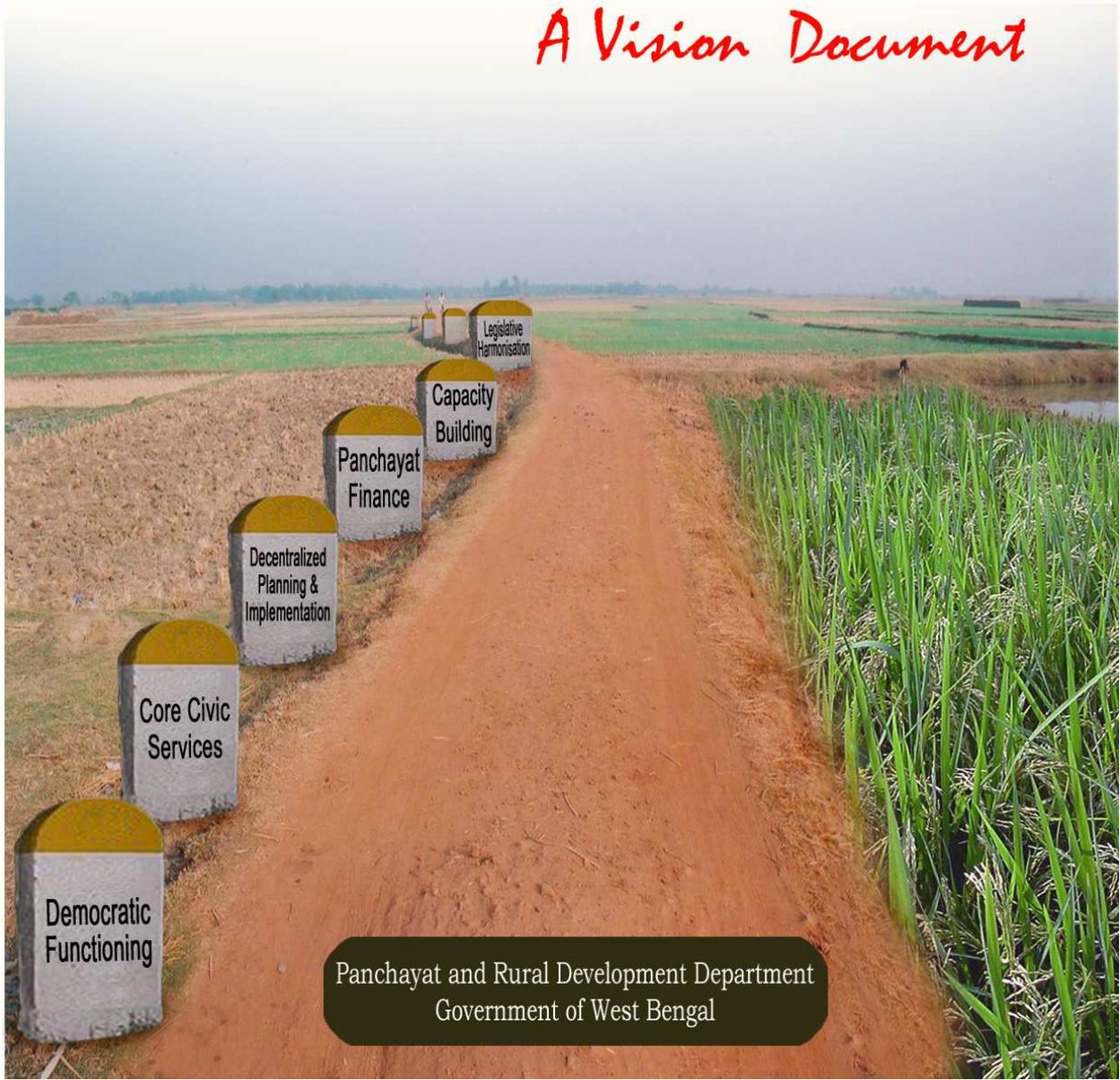




ROADMAP FOR THE PANCHAYATS IN WEST BENGAL

A Vision Document



Panchayat and Rural Development Department
Government of West Bengal

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FOREWORD

West Bengal is one of the forerunners in installing a 3-tier Panchayati Raj System (PRI) for rural local governance in India. The present generation Panchayats in the state started its journey in 1978 i.e., 15 years ahead of the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution of India. Ever since their inception, the state has demonstrated strong commitment to rural decentralisation by ensuring regular elections to PRIs, entrusting them with increasing responsibility of implementing various rural development programmes and making the development bureaucracy part of PRIs. The state also ensured adequate representation of the socially backward classes – Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST) and women in PRIs for their involvement in the process of socio-economic development.

The State Government, always open to new ideas, brought about need-based reforms in the Panchayat system from time to time from the very beginning. Some unique features of the West Bengal Panchayats are – (a) Gram Sansad at village level, Block Sansad at Panchayat Samiti level and Zilla Sansad at Zilla Parishad level, (b) District Council at each Zilla Parishad headed by the leader of the opposition, (c) Gram Unnayan Samiti at the Gram Sansad level, (d) Institutional involvement of opposition members in the Standing Committees of Zilla Parishad and Panchayat Samiti and in the Finance and Planning Sub-Committee of Gram Panchayat, (e) Determination of principles of subsidiarity for each tier of Panchayats, (f) Mapping of activities to be performed by three tier Panchayats falling under 28 subjects (out of 29) listed in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution of India, (g) Empowering the Standing Committees and Sub-Committees to prepare and implement their own work plan and budget, (h) Opening Panchayat Window in the State Budget by the Departments who have substantial flow of fund to Panchayats, (i) Annual self-evaluation of all the three tier Panchayat bodies through score-based schedules for assessment of their performances and providing incentive grant to the best performing Gram Panchayat in each Block, to the best performing Panchayat Samiti in each District and to the best performing Zilla Parishad in the state separately under two heads – (1) institutional functioning and good governance and (2) mobilization of revenue and utilization of resources on the basis of validated scores of self-evaluation and (j) Double entry system of accounting for all the three tier Panchayats.

The PRIs in the state have grown over the years with more spontaneity and has made positive impact in order to achieve economic development and secure social justice for all. However, even now there is a long way to go for the West Bengal Panchayats to really become proper people's institution as vanguard of holistic development of rural people. This document visions such institutions and sets out strategy to accomplish the vision.

Designing the Roadmap was a challenging task. We first came up with a draft version and invited feedbacks from all interested persons and organisations. We had received huge number of feedbacks from the institutions and individuals within as well as from outside the state. All the feedbacks have been carefully considered and most of them have been incorporated in letter as well as in spirit depending upon their applicability in the strategy conceived. We sincerely thank all the contributors who helped us immensely to shape the final Roadmap.

The State Government will review the achievements in terms of the milestones set here and revise the strategy, as may be necessary, after every two years.

We sincerely believe that this document will guide the Panchayat institutions, the State Government as also other players in the field to usher in a stronger Panchayat system capable of taking up the challenge of all-round development in rural West Bengal.



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A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- A.1 This is the Roadmap for the Panchayats in West Bengal. It is a vision document, which charts future path of decentralisation agenda for the Panchayat bodies in West Bengal. The Roadmap visions a proper people’s Panchayat and sets out strategy to accomplish the vision. This strategy includes activities to be undertaken at the State Government level as well as at the PRI level, assignment of specific responsibilities at both the levels along with targeted timeframe to achieve the goal.
- A.2 Chapter 1 specifies the need for a Roadmap. It narrates the evolution of rural local governance in the State aiming the present journey towards self governance. Here the necessity of bringing desired changes have been reflected along with the approach.
- A.3 Chapter 2 deals with strengthening democratic functioning of the Panchayats. It starts with the issues relating participation of the people at the village level along with organizing the poor for their participation in Panchayats. To facilitate this functioning of the Panchayats will be improved by strengthening the functioning of the Sthayee Samitis (Standing Committees) and Upa-Samitis (Sub-Committees). In addition, it is also necessary to ensure effective participation of the general members of three tier Panchayats, who are not office bearers, by defining their appropriate roles. Increasing the participation of the political parties in opposition in the functioning of the Panchayats is also very vital for strengthening the system. These initiatives need to be supplemented by an effective vigilance and grievance redressal mechanism which is a basic prerequisite of an effective system. Ensuring these measures Panchayats have to move further to improve accountability and transparency and adopt some ethical steps for good governance. Finally the role of civil society is also crucial in strengthening democratic functioning of the Panchayats and accordingly the interface between Panchayat and civil society has been specified.
- A.4 Chapter 3 sets out the agenda for improving core civic services by the Panchayats. This includes drinking water supply and sanitation, public health, universal literacy and elementary education, sports and culture, road connectivity, transport, irrigation, drainage and flood protection, housing and other civic planning, marketing and other facilities for promotion of economic activities, issuing trade registration certificates and licenses, special requirements for the urbanized Gram Panchayats and management of disaster.
- A.5 Chapter 4 relates to decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice. It starts with the agenda in respect of land reforms along with better management of natural resources and improving land use. This is followed by promotion of livelihood opportunities in non-farm sectors. The activities relating to

alleviation of poverty and ensuring social equity along with the measures for social security has been expressed thereafter. All these needs to be done through bottom-up planning processes and the strategy for this has been reflected here. These initiatives are to be complemented by Panchayat-Private partnership following the principle of social marketing.

