country. The program envisages connecting all habitations with a population of 500 persons and above in the plain areas

and 250 persons and above in hill States, the tribal and the desert areas. According to latest data from the State Governments under a survey to identify Core Network as part of the PMGSY program, about 1.67 lakh Unconnected Habitations are eligible for coverage under the program. This involves construction of about 3.71 lakh km. of roads for new connectivity and 3.68 lakh km. under up gradation.

Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) is an ongoing process with the objective to provide approach road and all-weather connectivity to all eligible unconnected habitations of rural India. This has also taken shape as mass movement and has reshaped villages in large numbers.

## MGNREGA

From infrastructural need to address a concern like livelihood, popular National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) is designed at improving the income protection of the people in rural areas by ensuring hundred days of salary occupation in a financial year, to a rural family whose associates offer to do inexperienced work. The purpose of the Act is to make resilient resources and enhance the income source platform of the rural areas. The main aims and objectives of this government scheme are to directly benefit the rural poor and help them earn for their families. MGNREGA is a great mission to bring livelihood to the door steps of the poor villagers and help them stay at home rather than migrate from villages to the urban areas for the income earning opportunities.

Livelihood is very critical and lack of or direct visibility of earning opportunities makes the lives miserable for the rural communities. In the absence of sufficient exposure and skill development, the rural community is often dependable on unskilled work and labour and the number is always huge than the requirement and hence lot of them go without job and sit idle for many a days together. NREGA is a boom to the rural community and needs to reach to the poorest of the poor.

## National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)

**Keeping livelihood in mind, in June 2011,** Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India launched - **Aajeevika - National Rural Livelihoods**

**Mission (NRLM).** Aided in part through investment support by the World Bank, the Mission aims at creating efficient and effective institutional platforms of the rural poor enabling them to increase household income through sustainable livelihood enhancements and improved access to financial services. NRLM has set out with an agenda to cover 7 Crore BPL households, across 600 districts, 6000 blocks, 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats and 6 lakh villages in the country through self-managed Self Help Groups (SHGs) and federated institutions and support them for livelihoods collectives in a period of 8-10 years.

In addition, the poor would be facilitated to achieve increased access to their rights, entitlements and public services, diversified risk and better social indicators of empowerment. NRLM believes in harnessing the innate capabilities of the poor and complements them with capacities (information, knowledge, skills, tools, finance and collectivization) to participate in the growing economy of the country. NRLM is a great mechanism for poverty elimination through social mobilization in the villages. It is spreading faster and benefitting poorest of the poor villagers. Micro financing is also stressed upon for poverty alleviation in rural parts through Self Help Groups.

## Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation (BRLF)

Series of livelihood programs have been envisaged and the benefits are yet to reach all at the bottom of the pyramid. Livelihood emerges to be one of the most important issues and for that matter the rural development ministry has proposed a livelihoods foundation that will allow the government to partner with voluntary organizations in insurgency-hit central India during the 12th Five-Year Plan (2012-17).

A unique model of Public Private Partnership for development project is proposed through Bharat Rural Livelihood Foundation (BRLF). It started with a corpus amount of 1000 crore Indian rupees. Government of India partnered with various big private corporate houses like Tatas, Wipro, Infosys and Reliance. Govt. of India contributed 500 Crore and rest amount of corpus was shared by the four corporate houses. This foundation has sole motto of developing villages in terms of livelihood opportunities making the individuals self-sufficient to earn for his/her family.

## Bharat Nirman Volunteers (BNV)

The Government and the State Governments concerned have been implementing various welfare and development programmes for over many decades, however many evaluation studies have shown the gaps in implementation of the programs affecting the delivery of benefits to the intended BPL families. The delivery mechanisms placed at different levels are limited in size and the inadequate time to reach out to the targeted rural households also make the schemes reach not only untimely but also undeserving. Therefore, in order to provide the human face at the last mile connectivity with the rural households, it is envisaged to use the potential youth in the name of Bharat Nirman Volunteers (BNVs) to create awareness about all welfare and development programmes among rural households for better planning and quality implementation of programmes with transparency and accountability. Bharat Nirman Volunteer (BNV) is an individual who comes voluntarily from a rural household to act as an organic link between a group of families and hosts of various line departments with a purpose to ensure the unreached households to access benefits under various government sponsored programs.

The Ministry of Rural Development, Govt. of India, is in the process of initiating an ambitious program to train Bharat Nirman Volunteers to educate all those involved in the implementation of the various state-sponsored programs. This mass-based, decentralised, capacity building venture, the first of its kind in developing countries, intends to develop about 40 lakhs persons as Bharat Nirman Volunteers (BNVs). They will be engaged in creating awareness, increase mobilisation and participation in various government programmes and assist functionaries in shouldering responsibilities in a more effective manner. The Campaign of Bharat Nirman Volunteers (BNV) works as a powerful phenomenon for strengthening the gram panchayats.

## Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana (MKSP)

The status of women is worth alarming even after 66 years of independence. Given the scenario of women in Agriculture also, there is a need to enhance the opportunities for her empowerment, and realising the very need the Government of India has announced 'Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Pariyojana' (MKSP), as a

sub component of the National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM) and a budget of Rs. 100 crore was marked for the program during 2010-11. Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) will borne funding support of **up to 75%** (90% for North East and hill states) and the rest is borne by the respective state governments or any other donor agencies, national and international.

