SECTION - III

THE CLIENT, CHANGE AGENT, TARGET, AND ACTION SYSTEMS

In this section, the scholar will analyze the various systems in social work practice, their characteristics, and the plan of action for the change effort. The systems covered are: the client system, change agent system, target system and action system. The plan of action includes the formulation of outcome and method goals.

1. The Client System - The Community

The client as a system refers to the collectivity of individuals who benefit from the use of the profession's services either directly or indirectly through the participation of others on their behalf (Goldstein, 1973: 117). Pincus and Minahan (1973: 56) have added an important corollary of contract formation between the client and the agency as being a necessary condition for identification of the client-system.

In this presentation, the potential client-system refers to the people living in the geographical community that is served by the change agent system Jagruti Kendra. The community is usually referred to as Jari Mari. Jari Mari is the name of a goddess from Karnataka, and her temple is said to have been established about 40 years ago by her worshippers who are supposed to have been the original inhabitants of this community. Today, the population is heterogeneous.
1.1 The community system has its physical boundaries and covers 4 to 5 lakhs population residing along the Andheri-Kurla Road within the boundaries of Saki Naka, Kurla, Ghatkopar and Sahar airport (covering the parishes of Jari Mari and Saki Naka). About 30 years ago, the area comprised of forests and agricultural lands owned by the Wadi as and a few Catholic families. As industries came in, the land was cleared of forests/agriculture and used to build houses for the workers. Kajupada, one of the oldest developed localities, was a forest of cashew nut trees. Formerly, the chawls were better planned with adequate water and sanitation facilities. Today, there are ad hoc constructions of 10"X10" pucca or kuccha rooms in whatever space is available (there is very little left), with no water and sanitation. Most of the chawls are illegal. A vast area in Jari Mari is covered with stables (tabelas/buffalo sheds) contrary to the development plans of the area.

Being part of the vast sea of unauthorized dwellers in the city, having occupied land belonging to the airport authorities, and uncovered by protective legislation, this system's boundaries are open and most vulnerable to external threats of eviction and harassment. This is aggravated in the present context of a Bombay High Court decision to evict dwellers from land needed for development purposes as well as the eviction of tenants on central government premises under the Public Premises Act (the Independent, 7-2-1991).
Most of the people are migrants from Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka. They are mainly millworkers. On the technical side, there are welders, fitters, turners, electricians and mechanics. A small number are in business and trade. Several people also earn as auto-rickshaw drivers, peons, clerks or hotel and canteen workers. There are a few pockets where ragpickers reside and lead a hand-to-mouth existence. The average income earned by the male breadwinner ranges from Rs. 1500 to 2000. The families in business and trade may earn up to 5000, while the ragpickers and naka workers (unemployed persons who wait at street corners seeking daily wage work) may earn even as low as 500 per month. The women work in mills, factories or as domestic workers and ragpickers, on wages lower than the men. The majority of families are nuclear or extended, comprising of an average of 5 to 6 members; the number of children may be as low as two or as high as seven.

A large percentage of the people have not attained formal education, have failed, or dropped out of the formal education system. Resources vary from financial constraints to the negative social influence of the environment, as well as the lack of upward mobility despite education.

As the area has developed in an ad hoc manner, with the land being carved under different ownerships, the provision of basic amenities is also ad hoc. In most cases, the residents have bought rooms in chawls without the required amenities of
water, electricity, toilets and drainage. In Jari Mari west, most of the houses were kuccha. It is over the years that settled families have used their meagre earnings for plastering and making them more permanent. Narrow open nallahs are built alongside the houses for the waste water, which flows into the gutters provided by the BMC or accumulates on the land, stagnates and breeds mosquitoes. Some of the sewer and water pipes have got deeply buried under the debris of constructions. In the rains, the nallahs overflow and enter the moris (the place of the water taps) and the low-level rooms. Every minuscule of space is being exploited so thoroughly that there is no place for throwing garbage. In many places, the BMC has provided a temporary shed near the toilets or bins on open grounds. If the garbage is not removed regularly, it becomes a pollution hazard for the residents; there is terrible smell; flies and mosquitoes increase; the path to the toilets gets blocked, particularly in the rains, forcing the children and even adults to use open spaces.

While there is a tremendous increase in the population, the ratio of toilets to persons has not changed. In chawls on private land, the ratio is usually one toilet for ten persons; on airport, BMC or housing board property, the ratio may be one for 100 persons or more. Where the chawl committee exists, or the owner is reasonably concerned, they are maintained well; in other places, the toilets are in a ramshackle state; water and electricity are not available. For women in particular, the use of the toilets is most stressful. It is also most normal to see
children sitting near or on the garbage dumps for purposes of excretion. Gastro-intestinal problems are thus perennial.

The community system is characterized by subsystems formed on the basis of local chawl committees. Thus, a group of families living close to each other form a chawl with a formal or informal leader. Some of the chawls are small in size; others are fairly large. Some of the chawls have closed boundaries while others are open to interaction and relate easily with other sub-units and the change agent system. The pattern of leadership seems to have influenced the extent of permeability and vulnerability to intra-system and extra-system inputs and adaptations. Certain areas are kept on guard by leaders using physical force. In several areas, the chawl owners themselves keep external interventions at bay. They use threats of eviction and legal action on their tenants who are otherwise interested in improving their living conditions. Chawl committees, constituting the male head of the family, are sometimes the cause of impermeability into the system. The males prefer to work on their own for the welfare of their chawl (as they perceive it), and do not like to be questioned or their position threatened particularly by their wives. The women are made to feel inferior, incompetent and incapable of action on issues.

1.2 Since the Bombay High Court orders of 7th March and 7th April, 1990, the community is in a state of conflict with the outside system. The orders have removed the grant of stay on
evictions for developmental purposes and of those residents who
have built dwellings in slums after 1st January, 1985. At the
same time, there seems to be a sense of lethargy developed over
many years of 'empty' threats. The change agent system has thus
to use direct influence to energize the client-system into taking
some action on the issue. There is conflict and deviation re­
sulting from the diverse, incongruent and inadequately articulat­
ed instructions and expectations of the larger system. The elite
of the city expect the slum dwellers to lead a normal, healthy
and happy existence and blame them for their personal behaviours
when they are forced to live in an environment of deprivation -
lack of basic amenities like adequate water supply, electricity,
housing, sanitation, drainage and environmental hygiene
facilities. This is further aggravated by the pollution by
industries, vehicles, accumulation of garbage and stagnant water.
In such an environment, the slum dweller is expected to live a
normal family and community life.

