

Practical Manual on Community Extension and Rural Development

CECM - 111

**B.Sc. (Hons.) Community Science
Semester - I**



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CERTIFICATE

*It is to certify that this is record of the practical work carried out by
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INDEX

Ex. No.	Title of Exercise	Page Number	Date
1.	Visit to Gram Panchayat ,Report writing	3	
2.	Visit to KVK ,Report writing	7	
3.	Study of SJSY5, Report writing	11	
4.	Visit to NGO ,Report writing	17	
5.	Study of ICDS, Report writing	19	
6.	Visit to Anganwadi centre, Report writing	23	
7.	Study of ATMA, Report writing	27	
8.	Study of DRDA, Report writing	31	
9.	Study of MGNREGA , Report writing	33	

Visit to Gram Panchayat

On the basis of Bombay Village Panchayat Act 1958, village panchayat were already there in Maharashtra. Then Maharashtra State Govt. appointed a committee in 1961, under the chairmanship of Vasant Rao Naik to review democratic decentralization in Maharashtra. On the basis of recommendation of this, the Govt. enacted the Maharashtra Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti Act 1961. Thus Panchayat Samiti at block level and Zilla Parishad at district level were established during 1961-62 in Maharashtra.

Objectives:

The basic objectives emphasized in Panchayat Raj are

1. To have three-tier structure of local self-governing bodies from village to district.
2. To have genuine transfer of power and responsibility to these bodies.
3. To provide resources to the new bodies to enable to discharge their responsibility.

The Gram Panchayat

Gram Panchayat is the first formal democratic institution enjoined on us under the directive principle in the Indian Constitution, which is the primary unit of local self-government. Panchayat is the cabinet of village leaders, directly elected by the adult citizens of the village. It is constituted according to per capita income, area and population of the village. With the variation of population i.e. 750 to 25,000, their memberships vary from 7 to 17. There is provision of reservation to seats for women, SC and ST. The members of Panchayat are directly elected while the members elect Sarpanch. Sarpanch conduct the gram sabha meeting atleast once in six months (atleast four in a year according to 1992 Constitution amendment act) and meeting of member once in a month. Each Gram Panchayat is required to have functional committees. It functions in all developmental and social welfare activities. The levy of house tax, professional tax, vehicles tax, license fee for professions and trades, runs markets and other enterprises etc. are the sources of income to the Gram Panchayat.

Functions of Gram Panchayat:

1. Representative functions: The Sarpanch, members (panch) and gramsevak represent the voice and opinion of the villagers on behalf of the grampanchayat to

the taluka and district level by attending the meetings or sending the official reports.

2. Regulatory and administrative functions:

- I. This institute solves the disputes of villagers as individual or groups.
- II. They control the behaviour of people. Collect their opinion about various programmes.
- III. Gram Panchayat implement the official programme given by the authorities.
- IV. Conduct regular meetings and keeps records for various departments.
- V. The measures are enforced for the desired safety and sanitation of the villagers.

3. Service or developmental functions :

- I. Promotion of educational, health, agriculture, communication facilities.
- II. Providing health and drinking water facilities whenever the villager's need.
- III. Produce authentic documents regarding birth, death or property details of villagers.
- IV. Collection of taxes.
- V. Looks after general welfare and immediate development of village e.g. road, light, market, community facilities etc.

Sources of funds - (I) Collected taxes, (II) Govt. grants in aid, (III) Loans, (IV) Subsidies through govt. programme like 'Jawahar Rojgar Yojana'/ SJSY.

Practical Exercise :

The students will visit the office of the grampanchayat and collect information of grampanchayat.

Visit to KVK

The genesis of KVKs

The genesis of KVKs can be traced to the Second Education Commission (1946-66).

What is KVK

KVKs are grass root level organizations meant for application of technology through assessment, refinement and demonstration of proven technologies under different 'micro farming' situations in a district" (Das, 2007). It should be clearly understood that transfer of technology is not a primary function of KVKs and the same is the responsibility of State departments.

