

Engendering Development: A Study of Gender Resource Centre in Delhi

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Introduction

Today, not a single nation can afford development without considering women who constitute about half of the human resources. Gender equality is leading to increased work opportunities, enhanced capacities for livelihood developments, enhanced social protection and overall increasing voice may enable women to participate equally in productive employment, contributing to women's development leading to economic growth of the nation. It is central focus to the realization of Millennium Development Goals. Thus, engendering growth has been internationally recognized instrument of development by incorporating gender perspective and concerns at all levels and stages of development planning, policy, programmes and delivery mechanisms. The issue of engendering development and women empowerment has been in the central stage with the shifting of paradigm of development and governance at the global level and particularly in India.

Engendering development and inclusive growth requires an enabling environment in which women's contribution to the economy can be tapped and enhanced in a substantial and holistic way. This environment needs to ensure from conception to death - an environment that provides physical, emotional, economic and political and community security to girls and women. The engendered development also requires addressing the issues of accountability,

capacity building and governance that are of utmost importance for gender equity and inclusive growth. Women's role in decision making institutions needs to be enhanced through providing them reservation and enforcement and implementation of all pro-women legislations. It is also imperative to eliminate all forms of violence against women through improving institutional mechanisms and enhanced budgetary resources. There is also need to redefine poverty through gender lens. In order to promote pro-women inclusive growth, it is imperative to create and strengthen institutional mechanism for addressing the destitute, marginalized, disadvantaged and vulnerable women. The enhanced budgetary resources besides strong political and bureaucratic will for engendering growth and development will lead to progressive society (Government of India, 2013).

Gender Mainstreaming

Policy approaches towards women and development in India have changed over the years of planned development. However, the shift from 'welfare' to an 'empowerment' approach has remained more in the realm of the rhetoric. The approach to the Twelfth Plan also exhibits insufficient awareness of the specific problems of women, their unpaid labour and their distinctive economic contribution to the nation's economy. Thus, the major shift through this initiative was to move the engendering of public policy into the macroeconomic space (Government of India, 2010).

The policy approach underlying both the Eleventh and Twelfth plans expects to promote economic growth through creating opportunities for the entrepreneurial class by liberalizing domestic and global markets. This framework - in which Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth is the relevant indicator and 'a dynamic private sector' is seen as the main instrument for its expansion - gives insufficient importance to employment intensive activities and conditions of existence for the majority of workers. The inclusion of the excluded or marginalized socio-economic groups is expected to occur through a trickling down of growth, expansion of productive employment in the economy, as well as implementation of flagship and other targeted programmes to be financed by the increased revenues of the government resulting from high growth rates. However, the direction of macroeconomic and growth policies is one that continuously undermines the possibility of better employment creation for greater numbers. This in turn permeates and infects all the other aspects of the Approach such that the basic objective of making growth "more inclusive" is unlikely to be met (UNIFEM, 2013).

The strategies for growth proposed in the Approach to the Twelfth Plan appear to be formulated with little consideration for the needs and roles of large sections of the population of the country and especially of poor women. This document aims to highlight some of these gaps in the overall design of the proposed approach to planning and to suggest ways of making economic growth during the Twelfth Plan truly more inclusive.

There is little evidence to show that the accelerated growth rate of the economy during the Eleventh Plan led to any significant achievement of inclusion. It deflects responsibility for achieving inclusiveness by stating that "success depends not only on introducing new policies and government programmes, but on institutional and attitudinal changes, which take time". Inclusiveness has

remained elusive. Even the limited focus given to inclusion and equity in the Eleventh Plan appears to have been jettisoned in the Twelfth Plan Approach, which focuses narrowly only on growth per se, assuming growth will ensure an improvement in the lives of people overall. The paragraphs on inclusion in the Introduction to the Approach Paper are particularly weak as they remain at the level of general intentions. There is lack of clarity regarding how inclusion will occur (UNIFEM, 2013).

In order to ensure inclusive growth, it is essential that all potential workers find remunerative employment in the mainstream of development. Generating productive work has to be an integral part of the plan model. It is now officially acknowledged (NCEUIS, 2007) that economic 'development' has not just witnessed the growth of the informal sector and of those being employed informally, but also the phenomenon of the 'informalization of the formal sector'. Further, there is remarkable consistency in the manner in which larger numbers of women and their 'work' either become invisible in data systems or get captured in categories that fall outside the purview of protective legislation. The organized or formal economy supposedly enjoys the protection of labour laws with some modicum of social security, but even this apparent protection is elusive. The National Commission for Enterprises in the Unorganized Sector (2009) estimated the effectiveness of the coverage of important labour laws for the year 1999-2000. Among other things, this exercise revealed that the effectiveness of coverage as far as the Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 was concerned was only 16 per cent. The International Labour Organization's recently concluded evaluation of maternity benefit schemes in India, carried this exercise further and revealed the manner in which eligible women workers were denied maternity benefits statutorily due to them (Lingam & Krishnaraj, 2010).

