

# **Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue**

## **A Facilitators Manual**

*By*

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## **Series Note on Methodological Innovation Series**

There has been an increasing agreement thorough out the world that governance is no more the exclusive domain of state and market institutions. “Governance Where People Matter” is becoming an accepted reality. Civil society, citizen collectives and citizen leaders need to play a central role in making governance institutions transparent, accountable and responsive. Concerns for citizen participation must be enabled and ensured to bring social equity, justice and sustainable development.

The strategic compact of PRIA “Governance Where People Matter” elaborates twin expected impacts – transparent and accountable self-governance institutions and effective voices of new citizen leaderships. Achieving these two expected impacts would require simultaneous attention and active action towards reforming governance institutions and building civil society at multiple levels. It is therefore, imperative to enable other development practitioners by providing relevant tools, techniques and methods to achieve the twin impacts.

In the past twenty-three years PRIA has been in the forefront of fostering innovations in development methodologies. PRIA’s work on capacity building of civil society organisations and strengthening local self-governance (Panchayati Raj Institutions and Urban Local Bodies) has fostered several such innovations in collaboration with its partners. The concern for participatory learning has been the core of all these innovations. PRIA takes pride to share these innovations in numerous forms for use by other development professionals.

The present series on “Methodological Innovations” is brought out with the same spirit to share our valuable learning for bringing social transformation where emancipation of poor and marginalized gets centrality. By publishing this series, the Civil Society Building Team in PRIA hopes to achieve a multiplier effect of these innovations. We hope that the development professionals from civil society organisations and government institutions, representatives of local self-governance and many more will be immensely benefited to try out these methodologies. PRIA and its partners have tried out the methodologies presented in the present series in varied contexts with varying degrees of success, which gave us certain amount of confidence, albeit with humility. There is enough scope for further modifying, adapting and adjusting these methodologies to suit the purpose and intended

social change. We will appreciate if development practitioners share their experience of using these methodologies.

The present volume on “*Organizing Multistakeholder Dialogue for Strengthening Local Self Governance*” is an effort to synthesise the experience of PRIA and its partners. Multistakeholder Dialogue has been used by PRIA as means to enable voices of poor and marginalized at the appropriate forum in its interventions on Environmentally Sustainable Industrial Development, Capacity Building of Voluntary Development Organisations and Strengthening Local Self Governance for many years. The concept and practice, over the years, have become matured by adapting numerous innovations both in purposes and methods. By bringing out an operational manual on Multistakeholder Dialogue we intend to replicate the same by other institutions involved in development. We sincerely hope that this manual will be useful to a large number of people who value the participation of citizen in development process.

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## Preface

The top down approach to development provided little space for participation of people in the development process. This monopolistic approach to development by the state ignored the value of creating space for local people to participate in decision-making. It undervalued the capacity of local people who could bring in substantial knowledge and expertise for making development sustainable. In recent times, there has been a gradual change in the mindset of policy makers and state representatives in the direction of engaging with the local people. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Constitutional Amendment, which is now known as Part X of the Indian Constitution, for strengthening Panchayati Raj Institutions has brought enormous opportunities for the hitherto excluded poor and marginalized.

There has been a gradual acceptance that state-led model of development cannot achieve the desired development goals – participation, equity and justice. The participation of all the stakeholders is extremely important. Successful examples of development practice on the ground where meaningful dialogue and consultation across multiple stakeholders have actually changed the situations are growing in number. However, there is a dearth of literatures, which exemplify the methodological approach to multistakeholder processes. The present manual intends to synthesise PRIA's experience of using multistakeholder dialogues and consultations as methodological corner stone in strengthening local self-governance and civil society building.

It will be an impossible task to mention all the names who contributed in preparing this manual. However, some names must be mentioned as deep gratitude. I am thankful to Dr. Rajesh Tandon in conceptualizing the Methodological Innovations series and for this manual, and providing necessary support and guidance during the writing process. I must acknowledge the contribution of my former colleague Nandini Sen. We started working together to prepare this manual. She wrote some part of this manual. Several partners of PRIA have been instrumental in organizing various multistakeholder dialogues – they are Parivartan, Maharashtra; Sahbhagi Shikshan Kendra, Uttar Pradesh; Unnati, Gujarat; Samarthan, Madhya Pradesh and Censored, Bihar. I am thankful to Poonam Mehdiratta of PRIA who helped in shaping the document in publishable form. Our sincere thanks go to all the people who contributed and participated in various multistakeholder dialogues to make them remarkable.

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## **SECTION 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

For several decades the development interventions to improve the lives of people have been characterized by expert-driven, top-down, centralized and non-participatory approaches. A handful people were entrusted to ‘develop’ millions of impoverished and marginalized lives. These handful people derived their legitimacy either through a process called electoral democracy or through their acquired expertise from the knowledge system which many a time was far off from the reality that millions of people had been experiencing in their every day life. These two sets of people – one was called elected representatives of the parliament and state legislative assemblies and the other was called the bureaucrats – together formed and occupied most of the state institutions. The state institutions thus monopolized the development agenda from their vantage point. The state was considered to be the single largest player who can ‘do development’ – from its conceptualisation to implementation. The consequence of this monopolistic approach has its devastating effect on the millions of impoverished and marginalized lives. The utter failure of many targeted development interventions have raised serious doubts in the minds of citizens about the omnipresent monopolistic approach of the state institutions.

In order to rectify this monopolistic approach to development the concept of “primary stakeholders” was brought into development discourse with uneven practice. The primary stakeholders were the groups and individuals who were considered to be the targeted ‘primary beneficiary’ of a particular development intervention or programme. Many international donor agencies including the multilateral and the bilateral agencies considered it essential to consult the primary stakeholders at the appraisal stage of the project formulation. However, much of this discourse remained rhetoric and still continues to be so.

For years the Voluntary Development Organisations and other Civil Society Organisations have been maintaining relationships in one hand with the community people (read broadly defined target groups) and on the other hand with the resource providers. This is particularly true for organisations working in service delivery and community development mode. This was primarily because of their overwhelming concern about the poor and marginalized section of the community. However, this practice has resulted into ‘relationship myopia’ among large number of Civil Society Organisations.

In the past decades the renewed interest on the role of civil society and governance have paved the way to redefine the debate and discourse on 'stakeholderhood'. It is now becoming clearer that transparent, accountable and participatory governance is central to development for the people and by the people. Governance as it includes active citizenships to its core meaning evokes a whole array of 'stakes' for various actors. Development and governance and democratic decentralisation have become interwoven with each other. Therefore, it assumes more complexity with multiple dimensions.

The Civil Society Organisations must understand and rise up to the challenges and opportunities posed by this complexity. Doing development, improving governance and deepening democratic decentralisation assumes a political task and involves dealing with multiple interests and stakes. All these require fundamental shifts in the existing power equations of the society from the vantage point of poor and marginalized. Civil Society Organisations cannot shy away from political negotiations if they want to bring social transformation from the vantage point of poor and marginalized. It involves dialogue with multiple stakeholders, which would require rigorous analysis of the stakes and interests of various actors and institutions on given issues and advancing the agenda of poor and marginalized.

