

# Unnat Bharat Abhiyan

## Group Recommendations for Setting up of Basic Amenities in Rural Communities

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### Summary

The Basic Amenities Working Group recommends setting up Rural Research, Training & Implementation Centers that are connected through internet (2G or 3G based datacards). This network of internet connected Centers will

- support local healthcare through multi-media supported telemedicine, counselling and training
- track, and provide training and infrastructure development for sanitation and quality water
- support local experts in providing school level and adult education
- bring markets to the community (allowing price discovery, access to local produce and services by global markets and delivery of goods to the local community), increasing efficiency of trade
- through this, it will support agro-processes, livelihood generation
- support integrated learning across centers, tracking of capacity building and strategy development

BAWG recommends broad frameworks in providing wellness services (health, sanitation and water quality), education, e-connectivity & marketing services to rural communities. The framework defines goals of the program and stakeholders necessary – local partners (NGOs, SHGs, government agencies) will need to define the program within this framework appropriate for local implementation.

### Introduction

Since independence, we have struggled in providing necessary quality of services and infrastructure in rural India. Over this time, we have – through collective efforts across socio-political and development efforts – gained significant learning about participatory processes, diversity of processes in our diverse country, capacity building at the local level, and the social and environmental impact of various development models.

This Basic Amenities Working Group (BAWG) proposes an integrated framework that can leverage our collective learning as a nation to implement a process that can build capacity within our rural communities and help develop local learning, develop resources and infrastructure and engender a vibrant economy.

BAWG is part of a larger effort of Unnat Bharat with goals to strengthen rural communities through:

1. Strengthening Organic / Chemical Free Agriculture
2. Strengthening local livelihood generation through empowering local artisans

3. Ensuring access to quality water for irrigation and drinking through water harvesting processes
4. Ensuring access to energy by intelligent sequestration for local sources to support local development and quality of life
5. Ensuring basic amenities including water, sanitation and healthcare (holistic wellness), e-connectivity to provide access to government services, and easier access to markets.

In creating a strategy for ensuring basic amenities in rural communities across India, BAWG recognized that given the diversity of India, the specifics of a development program must be local. We recognize that stakeholders and key players in any program change across the country. In addition, different parts of the country have developed key strengths (or see certain weaknesses) – hence, methods of implementation will also be diverse.

Thus, in delivery of basic amenities, BAWG has created a framework that ensures certain goals are met and specific roles are filled. Local partners are requested to present proposals with these goals. Methods of peer review and peer learning are built into the framework, while also ensuring the autonomy of the local partners and accountability to the local community.

### **Education**

BAWG recognizes that goals of the education program should include for all school age children:

- a. Ability of reading and writing, logical thinking and mathematics commensurate with national school metrics.
- b. Understanding of history and ecology – relationships with the environment, with and between individuals and communities, and with resources – with focus on the local and exposure to global ideas and on questions of sustainability.
- c. Awareness of individual and community wellness (including preventive, and promotive programs).
- d. Exposure to arts and culture – local and global
- e. Understanding of science based on observations of science in day –to –day events and phenomena around the individual. Ability to explain, and work with these concepts commensurate with national school metrics
- f. Ability to use this knowledge to explore and resolve local problems and challenges. Involving local youth in framing and solving such local projects.

BAWG recognizes that such learning opportunities should be available for older citizens as well.

Key stakeholders in this program include content developers, facilitators / teachers, students, and the community (including those who will assess the students and leverage their skills or give them jobs). Local community members and NGO / SHG partners or Government agencies will frame the details of

the program (including content providers, and facilitators). The program should include a component on continuous assessment, designed by the implementing partner. The community and peer partners need to be involved in assessing progress in the program. Assessment should include:

1. Assessing capability of students in government or board exams and intermediate exams.
2. Regular presentations by students to the community and peer partners
3. Presentations of projects by learners
4. Documentation of the above.

### **Sanitation & Water Quality**

BAWG recognizes that goals of this program should include:

- a) Training, awareness and knowledge sharing about need sanitation and water quality, methods of achieving them, infrastructure required and their maintenance.
- b) Creation of infrastructure and processes – at a community level and at an individual level.
- c) Models of incentives and penalization designed by the community that is fair, does not oppress on the basis of caste and ensures sustainability of sanitation and water quality.
- d) Partnership with equipment manufacturers for toilets, water quality kits, and other equipment.
- e) Integration with biogas units and with e-connectivity program (for tracking and training).

