CHAPTER THREE

PART A : ORIGIN AND STAGES OF GROWTH OF ICDS, WB ICDS AND PRA

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ORIGIN AMD STAGES OF GROWTH OF ICDS, WB-ICBS AMD PRA

PART - I : ORIGIN AMD GROWTH OF ICDS AND WB-ICBS

3.1. Preamble

This chapter has been presented in two parts. Part I deals with the origin and growth of ICDS programme and the importance of promoting people’s participation for greater impact of ICDS. Part II deals with the genesis and growth of participatory approaches dealing with rural problems and in promoting people’s participation under various programmes.

Tamil Nadu over the last two decades has created a network for child development services at village level that is unmatched for its spread and depth of services by any other state in the Indian sub-continent and a comprehensive and unique programme among them is the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) for the welfare of mother and child. ICDS is a powerful outreach programme to help achieve major nutrition and health goals, embodied in the National Plan of Action for Children. It also contributes to the national goal of universal primary education.
3.2. Integrated Child Development Scheme

The ICDS Scheme is globally recognized as one of the world’s largest and most unique community based outreach systems for promoting early childhood care for survival, growth and development, holistically addressing the inter related needs of young children, adolescent girls and women. The ICDS is also the convergent interface between disadvantaged communities and programmes such as primary health care and education.

In Tamilnadu, the ICDS was launched in 1975 by the Government of India. In the last 25 years, ICDS has expanded from the initial 3 projects to 431 projects covering all the districts presently.

Out of the 431 projects, 113 central ICDS projects are functioning under the control of Commissioner of Social Welfare and 318 ICDS projects are functioning under the control of Project Co-ordinator, World Bank assisted ICDS III Project. A separate State Project Management Unit for World Bank ICDS project has been formed and is functioning.

A comprehensive development programme, ICDS aims at meeting the holistic needs of children below six years of age and to create a healthy environment for their mental and physical development. The programme draws on the resources of the Centre,
States, voluntary organisations and the communities to meet its objectives of: reduction in mortality, morbidity and malnutrition among children, by improving their nutritional and health status; reduction in school drop-out rates; enhancement of mothers’ capability to look after the developmental needs of their children; and effective policy implementation and coordination.

In the last 22 years, ICDS has expanded from the initial 33 projects to 5416 projects. Covering 32 states/UTs presently, the programme’s objective of universalisation has thrown open the challenge for the programme planners and implementers to doubly enhance the capability and resources of ICDS to cater to a diversity and spectrum of community settings.

3.3. ORIGIN AND STAGES OF GROWTH OF CHILD CARE SERVICES IN INDIA

3.3.1. Evolution of Child Care Services

Any national development strategy that emphasises human development essentially begins with the welfare of children. Investments made in children’s health, nutrition and education help in reducing hunger and malnutrition, extending life expectancy, and lowering death rate and school dropout rate among them. Planners all over the world have recognised that access to minimum services for children is likely to ensure their optimal development and would help in shaping them into adults capable of contributing to economic and social development of the nation.
3.3.2. Child in India

India has around 350 million children who are below the age of six years. A majority of them are raised in families living in extreme conditions of poverty. Consequently, on important indicators of social development, India still ranks low. Infant mortality rate, one of the crucial indicators of child survival continues to be as high as 74 (1995); 30 percent new-boms are low birth weight babies; and about two-fifth of deaths occur in the age group 0 — 6 years. Further, we have not been able to adhere to the target to universal primary education and control dropout rate at primary level that continues to be as high as 48.60 percent (1986-87).

Owing to the interlocking problems of the grinding poverty of families, children grown in uncongenial environment characterised by non availability of civic amenities, health care and lack of access to cognitive stimulation, skills and knowledge remain a problem in India. Several intervention programmes and services therefore, have emerged during the last few decades, in order to safeguard survival and development of disadvantaged children, both in the Government and voluntary sectors.

Independence ushered in a new era in the field of child welfare/development. It is marked with events, which bear testimony to the commitment that we have towards our children.
Adequate provisions were made for the care and protection of children in the constitution. In order to meet these obligations, welfare services have been provided at the national level as an integral part of the country’s development plans. The first three five-year plans placed the major responsibility of child welfare services on voluntary organisations. The Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) was set up as early as 1953 to promote child welfare/development programmes by providing assistance to voluntary organisations. Besides this, the then Department of Social Welfare initiated several programmes which provided health, nutrition and education interventions for child welfare and development.

The experience of implementing various programmes sector-wise, however, indicated that the impact of these on children remained at best marginal. The isolated and fragmented services failed in providing solutions to the problems of children. As pointed out by Pandit Jawahar Lai Nehru, the then Prime Minister of India “..... individual acts and services performed here and there................. never solve great and stupendous problems on a countrywide scale”.

A high powered committee under the chairmanship of Shri Ganga Sharan Sinha recommended at that juncture that a comprehensive national policy for child welfare was necessary to take an interested view of different needs of children and assign
priorities. As a result, the National Policy for children was evolved and adopted in 1974. It describes the country’s children as a supremely important asset and enjoins on the State the responsibility of their nurture and solicitude.

3.3.3. The Philosophy and Approach

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 the related services. For example the provision of supplementary nutrition is unlikely to improve the health of the child, if the child continues to be exposed to diarrhoea, infections or unprotected drinking water. ICDS therefore takes holistic view of the development of the child and attempts to improve both his/her prenatal and postnatal environment. Accordingly, besides children in their formative years (0-6 years), women between 15 to 45 years are also covered by the programme as these are child bearing years in the life of a women and her nutrition and health status has a bearing on the development of the child.
ICDS is thus a unique programme, encompassing the main components of human resource development, namely, health, nutrition and education. It is perhaps the only countrywide program in the world functioning on a large scale requiring multi-sectoral operations and inter-sectoral linkages for its implementation. Efforts are also made for the convergence of related schemes/programmes in ICDS projects such as Safe Drinking Water Supply, Functional Literacy for adult women, and Mobile Food and Nutrition Extension Units (MEU).