The manufacturing sector currently poses a serious problem for the Indian economy. Despite

rapid growth in production during the last five years, its contribution to the national economy still remains relatively small and it has failed to generate additional decent employment. Especially for women, manufacturing employment actually shrank in this period. These trends are contrary to the world-wide pattern of economic development. While mentioning the need for generating employment in manufacturing, the Approach Paper for Twelfth Plan does not explore the sector's potential for doing so, besides making a 'brave' assumption that an additional hundred million decent jobs will be created by 2025, when only five million jobs were added to manufacturing in the whole decade preceding i.e. 1999-2000 to 2009-10. There was an increase in manufacturing employment from 44 to 55 million between 1999-2000 and 2004-05, but it fell to 50 million in 2010. Instead of recognizing this reality, the paper goes on to focus only on ways of enhancing the sector's contribution to the GDP and neglects other concerns. Methods by which such a massive number of jobs are to be created remain unaddressed. Manufacturing employment actually declined in the period 2004-05 to 2009-10, even though manufacturing output grew at an annual compound rate of more than 8 per cent over the period.

The Approach Paper for Twelfth Plan mentions the setting up of a high level National Transport Development Policy Committee to develop a transport policy going up to 2030, which will facilitate an efficient expansion of the transportation network in a manner that would help to minimize energy use and would place special attention on competitive pricing and coordination between alternative modes of transport. However, transport needs to be viewed not merely as a support for rapid growth, but also as an agent for change and development, for increasing the physical and societal mobility of people, especially women. Women's inclusion in developmental activities rests critically on their mobility. Needless to state, the National Transport Policy has to keep

women's needs in mind. Gendered infrastructural empowerment is obvious in the several levels of interconnections.

There are several ways in which gender sensitive policies can be implemented in the context of investment in infrastructure. These include pre-project rapid gender assessment surveys; gender-sensitive project coordination team and appropriate institutional structures; participatory project planning and implementation with women and men in communities, including procurement activities; women's participation and decision-making in community infrastructure management; women's participation in generating and operating maintenance funds; promotion of local cooperatives and SHGs for provision of materials; special concessions for women and child-headed households, pregnant women, MGNREGA households; financial resources for capacity building and training of local authorities; dissemination of guidelines in local languages for operation, management, and maintenance of public infrastructure; collection of sex disaggregated data; systematic institutionalized evaluation through use of appropriate gender budgeting tools for each project and sub-sector; formation of sector-wise multi-agency steering committees; systematic policy consultation and support for identifying gaps, strategizing action plans, and gender mainstreaming; development of appropriate infrastructure in the form of legal mechanisms and services; expansion of public sector; and extension of gendered regulation in private sector with cautious use of Public Private Partnership in building infrastructure (UNIFEM, 2013).

There is need for recognizing the critical care work provided by women, that saves the public health system both time and cost. The primary responsibility of care-giving within the home lies with women. This needs to be recognized and support provided to alleviate the difficulties, drudgery and depression that surround this role. The burden on home-based care givers must

be reduced by strengthening primary health centers and public hospitals, community care homes and hospices.

India's urban population has increased from 285 million in 2001 to almost 400 million in 2011. The Approach Paper for Twelfth Plan states that by 2030, out of a total projected population of 1.4 billion, over 600 million people may be living in urban areas. The process of urbanization is a natural process associated with growth and that agglomeration and densification of economic activities in urban conglomerations stimulates economic efficiencies and provides more opportunities for earning livelihoods; possibilities for entrepreneurship and employment and "this enables faster inclusion of more people in the growth process and is therefore more inclusive." Most workers in urban areas are working in the informal economy. An analysis of the NSS 2004-2005 data shows that 80 per cent of the total urban working population is informally employed. Informal employment is higher for women than for men. About 85 per cent of all women workers are informally employed as compared to 79 per cent of all male workers. One reason why the number of informal workers has increased is because of the growing 'informalization' of the formal sector, with 34 per cent of the formal enterprises employing informal workers in the form of contract workers or casual labour. Among the self employed, most of the workers would be in a "vulnerable" category, being either own account workers such as street vendors or family helpers. The better-off, employer categories who employ one or more employees are only 5 per cent of the self employed. For women, the main areas of work are home-based work and domestic work. More than 16 per cent of the women were hired by households as domestic workers – double the percentage in 1999-2000; whereas over 38 per cent of women were home-based workers, a category of work that has grown substantially in 2009-10 (UNIFEM, 2013).

The role of governance, in particular local governance, in which women can play an active role in developmental planning, given their political presence is critical in this convergence. Women's participation as elected representatives in local bodies has been noteworthy. Hence, the strengthening of these agencies' roles and powers, especially for implementing the 'inclusive' programmes at the grassroots level would be enabling for women led governance factored in. Needless to state, it is the combined effect of these inclusive programmes that can ameliorate much of the rural deprivation, in particular for women who perform some of these tasks in the unpaid 'care economy'.