The primary objective of the MKSP is to empower women in agriculture by making systematic investments to enhance their participation and productivity, which will also in turn create and sustain agriculture based livelihoods of rural women. By establishing efficient local resource based agriculture, wherein women in agriculture gain more control over the production resources and manage the support systems, the scheme seeks to enable them to gain better access to the inputs and services provided by the government and other agencies. Once the production capacities of women in agriculture improve, food security ensues for their families and communities.

## Model village initiative in Assam

While discussing the programs on rural empowerment, few context specific programs are also worth mentioning. In the state of Assam, state govt. has taken up a mission to convert one village in each district to a model village. The proposed model village will have the following amenities: a) Drinking water facilities with tape water; b) At least one primary school with playground; c) Road connectivity with main road from the village and internal roads; d) Extension of electricity to all villagers with strengthening the transformer; e) One community hall with sitting arrangement and public addressing system; f) Sports facilities for the children and the youth of the village; and g) Other amenities if required will be fulfilled from other funds of the Department.

The program is worth appreciative. A sum of rupees one crore has been estimated for each model village. Thus, for one model village in each district, a total sum of rupees twenty seven crore has been proposed under model village scheme during the year 2010-11 for the state.

## Adarsh Krishi Gram

Similarly, in the state of Haryana, a program regarding development of "Adarsh Krishi Gram" as model

agricultural village was proposed to the State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) of 'Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana' (RKVY). It was stated that to create awareness & to show the impact of improved farm practices one village per districts would be developed as model village. A benchmark survey would be conducted to know the present status of crop parameters. Farmers' centric activities like awareness camps, use of certified seed, seed treatment, demonstrations, promotion of farm implements, micro irrigation, Underground Pipeline System (UGPL), soil health etc. will be promoted to show the measurable impact of these interventions. The concept of such model village is being examined and deliberated minutely including the financial implications. An amount of Rs. 200 lakhs is decided to be utilized at Rs. 10 lakhs per village. The activities of multiple domains are to be taken up for the model village to be developed.

### **Science and Technology Model villages focusing on Dalits**

The Union Ministry of Science and Technology has chalked out a plan to develop model villages in eight states across India in a bid to improve the living standards of Dalits in the country. Through technology intervention and other measures like mini-cottage industries, a plan has been chalked out to make these villages as real models. The project will be implemented in Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. The main focus of the plan is to develop infrastructure facilities in the villages and raise the level of health and education. The plan will also utilise local resources to create employment opportunities and mini cottage industries. A village resource centre will be set up to provide elementary knowledge to women and children.

Water conservation, energy conservation, housing with total cleanliness, out of clutches of alcohol and tobacco, well done up roads, usage of only organic manure for crops, village women have doctras and micro finance activities, implemented various gadgets for water supply without using electricity and oil purely on hydro technique, set up of WLL network by installing telecommunication tower. Each house in village has a computer and school children are given all basic education. They have their own server like pabal village vidyan ashram which helps them to get connected with experts in agriculture and nonfarm sector.

All houses are painted in one colour.

Garbage management, proper drainage arrangements, after bodies are burned the ash and bones are used as organic manures in field, so the idea is even if the village is isolated, it has well done roads, plantation techniques for vegetable and allied products are there, today village is independent and do not take power from MSEB, do not take water from govt., no funding is accepted from government, villagers need not entertain government officers as they are self-maintained and self-contained, they do not need any government programs, they have better health programs and connectivity for critical cases, schools campus are well developed and maintained, showing wonderful results, they have adopted modern watershed management technique and water harvesting including rain water. Horticulture and afforestation activities are at its peak. All plants and trees are planted after considering flora and fauna and keeping natural bio diversity balanced. No foreign trees like 'nilgiri' etc., are planted only those which suit their environment and do not affect or pollute surrounding biology are planted. All court cases are withdrawn and handled by panchayat.

It is a successful model village and has independent village community. Village women need to be empowered and have their own programs with wonderful earning. School has constructed its own building and all activities including maintenance of boarding school, organic manure, use of kitchen waste, and natural cool house for keeping vegetables fresh and no of activities are carried out by the school children itself. This is believed to be truly a testimony of The Better India.

### **Hiware Bazar Model Village**

In the discussion of Model Villages, the village with the highest GDP in the country is worth mentioning. Hiware Bazar, situated in the Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra is India's model village. Ensnored in the rain shadow area of the Sahyadari range, Hiware Bazar faced an acute water crisis and severe land degradation during the 1970s. Throughout the 1980s, the village had a rain fed farming situation which resulted in limited seasonal agriculture and forced the farmers to migrate to surrounding towns and cities for work. The village therefore was deprived of its sole source of income – agriculture and the inhabitants turned to local liquor production and selling, giving rise to criminal activities.

A five pronged approach has been adopted for the socio-economic infrastructure of the village that includes: Free labour, ban on grazing, ban on tree cutting, ban on liquor, and family planning. Shramdan has inculcated a work culture among the local people, making Hiware Bazar a model for community development. Ban of grazing & cutting trees has tremendously increased the production of grass and reforestation. Due to the family planning program (One Family One Child), the birth rate has been brought down to 11 per thousand. The Hiware Bazar Gram Sabha instituted a watershed development program and imposed a complete ban on water intensive cultivation like sugarcane, banana. Since 2004, Hiware Bazar has been conducting an annual water audit, measuring the total availability of water.

