National Workshop on Strengthening Panchayati Raj institutions in India (May 12-13, 1998)
PRIA'S EXPERIENCE IN PARTICIPATORY PLANNING PROCESS

INTRODUCTION

The concept of "participatory planning" is fairly new, and it has a lot of promise in providing the missing link in India's planning efforts. Planning done at the national level does not always ensure its applicability at local levels for, each area has its own personality, potentiality, problems and needs. Micro planning is a type of spatial planning and is concerned with the organisation of all human activities for various needs in space. The "space" considered in this case is "panchayat" and the technique or method of planning is "participatory". So the micro planning intervention is being carried out at the panchayat level with peoples participation. The approach is bottom up i.e. from the panchayat to the block and then to the district level.

PRIA's micro planning project along with a grassroots NGO, Rural Technology and Development Centre (Rajgarh, Mandi) aims to introduce the concept of peoples participation in planning at the panchayat and village level in order to make them more self-reliant and less dependent on the schemes which trickle down from the centre. The aim is to make the people think, plan and act for their own panchayat's development by using the existing natural, physical and human resources available. Moreover, the 73rd Amendment has given provision for the panchayat's to make plans for economic development and social justice. Thus, PRIA's endeavour is to facilitate this process of planning at the panchayat level.

PARTICIPATORY PLANNING EXERCISE IN KEHAR PANCHAYAT

Participatory planning or micro planning exercise was started in Kehar panchayat, Mandi Sadar block, Mandi district, Himachal Pradesh. This exercise has been done in collaboration with a grassroots NGO, Rural Technology and Development Centre (RTDC) which is located in this panchayat. The Chief Functionary of the VA, Sukhdev Vishwa Premi is also the Pradhan of the Panchayat. The panchayat has six revenue villages - Kehar, Satoh, Bhiura, Rigar, Khiuri and Chawari. There are a total of 11 wards, four of them being headed by women members. Panchayat elections in Himachal Pradesh was held in December 1995.

The entire participatory planning exercise has been divided into different phases depending on the type and nature of the work done The exercise has been described in details as follows:-

OBJECTIVES

A) To develop and operationalise a concrete model of bottom-up planning with Gram Panchayats, where people act as their own agents of development
B) To develop a simple and systematic framework for micro planning/participatory planning process which can easily be carried out and be replicable elsewhere. This should be poor and gender sensitive.
C) The micro plan should be made for social justice and economic development - through optimal utilisation of scarce resources in different production sectors, with special emphasis on women, poor and people belonging to the backward classes.

It is hoped that at the end of our micro planning intervention, a concrete model will be developed, along with a simple methodology/framework.

The duration of this micro planning process is approximately 8-9 months.
PARTICIPATORY PLANNING APPROACH

SELECTION OF A GRAM PANCHAYAT

BUILDING A CONducIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR PEOPLES PARTICIPATION

COLLECTION OF DATA AND INFORMATION

SHARING OF THE FINDINGS WITH THE PEOPLE

COMMUNITY PROBLEM ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

IDENTIFICATION OF SOLUTIONS AND STRATEGIES

MAKING OF THE PANCHAYAT LEVEL PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION
PROCESS OF PARTICIPATORY PLANNING

PHASE 1: ENVIRONMENT BUILDING

Objective

The first phase of our intervention was to build an environment suitable and conducive for carrying out participatory planning i.e. involving the people in thinking, planning and acting for their own development. This stage was very crucial since it built the foundation for all future activities. Once the people felt motivated and involved the later stages could be carried out more easily. Moreover, achieving full and effective community participation in development activities is difficult and much depends on the way members of the community are approached. In this regard it was decided to form a core team whose main work was to be with the people and act as facilitators in all the phases. As such our micro planning exercise formally started by holding a workshop for the core group with the aim of understanding the concept of micro planning and chalk out a future work plan.

Selection of panchayat for micro planning exercise:
Certain criteria were taken into consideration while selecting Kehar panchayat for our micro planning exercise -
1) Good relationship with a grassroot NGO, RTDC based at Rajgarh, Kehar was the main criteria for selection of this panchayat.
2) The Co-ordinator of the NGO is also the Pradhan of the panchayat, so a good rapport exists with the people. He is a popular and trusted leader and supports the micro planning project.
3) Good contacts had been made with the local people during the pre-election voter awareness campaign, especially with members of the Nehru Yuvak Mandal, a local village organisation. Moreover, it is these local youth both men and women who have the potential to work as project volunteers.

Workshop for the Core Group:

The micro planning exercise began formally with a three days workshop for the core group consisting of 7 staff members of RTDC and 1 staff member of PRIA. On the third day of the workshop a seven page note was written by one of the core group members. This was mainly on the concept of participatory bottom up planning. It was written in simple hindi and was meant for the group of volunteers.

Date: 17th, 18th and 19th May 1996. Venue: RTDC, Rajgarh
Participants: 8

Objectives: a) To build our own knowledge base and understanding of the concept of participatory planning.
B) To explain to the core team the aim/goal of doing this exercise.
C) To understand the process of planning.
D) To chalk out a future plan of action. Meeting of the Gram Panchayat:

The purpose of this meeting was to inform all the Gram Panchayat members about the bottom-up planning exercise to be undertaken in their panchayat and also to identify two volunteers from each of the 11 wards. On the whole it was a one day orientation meeting of the panchayat members since they are now an integral part of village level planning for social justice and economic development.