Engendering Development

The Eleventh Five Year Plan was aimed at inclusive development. Its vision envisaged that every woman in the country should be able to develop to her full potential and share the benefits of economic growth and prosperity. The approach adopted was to empower women and recognize their agency thereby seeking to make them partners in their own development. This it sought to do by mainstreaming gender in all sectors as well as by undertaking targeted interventions. The Plan period witnessed the introduction of many new schemes and programmes aiming at addressing specific issues. These included SABLA, for empowering adolescent girls, IGMSY for supporting poor women during the final stages of their maternity, Mahila Kisan Sashaktikaran Yojana for women farmers, a scheme for leadership training of Minority women, Ujjwala for combating trafficking and Dhanalakshmi to tackle the issue of declining sex ratio. Existing schemes were also modified to make them more effective and to plug identified gaps. Implementation of Legislations enacted just prior to the Eleventh Plan like the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, and Hindu Succession (Amendment) Act, 2005 was followed up with

the States and a new legislation aimed at providing women a safe working environment, Protection Against Sexual Harassment at the Workplace Bill was introduced in Parliament. Several other policy decisions were made in the sector of women and children. Major amongst these was the launch of the National Mission for Empowerment of Women (NMEW) in 2011. The Mission envisages for strengthening inter-sectoral convergence at the Central, State, District and lower levels of governance making it possible for women to know about and access all Government schemes and programmes. The National Mission Authority, supporting Committees and the National Resource Centre for Women have been established and have started functioning. The first pilot convergence project was launched in Pali district of Rajasthan in September, 2011 and similar pilots are planned in other States/UTs. The State Governments are also establishing parallel structures at the State level. Moreover, 16 States/UTs have already established State Mission Authorities and 11 States are in the process of setting up of State Resource Centers for Women. The Mission stands testimony to the commitment of Government to the empowerment of women in the country. Another, landmark decision on which work has been initiated is the restructuring of the Rashtriya Mahila Kosh into a systemically important Non-Banking Finance Company with an enhanced corpus of Rs 500 crores. The restructured RMK will have a pan-India office network and in its new and expanded form it will be facilitating the financial inclusion of more than 2 lakh women from the disadvantaged sections of society on an annual basis towards the fifth year of its working.

The Eleventh Five Year Plan referred gender budgeting and gender outcome assessment and underlined the importance of gender audits of public expenditure, programmes and policies at national, state and district levels. The Plan envisaged the strengthening of the Gender Budget Cells set up in the various Ministries and

Departments. Towards this end, in March 2007, the Ministry of Finance issued a charter on Gender Budget Cells (GBCs) outlining the composition and functions of the GBCs. While, the charter was an important step towards institutionalizing gender budgeting within Government, the implementation of the charter remains a challenge. A scheme on Gender Budgeting was introduced in 2007 with a view to building capacity so that a gender perspective was retained at all levels of the planning, budget formulation and implementation processes. Both Central and State level officers have been trained under this scheme and as a direct consequence of these training efforts a number of Ministries as well as State Governments have taken gender budget initiatives. Gender Budgeting initiatives also led to development of new schemes in so-called gender neutral sectors like Department of Telecommunications and Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (Government of India, 2012).

India is amongst the fastest growing countries in the world today. The high level of growth may be sustained only when all sections of the society, especially women become equal partners in the development process. It is well recognized that societies which discriminate by gender tend to experience less rapid economic growth and poverty reduction than societies which treat men and women more equally. Gender equality and empowerment would, thus, need to be a core development goal if the growth planned in the Twelfth Plan has to be achieved. Some policy steps are critical to achieve gender equality. Gender discrimination cannot be automatically corrected in the course of development. The institutions of economics, politics and the law must be considered in terms of how they relate to each other and how they play out across the different areas where gender discrimination occurs; and gender assessments have to be undertaken continuously to reveal gaps and monitor progress towards gender equality. Empowerment of women is essentially

the vehicle of change to achieve gender equality that is meaningful and sustainable.

Empowerment of women is a socio-political ideal, encompassing notions of dignity and equality, envisioned in relation to the wider framework of women's rights. It is a process of gaining control over self, over resources and over existing societal perceptions and attitudes and would be achieved only when an improvement in the 'condition' of women is accompanied by an advancement in their 'position' by enlarging the economic, social and political freedoms and choices available to them. The National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, 2001 viewed empowerment as an enabling process that must lead to their economic as well as social transformation. Government has sought to operationalise this approach through legislative and programmatic interventions as well as by mainstreaming gender into the development planning process. Numerous such initiatives were taken during the Eleventh Plan period. These initiatives need to be consolidated and built on during the Twelfth Five Year Plan to enable women to challenge and change the contexts in which they live. Focused efforts through development programmes, both multi sectoral as well as targeted, along with governance reforms would be a pre-requisite. Women, especially the vulnerable and marginalized, would need to be provided a level playing field to access social, economic and legal entitlements as a right.

Women continue to face discrimination in terms of their socio-economic empowerment. This manifests itself in both the increasing violence against women as well as increasing feminization of poverty. Women have limited access to and control over resources. Lack of ownership of land limits their access to credit. More than 90 percent of women in the workforce are in the unorganized sector. They face discrimination in award of work, disparity in remuneration and security of employment as they fall outside the ambit of labour laws. In

addition to this is the malnourishment suffered by more than 50 percent of the women. Moreover, issues of women from marginalized and vulnerable communities and single women as envisaged in the Eleventh Plan are yet to be addressed. The issues, therefore, are manifold and the Twelfth Plan has Vision to address them.