The KVKs on the other hand will assess and refine (if needed) the newly released technologies, demonstrate the proven ones and train farmers and Extension functionaries on the same.

The basic principles for KVKs by the Mehta Committee (1973 Kothari Recommended the establishment of agricultural polytechnics to provide vocational education in agriculture to school drop-outs and other rural youths.

Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) appointed a committee under the Chairmanship of Dr. Mohan Singh Mehta of Seva Mandi, Udaipur in 1973 Committee worked on formulating an institutional design for Krishi Vigyan Kendra.

The Kendra will impart learning through work-experience. The Kendra will impart training only to those extension workers who are employed and to the practicing farmers, Farm women and Rural youths. There will be no uniform syllabus.

Programmes of each Kendra will be flexible in nature and tailored according to the felt needs, natural resources and the potential. Initially Krishi Vigyan Kendra (Farm Science Centers), an innovative science-based institution, was thus established mainly to impart vocational skill training to the farmers and field-level extension workers.

The effectiveness of the KVK was further enhanced by adding the activities related to on-farm testing and front-line demonstrations on major agricultural technologies in order to make the training of farmers location specific, need-based and resource-oriented.

Mandate of KVKs

- To conduct "On farm Testing".
- To organize frontline demonstrations.
- To organize training to update the extension personnel with emerging advances in agricultural research on regular basis.
- To organize short and long term vocational training courses in agriculture and allied vocations for the farmers and rural youths.

Working Pattern of KVK

The application of technology in the farmers' field is achieved through conducting of On-farm trial which include technology assessment and refinement.

The proven and recommended technologies are then introduced in the system through conducting of frontline demonstrations followed by training programmes to empower the farmers, field extension personnel and rural youths for its adoption. The extension activities such as field day, exhibitions etc. are conducted to disseminate the technologies across the system.

Functional Objectives of KVKs

- To plan and conduct survey of the operational area through Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)
- To compile all relevant recommendations/package of practices for the district
- To plan and conduct production-oriented and need-based short and long duration training courses
- To organize Farm Science Clubs in order to inculcate in the younger generations a scientific temper and an interest on agriculture and allied sciences
- To develop and maintain the campus farms and demonstration units on scientific lines as the facilities for providing work experience to the trainees
- To provide practical training facilities
- To provide added training facilities in the area for home making and nutrition education for rural communities
- To implement all such schemes of the ICAR and other related organizations which intend to strengthen the training and technology dissemination programmes
- To undertake on-farm testing of the technologies for their suitability and identifying the constrains.

- To demonstrate the potentialities of various technologies and recommend for their adoption

Growth of KVKs

The first KVK was established by the Indian Council of Agriculture Research in Pondicherry during 1974. Now there are 634 KVKs working for the betterment of farming community in India. Role of KVKs in Agriculture and Rural development could be attained through improving agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, dairying, sericulture, fisheries, rural engineering, and rural crafts.

Empowering rural population to enable them to practice these occupations. KVK is a grass-root level organization that can help to fight poverty, to foster education of rural people, and to promote behavior and technology that link high productivity with natural resources sustainability.

Practical Exercise :

The students will visit the KVK and collect information of KVK

STUDY OF SWARNJAYANTI GRAM SWAROJGAR YOJNA (SGSY)

The Swarnjayanti Gram Swarojgar yojna (SGSY) has been launched with effects from 1st April, 1999 as a new self employment programme with the coming into effects of the SGSY, the earlier programme, integrated rural development programme (IRDP), Training of rural youth for self employment (TRYSEM), Development of Woman And Children In Rural Areas (DWCRA), the Ganga Kalyan Yojna (GKY) as well as the million wells scheme (MWS) are no longer in operation.

Objectives:

The objective of the SGSY is to bring the assisted poor families (Swarozgaris) above the poverty line providing them income - generating assets through a mix of bank credit and government subsidy. The programme aims at establishing a larger number micro enterprises in rural areas based on the ability of the poor and potential of each area.