While selecting projects, priority is given to areas predominantly inhabited by backward tribes/scheduled castes 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 about 35,000 in tribal areas. ICDS serves the target group through a network of Anganwadis (AWs). The Anganwadi (literally meaning a courtyard play centre) is the focal point for the delivery of services at the community level.

3.3.4. Beneficiaries

The programme beneficiaries are children below 6 years; pregnant and lactating mothers; women in the age group of 15-44 years and adolescent girls up to the age of 18 years for non-formal education and framing on health since 1991.
3.5. Objectives

The main objectives of the scheme are to improve the nutrition and health status of the children aged between 0-6 years; to lay the foundation for proper psychological; physical and social development of the child to reduce the incidence of mortality, morbidity, malnutrition and school dropout; to achieve effective coordination of the policy and implementation among various departments to promote child development; to enhance the capacity of the mother to look after the health and nutrition of the child through proper nutrition and health education.

3.6. Services

A package of services provided to the beneficiaries includes supplementary nutrition, vitamin “A”, immunization, health check-up, referral services, treatment of minor illness, non-formal health and nutrition education to women, pre-school education to children in the age group of 3-6 years and convergence of other supportive services like water supply, sanitation, etc.

This package of services is offered to the target community at a focal point ‘anganwadi centre’ (AWC) located within an easy and convenient reach. Anganwadi Worker (AWW) is the key community level functionary who receives a small honorarium and is specially trained for the job. The presence of the AWW in the community has
synergistic effect as she liaises between health functionaries and the community.

3.3.7. Supplementary Nutrition

Six months to 6-year-old children belonging to low income families, pregnant and lactating mothers are encouraged to avail the facility of supplementary nutrition (SN) for 300 days in a year. The type of food varies from state to state. Usually, it consists of a hot meal cooked at AWC. It contains a combination of pulses, cereals, oil, vegetables and sugar. Some AWCs provide a ready-to-eat meal. This is also a good opportunity for community mobilization and participation. A flexible approach to respond to local needs seems to be the answer.

Improper storage facilities, poor quality and erratic supplies, pilferages and other logistic problems in certain states and some parts of other states have also been noticed and require corrective steps.

3.3.8. Immunization

Primary health centers (PHC) and its infrastructure, carry out the immunization of infants and expectant mothers as per national schedule. AWW assists the functionaries in this activity. She helps in organization of fixed day immunization sessions. She maintains records and follows up to ensure complete coverage.
3.3.9 Health check-ups and referral services

The health check-up activity includes health care of all children below 6 years, ante-natal care of pregnant women and post-natal care of lactating mothers. AWWs and PHC staff work together and carry out regular check-ups, body weight recording, immunization, management of malnutrition, treatment of diarrhoea, deworming and other minor ailments.

At AWC, children, adolescent girls, pregnant women and lactating mothers are examined at regular intervals by the lady health visitor (LHV) and auxiliary nurse-midwife (ANM). Malnourished and sick children, who can’t be managed by the ANM/AWW are provided referral services through ICDS. All such cases are listed by the AWW and referred to the medical officer.

3.3.10 Growth monitoring promotion (GMP)

Growth monitoring is an accepted method to evaluate nutrition. It is an important tool to assess the impact of health and nutrition-related services. Children below the age of 3 years are weighed once a month and those over 3-6 years, are weighed every quarter. Fixed day immunization sessions or days when mothers visit AWC for collection of take home’ rations for the younger children are used for growth monitoring activities. Growth is
charted to direct growth delay or malnutrition, if any. Severely malnourished children are prescribed therapeutic supplementary nutrition and are referred to medical officer.

3.3.11. Mon-formal and Pre-school Education

Non-formal nutrition and health education given by the AWW, is aimed at empowerment of women in the age group of 15-44 years and, to enable them to look after their own health and nutrition needs as well as that of their children and families. The education is imparted through participatory sessions at AWC, home visits and small group intimate discussions. Basic health and nutrition messages related to child care, infant care practices, utilization of health services, personal hygiene, environmental and family planning are the usual components covered by AWW.

Early childhood care and pre-school education is yet another important activity of the ICDS programme. This focuses on the total development of the child up to 6 years. It also promotes early stimulation of younger children (<3 years) through intervention with mothers.

3.4. Implementation of ICDS Programme

ICDS is implemented through the State Government with one hundred percent financial assistance from the Central Government for inputs other than supplementary nutrition. The expenditure of
the feeding programme is met by the State Governments from their own funds under the Minimum Needs Programme. Over the years, there has been substantial increase in the funds allocated for JCDS scheme in the central budget, which have increased from Rs. 337.6 million in 1983-84 to Rs. 5,876.4 million in 1996-97.

The UNICEF has evinced keen interest and participated in the programme of child development in India. They are eager to participate in the successful implementation of the present programme as well as envisage the implementation of a co-ordinated strategy for the development of the child. Some of the areas of UNICEF participation are constancy service, training, supplies, equipment, monitoring, research and evaluation.

The administrative set up of ICDS is well conceived and is uniform throughout the country. However, operational flexibility is accorded to the States in the implementation of the programme resulting in variation in its organisational pattern. There are variations in the administrative pattern at the district and project levels in different States available research information confirms that the scheme proposes active involvement of ICDS functionaries in programme planning. Though desired, it is not being practised and in most projects administration tends to be more centralised at the Directorate level (Murthy, 1989; Bhowmick, 1990).
To implement ICDS programme, the Department of Women and Child Development works in close collaboration with other technical departments, ministries and international organisations. It utilises all the existing resources and services provided at the State, block and district levels, and has close functional linkages with many allied schemes of the Government of India, State Governments and the Union Territories Administration. The horizontal and vertical co-ordination machinery therefore, have been set up at all levels of management for effective convergence of the services ICDS package and of the allied schemes.