The 12th Five Year Plan Working Group on 'Women's Agency and Empowerment' builds on the view that development is a process of expanding freedoms equally for all individuals, and considers gender equality as a core development goal in itself. It expands the definition of women's empowerment by looking at it as a process, which enables women to have a notion of dignity and self worth, bodily integrity, freedom from coercion and control over resources. It affirms that empowerment is achieved when, along with the condition of women, their position improves and their freedoms and choices are enlarged economically, socially and politically. Empowerment must enable *all* women to negotiate these freedoms and increase their capabilities. The Plan advocates a shift from mere 'income' poverty of women to the adoption of a 'multi-dimensional' approach to poverty and well being.

Recognizing that economic independence is the key to improving the position of women within the family and in the society, the Plan needs to focus on enhancing women's access to and control over resources. This would entail not only increasing their presence in the work force but, more importantly, improving the quality of women's work and ensuring their upward mobility on the economic ladder. Keeping the above trends in view, the Twelfth Plan would endeavor to focus on increasing women's workforce participation particularly in secondary and tertiary sectors; ensuring decent work for them; reaching out to women in agriculture; financial inclusion; increasing women's asset base and valuing their work. Additionally, the Plan would have to consider strategies to create

job and skill training opportunities which would meet the aspirations of the growing literate work force of women. Lack of adequate skills is one of the major impediments affecting women's participation in the work force, particularly in the secondary and tertiary sectors, perpetuating their concentration in low paid sectors. The focus of the Twelfth Plan would thus be on enhancing employability of women through skill development. It would also be critical that the training is not limited to traditional sectors but has relevance to the changing labour markets. The National Skill Development Programme (NSDP) has already identified 231 modular courses for women.

The Government has introduced a number of flagship programmes to enhance employment and income opportunities for poor people with special targets for women. These, inter alia, include MGNREGA, SGSY, SJSRY, etc. The current efforts geared towards consciously including women as a beneficiary of employment oriented schemes need to continue. The implementation of the scheme would need to be further strengthened to increase its outreach to women particularly in areas which are vulnerable to migration and trafficking. Further, there is a need for such programmes to create productive employment for women with proper planning of works. Other infrastructure development programmes under Bharat Nirman as well as JNNURM will need to be similarly engendered.

Health is a pre requisite for improvement of survival indicators; priority has to be on increasing access to health services. The focus of health interventions needs to be extended to address ailments which women are especially prone to such as post menopausal problems, osteoporosis, breast and cervical cancer, etc. However, the success of interventions ultimately depends upon efficient delivery of services. Another critical area is education. Education provides women greater access to information and resources and enables them to challenge

various forms of discrimination and engage with the development process. With the enactment of RTE, access to primary education for girls has now become a legal mandate. This coupled with the special measures already being undertaken under SSA to increase enrolment and retention rates of girls will continue to have a major impact on girl child education. The Twelfth Plan focuses on ensuring that the standards of quality of education are adhered to at all levels. This would include focusing on availability of teachers, proper class room environment and infrastructure, standardization of learning levels and adequate monitoring. Creating a gender-sensitive educational system is another priority. Housing, drinking water, sanitation and energy needs further impacts the quality of a woman's life. While in rural areas programmes like Indira Awas Yojana (IAY) have increased women's access to housing, this issue has not been adequately addressed in the urban areas. It is essential that women's perspectives are included in housing policies, planning of housing colonies and provision of shelter in urban areas also. Special attention has been given for engendering schemes like the Rajiv Awas Yojana in the Twelfth Plan. **In the Plan**, special attention has been given to improve the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation within accessible reach of households, especially in rural areas, through national programmes like NRDWSP and Total Sanitation Campaign. While Census 2011 figures would give an assessment of their actual reach and coverage, the Twelfth Plan would emphasize on ensuring women's participation in the planning, delivery and maintenance of such services.

Feminization of poverty and lack of viable economic opportunities for a large number of women and girls, are some of the reasons affecting the efficacy of the interventions. Increased migration and constantly changing patterns and trends relating to trafficking increases to the challenge of devising effective policy response. The focus of the government would thus be on providing alternative livelihoods

options to women particularly from marginalized sections of the society. This entails enhancing their employability through effective skill training, linking with poverty alleviation schemes and programmes of all Ministries and Departments in the Government, providing access to resources and credit facilities. The law enforcement response to trafficking will be strengthened so that those who are victims of trafficking are rescued and rehabilitated. It is imperative that victims of violence have an adequate support structure like shelter homes, medical facilities, counseling services for their effective rehabilitation. In order to address the needs of women in distress, schemes that provide shelter and other support services would also be strengthened in terms of quality and geographical reach. Shelter homes would be established in every district of the country with standards of care to ensure quality services.