To deal with the stresses of such an existence, the people
are observed to be coping in various ways: the men take to
alcohol; a few youth experiment with drugs. There is strength
derived from belonging to political parties and identifying with
or depending on the local 'dadas' in the area. There are physi­
cal and mental health problems. Formal and informal leadership
emerges in the chawls, and, in a total urban environment of
exploitation, such leadership also becomes exploitative in turn,
and the people do not benefit from such leadership. In most
cases, the people are forced to pay for services which are their basic rights. For instance, paying the municipal sweepers for cleaning the gutters and latrines, paying the plumbers who generally install sub-standard water connections which have to be cleaned every three months; to pay the shopkeeper in 'black' for hoarded and seemingly unavailable goods; to the private practitioners for ill-health due to the environmental pollution, the municipal health services being perceived as inadequate or inaccessible. Behaviour problems in children are not uncommon. Family stresses and breakdowns are on the increase.

Thus, the units of the community system are in constant flux, adapting to both internal and external stimuli and struggling to lead a normal life.

1.3 Convergence in a vast system like a heterogeneous urban community becomes difficult. However, one can observe convergence in the sub-systems, viz., within the chawls, particularly where the interactional and communication patterns have been well-established. This has been aided by the linguistic and/or religious bond, specially in the early stages of the development of the chawl. This is observed in the Tamil-speaking and the Catholic communities. As the areas have grown geographically and demographically, the population has become heterogeneous and it is in this context that the change agent system has a very important role to play. The change agent system has become a very important means to help develop convergence through
increasing communication vis-a-vis regular meetings to discuss issues with the mahila mandals, youth groups and the basic community leaders and the newly formed Jari Mari Rahivashi Sangh as well as organizing programmes on furthering awareness so that the people come together on a common platform.

Obstacles to convergence are several, their origin being endogenous or exogenous. In a few chawls in Jari Mari west (the land belongs to the airport authority), political parties have established committees on communal lines, for example, by bringing together only the Maharashtrian Hindus and keeping away the other Hindus, the Muslims and the Catholics. Afraid of the 'bullying' tactics of the party affiliates, the people are forced to remain within the boundaries and keep away from the rest of the families. In some instances, the relatives of the landlord, staying within the same premises, do not cooperate with the others on common problems. There are observed to be feelings of superiority in the comparatively better-off and better educated families to their less educated and less fortunate brethren. Prejudices and biases against Muslim families are common; many of them live along the borders in patra-walled (corrugated, iron sheets) huts. They are usually viewed as illiterate, dirty, indifferent and incapable of improving their surroundings and their lifestyle. They are ridiculed about the large families and unhygienic habits. These prejudices divide the community on religious lines.
1.4 Differentiation refers to the different roles each system and its components play at different stages of development of the change effort. The change process would necessarily begin on very general terms; but as data became available and the purpose clarified, differentiated roles, responsibilities, and tasks would emerge on the part of the participants (Goldstein, 1973: 114). Consequently, the characteristics of the change unit vary. Before the development of the change agent system as a potential base for conscientization of the community, only a few Catholic families benefitted from the church activities; the majority had no role to play. In all, there were the 533 Catholic families or 2520 people (Census Report of Jagruti Kendra, 1987: 5). These families were brought together to form 24 basic units (which have increased to 36 units in 1990), each unit consisting of 10-15 households with a leader. These leaders formed the core group for direct liaison with the parish priest. This was in keeping with the change in the ideology of the church in Bombay in 1980, wherein, all the parish priests had been asked to mobilize the families into manageable groups for the following reasons: closer interaction with each other and the church, better knowledge of the talents and potential of each parishioner, better service to each other and the society at large. This was undertaken in the St. Jude's Church through the efforts of the new parish priest who came with the vision of extending the programme and activities to the entire community in order to broaden the base for social change. The role of the
client-system thus shifted from mere beneficiary and target system to participants as action systems in all aspects of problem-solving. The shift, however, seems incomplete with respect to a few of the areas where the basic units exist. The mahila mandals and youth groups there have tended to remain closed to non-Catholics and self-initiated action has been slow. On the other hand, the newly formed groups of women and youth from heterogeneous communities have speedily acted on problems affecting them.

Formerly, the client system was a recipient of the programmes of the church - even with respect to the formation of the mandals and youth groups. There is a gradual shift on the part of several of the groups to a more active relationship with the change agent system. In the month of December, 1990, some women of Bhavsar chawl in Krishna Nagar approached the Kendra for help to approach the traffic department and demand for speedbreakers on the 90 feet road as two children of their chawl had suffered a severe accident; and one child had succumbed to the injuries. This crisis was used as an opportunity to form a mandal which is, today, one of the most active and well-attended. In fact, some of the very active members are called to help solve the problems of the neighbouring chaawls; in one instance, they were approached by the men of the area. Persons with family and marital problems needing legal advice and counselling are also actively seeking the Kendra's help.
A forum of the people of Jari Mari was established in the initial stages of the development of the agency with the idea that the client system can play the role of the action system. The forum was later extended to the residents of Saki Naka to form the Jari Mari - Saki Naka Rahivashi Sangh, with an ad hoc committee of leaders from both the areas. A morcha to demand better basic amenities was taken by the Sangh on 30-4-1990. Due to the lack of leadership (the President is transferred) and adequate follow up, the Sangh is dormant.

The different segments of the community, in the form of the women's and youth groups, are at different stages of development. While the newly formed groups are target systems, being helped and guided by the change agent system to come together, elect an executive committee and identify problems for work, such as, the mandals of Paul chawl and Gupta chawl, the Bhavsar chawl is in the middle phase of having taken action on issues. Older mandals like the Martin Pereira chawl mahila mandal are veterans and always ready to mobilise at the moment of need.