3. S. World Bank Assisted ICDS Tamil Wadu

Tamil Nadu over the last two decades has created a network for child development services at village level that are unmatched for its spread and depth of services by any other state in the Indian subcontinent. Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) with the assistance from Government of India (GOI) was introduced in three pilot areas in 1976 and today there are 67 rural, 2 tribal and 44 Urban ICDS Projects that are fully operational in the State. The Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project -I (TINP - I) (1980-1.989) covered children under 3 years was operational in 173 Blocks at 11 Districts. A Second World Bank assisted Nutrition Project, TINP-II was started in 1991 covered all non ICDS Blocks (318 Blocks) in 24 Districts was operational in 24 Districts and came to a close in
December 1997. The Government of Tamil Nadu introduced a Noon Meal Programme (NMP) for children 2+ to 4+ years in 1982. Together these programmes offered a package of Health, Nutrition and Pre-school services to children under 6 years. ICDS and TINP I & TINP II offered health and Nutrition services, also to pregnant and nursing women.

3.5.1. Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project — I (TIN PI)

3.5.1.1. Background

Malnutrition is caused by a verity of reasons like poverty, lack of education, inadequate health facilities and poor personal and environmental hygiene. The social burden of malnutrition, as reflected not only by high death rates but also by the ill effects it leaves on the learning ability of children and productive capacity of the population. The magnitude of the problem in developing countries like India is also grave. It may take several decades for most developing countries to raise the nutrition status of their population to a desired level if reliance were to be made only on the normal process of economic development and literacy level. Therefore, the policy of direct nutrition intervention is gaining great acceptance in recent years both among national Governments and international organisations. The World Bank started showing keen interest in mitigating the problem since the mid-seventies, treating malnutrition as a development issue. Several models were tried and
it demonstrated that improvement status could be achieved irrespective of the country’s rate of economic development nutrition.

Intervention programme would not be a costly one if the programmes are targeted properly nutritional status of children could be improved even when family income remains constant and lack of formal education need not adversely affect nutritional care of children provided carefully chosen messages are effectively conveyed to mothers.

When the World Bank in the late 1970s came forward to introduce the nutrition intervention programme in India, Tamil Nadu came forward enthusiastically to accept the proposal since Tamil Nadu already had the experience of running externally aided nutrition programmes like Balahar by CARE agencies.

3.5.1.2. Project Implementation

Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project -I, a Health Integrated Nutrition Project was commissioned in October 1980 on a pilot basis in one Block viz. Kotampatti Block in Madurai District. After studying its operational efficiency through the first round evaluation, It was extended to the rest of the project area in phases. The Project covered 173 Rural Blocks of erstwhile six districts.
The main objective of the TINPI was to improve the health and nutritional status of pre-school children and to extend health and health related services to other high risk groups viz. Pregnant and nursing women. The focus on the under 36 months children was in recognition of the fact that age group accounted for an estimated 90% of preschool mortality in the State and that malnourishment was found to be a leading or associated cause for 75 percent of deaths in the under three age groups.

It aimed at reducing the prevalence of energy-protein malnutrition among 6-36 month-old children from 50% to 20%, the prevalence of vitamin a deficiency from 20% to 5%, and the prevalence of nutritional anemia among pregnant and lactating women from 55% to 20%, while increasing their coverage with antenatal care (from 54% to 80%), tetanus toxoid (from 30% to 80%), and trained birth attendance (from 30% to 80%). Along with 90% coverage of children with immunisation, these efforts were intended to contribute to a 25% reduction in infant and child mortality.

The focal point of all the project activities at the village level was the Community Nutrition Centre (CNC) which on an average covers 1500 population. The CNC was run by a Community
Nutrition Worker (CNW) who was adequately trained in her job functions. The CNW was assisted, guided and supervised at different levels by Nutrition Supervisor, Nutrition instructress, Taluk Project Nutrition Officer and District Project Nutrition Officer.

3.5.2. Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project -II

The second Tamil Nadu Integrated Nutrition Project —II with the World Bank assistance (Credit No.2158-IN) was approved in June 1990 and made effective on December 5th 1990. The Project covered 318 rural blocks in Tamil Nadu in 24 districts (erstwhile 19 districts) in phased manner.

3.5.2.1. Objectives

The overall objectives of the TINP II were to improve the Nutritious status of the children 0-72 months with particular emphasise on children 0-36 months and pregnant and nursing women

1. Ensure child survival, health and development by improving maternal health and nutrition and consequently child nutrition from birth.

2. Further improve the nutritional and health status of children 0-6 years by:
   - Preventing the incidence of severe and moderate malnutrition
Implementing an effective programme for control and prevention of infectious diseases

Providing prophylaxis against specific nutrition deficiencies

3. Implement an effective pre-school programmes for children in the age group 3-6 years

4. Enhance the capability of the mother, family and community including the female adolescent group, towards improved individual and community health.

5. Promote community participation in planning, implementing and evaluating the health, education and nutrition programmes at the grass root level

6. Provide for man power to meet the above health, nutrition and other objectives

7. Promote operations research to improve the implementation of health and nutrition interventions in the state.

3.S.2.2. Specific nutrition and Health Impact objectives

1. To reduce severe malnutrition (Grade III and IV) among 6-36 months children by 50% in new areas and by 25% in TINP I areas.

2. To increase the proportion of children 6-36 months of age in Normal and Grade I Nutritional status by 50% in 1991 level in new areas and by 25% TINP I areas

3. To contribute towards a reduction of IMR from 84 to 55 per 1000 live births and to reduce to 50% level in the incidence of Low Birth Weight from 1991 level.
3.5.3. World Bank ICDS III Project

The specific objectives of the World Bank ICDS III Project have been designed in such a way that the benefits of the earlier TINP II programme are consolidated and new thrust areas given due focus.

3.5.3.1. The major objectives

- To improve Nutrition, Health and Psycho-social status of children 0-6 years of age with particular emphasis on preventing malnutrition in under 3 years and improve child care practices at the household level.