In India the 73<sup>rd</sup> and the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments (now better known as Part IX and Part IXA of the Constitution of India) brought in 1993 opened up a new vista for strengthening decentralized democratic local governance. The discourse on participation of people in development with special focuses on poor and marginalized (women, dalits, tribals and minorities) has got a new impetus especially with a view that the institutions of local self-governance are considered to be not only as political institutions but also as developmental institutions. Therefore, these local self-governance institutions have all the potential to provide space to local people (again from the vantage point of poor and marginalized) for decision-making with regard to access to and control over local and other development resources. However, realizing this potential would definitely involve political negotiations between multiple stakeholders. The contribution of Civil Society Organisations to prepare the poor and marginalized for such political negotiation is much to be desired at this point in history.

In order to pursue this political objective distinct perspectives on local self-governance and civil society building must be kept upfront.

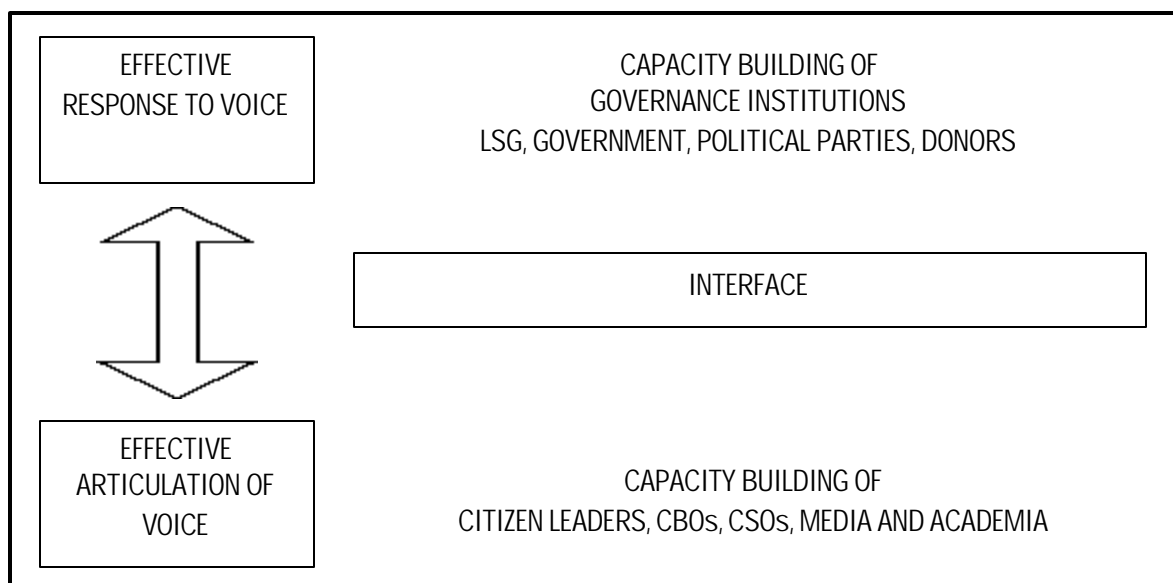
- Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) are to be viewed as institutions of local self-governance and not as mere implementers of centrally determined development programmes. Bottom-up comprehensive planning based on micro-planning exercise is to be the basis of self-governance. PRIs should not be allowed to become a third tier of development administration.
- Emphasis must be placed on active participation in decision making by women and other weaker sections with a view to enhance their role, status and leadership in local self-governance.
- Interventions in strengthening PRIs should focus on building, promoting and empowering new leadership of women, dalits and tribals. The interventions should focus on building leadership for elected representatives of local self-governance institutions as well as leadership for citizen collectives.
- PRIs should assert their access to and control over local natural and human resources as well as other development resources being available with state and national governments.
- Strengthening PRIs will entail clarity of their roles, systems of governance, accountability and transparency and inter linkages. The desired accountable and transparent local governance should be achieved and maintained with active participation of citizen leaderships.

It is in this context multistakeholder dialogue and consultation as a method of development intervention assumes importance. However, the required capacity – perspective, skills, tools and techniques are not well developed at this moment. The purpose of present endeavour to elaborate the methodological aspects of organizing multistakeholder dialogue is to bridge this knowledge gap. The manual is based on PRIA and partners’ own experiences of organizing several multistakeholder dialogues at the district and state levels in India on the issues of strengthening local self-governance and civil society building. It also draws upon PRIA’s experience of engaging with many international agencies on the issues of capacity building of civil society organisations. The experience from the pioneering effort of holding multistakeholder dialogues on the issues of environmentally sustainable industrial development in the state of Maharashtra contributed to build the preliminary knowledge about multistakeholder nature of development interventions.

Through the Constitutional Amendments, the system of local self-governance established in India has the following broad features:



1. There are three tiers of elected bodies in rural areas - *Gram Panchayat* at the village level; *Panchayat Samiti* at the block level and *Zilla Parishad* at the district level. This three-tier system is known as Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs).
2. The village assembly of all adult voters is identified as *Gram Sabha*.
3. At all tiers of elected representatives, one-third of all seats is reserved for women. Like-wise, reservation for socially oppressed (dalits and tribals) has also been mandated.
4. Regular elections every 5 years have been constitutionally mandated.
5. State Election Commissions have been constitutionally formed to conduct elections for the local bodies.
6. The Constitution lists a number of development areas for which the three tiers of the local bodies have responsibility. These include health, education, agriculture, drinking water, forestry, sanitation, livelihood, women and children etc.
7. The constitution of District Planning Committee (under Part IXA of the Indian Constitution) has been mandated for the purpose consolidating all the bottom up planning processes undertaken at various levels of PRIs and integrating rural and urban planning processes at the district level.
8. State Finance Commissions have been constitutionally required to allocate budgetary resources and the power for mobilizing revenue to local bodies.



*Figure 1*

PRIA's focus on interventions to strengthen local self-governance has targeted the all tiers of this structure. Therefore, the interventions aimed at (1) capacity building of civil society – citizen leaders, community based organisations, small voluntary development organisations, Gram Sabhas etc. to develop an effective voice on decision-making about access to and use of development resources; (2) capacity building, sensitisation and policy advocacy within the governance institutions – three tiers of PRIs, district administration, line departments etc. to respond to the voice of the new leadership from civil society; and (3) enabling linkages (interfacing) between the voice (of civil society) and response (of governance institutions) to demonstrate innovative exemplars of transparent and accountable use of development resources in favour of the poor, marginalized and excluded.

## SECTION 2

### UNDERSTANDING MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE

#### *a) Meaning and purpose of multistakeholder dialogue*

Multistakeholder dialogue is a process to build a shared understanding on a particular issue, to create a common platform among different stakeholders through dialogue, discussion and debate and to initiate joint action planning. It is used when issues cannot be addressed or resolved by a single set of actors, but require co-operation between many different stakeholders or interest groups. It is a fruitful and often initial attempt to bring together various stakeholders for sharing and debating diverse agenda but with some underlying common interest. More often it leads to common and agreed upon actions to be conducted. Joint action does not imply doing the same thing together, it involves assuming respective roles by different stakeholders for enhancing the overall purpose.