India is the world's largest democracy triggered by the 73rd and 74th amendments to the Constitution. The reservation of one-third seats for women has resulted in more than a million women elected women leaders in decision making positions at grassroots levels. With the reservation already increased to 50 percent in several states, e.g., Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Rajasthan and a Constitutional amendment to this effect in the process, the Panchayats will have great potential for women's empowerment and their contribution to gender sensitive good governance. While affirmative action in terms of reservation for ensuring women's political representation is an imperative step, it is not adequate to promote women's leadership and their participation in governance. However, women face social, economic and various other forms of institutional barriers to entering local governments and even in performing their duties as elected representatives. Efforts are being made to establish linkages between women functionaries at the local level such as EWRs, AWW, ASHA, teachers and women members of SHGs so that they can be empowered by working collectively

with a shared sense of solidarity. Involvement of NYK and NSS volunteers in supporting EWRs for social change will be encouraged.

The Twelfth Plan takes cognizance of the fact that policies and programs have a differential impact on women and men. This would necessitate strengthening of gender mainstreaming and pursuing Gender Responsive Budgeting at all levels of governance. The delivery of gender equality outcomes, to a large extent, would depend upon the adequacy of budgetary allocations. Gender Responsive Budgeting is a means of ensuring that public resources are allocated in an equitable way so that the most pressing needs of specific gender groups are satisfied. It translates stated gender commitments into budgetary commitments. Gender budgeting has made remarkable progress during in the Eleventh Plan.

Rationale for Gender Mainstreaming

The following are the points that may be considered as rationale of gender mainstreaming:

1. Women and men contribute to development and have a right to equal access to basic services and resources;
2. Women and men access services in different ways;
3. Infrastructure development is not gender neutral;
4. More men than women use the motorized road. More women use smaller roads. Similarly, women are more dependent on public transport, while men are usually own their personal vehicles for transport;
5. Women have less access to technology such as - mobile phones and need to be able to move around safely;
6. Women are accompanied by children and aged and carry bags while using footpath and

- public transport and thus inadequacy of public transport facility severely affects them;
7. Women are primarily responsible for water collection and storage. The public services based on user charges must be made gender friendly;
 8. Capacities of women must be enhanced to engage with local governments so that they can contribute meaningfully to planning for water supply and sanitation;
 9. Women in slum settlements need access to toilets as the absence of toilet facility to them creates problems of security, safety and environmental health hazards;
 10. Without access to toilets, women are forced to defecate in open which results in serious health problems and insecurity;
 11. A very few women own houses and eviction of slums adversely affects women both in terms of loss of livelihood and shelter;
 12. Women use home for productive activities besides performing their household activities thus housing conditions matter more for women than for men;
 13. A few women own properties hence property tax regime tends to be male oriented. Women headed households may find it difficult to pay property taxes unless there are gender friendly provisions;
 14. Women have low level of education and knowledge of computers, therefore, their access to e-Governance will be critical;
 15. Women councilors need more orientation and capacity building regarding different issues of urban development and governance in order to enhance their role in urban governance and management;
 16. Women's groups engaged in thrift & credit activities and self employment may be given opportunity to share the responsibility of urban sanitation and managing solid wastes;
 17. Self help group based micro financing is an effective instrument for empowering poor women living in slum and low income groups; and
 18. Gender analysis of policies, programmes, schemes and projects in urban sector oriented towards women empowerment is imperative.

Engendering of Delhi's Mission Convergence

Convergence of resources, schemes/ programmes, services and institutions is the most effective approach and strategy for poverty alleviation and empowering the poor. Bolsa Familia Programme launched in Brazil benefited more than 11 million poor families and about 46 million poor people through convergence of programmes, services and institutions. Convergence is also effective in dealing with poverty and income inequality in a sustain manner, integrating millions of people in mainstream development. Convergence means union and integration of resources, schemes, programmes and institutions strengthening the implementation of welfare and social development programmes and ensuring efficient and effective delivery of basic services to vulnerable and marginalized persons. Convergence encompasses integration of resources, schemes, programmes, projects, man power, institutions/departments/ organizations, finances, services, administration, ideas and thought, etc.

The existing social development programmes are being carried out in isolation, resulting in duplication of Programme inputs, increased overhead and improper targeting. The integration of all existing urban poverty alleviation programmes was considered necessary step towards convergence of efforts, based on need-based planning and monitoring. Various programmes, schemes and projects targeting poor may be classified into different sectors such as social development and social

security, infrastructure development, skill and livelihood development, health, sanitation and hygiene, education, housing and shelter, governance, etc. More than 20 Central Ministries have implemented more than 75 programmes and schemes targeting towards development, welfare and empowerment of poor. However, there is lack of coordination, convergence and integration for maximizing the impact of these programmes and schemes on the life of poor. Thus, it is imperative to adopt convergence planning and implementation of convergence plans for alleviating urban poverty and also improving the quality of life of urban poor.

Concept of Convergence

In general sense, convergence is the erosion of boundaries among previously separated services, schemes and projects of different sectors, ministries and departments. In other words, convergence may be conceptualized as integration of programmes, schemes and projects targeting poor. It may also be called a coordinated effort for maximizing the impact of development programmes and schemes. Convergence may consist of three things: man power, money, and material. The importance of convergence lies in effective targeting of poverty alleviation programmes/developmental schemes. This results into increased access to development funds from various agencies and departments by beneficiary groups. The resources available under various schemes are pooled together and put into use at one place at a time to achieve the holistic development of the target area/group of people. It further avoids multiplicity of programmes, thus avoiding wastage and resulting in optimum utilization of: (1) Man power; (2) Finance; (3) Material; and (4) Time. Convergence facilitates in getting all the services/schemes at one point resulting in all-round development of the poor. It also helps in long term sustenance of the activities/works.

