CHAPTER X

Conclusions and Suggestions
Challenge of Rural Transformation

Mr. Hazare who was serving in the army was appalled at the steady deterioration of his village during his annual visits home. The village temple was nearly in ruins. At that time the most distinctive features were its forty illicit distillaries that made the village a popular haunt for drunkards and gamblers. Thefts and brawls were common.

Life in the village was of abject poverty, utterly lacking in social amenities. The villagers’ outlook towards life was apathetic and the hope of spontaneous leadership for improvement was almost nil. Almost a quarter of the people were on the brink of starvation. They were surviving on bhakris made of hulga (horse gram). Many of them used to get food only for four or five days a week and go hungry the rest of the time. Over sixty percent of the villagers had to buy food grains from outside (other villages) to last throughout the year.

The village money lender was the important source for borrowing who charged exorbitant rate of interest. Since the villagers suffered from ignorance and poverty and were indebted to the village Mahajans, their need for ready money to pay off land revenues and family burdens like marriage sickness and lack of bank facilities compelled them to dispose off their crops at a loss. In the very nature of things the villagers were isolated from the normal opportunities of obtaining credit.
After the drought of 1972, EGS schemes were started. To retain more water thirty five projects of nullha bunding and a percolation tank were built. A local leader took the contract for nine lacs of rupees, but due to structural deficiencies within two years the tank gave away.

Most of the villagers took work under EGS. There also they were not being paid regularly. A few complained that they were not being given the ration coupons.

With water available only during monsoon the farmers could barely grow one crop a year and 70 percent of the 315 families lived in abject poverty. Uncertainty of rainfall and consequent poverty with ill health and misery coupled with no conscious desire for anything better was the way of life, for, they had no idea that anything better was possible.

The village bristled with problems and difficulties. The standard of living was very low. The agricultural technology was primitive. Irrigational facilities were absent, not to speak of potable drinking water. Non farm occupations were not well developed. There was no encouragement to the traditional farm industries. Institutions like banking and marketing were absent.

The above inadequacies were made worse by traditional attitudes and superstitions. Untouchability was deep rooted in the village. The Harijans who lived outside the village had a separate well, they were not allowed to enter the village temple, their children were not allowed in the school and they even had a separate cremation ground.
The people were superstitious. The traditional social customs were being followed religiously. At the annual village festival, sacrifice of several goats was the usual practice after which the flesh was distributed as "prasad". Superstition also had it that if goats were not sacrificed disease, famine and death would ravage the village. The people gave more importance to deity and spirits. There were many social taboos. The traditional social customs were feudalistic and very rigid in character.

The semi-stagnant economy of the village coupled with utter misery and deprivation had also put pressure on the natural environment leading to naked mountains, barren and parched lands nothing to say of agriculture.

Elementary education was available upto to 4th class. Non-enrolment and dropouts were high. Ralegan Shindi was utterly lacking in educational facilities and there was widespread illiteracy which did not allow them to take advantage of economic opportunities.

The Grampramukh operated with the backing of criminals. Generally caste and family were the important elements of elections. 40% of the villagers were with the surname Mapari, 30% with Pathare, 15% with Auti and the rest 15% were with other surnames. There were lot of family disputes which came out in the open during Grampanchayat and Gramsabha elections. Dominant caste and family with the backing of vested interests played a very influential role in the elections, resulting in unworthy people dominating village affairs.
Political parties entered the election fray and created, confusion, promoted homogeneous influencing centres like caste, kinship and individual families. For these vested interests which were the real internal enemies of the village, elections generally provided a forum for more aggressive exploitation of the sections of the village. Such vested interests took the protection of ignorance of the mass villagers and were successful in keeping the village inactive and defunct. Leadership was in the hands of persons who were not generally interested in the progress and development of the village. The village had turned out to be a handy tool of self advancement in the hands of petty politicians. Their main aim was to promote their own end. In fact there had been an inadequate development of non-official leadership which lacked selflessness, honesty, devotion and zeal.

Water was not the only commodity which was scarce but there was also shortage of social and moral responsibilities as well.

Local politics, graft, diversion of funds were the diseases which had plagued the village. It had become very difficult for any villager to rise above these. Even the youth of the village were way ward. The village had become more favourable to corruption and oppression.

Women were treated as secondary citizens. Children instead of being encouraged to go to school were given family responsibilities at an early age. The marriages in the village were celebrated with pomp and show and were generally witnessed by fights and misunderstandings over dowry and "Maan Paan".
Imbalanced diet, dirt and filth had created virtual breeding ground for virus and bacteria. Local cures from herbs were popular. Western medicines had not found their place in this village.

Thus Ralegan Shindi suffered from physical isolation from urban centres, paucity of resources, drought, untouchability, alcoholism, gambling and crime, poverty, primitive customs and traditions; thus providing a spectacle of misery, social disintegration and cultural backwardness which prompted Anna Hazare to come back to the village and to accept the challenge of its transformation.

Mobilisation of the support of the rural folk

Anna very well knew that it would take years to uplift the village. For that he had to mobilise the support of the rural folk to attain his sole objective, the upliftment of his village Ralegan Shindi. He planned and organised the exploitation of the resources. Emphasis was laid on the common man and the weaker section and the under privileged. Encouragement in peoples participation prepared the ground for creating opportunities for people to get a feeling that they were wanted and had a say in the ongoing activities for their benefit. Individuals had to be motivated because Anna realised that the programmes that did not motivate or satisfy the need and interest of the villagers were bound to be self defeating.
The main aim of Anna Hazare was to make the rural population increasingly self-reliant. People had to be involved not only in planning but implementing as well. He wanted to stimulate the local potential for growth in every direction. The promise was of reciprocal advance in both wealth and welfare not on the basis of outside charity but by building on the latent vitality of the beneficiaries themselves with minimum outside help.

With honesty, dedication and unselfishness Hazare spearheaded a movement that has led the village to all round development.

Anna initiated co-ordination of many sided developments by creating initiative and teaching the villagers the importance of organised efforts on the principle of making provision for their mental as well as physical development. His central theme was to change the villager from tradition to modernity and to make the villager worthy of his existence. The impact of his towering personality had galvanised the villagers into a corporate entity.

He realised that he had to lead the villagers towards initiating a process of transformation in the socio-economic life of the villagers to begin with, and, to work as an engine of economic growth at a latter stage, for energizing and mobilising the available manpower resources in the village so that the semi-stagnant economy of the village could be rejuvenated.
Even more remarkable is the social transformation that Hazare has brought about. His aim was to secure the fullest development of the material and human resources of the area thereby raising the standard of living by destroying the enemies of the village viz poverty, ignorance and disease.