1.5 System - Regulating Processes: Like all migrants in the city, the people of Jari Mari and Saki Naka have also settled down and formed a fairly stable and dynamic social sub-system which has developed their ties with the larger social system of the city. As conceptualized by Roland Warren, this community system has its units that fulfil locally relevant functions: (i) production-distribution-consumption; (ii) socialization; (iii)
social control; (iv) social participation; and (v) mutual support. This is linked to the larger city system and, hence, the functions can be said to be partial. For instance, while the private doctors cater to the basic health needs, hospitalisation and other major health problems are dealt with by the Holy Spirit Hospital and public hospitals in the city. Besides St. Jude's school, which serves a 3000 child population, there are other private and municipal schools. For junior and senior colleges, the students travel outside the community. It is observed that within the mandal and groups, the individuals play varied roles depending on their personality, level of education, previous experience and family support.

The area which is pockmarked by the 10" X 10" and 10" X 12" low ceilinged houses, as mentioned earlier, was agricultural and forest land in the sixties. In the development plans of the BMRDA, it was supposed to have served various purposes. Bits and pieces of the land were gradually occupied by factories and private builders with political influence, and slums were built to house the rural migrants. In fact, a prominent Congress worker wielded sufficient influence to change a portion of the development plan so that he could develop certain 'community' services like a temple which is today a place for weddings and other functions. The reason for the continuation of the community for 30 years without a major threat to the residents, may be considered to be political, as there are vested political inter-
ests in the continuance of slum communities as vote banks and industries for raising political funds.

On the one hand, there is lack of a clear policy on slums built on land other than municipal land i.e. unauthorised occupation of private and central government land and that of other bodies such as airport authority and the railways. On the other hand, the political parties vie with each other to provide protection against eviction, for obvious reasons. In this situation of vagueness and ambivalence and a divide and rule policy, where sporadic attempts at evictions of small clusters of houses do take place, are introduced the small-scale chawl builders who make hay while the sun shines. A chawl may constitute a minimum of five rooms, with or without basic amenities, to a maximum of 30 and more. Where the owner has cooperated, the area has been declared a private slum and the BMC has provided water taps and latrines. In several instances, the chawl owners have refused to accept the status due to the fear that if the BMC gives facilities, the land will be treated as the property of the BMC and, thus, a deadlock faces the residents. The alternative has been to stop paying the rents or to go to the courts. In a few instances, the change agent system helped the mandal to negotiate with the owner but without much success. In several chawls, the people have resorted to withdrawal from action and the attitude is: 'This is our destiny, what can we do?'. As the core forces in this system are continuity and survival, the system regulates itself with a few modifications in its structure. A factor that
probably contributes to the greater coping of the system, of the disruptions within and without, is the reality that "all of us are sailing in the same boat", i.e., all or most of the residents of the chawls face similar problems. In such instances, some action results. The geographical location of the chawl is important with respect to such outside influences which disrupt the system. If bordering the main road, or an inner road, or a major water pipeline, the people are more likely to get affected by disruptive stimuli from external sources, as for instance, a broadening of the road, or traffic pollution or garbage dumping. The people have to then depend on the local corporators, MLAs or the voluntary organisations like the Jagruti Kendra for help. When the Milind Nagar eviction took place in January, 1991, the people were in a state of shock at the suddenness of the happening; it was done in the morning when the men were out to work. With the support of the Kendra and one local political worker, the residents gained strength to cope and act rationally. The subsystem is gradually returning to normalcy after the stay order from the court; and the people are putting up temporary shelters. They are now organised to work further on the issue of alternative accommodation.

The family system itself may be viewed as the primary coping unit ensuring a steady state in the system. As the families are linked together in chawls, a kind of feudal system is created with the families depending on the chawl 'landlord' for fulfillment of certain needs. Where this relationship has become a
threat, the chawl committee is formed to override and protect the families within its coterie. With the intervention of the Kendra, the concept of mahila mandals and yuvak mandals has evolved as additional or alternative subsystems to help cope with disruptive stimuli and maintain the dynamic balance within the system. This, at times, becomes a threat to the existing system of relationships within the chawl as well as within the family, for they challenge the traditional family relationships. For instance, there was a little resistance to the formation of the mahila mandal in Kunj Vihar chawl as the committee of the men of the area already existed. However, this was overcome by a delineation of the roles of both the groups. In Satya Kutir, as the Shiv Sena-supported male-dominated chawl committee existed and was strong, the status quo was desired by the women and there was reluctance to form an independent mandal. This, however, did not prevent the non-Maharashtrians from approaching the Kendra for one. There is a relationship between existing family authority relations and the larger system relationships. One would expect change in one to lead to change in the other, or at least, affect the dynamics positively or negatively.

2. The Change Agent System (or the Change Environment)

The change environment is the generic term for the setting which hosts, sanctions, or establishes the purposes and parameters of social work practice (Goldstein, 1973: 121). It is the immediate environment of the worker-client interaction (Johnson,
partial salaries, almost like honoraria. They were like paid volunteers but part of the change agent system.

Jagruti Kendra was started as an independent organisation by the parish priest of St. Jude's church in March, 1989. The priest, who works as the Director of the Kendra, along with the Assistant Director (a sister from the Society of the Helpers of Mary), began with community work in 1988, after taking over as parish head. This was in keeping with the resolution of the Archdiocese of Bombay requiring the parishes to develop basic ecclesiastical communities of Catholics with a three-fold purpose: (i) being more accessible in groups, their talents would be better tapped and they would also get to know each other; (ii) to deepen their religious formation; (iii) to help the Catholic community to serve each other and the world. In 1988, non-Catholics were also included in the outreach programmes. This parish is viewed as a model for others as it has succeeded in (i) starting with small groups and moved to mass organisation; (ii) decentralisation through community leaders and participation in decision-making; (iii) teamwork comprising the various levels of staff along with the client system representatives; (iv) identification of the church with the marginalised. A similar model is to be seen in only the Bandra East Community Centre which is today not connected to the church, and Seva Niketan.

It is essential to understand the Jagruti Kendra as a change agent system, its impact on the functioning of all the systems
and on the interactions between the systems. An analysis of (2.1) intra-system and (2.2) inter-system factors, as elaborated by Goldstein, is thus warranted.