- A.6 Chapter 5 delineates the issues of augmenting Panchayat finance and improving financial management. At first the issue of mobilization of own source revenue by the Panchayats has been mentioned. This is followed by improvement of budgetary control and financial management. This requires improvement of accounting practices and computerisation of accounts. Efficient and transparent procurement and payment system is the prerequisite for improving financial management and the checks and balances are to be ensured by audits. The State Legislature also has the power to scrutinize the accounts of the Panchayats. The chapter ends with the strategy of the State Government regarding electronic transfer of funds to Panchayats for fastest availability.
- A.7 Chapter 6 deals with the functionaries of the Panchayats and building their capacities. It starts with the employees of the Panchayats followed by their capacity building as well as capacity building of the elected representatives. These huge capacity building initiatives require strengthening the training institutes and centres used for Panchayat training in the State. Use of information and communication technology is also very vital for making the capacity building exercises attractive. The classroom based training is to be supplemented by satellite based training through Lokashiksha Sanchar. All the activities proposed in this Roadmap needs to be facilitated and accordingly the office of the Directorate of Panchayats and Rural Development along with the field offices of Panchayat and Rural Development Department are to be strengthened. The capacity building initiatives should also involve NGOs and academic institutions of excellence.
- A.8 Chapter 7 sets out the agenda for harmonisation of Acts and Rules concerning functioning of the Panchayats. This includes amendment proposals for 32 Acts, of which 6 Central Acts and 26 State Acts, required for the Panchayats to really become peoples' institution. This is to be supplemented by amendments in the West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1973 and in the Rules framed under this Act to accommodate the envisaged dimension of Panchayat functioning.
- A.9 Chapter 8 highlights the road ahead and focuses the strategy for achieving the goals. The vision is to be shared in terms of outcomes and the goals are to be set locally. The Panchayat institutions need to be strengthened and delivery of services for social justice and economic growth needs to be ensured. For this the Panchayat institutions have to acquire capacities. Monitoring and evaluation of the entire activities is also very vital to assess the achievements towards the goal. The success of establishing a more responsive and efficient Panchayat system has to be ultimately judged by the people, who are the most important stakeholder of Panchayats.
- A.10 Appendix 9.1 benchmarks the implementation strategy of the Roadmap. For each and every issue there are activities to be undertaken by the State Government as well as by

the Panchayats. Every activity is linked with fixing responsibility of discharging the activity and timeframe of performing the activity. The matrix is the crux of the Roadmap.

- A.11 Ultimately, the strength of the Panchayat system should be derived primarily from the people for better functioning of the Panchayats as institutions of self-government. It should be the citizen who should own the Roadmaps by participating actively and making the Panchayats carry out the process as their representative institution.

1. THE NEED FOR A ROADMAP

1.1 Evolution of Rural Local Governance in West Bengal

- 1.1.1 Conceptualization of the present role of the Panchayats in the rural polity has charted a historical course from time immemorial. Panchayats in the village in ancient India was a loosely-formed body of the village elders, who used to resolve disputes among the villagers, looked after the common interests and tried to contend, often ineffectually, with external onslaughts. Since the life was simple in those days; the Panchayat also had simple roles. In pre-independence era, the colonial rulers constituted Panchayats with acquiescent people assigning certain functions of palliative nature. Those Panchayats often acted as buffer against various grievances of the village people. Post-independence first generation of Panchayats, which came up in late fifties and early sixties of the last century, were constituted in the wake of the report of the Balwant Rai Mehta committee. Those were envisaged to be institutions that would reflect aims and aspirations of the people they represent and would help in steering the development programmes for their benefit. These Panchayats ultimately failed to deliver because of certain basic flaws in their composition and ideological approach as well as lack of political will for devolution of powers and functions. The major flaws in these institutions were (i) the Panchayats constituted particularly at the higher tiers consisted of a large number of members indirectly elected and therefore were not truly representative in character, (ii) the functional mandates for these institutions were neither clear nor coherent, (iii) they were on various issues, controlled and regulated by the appointed executives of the State Government and (iv) the institutions were almost entirely dependent on contributions and grants from the government, which was too little and they were endowed with very limited opportunity for building up their own financial resources. Besides, the mandate for holding regular elections had no compulsive force since it was not backed by any legal sanction. Socio-politico-administrative environment of the period also did not lend support to these institutions and did not care for regular elections for their reconstitution.
- 1.1.2 The second generation of Panchayats constituted in 1978 under the aegis of a new Act, viz., The West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1973 (West Bengal Act XLI of 1973), brought some fresh air in the Panchayat system. Direct elections in all three tiers through universal adult franchise, to be held at regular intervals, have been made mandatory without any discretionary power of any authority to postpone such elections indefinitely [sections 7, 96 & 141]. Powers to collect tax and non-tax revenue are clearly defined. Functional domain of the Panchayats is more clearly delineated as compared to earlier Panchayats. The new legislation empowers the Panchayat to spread its wings in various

fields of activities encompassing rural life. On this issue, provisions relating to the functional ambit of Gram Panchayat may be examined. Its roles in the education and mass education extension, health support, both curative and preventive including environmental sanitation, supply of drinking water, agriculture, irrigation, animal resources development, village plantation, cottage industry, social welfare have been delineated in the sections 19, 20 and 21 of the State Panchayat Act. In fact, the provisions under section 19 to section 28 lay down various powers and functions of the Gram Panchayat with the objective of upliftment of rural life. The powers and functions assigned to the Panchayats cover almost the entire spectrum of rural life and livelihood and these institutions have been very clearly recognized as the most dependable vehicle for rural development.

- 1.1.3 In course of a little more than another decade, the role of Panchayat has been further expanded and its functional area has been increasingly extended to include additional activities. All poverty alleviation programmes sponsored by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India have been assigned to the Panchayat institutions (major portion to the Gram Panchayat). In any programme or scheme for extending any benefit to the weaker section including Schedule Castes and Schedule Tribes, the Panchayats, even when it is not implementing the scheme, has been assigned the role of selection of sites and of beneficiaries relating to such schemes. The Panchayats have been assigned responsibility for supporting the State initiative in improving nutrition of children and mothers and are also taking initiative of their own for raising nutrition level of the poorer people. During this period, through amendments of the West Bengal Panchayat Act, the Panchayats have been given clearer functional responsibilities for taking up various works as provided under Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution. It is however a fact that despite larger powers and responsibilities of the Panchayats, the major role of the Panchayat during the eighties and early nineties, remained largely confined to acting as the delivery mechanism of the programmes of the Central and the State Governments and their own initiatives were not of very high order.

1.2 Major Activities of the PRIs of the State Since 1978

- 1.2.1 The Panchayat election in 1978 was a trendsetter, as it broke new grounds in two areas. First, for the first time in the country the political parties were allowed to contest elections to Panchayats openly with their party symbols. Secondly, direct elections were held to all the three tiers. In another way also the Panchayats set up in 1978 were different from those of the rest of the country. Those who came to the leadership of these bodies through elections did not belong to the traditional upper stratum of the rural society, namely the landed gentry, who lost their economic and social power substantially due to massive vesting of ceiling surplus lands in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The new leadership came largely from the class of middle peasantry and professional groups like school teachers. It is the only state in the country where Panchayat elections have been held regularly since 1978. No constitutional support was necessary for this since the State was self-motivated to ensure continuity of the institution. Immediately after the new Panchayat bodies took position, the State experienced one of the worst floods in 1978 that rendered thousands of people homeless and caused enormous loss of food crops,

livestock and other moveable property. The entire work of flood relief and post-flood reconstruction work was entrusted to the newly elected Panchayat bodies. They shouldered this responsibility in exemplary manner demonstrating unmistakably the strength of these representative institutions in providing services that require intimate knowledge of the grassroots and responsiveness to the local needs. Thereafter the State Government entrusted implementation of the 'food-for-work' scheme – a wage employment generation scheme sponsored by the central government and all its subsequent variations to the Panchayats. The programme relating to rural water supply was also handed over to them.