Date: 23rd May 1996.
Venue: RIDC, Rajgarh
Training workshop for the volunteers:
The objective of the two days training workshop for the group of 22 volunteers was to orient them about the concept of bottom-up planning and to make them aware of their roles and responsibilities in this process.
Date: 27th and 28th May 1996.
Venue: Community hall, Rajgarh

Ward meetings:
Meetings in each of the 11 wards of the panchayat were held by members of the core team and the group of volunteers. These meetings were a very important part of the environment building phase, since direct contact was made with the Gram Sabha members through these meetings. The purpose of these meetings was to acquaint the people about the new Panchayati Raj system and about planning at the panchayat level. This was also a part of the rapport building process to develop a sense of trust and co-operation for the pursuit of participatory approaches to development.
Date: 3rd to 11th June 1996.

Given below is a detailed report of one of these ward meetings:-

The first of these meetings was held in Kehar, 1 ward at the community hall, a part of the panchayat complex. It was held on 3rd June and it started at about 11 a.m.

The meeting was called by the volunteers who had also notified the people earlier. This was the first of the meetings for environment building. There were a total of 44 participants (27 males and 17 females).

The meeting began by an introductory speech by the co-ordinator of RTDC, Sukhdev Vishwa who is also the panchayat Pradhan. He explained to the people about the meaning and concept of micro planning i.e. planning at the smallest unit - village level. By this process the resource existing in the panchayat will be studied. This micro planning exercise will be totally participatory in nature, where the people will identify and analyse their own problems and suggest possible solutions and strategies. He gave the example of Kalliasseri panchayat in Kerala where a participatory planning exercise has been carried out by the people. In Himachal Pradesh, perhaps this is the first time that such a participatory planning exercise is being carried out by the people and it is hoped to make this panchayat a model for others. In this process participation of the people and their involvement is most important and the primary aim.

After the preliminary introduction, Naval Kishore, a member of the core team further spoke on the micro planning programme giving emphasis on the fact that, the people should understand that their participation is most important. Without their involvement planning will remain incomplete and not be a success.

Then the people were asked to speak, give suggestions or ask questions. The people were an for our micro planning programme and said that such a study is needed to know the present and plan for the future - leading towards development. They further said that they will give their full support.

Outcome of Phase One:

(a) Selection of the panchayat for this exercise was an easy process since the Pradhan is also the Co-ordinator of the local voluntary agency. Thus, there was no lacking in support and enthusiasm.
(b) Enthusiastic participation and support from the people during the ward meetings. This was evident from the number of participants - both men and women who not only attended these meetings but also some of them actively took part in it by raising questions and issues.
(c) Identification of a group of volunteers who actively took part in all the activities of the first phase.
PHASE 2: COLLECTION OF DATA AND INFORMATION

Objective:
The actual process of data collection was the starting point for field operations in our micro planning project. People began with the process of finding out about their own situation. In planning development activities one of the most important things is to understand the existing situation or the present reality and think and think for a better future.

Meeting of the volunteers:
The second phase began with a one day meeting with the volunteers at the community hall. The objective of the meeting was to explain and train the volunteers about the beginning of the second phase i.e, data gathering stage through socio-economic survey. Training helped to ensure that each method of data collection was properly understood, and appropriate skills were developed.
Date: 21st June 1996.
Venue: Community hall. Rajgarh

Household Survey:
Objective: A pre-requisite of any assessment of future progress is basic information which can be used as a yardstick against which changes can be measured. In this case since more local information of a general nature is required a conventional questionnaire-based household survey was conducted. Large scale surveys provide statistically significant results over a wide area. When the actual extent of a social problem needs to be known, then such a survey is an appropriate instrument to use.

The survey was carried out in all 11 wards simultaneously by the volunteers along with some the Gram Sabha members. A questionnaire was formulated for this purpose by the members of the core group. This was used for the purpose.

In this socio-economic survey all the households in the 11x villages were covered by the volunteers.

The following socio-economic information was collected from the survey:

- Household information - names, age, gender, marital and educational status, employment status
- Status of women - their work, hours of work
- Ownership of land, livestock and other assets.
- Infrastructural facilities - Drinking water - sources, distance, shortage
- Agriculture different crops produced, their yield, productivity, income from the sale of the crops
- Animal husbandry
- Employment and income status of the households
- Problems encountered

Meeting of the volunteers: Date: July 19
Venue: Community hall, Kehad panchayat.
Participants: All the volunteers, members of the core group.

This one day meeting was called to discuss about the household survey, the problems faced, to analyse the peoples response to the survey and the micro planning exercise and to analyse and discuss the lacunae in the first phase i.e. the environment building stage.

