ADMINISTRATIVE SET-UP FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Rural development is a comprehensive concept embracing all aspects of life of the people in the rural areas. It has attracted a great deal of attention from all political parties and government at national and state level. Specially, since the 1960s, rural development is receiving the top priority even in the process of planning at the national level. Now, welfare of the poor has become a cornerstone of the national policy.

With a view to ensuring an integrated approach to the problems of rural areas and that the rural poor do not have to go from pillar to post for meeting all their basic needs and finding solution to their problems, a new administrative set up suited to development was created at different levels. The administrative machineries at different levels exercise their functions with the help of other non-governmental organizations, voluntary industries and banking institutions. The administrative framework in our country involves close functional relationship between the headquarters units and field agencies. All major policy decisions and initiatives related to rural development are taken centrally and then passed down hierarchically for implementation. Now attempts are being made to decentralize the functions as per the objectives of the five-year plan. (Hoshiar Singh: Administration Of Rural Development in India, 1995 p-25)

This chapter attempts to analyze the administrative set up for planning, implementation and evaluation of rural development programmes. It also discusses the structures and functions of different authorities at different levels, which are responsible for the effective implementation of the programmes.

The Planning Commission is the central machinery for rural development programmes as well as for other economic sectors.

However, the rural development is in direct charge of the state government, the importance of central government can no way be denied. It is the central government, which has consistently provided professional leadership
and momentum to rural development. All major programmes for rural development have originated from this level.

The administrative structure for rural development is organised hierarchically from top to bottom. The administrative structure can be discussed with the following figure:

**ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY AT THE CENTRAL LEVEL:**

Earlier the works of rural development were co-ordinated by the department of Rural Development in the Ministry of Agriculture. Now, this machinery has been undergoing several changes. Choudhury Charan Singh Government created the Ministry of Rural Reconstruction in 1979. In addition, it has been renamed as the Ministry of Rural Development in 1982.
A secretary to the government of India heads the Ministry, assisted by an additional secretary, seven joint secretaries and other supporting staff of directors, deputy secretaries, under-secretaries, deputy commissioners, and assistant commissioners etc. *(Hoshiar Singh, *opcit, p-260)*

The Ministry of Rural Development has overall responsibility of policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation of the programmes for the country as a whole. It also looks after all such matters that are related to rural development. The Ministry acts as a nodal agency for the release of central share of funds. Its jurisdiction covers land reforms, village and cottage industries, rural roads, town and country planning in rural areas, elementary and adult education, rural electrification, rural water supply, housing for the rural landless people and nutrition programmes. Besides, it coordinates the various components of rural development programmes for rural poor including scheduled tribes and scheduled castes, women and freed bonded labourers. Besides, it attends to all matters related to Panchayati Raj.

In addition to this ministry, there are four other ministries partially concerned with facets of rural development: Welfare, Health and Family Welfare and Works and Housing Ministry. The Ministry of Welfare attends to the welfare of children, women and the physically and socially handicapped and operates schemes for this purpose in rural areas. It also deals with the welfare of scheduled tribes and scheduled castes. Similarly, the Ministries of Health and Family Welfare and Works and Housing operate their respective schemes in the rural areas.

The Centre's financial support for the various schemes has greatly helped the states in going ahead with them, failing which the state government would have found it difficult and the poorer among them would not have ventured to take up the various schemes. *(S. R. Maheswari, *Rural Development in India: Sage Publication, New Delhi: 1995, p-210.)*

**STATE LEVEL ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY:**

The state government has the direct responsibility for the administration of rural development. As rural development embraces numerous functions like agriculture, co-operation, animal husbandry, public health and education and as
different departments perform all these functions, the rural development administration engages the attention of several departments of the state government. Therefore, as several departments are directly and intimately engaged in rural development points in order to fulfil the need for synchronizing their activities. As agriculture is the major, even dominant component of rural development efforts, the responsibility of coordinating departmental activities falls on the department of agriculture in some states. Most states have a department of rural development headed by a secretary, who is normally a member of the Indian Administrative Service (IAS) (S.R.Maheshwari, Op cit pp-211-212)

At the state level, the Department of Rural Development or any other departments to which the subject of rural development has been allocated are responsible for state level administration of rural development. They are responsible for planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the rural development programmes.

