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CONSTRUCTION
OF
PRIMARY SCHOOL BUILDINGS
IN
ETAH DISTRICT

(A Case Study of the Construction Programme)



Planning Research and Action Institute, Uttar Pradesh,
Kalakan̄kar House, Lucknow,

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FOREWORD

The Planning Commission sponsored a scheme for Research, Guidance and Training from last year with a view to promoting public co-operation in Plan programmes and creating a better understanding of the objectives laid down in the Third Five-Year Plan. Under this Scheme a number of case studies were assigned to the Planning Research and Action Institute, U. P., out of which four were published last year and some more have been completed during the current year. In sponsoring this scheme, the Planning Commission observed that the implementation of the various Plan programmes is gradually changing the outlook of the people and releasing the new initiative. The sense of self-help and responsibility is developing in considerable measure and new methods and techniques of organising people's co-operative efforts are being evolved. As such, it was thought desirable to undertake case studies of such successful co-operative efforts and publish them in the form of small pamphlets. "Construction of Primary School Buildings in Etah District" is one such study. It is hoped that this would stimulate thinking and action for initiating similar activities in other parts of the country.

I am grateful to the members of the Evaluation and Statistics Section of this Institute for preparing this case study.

RAM DAS,

Director,

*Research and Action Institute, Uttar Pradesh
Kalakānkar House, Lucknow.*

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Time and again the importance of three basic institutions at the village level, viz., panchayats, co-operatives and schools, has been emphasised. For the wholesome development of the village community the co-ordinated functioning of these three institutions is an essential pre-requisite. As such, in the wider concept of community development, these institutions have been rightly termed as "the three levers" for economic and social uplift of rural India. The importance of village schools has been realised since times immemorial. Aristotle, the Greek Philosopher (2000 BC) had also recognised the same in the following words :

"Creation of a school is equivalent to destroying of a prison."

Such is the importance of schools in human social system.

While institutions of panchayats and co-operatives in the village ensure social and economic justice by providing democratic rights to all the adults of the community, the village school, on the other hand, is meant to develop the young minds for responsible citizenship. By and large these three institutions are statutory ones. In order to ensure their effective, impartial and smooth functioning it is necessary that these village social organisations should have their own buildings. It is particularly so in case of the village primary school. Firstly, it is a recognised psychological fact that among other things a child must get a more pleasant and somewhat different atmosphere in the school than what is available at his home. The school building should have an entity of its own. Secondly, the remodelling of the curriculum of primary education on the basic pattern, enjoins the children to undertake activities of a wider range, e.g., various arts and crafts prevalent in the locality, kitchen gardening, etc. The main idea behind this new system of education is to integrate fully the school and community life from the early age of a child's life. And lastly, the provision of free and compulsory primary education for the children in the age-group of 5-11 years makes it all the more obligatory on the part of the society to provide buildings for the village schools.

Keeping in view the above considerations, great emphasis was laid on the improvement of existing primary school buildings and the construction of new ones in rural areas from the initiation of the First Five-Year Plan. In this State the primary schools function under the auspices of District Boards (now Antarim Zila Parishads) and these are mostly housed in donated *kachcha* buildings. There are practically little or no provisions for annual repairs and improvements in many cases. The main reason for this state of affairs is the lack of funds at the disposal of Zila Parishads.

However, sporadic efforts were made in various districts of the State for taking up the construction of village primary schools on a wider scale, but these were far from satisfactory. Even the progress of the country as a whole was not quite upto the mark in this direction. It is clear from the review of the progress of the First Five-Year Plan by the Ministry of Education, Government of India, that the extent of work done for expansion of primary education in rural areas was not to the desired extent,

Consequently, in the Second Five-Year Plan, greater emphasis was laid on this programme. Side by side with the opening of more development blocks in the rural areas, various socio-economic activities including construction of primary school buildings were initiated with a higher tempo. Simultaneously, more funds were also placed at the disposal of Block Development Committees, Antarim Zila Parishads and Education Department of the State Government for this purpose.

Various districts of the State, by availing these opportunities, were making some progress in this direction, when in the latter half of the Second Five-Year Plan, i.e., November 1959 people of Etah District of this State decided to present to the Prime Minister of India an album containing the photographs of 70 newly constructed village primary school buildings, the number corresponding to the age of the Prime Minister. This event attracted the attention of the people of other districts as well as the State Government. But this was again followed by the presentation of 71 Children's Parks and 72 Primary School buildings to the Prime Minister in the following two years. Such a steady progress made by the people of Etah District received an appreciation everywhere. The main question posed was "What created this tremendous urge in the people of Etah District for such a constructive programme".

In the present case study an attempt has been made to investigate and analyse the circumstances and factors which have contributed towards this spectacular achievement by the people of Etah District.