2.1 Intra-system Factors are characterised as (2.1.1) structural properties, (2.1.2) functional properties and (2.1.3) output (Goldstein, 1973: 124-130). These factors help the change agent system to pinpoint the components of the social problem to be treated, the populations to be involved, and the related conditions for service, as well as the means to be used to achieve the desired ends. Each will be elaborated below.

2.1.1 Structural properties are the conditions within the change system which directly or indirectly determine, guide, and organise the change process. The structure not only denotes the parameters of service but also governs the interactions and mode of delivery. The structure's properties include: (i) the physical setting, (ii) policies, regulations and protocol, and (iii) guiding theories and beliefs:

(i) The physical setting of the Kendra is significant - a church. This itself infuses an aura of power and authority along with religiosity. However, the setting is simple and functional. The church hall serves as both a place for mass and prayers as well as for community meetings (with a mike, folding chairs, a stage where the statues are kept). The office of the Kendra is a small room, simply and sparsely furnished and is used for one-to-one and small group
According to Pincus and Minahan (1973: 54), the public, voluntary, or project-involving agency or community, organisation and institution that employs a social worker is a change agent system. Lippitt, Watson and Westley (1958: 12) refer to any specialist who is a helper and an outsider involved in planned change as the change agent, but Pincus and Minahan emphasise the difference between a paid change agent and one who is voluntary.

In the context of the practicum, the change agent system is the Jagruti Kendra which employs helpers or change agents who are trained in community development, law and social work. Eight women from the change agent system were initially trained and employed to serve as animators and health workers on a part-time basis. At present, there are 3 community-level workers and 3 community health workers. Of the latter, one is the balwadi teacher and one helps in the running of the dispensary, recently started by the Kendra.

During the period of the practicum, i.e. from October 6, 1990 to January 31, 1991, the scholar worked as a temporary change agent (TCA) with the Kendra. While she was not a 'paid' staff member (a pre-requisite, according to Pincus and Minahan), she did gain in kind, i.e., in being permitted to work as a temporary staff member of the organisation to enable her to complete her practicum. An interesting characteristic of the Kendra was that, except for the typist, all the staff were on
interactions. Behind the church is the school building. Surrounding both is open space for sports, recreational activities and celebration of festivals. The Kendra is most accessible to the client system from all sides, being situated between two major arterial roads. The community becomes most often the setting for interaction rather than the premises of the church. Meetings of the women and youth are conducted in the chawls. Large group meetings of the Rahivashi Sangh and other programmes of the Mahila Utsav, Yuva Utsav, are held in the church hall. The recently inaugurated balwadi classroom is also used for holding parents’ meetings, celebration of festivals and training programmes. The Kendra is open to the community at all times, even in situations of crises; the official working hours for the regular staff vary from 10 a.m. to 5 or 7 p.m. The Kendra’s Director stays in the church premises, the Assistant Director in the chawl nearby and the community level workers are from the community.

(ii) Policies, regulations and protocol set the boundaries and norms for assistance. The Kendra is very clear about its objectives of making the marginalised people aware of their rights, of developing their confidence to fight the system through united action. The means used are the mandals, the mahila and yuva councils constituting representatives of the mandals to advise and guide them, and the sangh. The mandal
is viewed as the forum for dealing with individual problems also, although the clients and their families are offered legal help and counselling. Adult education classes, the balwadi, the dispensary, are run as supportive programmes. The roles of the various levels of staff are communicated in verbal and written form. All of them are expected to keep daily records of their work and share with the group in the regular staff meetings. Their work is monitored by the Director and his assistant. Inservice training, and participation in the programmes offered by other organisations, are encouraged. Being only two years old, policies, regulations and protocol have yet to take a concrete form. The meetings of the trustees once in six months help in clarifications of the structure. The Kendra thus functions with great flexibility in its response to the human situation.

(iii) The guiding theories and belief of the change agent system include the implicit and explicit philosophies of what is good and valuable for the people to which the agency addresses itself and provides the guiding culture for problem assessment and interventions. These theories and beliefs have to be accessible to expression and review, and to the testing of their usefulness and function (Goldstein: 125).
The Kendra is concerned about the problems of the marginalised and oppressed groups in society. The major concern is to mobilise and organise people and bring about quantitative and qualitative growth in all spheres of life. "Ultimately the marginalised people require the political power for decision-making, to remake history and to redefine their place and presence in the society" (Yearly Report, June 1988-May 1989). It is in the backdrop of these theories and beliefs that the change agent system has expanded its functions to cover a vast number of people in a period of two years. The number of staff appointments have also increased. There are requests from other parishes to initiate similar work in their areas. In consonance with its objectives, the Kendra is looking for a place for its office outside the church premises and coordinating staff, independent of the church.

2.1.2 Functional properties denote purpose, direction, and intent - in short, the utility of the change environment. It is determined by: (i) purpose, (ii) responsibility, (iii) range of variants, (iv) desired outcomes. The practitioner's interpretation of his own function (v), (vi) interpretation of dynamics, and (vii) the communicational system influence the expression of the above:

(i) The Kendra's purpose is to achieve social justice through people's awareness, power, organisation, and action. The methods, thus viewed as appropriate to achieve the purpose, are (a) mass education, (b) formation of action systems
around issues related to housing, women, environment and health; (c) initiating action on various issues; (d) coordinating with other systems like non-government organisations. The related tasks are, thus, the use of media, rallies, signature campaigns, morchas, dharnas, public and group meetings, training programmes, and public interest litigation. The Kendra does provide certain services to the public such as educational sponsorship for families in crisis, organises tuitions for children, free legal aid and guidance for employment, a balwadi and a dispensary's services. However, these services are limited.