- To improve Nutrition & Health, of women particularly pregnant and breast feeding mothers and adolescent girls and

- To empower women and adolescent girls through increased awareness to take better care of their personal and household health and nutrition issues.

3.5.3.2. The Package of Services are

- Growth Promotion
- Nutrition & Health Education
- Selective supplementary Nutrition
- Health Services by Health Personnel and Referral Services
- Early Childhood Care and Pre-School
3.5.3.3. Beneficiaries of the Project are

- Children 0-3 years
- Children 3-6 years
- Nursing mothers and Expectant mothers
- Adolescent Girls and
- Community Groups / Community leaders

Involvement of community is considered essential for successful implementation of any development programme. To ensure active participation of the community in assessing their problems, needs and take action, participatory learning and management techniques are adopted in villages, Participatory Learning and Management is one of the successful strategies to sensitisie community and mobilise their efforts. The participatory learning and management techniques facilitate the village people to assess, analyse their problems related to Health and Nutrition and identify their potentialities for solving their problems mostly by themselves.

Participatory learning and management exercise conducted last year by the District Communication Officers of the Project in various villages on pilot basis have yielded the following successful results.

1. Community leaders and others were able to solve some of their problems related to health and nutrition issues, when properly sensitised and facilitated ensured active involvement of the community in project activities.
2. Facilitated boosting up the image of the worker, Anganwadi centre and the project

3. Reduced public criticism, if any.

Based on this experience, the training on participatory learning and management was provided Block level Supervisors such as Community Nutrition Instructors (CNIs) and Community Nutrition Supervisors (CNSs) of World Bank assisted ICDS III project. The training in Participatory Learning and Management was anticipated to be the block level supervisors to practice participatory learning and management methods such as social mapping, wealth and well being ranking, seasonal analysis, food grain matrix, Venn diagram etc., in the field through which they can involve women members, adolescent girls and village leaders to assess, analyse problem and take possible action by the community. This would also help to strengthen community participation in programme implementation. Therefore it was felt necessary, first to impart training on Participatory Learning and Management techniques to block level supervisors who in turn would train and supervise the field functionaries. Both of them then, jointly organise Participatory Learning and Management (PLM) exercises in the villages.
Hence the training on PLM for block level supervisors become, necessary to adopt. “Triple A” (Assess, Analyse and Action in the village). The above strategy has also been included under Information, Education and Communication (IEC) in the administrative approach.

There are 1293 supervisors at the block level (Grade I / CNIs) 318 and Grade II supervisors 975 out of 1293 supervisors, 226 supervisor 56 CNIs and 170 CNSs have been already trained on PLM with the assistance of UNICEF and the Director of Public Health during 1998-99. Now 1028 supervisors were trained in 35 batches at the rate of 30 participants per batch in reputed training institutions like Gandhigram Rural University (323), Institute of Rural Health, (324) and State Institute of Rural Development (381).
3.6. Participatory Rural Appraisal: Genesis, Principles and Methods

The past five decades witnessed the evolution of many development strategies and theories. Of them, two main trends have emerged in practice. The first is where ‘development’ starts with the outsiders providing some goods or services, which a community may or may not need. This approach is fundamentally about the delivering of resources which come in various guises like finance, equipment, technical know—how, skills, even a particular approach to life, etc. This is also known as “top-down approach”, is still prevalent.

The second one is people-centered or bottom-up approach to development. This approach concentrates on the needs of the people, what they want and need. They define the goals of development and participate in development ‘projects’ from the beginning.

3.6.1. Assumptions under Top-down approach

The top-down approach is based on certain assumptions and practices. They arc: i) development can be created and engineered; ii) it is something which is brought, to and for some, by others who presumably are more developed; iii) it is done on behalf of third
parties and not by the communities and clients who are the subjects of the intervention; iv) it is linear and predictable. In other words, there is direct link between cause and effect; v) it presumes that understanding will generate change; vi) it places far more emphasis on technical experts and ‘advisors’ and on trainers, than it does on change facilitators; vii) it assumes a preferred culture or value system. The presumption is that there is something wrong and we intervene to change it; viii) it sees participation as a means, not as an end in itself ix) it assumes that a successful development project is replicable and sustainable x) the development project is evaluated with reference to output and not to their outcomes.

3.6.2. Development Process

The assumptions of top—down approach have been questioned on the ground that development is an innate and natural process found in all living things. Development cannot be brought or delivered. The development process already exists. The development practitioners just intervene to facilitate the process of development. This necessarily presupposes that the development practitioner has to understand the development process into which he or she is intervening. It is important to know where the individual, the organization or the community is located on its own path of development. It is equally important to understand where it
has come from, how it has changed along the way and what the next development challenges are likely to be. All these in turn require openness; an ability to observe accurately and a fine understanding of development process. The top down approach has failed to recognize the fundamentals of development process. As a result, the approach could not make any desired impact on the life of the people.

3.6.3. **Assumptions of bottom-up approach**

The bottom—up approach has totally pinned its faith on the knowledge of the people and used participatory strategies at different stages of the project though the degree and level of participation vary from approach to approach. The bottom-up approach identifies three discernible phases of ideal unimpeded development. The first phase characterized by dependence is a period of great learning and skill acquisition in which both the outsiders and the people play a major role in providing the environment and resources required for growth. The second phase of independence entails a fundamental change in relationship and a period of testing and personalizing capacities and competencies, using them to act and impact on the environment in ways that help establish the people as unique and self-reliant. The third phase involves another fundamental change in relationship towards increasing inter-dependence - the people now understand that the
full realization of potential is achieved only through effective collaboration with others. All these three phases of development are equally important and people must find a prime place in all the three phases.