Salient Features:

The Salient features of the Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY) are given below. The SGSY aims at establishing a large number of micro - enterprises in the rural areas, building upon the potential of the rural poor.

The SGSY emphasizes on the cluster approach for establishing the micro - enterprises for this, 4-5 key activities have to be identified in each block. The major share of the SGSY assistance has to be in activity clusters. The SGSY adopt a projects approach for each key activity projects are to be preparing in respect of each identified key activities the banks and other financial institutions have to be closely associated and involved in preparing these project report, so as to avoid delays in sanctioning of loans and to ensure adequacy of financing.

The existing infrastructure for the cluster of activities should be reviewed and gaps identified critical gaps investments have to be made up under the SGSY, subject to a ceiling of 20% (25% in the case of north eastern states) of the total allocation made under the SGSY for each district. This amount is maintained by the DRDAs as SGSY - Infrastructure fund.

In the planning of the key activities care has to be taken to ensure that the maximum numbers of panchayats are covered without jeopardizing the quality of the programme.

The assisted families may be individuals or groups (Self - Help Groups). The SGSY however favours the groups approach.

The Gram Sabha authenticates the list of Below Poverty line families identified in the BPL census. Identification of individual families suitable for each key activity is to be made through a participatory process. The group approach involves organisation of the poor into self-help groups (SHGs) and their capacity building. Efforts have to be made to involve women members in each SHG. Besides, exclusive women members in each SHG. Besides, exclusive women groups are also to be formed. At the level of the block, at least half of the groups should be exclusively women groups. Group activities are given preference and progressively, majority of the funding should be for self-help groups.

The SGSY is a credit-cum-subsidy programme. However, credit is the critical component of the SGSY, subsidy being a minor and enabling element. Accordingly, the SGSY envisages greater involvement of the banks. The area to be involved closely in the planning as well as capacity building and choice of activity of the SHGs, selection of individual Swarozgaris, pre-credit activities and post-credit monitoring including loan recovery.

The SGSY seeks to promote multiple credits rather than a one-time credit 'injection'. The requirements of the Swarozgaris need to be carefully assessed, the Swarozgaris are allowed and, in fact, encouraged to increase credit intake, over the years.

The SGSY seeks to lay emphasis on skill development through well-designated training courses. Those, who have been sanctioned loans, are to be assessed and given necessary training. The design, duration of training and the training curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of the identified key activities. DRDAS are allowed to set apart up to 10% of the SGSY allocation on training. This may be maintained as SGSY- Training Fund.

The SGSY attempts to ensure up gradation of technology is the identified activity clusters. The technology intervention seek to add value to the local resources including processing of the locally available material from natural and other resources for local and non-local market.

The SGSY provides for promotion of marketing of the goods produced by the SGSY Swarozgari, which involves provision of market intelligence, development of markets and constancy service, as well as institutional arrangements for marketing of the goods including exports.

The SGSY is implanted by the DRDAs through the Panchayat Samitis. The process of planning implementation & monitoring integrate the Banks and other financial institutions, the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), Non- Government Organisations (NGOs), as well as Technical Institutions in the District.

Target Group

Below the poverty line families in rural areas constitute the target group of the SGSY within the target group special safeguards have been provided to vulnerable sections, by way of reserving 50% benefits for SCs/STs, 40% for women and 3% for disabled persons.

Funding pattern

The swarnjayanti Gram Sworazgar Yojona (SGSY) is financed on 75:25 cost sharing basis between the centre and the states.

Infrastructure Development

The SGSY provides for review of existing infrastructure for the cluster of activities and identification of gaps, critical gaps in investments have to be met from the funds available under the SGSY programme infrastructure, subject to a ceiling of 20% (25% in the case of North Eastern Status) of the annual allocation made under the scheme for each district.