The process and method of multistakeholder dialogue encourages stakeholders who have so far not had much systematic communication amongst themselves, to come together to dialogue on an issue of common concern. This interaction and sharing of ideas and perspectives leads to a process of decision-making or finding out solution that is broad-based and finds support amongst important actors (whose interests are strongly affected by the issue) on the issue.

Multistakeholder dialogue is based on principles of mutual accountability and equity in communication amongst stakeholders. It can occur only when there is open communication and a level of transparency and basic trust amongst the participating stakeholders.

This method is of great importance in the arena of development because most development problems demand multi-faceted and multi-layered solutions that involve a range of actors and stakeholders.

The multistakeholder dialogue is both a mechanism and an activity for strengthening local self-governance and civil society. As a mechanism multistakeholder dialogue is considered as one of the primary “methodological cornerstone” that enables discussion on strengthening local self-governance and civil society among stakeholders at different levels

(district, state and national). As an activity, multistakeholder dialogue renders operational this “methodological cornerstone” through certain processes prior to, during and after the dialogue.

***b) Types of multistakeholder dialogues***

Multistakeholder dialogues cover a wide range of structures and levels of engagements. Within the project cycle framework this method can be applied at either the planning, implementation or monitoring stages, or in each of the above, depending on the exact purpose of the multistakeholder dialogue. It can consist of dialogue on policy, consensus building on local plans, developing mutual accountability decision-making or implementation of solutions. Exact nature of multistakeholder dialogue depends on the issues, its objectives, participation, scope etc. It is also possible to link different levels of multistakeholder dialogues, if required, from micro to macro level (for example, from district level to state or national level dialogues).

***c) Pre-requisites for multistakeholder dialogues***

Multistakeholder dialogue is not a universal tool for all kinds of problems or situations. It is possible in a situation where there exists an issue of common concern, where dialogue amongst the different stakeholders is possible, where listening, reconciling interests or joint solution strategies seems appropriate and within reach. Only under circumstances can multistakeholder dialogue also act as a tool for conflict resolution.

***d) Organizing multistakeholder dialogues***

Organizing multistakeholder dialogues is a complicated process, which requires careful planning and a clear purpose. There are high possibilities that multistakeholder dialogue process going wrong unless it is planned, structured, managed, led and supported in a sensitive manner. The stakeholders should be fully consulted about their involvement in the process and need transparent mechanisms of engagement. Independent facilitation by respected and experienced persons is crucial to ensure the wholehearted participation of stakeholders, resolution of conflicts and achievement of successful outcomes.

## SECTION 3

### STEPS FOR ORGANIZING MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIALOGUES

The multistakeholder dialogue process consists of three phases:

- I. Preparatory phase*
- II. Implementation phase*
- III. Post-dialogue phase*

In the following section, each of the three phases will be dealt with separately. It will include an outline of the phase, description of key issues and challenges in that particular phase.

#### **I. Preparatory phase**

As the name suggests this refers to the period of planning and preparation prior to actual implementation. During this phase it is important to set clear goals that are commonly agreed upon by all stakeholders. It is equally important to plan and strategize how the contribution of each participant will be received and fed into main process such that the desired outcomes can be achieved. Key issues that are important at this stage are selection of theme, selection of participants (stakeholders), identification of materials, pre-dialogue consultations and capacity building of stakeholders, selection of convener and dialogue design.

Key questions at the preparatory stage are:

- What will be the theme (issues to be addressed) of the dialogue?
- Who will be invited to participate (relevant stakeholders)?
- What materials will be used to support the dialogue?
- How the capacities of different stakeholders will be enhanced prior to dialogue?
- Who will manage the dialogue?
- How the dialogue will take place?

*a) Selection of theme*

The selection of theme will be determined by the issues to be addressed, which require active deliberation from different stakeholders. Clear themes, questions and topics for discussion need to be formulated depending on the desired outcome, relevance to stakeholders and context specific needs. Each theme then needs to be organized and sub-divided into issues such that important facets of the theme are covered during the dialogue and discussions. The following pages will highlight some of the issues relevant to strengthening local self-governance and civil society building<sup>1</sup>.

The 73<sup>rd</sup> and the 74<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendments (Part IX and IXA of the Indian Constitution) brought in 1993 provided the Constitutional framework for constituting democratically elected governance mechanisms at the local level. The provisions in these Amendments have some far reaching implications with respect to democratic governance and local development. By providing one-third reservation for women and proportionate reservation for other socially excluded and deprived sections (tribals, dalits etc), the Constitutional framework for local governance mechanisms in India has enormous potential for affirmative action. One of the most important roles for these local governance institutions is to plan for local development and ensure social justice in consistence with the citizens' needs and aspirations.

In a vast country like India, this democratic decentralisation has enormous challenge. In rural areas, nearly a-quarter million local bodies exist. Nearly three million elected representatives are there in these local bodies, of which nearly one million are women.

The experience of functioning of these local bodies in the past 10 years in India makes it clear that effective local self governance is still a distant dream and requires enormous interventions to realize its potential. This is particularly so because such democratic decentralisation is coming after nearly 50 years of centralisation in the state machinery, public resources and bureaucratic structures. As a result, hierarchies of government departments and agencies have generated vested interests and exercise their responsibility to apply public resources in an unaccountable manner. On the other hand, nearly five decades of state led model of development delivered from the top has created a sense of

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<sup>1</sup> *This section has been largely taken from an article Capacity Building for Effective Local Self Governance by Dr. Rajesh Tandon*

passive dependence on government agencies, programmes and resources among citizens in rural and urban areas.

### **Issue 1: Strengthening Gram Sabha as contemporary civil society formation**

Effective functioning of local self-governance requires active, engaged and organized citizenry. In the practical context of today's reality, families and communities have been increasingly divided around caste, religion, ethnicity and gender. Systematic obstruction to authentic information about rights and top down development delivery nurturing extreme passivity are major impediments to informed and active citizenship in many rural areas. The marginalized (women, dalits and tribals) sections of the community are systematically excluded from political participation by rural elites (higher caste) in connivance with local authority and strong patriarchal system. Therefore, the most significant intervention is needed to strengthen Gram Sabha as contemporary civil society formation in each village. Capacity enhancement interventions at this level entailed an appreciation of the collective identity of Gram Sabha. Such an intellectual preparation required inculcating a perspective of collective citizenship as the basis of civil society.

A strong Gram Sabha also requires institutional mechanism to function effectively. It requires effective conduct of periodical (quarterly or six monthly) Gram Sabha meetings where development planning at the local level as well as monitoring of implementation could be undertaken to enable the Gram Sabha (including acquiring further legitimacy constitutionally) to operate as the basic unit of collective decision-making in common public good.

### **Issue 2: Strengthening citizen leaderships and citizen collectives**

There have existed many informal local community based associations in villages. Some of them are traditional associations around caste or kinship, cultural-religious associations, etc. In recent years, many government or NGO development programmes have also catalyzed formation of new associations like self-help-groups, Mahila Mandals (women's groups), youth groups, village education committee, forest protection committee, watershed committee, etc. A significant aspect of strengthening local demand system is to build the capacity of these traditional and contemporary local associations and their leaderships. The capacity building efforts for these collectives and leaderships should focus on citizenship education and their role in local self-governance.