3.6.4. Participatory Approaches

Several methods, strategies and approaches have emerged during 70’s, 80’s and 90’s placing people as the prime actors in the process of development. All these methods emphasized the participation of people at different stages of the development process. Many of these methods have richly contributed for the evolution and growth of PRA. Some of them stand out. They are:

- Participatory Action Research
- Agro-Eco-System Analysis
- Applied Anthropology
- Informal Survey
- Rapid Rural Appraisal

The idea behind each one of the above approaches, the purpose and methods followed under every approach and contribution of each approach for the genesis of PRA is briefly presented.
Participatory Action Research (PAR), is a development strategy in which the community participates fully and through its own critical analysis, gets to know the facts of its own situation, condition, strengths, weaknesses, resources, problems etc. The process of PAR involves an effort to generate and consolidate the community’s knowledge, skills and practices that are present among the poor and the marginalized which in turn could be used as a powerful tool for their empowerment and liberation.

PAR is used to collect old facts and empirical data from the people -mainly the marginalized and also to generate theories relevant to specific social situations. The people are the prime movers in the participatory action research and they do everything. Their participation takes place from the every day the research begins. It is a collective effort by the participating community to pool their efforts and other resources to achieve the objectives that they have set for themselves.

In short, participatory Action Research is both a methodology and a process, wherein people are involved in actions/activities that have been planned, designed, implemented and controlled by the community for its own betterment. The major goal of PAR is to rediscover, release, restore, renew, empower and transform the
people’s situational conditions so that they have control over their own situation.

3.7.1 PAR aims at

   > empowering the weak and the poor so that they are enabled to lead a fairly good life with what they know and what they have;
   > enabling the members of the community especially the oppressed and the marginalized to come together and share a common platform, discuss and analyze common issues and deciding on a workable action plan;
   > making the people to realize their self-worth, their potentials and usefulness of their role in society; and
   > building—tip self-reliance in the village community and thereby relieving them from dependency culture.

3.7.2. **PAR believes**

   > in the fundamental intelligence of people irrespective of whether they have had formal education or not, as they may be having immense experiential knowledge.
   > that everyone including the poorest has not only the right to make history but also the right to create knowledge and formulate theories.
> that the marginalised/exploited poorest with their experience and knowledge could become resource-rich people.

> that everyone is capable of learning.

> that the people learn best by doing.

> that knowledge is power.

> that success helps in building confidence and makes people realize their self-worth.

3.7.3. The contributions of PAR to PRA are as follows

> the professionals should reflect critically on their concept, values, behaviour and methods

> learning through engagement and committed action

^ professionals have roles as conveners, catalysts and facilitators

> the weak and the marginalized can and should be empowered

> instilling in the minds of the rural, especially the poverty-stricken, that they can and should involve in investigating and analyzing their own problems as well as plan for solutions.
The agro-eco system can be defined as an ecological system partly modified by man to produce food, fiber and other agricultural produce, which is useful for the mankind.

The system permits both for experimental and applied research for the purpose of its continued development and sustainability.

Agro-eco—system has four different html interconnected system properties. They include:

**Productivity:** It is defined as “the net output of valued product per unit of resource input. Product is measured as field or net income on food value etc. The resources may be land, labour, capital, energy, fertilizer, pesticides etc. Productivity, therefore, may be with reference to land, labour, capital, technology etc.

**Stability:** It is the constancy of productivity in response to small disturbances or changes caused by the normal fluctuations of the surrounding physical, biological, social and economic environment.

**Sustainability .** It is the ability of the farm, ecological system to maintain productivity and stability inspite of major environment disturbances such as stress and shock which can neither be predicted well in advance nor measured accurately.
**Equitability:** It is the evenness of distribution of the production of the agro-eco system among the human beneficiaries.

The Agro-eco system develops through a process of intensification, which normally involves:

* transformation of land use
* existing land use

The intensification process for development of agro-eco-system may have positive as well as adverse consequences. Therefore, it is important to trade off between different elements in the agro-eco system.

Agro-eco-system analysis developed in Thailand in the late 70s at the University of Chiang Mai by Gardon Conway and his colleagues, spread first through Southeast Asia and then other parts of the world. Conway worked further with others especially with Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (Pakistan) to develop the agro-eco system analysis more suitable for identification and assessment of practical hypothesis for action in the field of agriculture.

The agro-eco system analysis makes use of several tools. Some of the major contributions of Agro eco system analysis to PRA are:
* Transects (systematic walks and observation)
* Informal mapping (sketch maps drawn on sites)
* Diagramming (seasonal calendars, flow and causal diagrams, bar charts, venn diagram)
* Innovation assessment (scoring and ranking different actions)

3.9. APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

Traditionally, anthropology has dealt more with understanding of the facts of human existence than dealing with the solutions to human problems. However, 1970s and 1980s witnessed the establishment of anthropological approaches in a professionalized manner, soiling out the vicissitudes of social change in tribal and rural communities.

The present repertoire of PRA owes a great deal to the insights gained from the field of applied anthropology. To emphasize some of them:

* Recognizing that learning from the field involves the flexibility contained in arts more than the rigidity seen in a scientific endeavour;
* The meaning and value of learning from relaxed and unhurried interactions and observations with people in their natural settings;
* Importance of establishing rapport with the people with the important role of the underlying attitudes and behaviour;
* The emphatic emic—etic distinction; and
* Recognition of richness and validity of indigenous technical knowledge.

3.10. **Informal Survey or Sondeo**

Agricultural research teams after seeing the “expensive, bulky and hard—to—process questionnaire survey have gone in for informal survey. The informal survey is a data gathering method which can produce at minimum cost a rich description of life in a farming community, an understanding of local ecology, cropping systems and how farmers, merchants, extension workers, and others perceive their conditions and make decisions.

Informal survey can provide basic data and information on the feasibility of beginning a project in a region. This is so especially when dealing with farming system about which little is known. It can also be used to quickly obtain basic information specifically for the design and execution of formal surveys or more in-depth investigations. The important purpose is to help focus a subsequent formal survey that will utilize random sampling and quantify critical aspects of rural life or the production system. The need is not
simply to get a feel of the area, but to discover important, albeit
tentative, organizing concepts upon which to base future research.