Hiware Bazar is now reaping the economic benefits of the developmental schemes. Each village resident earns almost double of most of the country's rural population. As a result 32 families that had earlier migrated to nearby urban areas of Mumbai & Pune have come back. The process of social integration has led to the formation of Women Thrift groups, Milk Dairy Society, Youth Clubs, Common crematorium facility and numerous other co-operatives.

### **Model village on WASH (Water, Sanitation & Hygiene)**

In line with the earlier discussed projects on drinking water and sanitation, the Millennium Villages Project (MVP) seeks to increase sustainable access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and to improve hygiene practices in an effort to improve health outcomes and empower girls and women to be effective agents in their communities. A WASH program must be comprehensive and holistic in order to successfully address the barriers related to the uptake of safe water, sanitation and hygiene related behaviours. Aim of the project is to develop a model village on WASH through awareness creation, construction of house hold toilets, garbage management, and construction of rain water harvesting structures, eradicate open defecation in the targeted villages.

S&T Communication program on "Eco & WASH Futures" aims to promote target specific S&T communication to raise awareness, promote scientific literacy and build capacity for informed decision making on issues concerning water, sanitation & hygiene and related

ecological sciences.

### **Initiatives on campaign mode for developing Model Villages**

With the various programs on developing rural India, there has been very rich experiences and expertise of implementation of campaign mode of development. The campaign mode of development was a very innovative approach of implementing a campaign for holistic development of a district.

The salient features are: (a) mass mobilization for awareness building, motivation and people's participation, (b) networking of the efforts of all the developmental functionaries, (c) pooling of physical & financial resources, (d) self-reliance & Gram Swaraj, and (e) integrated natural and human resources development. More or less such approaches have been replicated by various State Governments in several parts of the Country.

### **Adarsh Gaon Yojana of Govt. of Maharashtra**

Among the various programs of developing model villages across the country, "Adarsh Gaon Yojana<sup>6</sup>" is a very special initiative and commendable work of the Government of Maharashtra for the replication of village development model demonstrated by Hon. Annasaheb Hazare at village Ralegan Siddhi. The 'Adarsh Gaon' model prides itself of being based on the joint decisions made by the Gram Sabha, where all the villagers are present. Villages need to follow strict rules. The process begins with effective water management through the watershed technique and water auditing, taking responsibility of the village's natural resources- planting trees and stopping grazing, contributing labour for the village work, and then expanding to bring about behavioural changes in the people for harbouring social change.

### **Janmabhoomi and Indiramma programs of Govt. of Andhra Pradesh**

Janmabhoomi program initiated by Nara Chandrababu Naidu has broadly three objectives, 'Prajala Vaddaku Palana' (administration to the doorsteps of the people), 'Shramadanam' (donation of labour) and 'Micro-level

<sup>6</sup> Refers to model village plan

planning'. The program, Prajasa Vaddaku Palana (PVP) was intended to bridge the gap between the common man and the state administration. The entire state administration, including the ministers, district collectors and the revenue officers and development functionaries are mobilised on a large scale to meet the people in Gram Sabhas, discuss the problems confronting them, receive representations concerning community problems as well as individual grievances and try to find solutions for the same.

The second aspect of Janmabhoomi, Shramadanam has been regarded by government as the logical outcome of PVP. The government opined that during the course of PVP rounds, the people at large showed interest to participate through contribution of labour and donations in the execution of works identified by them. The third objective of Janmabhoomi, Micro-Level Planning, has been included, mainly intended to acknowledge the people to identify and prioritise their problems through conducting Gram Sabhas. With the experience of PVP and Shramadanam, the need to prioritise problems in terms of their importance and cumulative benefit with reference to an estimate of local resources, both of manpower and materials was felt.

In Janmabhoomi program, people's participation is identified as essential to all developmental activities. It was felt that the need to internalise the values of sacrifice, hard work, diligence, discipline, honesty, self-respect and the quest for excellence by the people and all institutions.

### Gokul Grama Yojana

Gujarat has grounded its own version of Janmabhoomi under the name "Gokul Grama Yojana," while Rajasthan is implementing the programme under the name "Apna Gaon Apna Kaam." It has been rechristened "Gram Sampark Abhiyan" in Madhya Pradesh and "Namakku Name Thittam" in Tamil Nadu. Andhra Pradesh itself borrowed the concept from Korea's Saemaul Undog, rural reconstruction through self-help and cooperation. However, the implementation in the four States was restricted to a limited extent compared to the full-scale operation in Andhra Pradesh.

### Right to Information Approach of Rajasthan

Development interventions can be made more effective

through a vibrant grassroots democracy by focusing on transparency and accountability of public expenditure. The work of a community based organization, the Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan (MKSS), in Rajasthan, one of the most economically and socially backward states in western India, offers such an example. It demonstrates how a grassroots movement in which the community demands to know the details of public expenditure eventually led to the enactment of legislations pertaining to the Right to Information (RTI) in Rajasthan as well as a number of other states in India.

### Highlights of Model Village Experiments in India

Whether it was micro planning and bottom to the top approach of Govt. of Kerala, Adarsh Gaon Yojana of Govt. of Maharashtra, Janmabhoomi program of Govt. of Andhra Pradesh, Villages Self Govt. of Madhya Pradesh, Right to Information approach of Rajasthan and similar and several other efforts of various other State Govt. of our Country, essentially good governance and participatory approaches of various Govt. catalysed efforts can be seen. Ultimately the need of the hour is to reorient all the approaches & efforts towards achieving the goal of Modern Villages.