### **Issue 3: Perspective building of intermediary civil society organisations**

Perhaps the most important aspect of civil society is intermediary voluntary development organisations (VDOs). Most of them have a package of development programmes, which they implement in various villages. Orientation and sensitisation of these intermediary VDOs to work through Panchayats and the Gram Sabha has been a necessary challenge of capacity enhancement. Yet, there are many more who are neither convinced about the significance of local government nor willing to change their approaches and programmes to respond to them.

There is a vast arena of public education for society at large so that different individuals and institutions such as the media, academic institutions, youth groups, human rights organisations and others who need to be sensitized and oriented to the challenges faced by local bodies in building their capacities to accomplish their constitutionally mandated purposes.

### **Issue 4: Enhancing capacities of elected representatives of Local Self-Governance**

The elected representatives of Gram Panchayat represent a village or a cluster of villages. In addition, there is a *Sarpanch* – elected as Chief of Gram Panchayat directly by all members of Gram Sabha. In some ways, this body is the first and most direct representative body of local self-governance. However, Gram Panchayat as a vehicle for exercising representative leadership with transparency and accountability to Gram Sabha is a distant ideal.

- i) To understand the autonomous and basic democratic nature of Gram Panchayat as a collective decision-making body, most significant interventions have to be focused on preparing this collective identity. Such interventions must aim at developing a common perspective and intellectual appreciation of the Gram Panchayat.
- ii) The second set of interventions should aim at developing institutional mechanism of Gram Panchayat to function as transparent and accountable local body. This includes mechanisms for conducting meetings, preparing minutes, sharing information with Gram Sabha, securing participation and contribution of Gram Sabha, developing participatory micro plans, procedures and systems,



effective implementation and monitoring of these plans, securing and mobilizing resources and maintaining transparent systems of financial management, etc.

- iii) The capacity building intervention at this level also needs to address the question of enhancing the material base of Gram Panchayat to make them financially autonomous and sustainable entities. Capacity enhancement interventions in this area particularly focused on mobilizing local resources from the village.

The most significant interventions in capacity enhancement at this level is needed to focus on building individual leadership of each of the elected representatives. This is particularly relevant for women, dalits and tribals. These newly elected leaders are experiencing political participation in public space for the first time in their life. Thus, enhancing their leadership roles requires capacity enhancement in several ways:

- i) Access to authentic information about the system of local governance, their roles and responsibilities and financial resources available to them are the first and foremost requirement. Capacity building for these literate and semi-literate constituencies such as women, dalits and tribals, requires methodological innovations in audio-visuals, folk forms, etc. to be carried out in different settings.
- ii) Most of these elected women have not left their house or hamlet ever before. Therefore, opportunities for homogenous groups of women, dalits and tribal to share their experiences, express solidarity and provide mutual support needed to be created. It is in this context that exposure for groups of elected representatives, joint camps and big Sammelan (Conferences) could be utilized as innovative approaches to building self-confidence for the elected leadership.
- iii) Exercising new leadership also requires learning new skills. These skills included how to conduct a meeting, how to prepare minutes, how to prepare village plans, how to manage funds, etc. Learning these skills through training, practical demonstration and hand-holding needs to be promoted.

Therefore, capacity enhancement interventions aimed at individual strengthening and empowerment of new leaders has been a fundamental challenge in local governance.

Another area of horizontal networking is building relationships and support mechanisms with other elected representatives in neighbouring villages, blocks and districts. Support towards building such horizontal networks as bottom-up pressure groups and mutual support mechanisms are a major challenge of strengthening local governance.

### **Issue 5: Linkages among three tiers of Panchayat and local administration**

Given different tiers of local bodies, vertical linkages across them are needed to be strengthened. One of the most significant areas of strengthening is to enable horizontal linkages between different tiers of local bodies and commensurate tiers of local administration. These include primary school teachers, village level workers, *Aanganwadi* (pre-school) workers, multi-purpose health workers, forest guards, etc.

According to constitutional provision, all the above-mentioned government functionaries should be accountable to Gram Panchayat. However, this is not a reality anywhere in India so far. Gram Panchayat needs to learn how to assert their rights and supervision over the concerned government functionaries and relevant government development programmes and resources. Structured learning opportunities need to be created separately for Gram Panchayat, as well as jointly with concerned government officials and their supervisors.

### **Issue 6: Enhancing capacities of government officials**

Orientation and attitudinal change for government functionaries at all levels is a major challenge in working with responsive and accountable bureaucracy. A primary vehicle for bringing this about is through civil service training institutions at the district, state and national levels. This may imply improving pedagogy and quality of facilitators in such government civil service training institutions.

The second area of capacity enhancement for government functionaries has to do with specific skills that they may need to work with Panchayati Raj Institutions. For example, in the system of top-down development interventions, lowest level government officials have no skill in planning and monitoring since all of that has been centralized. They need to

learn skills in promoting micro plans (including budgeting) as well as social audit and community based monitoring of implementation of these plans.

### **Issue 7: Enhancing capacity of other actors**

Sensitisation and attitudinal changes are also a major arena of capacity enhancement for political leadership at all levels. Barring a few individuals, the political culture in most political parties and among active and elected politicians is one of the disregard for the activities and motivations of ordinary people to take responsibility for village level development.

Capacity enhancement interventions are most urgently needed to sensitize and re-orient donors. Despite general discussions, concrete shifts in donor policies, resources and programmes towards strengthening institutions of local governance are yet to take place. Carefully selected communication strategies, meetings, dialogues and workshops need to be utilized for such capacity enhancement interventions.

For organizing multistakeholder dialogue any issue as mentioned above or all the issues can be taken up for discussion and deliberation by different stakeholders. The deliberation through dialogue process may bring in alternative perspectives, which may necessitate to redefine or rearticulate the issues.

For each issue to get addressed appropriately it requires full participation of multiple stakeholders. For example, a strong Gram Sabha is the foundation of effective PRIs. However, the present reality is very dismal. Citizens are reluctant to attend Gram Sabha because they do not see any relevance or perceptible benefit of attending the Gram Sabhas. In most places meetings are not convened due to lack of quorum. Many elected Sarpanchs get away without convening Gram Sabha meeting. Even when Gram Sabha meeting is organised no decisions related to village development are made or the government officials do not attend the meeting. The venue and timing are not suitable for women to attend the meeting.

In order to rectify this situation all the stakeholders need to take responsibility. An open discussion and dialogue involving various stakeholders in this case assumes importance. The government should make enabling provisions like determining fixed periods of meeting and delineating the procedure for informing and conducting. However, enabling provisions through Acts or Government Orders alone may not resolve the problem. The elected Sarpanchs should take their responsibility seriously and citizen associations and their leadership should be proactive to participate in the Gram Sabha. The local civil

society organisations can play important roles by informing the citizens about the venue, date, agenda and most importantly the relevance of citizens' participation in Gram Sabhas. It is therefore important that all the stakeholders make concerted efforts to strengthen Gram Sabhas.