The informal survey is methodologically simple but physically
tough. The successful survey may require sloshing through muddy
fields and scrambling along rocky paths and dangerous slopes. The
surveyor must be country-oriented, grabbing out information in the
fields, market places or wherever farmers’ daily routines carry
them.

The successful informal surveys also require mental and
methodological flexibility. It does not proceed like the formal
questionnaire survey where pre-determined hypothesis is tested.
Instead, important questions and direction of study emerge as
information is collected. This is not to say that normal survey lacks
logic but that one must be able to accommodate new information
and adjust research plans accordingly. As the survey advances, the
team will pass initial vagueness to a mid-way focussing and finally
arrive at a stage where threads can be pulled together and specific
ideas tested.

The major contributions of informal survey to PRA are:

* Observation - the researcher needs to keep the eyes open
  for patterns in crop production, land use and farm
  behaviour.
* Informal conversation — the researcher needs to talk with the people and listen to their concerns and views.

* Inter-disciplinary team

* Recording - the researcher has to discretely write everything down. Complete field notes are crucial.

3.11. **RAPID RURAL APPRAISAL**

The Participatory Action Research System and Agro-Eco System analysis were developed and experimented in the 70’s for the purpose of gathering data and information for quickly appraising the situation and conditions of the farmers and the agriculture especially in the third world countries. The methods adopted by the experts for agro-eco-system analysis did not, however, find their place in fields other than agriculture. But the development efforts and strategies are not confined to agriculture alone. It has a wider perspective and covers a whole range of activities, which affect the life of people in a locality, or country. Therefore, the development professionals felt that it is essential to have better understanding of the overall situation of the local area to plan, execute and to evaluate the development and welfare programmes. Therefore, they started using quick appraisal methods to appraise the conditions for planning their programmes.
Rapid Rural Appraisal is a way of organizing people for collecting and analyzing information within a short time span. It can be defined as any systematic process of investigation to acquire new information in order to draw and validate inferences, hypotheses, observation and conclusions in a limited period of time.” It has flexibility to adjust to situations because it does not imply or recommend a standard set of methods to be applied in each case. The methods vary from situation to situation and are determined by local conditions, local problems and objectives at hand.

RRA, as Robert Chambers has put, had three main origins. The first was dissatisfaction with the biases, especially the anti-poverty biases of rural development tourism (the approach of brief visit to rural areas by the urban-based professional to understand the socio-economic conditions of the people in the rural areas). Second, the disillusion with the normal processes of questionnaire surveys and their results. Third, the continuous search for most cost effective methods of learning the rural conditions.

In the evolution process of the RRA approach, certain principles emerged and these principles describe the RRA as a method of appraisal of a situation largely. The RRA approach can be described as a semi-structured way of learning, relatively quickly and in a multidisciplinary team, from local people about the key
problems and opportunities of an area and of deciding on an agreed set of possibilities for alleviating the problems and/or making good use of the opportunities.

The RRA approach thus aims to:

° allow the outsiders to learn from the local people,
° go beyond and get answers/ responses, which the formal surveys can not get,
° challenge anti-poverty biases, which are common in other approaches especially in Development Tourism,
° be quick, flexible and adaptable to the rural situations,
° get away from roads and reach interior villages and remote places,
° avoid over collection of data and collecting only the required data, and
° accept a degree of inaccuracy.

3,12. Advent of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

The approaches discussed have some features in common. They may be listed: i) they are fairly rapid than conventional methods; ii) all are field-based; iii) the emphasis is on learning directly from the people; iv) they avoid blue-print approach and adopt semi-structured multi-disciplinary approach v) focus is more on the process rather than on outcome.
Yet, all these approaches remain extractive in nature, as people are not consulted beyond the phase of data collection. In other words, participation of the primary stakeholders (people) of the development project ends with collection of data and information. They are not involved in the analysis of their situation. This was considered as a serious lacuna in the participatory field-oriented approach. Hence, the emphasis shifted from rapid to ‘participatory’ and empowering, which fitted well with participatory approach to rural development and become the starting point of PRA.

3.12.1. PRA: Meaning

It is a family of approach and methods of enabling local people to analyze their living conditions, to share the outcomes, and to plan their activities. It involves “handing over the stick from outsider to insider" in methods and action. The outsiders’ role is catalytic, as a facilitator and convenor of processes within a community that is prepared to alter its own situation.

3.12.2. Basic Components of PRA

The three basic components of PRA are facilitation, attitude, and behaviour of outsiders and culture of sharing. In PRA, outsiders act as facilitators and enable local people to do all or most of the investigation, mapping, modelling, diagramming, analysis,
presentation, and planning. Similarly, the facilitators are expected to follow the local norms to the extent possible so that local people can feel they are part of their own community. This requires the outsiders or facilitators to pay attention to their every activity such as where to sit, how to listen to local people (rather than lecturing) appropriate visiting time, respecting local people’s knowledge, skills and expertise, taking an attitude of learning and embracing error. Finally, continuous sharing of information with local people, with other PRA team members, and with other institutions, NGOs and government, is another basic component of PRA that has to be considered by the PRA team members all the time.

3.12.3. Principles of PRA

PRA is based on certain principles. They are revolutionary in nature though they are not declared from any pulpit of revolution. They constantly question the conventional modes of understanding rural problems and have evolved certain principles, which are easy to follow and adopt. They are stated below:

Reversal of Learning: In PRA, there is a total change or shift in the learning process. PRA encourages the novice outsiders to accept their ignorance about rural realities and be willing to learn from the rural people. It believes in flexibility and openness and not in a blueprint. It underscores its faith in learning through and with
group. It pins its faith in empowering the people and not in extracting information from them. Its approach is holistic and not reductionistic. It has made the process of learning a fun by using a mix of different methods and techniques that enable the people to participate at every stage of the development process.