The following are the suggestion<sup>7</sup> for achieving the Model Villages.

- (a) Model Village may be defined as one in which there is an *integrated - natural & human resources development* through people's participation, where in people are in harmony with Nature for peace, progress and prosperity. Model Village can also be defined as the village in which due to integrated natural and human resources development, the livelihoods are improved, education and economic levels are improved there are improved income levels leading to overall improvement in resources development and economic development of the villages.
- (b) An integrated, resource Development Plan based on *micro planning* is required to be prepared for each village through PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) and participatory approaches so as to reflect the felt

<sup>7</sup> Sourced from: Vadaon, Sundar. Model Village. Viewed on 13/08/2013 at 12.00 [http://www.karmayog.org/startanngo/startanngo\\_13796.htm](http://www.karmayog.org/startanngo/startanngo_13796.htm)

needs of peep and elicit people's participation in development.

- (c) A **participatory poverty assessment** is required to be done for each of the family so as to have life cycle approach of planning for each member of family for development.
- (d) Families who are **below poverty line, poor, marginalized, land less poor** are required to be identified for promoting resources development. Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threats analysis is required to be implemented for identifying strengths and weaknesses of the people.
- (e) **Community resources generation** is required to be promoted in a big way. Low cost approaches are required be promoted followed by **cost effective approaches**.
- (f) Ridge to valley treatment of soil & conservation, rain water harvesting and integrated resources development is required to be done aimed at **conservation of water, soil and enhancement of livelihood and production and productivity** of the micro water shed.
- (g) Adequate focus is required on human resource development with focus on education. All efforts to promote education for all including school drop outs, disabled, and adult illiterates to be taken up so as to achieve **education for all**.
- (h) **Health for all** is required to be taken up with adequate focus on life cycle approach and also to see that all efforts are put in so that all the age groups are properly attended to in their requirement of health needs.
- (i) **Employment for all** is required to be taken up with employment guarantee schemes, self-employment opportunities and even regular employment opportunities available.
- (j) **Water for all** is required to be given fillip with clean drinking water and adequate water availability for domestic needs.
- (k) **Shelter for all** is required to be focused with sufficient opportunities of providing shelter for the people.
- (l) **Infrastructure of the village** in term of rural roads, connectivity etc. is required to be given priority.
- (m) **Sanitation for all** is required to be focused in a big

way.

- (n) **Rural cooperatives** of Agriculture, Dairy, and Artisan are to be promoted. Marketing of the products to be given priority. Self Help Groups with adequate credit and marketing linkages are required to be promoted in a big way. While the positive approaches, micro credit is required to be promoted, the ills of micro finance is required to be checked toughly.
- (o) **Agriculture** is required to be promoted in a big way with all its requirements of inputs, subsidies, scientific methods, high yielding varieties, credit linkages, adequate marketing for the products and a very proactive approach of promoting farming.
- (p) **Tree planting** in all the vacant lands, road side, Railway line etc., is required to be promoted in a big way. Agriculture related horticulture, sericulture and floriculture are required to be promoted in a big way.
- (q) **Animal Husbandry and Dairy** is required to be promoted in a big way including promotion of door step artificial insemination services so as to maximize milk production. The Dairy cooperatives are required to be promoted in a big way. Fisheries, Aviary Piggery and any other avocations are required to be promoted.
- (r) **Villages knowledge centres** are required to be promoted so as to utilize IT enabled services for forming, agriculture related activities, drought relief, disaster management and resources development. Through village knowledge centres E-commerce is required to be promoted, so as to promote marketing of the products of SHGS, several artisans, involved in commerce.
- (s) **Networking the efforts of Govt. & NGOs** is required to be taken up. Adoption of villages by Industries, NRIs, and Philanthropists etc. is required to be promoted. Corporate Social Responsibility is required to be roped in for resources development.
- (t) **Volunteerism and voluntary social work** is required to be promoted in a big way.
- (u) **Child labour** is required to be eliminated totally by promoting education of school going children.
- (v) **Social evils** are required to be prevented.

Ultimately by promoting integrated and holistic development, and by empowering poor women, SCs, STs,

Backward people, tribal, disabled and other disadvantaged and by focusing on education, employment, income and economy and by promoting multi sectorial coordination and convergence among the government departments, NGOs and Peoples Committees and by joint action for holistic development model villages can be created and developed.

## **Adarsh Gaon: A Concept and a Blueprint Towards Building Model Villages**

Model village is proposed to be developed over a period of few years and will take considerable amount of thinking and planning. Model village plan envisages sustainability of a village community by supporting all the pillars of sustainability namely Livelihood, Infrastructure and Services. Though the broader umbrella remains the same, yet the local needs and demand are very contextual, hence research tools need to be developed to understand community needs before executing model village development plan in any village.

Under the holistic Model Village Plan, rural entrepreneurs are to developed and logically extended to develop micro enterprises in the villages providing livelihood and infrastructure in the villages, thereby, creating Model Villages. This will put a check on migration also since people are increasingly moving away from villages in search of livelihood and/ or lack of infrastructure.