Implementing Agencies

The Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY) is being implemented by the District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs), with the active involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), the Banks, the line departments and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)

The SGSY Scheme is expected to play an important role in Rural development. Particularly after independence. It is to be noted that the SGSY Scheme is one of the main programme for the development of rural areas. Rural Development is a choice influenced by time, space and culture. The programmes needs overall development of rural areas to improve the quality of life of rural people. It is a comprehensive and multi-dimensional concept; and encompasses the development of agriculture and allied activities, village and cottage industries and crafts, socio-economic infrastructure, community services and facilities and human resources in rural areas. As a discipline, it is multi-disciplinary, in nature, representing an intersection of agriculture, social, behavioural, engineering and management sciences. The main objectives of rural development programme are to maximise the total welfare of the people in the rural areas.

Practical Exercise :

The students will visit the SGSY office and collect information of SGSY

Visit to NGO

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a citizen-based association that operates independently of government, usually to deliver resources or serve some social or political purpose.

The World Bank classifies NGOs as either operational NGOs, which are primarily concerned with development projects, or advocacy NGOs, which are primarily concerned with promoting a cause.

NGO activities include, but are not limited to, environmental, social, advocacy and human rights work. They can work to promote social or political change on a broad scale or very locally. NGOs play a critical part in developing society, improving communities, and promoting citizen participation.

Non-governmental organizations, or NGOs, were first called such in Article 71 in the Charter of the newly formed United Nations in 1945. While NGOs have no fixed or formal definition, they are generally defined as nonprofit entities independent of governmental influence (although they may receive government funding).

As one can tell from the basic definition above, the difference between nonprofit organizations (NPOs) and NGOs is slim. However, the term "NGO" is not typically applied to U.S.-based nonprofit organizations. Generally, the NGO label is given to organizations operating on an international level although some countries classify their own civil society groups as NGOs.

NGO activities include, but are not limited to, environmental, social, advocacy and human rights work. They can work to promote social or political change on a broad scale or very locally. NGOs play a critical part in developing society, improving communities, and promoting citizen participation.

Practical Exercise :

The students will visit the NGO and collect information of NGO

STUDY OF INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES SCHEME

The **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)** scheme was launched in 1975 by the Govt. of India, in the Ministry of Social and Women's Welfare.

Objectives of ICDS

- (a) To improve the nutritional and health status of children below the age of 6 years and pregnant and lactating mothers;
- (b) To lay the foundation for the proper psychological, physical and social development of the child;
- (c) To reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school drop-outs;
- (d) To achieve an effective coordination of policy and implementation among the various departments to promote child development; and
- (e) To enhance the capability of the mother to look after the health and nutritional needs of the child through proper health and nutrition education.

Philosophy and approach of ICDS

The concept of providing a package of services is based primarily on the consideration that the overall impact would be much greater if different services are delivered in an integrated manner, as the efficiency of a particular service depends upon the support it receives from other related services. ICDS takes a *holistic view* of the development of the child and attempts to improve both pre-natal and post-natal environment. Children in their formative years of 0 to 6 and women between 15 to 45 years are covered by the programme, as these are child bearing years in the life of women and their nutritional and health status have a bearing on the development of the children.

ICDS is a unique programme, encompassing the main components of human resource development namely - health, nutrition and education. It is perhaps the only country-wide programme in the world functioning on a large scale, requiring multi-sectoral cooperation and inter-sectoral linkages for its implementation.

'While selecting projects, priority is given to areas predominantly inhabited by scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, drought prone areas and urban slums. Each project aims at total coverage of a compact area, with a population of about

one lakh each in rural and urban areas and around 35 thousand in tribal areas. ICDS serves the target group through a network of *ANGANWADIS*, literally meaning a courtyard play centre, which is the focal point for delivery of services at the community level.

Services envisaged in ICDS/fCDS Package

1. *Supplementary nutrition* is the most important component of the scheme and is given to nursing and expectant mothers and children below 6 years, from the low income group. It is given to bridge the dietary gap which exists between the home diet and the actual nutritional need. The food provided depends on local availability. For children below 6 years, about 200 calories and 8-10 grams protein, for pregnant and lactating women 500 calories and 25 grams protein are given for 300 days a year. Funds for supplementary nutrition are provided in the plan under Minimum Needs Programme.