**b) Selection of participants**

Selection of participants poses a crucial question at this stage. While there exists a tendency to choose those participants who are known to the person/organisation organizing the multistakeholder dialogue process, it is important to identify objective criteria and framework for selection of participation such that the process is transparent and inclusive. As difficult questions regarding legitimacy of stakeholders are likely to arise in this process, it is essential to develop a normative framework for identification of stakeholders through their legitimate channels and with their involvement. Two important criteria for selection of such participants are *representation* and *interest*.

**Representation** refers to

- sector involved, number, level of responsibility in organisation (ability to contribute to the dialogue), involvement in the theme of the dialogue

**Interest** refers to

- experience, felt need, willingness to participate in the dialogue.

It may be important here to analyze the stakeholders relevant to strengthening local self-governance and civil society. Stakeholders are people, groups, or institutions which are likely to be affected by or can affect the issues (Rietbergen-McCracken and Narayan, 1997). Stakeholder analysis is an important tool for understanding the institutional context of the issues to be addressed with regard to strengthening local self-governance and civil society. Its findings can provide early and essential information about (1) which individuals, groups, and institutions are affected by the issues to be addressed, and (2) who could influence the effective redressal of the issues. Essentially, it indicates whose interests should be taken into account when planning for multistakeholder dialogue and its expected outcome. At the same time, the analysis ought to indicate why those interests should be taken into account.

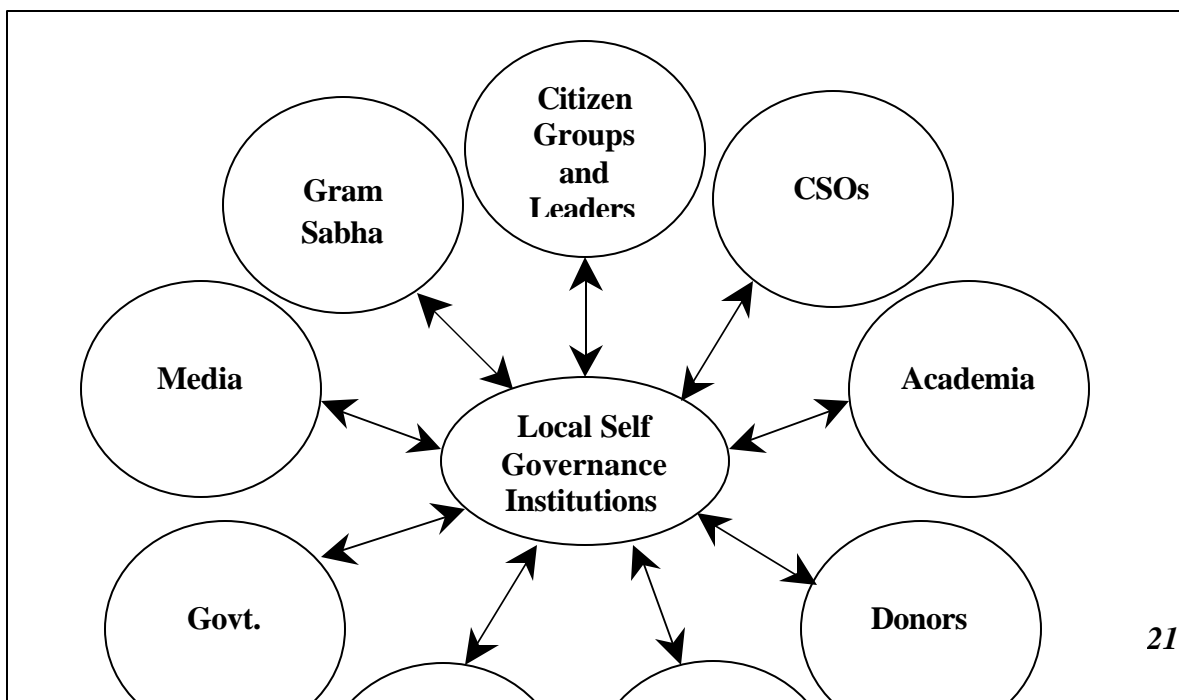
What are the steps of stakeholder analysis?

**Identify key stakeholders:** The first step of stakeholder analysis is to identify the key stakeholders, from the large array of institutions and individuals that could potentially affect or be affected by the issues. This can be achieved by drawing up a simple list. The list, which results from this exercise, can provide the first input into the stakeholder analysis. Figure 2 gives an idea about the potential stakeholders for local self-governance.

The actual identification of stakeholders should be done according to level at which the dialogue needs to be convened. For example, if the dialogue is to be convened at the district level, the officials and institutions representing the government will be different from that of a state level dialogue. Sample lists of stakeholders associated with local self-governance at the district and state levels for dialogues at the respective levels are given in Annexure 1.

**Assess stakeholder interests:** Once the key stakeholder groups are identified, their possible interests in the issue can be considered. Some stakeholder interests are less obvious than others and may be difficult to define, especially if they are not explicitly articulated, or if they have multiple expectations, or they may be in contradiction with that of other stakeholders. The following questions can guide the inquiry into the interests of each key stakeholder or group:

- ◆ What are the stakeholders' expectations from the dialogue?
- ◆ What benefits are there likely to be for the stakeholders?
- ◆ What resources might the stakeholder be able and willing to mobilize?
- ◆ What stakeholder interests conflict with the stated objective of the dialogue?



*Figure 2*

**Assess stakeholder influence and importance:** **Influence** refers to the degree of power, which stakeholders have in setting the direction of the decisions to be made during or after the dialogue process. It can be exercised by controlling or facilitating or hindering the decision-making process directly or indirectly. This control or facilitation or hindrance may come from a stakeholders' status or power, or from informal connection. **Importance**, relates to the degree to which the issue demands the active involvement of a given stakeholder group. Stakeholders who are important to the issues are generally those whose needs the issue seeks to meet as well as whose interests converge with the issue. Some stakeholders may be very **important** to an issue but may have very limited **influence** over defining the issue. For example, the women, dalit or tribal elected representatives of Panchayat may have little influence over the capacity building policy whereas their participation is important for strong local governance body. Both the influence and importance of different stakeholder groups can be ranked along simple scales – for example high, moderate and low.

### **Stakeholder Analysis**

<i>Name of Stakeholder</i>	<i>Interest(s) of stakeholders</i>	<i>Degree of Influence</i>	<i>Degree of Importance</i>

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*c) Selection of venue*

Selection of venue must be such that it is convenient for all stakeholders to reach. While using government premises as venue it is particularly important to ensure that it is not being used for other meetings or events around the time of the scheduled multistakeholder dialogue. If this happens it might mean vacating the venue earlier than required and not allow for proper winding up of the multistakeholder dialogue. Neutrality of the venue is also another concern as the use of certain premises might be viewed as taking the side of a particular stakeholder. Hence, the choice of premises is of significant importance to ensure equitable participation of all relevant stakeholders.

*d) Dialogue design*

The structure of the dialogue needs to be planned out in as much detail as possible keeping in view the participants, theme and the goal of the multistakeholder dialogue. It should include details such as structure and flow of the multistakeholder dialogue, role of various participants, length of the multistakeholder dialogue, logistical requirements, process to be followed, contents, materials to be used, deciding the convener and her/his role, need and purpose of pre-dialogue consultations etc.