The model village development is a participatory development process in all stages of the project cycle including operation and maintenance. Community mobilization is an essential element of the project work throughout the development and implementation phases: from awareness creation and to increasing the role of women, dalit and disadvantage people in decision-making process. In addition to, health, hygiene and sanitation issues, it is to increase awareness and make contributions in income and employment generation. Overall management of the project is done by the community.

### **Significance of Model Villages**

We believe that rural citizens are entitled to the full spectrum of quality life and we help them to get it by making them aware of the options available to them. We want to tackle the root cause of their problems and not

just solve them for the time being. The model village envisages providing vocational training to any able and willing youth/adult in a village and using the same to help him/her to earn and improve his/her standard of living.

The main purpose of the model village is to enhance personal resources of rural poor people in terms of skill sets, knowledge, and their capacities to bring a sense of well-being, belongingness, security and self-esteem into their lives impacting them and their families directly and the overall development of the rural community indirectly. It also aims at bridging the gap between so called people belonging to Above Poverty Line (APL) and Below Poverty Line (BPL).

The model village aims at leveraging appropriate technological innovations for augmenting livelihood opportunities for the rural poor with focus on women. Under the initiative, an integrated rural and appropriate technology facility is to be created for skill training, capacity building, entrepreneurship development, support services for income earning opportunities for the local target population. The facility is designed to facilitate the rural poor by rendering skill development trainings on livelihood, for exploring locally relevant various occupational opportunities.

Farm related skill training will enable the villagers to harvest more revenue from their farm land. New techniques and equipment of farming through training will be introduced to villagers. The intervention will provide adequate knowledge and equipment to farmers in order to improve agricultural production. Knowledge related to agricultural market will be provided as and when required. Training on rain water harvesting and watershed management will save the villagers from scarcity of water and open up new avenues for multiple cropping systems. Farming methods will help in increase of agricultural crops so as increase in sales and profits which influence standard of living of people. Overall the model village aims at creating new employment opportunities with optimum utilization of local resources for villagers, particularly women and helping them improve gain from their current agricultural occupation. It is expected that enterprise development around farming and farm produce will take place.

To make villagers at par with other people in terms of technology, skill training on industrial trades will be another core skill training domain for enhancing livelihood

opportunities for the villagers. The model village initiative will make the local youth understand the working and application of their respective engineering field so that after completing the course they can carry on the job on that kind of machinery and can work in any industry or become self-employed. Basic trade certification to higher level trade training curriculum will be built on (Faulkner, 1986).

The children and youth will receive English speaking course facility to improve their communication skills. This will make them at par even with students of city and they can expand their horizons. Computer literacy and education will bring them at par with the other class of society. With Library facility the people will be well equipped with knowledge and current happenings. Reading Room facility will encourage people to read. The model village initiative will open the door of opportunities for villagers. On successful execution of the initiatives, overall development will take place in villages and they will be considered as model villages.

### Objectives of Model Village

The aim of 'Adarsh Gaon' initiative is to promote self-content, self-sufficient model villages wherein all residents find opportunities to live happily and in harmony. It will work towards holistic development for different target groups in the village community. The intervention will provide income earning opportunities to rural poor men and women by providing appropriate skill training and creating conducive work environment for facilitation of open employment or self-employment leading to a dignified and sustainable livelihood. In brief, the proposed model village initiative will address social, economic, educational, health and other community needs for sustainable village development.

The objectives of Model Village development initiative will include (a) to promote awareness among the villagers to promote self-content and self-sufficient model village for harmonious living, (b) to create, develop and maintain social, economic, cultural and infrastructural facilities for meeting the village community needs, (c) to provide vocational training to the rural youth, the school leavers and existing unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers. specially women and people with disabilities to improve their employability by equipping them with suitable skills for employment, self-employment and enterprise

development, (d) to develop a Community Centre in every village as an identity and centre for carrying out all the activities for and by the village community people, (e) to facilitate and promote employment and self-employment opportunities for sustainable livelihood for the target population, (f) to promote voluntary groups of village women (mahila mandal), youth (youth club), farmers (farmers club) and children (bal mandal) for promoting a dynamic village society, and (g) to focus on overall development of the village as a community.

### The Model Village Interventions

The Model Village activities are grouped into five segments including (a) Village Community Need Assessment, Researching and Documentation, (b) Village Community Centre, (c) Village Infrastructure Development, (d) Vocational Training for Skill /Capacity Building for Livelihood, and (e) Community Development Activities.

#### Village Community Need Assessment, Researching and Documentation

Need assessment, process documentation, review report, beneficiary satisfaction and impact assessment will be an integral part of the project work. The field action project calls for continuous interface conceptual framework based on existing literature and contemporary experiments, and field level project intervention.

Need assessment, researching and documentation will cover (a) mapping out the need of the villagers in designated villages. In order to understand the needs and opportunities in the target villages, a quick need assessment exercise will be carried out for (i) understanding the present skills and level of competency among the target population, (ii) developing an understanding of the human resource needs in the district, (iii) exploration of locally available resources and opportunities for income earning avenues; and (iv) exploration of market opportunities for products and services; (b) researching on different aspects of project execution, beneficiary participation, community involvement; (c) preparation of periodic reports on progress of work; (d) review of first phase of work with recommendation for the second phase, (e) post project execution evaluation; and (f) impact assessment of the intervention.