2. *Immunisation* of children as per schedule (universal immunisation programme) is done. Expectant mothers are immunised against tetanus.

3. *Health* check-up of various groups is done regularly. Antenatal and postnatal care of mothers and check-up of children under 6 years of age are done. A minimum of 3 physical check-ups are necessary. High risk patients are referred to appropriate hospitals.

4. *Non-formal pre-school education* is imparted through a network of *anganwadis*. Each village under the scheme with about 1000 population has an *anganwadi*, and is responsible for developing desirable knowledge, attitude and skill among children between the ages 3 to 6 years. There is no rigidity of curriculum, and locally available materials and places are fully utilised for teaching.

5. *Nutrition and health education* is imparted to all women in the age-group 15 to 45 years, especially pregnant and lactating mothers, in specially organised classes during home visits by *anganwadi* workers.

6. *Referral services* are provided for both mothers and children, and high risk mothers are sent to referral institutions for special care. Children requiring referral services are provided appropriate facilities at the Public Health Centres, Sub-centres, clinics, district hospitals and referral hospitals.

Structure of ICDS

In an ICDS project the 'Community Development Block' is the administrative unit in rural areas. There are 'tribal development block' in tribal

arcas, and a group of 'slums' in urban areas. Preference is given to backward areas, drought prone areas, and where nutritional deficiencies are spreading in an uncontrolled way. Project in rural / urban area has a population of one lakh, and in tribal area about 35 thousand.

The main functionary for delivery of services under the scheme is the trained local women known as *Anganwadi Worker* (AWW). Child Development Project Officer (CDPO) is in-charge of 4 supervisors (Mukhya Sevikas) and 100 AWWs. Each supervisor is responsible for 20 - 25 Anganwadis workers and assist the AWWs in record keeping, organise on the job training and visit to community and health professionals. AWW provides direct link to children and mother; help CDPO in survey of community and beneficiaries, organise non-formal education, assists PHC staff in delivering health services, keep session records of immunisation, feeding and pre-school attendance, liaises with block administration, local school, health staff and community.

Implementation of ICDS

At the district level, a Coordination Committee functions under the chairmanship of the District Collector. At the block, project and village levels, the coordination mechanism is informal, voluntary and yet more functional in nature. Stress is given on establishing close functional ties -if among EDO, MO and CDPO, and between the rest of health and non-health staff of ICDS to avoid duplication of efforts and resources, and to optimise on time money, energy and technical knowledge. At the village level, efforts are also made to have liason between the Anganwadi and other local level organisations like mahila mandals, panchayats, cooperatives, schools etc. (Following Dubey and Bishnoi, 2008)

Practical Exercise :

The students will visit the ICDS project and collect information of ICDS

Visit to Anganwadi centre

Selection of Anganwadi

The village to be covered for Anganwadi activities may be selected in a phased manner on the basis of the following considerations -

- (i) The community is desirous of establishing an Anganwadi in its area and has a felt need for the same;
- (ii) Availability of suitable space for Anganwadi and contribution by the community in cash, kind and labour to supplement the resources of ICDS;
- (iii) The village community will make available necessary assistance for running of the Anganwadi. The Anganwadi should be easily accessible to all the children, particularly from vulnerable sections of the community; availability of sufficient space for both indoor and outdoor activities; and availability of safe drinking water.

Anganwadi Workers

The focal point for the delivery of the package of services under ICDS scheme is an Anganwadi Centre, Anganwadi worker is the kingpin of the ICDS programme whose success rests to a large extent on her ability and capacity to perform her role and responsibilities effectively. There shall be one Anganwadi worker for a population of 1000 in rural and urban projects, and one Anganwadi worker for a population of 700 in tribal projects, subject to the upper limit of 1000.

The Anganwadi worker is expected to be a woman in the age group 21 to 45 years. She should be selected from within the village / local community and acceptable to them. Special care has to be taken in the selection of Anganwadi worker, so that she can effectively serve the preschool children, pregnant women and nursing mothers, and women in the age group of 15 to 44 years of the project area. She should be able to work with women and children of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes and other weaker sections of the community.