To assist the Department of Rural Development or other departments of the state level in discharging their responsibilities, a state level coordination committee has been provided.

**COMPOSITION OF THE STATE LEVEL COORDINATION COMMITTEE:**

The Chairman of this Committee is the Chief Secretary/Agricultural production Commissioner/Development Commissioner.

A number of other members assist him. They are—

1. Secretary, Department of Rural Development.
2. Secretary, Department of Finance or his representatives.
3. Secretary, Department of Planning and his representatives.
4. Secretary, Department of Women Development
5. Head of the Department of Agriculture
6. Head of the Department of Irrigation
7. Head of the Department of Co-operation
8. Head of the Department of Forest
9. Head of the Department of Fisheries
10. Head of the Department of Animal Husbandry
11. Head of the Department of Industries and Mines
12. A representative of the Government of India (not below the rank of Deputy Secretary)

**Member Secretary:**

Joint /Deputy Secretary, Department of Rural Development acts as the member secretary. The state government may also include other officials/non-officials, as they deem necessary in this committee.

The composition of the Committee reveals that the Department of Rural Development functions in collaboration with other technical departments in coordinating the programmes and services for rural population.

**FUNCTIONS OF THE STATE LEVEL CO-ORDINATION COMMITTEE:**

The SLCC has been given a large number of functions on which the success of state level administration highly depends. The functions of SLCC can briefly be discussed as follows:

1) The SLCC is to provide leadership and guidance to DRDA in the sphere of planning, implementation and monitoring of the programme.
2) It tries to secure inter-departmental co-ordination linkage between the various implementing agencies of the programmes and ensures the development of strong backward and forward linkage for the programmes.
3) The SLCC is empowered to consider the needs and changes in the administrative set-up for the implementation of the programme, approve the establishment pattern, and sanction the post according to them. It also fixes the norms for office expenses, equipments, vehicles, hiring of accommodation etc. where necessary.
4) It reviews the physical targets of the districts keeping in view the objective conditions affecting the provision and operation of viable schemes and modify the target for the districts accordingly, keeping in view the overall objectives.
5) The SLCC monitors and evaluates the implementation of the programmes.
6) It also provides a forum for a meaningful dialogue between the policy maker at the state level and implementations at the field level. *(SOURCE: A manual on IRDP and Allied Programmes, Department of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, New Delhi 1991, ppp-15, 16, 17)*
ADMINISTRATIVE SETUP AT DISTRICT LEVEL:

The district administration ultimately determines the success or failure of rural development programmes. A district is put in charge of a District Collector or Deputy Commissioner. The District Collector or D.C. holds a position of crucial significance. He has the overall responsibility for the implementation of various schemes and programmes and as such, he must properly integrate the departmental activities.

To synchronize the activities of all departments, a coordination committee has been created in each district under the leadership of District Collector or Deputy Commissioner. This committee is expected to meet regularly to sort out interdepartmental problems and to integrate the action of different departments. *(ibid, pp-216,217)*

In 1980, the DRDA was created in each district of India to act as a nodal agency for funding and carrying out all the developmental programmes being implemented in the district.

Now in every district there is the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) headed by the District Collector or Deputy Commissioner or Chief Executive Officer, Zila Parishad in those states where he is of the same status. The DRDA is set up as a society registered under the Registration of Societies Act. *(Hoshibar Singh, Op cit p-33.)*

**Governing Body of DRDA:**

DRDA has a governing body chaired by the District Collector or Deputy Commissioner. It has the following members:

1) All M.P.s and M.L.A.s of the district.
2) The head of the Central Co-operative Bank.
3) Chairman of Regional Rural Bank.
4) Chairman of the Zila Parishad or his representative.
5) Senior most bank officer.
6) District level representative of NAWARD.
7) General Manager, District Industries Centers.
8) Representative, Board of Khadi and Rural Industries.
9) District Officer In-charge of Family Welfare Programme.
10) District Employment Officer.
11) Project Officer, IRDP.
12) Regional/District Officer/Scheduled Caste Finance Corporation.
13) Two representatives of the weaker sections, one from S.C. and other from S.T. They may be the beneficiary of the programme.
14) Assistant Project Director (women development)
15) One representative of rural women preferably a beneficiary.
16) Representative of the District Milk Union.