- 1.2.2 West Bengal had a very high level of rural poverty as compared to many other states and the all India average. In 1973-74, when the all India rural poverty was at 56.4 percent, as much as 73.2 percent of West Bengal's rural people lived below the poverty line. The wide difference however has narrowed down, more so after 1983-84. During the period from 1983-84 to 1987-88, rural poverty in West Bengal registered a fall from 63.1% to 48.8% per cent implying an annual percentage fall of 3.3%, which was the highest among all States and much above the country average of 1.7%.¹ However, incidence of rural poverty in the State was still well above the all India average of 39.0%. The declining trend continued and rural poverty in West Bengal came down to 28.5% in 2004-05, which was just below the all India average of 28.7%. In fact, in terms of the rate of reduction in rural poverty, from 1973-74 to 2004-05, West Bengal (44.6 percentage point) came next only to the state of Kerala (46 percentage point).
- 1.2.3 The most important factors which contributed to faster reduction of rural poverty in the State are implementation of the land reform programme and growth of agricultural production. The Panchayats provided the crucial support in implementation of land reforms for both identifying the beneficiaries as well as helping them to take and maintain possession of vested land assigned to them and ensuring that the share croppers got registered, received their due share of produce and continued to cultivate their land without being evicted by the landlord. The Panchayats also helped in distribution of homestead lands to the poor, who had no title over the lands of their shelters. The land reform did have many other beneficial effects upon production and productivity, such as, bringing 'peace to the countryside' (though that happened after the initial disturbances, which led to many law and order situations, for establishing the new order) and creating an investment-friendly ambience, transformation of a rent seeking class into productive agents and the rise of the peasantry owning even small parcel of land as enterprising cultivators.
- 1.2.4 This change along with providing infrastructure like irrigation and inputs like seeds and fertilizer by the Panchayats and easier access to institutional credit through newly acquired title and cultivation right of land as sharecropper helped to increase the agricultural production substantially. Between 1981 and 1991, the food grain production of West Bengal grew at an annual growth rate of 6.5 percent, which was highest among the 17 major states of the country. It may be mentioned that Boyce (1987) estimated that between 1949 and 1980, the annual growth rate of agricultural output in West Bengal, in

¹ Source: Himanshu 2007

spite of being endowed with rich natural resources, was only 1.74 percent. Since 1996-97 the state has been producing double the amount of food grains produced in 1981-82. All these provided substantial relief from the clutches of acute income-poverty to a large section of rural people and the transformation helped to change the composition of the Panchayats compared to what existed in the pre-land reform period.

- 1.2.5 The Panchayats of the State has been entrusted with the responsibilities for implementation of all programmes directly aimed at alleviation of rural poverty. After 1978 all the centrally sponsored poverty alleviation programmes beginning with the Food for Work programmes and Integrated Rural Development Programme have been entrusted with the Panchayats. There are several studies and concurrent evaluations by the Government of India showing better targeting of both the employment generation and self-employment programmes, which have contributed in faster decline of poverty in the State as mentioned above. In fact alleviating poverty has been a core activity of the Panchayats of the State right from the beginning. Apart from economic gains of the poorer sections the major contribution of the Panchayats has been providing dignity to all of them and enhancing their freedom to participate in various development programmes. The Panchayats are also associated with various social security programmes and are instrumental in reaching those benefits to the poorest sections.
- 1.2.6 Along with the agricultural growth since early 1980s, agricultural wages have also increased. The most proximate reason for this is the higher demand for labour because of higher productivity and cropping intensity of agricultural lands. While in 1981-82, the average daily wage rate was not even Rs. 10, it increased to more than Rs. 55 during the last two decades.²
- 1.2.7 Many scholars have noted close relationship between agricultural growth and the institutional reform of Panchayats. The social composition of the Panchayat members helped in giving priority to schemes beneficial to the poorer section. Fixation of priorities and decision regarding location of scheme matched much better with the felt needs of the people. Also, being relatively more transparent than a bureaucratic institution, quality of implementation of schemes was, in general, much better. Individual schemes undertaken by the Panchayats are small, but the schemes executed every year by them are large in number. No centralized bureaucracy could handle the planning and implementation activities of such large number of small schemes spread over numerous villages. A recent survey shows that among the recipients of the 'mini kits', the share of small and marginal cultivators is noticeably high, amounting to approximately 87 per cent of the total kits distributed (Bardhan and Mookherjee 2004).

² The wages have increased at higher rate during 1990s than that in the 1980s. (BAES, *Economic Review*). Between 1979-80 and 1992-93, West Bengal showed the highest rate of growth of wages among all states (Rawal and Swaminathan 1998). According to another calculation as quoted by Rawal and Swaminathan (1998), the daily wage rate for male agricultural labourers in terms of rice increased from 2.56 kilograms in 1983 to 5.07 kilograms in 1990. Though the information on wage rate of female agricultural labourers of West Bengal is not available in any government report since 1980s, some studies reveal that male-female wage differential is either non-existent or insignificant in rural Bengal (Rawal and Swaminathan 1998, Gazdar and Sengupta 1999).

- 1.2.8 The Panchayats of the State have played the roles mentioned above in the initial days more as an agent of the State Government. However, that has helped the Panchayats of the State to establish root in the rural society and has made grounds for graduation for functioning as the local self government. There is need to facilitate the process of its emergence as the local self government through more functional devolution, providing resources to those bodies and building up capacities for discharging their responsibilities.

1.3 A Journey Towards Self Governance

- 1.3.1 Emergence of the Panchayats as units of local self government requires adoption of appropriate policy of the State Government, to make legal and organizational changes as well as to put in place several other associated processes. Such change was carried out incrementally all along in West Bengal though the same got a boost with the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution, which recognized the Panchayats as the third stratum of government. However, the quality as well as the pace of change envisaged by the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution was left to the State Government by allowing it to decide the functions to be devolved on those bodies, resources to be transferred and tasks in building capacities to meet the requirement. There was also debate whether the capacity building should precede more devolution or the otherwise. West Bengal adopted a slow yet steady path of gradual devolution of functions and simultaneous building of capacities for the Panchayats to emerge as units of self governance.
- 1.3.2 One major area of change brought about by successive amendment of the Panchayat Act for strengthening the governance by the Panchayats was related to improving participation of the people. It was realized that it was not enough to leave the entire initiative to the people's representatives who are representatives but not substitutes of the people. Therefore, there was need for further deepening and strengthening the process of decentralization and making the Panchayats an effective institution for economic development and social justice. The amendments envisaged that the Panchayat bodies interact with the people continuously and there were adequate interactions among various tiers of the Panchayat.
- 1.3.3 The Panchayats in the meantime gained deeper root in the rural society and started influencing decisions of the line departments in respect of their activities, which was supervised by the various Sthayee Samitis (Standing Committees) of the upper and the middle tier of the Panchayats. However, there has been little formal devolution by most of the departments and the Panchayats are approached whenever any department wanted participation of the people in implementation of any of their plan or maintaining their assets. There are departmental orders for seeking the support of the Panchayats for that purpose and the Panchayats functioned in respect of activities of the line departments within that limitation. Such involvement, though not ideal, helped the Panchayat bodies in acquiring some institutional capacities to think of holistic development and to act accordingly, though in a very limited way, with its own initiatives. The field officials of the line department also got acquainted with the process of consultation with the Panchayat functionaries and even without formal devolution they exercised control on many of the decisions related to delivery of services by those departments. This necessitated improvement of several institutional processes related to decision making as

well as implementation by those bodies. This also helped the Panchayats to find their role in coordination among all the departments and getting engaged in planning with available resources for holistic development.

- 1.3.4 The Panchayats have been empowered under the State Act as also under the Constitutional mandate to prepare development plan – with regard to resources available and also to implement schemes for economic development and social justice [section 19(1)]. The State Panchayat Act needs further amendment for accentuating the role of the Panchayat as a unit of self-government for achieving the goal of human development including economic development and securing social justice for all. In order to achieve the aforesaid goal, the Gram Panchayats have started preparing plans and preparation of plan by other tiers also started gaining ground albeit slowly. The process was also facilitated by emergence of other institutions, as a consequence of the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution, like the State Finance Commission to judge independently and recommend transfer of resources to the Panchayats to discharge its responsibility as well as the Central Finance Commission making specific recommendations towards transfer of fund from the Union Government. All these have contributed to make the functioning of the Panchayats more responsive, decentralized, transparent and accountable.
- 1.3.5 To cope with the needs mentioned above certain initiatives as mentioned below, have since been taken in the State, with amendment of Act and Rules where necessary:-
- (a) Six Sthayee Samitis (Standing Committees) at the Zilla Parishad and the Panchayat Samiti level were in place at the time of inception of the present generation Panchayats. In 1992 four new Sthayee Samitis were constituted and some additional subjects were also added in the names of the existing Sthayee Samitis. Some alterations in the names of the Sthayee Samitis took place in 1984 and 1997 as well. Such organs remain responsible to the main body and function as the executive arm for implementing programmes and schemes in various fields of activities.
 - (b) In 2003, five Upa-Samitis (Sub-Committees) have been constituted at the Gram Panchayat level. Their functions are similar to that of the Sthayee Samitis.
 - (c) In 2003, provisions have been made so that opposition members are represented in each Sthayee Samiti of Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad.
 - (d) Also in 2003, Block Sansad and Zilla Sansad have been constituted as accountability forums for Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad.
 - (e) Gram Unnayan Samitis (Development Committees at the Gram Sansad level), constituted by the Gram Sansad, are the executive wing of the Gram Sansad and act as an extension arm of the Gram Panchayat.
 - (f) It has been emphasized that all major initiatives of the Gram Panchayat should be validated by the Gram Sansad and on certain issues initiatives should begin at the Gram Sansad level.
 - (g) District Council for Panchayats have been constituted with the leader of the major opposition party in the Zilla Parishad as its Chairperson, with effect from 1994. The Council is empowered to examine whether financial norms and propriety are observed in the functional ambience of all Panchayat bodies within the district. The Council may call for necessary record or may cause an inspection of the relevant records and may give its recommendations.