CHAPTER 2

ORIGIN, HISTORY AND GROWTH OF THE PROGRAMME

The whole movement of school building construction in Etah District owes its origin to the efforts of the people of village Pharauli. Tracing back the history of this movement it is observed that it started with the construction of school building in this village. It would be no exaggeration to say that the efforts of this village community were mainly instrumental in creating a district-wide urge for the construction of village primary schools. As many as 300 villages in the district drew inspiration from the experiences of the village community of Pharauli in this direction. So, in order to study the whole movement, it is very necessary to study in detail the events which led to the construction of Pharauli school building. The story of its construction is described in the following paragraphs.

The idea of constructing the building for the village primary school was mooted out as early as 1956. It was at that time that the people of the village donated voluntarily a sum of Rs.400 for the construction of the village approach road. But, Sri Shyam Sunder, the then village Pradhan, was in favour of utilising this fund in the construction of a school building in the village, as the school was functioning in an old building donated by a villager. He expressed his feeling to the other people in the village and some of them readily agreed to his suggestion. The result was that very soon the entire village was divided into two camps, one in favour of investing the money in the feeder road and the other on the village school building. Incidentally, the District Magistrate, Etah, along with the block staff, happened to visit the village when this controversy was current. During the course of discussion regarding the various development activities, a mention was made of the controversy over the investment of the voluntary contribution of the village people. The District Magistrate, after hearing the people of both the groups, reconciled them in favour of a school as one of the basic institutions of democratic society. It was also emphasized by him that the people of the village would have to bear the main responsibility in this connection, although every possible financial assistance and technical guidance would be provided by the official agencies. The District Magistrate also gave specific instructions to the block development officer to follow up this matter more closely.

Construction of the building is planned

As a first step towards construction of the school building, a piece of land measuring about two acres was donated by the village Panchayat for its site. After the building site was made available, the village Pradhan approached the Block Development Officer for a suitable plan and the estimates of expenditure to be incurred on the building. The Block Development Officer assigned this job to the Block Overseer and the Assistant Development Officer (Panchayat). The plan and estimates of expenditure thus prepared were discussed and approved in a meeting of Gaon Panchayat. Side by side a resolution to the effect that all possible resources shall be mobilised for the purpose was passed. The District Magistrate, who was watching the progress in this direction with keen interest was

shown the plan of the proposed building. In this connection it may be mentioned that the plan was of usual standard design recommended by State Public Works Department. The District Magistrate suggested that an arched verandah in the front instead of rectangular one as was shown in the original plan would give an attractive view to the building. This modification was readily accepted. Now the stage was set for the construction of the building, but the same required funds to start the work.

How were funds raised ?

It was, no doubt, a difficult proposition for the village community because a major part of the funds was to come from the people. The village panchayat began to explore all possible avenues for raising funds for this purpose. First of all, panchayat disposed of some of its properties consisting of a plot of land and a few trees for an amount of Rs.2,160. Thereafter, the panchayat decided to realise the arrears of panchayat tax. An extra contribution of Re.1 per family was also raised. This effort of the panchayat brought a handsome amount of Rs.2,650. Apart from all these, on the occasion of three marriage ceremonies in the village, a total donation of Rs.72 was also received towards the school building construction. In this way the village panchayat was able to raise a total contribution of Rs.4,882. But still, much remained to be done.

As a next step the panchayat decided to avail of the financial aid from Government and local bodies earmarked for this purpose. Accordingly, on the basis of Rs.7,500, as estimated cost of construction, the village panchayat obtained an amount of Rs.3,000 (40 per cent of the total cost) from the block budget in December 1956. Another grant of Rs.1,000 was received from the Antarim Zila Parishad, Etah. It is evident from the above that the village people were not solely dependent upon the Government aid but they tried and succeeded in raising as much funds as could be possible through voluntary efforts. Although the Government and Zila Parishad's contribution of Rs.4,000 was also availed of, yet the local initiative was the keynote in the success of the programme. The table below gives the details of contribution from various sources :

TABLE NO. 1
Details of Government Aid and People's Contribution

Serial no.	Sources	Amount (In rupees)
1	2	3
1	People's contribution	
	(i) Obtained by selling unclaimed plot of land	2,100
	(ii) Panchayat tax and villager's contribution	2,650
	(iii) Obtained by selling trees possessed by Panchayat	60
	(iv) Contribution by three marriage parties	72
	TOTAL OF PEOPLE'S CONTRIBUTION	4,882
2	Government aid from Block Budget	3,000
3	Aid from Antarim Zila Parishad	1,000
	TOTAL AID RECEIVED	4,000
	TOTAL COST OF CONSTRUCTION	8,882

Construction begins

After the construction site and requisite funds being available, it was only a question of time to start the actual work. For this purpose an action programme was chalked out. Details pertaining to the purchase of building material, employment of labour and assigning the duties for supervisory work were worked out. The bricks were purchased from Sahawar town which was hardly one mile from the village. The labourers of the village who could not contribute in cash earlier, now had an opportunity to do so. Out of the carting charges paid to them for the transportation of the brick a percentage of the same was donated by them towards the school building. The cement and steel were purchased at controlled rates against the permits issued by the district authorities. The wood was purchased locally.