Key stakeholders in this program include equipment manufacturing and process experts, trainers (for local building and maintenance), sanitation systems tracking and process compliance partners, as well as the local community. Local community members and NGO / SHG partners or Government agencies will frame the details of the program (including content providers, and facilitators). The program should include a component on continuous assessment, designed by the implementing partner. The community and peer partners need to be involved in assessing progress in the program. Assessment should include:

1. Assessing efficacy, feasibility and sustainability of the solution.
2. Identification and tracking of key parameters
3. Continuous assessment of operation efficacy

### **Health Care**

BAWG recognizes that goals of this program should include:

- a) Improved access to health expertise (doctors, counsellors), primary diagnostics and generic medicines – support delivery of advice through smart telemedicine.
- b) Improved tracking of health indicators (malnutrition, infectious diseases, childhood mortality, mental health, sexual health)
- c) Improved training and awareness (to individuals and to health support community) on early childhood development, reproductive health, adolescent health, geriatric health, mental health.
- d) Partnership with health providers (private and government), device providers, delivery of generic medicines, health workers.
- e) Training of community on health; Training of health workers on first response, counselling, and health support programs. Support of health workers with smart tele-counselling
- f) Identification and development of local medicinal resources – an opportunity for training and livelihood generation

Key stakeholders in this program include health providers (allopathic, AYUSH, government and private), diagnostic device manufacturers, low cost generic pharma delivery and insurance solutions, health workers, telemedicine facilitators and counsellors, as well as the local community. Local community members and NGO / SHG partners or Government agencies will frame the details of the program (including content providers, and facilitators). The program should include a component on continuous assessment, designed by the implementing partner. The community and peer partners need to be involved in assessing progress in the program. Assessment should include:

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### **e-Connected Rural Research, Training & Implementation Centers**

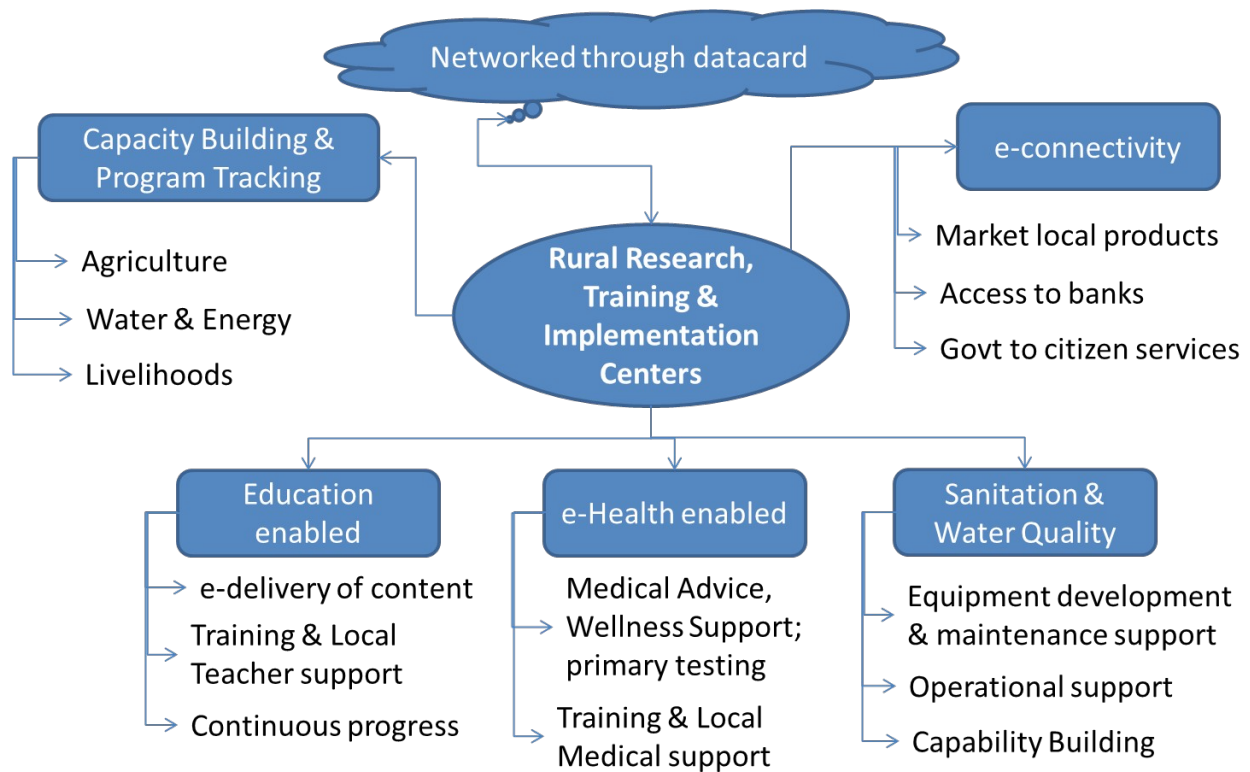


Figure 1. Schematic of a revenue generating Rural Research, Training & Implementation Center

These centers lie at the core of the recommendation. They are intended to become institutions that implement these programs as well as facilitation of locally controlled capacity building. By institutionalizing these centers, this program attempts to create a framework where NGOs can participate in local capacity building in partnership with the local community and where the effectiveness of the NGO can be audited by the local community. This is significant since NGOs have often been responsible to the funding community rather than the local community.

The centers will initially be run by an individual who will serve as the coordinator with the blessings of the community. A representation of the local village / panchayat will oversee the working of the center. The coordinator will be responsible for facilitating telemedicine support (we propose that initially this coordinator is a woman member of the community to encourage use of health and education services) with remote doctors and experts (and will be paid for her services). In addition, the center will also be an interface for e-marketing services of the community – all produce and their prices (available for sale) will be listed through the center on a national website on rural produce (BharatHaat). The coordinator will also be paid for supporting this service. Some fraction of the revenue from e-market services will also be collected in a village fund for developmental services.