These measures helped the Panchayats of the State to gain more strength as local self government. However, there remains much scope for further strengthening the institutional aspects of the Panchayats to make them function as units of local self government more effectively.

- 1.3.6 Another important learning has been that it is rather easier to amend Act and to make change in the legal processes but it is much more difficult to give effect to those changes through building capacities at all level. Starting from the general people, the elected functionaries as well as employees of the Panchayats need to play their changed role related to further devolution, which should also be taken care of properly.

1.4 Bringing About Desired Changes

- 1.4.1 Keeping the limitations mentioned above in mind, the State Government in the Panchayat and Rural Development Department has been trying to accelerate the pace of rural decentralization for attaining better quality of local self governance through various changes in the legal and administrative systems supporting the Panchayat bodies. A wide range of consultation was also initiated subsequently as a part of an initiative for “Strengthening Rural Decentralisation”. The main areas for the changes are:

- Amending the West Bengal Panchayat Act and Rules framed under it to enable the Panchayat bodies to function more effectively as units of local government;
- Defining the functional domain of the Panchayat bodies more specifically to enable them to focus their activities in improving the quality of services delivered by them and respond to citizens demand for diversifying the areas of service;
- Improving capacities of the Panchayats including providing additional manpower support to the Panchayat bodies;
- Putting in place a structured system for preparing and implementing participatory plans at the village level and their integration with the plans prepared by the Panchayat bodies;
- Taking up in depth studies of various management practices of the Panchayat bodies for business process re-engineering;
- Taking various steps for improving the ethical and functional framework for good governance and better delivery of citizen services.

- 1.4.2 This Roadmap is about the proposed roles and responsibilities of the Panchayats and how to reach the goals including the steps the Government should take for effecting the changes. It charts the future path of the decentralization agenda for Panchayat bodies of West Bengal. The Roadmap will set out the broad policy of the State Government to be followed in further strengthening the Panchayats towards the goals mentioned below and the strategy to be followed in effecting those changes.

- activating the new political structures and widening democratic functioning of the PRIs including the stake of the ordinary citizen;
- establishing a new ethical framework projecting dignity for every citizen irrespective of their socio-economic status to encourage participation for all in affairs of the community;
- a more clearer devolution of fund, function and functionaries;

- strengthening financial management and administrative structure and accountability;
- improving delivery of services to the level of expectation of the citizen and establishing practices related to good governance keeping the need of the citizen in mind;
- promoting well-being of every one and achieving greater equity and focusing more on outcomes concerning various components of economic and human development.

1.5 Approaches for the Roadmap

- 1.5.1 The Roadmap for the Panchayats of West Bengal has been prepared based on the evolution of the system that has taken place so far and capacities acquired in delivering various services. The process of evolution has been guided by both the top down and the bottom up factors. The former relates to the steps taken from above by the State Government in assigning responsibilities and resources for delivering various services, which has been mostly structured in the lines of various schemes. The later relates to the demand from the people below, which impelled the Panchayats to deliver certain services sometimes without any mandate from above. The former is the supply driven and the later is the demand driven progresses in the process of evolution of the Panchayats in the State.
- 1.5.2 Panchayats in West Bengal may be characterized by existence of a strong demand driven process of evolution in owning responsibilities and in future also the process should be facilitated through building up of capacities to enable the Panchayats to take on new responsibilities of their own. This also reaffirms that Roadmap for the Panchayats of the State will not be merely the Roadmap for devolution of responsibilities by the various departments of the State Government through the conventional exercise of activity mapping and assigning responsibilities from above through either legislative or executive route but also the Roadmap for developing various capacities within the Panchayats so as to respond to the need-based demands of the people and acquire more responsibilities of their own for realization of such demands, stemming from the local needs and aspirations. This process should be guided by setting milestones in various fields related to socio-economic development of the people so that the Panchayats may work on their own, irrespective of formal devolution to reach those goals. In fact devolution through activity mapping provides certain space to the Panchayat bodies, which were so far occupied by the Government, but the experience shows that much space in the development matrix is available beyond that occupied by the Government and a proactive Panchayat may tread on such spaces uncharted so far, provided they have the capacity to do so. The West Bengal Panchayat Act will be amended appropriately through which specific responsibilities shall be assigned to those bodies in this regard. While such assignment shall endow the Panchayats with exclusive powers and responsibilities in certain fields of activities, there will be areas where the Panchayat will be assigned authorities running concurrently with that of the State Government. The latter assignments shall not immediately reduce the responsibility of the State Government but shall at the same time encourage the Panchayats to be more proactive in many areas, sometimes independently and sometimes in collaboration with the State Government drawing liberally from its knowledge bank, technical or otherwise. One can argue that

those are not exclusive functions but concurrent jurisdiction of the Panchayats in taking up those activities. The considered views of the State Government is that in the present context it is more logical, pragmatic and productive to provide concurrent jurisdictions in certain areas, which will help the Panchayats to acquire adequate capacities in voluntarily taking up those activities or utilizing the infrastructure and expertise of the government machinery on suitable occasions; the State Government shall in due course provide exclusive responsibilities as and when the same will be necessary and appropriate.

- 1.5.3 It is envisaged that the Panchayats of the State will be engaged broadly in three types of activities. The first one is obviously the obligatory duties within the meaning of Article 243G, encompassing the issues relating to socio-economic development with emphasis on human resources development. This encompasses the regulatory functions of the Gram Panchayats and it has been decided that the State Panchayat Act shall be suitably amended to enunciate regulatory functions of the Gram Panchayat more specifically. This shall empower the Gram Panchayat to control and regulate private activities to ensure planned growth protecting interests of all citizens, to generate and maintain certain data for making future plans and to run its own administrative machinery. The envisaged amendment shall also identify some of the complementary functions of the GPs for improving the quality of life of the people, including such activities which should be undertaken by the Gram Panchayat for good governance and for frequent interaction with the people to sensitize them about their rights as also responsibilities and to make them conscious about their stake in the development process.
- 1.5.4 The second type of activities is those which will be assigned on the Panchayats to perform tasks on behalf of the State primarily as an agent of the Government. The functions assigned to the different tiers of the Panchayat bodies at different levels are detailed in Activity Mappings (executive order no. 6102/PN/O/V/4P-1/05 dated 07.11.2005, 3969/PN/O/1/4P-1/05 dated 25.07.2006 and 4769/PN/O/I/4P-1/05 (Pt-IV) dated 29.10.2007). Implementation of many of the poverty alleviation schemes come under this category. In implementation of these programmes, the role of Panchayats to all intents and purposes actually transcends mere agency function. Because of nearness to the people, they can select the right nature of schemes that will not only generate employment but create durable assets of the society for sustained development and for improvement of quality of life of the people. Besides, the Panchayats are best placed to select the proper group of beneficiaries for the related schemes and programmes with special emphasis on the disadvantaged groups of the community.
- 1.5.5 Third types of activities, which are gradually gaining strength, are those which are taken up by the Panchayats neither as a devolved function nor as an agency function but are taken up under the Constitutional mandate by the Panchayats for economic development and social justice. Such functions are concurrent in nature in as much as they largely require back-up services from the State Government and other institutions. The West Bengal Panchayat Act shall give legal authority to the Panchayats in taking up those activities through appropriate amendment.
- 1.5.6 The Panchayats are required to keep the broad objectives of development of the state and existing interventions of the Government in mind to plan and implement schemes to

strengthen the efforts launched for comprehensive development and execution of such activities depends on availability of fund and acquiring capabilities by the Panchayat bodies. The State Government should facilitate both building up capacities as well as augmenting resource of the Panchayats for strengthening people-oriented interventions by the Panchayats of their own. The sector specific Roadmap presented in the latter part of this document takes into account all those types of activities with an attempt to spell out the goals and the processes through which the same will be achieved and also defining what will be the role of the State Government in that process.

2. STRENGTHENING DEMOCRATIC FUNCTIONING OF THE PANCHAYATS

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Panchayats as democratic institution are to function under the leadership of the elected functionaries. However, the elected functionaries in their roles as representatives of the people cannot always be expected to correctly focus the aims and aspirations, the deprivations and demands of the people, particularly the mute section of them unless there exists close and regular interaction with the people. Though this is true for all elected bodies but the same is more significant, particularly at the lowest tier of the Panchayat, because they function on addressing the local issues touching everyday life of the people. In order to bring out the popular demands in focus, one requires continuous active participation of the people. This chapter describes how the democratic functioning of the Panchayats will be strengthened and expanded for more wide and effective participation of the people, particularly the weaker section of the community and how to build capacities at all levels for achieving the same.