The Anganwadi worker is to be an honorary worker and will be paid a monthly honorarium. It would be preferable to select matriculates as Anganwadi workers, or at least have passed standard VIII. However, where such candidates are not available, less educated or even semi-literate or illiterate but intelligent women from the same village may be appointed. The Anganwadi workers shall be

specially trained for their job.

In order to ensure that the programme of Anganwadi provides necessary assistance and cooperation to the workers of the Anganwadi, a system of associating mothers of the children attending Anganwadi and other children getting services of the ICDS, should be evolved. This would mean among others, that each such mother would have to take a turn once a month to work in Anganwadi, Apart from community participation and educating the mother about child care practices, this will pave the way for the community ultimately taking over these activities.

Helpers

Each Anganwadi is to have a Helper to assist the Anganwadi worker in cooking and serving the food to children and mothers; cleaning the Anganwadi premises daily; fetching water; looking after cleanliness of young children, and collecting children at the Anganwadi. This Helper must be a local village woman and should be paid an honorarium.

(Source: Manual on Integrated Child Development Services. National Institute of Public Cooperation & Child Development, 1984)

Practical Exercise :

The students will visit the Anganwadi centre and collect information of Anganwadi

STUDY OF AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

ATMA is a registered society of key stakeholders involved in agricultural activities for sustainable development in the district by integrating research-extension activities and decentralizing day to day management of Public Agricultural Technology System.

OBJECTIVES

The Revised Scheme shall focus on the following key extension reforms as objectives of the Scheme:

- Providing innovative, restructured and autonomous institutions at the state/district/ block level.
- Encouraging multi-agency extension strategies involving Public/ Private Extension Service Providers.
- Ensuring an integrated, broad-based extension delivery mechanism consistent with farming system approach.
- Adopting group approach to extension in line with the identified needs and requirements of the farmers in the form of CIGs FIGs;
- Facilitating convergence of programmes in planning, execution and implementation.
- Addressing gender concerns by mobilizing farm women into groups and providing training to them.
- Moving towards sustainability of extension services through beneficiary contribution.

The objectives of the scheme shall be met through strengthened institutional arrangements and dedicated manpower at State, District, Block & Village level through the institutional mechanism as detailed below.

State Level:

- The State Level Sanctioning Committee (SLSC) set up under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) is the apex body to approve State Extension Work Plan (SEWP) which will form a part of the State Agriculture Plan (SAP).
- The SLSC will be supported by the Inter Departmental Working Group (IDWG). IDWG is responsible for day-to-day coordination and management of the Scheme activities within the State.

- The State Nodal Cell (SNC) consisting of the State Nodal Officer and the State Coordinator (along with supporting staff) will ensure timely receipt of District Agriculture Action Plans (DAAPs), formulation of State Extension Work Plan (SEWP) duly incorporating Farmers' feedback obtained through State Farmer Advisory Committee and its approval by the SLSC. The SNC will then convey the approval and monitor implementation of these work plans by SAMETIs and ATMAs. The SAMETIs will draw-up and execute an Annual Training Calendar for capacity building of the Extension functionaries in the State. While doing so, the SAMETI will check duplication and overlapping of training content, training schedule as well as trainees.

District Level:

ATMA is an autonomous institution set up at district level to ensure delivery of extension services to farmers. ATMA Governing Board is the apex body of ATMA which provides overall policy direction. ATMA GB will be assisted by the District ATMA Cell comprising PD ATMA, Dy. PDs and Staff in the discharge of its functions. **ATMA Management Committee** is the executive body looking after implementation of the scheme. District Farmers Advisory Committee is a body to provide farmer's feedback for district level planning and implementation. With dedicated staff provided for the ATMA, it will continue to be the district level nodal agency responsible for overall management of agriculture extension system within the district, including preparation of Strategic Research and Extension Plan (SREP).

