Collective action plays an important role in the process of local development. It is how various social, economic and political collective actions are carried out to bring development supplemented by the values of social capital that matters. The variables of social capital like accountability and responsibility are linked with the variables of collective actions such as social collective action, economic collective action, political collective action and analysis is made with reference to 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, to find out the relations between formal local government institutions and informal local governance institutions.

**Trust**

An effective conflict resolving mechanism shows the higher level of trust in the community. The village people regularly attend the meetings and pay the annual contribution. The informal institution collects the money and hands it over to the formal institutions. There is high trust among people and for the local institutions governing the village. The people in these villages will not break rules and thus there was no need to keep a watch on them in many affairs. Laws, regulations and fair treatment of all social groups by these two institutions generate trust.

**Reciprocity**

Trust and reciprocity feed in to each other. People who trust each other tend to help each other and reciprocate to each other’s needs and-versa. That is why it should be expected that villages that have higher levels of trust also have higher levels of reciprocity. The
scores of the 15 villages prove this point. Reciprocity can be judged by the fact whether people of the village take up various collective activities. People in the village take up collective activities with the help of both institutions. The formal institutions and informal institutions collectively work if there is any crisis or disaster. Both the institution helps each other for planning, monitoring and implementing activities. People in the villages also started to help the fellow-villagers seeing the reciprocity of both institutions.

Participation

Both institutions create participation between them and also among the people. The formal and informal institutions assist in publicity to increase farmers’ participation in the crop yield competitions by creating congenial and positive competitive spirit among the farmers. Participation between these institutions can be found in each and every activity which they perform, they participate in decision making, resolving disputes and election process.

Cooperation

The formal and informal institutions act together in harmony to achieve a common goal. Proper implementation of programs by both institutions increased the level of cooperation in these villages. Cooperation between both institutions allows for greater effort than institutions could exert on their own, and it provides intrinsic rewards such as gratitude.

Social interaction

The institutions increase social interaction to reduce conflict. Conflict is a kind of interaction in which one party dominates the other. The formal and informal institutions communicate with each
other without any restraint. They maintain a positive stand in all the dealings and relations. These institutions by and large complement each other. Both interact with each other in all development programmes. Here social interaction is the basis of social order. By orienting their behavior to one another and by considering other people’s reactions to them, both institutions develop an understanding of behaviour. From the study villages it is clear that for discussing the matters related to development of the village the informal authorities along sit with the formal authorities.

Cohesion

Cohesion between these two institutions consists of the following elements;

• Social progress-the formal and informal institutions fulfill the basic necessities of the people which is way to social progress.
• Social order-the following social orders are fulfilled by these institutions such as safety and freedom from fear, tolerance and respect, peace and security.
• Positive interactions-there is no dissention between both institutions in carrying out the development activities of the village.
• Social inclusion-both institutions participate in the social, economic, cultural and political life of the societies. There is no deprivation between them.
• Social equality-here social equality in the sense equality of status. Both institutions give due respect to each other.
Communication

The formal institutions informs each and every development matters which are going to be done for the society. The informal institutions never undertake any activity without discussing with the formal authorities. Informal institutions serve as more effective channels of two-way communication between the government and the people. There is no communication gap between both these institutions. Both discuss the matters in detail to find out the pros and cons before commencing the meetings.

Social support

The formal local government institutions and informal local governance institutions provide social services and support to those in need. There are number of cases such as helping women, collecting funds from the villagers to help the poor families, arranging funeral rites for the insolvent people. Both institutions play a significant role in maintaining communal harmony in villages.

The formal and informal institutions provide several types of social support to each other such as:

- Instrumental-both institutions assist each other to solve the problems.
- Informational-informal institutions advise formal institutions in times of needs, the formal institutions also do the same.
- Emotional-both institutions give reassurances if one is in some kind of predicament.
Social networking

There are mainly four ways of social networking between both institutions namely:

1. Horizontal networking-institutions learn best from, each other. Social capital is built in course of this lateral learning.
2. Vertical networking-institutions are linked everywhere.
3. Flexible networking-both the institutions are not committed for the whole life time.
4. Permeable boundaries-when something very local is required, the boundaries can become temporarily narrowed. Permeable and flexible networks are critical for the sustainability of institutions. Horizontal networking can be seen between the institutions from the study.

Norms

Failure to follow the norms earlier can result in severe punishments including exclusion from the groups which used to happen frequently earlier. But now the situation has changed. Both institutions follow the norms and act as model for the village. The existence of social norms maintains acceptance and popularity within the village. They are established and maintained by the institutions through body language and non-verbal communication.

Decision making

Both institutions give preference to the common people from all sections before finalizing the decisions. In the case of problem solving activity the institutions together takes the decisions and they find satisfactory solutions. In Kottampatti village in Dindigul district, the village president is a woman. The masses create problems while
taking decisions, because they have a feeling that women reverberate if they solve the problems.¹

Social welfare

The informal institutions along with formal institutions are engaged in social welfare activities.