The command and skill of Anna Hazare that could hold the fellow villagers together for the purpose of adoption of certain innovations, did initiate a qualitative change in the set pattern of relationships of the village. Anna Hazare’s skill was unquestionable in inducing the villagers to participate in “Shramadaan”. Priority was given to common village programmes. As for himself, his contribution was mainly in terms of demonstration and advice.

That with sympathetic counselling, expert guidance and some financial assistance the villagers were led to recognise their most important, immediate and acute problems, to think about them, formulate plans for their solutions and put these plans into action.

His task was directed towards man making. For Anna, the most important thing was not the immediate material improvement like ample food grain, enough water, health and sanitation but the change in the outlook of the people, instilling in them an ambition for a richer and a fuller life by developing the capacities of the individual so that he could master matters for himself.
Co-operation in work and in all activities of life were repeatedly emphasised. Anna Hazare considered the developmental programmes as an approach to development and a part of the bigger scheme of planned national development. As a process it involved a sequential and interdependent progression of changes — economic, social, political and psychological. Anna thus stimulated the local potential for growth in every direction.

Thus Anna took upon the task of all round development. This was in other words the practical application of the principle that the central figure viz. the villagers himself had to be changed and to make him take great interest in himself and in his village, thus helping in achieving the objective that is the upliftment of Ralegan Shindi.

Various schemes introduced

The transformation of the village was the result of far sighted programmes that transformed the village on sound economic, social and cultural footing. The programmes covered each and every aspect of the village life and created an environment that helped promote growth and change through planned step by step action as under.

Re-building of the village temple

Today the village temple which he rebuilt as it was in a dilapidated condition, is the "Heart" of Hazare's movement.
He has achieved in bringing together the villagers on a common platform "the village temple" from where all the developmental activities of the village are formulated and put into action.

Youth-club

The harnessing of youthful energy was very useful for developmental activities. The youth club has become an integral part of all round development.

Shutting down illicit distillaries

Today no one drinks at Ralegan Shindi. Shutting the distillaries gave a new meaning to the lives of the villagers. This was a part of a wide programme for bringing about a rapid increase in the standard of living.

Work for villagers

Shutting down the distillaries had made many families destitute as they had no work to do. Anna Hazare with the help of Tarun Mandal boys got them work at an EGS site, thus developing a "community" sense and a feeling of solidarity in the village propaganda against evils like illicit distillaries.
Eradication of untouchability

Today untouchability is beginning to loose its force with Annas efforts. Now there is co-operation at work and in all activities of life. In fact the Harijans share the prosperity generated by the villagers.

Stopping of inhuman practices and customs

Anna Hazare stopped the gory practice of goat sacrifice at the village annual fair. The people of the village were awakened. He thus proved that disease, famine and death have to be fought by the villagers themselves.

Akhand Harinaam Saptaha

These religious functions have helped in enlightening the people.

Anddha Shraddha Nirmulan Samiti

This samiti helped in lifting the villagers out of ignorance. Effective remedies for superstition had good effects on the villagers and blind faith was eradicated.

Unanimous elections

This helped in eliminating political parties from the village scene. The evils of elections and electioneering were put a stop to.
Education

Classes upto Xth standard were started creating opportunity for further education.

Hostel

The hostel houses about sixty students from all castes and creed. It was built under the EGS sanction of Rs. 5 lacs by sramadaan and a two storeyed building valued at 12 lacs was built.

Solar street light and water heater (at boys hostel)

It has helped in taking science to the village. It has been installed to demonstrate the capabilities of science to the villagers – to show to them that such things are possible.

Nursery

The children are taught hygiene and discipline is encouraged.

Functional literacy

Every boy and girl got an opportunity of education especially those who did not go to school.
Adult Education

Almost all the adults have become literate.

Bank

The bank played a very crucial role in the development programmes of Ralegan Shindi. In fact everything that agriculture requires was offered by the bank.

Co-operative consumers society

The villagers get grains at fair (subsidised) prices.

Sant Yadavbaba Milk Society

It collects all the milk produce of the village which is then carted away to Narayangavhan thus reducing individual efforts to sell milk.

Credit-society

It has helped the farmers to avail credit/finance when they need the most, avoiding sale of grains at a loss.

Co-operative flour mill

The village women could do away with the traditional "jaata" which consumed lot of their time and labour.
Smokeless chullhas

It has reduced the consumption of firewood and also incidences of respiratory diseases amongst women.

Insurance scheme

It covers water pumpsets which are replaced or repaired immediately, thus helping them in giving uninterrupted water supply to crops.

Social improvements (group-marriages)

Money, no more is spent with tears as needless expenditure is totally avoided. The function is conducted in utmost peace without the usual fights over dowry and "Maan Paan".

Radio and Broadcasting

People come to know of latest development through them. Programmes on agriculture has helped them a lot.

Health service

There is now absence of major diseases. People have realised the importance of health.
Veterinary-Aid centre

Due to this centre, death of animals due to disease has been reduced.

Percolation tank

The aim of the tank was to augment and firm up the water in near by wells.

Community wells

It has helped in aiding agriculture a lot.

Windmill

It has the advantage of working twenty four hours without electricity.

Stopping the running off water

It has helped in replenishing the ground water level. The water table has considerably gone up.

Community fruit gardens

Developed on wastelands the villagers get fruits to eat. Some are sold. From the increased earnings, scholarships to poor students are awarded.
Lift Irrigation

It has helped in irrigating 500 acres of land of Ralegan Shindi. In addition 250 acres of land of the villages through which the pipe line passes are also irrigated.

Pasturising the lands

Due to unprecedented drought twelve hundred acres of land was tended to grow fodder, because water was available through lift irrigation. Forty villages in and around Ralegan Shindi could benefit from the fodder.

Sprinkler and Drip Irrigation

Has helped in increased yields as well as helped in saving water. They were also economical.

Grain Bank

In case of emergency the villagers could get grains from this bank.

Voluntary control on grazing

This timely decision has given impetus to the forestry programmes envisaged by the villagers.
Afforestation

It has helped in "greening" Ralegan Shindi. Fast growing fuel and fodder trees have been planted.

Vegetable export

The export of Bhendi was not a small achievement for the village, taking into account its background of drought and water scarcity. This instilled in them an ambition for progress. Since export of Bhendi was definitely a mile stone in the development of Ralegan Shindi.

Farmyard manure

Efforts were made not to waste farmyard manure for burning but to use it as manure. Since it contains all the ingredients required for the growth of crops.

Cow-dung

Instead of burning cow-dung as fuel, Anna popularised gobar-gas units which required cow-dung.