**Member – Secretary:**

The Project Director of the Agency acts as the member secretary. *(A manual, IRDP and Allied programmes, department of Rural Development, Ministry of Agriculture, govt. of India, New Delhi: 1991 pp-17, 18.)*

**Executive Committee:**

The Chairperson of the DRDA can form an Executive Committee to assist the agency. The Committee consists of all the district level officers and any other officers deemed necessary for planning and implementation of the rural development programme. The meeting of the Governing Body and the Executive Committee are held once in three months and once a month respectively.

**Functions of DRDA:**

The DRDA has been made overall in charge of the planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of rural development programmes in the district. It has to perform various functions. They are as follows: ---

1) DRDA hass to keep the district level and the block level agencies informed of the basic parameters, the requirements of the programme, and the tasks assigned to them.
2) It has to coordinate and oversee the surveys conducted, preparation of perspective plan and finally prepare a district plan.
3) DRDA is empowered to evaluate and monitor the programmes to ensure its effectiveness.
4) It has to secure inter-sectoral and inter-departmental coordination and cooperation.
5) Another function of DRDA is to give publicity to the achievements made under the programme, disseminate knowledge, and build up awareness about the programme undertaken.

6) DRDA is to send periodicals and returns to the state governments in the prescribed manner.

**The Staffing Pattern for DRDA:**

The DRDA is headed by a full time Executive Officer; preferably, a senior IAS officer or an equivalent officer of the state services. The post of APO (women) is created to look after the women components of the IRDP and the DWCRA works. The APO Industries looks after the TRYSEM and the District Industries Centre acts as the technical arm of DRDA.

Identification, investment opportunities, preparation of bankable projects, provision of expert service to the beneficiaries, designing of training programmes, identification of training centers etc are the functions being performed by the DIC.

A planning team consisting of an economist, a credit planning officer, rural industries officer and Office Manager (Expenditure) is associated with DRDA to facilitate project formulation. A civil servant is appointed by the project director to look after its day-to-day administration. The APO (monitoring) is created for monitoring of the programme. There are officers like Accounts Officer (1), Accountants (3) to maintain the accounts. Besides, here are other employees like – Head Clerk (1), LDC (4), LDC (1), Steno (1), Driver (2), Grade IV (4) etc.
The staffing pattern of DRDA is shown in the figure - 4:2

Chairman (Collector/Deputy Commissioner/ DM)

Project officer

APO (Agriculture) APO (Animal Husbandry) APO (Monitoring) APO (Women)

Economists Credit Rural Industries Planning Officer Office Manager
Or or Officers (Expenditure)
Statistician

Accountant Staff

Accountant Officer (1)

Accountants (3)

LDC (4) Steno (1) Driver (1-2) Grade IV (4)

(Source – Hoshiar Singh Op cit P-35)

The success of Rural Development Programme is highly dependent on efficient administration of DRDA. The success of DRDA depends on the extent to which district collector or deputy commissioner is committed to and interested in RDP’s.

BLOCK LEVEL ADMINISTRATION

Below the District, comes the block level administration of rural development. The district is subdivided into a number blocks each on the
average, covering 100 villages and population of approximately one lakh. The block level administration is one of the organizational innovations of rural development planning in India. It is the basic unit of planning and development programme are routed through the block development administration. In reality, the success of every rural development programme mainly depends upon block administration. Therefore, the machinery at this level has to be effective.