2.2 Participation at the Village Level

2.2.1 Legal changes have been made to entrust more responsibility including execution of schemes involving less fund and simple technology by the villagers themselves through constitution of the Gram Unnayan Samiti (GUS). The GUS is not a new tier of Panchayat but an integral part of the GP sharing some functions of the GP on its behalf at the village level. GUS will be the representative body of the villagers at the village level to continuously interact with the people and maintain liaison with the GP. Proper functioning of the GUS will require appropriate political will and congenial environment for consensus based approach to development. Therefore, formation and functioning of GUS cannot be imposed from above and the State Government will facilitate formation of all GUS where the people will demand so. The aim will be to sensitize the citizen to come forward and build consensus in forming GUS in all the Gram Sansads. Formation of the GUS will be followed by capacity building through training and regular interactive sessions of all the members of the GUS for which the State Government will make necessary arrangement. The outcome will be measured by participation of at least 20% of the citizenry in the Gram Sansad meetings and ability of the GUS to help in preparation and implementation of Gram Panchayat plans showing Sansad-wise break up. Experience shows that the activities, which can be planned and taken up at the Sansad level, though

small in size yielding limited benefit in isolation but are very important in the local context, have considerable impact when multiplied. For this purpose, there is no need for devolution of functions by the State Government as no such micro-level activities are planned or implemented by the State Government. [Appendix reference: 2. - (i) - (a) and (b) in page 83]

- 2.2.2 Inadequate understanding of the system of governance and the roles and responsibilities of the Panchayats is a major impediment in participation of the people. Sometimes that also leads to demanding services from Panchayats for which these bodies are not at all responsible. The State Government will take measures for dissemination of important information related to the functioning of the Panchayats with particular reference to interests of the citizen and take all possible measures for generation of awareness related to those aspects among the people. The effort will also include development of consciousness among the people on their obligation towards functioning of the Panchayats. [Appendix reference: 2. - (i) - (c) in page 83]

2.3 Organizing the Poor for their Participation in Panchayats

- 2.3.1 Making legal provision and providing structural framework are not enough for the poorer section of the community and the women to participate in the process of development. In order to have the voice of the vulnerable and the marginalized sections heard, they are to be organized and their capacities are to be increased for being able to voice their demands and influence functioning of the Panchayats in their favour. This will be done by organizing the poor, particularly the women in Self Help Groups (SHGs). SHG movement, especially of the women, in the State has gained a lot of momentum and more than seven lakh SHGs have been formed out of which majority have been formed by women. Organizing the poor in groups will be strengthened further so that every poor rural family has at least one member included in an SHG within the Eleventh Plan period. [Appendix reference: 2. - (ii) - (a) in page 83]
- 2.3.2 Special drive will be taken up to improve the understanding of the SHGs regarding the socio-economic situations in their own context as well as services to be made available by the Panchayats for its improvement. They will be encouraged to participate in the affairs of the Panchayat as citizen and to avail due services from the Panchayats for their socio-economic advancement for which the State Government will take measures for building up their capacity. The State will lend its support to provide access to credit to all the SHGs within the Eleventh Five Year Plan period. Their achieving minimum level of income will be crucial for being able to participate freely, which is essential for expansion of democracy. [Appendix reference: 2. - (ii) - (b) and (c) in page 83]
- 2.3.3 Legal provision has been made for the representation of SHGs in the GUS. Also, the SHGs are being organized further in Sub-Clusters within the Gram Sansad, Clusters within the GPs. The Clusters are being federated in bigger bodies known as Federations in each Block for synergy in their functioning. Those are being formed by the women SHGs in general and men are also involved in certain areas. Orders have been issued for representation of the Clusters and the Federations in the Upa-Samitis and Sthayee Samitis of the GP and the PS respectively, as invited members, so that they can give their

feedback for decision making in their favour and whatever decision is taken can be communicated to their members for wider knowledge and participation. The task is to form such Sub-Clusters, Clusters and Federations in all Gram Sansads, Gram Panchayats and Panchayat Samitis respectively within the Eleventh Five Year Plan period so that every GUS, Upa-Samiti and Sthayee Samiti has representations of the poor group of women to act as a pressure group. These organizations, apart from playing the most crucial roles of ensuring benefit to their members, will also influence the local governments to remain pro-poor for maximizing benefit to the most deprived section of the community. The responsibility of the State Government will be to build capacities of the Panchayats to utilize the Sub-Clusters, Clusters and Federations as their agents for poverty alleviation and making social changes for uplift of the women will be an important task to be achieved within the said period. [Appendix reference: 2. - (ii) - (d) to (g) in page 84]

2.4 Strengthening Functioning of the Sthayee Samitis and Upa-Samitis

- 2.4.1 The process described in sections 2.2 and 2.3 will strengthen vertical decentralization for active involvement of the people, particularly the women belonging to the poor community, at the village level in the affairs of the Panchayats. There is also need for horizontal sharing of power and responsibilities in functioning of the Panchayats. All the three tiers of Panchayats now have Standing Committees (Sthayee Samitis at the ZP and PS level and Upa-Samitis at the GP level), whose roles have been broadly specified. Guidelines have also been laid down for their functioning. This is the forum for developing appropriate coordination and convergence of activities of the Panchayats and the State Government through its line departments. The State Government will take measures for improved functioning of the Standing Committees.
- 2.4.2 In respect of district sector schemes of the line departments, the Panchayats will be required to play a stewardship role in reaching full benefit of the programmes to the people and to ensure convergence with its own activities either as a part of the devolved function or as per their own initiatives beyond the periphery of such devolution. In respect of the district sector activities which are to be devolved on the Panchayats, the Standing Committee will formulate its own plan keeping the broad policy of the State and the local needs in mind. The Development and Planning Department of the State Government has laid down the policy and principles of the Government in this respect. In its communication to all departments of this Government, it envisaged that all schemes shall be split up into two groups – one for implementation by the departmental machinery and the other for implementation by the local bodies i.e. the Zilla Parishad, Panchayat Samiti, Gram Panchayat and urban local bodies. Such schemes will be assigned, inter alia, to the Zilla Parishad, Panchayat Samiti or Gram Panchayats in consideration of their territorial jurisdictions as also the administrative, technical and financial requirement of any of these schemes. Such assignments will be coupled with flow of fund and technical support where necessary. This methodology is in process and is expected to begin its course on and from 2009-10. The Standing Committees have representation of the line department officials of the appropriate levels. Both in case of implementation of the district sector schemes as well as those of the Panchayat body itself, interactions between

the functionaries of the Panchayat and representatives of the concerned departments at the appropriate levels will be strengthened. [Appendix reference: 2. - (iii) - (a) to (c) in page 84 and 85]

- 2.4.3 At present the functioning of the Standing Committees are still weak and there is need for both development of capacities of the elected members of the Standing Committees as well as changing the attitude of the official members for their better participation in functioning of the Standing Committees. The linkage between the State level functionaries and the Standing Committees of the Zilla Parishads are also weak and varies widely across different departments. The State Government will ensure interactions between the State level functionaries, including ministers in charge of departments and the elected members of the Standing Committees of the Zilla Parishads at least once in a quarter for guiding and apprising them of the State policy and development programmes. The district level functionaries including the Karmadhyakshas and the Sabhadhipatis of the Zilla Parishad will interact with the members of the Standing Committees at the Block level for integrating their activities. There will be similar interaction and integration of activities between the Block level Standing Committees and the GP level Upa-Samitis. This will ensure convergence of activities of the State and the Panchayats and will help the Panchayats taking up various concurrent activities for promoting the same goals without duplicating each other's effort. Since the programmes are varied and divergent, it is not possible to suggest a rigid line of action in this regard. The Sthayee Samitis / Upa-Samitis or the Panchayat bodies shall be required to shape their decisions on the basis of the local needs and available resources to meet that need. Capacities of the Panchayats will be built up for making appropriate interventions of the assessed local needs. This will also help better implementation of the State plans because of convergence of activities at the lower level. [Appendix reference: 2. - (iii) - (d) to (g) in page 85 and 86]
- 2.4.4 One essential requirement for proper functioning of the Standing Committees is to have their own budgets. Provision of having Standing Committee wise budget allocation has been made and financial power of each Standing Committee has been prescribed for all the three tiers to give those bodies some freedom to function under supervision of the general bodies concerned. For decisions involving higher amounts, approval of the Standing Committee on Finance or the General body is to be taken, as the case may be. Steps have been taken for preparing budget Standing Committee wise from the year 2006-07. It seems that there is need for tremendous capacity building and sustained monitoring for achieving the desired goals. The same will be achieved for all the Standing Committees of the Zilla Parishads and the Panchayat Samitis by the year 2009-10 (i.e., budget for the financial year 2010-11). In respect of the Gram Panchayat preparation of prior allocation and working out budget for all the Upa-Samitis will be achieved by the year 2010-11 (i.e., budget for the financial year 2011-12). The State Government will arrange for training and capacity building exercises including improvement of the manuals for proper functioning of various Standing Committees. Arrangement will be made by the State Government for monitoring functioning of the Panchayats and each body will be encouraged to monitor their own functioning, including number of meetings being held and quality of output and outcome through tools developed for self-evaluation. [Appendix reference: 2. - (iii) - (h) to (j) in page 86]