Problems faced during this phase:
According to the volunteers who have been involved in the participatory planning process the problems faced are as follows:
- The people have not given correct information on the land owned and household income.
• The volunteers were also of the opinion that long breaks in between the different phases can lead to losing of interest on the part of the people. The work should go on continuously, without too many long gaps.
• It is difficult to convince and make the illiterate people understand the importance and need to carry out bottom-up planning exercise. These people were more interested to talk about their problems in the hope that there can be some sought of a solution.
• According to some of the volunteers the people are still not much aware of the micro planning exercise being carried out in their panchayat and the need for it. So more efforts need to be undertaken in this direction i.e. to create greater awareness amongst the people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8 steps in making a &quot;MICRO PLAN&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Selection of panchayat for micro planning exercise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good relationship with a grassroot NGO</td>
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<td>• Good rapport with the people based on trust and ~</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Contact with community based organisations • Nehru Yuvak Mandal, Mahila Mandal etc.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Environment building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of posters and banners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formation of a core group,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Identification of volunteers (2 from each Ward) and training them</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Meetings with community members in all 11 wards of Kehar panchayat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Collection of data, its tabulation and analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collection of socio-economic data Through household survey (questionnaire)</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Tabulation of the data to make it easily understandable</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Situational analysis to understand the present in order to plan for the future</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Sharing of the findings with the people</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use of graphical illustration on charts to depict the data in pictorial form</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Analysis of the village land use map</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Discussion on the emerging problems</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Community problem analysis and identification of development priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community problem analysis done through meetings at the village level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Based on the problems and needs identified by the people, development priorities identified by the villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Identification of solutions and strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Based on the priorities, certain strategies were evolved to overcome the problems faced by the people, E.g. drinking water, road construction etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Formation of Village Development Committees to formulate and implement plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Preparation of micro plan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Consolidation of all the village level plans at the panchayat level (Gram Sabha meeting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village Development Committees along with panchayats to implement the plan</td>
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</tbody>
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Outcome of Phase Two:

(a) Detailed socio-economic data was collected from all the 747 households of Kehad Panchayat by a door-to-door survey. The data collected provided authentic information necessary to find out the situational analysis, an important step in the planning process.

PHASE 3: TABULATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS

Objective

Tabulation of data is the first step in getting useful information from all the data collected through the socio-economic survey and transferred to the tally sheets. By tabulation the data is summarised and made easily understandable. The tabulated data can be analysed and made more meaningful. Collation and tabulation of data is a time consuming process. The group needs to select appropriate ways of putting data together. The purpose of data tabulation was in order to provide data which can be looked at from various angles, thus building awareness.

Analysis is a key step, involving both thinking and feeling. It is clearly related to how data are put together. A participatory approach in analysing data generates more relevant findings which form the basis of recommendations for planning and action.

In this bottom-up planning exercise, though the data was collected ward wise, it was decided to do the tabulation and analysis for the revenue villages by combining the ward wise data.

Situational Analysis: Rationale:

- To understand and have an in-depth knowledge of the present in order to plan for the future.
- To enable the community group to define the problems affecting the people and understand the need to effect the desired charges.
- To provide relevant data - both primary and secondary in order to develop and implement projects.
- It serves as a base for evaluating the ultimate impact of the projects after completion.

Important data of kehar panchayat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village/Ward</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>No. of Household</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BHIURA</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SATOH 1</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SATOH 2</td>
<td>379</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIGAR 1</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RIGAR 2</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KHIURI 1</td>
<td>259</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KHIURI 2</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAWARI 1</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHAWARI 2</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEHAR 1</td>
<td>388</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KEHAR 2</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>189</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3626</td>
<td>2035</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>747</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Caste wise breakup of population (percentage) of Kehar panchayat

1. Brahman 16%
2. Rajput 22.3%
3. Jat 4.3%
4. Saini 7.2%
5. Khatri 0.74%
6. Kumhar 2.52%
7. Acharya 1.1%
8. Nungir 0.81%
9. Sunar 1.1% 10. Bohre 1.1%
11. Tei (S.C) 7.2%
12. Koli (S.C) 10.8%
13. Dumna (S.C) 2.52%
14. Chamar (S.C) 6.24%
15. Julae (S.C) 7.9%
16. Jogi (S.C) 0.48%
17. Gujjar (S.T) 0.51%

- general category 55.46%
- scheduled caste 44.11%
- scheduled tribe 0.51%

**Employment Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of village/ward</th>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Self-employed</th>
<th>Unemployed</th>
<th>Registered unemployed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Kehar 1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Kehar 2</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Chawari I</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Chawari 2</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Rigar I</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Rigar 2</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Satoh I</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Satoh 2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Khiuri I &amp; 2</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Bhiura</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Outcome of Phase Three:
(a) Consolidation of the information collected through the household survey.
(b) Involvement of the village youth in collecting the socio-economic data.
PHASE 4: COMMUNITY PROBLEM ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES-RESOURCE MAPPING

Objective:
This phase is very crucial in the entire planning process since the community members are involved in it and they play an important role of identification of problems and development priorities. Village resources. This sets them thinking which in turn might lead to action in the next phases.