### Village Community Centre (VCC)

One Community Centre will be built and developed in every village as the centre for all community activities. It can be built on 1-2 acres of land with 8000 to 10000 square feet built up area. The Community Centre will provide infrastructural facilities for carrying out activities for village development.

The Community Centre will have multiple facilities. The **Rural Library** will promote reading habits among the villagers including the school children. The Library will keep newspapers, select magazines, story books and reference material. It will also subscribe to certain newsletters concerning village development. It will be run by villager volunteers. The **Computer Training Unit with a** well-equipped computer laboratory will provide computer literacy and basic computer course to the village youth and school going children. The lab will have internet connectivity and be powered by generator or solar power. The **Coaching Centre for school going children** aims at providing support to school going children so as to help them perform better. Besides, special coaching classes will be conducted for students appearing for board examinations and certain entrance examinations. It will offer online and/or offline coaching classes on select subjects like English, mathematics and science. The college students and other village youth will be encouraged to volunteer for coaching classes.

**The Community Information Resource and Guidance Centre (CIRGC)** will be an in-house facility for the use and benefit of the vocational training students and the villagers. It will act as a depository and a clearing house of information needs of the villagers about educational, health, and all other village information needs. It shall collect process and make available information to the interested villagers about (a) Agriculture related – about crops, fertilisers, pesticides, etc. (b) government schemes, (c) market information for products and services, (d) educational institutions, (e) professional courses, (f) training institutions, (g) scholarships, and (h) financial aid from charitable sources. The Centre will also provide and facilitate career guidance, career counselling, internship opportunities and aptitude tests. A **Training and Meeting Hall** will be used for (i) conducting training programmes for villagers, (ii) meeting for different voluntary groups like Mahila Mandal, Self Help Group, Youth Club, farmers Club, etc., (iii) hosting all kind of community

gathering for social functions and networking activities, and (iv) providing for indoor recreational facilities.

**The Community Livelihood Workshop/ Workshed Facility** will be a centralised integrated and comprehensive infrastructural resource facility for livelihood promotion. The Facility will support and complement the vocational training. It will be a well-equipped Community Facility for collective workshop/ workshed for post training platform for the trainees to sharpen their technical skills and /or operate their self-employment ventures. Aim is to provide infrastructural support (workshed where people can come and work, start their own business, till they can set up their own infrastructure). After the in-house training, they will be provided with necessary material and infrastructural facilities to undertake job work or start their own business. After the training, they can be self-employed individually or collectively to produce products that can be sold in the local market or can be sold to wholesalers if the quantity is greater. In case of selling in the local market, workers themselves can be used as salespersons by providing them with basic sales knowledge, cost of the product and reasonable margin that should be charged in order to remain profitable.

**The Village Nursery and Demonstration Farm** will focus on cultivating/organic farming of fruits, vegetables, and other select crops, livestock management and inland fisheries. The Farm will cater to the practical training needs opportunities of the trainees and villagers. Besides, the field based Farm will be used for promoting modern and desired agricultural practices for the villages so that they get better return from their farm produce. The Farm will serve at educating the farmers regarding effective farming techniques, rain water harvesting and water shed management, and effective farming techniques will include educating the villagers about organic farming techniques. Organic farming technique is a nature friendly technique which does not use any harmful chemicals in the process of farming. It helps to increase the productivity of the soil and retain its moisture content. Also organic farming is a very cost effective farming method. Organic farming can help the farmers reduce their input cost and thus help them inflate their profit margins. Educating villagers about rain water harvesting and water shed programs will help to increase the irrigation facilities and the water storage capacity of the village. The activities that can be undertaken by the villagers in the water shed program will include afforestation, digging up small ponds and building check dams, etc.

## Village Infrastructure Development

There is a need for developing village infrastructure for holistic development of the village. The Project will strengthen and if create infrastructural facilities in the village for ensuring provision for (a) Pre-Primary (Balwadi) Education necessary, (b) Primary Education, (c) Rural Crèche for working women, (d) Portable drinking water (through tube well, bore well or open well), (e) Rural Sanitation (preferably toilet in every house) or community toilet in poor section of the village (Wada), (f) Electricity for domestic and livelihood purpose like business, farming, etc., (f) All weather access road, (g) Access to health care service within a reasonable distance or through mobile health clinic, and (h) Sports facilities. If the facilities already exist, the project will ensure proper functioning for providing quality care/ service through community awareness and mobilisation, training of staff, monitoring and facilitation. **Depending on specific requirement as decided in consultation with the villagers**, in case investment for creating or improving/strengthening infrastructure or services is required, a separate budget will be raised for approval of the Company. Efforts will also be made to access available

facilities from local and state government sources as and when feasible, with prior approval of the Company.