Multiple use of gobar-gas

The 35 gobar gas units provided fuel as well as fertilizers. It also stopped improper storage of animal litter.
Manure pits

These were developed to use human waste as manure.

Human waste as manure and fuel

Biogas units were installed to use human waste as fuel and manure, near community toilets and at boys hostel.

All sided success

The various developmental schemes which Anna undertook gave very good results. The various schemes not only solved the problems but also the felt needs of the people. The standard of living of the people improved considerably. Every villager has two meals a day and has enough clothing. Everyone has a pucca house and the slogan of the government of Roti, Kapada and Makaan for the deprived has become a reality. The farmers are seen driving around on mopeds. The village has been transformed into a rich green verdant place. It is surrounded by fields of successful grass land cultivation irrigated by a lift irrigation which is by no means a small achievement. Irrigation by wells as well as the drinking water problem was solved because every drop of water was stopped from running off.

The village Ralegan Shindi has provided the much needed alternative to the present irrigation strategy based on big dams. The village which suffered from severe drinking water
shortage to say nothing of agriculture, since most of the
villagers were doing bootlegging and distilling illicit
liquor for survival, expected a record harvest of 172 million
tonnes in 1988-89 which led to the selection of Mr. Annasaheb
Hazare, the man who was the driving force of strength for
this green revolution, to receive the award of "MAN OF THE
YEAR" of the magazine 'Gentleman'.

Long term plans of drought proofing was successful in
reducing the dependance on erratic monsoon. Optimum and
social use of water were advocated thus avoiding crops like
sugarcane.

The ecological balance could be maintained by planting
two and a half lacs of trees. Voluntary control on grazing
also helped in balancing ecology and saving the much needed
vegital cover.

Co-operation in work and in all activities of life was
very successful. It had passed the true test, that is, it had
survived, grown, spread and became permanent.

By keeping politics away from the village scene Anna
had created a proper environment for freeing the village from
homogeneous influencing centres like caste, kinship and
individual families.

The benefits of development schemes have reached the
Harijans also. They share the prosperity generated by the
villagers.
Even more remarkable is the social transformation which has been brought about. The people of the village have been awakened by putting a stop to inhuman customs and rituals.

However, social transformation could take place because of increase in the level of education and a free flow of information. Functional literacy and Adult education helped the illiterate to take advantage of the developmental activities.

Great attention was paid to health, animal husbandry, hygiene, sanitation etc. which promised an advancement in both health and welfare of the villagers.

Initially the progress was very slow. However, success with the first improvement, developed individual pride and group satisfaction and led towards the desire for further improvement. That after a couple of years, successive improvement in agricultural production, water supply, health measures, education and other opportunities completely transformed the village life not only in its physical amenities and improved economic status but also in the mental attitude and behaviour pattern of the villagers. Helplessness was replaced with determination, apathy with ambition and indifference with pride and accomplishment.

The change in the village life has been considered to be brought about by concentrated efforts and an integrated approach making an assault on all facets of rural life in the village through a single multi-purpose aim of upliftment of the village Ralegan Shindi. Anna looked upon the
developmental programmes as an approach to local development, as a part of the bigger scheme of planned national development. As a process it involved a sequential and interdependent progression of changes - economic, social, political and psychological. Anna was successful in stimulating the local potential for growth in every field and direction.

Today Ralegan Shindi is self sufficient. A sense of pride and glory prevails everywhere. As the people of Ralegan Shindi affirm it is not only their economic progress of which they are proud of but it is their flowering into complete human beings of which they are proud today.

Financial support to his schemes

As for the financial assistance for all the schemes undertaken by Anna Hazare - it was not on the basis of outside charity but by building the latent vitality of the beneficiaries themselves with the minimum of outside help.

Anna had encouraged self help through the schemes which was the key stone of village development. The asset of the village was its hands, "SRAMADAAN", for all of it was the voluntary efforts of Anna Hazare and the villagers. Through sramadaan the villagers could build a percolation tank, a boys hostel, lift irrigation and also could undertake afforestation programmes.
What Anna Hazare did was the utilization of one and all the government schemes effectively. Annas programmes although directed towards the task of the village upliftment embraced all aspects of governmental activity in the field.

The transformation of the village is however the result of one man’s thinking, one man’s planning, one man’s inspiration but development has come about through self help and cooperative efforts of the entire village. No outside help was involved. Cooperation in work and in all activities of life was very successful which characterised itself by self sustaining, self-generating, self perpetuation of all the schemes and growth signs of rural modernity abound. There is a bank now. Just ten years ago money lenders controlled the village economy and almost every inhabitant was bonded to them.

With the bank’s arrival at Ralegan Shindi the picture is incredibly different today. After the bank opened its branch at Ralegan Shindi the risk of production operations like drought, accidental break down of machinery, unsuspected defects in seeds were all shared by the bank. Loans for buying cows, bullocks, implements, infact everything which agriculture requires were offered by the bank. Thus the bank played a crucial role in the development programmes of Ralegan Shindi.

The bio-gas units, gobar-gas units, community wells, lift irrigation were the schemes financed by the bank while the hostel, percolation tank, afforestation schemes were undertaken under EGS.
Future schemes planned for the village

The village Ralegan Shindi and its environs are a testimony of what a dedicated voluntary agency, enthusiastic people and far sighted programmes can do in seemingly impossible conditions.

However, Anna Hazare plans to start Nation’s first centre for training volunteers in rural development in the near future at Ralegan Shindi. The above said programme will be started with the firm backing of government of Maharashtra’s chief secretary Mr. Paranjape and Mr. B.G. Bhide a social reformist.

The above said programme covers every aspect of rural life. It would create an awareness that would help promote growth and change through planned step by step action. Ralegan Shindi itself will provide as a model and all the schemes undertaken will be studied in detail.

The students will be taught about the role they are required to play in the context of rural development that would go a long way in creating a favourable climate for the growth of individuals and emergence of selfless leaders.

The candidates will be called for an interview. They will be selected on their overall personality including their interest in rural development. A batch of 100 candidates will be selected and admitted in the first year of the two year residential programme. Services of professionals from
universities will also be taken. Anna says that any individual with minimum intelligence, general sense of dedication together with this orientation programme may emerge successful in facing various challenges of the countryside which would have been difficult as of today, without proper training.

Great attention will be paid towards agriculture, health, animal husbandry, irrigation, forestry, fodder, water management etc. The participants will be made aware of all the governmental activity in the field, those which were embraced by Ralegan Shindi and those which have been introduced of late.

Anna Hazare looks at this programme as an approach to local development, as a part of the bigger scheme of planned national development.