This phase was carried out by holding a series of meetings in all the six villages of the panchayat. The participants were:
• Gram Panchayat members
• Mahila Mandal members
• Nehru Yuvak Mandal members
• Kjsan Sabha members
• Gram Sabha members
• Staff of PRIA and RTDC

The purpose of these meetings was to:
a) To share the findings and the analysis of the socio-economic survey with the villagers.
b) To identify the problems both at the village as well as the panchayat level, by the people.
c) To discuss and identify the resources available in the village. d) To identify the development priorities by the people.
e) To identify and decide on the solutions which can be implemented by the people in the near future.
f) To make a micro plan for the village - people centred bottom up plan. This plan is to be need based i.e., taking into consideration the main problems that exist in the panchayat.
g) Making of Village Development Committees at the village level and a Panchayat Development Committee to assist in the making of the plan and its implementation.

Methodology adopted for community problem analysis, identification of priorities and making of the micro plan at the village level:

(a) Welcome address by the respective Ward member

(b) Introductory speech by the Panchayat Pradhan
   - new panchayati Raj
   - importance and need for planning by the people
   - collaboration of PRIA and RTDC in this respect

(c) A brief overview of the micro planning activities carried out so far in order to make the exercise more meaningful to the people.

(d) Problem identification: Procedure:
Step - 1: The problems identified by the villagers was done at 3 different levels on separate flip charts
• individual: to identify the beneficiaries of the different schemes
• village:
• panchayat:
Step • 2: As and when the people told their problems, these were noted down on the 3 separate flip charts by one of the members of the core team with the help of some of the local community members.

(e) Prioritisation: Once problems and opportunities have been listed, the major task of ranking them remains. This is a very important step in the whole exercise since it enables the people and representatives of village organisations to discuss and agree upon priorities. Prioritisation also creates
community awareness and an interest in participation and action. Most important, this method serves as a basis for development of village level plan.

In the case of Kehar panchayat it was seen that the two main priorities of the villagers are:

- water supply for drinking and irrigation purposes
- metalled road for transportation facilities

Based on these problems development priorities were found out by the community members themselves. This was done by the following method:

Step - 1: Three different coloured markers were used by the people to mark on the where the problems identified earlier had been written down.
- Red - first priority
- Green - second priority
- Black - third priority

The method of prioritisation was explained to the people by a member of the facilitators team. He told them to put three tick marks on each of the charts displaying the problems identified.

Step - 2: After this the people went up to the wall charts and using the 3 different colours prioritised their felt needs at an individual, village and panchayat level. In all they had to tick nine times. At this stage a lot of facilitation and guidance is required especially for the illiterate people.

Step - 3: Next, the total number of tick marks were counted for each of the three colours separately for the 3 levels. After this the relative priority was calculated by giving points to the 3 colours. Red being the first priority was given 3 points, green - 2 points and black - 1 point.

Relative priority = no. Of ticks * points

The highest marks obtained by an individual problem by this method was considered to be the most important development priority of the people. The second and third priority was also found out.

Observation: Besides the main motive of prioritisation, there was also the hidden intention of making the people get up from their place, go up to the wall charts and choose from the various options. This method did create a certain amount of involvement and interest in the people as they felt that their views are being taken into consideration and are being given a certain amount of importance. However, the major drawback to this exercise was that some of the people especially the women left the meeting thinking that their task of method was changed at a later stage when the sheets were taken around to the people in order for them to prioritise.

(f) Making or Village Development Committee (VDC) and Panchayat Development Committee:

It was decided to establish a VDC in each of the 6 villages of Kehar panchayat. This will have a membership ranging from 15 to a maximum of 25 members. These committees will comprise of the following members:
- Ward member - Chairperson
- Women - 1/3
- Scheduled Caste (male & female) - 1/3
- Volunteers
- Technical expertise
  - education
  - public health and sanitation
  - agriculture
  - engineering
  - electricity
  - PWD
  - forest
  - lawyers
The VDC will be responsible for the finalisation of the village level plans along with technical help from the JE’s. They will also be responsible for the implementation of these plans along with the Gram Panchayat. Infact, the Chairperson of these committees are the Ward members themselves. These individual VDC’s will together form a Panchayat Development Committee to consolidate and implement the plan at the panchayat level.

(G) Making of the village development plan along with the people. This includes ~

- Activity plan
- Time frame
- Responsibilities
- Facilities, services and equipment
- Budget

Details of some of these meetings is given below:

- The first of these meetings was held in Kehar village on 26th December, 1996. The venue was the community hall of the panchayat complex.
  The meeting began with a welcome address and brief introduction by Sukhdev Vishwa Premi, Pradhan and Co-ordinator of RTDC. He stressed on the following points:
  - concept of micro planning/participatory planning
  - need of peoples participation in village development
  - participatory planning exercise in Kerala
  - micro planning in Kehar panchayat
  - various steps involved in the process

- The second meeting was held in Bhiura on 18th January 1997. The meeting was presided over by the Pradhan and Ward member Govind Ram. A total of 44 members attended this meeting out of which there were 25 males and 19 females.