The technical guidance and supervision was provided by the Block Overseer, who had prepared the plan of construction earlier. The day-to-day supervision was done by the village Pradhan himself. The contract of the building was given to a village mason who was well skilled in his profession. The village Pradhan was assisted by the Village Level Worker, Panchayat Secretary and other progressive villagers. Through the co-ordinated efforts of the village people as well as officials, the building was completed in the middle of 1957 at a total cost of about Rs.8,900.

News spreads to surrounding villages

Construction of a *pucca* primary school building by the village community, Pharauli at a reasonable cost served as a good example as well as a source of encouragement to other adjoining villages in the area. The Pradhans and the people of neighbouring villages started coming to see the Pharauli school building and most of them were inspired and convinced that it was possible for them also to construct similar buildings in their own villages. But this inspiration of few created a tremendous urge in a number of panchayats of the whole district. The programme developed with such rapidity that it took the shape of a district-wide movement. In the chapter that follows, methods and techniques employed during various stages of the programme are discussed.

CHAPTER 3

DISTRICT-WIDE PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

Construction of a pucca building for village primary school in Pharauli mainly through people's efforts stimulated similar activity in other parts of the district. To start with, it was the villages of nearby blocks, but by and by it reached the other corners of the district also. In this context it would be significant and meaningful to analyse the methods and techniques employed with respect to programme planning, mobilisation of people's efforts and ultimately in creating an urge among the people for taking up this programme. The main ones among these, both at official and non-official levels, are described below.

Keen interest of the District Magistrate in the Programme

The ultimate aim of any community development programme is to inculcate a sense of self-reliance and thereby creating an independent initiative and a sense of responsibility in the leaders of local communities where a particular programme is going to be initiated. Such programmes are in most cases sponsored by official agencies to start with, but the ultimate aim being that it should be a people's programme with Government participation and not the vice versa. More or less similar was the case in school building construction programme in Etah District. As has been indicated earlier, the District Magistrate, Etah took keen interest in the construction of Pharauli school building. This association of the District Officer had a two-fold effect ; firstly, it had a healthy and inspiring effect on the village community, and secondly, the officials at various levels of administration were energized and motivated. During his visits to different parts of the district, the District Magistrate evinced interest in the primary school building construction in the villages. Such an initiative of the District Magistrate helped in enthusing other Government workers for promoting this programme on the lines of Pharauli building.

The programme in the deliberations of the Block Development Committees

In the Block Development Committee meetings, discussions on the utility and importance of construction of primary school buildings were also held. Such a step was designed primarily to motivate and enthuse the Pradhans for taking up similar programme in their villages, who happened to be the members of these Committees. Side by side, block level workers during their action visits or night halts impressed on the village leaders the importance of the programme. These contacts helped in the gradual diffusion of the programme and a number of villages were showing inclination in this direction. Wherever such an indication of local initiative was visible, it was followed up closely and vigorously by the officials ranging from village level to block level. The initial help extended to such village communities was in the preparation of a plan of the proposed building, the estimate of expenditure, advice regarding the procurement of construction materials, etc. Later on during the construction phase technical supervision was provided by the Block Overseer.

The programme in the deliberations of Antarim Zila Parishad

At the district level too there was very close follow up and review of the programme. In the meetings of the Antarim Zila Parishad the programme was discussed in detail. The Block Pramukhs were explained the utility and importance of school buildings in the wider context of socio-economic development of village communities. After reviewing the financial resources of Antarim Zila Parishad it was declared that an aid of Rs.1,000 will be provided by Antarim Zila Parishad to the venturing panchayats in this programme. The official machinery at the district level was also geared up to meet the requirements of the programme in time. Prompt action was taken for sanctioning aid from the Government budget as well as from the Antarim Zila Parishad grant. To make the procedure simple, funds from various sources earmarked for this purpose were pooled. In other aspects also there was an integrated approach by various Government Departments towards this programme. The essential building materials like cement, steel, iron, etc. were made available to the villages for the construction work. Over and above this, the district level officers on various occasions attended the meetings of the Block Development Committees and Village Panchayats and provided inspiration and encouragement for taking up this programme.