(ii) The workers of the Kendra have their assigned roles such as director, assistant director, coordinator, community organizer, but there is freedom to innovate and a high level of autonomy. Regular team meetings help to achieve congruence about the purpose, policy and services; and to resolve any conflicts arising thereof. In the initial and subsequent personal contacts, as well as in meetings, the scholar was able to sense the particular ambience of the setting - a kind of climate of concern, warmth, freedom to express and informality. The system's members view themselves as playing the roles of enabler, facilitator, catalyst, activator, and advocate. Hence, all their efforts are diverted towards organising the people into action groups.
The organisation works through groups and mass organisation. The group is seen as the means for taking action on individual, group and community-related problems. For instance, in the case of a dowry death, the mahila mandal was the main tool to publicise the event and mobilise social disapproval. The various groups have started on the basis of various factors. The first mahila mandal and yuvak mandal in Yellappa chawl was started on 11-7-1988 with the help of the basic Catholic unit already functioning there. The initial activities were religious in nature and later became more secular. Figure 3 shows the location of the 19 mahila mandals and five yuva mandals in the area.

The purpose of the mandal is clearly explained by the Kendra staff in the first meeting itself, viz., to undertake tasks aimed at (a) developing awareness about their problems; (b) analysis of the causes and remedies; (c) thinking together on the joint action plan; (d) follow up of the action plan; and (d) bring unity and people’s power to confront the oppressive structures. The group is helped to elect the executive committee consisting of the president, vice president, secretary and joint secretary, treasurer and joint treasurer. The importance of collecting a contribution of two rupees to cover the expenses of visits to the BMC, or attending programmes is clearly explained. The first meeting is usually conducted by the Assistant Director and one community-level worker.
Thereafter, the CLW, assisted by another, is solely responsible for the running of the mandal. The Assistant Director intervenes only when necessary, as for instance, when there is a serious conflict, or the mandal is not taking off, or on any other occasion. The commonly discussed issues, so far, have related to environmental sanitation, irregular, or lack of, or polluted water supply; exploitation by the landlords, pollution by factories, dowry death, harassment of women, and inadequate rations. The mandals are also expected to participate in the mahila utsav, celebration of festivals, and programmes of other organisations. A Mahila Council of the representatives of all the 18 mandals is formed for coordination and collaborative action. The newly formed Youth Council of 14 members (Nov. 2, 1990) is another means for work on issues. The Sangh or citizen’s forum is another strategy through which problem-solving at the larger community level takes place. Two morchas to the local ward office have been organised through the Sangh.

That the people should take initiative and responsibility is a very clearly defined principle of work. The Kendra does not hesitate to close down a mandal if the members are indifferent or do not wish to continue.

The community level workers are expected to perform their tasks of running the mandals, adult education classes, organising programmes, and participating with other NGOs.
They have to follow minimum discipline of maintaining diaries, preparing reports, and participating in the staff meetings. They have to strictly follow the leave rules. They work part-time and their timings are flexible. The Kendra is flexible and open to ideas based on the needs and issues of the client system.

(iv) The desired outcome is thus: (a) to mobilise people into groups, to dot the entire area of Jari Mari and Saki Naka with the mahila and yuva mandals, and build up their capacity to deal with their own problems as well the readiness to come together as a strong force on common issues; (b) to develop leaders in the groups and fora for decentralised decision-making; (c) to take up independent work on major issues; (d) to develop knowledge in the people of the functioning of the ward offices, the BMC, the police department and other important systems; (e) to create a mass-based people's forum.

(v) The change agent system has developed its functions in the aforementioned manner mainly due to the Director's perception of social problems affecting the marginalised people in the city and his conviction that knowledge is power and people's power means freedom from want, hunger and pain. According to the Director, who is responsible for the radical shift in the goals and functions of his parish, "Our movement is based on the conviction that bottom-level
neglected, ignored, oppressed and powerless people can become aware, can organise, and can solve by their effort, the problems and structures that keep them down. A process is set in motion which will hopefully bring about eventually people's movement to remake their history and to redefine their place and presence in society" (Yearly Report of Activities, June 1988-May, 1990).

(vi) Interpretation of dynamics: Each change agent system has a way of explaining the various factors that influence the problem, the task and the interpersonal and group interactions. This analysis affects how the problems are dealt with and the performance of the setting. As already discussed earlier, the Kendra views the problems of the marginalised as the result of exploitation and inadequate structural functioning, and, hence, the thrust towards Education, 'Awakening, Organising and Empowerment through Action. The community organisation and social action strategies are thus adopted for problem-resolution, and for the development of mahila, yuva 'shakti,'i.e., people's power.

(vii) Communicational System: "Social work is primarily a lexical profession that relies on communication exchange to carry out its varied functions" (Goldstein: 128). The performance of a setting generally relies on two dimensions of communication: (a) the modes to acquire and transmit
information, and (b) the type of information and content with which the change agent system usually deals.

Interviews and group meetings were the major modalities of practice within which communication was effected by the change agent system. It was only with the formal social systems that applications from the people and ratified by the Kendra were sought. Along with written complaints and requests, there was a constant flow of verbal individual and group complaints to the various systems. The community level workers served as a very important mode for carrying messages and exchanging information with the people. When necessary, posters and leaflets were used to inform about future programmes. Staff meetings and daily contacts with the staff helped the change agent system to know what activities and processes were being used. A form for written reporting helped the workers record in greater depth while the daily diaries helped to record important information in the field and to keep appointments. A printed annual report prepared by the director of the Kendra helped provide feedback to the funding agency as well as other systems. Observations were also reported verbally or in writing.

The type of information and content relates to the type of problem and comprises factual reporting of the work of the community level workers vis-a-vis the various subsystems. Once,
an attempt was made to collect and compile socio-economic data of the basic communities; thereafter, no such research has been undertaken.

2.1.3 Output is the final product generated by what the change environment determines is its function and purpose (Goldstein : 127). In general, the centre has been able to achieve the following:

a. It has set up 18 mahila mandals, 6 yuvak mandals and children's groups (Figure 3). The leaders meet regularly with the Kendra's workers, to discuss issues and action.

b. To coordinate between the mandals, the mahila and youth councils are formed.

c. The Kendra is able to take up independent work on issues related to women and housing; though, initially, the Youth for Unity and Voluntary Action (YUVA) and Committee for the Right to Housing (CRH) helped. The Kendra is part of the networking under the banner of National Campaign for Housing Rights.

d. The people are more conscious of their rights and have gained knowledge about the functioning of the municipal corporation, police department and other welfare organisations. It is estimated that more than 2000 people have been reached through the process of conscientisation.
e. Initially, the Kendra had no intention of extending its activities beyond its predecided jurisdiction. However, on witnessing the work of the Kendra, other parishes have shown interest. An orientation workshop for 60 sisters of the Congregation of Helpers of Mary has resulted in the formation of a council of 11 community based houses for help to start similar activities in their areas. The community leaders of four houses in Vakola, Cotton Green, Jogeshwari (E) and Dharavi attended a slum leadership training programme (Oct-Dec. 1990), organised by the Kendra.