(A) After a preliminary welcome address by the Ward member an introductory speech was given by the Pradhan. He said that “this micro planning exercise is being carried out in Kehar panchayat by a collaborative effort of 2 NGO’s RTDC and PRIA. The objective is to make a people centred plan involving the actual problems and felt needs of the people and identifying strategies to overcome them in the form of a systematic micro-plan. The final plan for the panchayat a, a whole will be made in a gram sabha meeting involving all the people. The panchayat at present has Rs. 45,000 under the JRY scheme which is not enough, so peoples participation and contribution in the form of labour, material and money is necessary for the successful implementation of the plan made and for development to take place.
(B) After the introductory session problems were identified by the villagers at an individual, village and panchayat level. These problems were noted down on 3 separate charts by a member of the facilitators team. During this session most of the people including the women participated very actively in problem identification.

(C) Sharing of the findings of the socio-economic survey. This was done through the use of wall charts. The data analysed was illustrated in the form of bar charts, pie diagrams, graphs etc. These were made by members of the core team i.e. the villagers themselves. The main aspects that were highlighted are:
- population - age-sex distribution, caste structure
- employment status
- educational status - general and SC.
- Agricultural production
- use types
- distance of source of drinking water

Population statistics:
Total population of Bhiura: 367
Male population: 192
Female population: 175
number of households: 71

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
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Along with these findings a map of Bhiura village made by two of the volunteers was displayed and explained to the people present by one of them. This was basically the land use map of the village showing the cultivated land, water bodies, forest cover, road network, grazing land, fallow land, temples etc.

(D) The next stage was that of prioritisation which was done by the people themselves. They did this by using 3 different markers as mentioned above on the charts displaying the problems. Red was used for the first priority, green for the second and black for the third. It was observed that men and women have different set of priorities. The former stressed on road construction while the latter was more in favour of drinking water facilities. This deadlock was finally solved by voting in which case, most of the people voted for drinking water as the foremost development priority and need of the village.

(E) Making of the plan for drinking water facilities in Bhiura village:
This plan was made entirely by the villagers themselves. The job of the core team was mainly to facilitate this process. The people know best about the locally available resources, the source of drinking water, what needs to be done in order to get water from them. But the only thing which is lacking in them is the initiative to start the process in a participatory manner. Since, the government provides the people with the basic infrastructure facilities, the people rely on the government for all their needs. They have become totally dependant on the latter. As such, they have in a way lost the
power or the ability to think that they too (i.e. the community as a whole along with the panchayat) can work for their own betterment. However, there are some exceptions to this and there are many cases of participatory development activities in Himachal Pradesh.

Plan for drinking water in Bhiura

The problem:
Bhiura at present gets its water supply from the BBMB project (Bhakra Beas Management Board) at Baggi.

Identification of locally available resources:
The potential source of water is at a distance of 1 km from the village at Baryha. This according to the people can be tapped in order to get a regular supply of water.

Land required for the construction of the storage tank was also identified and the owner said that he could give part of it for the purpose.

Labour would also be provided by the community members themselves.

Activity plan:
• Laying of a pipeline from the source to the village. This has to be done along the road. A total of 1 SO pipes is needed to cover a distance of 1 km, each pipe being 20 feet long.
• Building of a storage tank near the pipal tree on the land belonging to Shri Prem Das.
• 3/4 households would be provided with 1 tap each. At this rate a total of 18 - 20 taps need to be installed in Bhiura.

(F) Formation or Village; Development Committee

A village level committee was established after this. The ward member of Bhiura was unanimously declared as the Chairperson of the Committee. The committee had a total of 13 members out of which 5 are women. The main tasks or responsibilities of the VDC is:

• Formulation of a detailed action plan along with technical feasibility and economic viability. This would include detailed budget estimate of all the equipment needed, materials required, wages of technical people employed etc.
• Implementation of the action plan.

• The third meeting was held at Khiuri on 21st January.
(A) This meeting too was like the previous one and was begun with a welcome address by the ward member Indira Devi.

(B) This was followed by an introductory lecture by the pradhan. This was in the local dialect i.e. Mandiali. He spoke about the 73rd amendment, the new Panchayati Raj Act and the powers that have been given to the people. Plans have to be made at the panchayat level with peoples participation. Thus, one of the aims of this exercise is to create an awareness amongst the people about the need and importance of bottom-up planning with the involvement of people in it. The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the problems of the village, prioritise and make schemes at the village level. People should have some hold over their own resources mainly, water, forest and land. They should be able to identify their needs and try to solve the problems themselves rather than being totally dependent on the government. So far plans have failed due to lack of peoples participation.

(C) After this the entire planning process that has been carried out since May 1996 was explained to the people in order to make the process more clear to the people.

(D) Sharing of the socio-economic data with the people. The land use map of Khiuri village was also explained to the people.

(Observation: Presentation of findings has to be done in an analytical manner in order to bring forth the emerging problems and make it as simple as possible with pictures and diagrams so that it is easily understandable by the people.)
(E) Problem identification and prioritisation

(F) Formation of Village Development Committee
(Details of these have not been mentioned here since it is the same as has been described in the other meetings)

(G) Formation of village development plan

The fourth meeting was held at Satoh on 22nd January. The venue of the meeting was the village anganwadi.