Mobilisation of people's participation in the programme

The official initiative is primarily directed towards stimulating and motivating village people for taking up a programme. In the ultimate analysis of things the success of every rural development activity depends solely upon the active and fruitful participation of the people themselves. It is the local initiative which matters most while the official assistance in one form or the other is only meant to supplement the former. Enlisting of popular participation in all community development programmes is the most important as well as difficult task. The official agency as well as the local leaders do have a vital role to play in the mobilisation of people. In most cases this is motivated by a few selected individuals who are termed as 'local leaders'. The task of such leaders is two-fold; firstly, to mobilise the local opinion in favour of the action and secondly, to initiate the work for achieving the ultimate goal.

The role of Village Panchayat

It was, in general, the village Pradhans along with other progressive persons of the village community, who were influenced by the officials. The problem which was posed, was as to how best they could mobilise the village people for such an activity of common benefit. This was rather a difficult task. First of all, the village Pradhans placed the matter before the members of village panchayats. Here too the opinion on the question was divided. Some of the panchayat members who did not agree to the construction programme were contacted individually and they were gradually persuaded in favour of the programme. In case of staunch opponents both the official and non-official workers joined hands in bringing them round. Thereafter the village panchayat passed a formal resolution to this effect and it marked the beginning of the programme in the village. Soon thereafter discussions were held with the block officials regarding the plan of the building, the estimated cost of expenditure, arrangement for construction materials, etc., etc. In this connection the Block Overseer and the Assistant Development Officer (Panchayats) helped

the village panchayats a great deal. The site for the proposed school building, in most cases, was donated either by the village panchayat or some other benevolent individual or a group of individuals in the village.

The next step was how to mobilize the mass opinion and harness the potential physical and economic resources of the village community as a whole. The following procedure was adopted for this purpose. Since every member of the village panchayat had a group of followers in the community, they were asked to propagate the idea of constructing a school building among their groups. After such preliminary contacts, when a favourable atmosphere was created in the minds of the majority of the people, a meeting of Gaon Sabha was convened and the matter was placed before it.

Discussions in the Gaon Sabha Meeting

The resolution of the panchayat was put before the meeting of the Gaon Sabha. The discussions in this meeting were lively and many persons took part in the same. The members of the panchayat including the Pradhan explained to the people the aims and the objectives of the school building programme. The people were also told that the programme would, in the main, be the responsibility of the village community although some assistance from Government could be expected. In this way every effort was made to enthuse people for this task. Finally, a large majority of the Gaon Sabha members came out in favour of taking up the construction of school building programme. It was only after this that ways and means were devised for raising resources for the construction work. Contributions in cash and kind were made by the villagers. The pending arrears of the panchayat tax were also realised for utilising the same for this purpose. In some cases by unanimous consent of the people additional taxation for the school building programme was also levied. In this way every possible source was tapped to raise the requisite amount of contribution from the village community.

Assistance from Government and Antarim Zila Parishad

Financial assistance was also extended by the Government as well as Antarim Zila Parishad. The contribution of the Government towards the construction of village school building was to the extent of 40 per cent of the total estimated cost of construction. As stated earlier, the Antarim Zila Parishad also made a uniform contribution of Rs.1,000 per school towards the construction of its building.

Presentation of photographs of school buildings to the Prime Minister on his Birthday

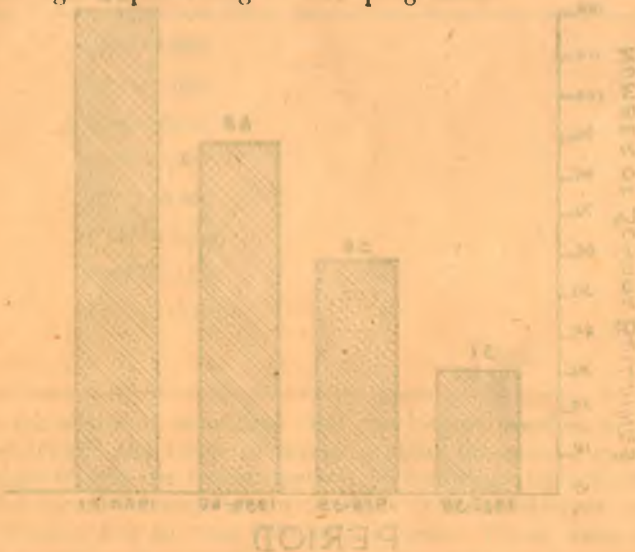
It is under the impact of the above efforts, i.e., motivation of village leaders and officials, adoption of resolution by the village panchayat, preparation of the plan of the building and estimated cost of expenditure with the help of block officials, mobilisation of public opinion for the programme and raising adequate resources from the village community and the assistance from the Government and local bodies that the programme of school building construction progressed smoothly in different parts of the district. It was, however, in October 1959 that the people of Etah thought of presenting an album containing photographs of the village school buildings to the Prime Minister of India on the 14th November,

which happens to be his birthday. There were altogether 70 school buildings which were included in the album, this number corresponding to the age of the Prime Minister. This step imparted an emotional tinge to the whole movement and the non-participating village panchayats were showing their eagerness for the construction of primary school buildings in their villages too. A greater attraction was that the Pradhans of those villages in which very good buildings were constructed were sent to Delhi for the presentation of the album to the Prime Minister. Everyone of the village Pradhans vied with one another for inclusion in this team. Furthermore, all the Pradhans whose term of office were to expire in 1961 tried to complete the school building during their tenure of office. All these factors prompted a healthy competition among the village panchayats for taking up this programme as well as for completion of the same.