2.5 Defining the Roles of the Members who are not Office Bearers

2.5.1 The role of ordinary members would be to represent their constituents, participate in the policy and budget decisions of the general body, suggest policy improvements, and scrutinize the executive's policy proposals and their implementation. All such exercises shall be done by them in the light of their experiences in their constituencies but with a wider vision for development of entire Panchayat area. The precise balance between the roles of the office bearers and other members in initiating policies will depend on the detail of the arrangements in place. Each member will become a champion of his/her constituency defending public interest in the Panchayat body and channelising the grievances, needs and aspirations of their electorate into the scrutiny process without jeopardizing the sustainable development process of the Panchayat. The Gram Panchayat members will get feedback from the GUS of which they are the chairpersons and will take up those issues in the General Body meetings of the GPs. Regular meetings of the General Body and participation of all the members is a salient part of what they own to their constituents as also to the entire populace of the Gram Panchayat in justification of their roles as members of the Gram Panchayat and will be an important ingredient of democratic functioning of those bodies. The members would also continue to have other important responsibilities vital to the effective functioning of their constituency. These would include:

- reviewing and questioning decisions taken by the office bearers;
- advising them on decisions and policy on local issues;
- reviewing policy, formulating policy proposals and submitting proposals to the Standing Committees;
- suggesting plan proposals and contributing in final preparation of annual action plan; and
- considering the budget proposed, proposing amendments and voting on the final budget.

The Government will take steps for clarifying their roles appropriately, arrange for their capacity building and monitoring the progress. [Appendix reference: 2. - (iv) - (a) in page 87]

2.6 Increasing Participation of the Political Parties in Opposition

2.6.1 In order to make the development initiatives more inclusive there is need for consensus building on strategic issues of development initiatives among all the political parties, who have representation in the Panchayat. Provision has been made for representation of one member from the opposition political parties unless at least one member is already elected through the prescribed process, in each of the Sthayee Samitis of ZP and PS and in the Artha O Parikalpana (Finance and Planning) Upa-Samiti of the GP. Provision of law provides the framework only and effective participation of all political stake-holders will require appropriate political will and imbibing democratic spirit by all the members and the majority will have to create conditions for participation of the members from the political parties in opposition with freedom, mutual respect and dignity. The State Government will encourage all processes leading to development of right attitude of the members of the majority to listen to the voice of the minority and place all facts before

them to justify decisions, if taken with disregard to the suggestions of the minority opinion. Since all the political parties are in opposition in some or the other Panchayat bodies there is need for active involvement of political parties in consensus building for developing such practices. The role of the State Government will be to facilitate the process wherever possible. It is however necessary that the opposite or alternative proposals or views expressed in the meeting should be recorded in brief in the proceedings. This will help in creating awareness among the people and motivate them in larger participation in the discussions. Likewise, in the Gram Sansad meeting also, the practice of recording of opposite or different views on any issue expressed by the opposition group or any individual, in the minutes of the meeting will be facilitated. The State Government, for that purpose, will plan for providing more training and capacity building inputs for effective participation of members from the political parties in opposition. Many of the social and economic objectives, some of which are even covered by legislation, are beyond any political debate and all the parties support the same in public. The capacity building initiatives will attempt to unite all of them behind those issues for maximizing benefit. [Appendix reference: 2. - (v) - (a) to (c) in page 87 and 88]

2.7 Vigilance and Redressal of Grievances – District Council and the Lokayukta

- 2.7.1 One very important aspect of involvement of the political parties in opposition is to work as the watchdog for monitoring activities of the majority. An institutional structure for the same has been provided by creating the District Council in all the Zilla Parishads, which are supposed to go through records and physically inspect schemes being taken up by any tier of the Panchayat. The District Council is still weak as an institution and the same will be strengthened for its more effective functioning. Steps will also be taken to strengthen its staff support for augmenting its delivery mechanism. [Appendix reference: 2. - (vi) - (a) in page 88]
- 2.7.2 In order that the Panchayats become true institution of the people there should be a strong mechanism for redressal of grievances against functioning of those bodies. There will be two types of arrangement for that purpose. The first type will comprise of a system for recording grievances in each Panchayat body along with a system of monitoring of redressal of grievances recorded in those registers. The Directorate of Panchayats will be restructured to monitor the process systematically. The second type will be redressal of grievances through the Lokayukta. [Appendix reference: 2. - (vi) - (b) and (c) in page 88]
- 2.7.3 The West Bengal Lokayukta Act, 2003 provides for appointment of a person as Lokayukta (eligible for appointment as a Judge of the Supreme Court) and one or more persons as Upa-Lokayukta (eligible for appointment as a Judge of the High Court). Any citizen may lodge a complaint against the elected representatives to the Lokayukta. On being satisfied that the complaint is justified and have ground for investigation, the Lokayukta conducts an investigation. If the complaint is substantiated on investigation, the Lokayukta sends the matter to the concerned authority recording thereon his/her findings and recommendations. A vibrating and responsive democracy demands that there should be reliable machinery for the common people to take resort to when their rights and privileges are denied by the established administrative machinery. Since the Lokayukta acts independently, it may be confidently stated that the process envisaged

shall result in an impartial and well-balanced decision in every matter placed before him/her. Although the authority of the Lokayukta is recommendatory, it is strongly felt that by virtue of the related statutory provisions, the competent authority in the administration cannot but take firm, unbiased steps without any prejudice by restoring the rights and privileges of the complainant and administering appropriate penal action against the person complained against when deemed necessary. The process is further buttressed by the provision that the annual consolidated report of the Lokayukta shall be laid by the State Government before the State Legislature along with a memorandum of action taken upon the recommendations. It is firmly believed that the institution of Lokayukta shall make the democratic polity and the administrative machinery in this State stronger, more people-oriented and cleaner. It shall also build up enhanced confidence of the common people in the administrative functions of the State down to the grassroots level. The State Government will take necessary steps for building awareness on functioning of the Lokayukta to enable people to get their grievances redressed through that body. [Appendix reference: 2. - (vi) - (d) in page 88]

2.8 Improving Accountability and Transparency

- 2.8.1 Improving accountability is one key pre-requisite for better functioning of the Panchayat. At the village level such accountability is attempted by calling all the voters in Gram Sansad meetings once in six months for sharing information and receiving suggestions of the people. The system of social audit of all important programmes will be made a regular activity of the GP and the Gram Sansad will also assist in conducting “Social Audit” conducted within its area. [Appendix reference: 2. - (vii) - (a) in page 89]
- 2.8.2 Meetings of the Gram Sansad shall be more meaningful and effective if officers and functionaries of the State Government implementing programmes or providing services to the people of that Gram Sansad also attend its meetings. They may explain the programmes implemented or services provided to the people and shall be able to get feedback from the people on how their functions may be improved. Their direct interaction with the target group people will also help in better implementation of the programmes. Attendance of officials at the Gram Sansad meetings will be ensured to the extent possible keeping in mind the limited numbers of officials of many departments at the GP level. [Appendix reference: 2. - (vii) - (b) in page 89]
- 2.8.3 In higher tiers the method of direct accountability to the citizens cannot be worked out. As a feasible alternative, forums known as Block Sansads and Zilla Sansads have been created for the intermediate and the district level. Those Sansads are constituted by all the elected members of the concerned body and the representatives from the lower tiers as well. The system is still evolving and the State Government will take up measures for strengthening the system by improving upon the institutional mechanism for organizing those Sansads as well as the quality of transactions that will take place in such forums. The institutional mechanism will include working out the essential disclosures to be made in those meetings, format for disclosures and standardization of some of the essential items to be included in the discussions. Improvement in functioning of those institutions will be continuous in nature. However, it is expected that some minimum standards will be achieved in the next three years. [Appendix reference: 2. - (vii) - (c) in page 89]

2.8.4 Accountability cannot be enforced if there is lack of transparency in functioning of the Panchayats. Steps will be taken, as described later, for improving access to information to the people. One immediate measure will be to make some disclosure voluntarily. Gram Panchayat will be required to publish by writing permanently on suitable walls or permanent display board in its office or in other public places (i) the list of beneficiaries for programmes like the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS), Indira Awas Yojana (IAY), Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY), (ii) families being assisted with cooked food under the SAHAY programme, (iii) rights under various Acts like the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGA) etc, (iv) progress of implementation of important programmes like the NREGA every month as per prescribed format, (v) availability of services by the GPs like timing of opening dispensaries run by those bodies etc. This will be apart from building capacities and sensitivity of the Panchayats in supplying information to the people as per provision of the Right to Information Act. [Appendix reference: 2. - (vii) - (d) and (e) in page 89]