Block Level:

At the Block level, two bodies viz. **Block Technology Team (BTT)** (a team comprising officers of agriculture and all line departments within the block) and **Block Farmers Advisory Committee (BFAC)** (a group exclusively consisting of farmers of the block) shall continue to function jointly (with the latter providing farmers' feedback and input). BFACs shall represent Farmer Interest Groups (FIGs) / FOs existing within the block on rotation basis to advise. The Block ATMA Cell consisting of these two bodies, Block Technology Manager and Subject Matter Specialists will provide extension support within the Block, through preparation and execution of Block Action Plans (BAPs).

Village Level:

- The Farmer Friend (FF) will serve as a vital link between extension system and farmers at village level (one for every two villages). The FF

will be available in the village to advise on agriculture and allied activities. The FF will mobilize farmers' groups and facilitate dissemination of information to such groups, individual farmers and farm women directly through one to one interaction individually or in groups and also by accessing information / services on behalf of farmers as per need through Common Service Centres (CSC)/Kisan Call Centres (KCC).

- Wherever available under their respective Schemes, **Agri- entrepreneurs** will supplement the efforts of extension functionaries by making quality inputs available to the farmers and by providing them critical technical advice.
- **Farm Schools** will serve as a mechanism for farmer-farmer extension at 3 to 5 focal points in every Block.

Practical Exercise :

The students will visit the ATMA project and collect information of ATMA

STUDY OF DISTRICT RURAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (DRDA)

District Rural Development Agencies

(DRDAs) are district level development execution and monitoring agencies created under the Indian Societies Registration Act. Substantial sums of rural development funds of government of India were transferred and routed through them under various Centrally Sponsored Schemes. From purely a financial resource from Rural Development point of view the DRDAs are extremely important institutions at the district level.

The District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) is the principal organ at the District level to oversee the implementation of different anti-poverty programmes. In 1999, the Government of India had introduced the 'DRDA Administration' scheme under which the salary and administrative expenses of DRDAs are funded on a 90:10 basis between Centre and State Governments. The primary objective of DRDA Scheme is to professionalize the DRDAs so that they are able to effectively manage the poverty alleviation programmes of the Ministry of Rural Development and interact effectively with other agencies. The DRDA is set up in all districts of the State. It is headed by the Project Director who is assisted by a team of officers and staff.

At an all India level, the progress reported in this regard is far from satisfactory. There are some vexed issues, one among which is the 'reported' reluctance on the part of some of the institutions of Union Government for the proposal of merger of DRDAs with the district Panchayats. The complete merger seems to have happened only in Kerala and Karnataka. The latter has a much longer history of doing this. In both the States the DRDAs function as if they were the cells for poverty alleviation/ rural development schemes within the Zilla Panchayats.

Practical Exercise :

The students will visit the DRDA project and collect information of DRDA

STUDY OF MAHATMA GANDHI NATIONAL RURAL EMPLOYMENT GUARANTEE ACT

The popular NREGA OR Nationwide Non-urban Career Assurance Act 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 guide work. The purpose of the Act is to make resilient resources and enhance the income source platform of the rural inadequate. The choice of works recommended in the Act deal with causes of serious hardship such as famine. The high deforestation, complete land problem, in order to course of action of occupation creation is on a maintainable basis works recommended in the Act details causes of serious hardship like famine, deforestation and land break down completely, in order to the modus operandi of occupation creation is managed on a maintainable base. Therefore, by observing the main aims and objectives of this government scheme, people can easily understand the benefits of the program.

Objectives of MGNREGA

- Expanding earning sources
- Strengthening pure natural resources under control via works that deal with causes of serious hardship like famine, deforestation and ground break down and so motivate maintainable growth.
- Strengthening grassroots procedures of democracy
- Infusing visibility and responsibility in government
- Strengthening high decentralization as well as deepening procedures of democracy by providing a critical part to the local Panchayati Raj, Organizations in planning, tracking and execution.

This is a rural wage employment programme in India. It provides for a legal guarantee of at least 100 days of unskilled wage employment in a financial year to rural households whose adult members are willing to engage in unskilled manual work at a pre-determined minimum wage rate.