The programme expands .

As a result of the co-ordinated efforts, both at official and non-official levels, the programme of primary school building construction spread over the whole district. In the initial stages it was the official agency which stimulated and mobilised the village people, but as the programme developed, it was the mass urge which mobilised the whole Government machinery of the district for carrying out the programme. At times, it became rather difficult for the officials to cope up with the enthusiasm of the people. A number of village communities even did not wait for the financial assistance from Government. Three school buildings were constructed at a total cost of Rs.23,000 without any financial assistance from the Government. The district authorities believed that if the present pace of the movement is maintained, the entire district would be saturated with the primary school buildings within the Third Plan period. Most of the village schools have also been provided with children's parks, vegetable gardens, safe drinking water supply, sanitary latrines, etc.

In the chapter that follows, an attempt has been made to analyse the facts and figures pertaining to this programme.



CHAPTER 4

FACTS AND FIGURES OF THE PROGRAMME

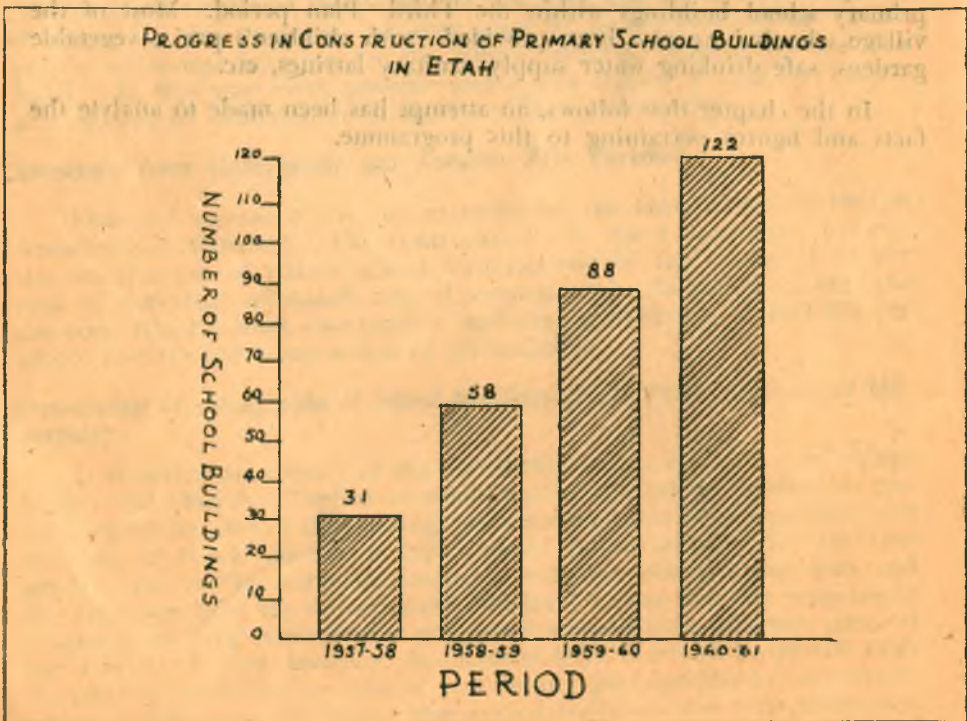
Radiation of the programme in other areas of the district

The presentation below depicts the figures of village primary schools constructed in Etah District during different years starting from 1957 :

TABLE NO. 2

Number of Primary School Buildings constructed in Etah District

Period	Number of school buildings
1957-58	31
1958-59	58
1959-60	88
1960-61	122
Total	299



It could be observed from the above that the programme of school building has made significant progress since 1957. Majority of the school buildings have been constructed on the lines of the Pharauli design which consisted of two side rooms, one central hall and one curved front verandah. Construction of boundary walls has also been included in the cost of building. A design of school-cum-panchayatghar of Pharauli type is given in Appendix I.

Financial aspects of the school buildings constructed so far

The main sources of finance for the construction of school buildings have been mainly two, viz., contribution by the village people and the assistance by the Government agencies. All the buildings have been constructed more or less on similar pattern, but nevertheless they differ in respect of size, accommodation and hence in total investment. The people's contribution and Government aid vary from school to school. In the succeeding paragraphs an analysis of total cost of the buildings, people's contribution, Government contribution and certain key-indicators relating to the construction of school buildings has been given. The figures relating to 151 school buildings were available for this analysis.