Learning Rapidly and Progressively: The learning process is flexible and adaptable. The methods are improvised and employed depending on the local situations. There is ample opportunity for active interaction with the people and also for exploring and identifying undiscovered areas in development practice.

Off setting Biases: The different types of biases found in conventional ways of learning are off—set by listening, probing, being unimposing, deliberately seeking out the neglected and marginalised and learning their concerns and priorities.

Optimizing Trade-off: This includes the principle of optimal ignorance and the principle of appropriate imprecision. Optimal ignorance means avoiding over collection of data. Whereas appropriate imprecision means not measuring more than needed.

**Triangulation:** It is carefully cross-checking the information gathered using a mix of techniques, by employing multi-disciplinary team and by turning to different sources of information.
Seeking Diversity: PRA believes in variability and not in averages. The purpose is to maximize the diversity and richness of information. It deliberately looks for, notices and investigates contradictions, anomalies and differences.

They do it: PRA has a strong faith in peoples’ knowledge and capabilities. People are facilitated to do everything related to data gathering, analysis, interpretation, drawing inferences, prioritizing the problems, suggesting solutions or alternative courses of action. The outsiders are mere facilitators, learners and catalysts.

Self-critical Awareness: This is a very cardinal principle of PRA. The outsiders, as facilitators constantly examine their attitude and behaviour and try to do better. They embrace the errors committed by them in the appraisal process. They also welcome error as an opportunity to learn better and do better. The golden rule is “In all circumstances use one’s own best judgement”. This would mean accepting personal responsibility rather than looking for manuals or a rigid set of rules.

On the Spot Analysis: The data and information gathered are analyzed on the spot by the people facilitated by outsiders. Analysis at the office is always avoided. On the spot analysis of data and their interpretations by the people often astonish the researchers with new revelations.
Sharing: The information gathered are shared not only with the people but also with others who are interested. Sharing is the fundamental rule, which is practised by everybody involved in the appraisal. Sharing would also mean sharing of even food sometimes.

Action: It is good to make it a point never to leave the village high and dry after the situation appraisal or planning process is over. The closeness of working relationship and the affinity PRA develops between the outsiders and insiders, definitely make the rural people to expect some action programme to better their living conditions. Moreover, rural people have cooperated and participated all through the PRA process. So, it is always good to initiate some kind of joint action.

3.12.4. Methods of PRA

PRA uses a wide range of methods. They are not new nor inventions. Many of them are borrowed from different disciplines. They are improvised and used depending on the local situation and conditions. The practitioners of methods should be flexible and innovative in using the methods. The golden rule is "use your best judgement in all circumstances". The facilitator must be thorough with the method he uses. He must be in a position to explain the method to the people in a simple, lucid style so that the people are
able to understand and use the methods in the field without difficulties. In other words, methods must, be mutually understood. There are more than 50 PRA methods. We present a few methods, which are often used in the field.

Social, Resource and Land Use Map; Mapping as an exercise in PRA involves a group process in which a sketch of the community is compiled in cooperation with a group of local men and women to identify physical and socio-economic details along with the infrastructure available in the community. Depending upon the purpose of the exercise, different names can be given to such sketches such as a social map, resource map, land-use map, etc. The aim of mapping is to allow local people to express their perceptions of location, usage patterns, and changes of local resources or facilities. Maps are the excellent source of information sharing. Its visual character attracts greater participation of people/villagers in the PRA exercise.

Transects Transect is a systematic walk with a purpose along with a few key informants through an area. The aim is to have a very clear understanding of the locality by identifying different zones, observing, asking, listening, discussing local technologies, problems, seeking solution, opportunities, amid mapping and diagramming the resources and findings. This technique has the
advantage of leading to field-based observations, which can be discussed with local people in the subsequent sittings.

Seasonal Calendar: This tool is applied to collect seasonal information such as intensity of rainfall or soil moisture, land use or cropping patterns, migration patterns, food availability, income and expenditure patterns by month. Local people use different lengths of sticks or straw along with counters (e.g. seeds) to chart on the ground the relative quantities of some variables. Seasonal calendars also help record villagers’ views of problems and opportunities.

Time Line: Time line is a record of events and activities, which occurred in the community in the rememberable past. The events and activities are, by and large, recorded in a chronological order. This exercise involves discussion with a group of local people (usually 4-8) regarding what they consider to be the most important past events. This is a good ice-breaker for building rapport with local people as it shows an interest in their lives. The main purpose of time line is to identify events in time to which local people can refer when discussing historical issues.

Trend: Trend analysis attempts to study people’s accounts of the past, of how things close to them have changed at different points of time. Information sought through the technique of “trend’
gave insights on various facts such as ecological histories, changes in land use and cropping patterns, changes in customs and practices, changes and trends in population, migration, fuels used, education, health, credit..., and the causes of changes and trends could be ascertained using trend analysis method.

Tread Line/Diagram: Trend lines are developed according to village perspectives to show patterns of changes along with the causes of such changes in resources and issues such as rainfall, crop production, soil loss, deforestation, livestock holding, and other topics of concern to the community. A group (15-20) of local people representing different age groups, knowledgeable about the topics to be explored could be gathered for this exercise.

Activity Profiles and Daily routines: Activity Profile and daily routines are exercises, which help exploring the daily patterns of activity through profile and routines. Chart for each hour of the day with typical activities, amount of effort involved, time taken, location of work etc., are elicited and used for understanding the routines of the different classes, age groups, sexes of people in a community. It also allows comparison between and among different people e.g., men, women, old, young; compare profiles and routines for different seasons.
Local Histories: Local histories are the detailed accounts of the past, of how things have changed, particularly focusing on relationships and trends. These include technology histories and review, crop histories, livestock breed histories, labour availability, trees and forest histories, education change, and population change. Folklore, songs and poems are valuable resources for exploring history.