The block agency is headed by the Block development Officer (B.D.O.). The B.D.O.is assisted by a group of Extension Officers (EO) belongs to different technical departments. Such as Agriculture, Horticulture, Co-Operatives, Minor Irrigation, Animal Husbandry, Rural Engineering, Social Education and Programme for Women and Children, Panchayats, Rural industries etc. The Structure of the Development block is shown in the figure below——

![Block Administration Structure Diagram]

(Source: Hoshiar Singh, Administration of Rural Development in India, STERLING PUBLISHERS PRIVATE LIMITED, 1996)
The administration set up at the block level was reviewed in 1981. It was found that many blocks did not have the posts of Extension officers for Industries, Co-Operation and Animal Husbandry under the administration control of the BDO. Some of these posts had been transferred to their respective technical departments.

**BLOCK DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (B.D.O.):**

The Block Development Officer (BDO) acts as the leader of the team of extension officers. As a leader of the team of extension officers, he has been charged with the responsibility for efficient implementation of the development programmes in his block. He coordinates various technical functions in the block and all correspondence between the district level officers of developments departments and field personnels passes through him. He looks after the administration needs of the block so that the technical personnels remain free from routine works and be able to devote themselves fully to the implementation of programmes relating to their respective fields.

He convenes regular meetings of Gram Sewaks and Extension Officers and fosters a team approach among all members working under him.

As the head of the Office, the BDO looks after the office works, replies to the large volume of letters received in office, submits numerous returns, reports to the higher authority and exercises a number of financial as well as administrative powers with respect to the personnels under his control.

The Block Development Officer is the Secretary and Chief Executive Officer of the Panchyat Samiti and as such, performs numerous functions. He coordinates the work of all the extension officers working in the block. They receive orders from him and report to him on all administrative problems.

The BDO and the extension personnels constitute the administrative machinery of Panchayati Raj institution. Thus, the foremost responsibilities of these functionaries are towards Panchayati Raj. The same machinery is utilized to administer the programmes like CDP, IRDP, NREP, even though not all of them come under the control of Panchayati Raj.

At any rate, the extension personnels at the block level carry main responsibility for the implementation of rural development programmes and any
other works, the state government fixes from time to time. (S.R. Maheswari: *op cit ppp* 222,223,224.)

**BLOCK LEVEL COORDINATION COMMITTEE:**

At the block level, a Coordination Committee has been set up for proper coordination and effective implementation of the rural development programmes.

**Composition of Block Level Co-ordination Committee:**

The Chairman of this committee is the Local MLA. He is assisted by other members like --

(a) Project Director, District Rural Development Agency (DRDA).
(b) Sr. BDO acts as the member secretary.
(c) Representatives from ST and SC committees.
(d) Councilors of Mahkuma Parisad.
(e) President of Gaon Panchayat.
(f) Co-Opted members of financial institutions, operating in the block.

The block level Coordination Committee has been entrusted with some functions, which are given below —

(1) BLCC is empowered to ensure the proper identification of the target groups.
(2) It has also the responsibilities to make proper co-ordination between the development departments, financing institutions and other agencies, functioning in the block for successful implementation at rural development programme.
(3) It has also the power to ensure timely repayment of loan to the financing institutions sanctioned under these programmes.

**VILLAGE LEVEL:**

At the bottom of the administration, structure of the rural development is the village level. In India, a Government Servant, namely the Village Level Worker commonly known as ‘VLWs’ or ‘Gram Sewak’, serves every village. The Village Level Worker is at the tail end of rural development administration, and it is he, who comes and continuously remains thereafter, in touch with the former and others in the village. He is the cutting edge of rural development administration.
A district level selection committee recruits the village level workers. They maintain a link between the village and subject matter specialists at the block level. Normally, their jurisdiction extended over 10 villages.

The role of VLWs or Gram Sewaks and Gram Sewikas, is very much important in the sphere of implementation at the rural development programme. He has to visit every village once a fortnight. The VLWs have to maintain relation between the villages and block level team.

The VLWs or Gram Sewak is designed as a multipurpose functioning capable of rendering services of the 'first aid' variety to villagers. He explains to client groups the schemes; help them to take advantages of them. He carries those problems, which he himself cannot readily solve, to the Extension Personal at the block level. Thus, he makes linkage between the two. He reports on the progress of schemes to the block authority.