Total cost of school buildings—The cost of construction of school buildings varies rather widely from Rs.2,500 to Rs.12,500. This is mainly due to the size, design and types of materials used. These figures have been presented in the following frequency distribution table :

TABLE NO. 3

Frequency distribution of total cost of construction

Total cost (in rupees)	Number of School buildings
Below 5,000	8
5,000—6,000	20
6,000—7,000	27
7,000—8,000	60
8,000—9,000	24
9,000—10,000	7
10,000—11,000	3
Above 11,000	2
Total	151

From the above it is evident that the largest number of schools were constructed within the range of seven to eight thousand rupees. In terms of percentage figures the investment on 60 buildings i.e. about 40 per cent of the total varied between seven to eight thousand rupees and about 87 per cent between five to nine thousand rupees. There were only 12 buildings with a total cost of more than nine thousand rupees each. Similarly, there were only eight buildings on which the investment was less than five thousand rupees each.

People's contribution—The figures relating to people's contribution towards the construction of primary school buildings are shown in the table below :

TABLE NO. 4

Frequency distribution of amounts contributed by the people

<i>Amount of people's contribution (in Rupees)</i>	<i>Number of school buildings</i>
1,700—2,000	7
2,000—3,000	18
3,000—4,000	20
4,000—5,000	52
5,000—6,000	42
6,000—7,000	6
7,000—8,000	4
Above 8,000	2
Total	151

From the above table, it is clear that the people's contribution varies from Rs.1,700 to Rs.9,900. The number of buildings in the intervals of minimum and maximum contribution is not large. This shows that people neither liked to undertake petty constructions, nor too ambitious ones. They were practical and realistic in their approach to this programme. Nearly, 114, i.e., 75 per cent of the buildings fall in the contribution range varying from Rs.3,000 to Rs.6,000, which is perhaps the optimum range of contribution which people can raise locally through their voluntary efforts.

Government contribution—As compared to the people's contribution, the Government aid was much less. The Government contribution was mainly instrumental in stimulating the mobilisation of local resources for the construction work. This assistance served as a means for creating interest and developing initiative among village people for this programme. The amount of aid varied from school to school depending upon the contribution of village community.

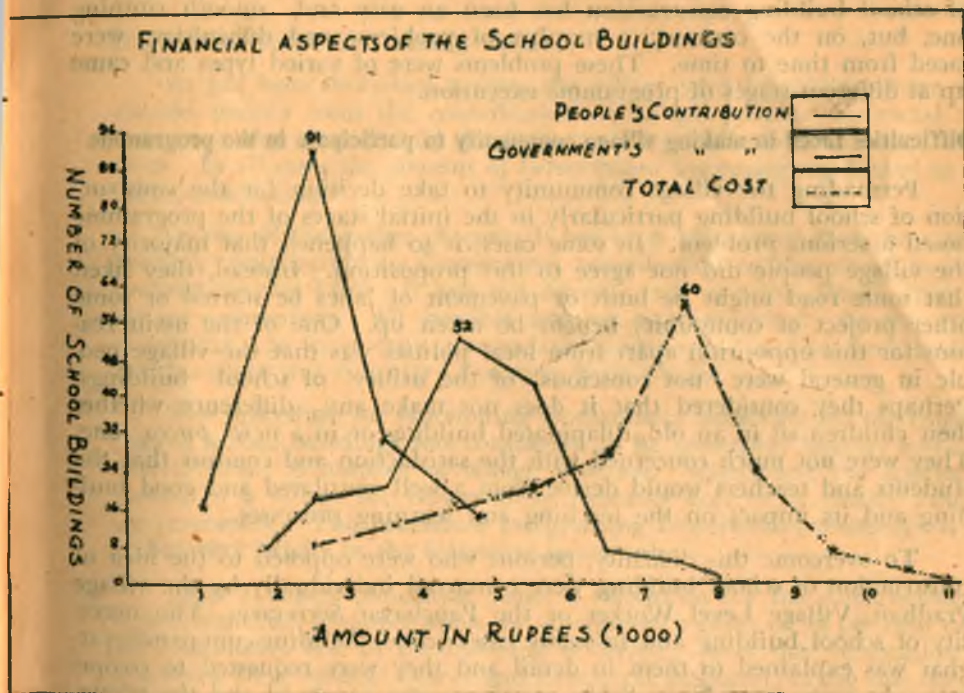
The assistance from the Government extended to 151 village schools is shown in the table below :

TABLE NO. 5

Frequency distribution of amounts of Government aid

<i>Amount of Government Aid (in Rupees)</i>	<i>Number of School buildings</i>
below 2,000	16
2,000—3,000	91
3,000—4,000	30
4,000—5,500	14
Total	151

It could be observed from this table that about 60 per cent of the schools were granted an assistance ranging from two thousand to three thousand rupees, whereas another 20 per cent received aid ranging from three to four thousand rupees. There were only 14 schools which were given an aid of Rs.4,000 to 5,500 each. On the other hand, 16 schools received less than Rs.2,000 each. A graphical presentation of financial aspect of the buildings is also given below.