*e) Identification of materials*

Written materials, study reports, case studies, surveys and issue-based handouts are often used to provide a background to the theme and provide a useful way of initiating the multistakeholder dialogue. They are also used to provide a starting database or as a handout to initiate a discussion. It is not only important to identify or develop such material that is relevant to the theme and participants but it is also necessary to simplify, consolidate and write such materials in a popular format to make them user friendly. Without burdening participants with a bulk of material it is necessary to ensure maximum usage of key materials – during and after the process. Copies of all key materials should also be organized and kept in one place to facilitate easy access and retrieval as per needs.

In cases where parallel multistakeholder dialogues are being held at different locations with a diversity of participants, timely synthesis and translation of key documents into the relevant languages also presents a major challenge.

*f) Pre-dialogue consultation and capacity building of stakeholders*

Organizers of multistakeholder dialogue need to spend sufficient time with the prospective participants and their organisations to clarify about the organizing institution's aim and the objectives of multistakeholder dialogue. It also helps to demystify the theme and the process of multistakeholder dialogue. At the same time organizer's expectations from participants are also clarified and clear terms of engagement is worked out. On one hand this helps to minimize misunderstandings about the process. On the other, the mindset of stakeholders is prepared for the dialogue. Such consultations also help to create awareness and interest in a new theme that can subsequently be taken up for action by some of the participants on a long-term basis.

Consultative meetings must be conducted with all stakeholders prior to the actual dialogue. These consultations provide occasion for specific stakeholders to discuss and consolidate their perspectives on the theme. Despite differences in interest this process goes a long way in creating a shared understanding on the issue and clear communication amongst the different participants.

There often exists a wide gap in access to information and subsequent understanding and articulation on the theme between stakeholders. Pre-dialogue consultations with individual stakeholders also help to overcome such gaps and bring them to a certain level. This is of great importance in multistakeholder dialogues where the communities and citizen leaders are involved. It is necessary to have repeated exchanges and capacity building sessions with members of the community to help boost their confidence and prepare them to articulate their concerns during the multistakeholder dialogue. This also offers a way to overcome the power gap that is likely to influence the flow and outcome of the multistakeholder dialogue. Organizers have a prime responsibility in designing and implementing such capacity building sessions.



*g) Selection of convener*

One of the most important issues in dialogue design is the plan for managing the multistakeholder dialogue. There are various practices depending on the contextual reality and the nature of dialogue. Usually a convener is selected to manage the actual event while a steering committee from amongst the organisers of the event provides technical support (e.g. logistics, materials, selection of participants and themes etc.) to the convener. The convener is usually an organisation, which enjoys credibility in the eyes of other stakeholders. This credibility is earned through the contribution that the organisation makes in terms of bringing new knowledge and experience on the issue.

The other practice is to select co-convener for managing the dialogue. Examples of co-convening mechanisms may include a local civil society organisation and the district administration (to be represented by the District Collector) or Zilla Parishad (to be represented by the Zilla Parishad Chairperson); other examples may include a state level civil society organisation and Department or Ministry of Panchayati Raj Institutions. Many a time state or national level donors can also be a co-convener. As platforms of civil society organisations are seen more representative, obviously its credibility and legitimacy will be more as compared to a single civil society organisation.

The convener or co-convener should be chosen in such a way so that wider circulation of information on the multistakeholder dialogue is ensured. An extensive network of partners may ensure that information would be disseminated to various stakeholder and potential partners. In this regard the credibility of the convener as known promoter of the development issue, having interest and capacity in broader development issues and demonstrated capacity to manage the process (organising workshops, seminars, training courses etc.) can help.

As the convener is expected to play a key role during the event, it is important to have a person with sufficient experience and familiarity with the theme and a broad development vision to facilitate the event. The facilitator must be acceptable to the different stakeholders and their varying perspectives. Excellent facilitation and management skills, along with the ability to manage conflict are other key characteristics that are required by the facilitator.

## **II. Implementation**

Implementation refers to the actual multistakeholder dialogue event. In general, the multistakeholder dialogue process involves a four-stage process: inputs, group discussion, plenary, discussion of plan of action. The length of a multistakeholder dialogue can range from 2 to 3 hours (involving high level government officials) to 1 to 2 days (especially if

community is involved) depending on the purpose of the multistakeholder dialogue, number of participants, levels of multistakeholder dialogue etc.

*a) Multistakeholder dialogue flow*

**i) Input session**

The input session is the opening session where a background to the theme and its current relevance is presented. Input session usually involves presentations of study findings, cases, surveys, data on the theme and create a backdrop for the event to follow. A variety of learning materials and aids are used at this stage of the multistakeholder dialogue and may involve use of handouts, audio-visual aids, presentations on transparencies or talks by eminent resource persons.

Together with this, the objectives of multistakeholder dialogue, the process to be followed and expectations from various participants is explained. It is also appropriate to lay out ground rules for the dialogue at this stage. For example, inculcate a respect for views of all participants, it is necessary to present experience and problems rather engage in complaint-making, each one takes turns to speak and so on.

Seating arrangements during the actual multistakeholder dialogue have the ability to influence the direction of the dialogue and reinforce existing power equations. It is therefore important to consciously plan seating arrangements such that one stakeholder is not made to feel powerful and active while another set feels disempowered and passive.

**ii) Group discussion**

Once the stage is set it is time to elicit participants views on the subject through a discussion. Group discussions are used to identify issues for discussion and coming up with action points for the future. This can take various forms ranging from open discussion where the agenda is focused and the number of participants is few. It can also take the form of small group discussion where the participants are divided into various groups depending on their profile where they discuss the same issue or different aspects of the same issue, which may then presented at the plenary session.

During this session, level of participants' knowledge, perspectives, comfort level of participants in discussing the issue with other stakeholders must be taken into consideration while dividing participants into groups. For example, putting government officials and community members may generate more conflict and one sided perceptions rather than constructive points for change. Alternatively, if the purpose is to sensitize one to the other's issues it might be worthwhile to put the two in the same group but to ensure that each side's perspectives are clearly and equally presented using a strong facilitator. During group discussions it is necessary to plan for a number of moderators and facilitators who can prevent the issue from deviating, ensure equal participation of all members and manage conflict with in the group.

### **iii) Plenary session**

During the plenary session, the outputs from various small group discussions is consolidated and presented in a large group. The plenary can either consist of representatives from all the groups or a combination of such representatives and resource persons or experts who can provide further inputs/suggestions for further action. The facilitator plays a crucial role in consolidating the inputs such that a fair picture (that reflects the perspectives of the different stakeholders) is presented and suggestions can be taken up in the future.

### **iv) Discussion on a plan of action**

As part of the plenary a plan of action is prepared, roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders worked out and decisions are taken regarding how to proceed in the future.

### ***b) Role of facilitator***

During the multistakeholder dialogue the facilitator has a crucial role to manage the dialogue process. To do this effectively the facilitator needs to be briefed properly and in detail about the participants, their perspectives and dynamics, overall purpose and process of the dialogue. In fact, it might be useful to plan the dialogue design in conjunction with the convener. It is also the facilitator's responsibility to monitor the direction of the dialogue, make necessary changes in the process along the way to correct the process.