The VLWs is an extension worker in the production field, educating the villagers in better techniques of agriculture and animal husbandry and promoting irrigational and other productive constructional works. His services are also extended to other fields such as – Co-Operation, Panchayats, Social institutions and Sanitation. He is supposed to promote human development in his area. He has to help youth, woman, and other sections needing special assistance, to organize themselves for their own benefit and contribute to the advancement of the community. He should serve as the principal and effective channel of communication between the development authorities and the village.

The Gram-Sewak has thus a heavy workload of many sorts. He is the beast of burden for all departments. He has to move among the people and talk to them about their problems. They bring the problems, which are faced by the villagers, to the notice of the higher authorities for their solution.

Largely, the role of Village Level Workers (VLWs) is very significant in effective implementation of the rural development programme.

As we have mentioned in the previous chapter that IRDP is a target group oriented programme, therefore subsidy should be given to those, who really belong to that group.
Block is the basic unit for the implementation of IRDP and other programmes. The major function at the block level is to identify the people who really belong to this group. For this purpose, survey of the villages is very much essential. The VLWs have to make survey about their land holding, income etc. and then inform to the block and given them.

Therefore, the VLWs play a very significant role in implementing the rural development programmes among the villagers.

Besides these implementing authorities, there are some other institutions and organizations, which always offer help in implementing the rural development programmes among the rural people of the villages. They are (1) Panchayati Raj Institutions (2) Voluntary Organizations (3) Industries (4) Banking Institutions.

In India, with the recommendation of Balwant Rai Mehta Committee, a three-tier system of Panchayati Raj was introduced in rural areas. They are Village Panchayats at the village level, Anchalik panchayats at the block level and Zila Parishad at the district level.

In Assam also, the same system of Panchayati Raj was introduced in 1959. However, in 1972, two-tier Panchayati Raj system was introduced by the Assam Panchayati Raj Act 1972 i.e. at the subdivision level and the Gram Panchayats at the village level. The Assam Panchayati Raj Act 1994 introduced the same system. In place of M.P., Zila Parishad was created at the district level. The Panchayati Raj institutions play a significant role in effective implementation of the rural development programmes at the grass root level. It has the power to supervise, guide and control the various developmental programmes. The members of panchayats are responsible for the development of agriculture and horticulture construction and maintenance of minor irrigation works, agricultural programmes, distribution of agricultural instruments, fertilizer, seeds, public health, sanitation, cottage industries, animal husbandry and primary education etc. It appears that, the sole responsibility of implementing the rural development programmes in village areas bestowed upon the Panchayati Raj...
institutions. The success of any rural development programme depends on the active working of the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

**VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS:**

Besides these formal agencies, there are some informal or voluntary agencies, which play an important role in the successful implementation of rural development programmes. In present societies, various voluntary organizations are formed by the people themselves to meet their local needs and to solve their socio-economic problems by themselves. These organizations are formed spontaneously without any external control. These agencies have their own rules and regulations, raise and manage their own fund. The Mahila Mandal, Mahila Samities, Youth Clubs etc. are some example of voluntary agencies. They have been playing a significant role in implementing the programmes. As they are nearer to the community, they are closely attracted with the socio-economic life of the village people and help them in time of need.

The Registered Societies like Lion Club, International Rotary Club, and UNESCO are the worldwide voluntary organizations. These organizations create greater awareness among the rural poor about the programmes on one hand and proper cooperation among the implementing agencies on the other. Anyway, their contribution in implementing the rural development programmes in village areas, can no way be denied.

**INDUSTRIES:**

Industries also provide assistance in implementing the rural development programmes. The Five-Year Plan focuses on specific measures for the village artisans for the development of cottage industries. *A.B.Dev: A Study of the Implementation of Rural Development Programme p-44.*

In this regard, mention may be made of setting up the All India Khadi and Village Industries Board in 1953 with a view to provide financial assistance for economically viable schemes of rural development. Industries are established to implement different types of programmes like animal husbandry diary development etc.
A statutory khadi and Village Industry Commission (K.V.I.C) was established at the national level to coordinate the development programmes of khadi and village Industries during the second Five Year Plan. The State Khadi and Village Industries Boards were set up in almost all the states. These boards offer financial assistance for implementing economically viable schemes in village areas with the help of Mahila Samities and Panchayats. Some industries have organised programmes in the villages with a view to provide services to the workers. There are other industries, which would like to undertake welfare programmes as apart of social responsibility.