Certain key-indicators relating to the construction of school buildings

On the basis of the data of 151 school buildings certain averages have been worked out. These averages indicate the constructional efficiency of these buildings.

Average cost of construction—The average cost of school building was Rs.7,400 and the average cost per square foot of plinth area comes to Rs.6.47. It could thus be observed that the cost per square foot of construction was quite reasonable. There are reasons for this. The school buildings were constructed under the supervision of local people and in most cases village Pradhans. They exercised every care to eliminate wasteful expenditure as well as to utilise locally available materials as far as possible.

Ratio of Government contribution and people's contribution—No doubt, assistance from Government provides an incentive to initiate community programmes, but ultimately it is the people's effort which counts for completion as well as maintenance of this community asset. From the tables no. 4 and 5 it could be seen that the ratio of Government aid to people's contribution was 1 : 1.6; in other words for every rupee contributed by Government, the village people contributed Rs.1.60 nP.

CHAPTER 5

DIFFICULTIES FACED IN THE PROGRAMME

By this time it might appear to the reader that the whole programme of school building construction has been an easy and smooth running one, but, on the contrary, a number of problems and difficulties were faced from time to time. These problems were of varied types and came up at different stages of programme execution.

Difficulties faced in making village community to participate in the programme

Persuading the village community to take decision for the construction of school building particularly in the initial stages of the programme posed a serious problem. In some cases, it so happened that majority of the village people did not agree to this proposition. Instead, they liked that some road might be built or pavement of lanes be started or some other project of community benefit be taken up. One of the main reasons for this opposition apart from local politics was that the village people in general were not conscious of the utility of school buildings. Perhaps they considered that it does not make any difference whether their children sit in an old, dilapidated building or in a new *pucca* one. They were not much concerned with the satisfaction and comfort that the students and teachers would derive from a well ventilated and good building and its impact on the teaching and learning processes.

To overcome this difficulty, persons who were opposed to the idea of construction of school building were contacted individually by the village Pradhan, Village Level Worker or the Panchayat Secretary. The necessity of school building and in many cases school building-cum-panchayat-garh was explained to them in detail and they were requested to co-operate. In some cases, Gaon Sabha meetings were convened and the proposal for construction of school building was discussed in detail. In these meetings the people were reminded of the past achievements of the district and by way of example 'Dhumri Bridge'* was cited and it was explained that such a project could only become possible due to the active participation and involvement of local people. Other successful instances of community efforts leading to the creation of assets of common utility were also narrated in these meetings to motivate the people.

The block and district level officials who visited the villages, also tried to create an urge among the people for undertaking the importance of school building construction programme. They also tried to create a spirit of healthy competition by citing the instances of nearby villages where such a building had already been constructed. It was pointed out earlier that since 1959 onward district Etah has been presenting albums containing photographs of primary school buildings to the Prime Minister of India on his birthday every year. For this purpose photographs of those buildings, which were completed, were taken for inclusion in the

*This bridge has been constructed on river 'Kali' at a total cost of Rs. 4.5 lakhs. The contribution of Etah people in this venture amounts Rs. 1.81 lakhs : Rs. 0.50 lakhs in the form of labour and rest in cash. This bridge has provided a trans-link in the district and with other districts of the State as well.

album. The occasion of taking photographs for this purpose was considered as a matter of great prestige by the village people. So, whenever it was found that some villages were lagging behind in the construction, they were reminded that if the school buildings were not completed within the specified period their photographs might have to be left out of the list of schools, which were to be presented in an album to the Prime Minister. By doing so the construction work in many cases was accelerated.

Difficulties faced in raising funds

As has been described earlier, the village school buildings were constructed mainly from the contribution of village people. Financial assistance was also extended by the Government agencies as well as Zila Parishad. In all cases the amount of Government assistance was linked to people's contribution.

In one of the earlier chapters it has been mentioned that the ratio of people's contribution to Government contribution in the school building programme was 1.6:1. It was not an easy task to raise funds from the village community. All possible avenues were explored by the village panchayat. In most cases accumulated panchayat tax dues were realized. Besides there was voluntary donation from people.

The procedure for sanctioning Government assistance for the construction of school buildings was considered to be somewhat lengthy and intricate process. A number of village Pradhans stated that the application moved by a village for Government assistance had to be closely followed up personally. The procedure for granting Government assistance is described very briefly in the following paragraph.