At the education level in the school, Anna wants to start trade classes so that those who are not interested in education and interested in a particular trade can make use of it and learn the tricks of the trade and serve the village itself ex. handloom weaving, carpentry, masonry, pottery, black smithy, shoe making, jaggery making, bullock cart making, repairing tractors, trucks or water pumpsets, electrical fitting etc.

Anna also feels that industries however small they are, is a must for progress. Anna wants the youth of the village to start processing, khadi and village industries. This may provide scope for intelligent and progressive youth of the village. This will also make the village self sufficient.
A bio-gas unit is proposed for the boys hostel. This will be attached to the hostel toilet. The hostel kitchen will use the gas for cooking and the unit will also provide manure.

There are small hills on three sides of Ralegan Shindi. Anna Hazare wants to plant trees on these hills too, by digging small trenches, so that rain water could be stopped step by step and the trees will get water.

After the forming of grain bank the people no longer have to go to rich farmers for grains during emergency. In future the people of Ralegan Shindi want to loan grains to other nearby villagers also, at the same rate of interest.

Opposition from the existing leadership

Since Anna Hazare's schemes embraced all governmental activity, he had to visit the collectorate and other governmental institutions many times. Initially these officers did not care for him. They troubled him by seeing that he made innumerable trips to get any project sanctioned. Unnecessary technical problems were raised making it difficult for him to get any work sanctioned. He haunted government offices a number of times returning empty handed. He even approached the local M.P. and MLA. They did not help him either. His requests to them to come to the village and see for themselves the schemes he was to undertake fell on deaf ears. They were not interested in coming to the village to survey the schemes to be undertaken. They were not even
interested in the development of the village. His innumerable attempts to meet them resulted in frustration.

The struggle to set up a high school in the village was unique. After the villagers decided they wanted a high school they constructed the school building themselves through sramadaan. However the government refused to provide money for running it and denied recognition to the school. Anna soon discovered the reason. A powerful local politician, an MLA, annoyed because he had received no votes in Ralegan Shindi in recent election was taking revenge. He had manoeuvred to deny recognition to the school. But Hazare was undeterred. He hired ten teachers offering free food and housing in lieu of salaries and got the school going. Then he systematically began lobbying officials both at district headquarters in Ahmednagar and at the state secretariat at Bombay, 350 kilometers away. To keep expenses down during his Bombay trips, Hazare slept on newspapers spread on bus station floors and bathed in the sea. But for one year, despite twenty visits to Bombay and innumerable more to Ahmednagar, nothing happened. Finally Hazare says "I decided I had enough". He descended on Ahmednagar Zilla Parishad office one morning with 250 villagers and announced that they were all going on hunger strike. Within hours officials in Bombay sent a positive reply and in a few days the recognition and funds for salaries of the teachers were made available.
Demonstration effect

Now that the fame of the village has spread far and wide many luminaries visit Ralegan Shindi. Even foreigners visit the place. Some of the luminaries who have visited Ralegan Shindi include the former governor Mr. I.H. Latif, Mrs. Bilkees Latif, Mrs. Shanti Sadiq Ali, many political leaders like Mr. Shivajirao Moghe, Mr. Ulhasrao Pawar both MLA's, Mr. Yeshwantrao Gadhak, former MLA Mr. Babasaheb Thube, Mr. Nanaji Deshmukh of Gramvishwa who pioneered the Gonda project in Beed, Mr. Sharad Joshi of Shetkari Sanghatana, Mr. Balasaheb Bharde of Gandhi trust, officials from Tata Rural Trust, many industrialists including Mr. Navalbhai Firodia, editor of Daily Lokyog Mr. Govardhanbhai Barshikar, Collectors of many districts, officials from forestry department, officials from Bank of Maharashtra, officials from Zillha Parishad have visited the place. All of them were very much impressed by what Anna Hazare had done and one and all said that such things must be followed by other villages.

It has also become a picnic spot. Agricultural institutions, educational institutions, water and land management institutions come in buses and spend their day at Ralegan Shindi enjoying their stay as well as learning from what Anna Hazare has done.

It gathers special importance because on 19th Nov. 1986. The then honourable Prime Minister Mr. Rajiv Gandhi presented to Mr. Anna Hazare the prestigious "Indira
Priyadarshini Vrikshamitra Puraskar" at the Vigyan Bhavan. The function was largely attended by, apart from Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, his cabinet colleagues and other ministers and dignitaries. Prominent among them were Mr. Bhajanlal the then minister for environment and Dr. Kamala Chaudhary, President of waste land development Board.

In 1980 Ralegan Shindi got the first prize in the district for propagating eradication of untouchability.

Anna Hazare was also selected as the recipient of "Man of the year" award for 1988, of the magazine ‘Gentleman’.

Anna Hazare has also been awarded the "Krishibhusan" by the government.

Anna Hazare was decorated with "Padmashri" on 26th Jan. 1990 for his service to humanity.

When Anna Hazare was at New Delhi to receive "Padmashree", he was invited by President R. Venkatraman’s wife Mrs. Janaki Venkatraman at Rashtrapati Bhavan to know more about the development programmes at Ralegan Shindi. Anna Hazare gave detailed information about the various schemes undertaken at Ralegan Shindi, in an informal one hour meeting with the family members of the President of India. He also took this opportunity of inviting the President’s family to Ralegan Shindi and to see for themselves the progress made at Ralegan Shindi. Accepting his offer, a communiqué from Rashtrapati Bhavan says that the family of the President of India will visit Ralegan Shindi in September 1990.
Research work at Ralegan Shindi

The water balance in Ralegan Shindi is very satisfactory. "The Ralegan Shindi experiment in rural upliftment is unique in many respects", says Prof. R.K. Patil, a Pune based researcher and social worker who is studying the water balance in Ralegan Shindi.

An evaluation of the Ralegan Shindi project conducted by Prof. R.K. Patil, K.R. Datey and Suhas Paranjape for the centre for Applied Systems Analysis in Development (CASAD) shows that 32.5 percent of the fuel requirement of the village has been met by gobar-gas and bio-gas units.

Mr. Anil Agarwal, Padmashri, and a consultant to the Planning Commission on matters of development and environment points at Ralegan Shindi for better water management. He is very appreciative of creating small harvesting systems like Ralegan Shindi's and says Ralegan Shindi has an answer to capital intensive or resource intensive water management programmes.

Mr. Shankar Menon, Secretary of the employment guarantee scheme visited Ralegan Shindi to study how EGS schemes could be effectively implemented.