(A) The welcome address was given by the ward member Chamanlal.

(B) After this an introductory speech was given by the Pradhan of the panchayat, where he talked about the 73rd amendment and provisions given therein about making a socio-economic plan at the panchayat level. For the first time such an exercise is being carried out in Himachal Pradesh with Kehar panchayat as a model. He also explained the purpose of this meeting i.e. to diseases the problems, prioritise developmental activity and make a plan by the people based on their needs. It is a new process of bottom-up planning. After that he said that at the end of the meeting a Committee will be formed which will consist of 15-25 members from amongst the villagers themselves. This Committee will then make a detailed plan and also work towards its implementation, so that people can solve their own problems themselves.

(C) Next, one of the members of the core group said that this meeting is not like other meetings where people come, listen and do not participate in the proceedings. Their role is basically passive. But, this meeting is different in the sense that people will not only have to listen to the sessions but also play an active role by asking questions, raising issues and talking about their problems. They should feel involved and feel that it is their programme. This feeling should come from within themselves. He also explained to the people the reasons for putting up the findings of the socio-economic survey - to know the present reality based on which the future planning will be done.

(D) The next issue discussed in the meeting was on problem identification which was done in the form of a large group discussion in the local dialect. In this case problems were identified separately for the two wards since they are very different from each other. Problems were identified at three levels:
• ward level
• panchayat level
• individual level
The gathering of the people was quite strong and there was representation from all age groups - young, middle-aged and old. Thus, all sorts of problems were mentioned including those of women.

(E) Prioritisation of the problems was done by the method of ticking on the wall charts where the problems had been earlier identified. This was done using 3 different colours red, black and blue (the details have been mentioned above).
(Observation: One of the problems faced during this process was that some of the people especially the women left the meeting after having got up from their place to prioritise their development needs. They felt that their job and the reason for their coming to this meeting was to mention their problems and needs. This shows their dependency on others.)

(F) For both the wards it was seen that the main priority was that of a metaled road. This was more so because this particular village of Kehar panchayat is the main vegetable growing area and a lot of difficulty is faced by the people in transporting the vegetables to the market without any proper road facilities.
Village Development Plan for Satoh 2
Objective: Metaling of a village road, 500 mts long.
Action Plan:
- Establishment of the Village Development Committee.
- Meeting of the Committee members to discuss the future plan of action. Main issues be
discussed in this meeting is how to get villagers cooperation in terms of labour and other
thing and how to get them involved.
- Finding out the source of locally available raw materials needed for the construction of
metaled road, namely sand, stone, cement etc.
- Door-to door visit to all the houses of Satoh 2 - in order to get more support and great
involvement of the people.
- VDC will contact the J.E. for technical help - in terms of making an estimate of the
materials needed and also a budget estimate.
- Making of a detailed plan of action on road construction - this will be done by the VD
along with the J.E. and the technical expertise available in the village itself.
- Approval of the plan - The Pradhan was given the responsibility for this important activity.
- Collection of the raw materials needed for road construction - this includes not only the
sand, cement and stones needed for road construction but also the necessary tools and
equipment. This village has only one tractor which will be made available when needed.
- Arrangement of labour, masons needed for road construction.
- Arrangement for storage facility
- Stan the process of road construction - it should be ready by May/June 1997.

The fifth meeting in the series on community problem analysis was held in Rigar on 26th
January 1997. This is the largest village in the panchayat in terms of population size and is also a greater height
than the others. In fact one of the wards is situated on the slopes of a mountain and has no
infrastructure facilities at all except electricity.

In terms of attendance this meeting had the least number of participants in comparison to all the other
villages, inspite of a large number of people residing there. This was more so because of caste factor.
Being an upper class dominated village many of them abstained from the meeting This meeting was
held in a similar manner as the previous ones. The same stages were followed. The only exception was
that the method of prioritisation was different from the others in this case In the earlier meetings people
left after having prioritised their development needs. This was more so because once they left their
seats to tick on the flip charts they felt that their work was over and that they could leave. In order to
avoid this the method of prioritisation was changed. Instead of making the people get up and tick on the
wall charts, the problems were written down o pieces of paper and these were then taken around to the
people.

ACTIVITIES INVOLVED IN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

After the formulation of the panchayat level plan the following activities will be carried out for
implementation of the various developmental activities. This wilt be done entirely by community
participation. However, the main responsibility will lie with the VDC, members of the core team and the
panchayat.

These activities are as follows:
- Contact formal and informal leaders of the community in order to get their opinion and involvement.
Organise and conduct a meeting of the community leaders, Committee members, village level organisations and Gram Sabha members to discuss and plan for the project.

Organise a meeting with the community members to get them involved and participate in the project and also to get their contribution in terms of finance, labour, raw materials, equipment etc necessary for the development activity planned.

Visit different households in the panchayat in order to get them involved in the project, so that there is greater community participation.

Contact related government departments to discuss the objective and purpose of the project and to get their assistance whenever required.

Prepare a preliminary plan and estimate with the VDC.

Prepare a detailed plan and estimate, (based on the earlier plan) along with the J.E. and other technical people from the related government departments.