Approach to Convergence

The experiences of programmes like Bolsa Familia of Brazil shows that it is possible to deal

with poverty and income inequality in a sustained manner, integrating millions of people into the economic and social mainstream of the country without giving up economic development. The inter-sectoral consultation on reaching the poor was organized by the Ministry of Urban Development in February 1994, in order to discuss the process of linkages with and between different sectoral departments and the State/local agencies, in order to address the multifaceted needs of the urban poor in a convergent and community-based manner. It was recognized that existing programmes in urban areas are being carried out in isolation, resulting in duplication of Programme inputs, increased overheads and improper targeting. It was recommended that the UBSP approach of community participation through a structure of community based organisation should be recognized as appropriate by all sectoral Ministries and agencies and adopted wherever possible, by using the CBO's as the focal points for convergence. It was felt that the UBSP would acquire greater significance now in the context of the 74th Amendment which vests responsibility for urban poverty alleviation and slum improvement in the Municipalities and envisages decentralised delivery of services reaching down to the Ward Committees. As a first step, the integration of all the existing urban poverty alleviation programmes was considered a necessary step towards convergence of efforts based on need-based planning and monitoring and a wider definition of the poor (Sundaram, 1995).

Rationale for Convergence

The government being a welfare state has since inception through policy, legislation and its executive worked for the welfare of the poor. The line departments of the government have been implementing the various development and welfare programmes for the poor for many years. The collective experiences of implementing welfare schemes and various initiatives have led to the recognition that in spite of sincere efforts there is:

1. Duplication of efforts, both human and financial resources by various departments;
2. Failure to accurately estimate and track the number of actual beneficiaries, often leading to improper use of the benefits;
3. Multiple points of service delivery which make the system more complex; and
4. Inclusion and exclusion errors.

All this has resulted in the poorest running endlessly to various departments and engaging in complex procedures. This has also led to duplication of efforts, restricting the departments from attaining their maximum potential and efficiency. Therefore, there is a pressing need to simplify government procedures, increase inter departmental coordination and information sharing, enhance effectiveness of service delivery at the grass root level and increase citizen involvement. To make services available and accessible to the poorest of poor, Government has decided to adopt and implement the globally accepted and successful model of convergence. To achieve this vision, the government intends to bring a plethora of welfare schemes on a common platform, strengthen the implementation machinery at the lower levels, and incorporate civil society organization's as partners in overseeing the entire process.

Samajik Suvidha Sangam: Delhi Mission Convergence Model

The Government of NCT of Delhi (GNCTD) is committed to improve the quality of life of its citizens, especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of the society. For this, it has initiated Mission Convergence called Samajik Suvidha Sangam to converge various welfare entitlement schemes and services with the objective of making entitlements reach the poor through a single window system in a hassle free manner. Samajik Suvidha Sangam is the interface between departments, DCs Office and Nodal Agencies and NGOs. To fulfill the

objective, Samajik Suvidha Sangam is engaging NGOs and CBOs in a partnership mode (sss.delhigovt.nic.in).

The mandate of the Mission is to bring together to a common platform the plethora of schemes to eliminate duplications, error records and strengthen the implementation mechanism by use of IT enabled system, rationalise administration, and incorporate partnerships with civil society organizations for more effective delivery. The long-term objective of this project is to package useful social sector welfare schemes focusing on empowerment of the vulnerable population together at delivery level thereby maximising their impact and efficiently utilising scarce financial resources through active involvement of community in a concerted and focused manner. The Mission strives to enhance the visibility of schemes to all targeted communities; enhance the control/influence of the community/service recipient over the welfare schemes; strengthening the organizations (GRC/NGOs/Government line Department) and its processes related to prompt service delivery; and incentivise and reinforce appropriate mechanisms for receiving/providing services.

Under the Mission Convergence programme nine government departments have been taken into account with their current entitlement schemes. Each participating department has a Nodal Officer, who is accountable to their department for programme implementation. At district level, Deputy Commissioner (DC) has been designated as the District-in-Charge to guide the mission. The DCs are the central convergence point for all the social sector programmes in the district. At community level the local NGOs/CBOs have been involved for implementation of the programme at community level itself. These institutions would be linked to Suvidha Kendras that is true convergence and facilitation center at single window.

The Mission Convergence project aims to overcome both the supply and demand side challenges of welfare service delivery. In terms

of supply, integration eliminates redundancies in delivery efforts. Similarly, it mitigates any confusion created from the involvement of multiple implementing agents. Lastly, the programme decreases the distance between delivery agencies and beneficiaries. Demand side problems majorly lie in the inability to access entitlements due to the disadvantaged status of beneficiaries. The GNCTD created the Samajik Suvidha Sangam, a registered society, to implement the Mission Convergence programme with a twofold objective: one, to maximise impact of welfare entitlement schemes and two, to optimise the efficient use of government resources. These goals were achieved in a step-by-step manner; outcomes were guided by aims of furthering awareness of welfare schemes, empowering citizens to act on their entitlements, strengthening operations of implementing agencies - DRC, GRC, NGOs - and incentivising the building of mechanisms for improved service delivery (One world Foundation India, 2010).