After a village panchayat passes a resolution for the construction of school building, an application for sanction of a grant of 40 per cent of the total estimated cost of the building is moved. After due verification by the Block Development Officer and Panchayat Inspector, as the case may be, this application for Government assistance is put up before the Block Development Committee for its approval. The Block Development Committee in turn recommends the sanction of the subsidy applied for. The total amount is paid in three instalments. No payment is made unless the construction work actually starts and a specified stage in the building construction is reached.

Although Government assistance has been readily available in all the school buildings, the village people thought that the whole process for sanctioning such assistance should be further simplified. They thought, if the procedure is modified the people will be further encouraged for taking up more of such programmes in their villages.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Certain broad conclusions emerge from the present study and these are listed below :

1. The programme of primary school building construction, as has been carried out in district Etah, is essentially a people's programme. Because in all stages it has been planned and executed by the initiative and efforts of the village community. Though various Government agencies were also associated with it, but only in a participating capacity, such as, provision of technical guidance and some financial assistance. Truly, it has been a people's programme with Government participation, a situation which is aimed at, in all the community development programmes.

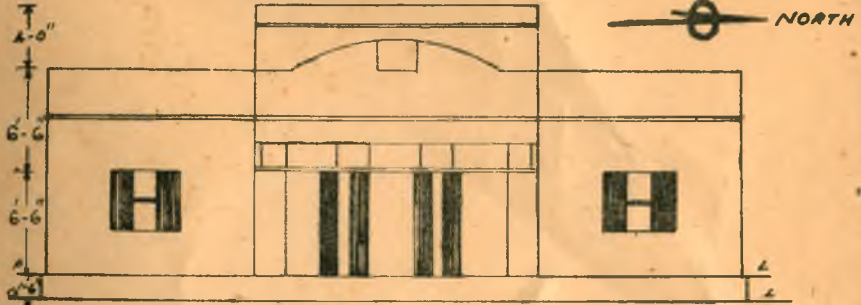
2. Once the public opinion is effectively mobilised for any activity of the community, the programme is bound to become self-generating. In the present case, once the people were convinced of the importance and the utility of school buildings, it was taken up by one village after another all over the district.

3. Success of the programme, like the present one, planned and carried out by the people themselves admits of no impediment in its way. Even the financial obstacles were overcome by the enthusiasm and determination of the community. This goes to show that mere contribution either in cash or kind, is not so important as the spirit behind it. What is needed is the complete identification of the people with the programme.

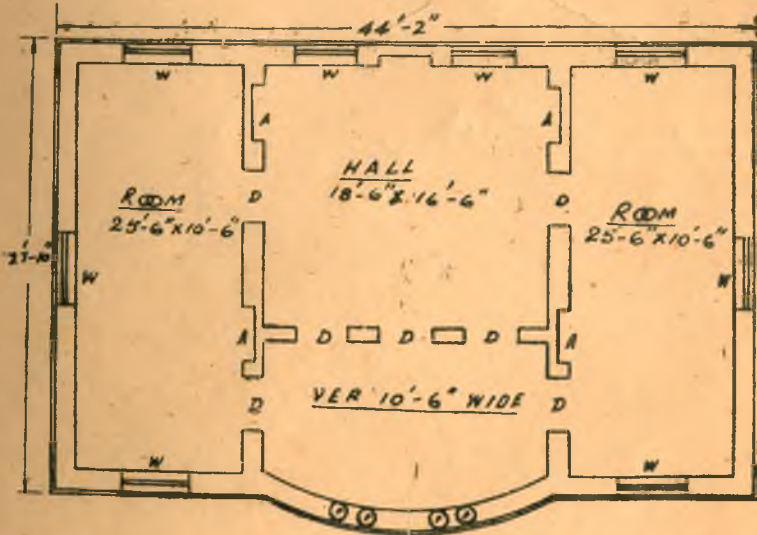
4. No doubt, the success of all programmes of community benefit depends ultimately on the initiative and active participation of the people, but assistance and recognition of Government have also their own place in stimulating and motivating people in achieving the desired goal.

5. Wherever the village communities have realised that organised self-help of the community in development programmes not only secures financial and technical assistance from the Government, but also leads to the recognition of its efforts by it and other agencies then it is bound to create immense creative urge among them. This has been precisely the case in school building programme in Etah district. There are two reasons for this, one on physical and the other on social plane. The physical reason is that the community realises its competence, both human and material, to undertake such programmes thereby creating confidence in itself. The social reason is that every human group that has successfully accomplished community undertakings of common benefit feels proud of its achievement and other communities try to emulate the example.

Primary School Building
Pharauli, ETAH.



ELEVATION



PLAN

Sub. National Systems Unit,
National Institute of Educational
Planning and Administration
17-B, Sri Aurobindo Marg, New Delhi-110016
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