Two researchers, Dr. Ramesh Awasthi and Mr. Dashrath Panmand, recently completed a socio-economic study of the progress made by the village since 1975.
Door Darshan

At the regional level Anna Hazare's developmental programmes have been repeated a number of times in Aamchi Maati Aamchi Maanse" to demonstrate to the viewers that such things are possible and that they could undertake such projects.

At the national level also the development of Ralegan Shindi has been shown in the national telecast.

The Television serial "VIRASAT" under the aigies of INTACH (Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) shows you a familiar picture – about drought. It is a thirteen part serial on the terrible damage that has been done to our environmental heritage, sometimes without forethought, often deliberately. The scenes are heartrending and people wonder how it has happened? However it offered an occasional glimpse of hope, of an individual effort – Ralegan Shindi. The message has come out clearly, that something has to be done and done very fast, the Ralegan Shindi way.

This series has certainly had an impact on urban as well as rural audiences. It has thus helped in awakening the people because they could see everything right in front of them, most of them had of course heard of it or read it in news papers.

No other village of the same size in India has so many facilities like gobar-gas, bio-gas, high school, bank,
hostel, medical aid centre, lift irrigation, percolation
tank, grain-bank, cooperatives to name a few. The wind, the
sun and water have all been tapped and every drop of water is
preserved and used. Thus Ralegan Shindi has become an
inspiration to the thousands of hamlets still struggling
under the yoke of backwardness. The drought cycle which was
becoming shorter year after year was totally squashed. The
story of Ralegan Shindi is a documentary evidence of such a
development, an experiment in the regeneration of
environment.

Scores of villages in and around Ralegan Shindi and
from other parts of Maharashtra have adopted the same
development strategy. Many more are on their way.

Village boundaries - no limit to his work

Today Ralegan Shindi is being identified with the
national movement for Rural Development.

However, Anna Hazare is not happy with this. He says
that the happiest moment in his life would be when all the
villages in India are fully developed. Each village must
become self-sufficient. Today many young and old from all
corners of the country visit Ralegan Shindi. They plead with
Anna Hazare to give advise and guide them. On their
invitation he visits many villages. After initial survey, he
proposes the schemes to be undertaken, the direction in which
development has to take place. Anna Hazare is constantly on
the move and spends almost twenty days in a month outside
participating in seminars and propagating his ideas.
Mr. Sharad Pawar the Chief Minister of Maharashtra was so impressed by the success of Ralegan Shindi that he has sought the assistance of Mr. Anas aheb Hazare at the grass roots level in the state for planning rural development programmes.

Hundreds of letters pour in each day, some to know about the development programmes, some for advise and others con veys the message that they have already started their work.

Mr. P. V. Barve, the project director for district rural development is Pune, said it was proposed to develop 50 villages in Pune district on the lines of Ralegan Shindi. There was much scope for progress as there were a number of voluntary agencies in the district, some of them formed, by committed engineers, scholars and others.

Mr. Zumberlal H. Sharma, the secretary of the Maharashtra Harijan Sewak Sangh, said ideally it should be possible to eradicate alcoholism as in Ralegan Shindi. But unfortunately, in many places the liquor shops are owned by leaders and politicians.

After Anna – what?

The transformation of the village was however due to one man’s thinking, one man’s planning and one man’s inspiration and he was Anna Hazare. With selflessness, honesty and dedication, Hazare was successful in transforming the village into all round development.
To a question on whether the schemes undertaken by him would work even without him. Hazare says "like the Buddhist wheel of life, changeless, endless and revolving in cosmic limbo, life in Ralegan Shindi will go on like before even if I am not there. Morale changes with time. The principles of the family or that of the head of the family may not be followed by the children. Therefore today's Ralegan Shindi will remain as it is, for, tomorrow can not be guaranteed right now. Moreover there may be some short comings too. A volunteer who can devote twenty four hours a day is a must. The villagers know how much they have suffered before, for, they have experienced adversaries. Therefore they will follow the path I have laid down. Today Ralegan Shindi has become a ray of hope for scores of villagers who are still struggling under the yoke of poverty and deprivation. Many villages in and around Ralegan Shindi and from other parts of Maharashtra have adopted the same development strategy. Many more are on their way. Perhaps some of the villages who are following Ralegan Shindi may overtake it in developmental activities. I am not happy with just developing Ralegan Shindi, the happiest moment in my life will be when all the villages in India are developed. However I am confident that the progressive work at Ralegan Shindi will continue".

**Hurdles faced in Execution of Schemes**

At Ralegan Shindi Anna Hazare triggered off the process of development. However change did not come overnight. There were different hurdles he had to face while implementing the schemes.
At that time Ralegan Shindi's most distinctive features were its 40 illicit distillaries which made the village a popular haunt for drunkards and gamblers. Liquor had blighted the lives of Ralegan Shindis residents. Thefts and brawls were common. There was no meaning in their lives as they did not think of anything better. In the absence of any work illicit distillaries provided them with some income. However, the cause of poverty at Ralegan Shindi lay in its weak economic base which was not in a position to sustain even 2000 people that resided in it. Almost a quarter of the people were on the brink of starvation. Roti, Kapada and Makaan were mere slogans that had no meaning to them.

The people of the village were tradition bound, they were maintaining their own traditions and adhered to their own social values. However, from amongst the customs were being followed religiously were primitive customs and traditions. Untouchability, sacrifice of goats at the annual village fair, seeking the blessings from the possessed were being followed. Ignorance and the dead weight of customs coupled with poverty provided the initial obstacle in bringing about change.

Local politics, graft, corruption, diversion of funds were the diseases that had plagued the village. Even the youth of the village were wayward. Political parties created proper environment in inducing homogenous influencing centres like caste, kinship and individual families to dominate the village scene which kept the village defunct.
There was widespread illiteracy which did not allow them to grow and take advantage of the economic opportunities. The village moneylender was still the important source for borrowing who charged exorbitant rates of interest. Dozens of villagers were under knee keep debt and were in the clutches of the money lender thus retarding progress.

Rainfall figures suggested that the village suffered from drought since time immemorial. There was acute drinking water shortage and decrease in the ground water level had reduced the vegetal cover not to speak of agriculture. The agricultural practices adopted were primitive. No irrigation facilities were available.

Due to lack of planning all the efforts for development suffered numerous drawbacks. However attempts to revitalise the rural life met with enormous obstacles. There was an overall blindwall and any attempt for economic development met with sceptism. It was a tremendous task to develop the village in all its aspects due to inadequate support by the people. The hope for spontaneous leadership was almost nil. There was absence of zealous and properly oriented village level workers. There was no body to lead the village towards initiating a process of transformation in the socio-economic life of the villagers.