Objectives of Mission Convergence

To operationalise the Mission Convergence, the specific objectives are as follows:

1. Enhance the visibility of social sector/welfare entitlement schemes to all targeted communities.
2. Enhance the control/influence of the community/ service recipient over these schemes.
3. Strengthening the Organisations (DRC/GRC/NGOs/Government Line Department) and its processes related to prompt service delivery.
4. Incentivise and reinforce appropriate mechanisms for receiving/providing services (Samajik Suvidha Sangam).

Stakeholders of Mission Convergence

1. **Samajik Suvidha Sangam:** The Samajik Suvidha Sangam is an autonomous society that facilitates the Mission Convergence project. It is a state level body

that works under the Chairmanship of the Chief Secretary of NCT of Delhi It is also the agency that coordinates between the Deputy Commissioner's office, nodal government agencies and involved NGOs. The government is responsible for funding of programme components, setting operational norms and capacity building through training of personnel.

2. **Participating Departments:** Following Departments participate in the Mission Convergence:

1. Health and Family Welfare
2. Education Department
3. Women and Child Development
4. Social Welfare
5. Food and Civil Supplies
6. Labour
7. Urban Development
8. Information Technology
9. SC&ST /OBC/Minority/ Backward Class Welfare Dept. and Corporation
10. MCD, NDMC and DDA, Technical Training Education would also be associated as part of the mission goals.

It is proposed that various beneficiary and welfare oriented entitlement schemes of these Departments will be converged and delivered in an integrated manner at the targeted urban vulnerable community at the district level. The needs of community will also be taken into account with priority through a multi stakeholders and district level planning.

3. **Central Units:** The Central Coordination Unit (CCU) is the monitoring agency that oversees operations of the district and gender resource centers.
4. **District Offices:** The Deputy Commissioner is the head of district level operations. This includes the District Mission Unit (DMU) and the District Resource Centers (DRC), which work in correspondence and

coordination respectively. The DC issues all necessary instructions to converging Departments through the principal secretaries. The line/field staff of all the converging Departments also directly report to respective DCs.

5. **Mother NGOs:** There are three nodal or 'mother' NGOs (MNGOs) that are dedicated to building capacities across stakeholders. To accomplish this, they work in advocacy and empowerment by informing disadvantaged populations of their entitlements and encouraging access to them. They also hold a monthly district convergence forum, a first-ever gathering of all involved welfare Departments, for example health, education and labour, GRC and DRC operators. The main responsibility of MNGOs is database management. MIS reports are developed at the DRC and GRC level and then aggregated and monitored at the MNGO level.
6. **District Resource Centers:** DRCs are housed in the offices of the Deputy Commissioner. Before Mission Convergence, the Deputy Commissioner's office concentrated on revenue-related and regulatory issues and now, it has taken on a developmental approach wherein the focus has expanded to social needs of communities. Through a single window and an e-entitlement card platform, the DRC offers an avenue through which citizens can easily obtain information about welfare schemes and access their corresponding entitlements. The DRC fulfills a long list of tasks that together contribute to the newly improved delivery process. The centre manages and maintains the central database of information on services, schemes and government programmes. Officials are responsible for the propagation of this information, especially through direct outreach and community mobilization programmes such as vocational training and health camps. When entitlements are

accessed, a district level report is compiled and examined at this level to determine the level of success of the programme.

7. **Gender Resource Centers:** In 2006, the Government of Delhi built GRCs to directly support gender issues at the grassroots level. This meant targeting women for support services and empowering them through knowledge provision. Under the Mission Convergence programme, a Suvidha Kendra was added to every GRC, each with an estimated outreach target of 10,000 to 15,000. Today, the GRC-Suvidha Kendra is the fulcrum of the model, catering to the needs of all family members, including children, youth, senior citizens and the physically and mentally impaired. As is the case with DRCs, GRCs are owned by the government but operated by non-governmental organisations. To date, there are 120 Gender Resource Centers throughout the city of Delhi. The responsibilities of GRCs are: (1) Data collection; (2) Coordination of stakeholders; (3) Knowledge management and distribution; (4) Creation of information; (5) Operations.
8. **Homeless Resource Centers:** Today, there are six homeless resource centers in Delhi. They operate as night homes for those who lack shelter (One world Foundation India, 2010).

A Case Study of Gender Resource Centre of SMMSSS, Delhi

Sadik Masih Medical Social Servant Society is a Delhi based voluntary organisation working for social justice and empowerment. It is a non-political, non-sectarian, non-profit making and secular organisation which is established in 1994 by the dedicated youth, women keeping in view to improve the all-round development of the people living in the deferent areas of Delhi. The organisation has been working remarkable activities in the field of social welfare since its establishment. Under the Mission Convergence Project of GNCTD, the organisation is playing

an important role to carry forward its aims to the community through regular innovative and sustainable community outreach programmes. The activities of the organisation under the Mission Convergence are as follows:

1. Economic Empowerment: It provides training courses in different areas such as - computer, beauty culture, embroidery, hand painting, wood work etc. It also tries to identify trades based on their potential market in order to provide jobs and set up entrepreneur for its beneficiaries.