2.9 Other Ethical Steps for Good Governance

2.9.1 Strict observance of rule of law, following financial disciplines and maintaining objectivity and integrity are essential ethics on which the Panchayat system has to function. Maintaining transparency in all transactions and providing access to information to the citizen will be given due importance, as already mentioned. Apart from scrutiny by the District Council, the auditors and administrative inspections, emphasis will be given on development of citizen's report card to judge the ethics being followed in the affairs of the Panchayat with simultaneous development of the capacity of the citizen to collate, sift and evaluate available information within the precincts of the rules and procedures and the ground realities. [Appendix reference: 2. - (viii) - (a) and (b) in page 89]

2.9.2 The State Government will take up appropriate advocacy programmes for the people to demand highest standards of honesty, integrity and objectivity. Also in order that any person can judge the same there should be access to all information upholding the spirit of the Right to Information Act. Experience shows that individual person, who is from the marginalized section and have apprehension of losing patronage of such bodies are not in a position to come forward unless organized in groups or assisted by others for demanding transparency and information, particularly if the same has been taken against their interest. There is need for engagement of civil societies for taking up the cause of such persons and to work as pressure groups for maintaining objectivity and integrity in functioning of the Panchayats. Panchayat and Rural Development Department will play its part so that under the Civil Society Support Programme (CSSP) under implementation in the State with assistance from DFID appropriate measures are taken in this direction. [Appendix reference: 2. - (viii) - (c) and (d) in page 90]

2.10 Interface between Panchayat and Civil Society

2.10.1 Development of social capital by encouraging civil society to get engaged with the functioning of the Panchayats will be an important aspect of institutional strengthening of

the Panchayat system. To promote that the Government wishes to see consultation and participation embedded into the culture of all Panchayat bodies. The Government proposes to ensure that the statutory obligations for consultation, at all levels are followed up in letter and spirit to ensure greater transparency of functioning. This would imply a more focused set of interventions for improving the quality and regularity of the consultation process in which the participation of the civil society will be very much desirable. However, this will be an evolving process and it is difficult to chart a Roadmap for the same except that all possible steps will be taken for promotion of civil societies and for creation of an ambience so that they may mutually reinforce each other in better understanding of the issues and strengthening the processes of good governance. The Panchayats will be made more accountable to the people they serve through more effective engagement of the Civil Society with those bodies, which will be attempted through the CSSP, mentioned in the previous paragraph. [Appendix reference: 2. - (ix) - (a) to (c) in page 90]

3. IMPROVING CORE CIVIC SERVICES

3.1 Providing Civic Services to the Citizen

3.1.1 Most of the civic services are best provided by the Gram Panchayats (GPs), being the closest to the people. The upper tiers may also remain associated with directly providing certain services requiring higher engineering skill and organizational capacities or having impact over a wider geographical area and may also bear the responsibility of providing necessary supports in delivering services by the GPs. Therefore, the general approach should be to provide as much services as possible by the lowest tier, that is the GP, and the upper tiers working for providing support to the GPs in realizing that goal. The services that the PRIs should provide in various sectors are described mostly in this chapter and some of the other services have been described in subsequent chapters. The following services are now to be provided by the GP as per the Act or assignment of responsibilities by the Government.

3.2 Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation

3.2.1 Providing drinking water to the people is an important service to be delivered by the GP. At present the GPs install and maintain the spot sources and the Public Health Engineering Department installs and maintains most of the piped water supply schemes. The PHE department will hand over all the existing piped water supply schemes to the Panchayats, except schemes which are very large and have technical complexity like those related to arsenic removal etc. within the Eleventh Plan period. The same will be handed over to the lowest tier of the Panchayats, within which a particular scheme area is fully located and that department will continue to provide technical support other than day to day maintenance as per MOU to be signed between that department and the Panchayat concerned. In respect of bigger schemes or those having technical complexities that department will supply water in bulk to the GP which will distribute the same at the household level with appropriate cost recovery. For that also suitable MOU

- has to be signed between that department and the Panchayat. The State Government will create posts in the Zilla Parishads so that the Panchayats have adequate personnel for that purpose. [Appendix reference: 3. - (i) - (a) to (d) in page 91]
- 3.2.2 The Panchayats will develop data base with the support of the PHE department about habitations with inadequate supply of drinking water, facing seasonal shortage of supplies and having water quality problems. This will be best done by the Panchayat Samiti with full support from the Zilla Parishad with access to the database of State Water Investigation Directorate and similar other organizations linked with local knowledge and experience. Habitation based small piped water supply schemes will be developed for areas facing contamination from arsenic and fluoride or having other problems based on surface water or other appropriate solutions wherever necessary with support of the PHE department to provide adequate supply of safe water to all the habitations of the state by the next five years. [Appendix reference: 3. - (i) - (e) and (f) in page 91]
- 3.2.3 Capacities of the Rural Sanitary Marts (RSM) and other NGOs will be built up to also deliver water supply engineering related services. Surveillance of all drinking water sources for bacteriological and chemical contamination will be ensured for testing quality of water in laboratories to be run and established in partnership with RSMs or other NGOs and using existing laboratories. Capacities of the Panchayats will also be enhanced appropriately for this purpose as well as for taking up measures for purifying contaminated water. Special drive will be taken in areas affected by arsenic, fluoride and salinity. This will be the primary responsibility of the PS but the part of the implementation related to collection of samples etc. will be the responsibility of the GP and overall supervision will be with the ZP. The water quality testing arrangements are to be financially sustainable and, if necessary the ZP will provide fund from its own revenue for meeting the shortage as per policy already worked out. [Appendix reference: 3. - (i) - (g) to (i) in page 92]
- 3.2.4 100% access to safe sanitary toilets to households and all institutions like schools, ICDS centres etc. have to be ensured by the Eleventh Plan period by the respective GP. Sanitation facilities will be provided at all public places and the responsibility will lie on the GP, PS or ZP depending on the place and within the said timeframe. Creating awareness among the people for maintaining a good level of personal hygiene and environmental sanitation will be the responsibility of the GPs to be supported by the other two tiers. [Appendix reference: 3. - (i) - (j) to (l) in page 92]
- 3.2.5 Sewerage and solid waste management arrangement will be put in place in each habitation for proper environmental sanitation by the GP. Each ZP will develop one or more pilots in selected GPs of the district and implement the same by the Eleventh Plan and at least 50% of the habitations of the State will be covered by the Twelfth plan period under such schemes. This will include conservancy services in urbanized or other GPs where such services are necessary and those GPs will be taken up on priority for implementing the pilot schemes as well as during the initial scaling up phase. Those GPs will be assisted by the State Government to dispose the solid waste in eco-friendly manner and to generate organic manure, where possible. [Appendix reference: 3. - (i) - (m) to (o) in page 93]

3.3 Services Related to Public Health

3.3.1 Improvement of public health is associated with a large number of activities and responsibilities by the local bodies. Responsibility for improving public health lie with all tiers from the central government to the GPs and the same also demands informed and active participation of the people for desirable outcome. Many of the proximate factors for good health are either delivered or may be coordinated by the Panchayats for proper convergence of all efforts by various bodies. The GP will provide that forum at the lowest level, which will be most crucial for ensuring convergence for all such activities. The other two tiers of Panchayats will take up similar activities in respective levels. There are many national level programmes, including the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) as well as separate State Government initiated measures for improving various aspects of preventive and promotive healthcare. The Panchayats will be responsible for organizing IEC activities and mobilizing the community for their active participation in those programmes and will attempt to reach the targeted objectives in respect of their areas by utilizing the available services. The Panchayats will also draw plan on public health issues for its area and will add their own resources to meet the critical gap for making those programmes reach the entire community, particularly the weaker sections. In case such services are not available or are of poor quality the Panchayats will mediate with the Government for ensuring delivery of public health related services for which the responsibility lie with the Government. The following gives a broad outline of what the Panchayats will be doing in respect of public health apart from what has been stated earlier in relation to water and environmental sanitation.