## Vocational Training for Skill /Capacity Building for Livelihood

Vocational training is the backbone of the Model Village development interventions. In India, we still have a fixation for degree-oriented education which is not really available to the rural people. With vocational training, this handicap faced by them can be tackled effectively. The Project will be providing access to agro/non agro-based vocational training. Vocational training will be the foundations for transforming the rural unskilled poor people into a skilled confident and self-motivated workforce. Conducting a series of formal training courses and workshops will be an important part of the project so as to enhance employability of the youth and facilitating income earning opportunities through self-employment and enterprise building. The intervention will conduct a series of target oriented skill development programme focussing on livelihood and generating employment opportunities. The courses initially will be of non-residential nature in order to reduce the cost of training. The trainees may be required to pay a nominal fee in

Agro-Based Courses	Non Agro-Based Courses
1. Crop based <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Food Processing:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cereal based Food Processing;</li> <li>• Fruit based Food Processing;</li> <li>• Vegetable based Food Processing</li> </ul> </li> <li>(b) Medicinal Plantation</li> <li>(c) Nursery Technology</li> <li>(d) Organic Farming</li> <li>(e) Vermiculture</li> </ul> 2. Live- Stock based <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Dairy</li> <li>(b) Duck Rearing</li> <li>(c) Goat Rearing</li> <li>(d) Poultry Farming</li> </ul>	1. Technical / Industrial. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Civil work Painting</li> <li>(b) Electrician</li> <li>(c) Masson</li> <li>(d) Plumbing</li> <li>(e) Welding</li> <li>(f) Wireman</li> </ul> 2. Computer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) Computer Data Entry</li> <li>(b) Computer literacy</li> <li>(c) Desk Top Publishing</li> <li>(d) Web Designing</li> </ul>
Others Courses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accounting skill</li> <li>• Beautician</li> <li>• Entrepreneurship skill</li> <li>• Grooming – appearance, presentation,</li> <li>• Home Nursing</li> <li>• Leadership skill</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing Skills</li> <li>• Old Age Care Giver</li> <li>• Play School and Nursery Teacher Training</li> <li>• Spoken English</li> <li>• Tailoring and Garment Stitching</li> </ul>

order to ensure their continuing interest in the course and timely completion. Training will be provided on pilot basis by identifying the capabilities and interests of the target population.

### Skill Training Courses

As part of the five year intervention, it is proposed to conduct training programmes in two broad areas, namely agro-based and non-agro-based training. Some of the tentatively identified skill based training activities in the said agro-based and non-agro-based areas, are as follows:

**Agro based courses** are grouped into two broad categories: Crop based and livestock based. **Crop Based Courses** will include food processing, medicinal plantation, nursery technology, organic farming, and vermiculture. **Food Processing courses** will include the food items that are locally consumed so that the trainees can start their businesses to cater to the local market (local shops, schools, or door to door retailing, etc.) with value addition as well as varieties. Starting with dry food items that will have longer self-life (and hence causing less wastage and loss of revenue), the training on wet or short shelf life food items (like cooked food, sandwich, etc.) will be introduced. In the domain of food processing, the specific courses will be designed for (a) cereal based food processing, including dry food items like making of Chocolate, Cakes, Cookies and wet food items like sandwich, bread, pau and other bakery items, (b) fruit based food processing, like making jam and jelly, and (c) vegetable based food processing, like pickles, tomato sauce. Appropriate environment will be created for women as they learn the food processing skills better in collective work environment. The **farm related courses** will include organic farming, vermiculture, medicinal plantation, and nursery technology. Considering the local prospect, the **live-stock based training** can be imparted on dairy, duck rearing, goat rearing, and poultry farming.

**The Non Agro-Based Courses** may include (a) technical and industrial training on masson, plumbing, welding, civil work, painting, electrician and wireman as these skills sets are required in any housing colonies. In view of growth of information technology sector and rural BPO work, computer training will be helpful for creating job opportunities for the rural youth on computer literacy, computer data entry, desk top publishing and web designing.

Considering the market needs and work opportunities, it is also the model village initiative with make provision for conducting short courses on beautician, tailoring and garment stitching, home nursing, old age care giver, ad play school and nursery teacher training. The basic tailoring techniques can be taught even to illiterate women with minimum infrastructural facilities.

Besides above skill training and job oriented course, the **value added training inputs** must be integral component of all trainings modules including accounting skill, entrepreneurship skill, leadership skill, marketing skills, soft skill development on appearance, grooming, presentation, etc., and on spoken English.

The number of training programmes to be conducted will depend on the demand and scope for employment, self-employment and enterprise creation. The above mentioned skills have been narrowed down considering opportunities in the locality. The specific need of the local/geographical area and the available natural resources and traditional skills will be considered while designing courses. The villagers lack guidance and proper training to make use of their potentials and opportunities.

### Community Development Activities

Under community development activities, different initiatives will be undertaken for addressing emerging as well as age old problems and needs of the village community. It may include efforts towards organising villagers for better healthcare and sanitation, education, income generation, agriculture, infrastructure facility, etc.

In order to promote greater awareness about civic and social environment for expanding the knowledge horizon and developing desired attitude towards rights and responsibilities of individuals, groups and community, the project will conduct meetings, campaigns, dialogues, discussion, public talk, etc. on themes like small family norms, cleanliness and personal hygiene, reproductive health for adolescence, old age care, HIV/AIDS, gender equity, discrimination against caste/ colour, self-sustaining and self-contained village community, social evils, and safety and security.

**Livelihood Support Services** for promotion of self-employment and enterprise building for creation of different livelihood opportunities will be a core component of model village development initiative. Under enterprise

building, the initiative shall supply to vocational training graduates machineries, seed money, animals and various items to increase their productivity and generate additional income. Supply of goats, poultry birds, pigs, milk animals at times results in failure as the animals die for various reasons but mainly due to ignorance of the beneficiary in rearing them. The poor results indicate that unless assistance and training is given on a continual basis and for several years, results in supplying the poor with items which are supposed to increase their income will not benefit them. Under enterprise building, the model village initiative aims at facilitating start-up business by the graduates from vocational training. They will be mentored to start and run small businesses individually or collectively.