### ***c) Documentation of the multistakeholder dialogue***

It is always effective to allocate the responsibility of documenting the proceedings in detail to a specific documenter. The documenter should take the sole responsibility of recording all the deliberations and processes, which could be consolidated in consultation with the facilitator. A synthesised document specifically should focus on (1) the elements of the processes and contextual environment or factors which influence dialogue, (2) the vertical linkages of the various dialogues if they are organized at various levels (e.g. district, state and national), (3) the possible opportunities for growth in the dialogue processes including follow-up actions. A suggestive framework for consolidating various multistakeholder dialogues is given in Appendix 2.

### **III. Post-Dialogue Phase**

Often the conduction of multistakeholder dialogue is seen as the end of the process. However, it is crucial to follow up this with a third phase that aims at evaluating and assessing how far the objectives of the dialogue have been attained and distill lessons that have been derived from the particular exercise which can form inputs for such exercises in the future. This phase is also crucial for completing the documentation and producing documents that can be used for wider dissemination and sharing. Depending on the purpose of the dialogue such documents can build up support for a particular theme and action plan and used as tools in advocacy. Such documentation also forms a guide for future initiatives that may result from the dialogue and is crucial for the process to be completed.

## SECTION 4

### CHALLENGES OF ORGANIZING MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE

#### 1. Challenges in the preparatory phase

##### a) *Selection of theme*

In a situation where both powerful and less powerful stakeholders are involved how to come up with themes that are relevant to the other stakeholders but do not sacrifice the concerns of the primary stakeholders? In other words, ensuring that the concerns of the marginalized groups forms the central focus of the multistakeholder dialogue while including all other stakeholders in the process is a major challenge for civil society organisations and other change agents that has implications for the success of the process.

##### b) *Selection of participants*

Usually multistakeholder dialogue includes the convener's traditional partners as stakeholders. Multistakeholder dialogue should find a way of including non-traditional partners, and to integrate their concerns and points of view for the dialogue to be truly inclusive. Institutionalisation of stakeholders' participation in multistakeholder dialogue is necessary in order to provide continuity to the process. It is also important to make sure that multistakeholder dialogue is not a one-time event. The dialogue should be seen as a process of ever enlarging circles whereby each dialogue is founded upon the outcome of the earlier dialogue or consultation.

##### c) *Pre-dialogue consultations*

Although pre-dialogue consultations with stakeholders have number of advantages, care must be taken that it does not become an artificial process, where issues, participants and conclusions have been drawn up in advance and there is no room for prospective participants to influence the process. Organizers are likely to get lopsided views and perspectives when they tend to rely solely on their traditional partners while ignoring non-traditional ones. Such a process is likely to lead to frustration and disengagement among stakeholders and distort the multistakeholder dialogue, if and when it occurs.

**d) *Dialogue design***

When multistakeholder dialogues occur at various levels and in various locations, how to establish a system for managing the different phases of multistakeholder dialogue process that would still reflect the local needs but be broad based enough to ensure that set standards of operations are maintained for all the multistakeholder dialogues presents a major challenge. In other words, who provides oversight for quality control? What are the mechanisms so that minimum standards for the dialogue are ensured? How to ensure that quick and timely changes can be made in the multistakeholder dialogue process in such manner so that the purpose can be achieved? Given that different stakeholders have different power and it is the needs of the less powerful that needs to be projected, how to promote active engagement of all stakeholders at every stage of the process?

**2. *Challenges in implementation phase***

**a) *Capacity of convener***

Diversity of stakeholders' interests, constituents, commitments, understanding of theme, causes initial reluctance to engage in dialogue. Secondly the large number of participants, short time frame and variety of topics that need to be covered within it requires a fairly high degree of event management skills and present a challenge to the convener. Only then can multistakeholder dialogue objectives can be met. In this situation capacity building of conveners itself is an issue that requires attention.

**b) *Capacity of facilitator***

Effective engagement among stakeholders during the dialogue depends on the sensitivity of the facilitator to the diversity of participants and her/his skills to balance interests of different groups. It is therefore necessary to develop a facilitation plan that would identify needs of a particular method, criteria for selection of experienced facilitators, expected outputs.

**c) *Documentation***

Documentation of dialogue output is critical to this process and its outcome. Documentation of dialogue output at all levels must be generated, synthesised and

consolidated. When dialogues are being conducted at various levels there is a need not only to document the entire process but also to synthesise the matter, derive lessons and refine the process further.

### **3. Challenges in post-dialogue phase**

#### ***a) Evaluation***

For the post-dialogue phase to achieve its objectives, it is necessary to make a deliberate evaluation plan. It must be developed that would serve a two-pronged purpose: (1) prove multistakeholder dialogue as a forum for effective engagement of various stakeholders on a particular theme and (2) establish contribution of dialogue to overall organisational goal.

#### ***b) Resources for follow-up***

Follow up of any action plan that has emerged from the dialogue requires separate resource commitments by donors. It cannot be covered by dialogue expenses and will not result voluntarily until time, personnel and resources are committed for the same.

## **SECTION 5**

### **POINTS TO BE CONSIDERED IN ORGANIZING MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE**

#### **1. Preparatory phase**

- Management of multistakeholder dialogue involves two key functions: organizing and facilitating. Organizing includes creating the dialogue design and framework, assigning responsibilities and designing structures and systems for different phases of dialogue. Facilitating means ensuring that the structures and functions that have been created work. Dialogue can succeed only when the convener and facilitators ensure that both functions are carried out adequately.
- Establishment of a steering committee as part of management structure increases the credibility and minimizes the dialogue as a one-person, one-organisation show.
- Credibility of convener(s) is a major factor influencing the willingness of prospective stakeholders to participate in the dialogue.
- Active and meaningful participation of the weaker sections does not happen automatically. It requires deliberate effort and planning on the part of the organizers and their (weaker sections) involvement since the beginning.
- Theme building is part of the agenda building for multistakeholder dialogue. There are two aspects of theme identification: content of theme and process of selection. The content should reflect (a) interests of stakeholders and (b) needs of the local people. Selection process of theme needs to be weaved these two into a common agenda. Prior discussion with prospective stakeholders, review of work on the issue, and review of initiatives in the area are particularly helpful in this regard.
- Clarity of theme and design of the framework result in clear criteria for choosing stakeholders rightly.
- Quality of engagement depends less on the number of participants and more on the stakeholders' interest and capacity to contribute positively to the theme.



- Materials used in the multistakeholder dialogue are of two types: for information and for reaction. Materials for information purpose help to establish the background of the dialogue and the organizers. They also contain details, which could not be covered in the dialogue. Materials used to elicit reaction are in the nature of working documents that are presented and discussed at the dialogue. They act as a basis for action and discussion. It is found that working documents are understood better and elicit greater participation from stakeholders when they are synthesised and presented systematically with visual aids.
- Effective networking prior to actual dialogue helps to identify “major actors” on the theme, gathering information on their perspectives and interests, and gauging their expectations.
- Consultative meetings between prospective participants by stakeholder groups enhances interest in the dialogue process, provides opportunity for dialogue within the stakeholder groups and helps to prepare for active engagement with other stakeholder groups during the actual dialogue. This helps to smoothen and speed up multistakeholder dialogue process as each sector has already consolidated much of its expectations and perspectives on the theme.
- The conduct of stakeholder group consultations and networking with stakeholders generate information, which brings more focus on the content of multistakeholder dialogue materials. Use of this information ensures relevance of materials to stakeholders’ needs and possible lines of action.