Local Researchers and Village Analysts: People concerned with the development of the community are well versed with the local issues and problems. They also attempt to analyze the issues and problems in detail and in their effort find solution to such issues. The knowledge of such people could be a great source of information for an outsider to learn and to the villagers to share. Even during the PRA exercises more and more local people are taking an active role in analysis and presentation. Village extensionists conduct complete participatory analyses with no outside help; villagers conduct transects, interview other villagers, draw maps, observe and produce plans. Other potential researchers include school teachers, students, poor etc.

Key Probes: Key probes are questions that can lead directly to key issues, such as “what do you talk about when you are together?” “what new practices have you or others in this village experimented in the recent years?”
Sequencing and Chains of Interviews: There are many types of interviews that may be combined in sequences and chains.

Key Informants Interview: Arranging for a series of interviews with key informants of the different stages of a process (e.g., men on ploughing, women on transplanting and weeding, shopkeeper for credit and inputs etc.).

Group interviews: There may be groups convened to discuss a particular topic (focussed or specialist groups); groups comprising a mix of people whose different perceptions illuminate an issue (structure groups); casual groups, say, at a tea shop; community and neighbourhood groups. Group interviews provide the focus for discussion. Group interviews are often powerful and efficient.

Inventory of Local Management Systems and Resources: Local people know their area best, and have evolved their own systems of management. Use local classifications wherever possible - these are often more diverse than those used by outsiders. Every village has its local taxonomy and classification.

Matrices: Matrices are useful for ordering and structuring information gathering and planning. They include:

* attribute matrices for technologies e.g., dams and catchment structures along the top and attributes down the side;
* problems-opportunity matrices, with column headings including, *for example*, local name for zone, local name for soil, soil type, cropping pattern, problems, resources available in village and lastly possible solutions;

* manual discriminant, technique matrices for contract comparisons. Ask group A why group 13 is different or does something different. *For example*, set up three groups of high, medium and low maize yielding farmers, and ask why they get the yields they get, and why the others get their’s. Record the key findings in a matrix.

**Matrix Ranking**  
Matrix ranking helps to elicit information about local people’s preferences with regard to tree species, types of livestock, varieties of crops, etc. and the criteria on which those preferences are based. While the criteria are listed to the left, the preferences that are to be compared with one another are listed on the top.

Matrix ranking is best done by two people - one to ask the questions and conduct the interview, the other to keep notes and collate and list the criteria. The second person can also observe what goes on in the group, note potential key informants for follow-up and list points for further enquiry.
Direct Matrix Ranking (OMR): Direct Matrix Ranking describes the method because it moves quickly from early
discussion and questioning to recording respondents’ views directly
onto a table or matrix. It is simple, quick, and informative, and
everyone seems to learn something from it.

Wealth Ranking: Wealth ranking is a technique that can be
used for gaining rapid insight from a local perspective into factors
affecting differentiation. It combines in-depth discussion of wealthy
with a ranking exercise that allows the participating group of local
people to assess the relative wealth of households in a pre-selected
list.

This method helps categorize households according to wealth
or well being in the community. Key informants first develop the
parameters they think are important to consider while ranking
households and then keep placing households into appropriate
ranks based on those parameters.

The technique has a number of potential applications:

* The stratification of a sample according to wealth criteria
  for further focussed appraisals on particular sub-sectors
  of the population.

* The generation of questions for further research into
  rural differentiation.
© An examination of survey data from a farmer’s perspective.

Venn or Circle Diagram: Venn or circle diagrams are used as a tool to discuss the relative importance or position of different factors, commonly institutional or social structures, and their closeness to the people in a community. Key informants are asked to rank community institutions in order of importance and to construct diagrams that indicate the relationships between and among village units. Circle of different sizes and colours represent organizations, institutions, or prominent people. Their relationships to each other and relative importance in the community can be mapped out by placing these circles on the ground in relation to each other.

Semi-structured Interviewing: This technique, also known as informal discussion, is considered the core of good PRA. It is a kind of open discussion with open-ended questions, which can take place anywhere in the community, either with individuals and/or groups of key informants. It can be done with mental or written checklists. These conversations can take place on the path while observing community activities, over the garden fence, and in fields or homes.
Night Halt: All interactions between outsiders and villagers are facilitated by staying in the village — the night halt. Many organizations have made this an essential part of participatory analysis and planning. It provokes change in outsiders’ attitudes - they sleep and eat as villagers do; it allows for early morning and evening discussions when people are less busy; and it is an explicit indication of commitment by the outsiders and brings the outsiders very close to the people in the village, which strengthens mutual understanding.

Self-correcting Motes and Diaries: This is not of course a PRA tool which enables sharing information, but it aids in a better learning process. It helps to a greater extent to improve the outcome of the PRA exercises. The PRA practitioner by keeping a private diary or series of notes to focus on where he, as an outsider, would desire things to go better next time? where were the problems? what could be done to avoid them? who might be able to provide some solutions?

Shared Presentations: The findings are presented back to villagers and outsiders. It would be better if villagers do it themselves. It offers opportunity for cross-checking and feedback. Outsiders stand up, present, and invite comment and criticism — a reversal of roles. It is essential that outsiders concentrate upon both presentation and analysis of who contributes. The findings are

3.12. Conclusion

Participatory Rural Appraisal as an approach and as a method has primarily emerged to strengthen, reinforce and sustain the participation of the people in development intervention. The ultimate aim of PRA is self-mobilization and empowerment. The aim, the advocates of PRA felt, could be realized as the concept of PRA is simple; as the principles are mostly ground rules and pragmatic; and as the methods could be practised even by naive villagers. But then the outsiders or facilitators need to play a very significant role for grounding the PRA at the grassroots and also in enabling the participants to practice the participatory methods with all its essential features. Both the outsiders and insiders have equally a major responsibility in realizing the aim of the PRA. Their role in tandem determines the efficacy of participatory methods. The focus of the thesis is on efficacy of participatory methods. This chapter provides a prelude for understanding the inferences drawn on subsequent chapters.
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