In relation to specific issues, the centre is involved in a continuous process of initiating change with various systems and on various issues, viz., (a) work with women, (b) work with youth, (c) work on housing, (d) work on environment, and (e) action on other issues. A few (f) other services are also provided:

(a) Work with Women: The six community level workers working with the Kendra belong to the client system being served. Eighteen mahila mandals have been established (Figure 3). They have been supported in their work to help families get ration cards, take up issues of corruption and bribes, mobilise public opinion against a dowry death, book culprits on a rape issue, and take up cleanliness drives. The mandals are coordinated by the mahila council. The Kendra supports the Stree Utsav Committee (which is a joint action
group in Bombay) and helps to organise programmes in different areas.

(b) **Work with Youth**: The six yuva mandals, one each in Yellappa Chawl, Martin Pereira Chawl, Indira Nagar, Arokia Niwas, Krishna Nagar, and Chiragudin Chawls, have joined together to form three mandals (Figure 3). They have taken up issues pertaining to industrial pollution, police harassment, study classes, basic amenities, personality development, and solidarity with other groups, for example, on dowry, rape and eviction. A YUVA UTSAV 90 was organised for the youth of the area to awaken the youth and strengthen their organisation. A significant result was the formation of a youth council of 14 members.

(c) **Work on Housing**: Jagruti Kendra is a member of the Committee on Right to Housing (CRH) and National Campaign on Housing Rights (NCHR). The people have participated in awareness marches and seminars on housing. They have undertaken survey of the residents on airport land, a signature campaign for a petition in the Lok Sabha, and given help to tenants oppressed by landlords. Slide shows and street plays on housing have been presented to create awareness on the issue.

(d) **Work on Environment**: Consistent work had not been done on environmental issues. Individually, the mandals had made
efforts to contact the ward office to clean up garbage, toilets, gutters and drains. With the help of social work students, the youth of Chiragudin Chawl worked on the issue of water pollution in their area, and got the mains repaired by the ward office. As mentioned earlier, they also put up an exhibition on pollution. As a consequence of the Yuva Utsav, the play on environment put up by them was highly appreciated and used later for the session on ecology in the slum leadership programme.

(e) Action on Other Issues

i) In December, 1988, 10 evening sessions were organised on mass organisation strategies.

ii) During the elections, the Kendra prepared a profile on those candidates standing for elections. At a public meeting, the people presented their demands to the various political parties.

iii) A meeting of activists was held on 13th November, 1989, to prepare a memorandum on issues of communalism, environment, housing and women.

iv) A protest march was taken on the fare hike and better facilities demanded from the BEST Depot Manager.

v) The domestic workers were organised and have become members of the Mumbai Gharelu Kamzaar Sanghatana.
MAP OF JARI MARI SHOWING LOCATION OF MAHILA AND YUVAK MANDALS.

Figure: 3

Mahila Mandals:

1. Yellappa chawl.
2. Hanumanth chawl.
3. Martin chawl.
5. Tangi nagar.
7. Chiragudin chawl.
8. Kuppusoomi chawl.
9. Mary society.
10. Arokia niwas.
11. Satya kufri.
12. Manuel chawl.
14. No 3 Khadi.
15. Kunj vihar.
16. Brusar chawl.
17. Devi chavan chawl.
18. Gupta chawl.

C: Jari Marí West (includes Yellappa & Martin Pereira chawls)
vi) The construction workers were organised and have joined the organisation "Nirman".

vii) Meetings with widows have been taken and self-employment schemes to be initiated.

viii) Jagruti Street theatre group has been formed.

ix) Two morchas, one on 30th April, 1989, and the other on May 30, 1990, were taken to the 'L' ward office and a memorandum submitted to the ward officer for action on issues of basic amenities and environmental problems.

x) The first slum leadership programme was organised from October 7 to December 9, 1990, on 10 Sundays, for the leaders working in various communities and NGOs.

xi) A Rally on Secularism, organised on 16th December, 1990, attracted a crowd of 2000 people from the various mandals and basic communities.

(f) Other Services provided

i) Tuitions to 50 children by two tutors (have been stopped since June, 1990).

ii) Educational sponsorship to 425 children of families in crisis.

iii) Free legal aid and guidance cell.
iv) Employment bureau for the local residents.

v) Exposure programmes to other groups.

2.2 Inter-system factors comprise relationship with sources of support, sanctions and expectations, relationship with other social welfare systems, and interpretations of social problems.

2.2.1 Agency and Funding Body: The Kendra depends upon financial support from external sources of funding. Monetary resources of funding are important to encourage continuity, breadth and quality of service. Funding is sought to support the staff (both professional and paraprofessional) of the organisation. It will be necessary to understand both the relationship between the change agent system and the supporting body for implications on autonomy, decision-making and goals (short-term and/long-term).

