

## Phasing out

The Self Help concept is based on a sustainable approach to development. It starts with bringing together members from very poor and vulnerable sections of society. A people's institution is built in stages of self help groups, cluster level associations and federations. The capacity of the members is built all along, leading them to take charge of their lives. The promoting organization plays a Facilitating role with a clear understanding that they will phase out at a certain stage in the process. The approach is started with this understanding from day one. The promoting organization and the members of the people's institution should be clear about this phase out right from the initial stages.

The concept is based on the principle that every human being, however poor or vulnerable has potential. The approach is focused on unleashing this potential. Once people realize their potential and organize themselves, the promoting organization phases out. The people themselves decide the sense of direction, goals and priorities suitable for them and they steer their lives and their communities in that direction. The promoting organization does not dictate terms since as human beings they have their individuality and have their right to direct their path and live their lives. All along the process the promoting organization should be careful to make sure that the people decide for themselves and are not constrained by external influences.

The development and empowerment process includes:

- o Coming out of the poverty cycle and having access to capital
- o Realizing self worth and building up self esteem
- o A growing human capital through institution building and linkages
- o Coming up with own programmes to meet the needs of communities
- o Establishing and maintaining moral values for the communities
- o Having a sense of direction and clear vision and mission.

The terms "phasing out" and "withdrawal" are used in development parlance. A general understanding of the terms is:

Phasing out: The complete withdrawal of a promoting organization from a working area. After phasing out, the promoting organization might go to a new area and start work afresh. The promoting organization will not spend money after the phasing out in the old area.

Withdrawal: No direct participation, involvement or implementation. The promoting organization will still be in the area as an advisor to the people's

institutions. The promoting organization may spend money and resources after the withdrawal in the old area.

In the self help concept, promoting organization plans to 'phase out' and not just 'withdraw'. This goal of phasing out is achieved in stages and has to be understood by all the stakeholders right from the beginning. A lot of capacity building inputs are provided at every stage to help the fledgling people's institution stand on their own feet. Some of the steps in the process are:

- o At the self help group level, encourage the groups to make their own, responsible choices and decisions and help them to carry them through.
- o At the cluster level association level start shifting the monitoring and control functions of the institution from the promoting organisation to the institution.
- o Facilitate the People's institution to establish linkages and network with other institutions. Encourage them to access services and resources rather than hand over to them.
- o Encourage the CLA to come up with their vision and mission and facilitate the process of reaching their goals through programmes implemented by the people's institution.
- o Administration responsibilities borne by the promoting organization should be shifted to the people's institution starting from the CLA level.
- o Facilitate the Federation to establish its own unique identity and have its own legal status.
- o The Federation will take over the administrative role from the promoting organization, ensure that necessary costs are raised and start operating independently.

*Phasing out financial support:*

The phasing out of the financial support is an important step in the process. It can be carried out in the following stages:

Stage 1: *Promoting Organisation bears all expenses. The expenses are:*

- Honorarium for Community Facilitators
- Training expenses
- Travel expenses for Community Facilitators
- Salary of Project Officer
- Travel expenses of Project Officer
- Administrative expenses of Promoting Organisation

Stage 2: *People's Institution raises small part of administrative expenses and expends them. This could start at CLA level. The responsibility of spending the money raised and accounting the same will lie with the people's institution.*

Stage 3: *People's Institution raises larger part (above 30%) of administrative expenses and starts managing part of the finances to Acceptable standards. The Community Facilitators start reporting to the People's institution and they pay their remuneration and travel expenses. Even if the whole amount cannot be raised, the promoting organization can route the money through the people's institution.*

Stage 4: *People's Institution raises major part of administrative expenses and manages all the finances. This is normally achieved at the Federation level.*

Administrative expenses can be raised through three main channels:

1. Regular subscriptions from member SHGs
2. Earmarked administration costs from project funds raised by the People's institution
3. Viable Income Generating projects of the people's institution that will provide funds on a sustainable basis for administration. Sizeable investments may have to be made for these. E.g. Community shower

#### *Phasing out Roles and Responsibilities:*

The Promoting organisation conducts periodic role transfer exercises with the People's institution, starting with the CLA level and going up to the Federation level in a participatory manner. The roles and responsibilities of building the people's institution and strengthening the same are listed at these sessions. Roles that can be taken over by the People's institution from the Promoting organisation are identified. The needed Capacity Building programmes to take over the roles are identified and imparted. The roles and the responsibilities that go with them are thus systematically transferred.

From the time the CLA is formed, such role transfer exercises could be done in six monthly periods and the needed capacity buildings provided to enable the People's institution effectively take over. Self-monitoring systems should be in place.

In a well planned and well implemented self help programme, phasing out should be possible in 5 to 7 years.