The objectives of the Act are

- To enhance the livelihood security of the rural poor by generating wage employment opportunities; and
- To create a rural asset base which would enhance productive ways of employment, augment and sustain rural household income.

MGNREGA was initially implemented as National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) in 200 selected backward districts in India on February 2, 2006. It was extended to an additional 130 districts with effect from April 1, 2007. Later, the remaining 285 districts were covered from April 1, 2008. The National Rural Employment Guarantee (Amendment) Act, 2009 renamed NREGA as MGNREGA.

Section 4(1) of MGNREGA mandates the design and implementation of State-specific Rural Employment Guarantee Schemes (REGS) to give effect to the provisions made in MGNREGA. Section 6(1) empowers the Central Government to specify the wage rates for MGNREGA beneficiaries. So far, the wage rates have been modified three times, the latest being on January 14, 2011 where the base minimum wage rate of Rs. 100 was indexed to inflation.

MGNREGA is unique in not only ensuring at least 100 days of employment to the willing unskilled workers, but also in ensuring an *enforceable commitment* on the implementing machinery i.e., the State Governments, and providing a bargaining power to the labourers. The failure of provision for employment within 15 days of the receipt of job application from a prospective household will result in the payment of unemployment allowance to the job seekers.

The implementation of MGNREGA largely depends on the active participation of three-tier decentralized self governance units called *Panchayat* institutions. The *panchayats* are required to estimate labour demand, identify works and demarcate work sites, prioritize works, prepare village/block/district level development plans in advance for the continuous and smooth planning and the execution of this wage employment programme. The *Panchayats* are responsible for processing the registration of job seekers, issuance of job cards, receipts of applications for employment, allotment of jobs, identification of work sites, planning, allocation and execution of works, payment of wages and commencement of social audit, transparency and accountability check at the grass-root level.

The implementation of MGNREGA has influenced the wage structure in rural areas as the minimum wages for agricultural labourers across States have witnessed an upward trend between 2006 and 2010. The Act has broadened the occupational choices available to the agricultural workers within their locality, thereby impacting rural-urban migration.

Budget provision hovered around 40,000-50000 under this programme.

The report card on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) on the completion of ten years of its implementation on 2nd February 2016, may be seen from the official press release of Ministry of Rural Development on 1 February 2016.

Implementation structure of MGNREGA : The MGNREGA Act underlines the legitimate role of Panchayats in its implementation mechanism. The recognition of Panchayati Raj Institutions is the main agency of implementation under MGNREGA. The programme comprises of following five tier of implementation ; (i) Gram Panchayat (ii) Block Panchayat (iii) District Panchayat (iv) State Government & (v) Central Government. In this five tier system, Gram Panchayat occupies the bottom & Central Government the top.

Implementation Mechanism of MGNREGA

1. Gram Panchayat (GP): It is the basic agency which is responsible for the registration of households, issuance of job cards, providing work etc. Gram Panchayat has to select, design, & implement 50% of the works.
2. Block Panchayat: Block Panchayat is the second tier which deals with the implementation of the programme. The Block Panchayat undertakes the remaining 50% of the work either at their own level or at District Panchayat or jointly undertaken by them. It also looks after the updating of the data under the programme relating to works, muster roll entries etc.
3. District Panchayat: Besides implementation of non mandatory works, District Panchayat also coordinates the activities of programme at the district level. This panchayat also prepares the district annual plan & the five year perspective plans in consultation with Gram & Block Panchayats.
4. State Government: The state government functions like a facilitator in the flow of MGNREGA funds. It is also responsible for setting up the State Employment Guarantee Council which acts as an advisor to the Government on implementation, monitoring & evaluation of the programme in the state.
5. Central Government: The Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India is the nodal agency for MGNREGA implementation. The Central Government has the authority to set up Central Employment Guarantee Council for receiving advice on MGNREGA implementation besides independent evaluation & monitoring of the scheme. The Central Government also has to prepare the budget & disburse the funds.

Practical Exercise :

The students will visit the MGNREGA project and collect information of MGNREGA