They provide material support to the disadvantaged and the destitute, donate stationery to local schools, and support the education of poor gifted students. Special provisions are made to women children and disabled. Nutrition programmes for mother and child are carried out by both institutions. Voluntary agencies engaged in social work activities are getting grant-in-aid. Both institutions together rehabilitate the needy with reference to

- Acting against discrimination and oppression.
- Formation of self help groups
- Prohibition of liquor
- Female infanticide prevention
- Anti-dowry promotion
- Communal harmony promotion and
- Eradication of untouchability

Organizing religious activities

Both institutions play an important role in organizing religious ceremonies and festivals. After discussing with formal institutions informal institutions organize religious activities. The formal authorities make all necessary arrangements at the time of festivals. The informal institutions consult formal institutions in constructing and maintaining local temples and also in raising resources for religious functions.
Chastisement process

The informal institutions along with formal institutions resolve petty disputes and take the cases to police station if the cases are severe. While solving the problems there is no preferential treatment on the basis of caste, domination and village prosperity. If the disputes cover the boundaries the informal institutions and village panchayat officials takes the cases to station. They takes the party support if the case extents. Earlier before one decade chastisement process were done by collecting fines. They collect an amount ranging from rupees 100 to 200/-. They spend this amount for construction purpose and for purchasing bathi and oil for the temple purpose. There are no water tight compartments as far as issues of conflicts are concerned. Here the dispute resolving mechanism is a blend of modem and traditional authority. Conflicts are resolved and are channeled in a positive way.

Health and sanitation

Both institutions promote community participation in maintenance of assets in the field of health and sanitation. The formal institutions supply protected drinking water to all the areas of village panchayat. The informal institutions ensure prevention of communicable diseases. Both institutions collect and organize immunization and vaccination programmes. The informal institutions assist the formal institutions in constructing drains for the disposal of waste water.

In Nallukottai in Sivagangai district, the leader of the Oorsabhai is the president of the village. From the village office they supply a sanitation kit consisting of nail cutter, soap and towel. The president is proud of his own village because the village is so far free from
diseases like malaria and cholera. They discuss and with the help of village people they make arrangements to clean the streets, remove rubbish heaps.

Mobility

The people in these villages are not facing any problem regarding social mobility. The formal institution places any chances before them to go out for job or other activities for the development of the individual and the village. The informal institutions are not becoming a threat to their mobility. The women in these villages are going for coolie work or daily wages to run the family. Every household member keeps his dignity. They are not facing any restrictions from family or society.

Morality

The formal institutions work for the development of the village without harming the morality of the village. Both institutions preserve moral values. They together question the people if they violate any rules.

Curbing discrimination practices

Earlier before one decade there existed discrimination practices such as non-entry in hair cutting saloons, prohibition from fetching water, non-entry to local temples, education discrimination in the village; the low caste people were not allowed to wear sandals while walking through the streets of dominating castes. Tea was served in separate glasses (double tumbler system). Now the situation has changed. If any conflict arises due to discrimination practices both the institutions resolve the conflicts. Both institutions try to maintain unity among the people for the prosperity of the village.
Involvement in developmental activities

- Both institutions plan and preserve the trees on the sides of all public roads in the village.

- Formal institutions have opened literacy centers and centers for imparting social education. These centers are maintained by the informal institutions with the advice of the formal institutions.

- Both institutions involved in organizing collective field patrols to prevent crop thefts and unauthorized grazing.

- Schools and libraries have been constructed in the villages for the development of village people. The informal institutions teach the local people the importance of education.

- Formal institutions collect details on water table and with the help of informal institutions identify suitable location for bore wells for improving irrigation facilities in cultivable lands.

- Both institutions together conduct awareness campaign on non-conventional energy sources like smokeless chulah and solar cookers, and biogas programmes.

- The formal institutions discuss with the informal institutions and organize games, sports and festivals for promoting local arts and culture.

- The formal institutions provide assistance to officials for eradicating leprosy, tuberculosis, malaria, AIDS and other diseases. The informal institutions leave rest of the necessary arrangements to the officials.

- Various programmes like NREGP, I AY and AGMT are going on.
Basic amenities

The informal institutions help the formal institutions in identifying beneficiaries for allotment of house sites, construction of free houses under IAY and other rural housing programmes. Both institutions together collect and maintain data on rural housing. The informal institutions also help in improving the habitation in rural areas with the support of the government. The informal institutions help the formal institutions in the maintenance of drinking water sources like hand pump, open wells and ponds. They assist the formal institutions in identification of location for drinking water supply scheme. A special kit is given to village panchayats to test the quality of drinking water. The informal institutions collect and distribute water to formal institution and test the quality with the help of village students.