The villagers were unaware of many schemes the government was sponsoring. In the absence of media like T.V., newspapers and films, the accessibility of the villagers to
mass media was very limited. Lack of technology was also the cause of backwardness.

As for the opposition faced while doing social work, Anna Hazare treats it philosophically, "Prabhu Sri Ram lived in the Satyug", he says. Even then there were evil people like Ravana. Bhagwan Sri Krishna came to reform the world but even then there were people like Duryodhana. And all this happened in Satyug, so what do you expect in Kaliyug? Besides, if there are no evil people in the society, your work will not have half the keemat it does - if everybody is good, who will call it good?

Some accuse him of being undemocratic to which Anna says that rural society is a harsh society and sometimes you have to be tough and for any development, strict moral codes have to be followed.

People also criticise out of jealousy. But this should not deter anybody from doing good work. People throw stones at trees which bear fruits. Who will throw stones at barren trees? asks Anna. Anna says he is not afraid of such criticism. It is those people who take up social work for personal gains or selfish motive, just to earn some name and fame, who are afraid of criticism. The moment somebody criticises them, they leave the work half done and run away. As for him his selflessness has made him more confident.

Thus to sum up, the different hurdles faced by Anna Hazare were that the village suffered from isolation from urban centres, misery, paucity of resources, drought,
untouchability, alcoholism, gambling and crime, poverty, primitive customs and traditions, social problems, illiteracy, poor agricultural practice, water shortage etc.
Suggestions

1. Voluntary Agencies should avoid dependance for funds and doles from donors

For a long time funds have remained a very sensitive subject. A number of voluntary organisations which have been receiving grants in aid from the state, the central government, the industries and private citizens for implementation of rural development programmes entrusted to them, making them completely dependent on donors, should be avoided. Mobilising by voluntary organisations of resources through their own exertions will avoid overdependance for funds on the donors, thus aiding in availability of funds in time and in sufficient amount, which, so far has remained a source of friction between the donors and the voluntary organisations.

While the resources which might be applied by these organisations are sizable, the problem of misuse of funds is also avoided and the moral responsibility on the part of receiving voluntary organisation to see that the funds are properly utilised is also not there. Voluntary organisations therefore should incorporate a strong voluntary element so that it can function without the overwhelming dependance on aid from others.
2. Voluntary agencies should improve their operational abilities in implementing the programmes

For over several decades transformation of the rural communities has been the concern of the government, the voluntary organisations and the people. The intensity and direction of these efforts have however varied from time to time. Just having the will, enthusiasm and capacity to mobilise the community resources is not enough but voluntary agencies should develop the expertise to go about the task. Identification of the problem, expert guidance and advice, and mobilising the community in the right direction by the voluntary agency will play a crucial role in rural transformation. People with diverse customs, traditions, beliefs have to be organised to aim more and more at creating a sense of wanting to improve themselves will enhance the operational abilities of voluntary organisations.

3. Voluntary agencies should encourage the target group to be self-reliant

The true test of any development project is that it should be self reliant. Voluntary agencies should advocate self help and self reliance which will help the people to grow and manage their own affairs. The doctrine should be to help the people to help themselves by involving them not only in planning but implementing as well, so that the programmes acquire roots in the society. The voluntary efforts of the people make the programme grow, spread and become permanent.
4. **Voluntary agencies should gain the confidence of the people**

Many times it has been seen that there are many voluntary agencies which are very enthusiastic and genuinely want to help rural masses. In their enthusiasm to help the rural poor they should make sure that the sociological process is not ignored. Attempts to bring rapid development should be avoided as it results in frustration. Just an ambitious beginning and enthusiasm is not enough, it should gain the confidence of the people for whom development is being planned.

Taking too much too soon could create the opposite effect and retard progress. Therefore, the voluntary agencies should make a modest beginning and extend its scope of activities gradually by gaining the confidence of the people.

5. **Voluntary agencies should develop their own indigenous methodology of working with the people**

Voluntary agencies should indentify the felt needs and problems of the people and should involve their own indigenous methodology of working with the people. The pattern of working of the voluntary agencies should contribute to the genesis and growth of their activities for rural development rather than follow the central guidelines. The voluntary agencies should involve themselves in the task of rural development with a view to alleviate conditions of poverty and promote higher levels of utilization of

435
available resources, infrastructure and services, thus developing their own indigenous methodology of working with the people.

6. Spectrum of voluntary action should cover all aspects of village life

The voluntary agencies should not concentrate on a particular community, a particular block, a particular aspect of village life, operate for a section of a population and devote to few aspects of rural life resulting in sporadic and uneven development.

The spectrum of voluntary action should be wide and cover all aspects of rural life, so that, the results achieved by the voluntary agency have radiant effects on the whole community. The rural development programme should be built around the community as a whole. The village problems should be dealt in totality with the initiation of the common action towards development. Thus utilising the growth potential becomes easier and quicker that will benefit the entire community.

7. Voluntary agencies should associate the local institutions with development activity

In the context of the utilization of local resources and potential for rural development, the voluntary agencies should associate local institutions like the Grampanchayat, co-operatives, Youth club, village school, Dispensary, in all
the programmes for development. These institutions if involved result in speedy development with good and lasting results.

8. Voluntary agencies should delink themselves from politics

Many voluntary agencies which engage themselves in rural upliftment should not, after some time during the process change their ideologies. They should not be driven by the wedges of political competitiveness, after the organisation acquires some standing amongst the local population and should not start attracting a political clout to attract programme funds from the government or sponsor their own favourite for elections. This will abort the rise to a style of power-exercise which is hardly collegial or democratic and smacks off sycophancy and personal idolatory which adversely effects the quality of the services of voluntary agencies.

The voluntary agencies should therefore delink themselves from politics and political parties and concentrate solely on the development activities. They should refuse to comply with a system that perpetuates injustice but instead struggle to create a new community free from politics.
9. Voluntary agencies should motivate the people

Though planning in the right direction helps in speedy development, the voluntary agencies should create incentives for individuals, that will result in the success of the development programmes rather than use force. The individuals have to be motivated by taking up programmes that satisfy their needs and with sympathetic counselling, expert guidance and some financial assistance by the voluntary agency the villagers should be motivated to recognise their most immediate and acute problem, to think about them, formulate plans for their solution and put these plans into action.

Thus the voluntary agencies should play a very creative role in harnessing motivation of the people in the development process.