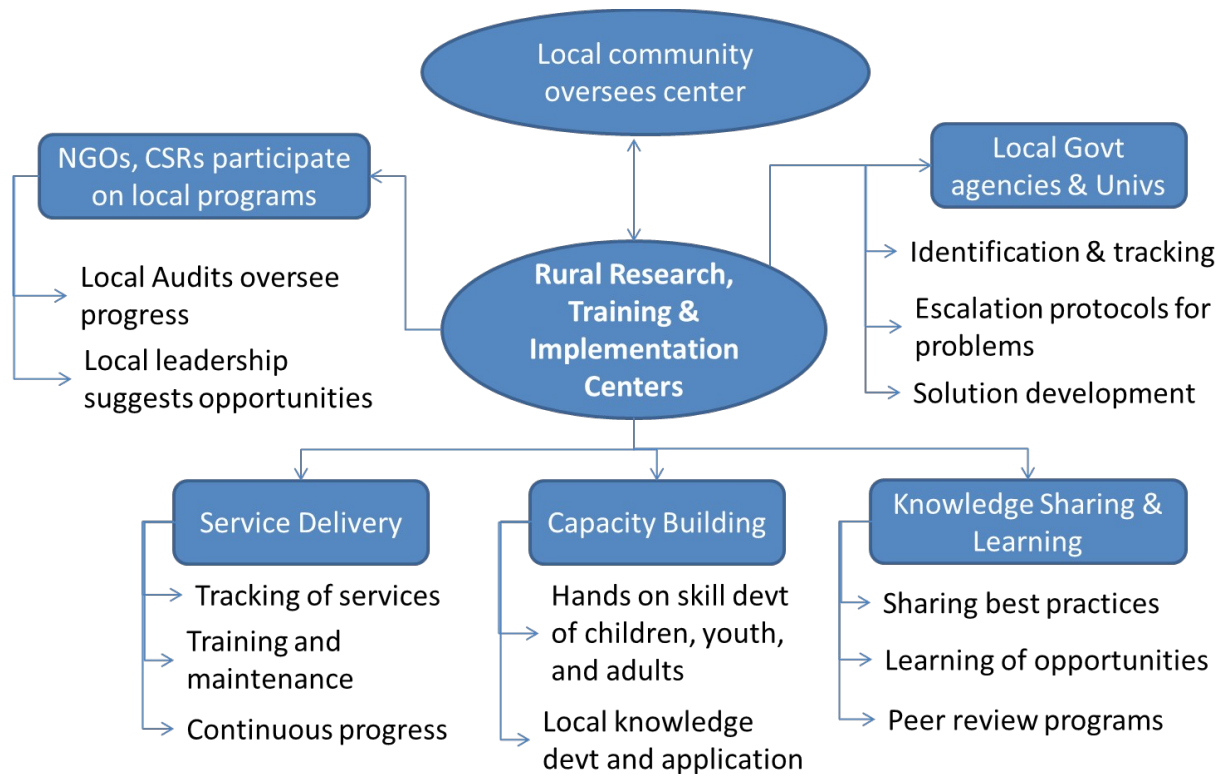


Figure 2. Centers as a model of Swaraj: Self governance and capacity building

The e-connected center will also provide financial access (bank accounts and access), and government to citizen services, for a fee. The revenue from e-market services can be directly integrated into the bank accounts of individuals.

The set up and operational cost of the center will include:

1. Rent of a 1 room& electricity – INR 1500/month
2. Salaries to a coordinator – INR 7000/month
3. E-connectivity (data card) – INR 600/month
4. A one time cost of a desktop, UPS, web-cam and speakers – INR 75000 (approx.)
5. A one time cost of a multi-functional diagnostics device integrated into e-health system – INR 12000 (approx.)
6. One time cost of set up and training of e-health system, financial services, government to citizen services – INR 3000
7. Annual maintenance of hardware – INR 10000 (approx.)

The total cost of this center for 2 years would be INR 322400. The revenue generated into the village for marketing services would more than cover this amount.

### **The Center as A Capacity Building Institution**

This center, owing to its e-connectivity, will also become a site for learning. With increased bandwidth, lectures and workshops can be streamed into this center on agriculture, livelihood generation and development of local facilities and infrastructure. Local students can learn from other centers as well as from local technical institutions, and other centers of expertise from around the country. In addition, local experts (artisans, artists, agriculturists) can also share their expertise with other parts of the country. This model will also help local universities (faculty and students) engage with local problems, further helping contextualized skill development that is needed in India.

The center can also become the site for documentation and auditing of all work being done by local partners, NGOs, SHGs – as well as of local resources, and infrastructure. Collaborative tracking of progress can be the responsibility of the center – it will allow continuous tracking, peer review, knowledge sharing and improvement. Incentive structures (social, financial) can help drive progression of programs and activities.

In the long term, we expect the center to become a space for knowledge sharing, training, and support for development of infrastructure and services that bring greater revenue to the community and improve its quality of life.