The drinking water has been brought under the comprehensive village water supply scheme of the government. Both institutions ensure proper and equitable distribution of water and prevention of any misuse. The sources include piped water, tube-wells, protected wells and regular supply from tanker trucks. Libraries are there in every village most of them subscribe only to newspapers. The transportation facility is not very good; the mass in these villages has to depend on timings for catching buses. The informal institutions support the formal panchayats in reducing electricity bill and over usage of water. They are conscious of the implications of the glut use of electricity and water. Both institutions involve themselves in development projects. But the reality is that the village people complain about the lack of facilities and development functions. The resources are limited and people do not use the scarce resources for
limited wants. In Piravallur village in Dindigul district people use fan, grinder and other things which are beyond the limits and they are hesitating to pay the tax. Per day the tax is Rs1/- The informal institutions and the village officials go door to door and collect tax. But the people do not pay it regularly. In such cases the village presidents give the amount from their own pockets and look after the development activities. In Thumpapatti village in Madurai district the village panchayat and informal institution together work for water scheme which have a fund of Rs 2, 70000/-. The villages can be characterized as remote ones with enough facilities.3

Selection of beneficiaries

The selection of beneficiaries is on the basis of BPL families; it is made according to the rules and regulations. The informal institutions typically are part of the local committee that oversees the implementation of programmes in Seevalsaragu in Dindigul district both institutions select the beneficiaries according to the schemes. In 2006-07, four houses were constructed; two for SC and two for OC and in 2007-08, eighteen houses were constructed five for OC and thirteen for SC’4 In Kottampatti village in Madurai district, ten people received Rs6000/- towards pregnancy care and ten people received widow pension as Rs10000/-.3 There is no dissention between both institutions in the identification of beneficiaries for the following such as:

- Identification of beneficiaries for allotment of house sites.
- Construction of free houses under IAY and other rural housing programmes.
- Identification of beneficiaries for loans and scholarships.
- Identification of beneficiaries under various schemes implemented by agriculture and horticulture departments.
• Reallocation to landless poor in case of poramboke lands.
• Identification of beneficiaries for entrepreneur’s development programme.
• Selection of project beneficiaries.

Equal distribution of resources

The formal local government institution and informal local governance institution distribute the resources to the people equally. They are not segregating the masses on the basis of caste, creed, and religion. The wants of the people are more but the resources are scarce. The informal institutions help to distribute the resources without neglecting a single section of the society.

Common property resource management

Some of the common property resources like village tanks, grazing lands, paromboke lands and footpaths are maintained by the formal institutions with the help of informal institutions. Both institutions protect common property resources for the collective good of the society. These resources are efficiently managed by the local community with the support of both institutions. In Akkaraipatty village in Dindigul district, recently they cut some of the tamarind trees and got an amount of Rs8000/-. They spent this amount for mend the pits in the road. Both institutions assist the people for cleaning the jungle growth and prickly pear. The formal local government institutions and informal local governance institutions have contributed to achieve most of the sustainability outcomes. Formal institutions have performed this by learning the local knowledge of the community in the CPRs management with the help of informal local governance institutions.
Election process

In the election process the formal institutions along with informal institutions select candidates for gram panchayat elections. The selection of candidates is done prior to filing of nominations to gram panchayat elections. Short-listed candidates are asked to contribute to the village fond, equivalent of what their election campaign would cost. Informal institutions do not compel other candidates to withdraw in favour of its candidates.

There are no cases of overlapping of leadership. Women who are educated and active and also women who are married to men who are active in the village affairs are selected for contesting elections. But here the woman themselves take the leadership, male domination is less. Their husbands only assist them to carry out the development activities. The trend of unanimous elections is not seen in the villages. The institution’s intervention in determining the candidates for seats reserved for women in village panchayat seems to be more effective when compared to men. Women by and large tend to obey the dictates of both institutions and do not go against the wishes of the community. The informal institution does not collect money from the candidates. The elections are held once in five years or even ten years if the informal local governance institutions and the people are interested to keep the candidates for years. Paraipatty village in Dindigul district holds elections once in ten years. The same process continues for a longer period as long as the people support it. Here all are giving due importance to women. In this village the village president is the mother of the clerk in the concerned village. 6
Reservation

There is no variance between formal and informal institutions in identification of beneficiaries for loans and scholarships. Prescribed number of seats is reserved for women in the panchayat. The Scheduled castes and Scheduled tribes are getting due respect and equal opportunity in the villages.

For the past one decade there has been a positive relation between formal local government and informal local governance institutions. There is no dissention between them in performing the activities of the villages. The level of social capital and collective action between both institutions is high.

References

1. Interview with the Kottampatti Village Panchayat President, August, 2008.
2. Interview with the Nallukottai Village Panchayat President, Oct 2008,
3. Interview with the Thumpapatti Village Panchayat President, Sep 2008.
4. Interview with the Seevalsaragu Village Panchayat President, Aug 2008.
5. Interview with the Akkaraipatty Village Panchayat President, Aug 2008
6. Interview with the Paraipatty Village Panchayat President, Aug 2008