10. Voluntary agencies should encourage the participation of target groups

Voluntary agencies in their anxiety to achieve targets in comparatively shorter periods should not ignore the important principle of involving the people. It becomes very easy to develop the rural areas in all its aspects if adequate support is received by the people. Thus voluntary agencies should encourage peoples participation, regardless of their social or economic position, to realise their only objective and that is the development of the village.
11. Voluntary agencies should identify themselves with the rural masses

Voluntary agencies should not act as catalysts operating externally. They should be able to identify themselves with the land and the people. Identification with the rural masses will help them in understanding the social, economic, cultural and political aspirations of the people and the problems arising during the implementation of the schemes are avoided. The target group develops an affinity towards the voluntary agency as one amongst them and rely on its programmes without suspicion which will lead to a quick all round development.

12. Encourage voluntary agencies to bridge the gap between the people and the government

The involvement of voluntary organisations in the task of rural development with a view to alleviate conditions of poverty and promote higher levels of utilization of available infrastructure, resources and services should be stressed, more so, because there are a lot of government schemes for the upliftment of the rural masses. Resources being released, voluntary agencies should see that they reach the disadvantaged and the benefits go to larger section of the society. The villagers should be encouraged by the voluntary agencies to avail the facilities given by the government. The wide gap between the services and facilities available for the people and their utility to the larger group should be reduced, by seeing that they reach the rural folk for whom they have been provided.
13. **Voluntary agencies should harness youthful energy for developmental activities**

The harnessing of youthful energy is very important for developmental activities. Thus the voluntary agencies should help in organising the youth into youth clubs. The voluntary agencies should conceive this idea as an integral part of all round development. The youth should be encouraged to participate in the development of community works through contribution of free labour i.e. "Sramadaan".

14. **The voluntary agencies should pressurise government to encourage banks to go to rural areas**

The voluntary agencies should pressurise the government to encourage banks to open their branches or extension counters at villages or for a cluster of villages since banks could play a very crucial role in the development of any village. They not only offer loans under various schemes to the farmers but also make the villagers aware of such schemes which they are ignorant of. The people no longer will have to go to money lenders for money, who, in times of need, charge exorbitant rate of interest.

15. **Voluntary agencies should encourage villagers to go in for small water harvesting systems**

Voluntary agencies should encourage villagers to go in for small harvesting systems which need small capital outlay
and use local talents and resources. The utilisation of irrigation potential is almost immediate as against big projects (dams) which suffer from heavy investment and time overruns. Since these schemes are locally developed by the cultivators themselves they bring about satisfaction of the psychological and physical needs of the cultivators. The loss of water in distribution is reduced and the water supply from these is more reliable, suiting the needs of the people around.

16. Voluntary agencies should popularise bio-gas units which will reduce the dependence on wood for fuel

Voluntary agencies should popularise bio-gas which act not only as fuel suppliers but also as manure suppliers. If the fuel requirements are met by bio-gas the depletion of forests will be arrested to a greater extent. It will help in maintaining a balance between human and environmental needs.

17. Voluntary agencies should popularise literacy so that benefits of the development schemes reach the rural folk

Voluntary agencies should play a major role in eradicating illiteracy as, the key issue to development is literacy. It is the first step directed towards enabling the people to stand on their own feet. Being literate will enable them to demand development. By encouraging literacy, voluntary agencies will be able to remove the greatest hindrance of India’s progress and literacy will allow people to take advantage of economic opportunities. Literacy for a
large group of people is bound to change the equation in the society. The disadvantaged can be resocialised through education so that they can participate in the real sense of the development efforts for well being. Voluntary agencies by popularising literacy will make the people absorb economic opportunities and enjoy the benefits arising out of it.

18. Voluntary agencies should bring technology close to the people

Voluntary agencies in their quest for modernising our villages should bring technology close to the people as it is the only available option to India's development problem. It is the only tool to solve the existing problems. Voluntary agencies should usher in technology through gobar-gas units, bio-gas units, smokeless chullhas, lift irrigation, T.V., solar street lights and water heaters, flour mill, electrical water pump sets etc. to name a few, which will play a very important role in speeding up development.

Voluntary agencies through improved technology can increase productivity and efficiency, reduce cost, boost innovation and at the same time change the basic attitude to work, foster a work ethic and improve the quality of work.
19. Voluntary agencies should stress on avoiding sugarcane crops in drought prone areas

Voluntary agencies should encourage the farmers to restructure their cropping pattern by avoiding water intensive crops like sugarcane in arid and semi arid areas because the amount of water and time required for one crop of sugarcane can give three other crops with less water. Voluntary agencies should advocate social use of the limited water so that the planned use of water will help a lot in getting more benefit from the limited availability of the precious liquid in drought prone areas.

20. Voluntary agencies should see that wasteland farming is encouraged by the government

Instead of national debates and policy formulations on dry farming by the government, voluntary agencies should show to the government ways and means to divert areas unsuitable for sustained crop cultivation to uses like raising forests horticultural plantations, fuel cum fodder trees, grass lands and pastures, fruit bearing trees etc. that will give economic benefit to the individual cultivator. A large part of battle against unemployment and poverty will be won if dry lands are used for farming as it will definitely make a vast difference in the country's total farm production. It will be a great relief to the government if waste lands are effectively used in terms of maintaining our ecological balance.
21. Voluntary agencies should see that the afforestation programmes of the government become peoples programmes

Voluntary agencies should undertake tree planting drives and make people aware of ecology and their environment. Efforts should be made to educate people that, the man made phenomena that causes severe drought are deforestation and encourage the participation of the people in afforestation programmes by the government.

Afforestation programmes by the government are mere drives and the approach is that of "crisis management" rather than long term solutions, thus voluntary agencies should initialise the participation of the people for the successful implementation of the government afforestation programmes.

22. Voluntary agencies should make the rural folk aware of the various government schemes

There are a number of government schemes for the upliftment of the rural masses. Voluntary agencies should make the villagers aware of the various schemes of which they are ignorant in terms of nature and content of the programmes. Therefore, most of the villages in India will be able to avail the facilities given by the government, if the people are made aware of these services and facilities which have limited to a great extent their utility for the village folks for whom these have been meant. Voluntary agencies should aid in tapping the various government schemes for the upliftment of the rural folks.
23. Voluntary agencies working in rural areas should lay more importance to drought proofing

In India, which faces unprecedented drought every now and then, the voluntary agencies should encourage to turn the drought relief measures into assets if properly carried out. The resources diverted to dealing with drought could be used to lay the base for stronger economic development in the future so as to reduce the likelihood and consequences of drought in the future. Voluntary agencies should put high priority on drinking water schemes, strengthen the capacity for irrigation, construction of contours and terraces to impound rain water, construct percolation tanks etc. that will make the area more resilient to future shocks of drought. Voluntary agencies should help in finding more permanent solution to the recurring problem of drought rather than defuse the crisis temporarily.