Thus, with varying motivation, some of the selected industries have taken up programmes of rural development. For example- the Mafatlal Services have sponsored the Bhatiya Agro- Industries foundation for implementation of programme of animal husbandry and diary development; the TATA group of industries has created TATA Welfare Trust for undertaking welfare measures. (D. Paul Choudhury Opitp-42.)

Therefore, the government of India gives emphasis on the development of Industrial sector.

**BANKING INSTITUTION:**

In the implementation of rural development programmes, the banking institutions play a great significant role. Finance is the life and blood of every rural development programme. Without finance, rural development programmes cannot be implemented successfully. Functions and finance are interrelated. Financial assistance is provided by the bank in the form of loans and subsidy. The subsidy is supplemented by loan from the Multi-agency credit system, comprising commercial banks, co-operative banks and regional rural banks.

To have the expansion of the banking system in rural areas, the government of India established National Agricultural Bank of Rural Development (NABARD) IN 1982. This bank gives emphasis on matters related to agriculture and rural development and release loan to the rural people in village areas. (A Handbook on self-help group published by NABARD, Regional office Gauhati, p-1.)
In the implementation of rural development programmes, the loan application are sent to DRDA from the block office and the DRDA sends it to the respective banks. A credit camp is organised, in which members from block, DRDA, Bank Credit institutions represent. In this credit camp, the applications are scrutinized and finalized. Based on subsidy, which is released from DRDA, the bank sanctions its loan.

Thus, it appears that the banking institutions play a very significant role in the successful working of RDPs. Over and all, the regional Bank, Co-Operative bank are the sources of rural credit, which conduct assistance in the effective implementation of RDPs.

From the above analysis, it becomes clear that the implementing authorities for RDPs are organised hierarchically from top to the bottom. The implementing authorities at different levels exercise their functions with the help of other officials and non-officials agencies. The full co-operation among themselves results the success of RDPs.

The Administrative Set-up of the Rural Development in the District of Golaghat and Blocks under study is represented below:

```
              P.D.
               ↓                   ↓                   ↓                   ↓
              APO (Monitoring) APO (Technical) APO (Credit) APO (Agriculture)
               ↓                   ↓                   ↓                   ↓
       Junior Engineer         Junior Engineer
               ↓                   ↓
         Accountant 2 nos. Head Assistant
               ↓                   ↓
Lower Division Asst.  3 nos. Upper Division Clerk 3 nos.
               ↓                   ↓
       Peon         Driver Night Chowkider
               ↓                   ↓
        Night Watcher  Sweeper
```
Administrative Staff of Development Block under study

(a) RD Division.

BDO

- Extension officer (Panchayat)
- Extension officer (Agriculture)
- Extension officer (Women & Children)

- Accountant 01 nos.
- Upper Division Asst. 01 nos.
- Gram Sewak 07 nos.
- Gram Sevika 01 nos.

- LDA
  - Peon (01)

(b) C. D. Division.

- Extension Officer (Panchayats)
- Statistical Officer
- Extension Officer (Women & Children)

- Gram Sewak 03 nos.
- Accountant 01 nos.
- Gram Sevika 02 nos.

- LDA 01 nos.
- Peon 01 nos.

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MAP OF GOLAGHAT DISTRICT SHOWING THE SUB-DIVISIONS & BLOCKS OF GOLAGHAT SUB-DIVISION:

GOLAGHAT (Assam) Sonitpur
Nagaon
Jorhat
Karbi
Nagaland

SUB-DIVISIONS OF GOLAGHAT DISTRICT:
A. Bokakhat Sub-division
B. Sarupather Sub-division
C. Golaghat Sub-division.

BLOCKS OF GOLAGHAT SUB-DIVISION:
1. North Development Block, Dergaon
2. Golaghat Central Development Block, Kathalguri.
4. Morang Development Block.
5. Gomariguri Development Block.