2. SHGs Formation: It is another activity that has been undertaken by the organisation in order to involve women into savings and credits activity. Under the SHG programme, the organisation provides a platform for women to discuss various gender related issues. It also encourages them for entrepreneurship.

3. Health: It organises health camps at regular intervals in which aware generation regarding HIV/AIDS, T. B., Polio etc. is also included. The organisation also promotes sex education among adolescents in order to reduce RTI/STD cases.

4. Education: It works to motivate parents to send their children to school, especially girls. The organisation also encourages the school dropouts to enroll in the open school and NFE classes.

5. Legal Awareness Camps: It organises legal awareness camps and provides counseling to the targeted community people in legal problems through regular follow-ups.

6. Enrollment in Welfare Schemes: The organisation acts as a centre, wherein all the citizen of the community can approach for availing entitlements of welfare schemes of the various Departments covered under Mission Convergence. It is the first point of contact to apply for welfare schemes. The details of beneficiaries are as follows:

S. No.	Scheme-wise Beneficiaries	No. of Forms Submitted
Details of Financial Assistance Schemes		
1.	Old Age Pension Forms	267
2.	Widow Pension Scheme	93
3.	Handicapped Pension Forms	52
4.	Ladli Forms	63
5.	T.B. Forms	10
6.	Widow Daughter Marriage Forms	14
7.	Destitute Women	28
8.	Construction Labour Forms	287
9.	SJSRY	5
	Total	819
Details of Supporting Documents		
1.	Bank Account	58
2.	Caste Certificate	171
3.	Birth Certificate	40
4.	Disability Certificate	3
5.	Voter Card	5
	Total	277

Source: SMMSSS, Delhi (2011-12).

7. Awareness for Nutrition: It also organises camps for nutrition awareness to its targeted groups in the community and makes them aware about importance of intake of nutritious food.

Brief success stories of some of the beneficiaries of GRC-SK of Sadik Masih are discussed below:

Beneficiary-1: 'Darchha', 12 years old school dropout girl joined NFE classes under Sadik Masih GRC-SK programme. After continuing in NFE classes, the Community Mobiliser of the agency admitted her in regular Municipal school in class III in order to mainstream her. She was continuing her studies in that school. She was found very happy and quite satisfied. She was grateful to the staff member of the agency for providing all support to continue her education.

Beneficiary-2: 'Tabassum', 17 years old girl was told about Sadik Masih GRC-SK programme from her friend. Here, she joined six month's computer course and learned its basics. After that, the staff member of the agency helped her to get a job. She was working as a Computer Operator in a private company and getting salary Rs. 7000/- per month. She was found quite happy with that.

Beneficiary-3: 'Chanchal', 33 years old married lady heard about Sadik Masih GRC-SK programme from her neighbour. Here, she joined six month's beauty parlor course. After completion of the course, she started beauty parlor in her house. She was found continue with the same entrepreneur with the extension of cosmetics selling.

Beneficiary-4: 'Hemlata', 29 years old married lady joined SHG under Sadik Masih GRC-SK programme through its block meeting. She had been the member of SHG for last one year and saved her money through it. After that she got some work related to embroidery with the help of agency's staff member, which improved her economic condition and she was found quite happy with that.

Suggestions

The following are some of the suggestions for achieving engendering development in an effective manner:

1. Strong political and administrative will is imperative for convergence of administration, resources, schemes, programmes, projects and services targeting towards engendering development.
2. The programmes, schemes and projects introduced by various Ministries and Departments of Central and State governments need to be reviewed for examining their relevance and impact on the life of women.
3. The operational guidelines of each programme, scheme, project introduced by Central and State government are required for better understanding by the target population and their effective implementation.
4. The various Ministries and Departments of both Central and State Governments need to identify a Nodal Officer for wider dissemination of schemes, programmes and projects besides providing timely and adequate information to the target population and stakeholders.
5. There is need to identify the projects, programmes and schemes targeting women for their convergence and integration with the urban local bodies for their effective implementation.
6. Community-based organizations need to be further strengthened with the provision of appointment of community organizers/workers for their mobilization and empowerment.
7. Various engendering development models, initiatives and experiences need to be documented properly and disseminated widely for understanding and learning lessons from them.

Conclusion

Women are the major contributors to India's economy and important stakeholders of development. Their empowerment is essential for distributive justice for the nation's growth. Engendering development plans is imperative for gender mainstreaming and their empowerment. Such plans should include a gender dimension in all macro policies and budgetary support for their implementation. Women's needs are multi-dimensional such as - access to health and nutrition, water and sanitation, asset based marketing, credit, technology, education and skills, political participation etc. Thus, convergence of development policies, programmes, schemes and institutional resources is essential for engendering and inclusive development. Gender resource centers of Samajik Suvidha Sangam of Delhi is one of the wonderful effort in the direction of convergence of poverty alleviation programmes for the overall benefits of urban poor, especially for women.

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