Presentation of the plan and estimate to the people in a Gram Sabha meeting for further suggestions, clarifications and plan finalisation.

Meeting with the BDO, D.C. and other concerned departments to submit the plan and mobilise resources (financial and other support).

Follow-up visits to various departments to know the actual position of work.

Contact community members to get their support and contribution (man, material and money)

Organise a VDC meeting to assess and review the work done and to plan out future strategy and action.

Contact persons willing to contribute land, equipment etc for construction purposes.

Arrange for support services like tractor, equipment, labour available in the community.

Assemble all the materials/equipment necessary for construction and also arrange for their storage facility.

Arrange for the technical support like mason, carpenter, plumber etc.

Start the construction work (laying the foundation etc)

Complete the construction of the infrastructural facilities like storage tank, pipeline for water supply and metaled road etc.

Evaluation of the project.

**Outcome of Phase Four:**

(a) There was broad participation of men and women from different sections of the community in the village meetings where the community problems and development priorities were discussed. There were representatives from all the village organisations, namely, Nehru Yuvak Mandal, Mahila Mandal and Kisan Sabha besides the PRI representatives.
LESSONS LEARNT FROM THE PARTICIPATORY PLANNING PROCESS

1. Time is a major constraint for the rural people, since agricultural activities take up most of their time. So the limited time that the people can spare should be used in a constructive manner.

2. Participatory planning and community participation in village developmental activities is a new concept for the villagers who have been till now totally dependent on the government for all kinds of support. Getting their wholehearted support and involvement in the micro planning process is thus not an easy task. Their involvement and participation in this process is possible through meetings and PRA exercises where they get an opportunity to discuss their problems and give ideas, suggestions and solutions which go towards making the village or panchayat level plan. But, it is only through the implementation of the plan that can win full support of the people. Some of the schemes or plans if carried out by the panchayat will definitely go a long way in building up a good relationship of trust with the people who will in turn recognise the worth of people centred village development plan.

3. People at the village level take a lot of interest in sharing and discussing about their problems. The method of identifying priorities was also taken well by them. But, they felt that after this, their work is over and the actual plan and its implementation will be done by other people and not them. This highlights the fact that the people have been made so dependent on government schemes that they have lost the ability to think of themselves as the main actors in carrying out the development work. A lot of effort has to be made in order to bring about some changes in their way of thinking so that micro planning or bottom-up planning is truly people centred.

4. Long gaps in between the phases or the various activities can lead to a loss of interest on the part of the volunteers as well as the villagers. Continuity in the programme is necessary for the active involvement of the people as well as building up a better rapport with them.

5. Meetings with the villagers at all stages should be kept short (3 - 4 hours), keeping in consideration their availability and convenience. Long meetings can lead to a loss of interest on the part of the people. Moreover, people do not have much time to spare due to their agricultural and household activities.

6. Gathering of data through household survey is a very good method of getting authentic, primary information of the entire population of the panchayat. This process is also a means of meeting people and explaining the need, importance and peoples participation in the development process. However, inspite of these merits, survey method of gathering data is very time consuming. Besides, data tabulation and compilation is a very tedious and long drawn process.

7. It was realised towards the end of the planning process, that there is a need to carry out some Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises with the people during the first phase which includes building a conducive environment for micro planning and rapport building with the people. PRA helps in doing this and also in needs assessment.

8. Proper channel should be used for giving prior information to the people regarding the date, time and venue of village meetings. This can be done by:
   - using posters with the venue, date and time written very clearly and put up at vantage points in the village. For eg. Tea stalls. shops, walls etc.
   - visiting peoples houses, shops and other places and telling them about the meeting, its purpose and the need for people to attend it. This can be done by the team of volunteers.

9. Social dynamics especially the caste factor has to be kept in mind while organising village level meetings. This way the gathering will be large and people will indulge in healthy discussions.

PROBLEMS FACED DURING THE BOTTOM-UP PLANNING EXERCISE:

1. The volunteers were involved in all the phases of the micro planning project. However, during the course of the programme, some of the volunteers left the project due to various reasons like marriage, education, ill health or general lack of interest.

2. Breaks and long gaps in between the different phases led to loss of interest on the part of the people and some of the volunteers.
3. Assignments given to the members of the core group took long time to finish, thus, delaying the entire process.
4. Due to lack of proper orientation and opportunity, it was not possible to conduct PRA exercises which had been planned earlier as a part of the original plan.

MAJOR OUTCOME OF THE MICRO PLANNING INTERVENTION:
1. Development of a core team and a group of volunteers, who are the main forces behind the sustainability and replicability of participatory planning exercise.
2. Orientation of the Gram Panchayat members about the concept of micro planning, its importance and the need for their involvement in this exercise, since the panchayats have been given the power to make plans for social justice and economic development.
3. Active participation on the part of the people in the meetings held in the various phases (orientation meetings or meetings to discuss community problems and development priorities). This shows their interest in the programme and can be definitely considered to be a first step towards awareness generation and a feeling of involvement in the planning process.

Making of a panchayat level development plan which takes into consideration the problems and priorities of the people and identification of schemes which can be implemented by the panchayat along with the villagers.