The source is an international funding body which focuses on adult education. There is no interference with the working of the Kendra vis-a-vis the funding organisation. The Kendra is left to evolve and develop its own programmes as long as they have an adult education component. Training programmes for conscientisation fall within the purview of the objectives. Initially, annual proposals for money were invited but, after two years of establishment, the Kendra has received funds for a period of three years.
2.2.2 Agency and Community: Although the organisation is independent of the church functioning, both the Director and Assistant Director are from religious orders and are thus viewed in a positive manner and accepted. The sanction of the community is, thus, implicit in the relationship. There may be some doubts about the methods and tasks whereby active participation of the people becomes mandatory. From the people's point of view, for instance, the two morchas were not very successful. After the first one in 1989, the water pressure in certain dry areas was released for a week but, thereafter, the status quo of irregular supply returned. The second one in May, 1990, evoked the response of the cleansing of the gutters before the monsoons but due to the lack of follow up meetings with the ward office, action was discontinued. The Kendra's perception differed as success was viewed in terms of having achieved a process of bringing together the community for mass level action. The reasons for the lack of follow up were the dearth of staff to take the initiative (the community level workers needed constant direction and lacked sufficient foresight), particularly when dealing with an indifferent bureaucracy and lack of coordination between the various departments in the 'L' ward. Another important factor was the split in the Sangh due to the vast difference in perspectives and characteristics of the two communities of Jari Mari and Saki Naka. There is, however, increasing recognition by the mandals of the need for group directed action on issues, and women-initiated intervention. There are several
provide need-based services to the people like educational sponsorship, balwadi, a dispensary and adult education classes. As the Kendra is responding to changing interpretations of service in society, it is supported by other non-government organisations that have similar perceptions of the problems. Today, in the city and nationally, viewing the oppressed as victims of an unfeeling social and political structure, delegating responsibility to the people themselves and adopting social action strategies, are common to several non-government organisations. "Knowledge is power" is the belief based on which adult education and conscientisation processes are given priority. The Kendra undertakes continuous training programmes, sends staff for training in law, women's issues, housing, communication and non-formal education.

3. **The Target System**

The target system refers to those people who need to be changed or influenced to accomplish the goals of the change effort (Pincus and Minahan : 58). It was envisaged that, in the initial phase of work, the client system will also be the target system. People were found to be quite cynical about working on issues related to the environment since they viewed them as outside their purview of control. Besides, the results were intangible, long-term and often frustrating in achieving the results. The youth group of Chiragudin chawl, for example, worked for a year on the issue of water pollution, with limited impact at the end of the year. As the experience was frustrat-
ing, they were reluctant to take up action again. It was also observed that all the group members did not participate equally; for example, the burden of visiting the ward office was usually borne by only 2 to 3 members.

The mahila mandals also showed initial reluctance to participate in action on environment-related problems. They had tried to solve the problems related to polluted or insufficient quantity of water, overflowing toilets, choked gutters, garbage accumulation, and had not achieved much. They did not perceive it possible to do anything about air pollution due to factories or vehicles.

The community level workers, who hailed from the same client system, also expressed anxiety and cynicism about working on issues of pollution. They cited the examples of the limited results due to the morchas and felt that an apolitical group could do nothing.

Thus, the community level workers, who were already part of the change agent system, and the members of the mandals interested in participating in the training programme on pollution, constituted the target system and were to later form the action system. Thus, the client system, target system and the action system were to be from the same community system.

The conservancy staff of the 'L' Ward office were also identified as an important target system to be influenced to form
instances of complaints being registered and follow up being undertaken by the police and the ward office when the mahila mandals as groups have approached for help. A snowball effect is observed wherein women and youth from previously unorganised areas are approaching the Kendra to help start mandals.

2.2.3 Agency and Other Social Welfare Systems: The change agent system is very open to interactions with other social welfare systems, particularly, on common issues and ideological stands. YUVA, for example, was initially invited to help the organisation develop its objectives and strategy. The staff members are often invited to participate in workshops and training. The change agent system has also established links with the ward office in the area. The relationship varies from bargaining to conflictual. The Kendra is a member of other action systems like the Committee on Right to Housing. Client groups in the community are also encouraged to associate with other action systems like the Stree Utsav Committee, the National Committee on Housing Rights, the Mahila Kruti Samiti, Nav Nirman project and so forth.

The organisation's view of the client system as the victim of oppression may come into conflict with the perceptions of other service-oriented welfare-systems that may consider the poor as passive, dependent beneficiaries. As the Kendra is based in the church, which has been historically viewed as a charity-oriented system, there may be greater tolerance. The Kendra does
the action system and participate in the change effort. The staff comprised of the officials who supervised the collection and disposal of solid wastes in 'L' ward. It was also necessary to work with the sweepers, who were the grass-roots workers and responsible for cleaning the area, as a potential target system. However, the change agent did not consider it appropriate to deal with the sweepers as a group, in the four months' period, as it was too brief to handle problems (as anticipated) from their union. The effort was, thus, to influence them on an individual or small group basis, through the mandals of the areas in which they worked.

As the details of the client system have been presented in the section titled 'the Client System', it would not be appropriate to repeat the information here. Hence, some highlights regarding the mandals will help to provide the setting from which the trainees (target system) were selected.

Out of the 18 mandals started by the Kendra, all except one are in Jari Mari. The exception is a mandal of some of the women living in Ambedkar Nagar, in Saki Naka, in an unauthorised slum, consisting mainly of ragpickers, naka workers and other very poor families whose monthly income rarely rises to one hundred rupees. The trainees, however, including the five community level workers of the Kendra (and two Catholic religious sisters who were staff members), came from six different chawls and their respective mandals, from slightly better-off families, with an
income of at least Rs. 1500 or more. While the community level workers belonged to well-established mandals like Martin Pereira Chawl and Arockia Niwas, the rest, i.e., ten women and five male youth, hailed from newly established mandals in Bhavsar Chawl, Kunj Vihar, No.3 Khadi, and Indira Nagar. The selection of trainees from the newly established mandals was intentional, as the older mandals had already participated in several programmes of the Kendra; the members were open to ideas and were enthusiastic to play the role of trainees. It was essential to include the community level workers as they would be part of and serve as a strong support to the action system formed later.

Having understood the characteristics of the larger client-target system and the smaller target and potential action systems, let us now proceed to a discussion on the action system.

4. The Action System

The action system comprises of all those systems the change agent works with in order to achieve the goals of the change effort. In this practicum, the resource persons, invited to be trainers in the training programme on pollution, formed the action system along with the change agent system. At the end of the programme, it was envisaged that the trainees, i.e. the women and youth constituting the client-target systems, would be ready to form the action system, and ultimately, also influence the larger community client-target system to participate on action on any one of the issues discussed in the programme.
4.1 Various Levels of Action Systems: For the purposes of the change effort, there were five levels of action systems:

A. The Trainers or Resource persons conducting the sessions in the programme.

B. The Trainees partaking of the knowledge, skill and attitude content imparted in the programme.

C. The BMC officers and staff, responsible for garbage collection and disposal in the 'L' ward, were influenced by their senior officer-in-charge, who was also the resource person in the programme.