24. Other voluntary agencies should take inspiration from this novel experiment

Ralegan Shindi has shown the way to India tomorrow where man has to plan to defeat the vagaries of nature. What Ralegan Shindi has achieved should be looked upto by other voluntary organisations to get solutions for quick rural upliftment in seemingly impossible conditions. Also what Ralegan Shindi has achieved should become an example and an inspiration to scores of voluntary organisations working for rural upliftment.
25. Lot of publicity should be given to this success story of Ralegan Shindi

The realities and reports that appear often about miseries, drought, poverty, social problems have their solution in a dedicated voluntary agency like Anna Hazare should be made known to the public at large. A lot of publicity should be given through radio, magazines and T.V. which should high-light the achievements made in seemingly impossible conditions so that it may certainly have an advantageous impact on the listeners, readers and viewers of radio, magazines and T.V. respectively and may raise the consciousness of many and they may give serious thought to such experiments. It will give an opportunity for others to know and see for themselves the progress made at Ralegan Shindi.

26. Voluntary agencies should work as complimentary to government agencies

The problem of rural communities are so vast and complex that the state alone cannot tackle it and requires the support of the voluntary organisations to supplement its efforts. Through voluntary agencies the development programmes can reach the common rural folk and at the same time plans that reflect the felt needs of the people can be implemented. The new thrust of government policy is widely known - It is to put high priority on rural development and involve voluntary agencies in carrying out the various tasks. Voluntary agencies should therefore play a very important
role and that is the role of a partner of the government agencies in rural development efforts. With close cooperation and coordination between the government agencies and the voluntary agencies the developmental programmes will reach the village level.

27. The basic problems of which the country is facing today should be tackled with the assistance of the voluntary agencies.

Because the voluntary agencies are in close contact with the people and have correct and adequate information about the problems of the people because of their proximity with the people the basic problems which the government is facing currently like family planning, water management, adult education, afforestation can very well be tackled by the government with the assistance of voluntary agencies.

28. More literature should be written on this case.

Ralegan Shindi offers a glimpse of hope, of a voluntary agency's effort in creating a brave little oasis, of a community flourishing and keeping alive ancient traditions against all odds, to the students involved in management studies and social work. They should be made aware of this experiment so that they can go into details and find out factors leading to its success, for, more and more literature can be written on this case.
29. Anna Hazare should travel widely to popularise his experiment

The village Ralegan Shindi has become a 'model'. The villagers were successful in writing their own destiny with the help of Shri. Anna Hazare. No other village of the same size in India has so many facilities like gobar-gas, bio-gas, a bank, cooperatives, high school, hostel, grain bank to name a few. This success story will have little meaning if it is not popularised, therefore the founder i.e. Shri. Anna Hazare should be requested to travel throughout the country to popularise his experiment. He should be requested to share his rich experience in this field and should give suggestions to the disadvantaged.

30. Ralegan Shindi should start training camps to impart training to younger generation

Training camps for youths, National Service Schemes (NSS) of various colleges for imparting training to younger generation should be held at Ralegan Shindi, so that they get more and direct information regarding rural development. With this training they will play a very useful role in developmental activities. They will also develop interest in social service and will be able to face the challenges that would have been difficult without this training.
31. Anna Hazare should see that the second line of leadership is developed

At Ralegan Shindi the question .... after Hazare what? remains unanswered. The succession crisis looms large as a second line of leadership with the same quality of character is not there. He should therefore see that the second line leadership develops so that even after him the leadership continues.

32. Voluntary agencies should involve themselves in social transformation

Voluntary agencies should involve themselves at the grass root level struggle for women, children, tribals and other oppressed social strata which have been targets of atrocities and oppression for a long time for historical reasons unknown. They should concentrate more on their efforts to contribute to larger challenges and tasks involved in social transformation. They should struggle for creating a democratic and just society that will accent on human rights, civil liberties, the struggle for the rights of the poor and the oppressed people.

33. Voluntary organisations should not be bureaucratic

There should not be any constraints of any kind externally or internally on voluntary agencies. It should be free from bureaucratisation. They should be autonomous and independent which will give them an opportunity to carry on their work without hindrance.
34. The Planning commission should involve voluntary agencies in drawing and implementing plans

The planning commission should move beyond bureaucratic functioning and involve voluntary agencies in both the drawing and implementation of the five year plans since voluntary agencies have over the decades acquired intimate knowledge of local conditions and various problems that exist. The government's attitude of being monopolistic in defining what constitutes public interest and seeking exclusive preserve over matters of public interest will be curtailed to a larger extent if voluntary agencies are involved.

35. Voluntary agencies should face new challenges

Many voluntary agencies involve in constructive work of the traditional type like Sarvodaya Movement or draw their sustenance from pioneers like Lohia, Jayaprakash Narayan and Mahatma Gandhi. But times have changed now and voluntary agencies should chart a new course to meet the challenges of the changing situation. They should tune in to new challenges thrown up by new situations. In an overall context both the strategies and the tactics of voluntary agencies must evolve and find a new identity.
36. Voluntary agencies should become entrepreneurs

Voluntary agencies should play the role of becoming an entrepreneur and create wealth. This will make them financially viable too. They should increase their ability to formulate workable projects and implement them as per the needs of the people. Volunteers can be trained for implementing the project who in turn will propagate it further.

37. Voluntary agencies should encourage irrigation by small group action

Voluntary agencies should encourage small cohesive groups which is the key to the success of lift irrigation societies. The biggest advantage being, the face to face interactions among members which is one of the major reasons for its better functioning as against the bigger ones. The individual member’s needs are also satisfied by equitable and social distribution of water.

38. Voluntary agencies should take up more pioneering work

Voluntary agencies should take up more of pioneering work and do experimentation since it has the advantage of being more flexible and its organisation is rather simple as against the government agencies which are not flexible and have rigid framework.
39. Voluntary agencies should encourage educational institutions to inject creativity in their programmes

Voluntary agencies should encourage educational institutions to go beyond the routine — i.e. stress the role of creativity which means ability to do fresh thinking followed by suitable action. More and more opportunities for thinking and free expression will develop individual talent and will help every child to blossom into fullness.

40. Voluntary agencies should fight against rural joblessness

Voluntary agencies should create village jobs to social equity. This alone will usher in village development which will sustain livelihood. The aim of voluntary agencies should be to employ labour productively rather than absorb as many idle hands as possible in the countryside. Voluntary agencies by encouraging employment for all can help the society to rid itself of poverty thus bring about "sustainable development". Voluntary agencies should see that any rural employment programme should be structured around the specific needs of the community it serves so that such programmes become a blueprint for social transformation at the grassroots.