**Community participation: an achievement in Kehar panchayat**

**Case 1:**
In one of the villages of Kehar panchayat i.e. Rigar the people along with the VDC have started implementation of the plan formulated on the day of the meeting on community problem analysis. On that day (26th January) it was seen that the two main priorities of the people are water supply and need of a proper village road. Following this a meeting was held on 4th February. This was called by members of the newly formed Village Development Committee whose Chairperson is the ward member, Om Prakash. Besides members of the VDC and some of the villagers the SDM, Tehsildar, J.E.(IPH), BDO and the Pradhan an Up-Pradhan of the panchayat were also present. A total of 40 people attended this meeting.

The main issue discussed that day was supply of water for irrigation purpose to Rigar. The main cause behind this problem is a family dispute over land. The dispute is between three brothers, two brothers against the third. Due to a stay order on his house construction the third brother had stopped the laying of a pipeline which was to go through his land. This affected the supply of water to quite a few houses of Rigar. This has been the state of affairs or the last 8 years. The panchayat did try and intervene two or three times but could not solve the problem.

This family feud was finally settled in the meeting held on 4th February after the SDM intervened in the matter. He told the people concerned that if the stay order is not removed, then the matter will be taken to the court which will complicate things further. The three brothers then agreed to settle the matter and end the dispute for everybody’s benefit. The IPH department will take up the responsibility of providing water for irrigation purpose for Rigar.

2/3 days after this meeting, work was started by the people. If the work is done sincerely then it will take another 5-6 months for completion. Once it is completed the project will cover 60% of the households of Rigar including both the wards.
Case 2:
The people of Rigor have also taken up another developmental activity for their village, that of road construction. This was another major priority of the people as discussed earlier. On 4th February it was also decided that the VDC along with some of the villagers will take up the work of widening and repairing of the village road themselves. This road has been in a state of disrepair for a long time and neither the panchayat nor the government has done anything till now.
The people have now decided that they will take up the work of road construction on their own. They have realised that too much dependence on the government will not get their problems solved.
On the 23rd of February work started on the widening and repairing of the village road. A total of 21 local villagers worked in shifts from 10 a.m. to 7p. m. The ward member, members of the VDC and a member of the core team were all involved in the process.
As regards the raw materials the cement is being provided by the panchayat, while the rest of the material is available locally. So far 500m of the road has been organised properly. It has also been decided by the villagers that they will work on this road every Sunday till it gets completed.

DOCUMENTATION OF THE MICRO PLANNING PROCESS

Documentation of the entire planning process has been done alongside the main activities. Documenting the different phases, field experiences is an equally important part of the programme. This is perhaps the only way to share the valuable experiences which will otherwise get unnoticed. The different methods that have been used in documenting the micro planning process are as follows:

• Report writing - in hindi and English
• Photographs
• Video recording
• Mapping
• Poster
DIARY OF EVENTS

PHASE ONE

March 21 - 25 Micro planning workshop held at PRIA, New Delhi in order to make a common framework for PRIA and NCRSO’S.

May 17 - 19 Training workshop for core group on micro planning in Kehad panchayat. Mandi, Himachal Pradesh. Preparation of educational material for the volunteer’s workshop.

May 23- One day meeting of the Gram Panchayat members (Kehad) in order to introduce the concept of participatory bottom-up planning and to identify volunteers from each of the 11 wards.

May 27-28 Training workshop for group of volunteers in the panchayat complex, of Kehad panchayat.

June 3 -11 Ward wise meetings held in all the 11 wards of Kehad panchayat to acquaint the people about the concept and process of micro planning, its necessity, importance and peoples involvement in it.

PHASE TWO

June 20- The second phase of our exercise began with a one day meeting with the volunteers and briefing them about the first task of phase two i.e, the socio-economic household survey. For this purpose, sample survey of two households was done the same evening in order to get the volunteers accustomed with the questionnaire. Also the points which are missing were included in consultation with the volunteers.

June - July Socio-economic survey of all the households in six villages of Kehad panchayat was carried out by the respective volunteers of each ward.

July 19 One day meeting with the volunteers to discuss mainly the problems being faced and peoples reactions to our micro planning intervention.

July 20 - 11 Two days workshop on micro planning held at Aryan Bunglow hotel. Mandi. The purpose of this two days meeting was mainly to assess the activities carried out and to discuss and solve the problems being faced by the people involved in it.

PHASE THREE

July 30 - Aug 11 Tabulation of the data collected from the socio-economic survey by the volunteers.

Aug 21-25- Making of the master tables for compilation of the data collected.

Aug 25 -One day meeting with the volunteers to discuss and review the on going work, especially the problems being faced.

September- Tabulation and compilation of the data by members of the core team.

October - Building up a framework for analysis and writing of the report by members of the core team.
November- Tabulation and analysis of the data continued. Also members of the core team and a few of the volunteers prepared charts to depict the findings of the survey in a graphical manner which can be easily understood by the people.

Detailed mapping of all the villages in the panchayat was done by two of the volunteers. These maps were based on those of the Patwari, locally known as “lattha”. The natural and physical resources available in the villages were shown on these maps.