Some of the prospective businesses include (a) agricultural inputs and equipment sales, servicing, renting and hire purchase, (b) rearing milking cows for production and supply of milk, (c) goat bank and goat rearing, (d) production and supply of dry food to local shops, and (e) community fair price outlets. It is proposed to create a Revolving Animal Fund for supplying young animals like goats, cows, etc. to the targeted families for creating income earning assets. The marketing assistance for better pricing for the produce will also be offered. The model village initiative will also facilitate access of government schemes to the targeted individuals and families.

*The Rural Market shall promote a weekly Haat (Mandi) for the cluster of villages for promoting sale of local produce and providing goods and services to local people at fair price. Annual Health Camp will be organised for the villagers for general health check-up, dental check-up, eye check-up, cancer and TB screening, etc. Separate Health Camp specific proposal and budget will be prepared and submitted for approval for conducting the same. Annual Sports and Cultural Festival for Community Integration will include a sports and cultural meet to be organised annually for promoting talents and communal harmony.*

This Model Village development initiative can be achieved in five years period from inception to creating impact by achieving its proposed objectives. It is assumed that after five years, some of the components of the project will become self-sustainable by generating revenue from contribution from the villagers for the services and other earned revenue sources. The Model Village development initiative will ensure multifarious benefits to its target population by proper development

of support systems in place, from awareness generation, capacity building, service provision, enterprise support and income generation avenues. The output will be increasing sense of content, happiness and self-fulfilling individuals, families and village community. There will be a positive environment all over the village across all sections of village society. The school going children will do well in school and enjoy schooling. Youth will be fruitfully engaged in education of skill development. Farmers will take informed decisions in the cultivation of crops. Women will be sensitised and empowered. The adult members of the village will be engaged productively so as to be able to sustain themselves as wage earners or become entrepreneurs in their own right. It will especially provide gainful employment to women and disabled who has so far are not counted as an earning human power in our society, thus providing them opportunity to uplift their social status and hence lead their path for empowerment for envisaged larger social change. This would help them get - two meals a day, daily necessities, sustain their family, educate their children and improve their overall standard of living. Hence, this initiative will give them an opportunity to come out of the poverty and lead a happy and secured life.

The Model Village development initiative has immense potential to uplift massive population through awareness, training, service provision and livelihood opportunities. For example, training around 100 to 200 village youth under the Project will open doors for new opportunities for them. Similarly as most villagers depend on agricultural production, improvements in farming practices can raise their earning from cultivation and make their life happier by increasing their standard of living. Enhanced level of awareness and development of soft skills will make them more confident to face the outside world.

## Sustainability of Model Village Development Initiative

Sustainability of activities will be achieved by targeted capacity building of local youth and the local level village development committees. Local communities will develop a good network with village development committee, district development committee and non-government organizations of the district. Level of awareness will be enhanced and the end users will realize the importance of safe water, improved sanitation and hygiene for their family. They will realize the economic

output and tangible benefit from the project which lead to the regular maintenance and operation of their household level technologies.

India's model villages are developed with the objective of adding value to socio-economic aspects of the farming community. The objective is achieved under three major activities like crop advisory services, education-health-hygiene and safe use of fertiliser and pesticides. Having done these, it is essential to measure the impact of them to understand which programmes have contributed to the success and which have to be improved. This will also help to quantify the level of progress achieved and help us to determine the exit plan.

It is the time to envisage developing a model village in India where the villagers choose their leader, get trained and then decide what could be the best way to develop the village. The initiative will be the benchmark in the field of model village development involving low investment and to the development of the rural people. With this initiative, other people or small firms will be tempted to enter into various initiatives to ripe the fruit of the opportunities available. With their advent, overall development of the region will take a new shape and the entire region will flourish.

As the initiative will be working on livelihood issue of the rural poor, it will have the great impact in the family and the community in the long term. As skill training and capacity building is the major part of the initiative, it would have impact on the employment generation in the community. Marginalized groups will be empowered in the socio-economic terms. They will start the new movement in the community to get rid of social inadequacies.

### Way Forward for CSR

CSR to most people is about how the businesses engage with its stakeholders – its workplace, marketplace, communities and environment, which is the model promoted by business in the community. It is not about how a business chooses to meet the responsibilities it has to these stakeholder groups and how it chooses to give something back. The success of any CSR programme is to engage with large numbers of people and to use the power of collective actions to make a positive change, whether for a local community project, or through taking actions that may ultimately have a global impact. The

one thing that runs through any CSR programme is the fact that someone else is a beneficiary - whether people with unrealised potential finding opportunity to access employment, or simply others who may be given hope through kindness of someone who has more advantages in life than themselves. There are also strong business reasons for making CSR happen. Regulation enforces some monitoring and improvement, whilst market pressures and the war for talent will also be factors that business leaders will look to strengthen CSR programmes to add competitive advantage to the company (Fauset, 2006).

CSR is no longer a standard business practice of doing charity, the time is now to realise the potential of what can be achieved through CSR for business and for the community. CSR intervention must lead to initiating, experimenting and standardising a set of packages for improving quality of life of the villagers in the neighbourhood of company work centres through developing model villages. The Model Village development approach should become the central focus of company CSR policy.

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