## **2. Implementation phase**

- Mechanisms need to be in place in order to help participants focus on multistakeholder dialogue objectives and expected outputs.
  - i) Presenting the dialogue framework and the process flow at the beginning of the activity with the help of visual aids and referring to the same regularly helps to serve as a memory aid to participants.
  - ii) Explaining the logical connections between topics increases stakeholders’ appreciation of the process they are undergoing and provides an outline for discussion of next steps.

iii) Effective facilitation not only involves allowing stakeholders to articulate their views but also the ability to synthesise, consolidate and provide additional inputs on the theme.

1. Study findings, surveys, case exemplars and other documents tell stakeholders the existing state of affairs. Multistakeholder dialogue becomes more meaningful when it challenges to move on from there and think of the implications of existing policies, programmes and operations. Also the direction that programmes must take in future to overcome existing hurdles and show better and more tangible results.
2. Clarity about one's own perspectives ("where I stand/what my perspectives are") and others' perspectives ("where you stand/what your perspectives are") are crucial to the dialogue. When these are mutually shared in an open atmosphere, it diffuses tension and leads to understanding and agreement about where "we" stand in the creation of a joint reality.
3. Two kinds of multistakeholder dialogue documentation is possible: output and process documents. Output documents show the tangible results of the activity. Process documents focus on the manner in which results were arrived at, how diverse views of stakeholders were resolved. Both are important and create a complete understanding of the multistakeholder dialogue process.

### **3. Post-dialogue phase**

- Evaluation at the end of multistakeholder dialogue activity either in oral or written form should cover both content and process. Evaluation of stakeholders by focal points and conveners helps to (1) improve the quality of multistakeholder dialogue as an activity and (2) assess the overall contribution of the dialogue process to organisational goal.
- Establishing mechanisms for follow up at different levels helps to ensure (1) implementation and monitoring of action plans at local level and (2) integration to the agenda for higher level (e.g. national or regional).

## Suggestive List of Stakeholders for Multistakeholder Dialogue

<i>State level</i>	<i>District level</i>
<p><b><u>Government</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minister, Ministry of Panchayati Raj Institution</li> <li>• Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj Institution</li> <li>• Director/Commissioner, Department of Panchayati Raj Institutions</li> <li>• Director, State Institute Rural Development</li> <li>• Secretary, State Planning Board</li> <li>• Secretaries from relevant line ministries/departments like health, education, water agriculture, tribal development, women and child development, animal husbandry, fishery,</li> <li>• Programme Directors from state level projects or programme missions (like Kudumbasree programme in Kerala or Velugu programme in Andhra Pradesh)</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Government</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• District Collector</li> <li>• Chief Executive Officer, Zilla Parishad</li> <li>• District Panchayat Officer</li> <li>• Project Director, District Rural Development Agency</li> <li>• Chief Officers from relevant line departments like health, education, animal husbandry, agriculture, fishery, forest and so on</li> <li>• District Publication Officer</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Elected representatives from Panchayat</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson, Zilla Parishad (selected)</li> <li>• Chairperson, Intermediate Panchayat (Panchayat Samiti) (selected)</li> <li>• Pradhan, Gram Panchayat (selected)</li> <li>• Members of Gram Panchayat (selected)</li> <li>• Members of various standing committees (selected)</li> <li>• Members of District Planning Committee (selected)</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Elected representatives from Panchayat</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chairperson, Zilla Parishad</li> <li>• Members of Zilla Parishad</li> <li>• Chairperson, intermediate Panchayat (Panchayat Samiti) (selected)</li> <li>• Members of intermediary Panchayat</li> <li>• Pradhan, Gram Panchayat (selected)</li> <li>• Members of Gram Panchayat (selected)</li> <li>• Members of various standing committees (selected)</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members of District Planning Committee</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Political parties</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives from major political parties active in the state</li> <li>• Member of Parliament (selected)</li> <li>• Member of Legislative Assembly (selected)</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Political parties</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives from major political parties active in the district</li> <li>• Member of Parliament</li> <li>• Member of Legislative Assembly (selected)</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Intermediary civil society organisations</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intermediary civil society organisations</li> <li>• Voluntary development organisations working in the state who are working on the issues of Panchayat or have the potential to work on these issues or could be strategic partners in future advocacy initiatives.</li> <li>• Networks of voluntary development organisations</li> <li>• Nehru Yuva Kendra</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Intermediary civil society organisations</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voluntary development organisations working in the district who are working on the issues of Panchayat or have the potential to work on these issues or could be strategic partners in future advocacy initiatives.</li> <li>• Networks of voluntary development organisations</li> <li>• Nehru Yuva Kendra</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Citizens' collectives</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selected representatives from Self Help Groups/Mahila Mandals, project-initiated committees (water user association, watershed committees, forest protection committees and so on), Youth Groups etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Citizens' collectives</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selected representatives from Self Help Groups/Mahila Mandals, project initiated committees (water user association, watershed committees, forest protection committees and so on), Youth Groups,</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Media</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives from state level print media, electronic media and radio – English, Hindi and local language</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Media</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives from district level media or district correspondents of print media, electronic media and local radio</li> </ul>

	– English, Hindi and local language
<p><b><u>Academia</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic people from colleges, universities and research institutions who have shown interest either by publishing research papers or want to undertake research studies on the issues relevant to the multistakeholder dialogue</li> </ul>	<p><b><u>Academia</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Academic people from universities or research institutions who have shown interest either by publishing research papers or want to undertake research studies on the issues relevant to the multistakeholder dialogue</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Donor</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The donors active in the state who are providing resource support on the issues on Panchayat or have the potential as strategic partner in future advocacy initiatives.</li> </ul>	

**Suggested Format for Consolidating the Reports of Multistakeholder Dialogues**

**1. What are the views of various stakeholders towards strengthening local self governance (in terms of needs and expectations)**

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>District 1</b>	<b>District 2</b>
<b>Government</b>			
<b>Elected representatives of Panchayat</b>			
<b>Political party</b>			
<b>Intermediary civil society organisations</b>			
<b>Citizen collectives</b>			
<b>Media</b>			
<b>Academia</b>			
<b>Donors</b>			

**2. What actions are stakeholders taking/willing to take to strengthen local self-governance?**

<b>Stakeholders</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>District 1</b>	<b>District 2</b>
<b>Government</b>			
<b>Elected representatives of Panchayat</b>			
<b>Political party</b>			
<b>Intermediary civil society organisations</b>			
<b>Citizen collectives</b>			
<b>Media</b>			
<b>Academia</b>			
<b>Donors</b>			

**3. In light of above, what priority interventions do you propose to undertake?**

<b>State</b>	<b>District 1</b>	<b>District 2</b>

**What impact you anticipate from these interventions (specifically, in terms of roles/opportunities for marginalized groups)?**

<b>State</b>	<b>District 1</b>	<b>District 2</b>

**4. What resources you possess already?**

**5. What additional resources you need to realize these interventions effectively?**



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