D. The Members of the Mandals, an existing Community-Target system, who participated in the action on garbage pollution resulting from the training, and influenced the larger community-client-target system to get involved in the action.

E. The Larger Community Client-Target-Action System, were influenced by the mandals to collaborate in the change effort. It would achieve the status of an action system when all the people in the community would feel responsible to participate in and take responsibility for the change effort.

The details of the action systems and their involvement in the problem-solving process are delineated below:
A. The Trainers' Action System comprised of two senior and experienced officials of the BMC; one who was the chief superintending chemist in charge of the waste and drinking water treatment plant, and the other was the deputy chief engineer in the solid waste management department for the city. One expert on air and noise pollution was a lecturer in a technical institute and an active member of a voluntary organisation. All had a background of frequent participation in seminars, workshops and training. Through their presentations, they were able to motivate the trainees to think about the issues, discuss and plan action. The change agents (the TCA, along with two social work students) coordinated with them to influence the target-action system in the change effort.

B. The Trainees' Action System decided, along with the Deputy Chief Engineer, to take up action on the problem of garbage pollution in their own and other affected areas in Jari Mari and Saki Naka. They took the responsibility of having an initial discussion and involving other mandal members in the change effort, and gradually the larger community.

C. The BMC Staff Action System comprised of four persons, viz., the head supervisors, assistants and supervisor of the sweepers and garbage trucks dealing with the problem in 'L' ward. They were involved by their Deputy Chief Engineer to collaborate in the action on garbage pollution.
D. The Mandals' Action System developed after the initial meeting with the BMC Action System to plan the action. In the subsequent meetings, in the area as well as in the Kendra, several of the members got interested and participated. A committee of at least one representative from each mandal was also formed to monitor and report the work being done by the BMC and the cooperation from the larger system.

E. The Community Client-Target-Action System in relation to the particular change effort was in the process of development when the temporary change agent (TCA) discontinued the practicum. The Kendra staff planned to continue the process of its formation.

The process of formation of the client-target-action system began at the end of the 'initiating contacts' stage itself when the women and youth were ready to become part of the change effort. The training programme was, in a way, the culmination of the process.

4.2 Plan of Action of the Action System: Action in social work practice is governed by a process. Process is defined by Pincus and Minahan, 1973: 85) as a systematic series of actions directed toward some purpose (or designed to bring about a particular result, end, or condition). To understand the process, it is useful to begin with the idea of purpose - what
determines the purpose in a given practice situation at any point in time and how these purposes change. Purpose is designed for each activity and for the entire change effort, and is defined by outcome and method goals.

4.3 **Outcome and Method Goals**: The major factors which define purpose are (A) the outcome goals of all systems (client, action, target, change agent), and (B) the method goals of the worker. The worker's purpose is achieved through the accomplishment of specific tasks:

(A) **Outcome Goals**: The outcome goal is an envisaged end state or a specification of the condition in which we would like to see a situation at the end of a purposeful planned change effort. The outcome goals cannot be viewed in isolation; they must be understood in relation to the outcome goals of all systems involved in the planned change effort. On the one hand, the attainment of outcome goals depends on the cooperation of all involved in the change effort. On the other, the congruence of outcome goals of all those involved will determine the nature of relationship (collaborative, bargaining, or conflictual) with the worker.

The TCA envisaged the following outcome goals at the end of the practicum.

1. The target system, viz., women and youth who are part of the larger client system, will have developed a better understanding of the environmental issue of pollution.
(as identified and prioritised by the client system) in terms of the facts, the consequences on health, the implications for policy, legislation and programmes, and alternatives for taking action.

2. The target system, having agreed to form part of the action system, will prepare to initiate some change effort on the issue of pollution, as for example, a survey for information, or study of people's perception, or a shibir.

(B) Method Goals: Method goals refer to the actions to be undertaken to achieve the outcome goals, that is, the means selected by the change agent to achieve the purpose. Method goals are not sought as ends in themselves but as a means to further the achievement of outcome goals. There are a number of descriptive and prescriptive models which divide the activities of a social worker in any planned change effort into predetermined sequential steps or phases (Pincus and Minahan: 90). Each phase is characterised by some broad method goal which must be accomplished before moving into the next one. On the basis of the work of a variety of change agents, Ronald Lippitt, Jeanne Watson, and Bruce Westley (1958: 130) conclude that most change processes pass through the following seven phases:

1. Development of a need for change.

2. Establishment of a change relationship.
3. Clarification or diagnosis of the client system's problem.

4. Examination of alternative routes and goals, establishing goals and intention of action.

5. Transformation of intention into actual change efforts.

6. Generalization and stabilization of change.

7. Achievement of a terminal relationship.

Goldstein (1973: 175) suggests three distinct phases to provide a time-divided framework within which the tasks, objectives, content, and interaction pertinent to each phase can be ordered and comprehended:

1. The **induction phase** covers identification of problem; evaluation of problem, plan, capabilities, and resources, and promotion of motivation, roles and commitment.

2. The **core phase** is the period in which the practice system is stabilized; mutuality of patterns, roles, norms and objectives is achieved; and intensification and refinement of problem-solving activity takes place.

3. The **coding phase** is the period of problem resolution, analysis of outcome and implications, and termination.

Most phase models, reflecting the scientific method of investigation and problem-solving, account for the following steps in the entire change process:
1. Recognition and engagement with the problem;

2. Data collection;

3. Diagnosis (study and assessment);

4. Initiating contract;

5. Intervention, and


While, theoretically, the change effort should follow the sequential pattern, in reality, the worker may be operating in more than one phase at any one point in time, and with several systems.

The method goals are linked with the phase. The scholar initiated activities related to all the five phases (as outlined by Lippit et al), although at the time of the formation of the proposal, she did not intend to move into the action phase as the time period was too short for such movement to occur. However, the training triggered off the decision of the trainees' action system to work on the issue of garbage pollution.