3.3.2 **Registration of birth and death** – In exercise of power conferred under section 6(5) of the Registration of Births and Deaths Act, 1969 (18 of 1969), the Chief Registrar of Births and Deaths, West Bengal (Director of Health Services), has appointed the Pradhans of the GP within their respective jurisdictions to act as Sub-Registrars (Notification No. HF/O/FW/14C-2/94(I)/174-P dated 19/5/1997). On being so appointed, the Pradhans are acting as Sub-Registrars, that is, they are collecting information on births and deaths, maintaining registers in the prescribed manner and making available such extract copies of the registers as may be intended for. They are also sending periodical reports to the Registrars on the work done by them. The PRDD has circulated an order No. 4231-PN/O/1/4P-5/2003 dated 12/11/2003 delineating the functions and responsibilities of the Pradhans on this issue. At present all such events, particularly all deaths are not registered though such services are provided free of cost. The GPs are required to ensure hundred percent registrations of birth and death occurring within its jurisdiction. That will also help the GPs to maintain the vital statistics of the population living within its area. Based on analysis of such data the GP will make possible interventions in reaching services related to family planning, mother care and child health interventions, campaigning for following the legal provision related to the age at marriage etc. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (a) and (b) in page 93]

3.3.3 **Immunisation of the children** – The GP will be responsible for mobilizing the community in order to achieve 100% immunisation of children with appropriate support from the upper tiers of Panchayats and the State Government. The responsibility of the GP will be to see that adequate services are available within its area and, if not, will

mediate with the State Government through PS, if necessary, so that every newborn has access to such services. The GP will also mobilize the parents and the community to take benefit of the services and will keep track of the actual coverage. All the doses are not taken by some children and to avoid that the GP will try to maintain the immunization data child-wise in computers, as and when they acquire the capacity to do so. The State Government will assist the GPs to acquire such capacities within next three years. The purpose will be to track every new born to be sure that all the doses have been administered to every child. The GPs will take the assistance of the ANMs and the ICDS workers in accomplishing this job. Necessary outreach services will be organized by the GP with the available health and ICDS workers for reaching the immunization related services to the areas located far away from sub-centres. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (c) to (f) in page 94]

3.3.4 **Safe Motherhood** – The Panchayats will work towards providing access to government services related to birth preparedness for safe motherhoods to its residents and will utilise the support to be available under NRHM towards that goal. The poorer section of the society do not always access such services because of their lack of awareness as well as difficulty in access or even non-availability of such services. The Panchayats will work for increasing awareness about availing such services like tetanus vaccination, pre-natal and post-natal check-ups and other good practices for safe motherhood. Those bodies will also take follow up measures including medical check up in deserving cases. Members of ASHA and women SHGs will be utilized to campaign and to keep vigilance on such matters. In case such services are not accessible to all, the GP will identify those areas and will mediate with the State Government directly or through the PS for making available such services. GPs will also work towards taking appropriate measures for achieving at least 80% institutional deliveries and will ensure that the remaining births are attended by at least skilled persons. If the government maternity facilities are far off, the GPs will develop infrastructure in their head quarter health sub-centres or in other suitable places for safe delivery of mothers with the help of the ANMs working in their jurisdiction. They may arrange skilled birth attendant from among the local women for providing services. The GPs will also monitor events related to maternal death and will take preventive measures directly or with the support including fund from the higher tiers or the State Government to avoid death of either the mother or the child. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (g) to (k) in page 94 and 95]

3.3.5 **Preventing Malnutrition** – High incidence of malnutrition among the adolescent girl, mother and children is a major area of concern related to public health. Prevention of malnutrition will depend on several interventions by the Government, Panchayats and the households. The GP will be the lowest level at which the nutrition related data, mostly collected in the ICDS centres, will be monitored, aggregated and analysed for all possible interventions at that level. They may also share certain data with higher authorities with recommendations for remedial actions. In order to do that the GPs will ensure that all the children of the area up to the age of three years are brought under regular surveillance through the ICDS programme or otherwise. Monitoring and analysis of the weight at birth and at latter months of all the babies will be an important component of the activities for planning and implementing both short and long term interventions. Such interventions will include identifying the malnourished children and ensuring that they

get adequate supplementary nutrition through local arrangements for which the GP will make provision for economically weaker households out of their own resources, if no such provision is there out of any existing programme. This is one of the concurrent activities where GP will take measures on its own initiative where State intervention is inadequate or has not reached at all. The Panchayats will also work for increasing the awareness of the people particularly the women including the adolescent girls for promotion of adequate nutrition for all. The GP will also work for spreading awareness related to breast feeding and promotion of low cost nutrients including motivating the poorer families for developing kitchen garden for increasing the supply of nutrient foods and proper functioning of various feeding programmes at the ICDS centres and schools. GPs will also remain responsible for construction and maintenance of ICDS centers with due support of fund from the Department of Women & Child Development and Social Welfare and other sources. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (l) and (m) in page 95 and 96]

3.3.6 Prevention of Communicable Diseases – Prevention of communicable diseases in general is the task of the Government. However, the same becomes effective only when the entire community participate in those programmes. The role of the Panchayats will be to participate in all such programmes and utilize the resources available through existing programmes of the State and the Central Government to prevent communicable diseases by ensuring active participation of the people and adding their own efforts and resources for effective implementation of all those programmes. The outcome will be measured by the reduction of burden of disease upon the residents and absence of outbreak of communicable diseases for which the GP will remain vigilant. The GP will pass on information of any incidence of outbreak of communicable diseases to the appropriate agencies and will provide all local supports to make government interventions effective in containing the same along with taking up local measures for preventing recurrence of such incidents. The Panchayats will take initiatives for control and home management of diarrhea and prevention of other water-borne diseases through awareness building and skill training. The Panchayats will also assist in building up awareness on diseases like AIDS for its prevention within its area. Persons suffering from diseases like AIDS, leprosy etc. should be treated as clinical cases and they should not be made social outcasts. West Bengal has high incidence of Thalasemia, which is really not a communicable disease and the same can be reduced by avoiding marriage in which both the bride and the groom are carriers of the congenital ailment. Awareness building in such cases, including motivating the people to check the blood groups of the prospective bride and groom before marriage should be taken up by the Panchayats for preventing such ailments. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (n) in page 96]

3.3.7 Vector Control – The Panchayats will work in association with the Government for controlling breeding of mosquito and other insects which are responsible for spreading disease. Those bodies will also take local measures for vector control and ensure participation of the people in all such measures like avoidance of accumulation of water, regular clearing of shrubs and bushes. Maintenance of environmental sanitation through proper drainage and sewerage, as already described and keeping the area free from open defecation will be important tasks of the Panchayats in this respect. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (o) in page 96]

- 3.3.8 **Food Safety** – As local government, the Panchayats do not have the technical competence to enforce measures related to food safety nor have they been legally entrusted with that responsibility. However, even without such formal assignment the GPs may promote adoption of certain broad hygienic measures in respect of sale of readymade food to reduce the probability of spreading of infectious diseases and link the same with issuance and renewal of trade licenses for food related business or vending of food in public places and fairs etc. The State Government will facilitate this through taking up capacity building measures and advocacy. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (p) in page 97]
- 3.3.9 **Monitoring Events of Death of Children and Pregnant Mothers** – In order to reduce the IMR and the MMR to the desired level the Panchayats will be required to monitor all such events, which occur within their areas. The Health Supervisors, posted at the GPs, have already been entrusted by the Health & Family Welfare Department with the responsibility of conducting audit of all such deaths and reporting the same to the Gram Panchayats. The GPs will have the responsibility to act on the basis of such reports by taking up suitable interventions locally and mediating with the higher tiers as well as the officials of the Health & Family Welfare Department for initiating possible measures in preventing such deaths. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (q) in page 97]
- 3.3.10 **Convergence of All Public Health Related Activities** – Convergence of all public health related activities and assessment of quality and extent of delivery of all the related services will be an important task of the GPs. The State Government has already introduced a review meeting by the GP in the last Saturday of every month and officials of Health & Family Welfare Department and the Women & Child Development and Social Welfare Department along with functionaries of the GP attend this meeting. Convergence of such efforts at the Block and District levels will be similarly coordinated by the PS and the ZP.
- 3.3.11 **Providing Elementary Curative Services** – Access to curative services in interior rural areas is still limited because of non-availability of qualified doctors in villages. Government doctors are available only in the PHCs, which caters to a large area and are located far away from many villages. Even travelling to those centres by the sick people involves considerable expenses and loss of time and income. As a result of that the poorer sections of the community are not in a position to take full benefit of available curative services of the Government and the only solution is to reach curative services closer to the people. The State Government will ensure that curative day care facilities are available within the geographical area of every GP. Such services are already available in GPs where government health centres like BPHC and PHC are located. The GPs, where no such centre exists, will be provided assistance by the State Government to run a dispensary by engaging a graduate doctor from prescribed system of medicine as may be advised by Health and Family Welfare Department. The doctors of the PHCs, which run only out-patient services, will also attend outdoor clinic in some of those GPs, particularly which are located in remoter places, to the extent permitted by the strength of doctors available in such PHCs of the same Block. In fact, 930 Homeopathic dispensaries, 154 Ayurvedic dispensaries and 48 allopathic clinics are being run at present in GPs without having any Government run health centres within their

geographical area. The remaining GPs, having no health centres within their area, will also be covered as soon as possible (preferably by the year 2010-11, subject to the availability of doctors on hire) so that every GP has some dispensary to provide elementary curative service to the people. All the doctors in those GPs are engaged on contract by the GPs and expenses for medicines etc. are borne both by the State Government and the GPs themselves. As already mentioned, in some of the remoter GPs Government allopathic doctors will be sent on rotation to provide outdoor treatments. Patients from all the clinics will be referred to the PHC/BPHC, if necessary. Every GP will develop appropriate infrastructure to allow running of such clinics and will maintain data related to treatment in such clinics for necessary disease surveillance. In fact the GPs are being assisted to develop proper infrastructure in their head quarter sub-centre as per model plans circulated for that purpose. All the GPs will have such infrastructures within the Eleventh Plan period. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (r) to (t) in page 97]

3.3.12 Maintenance of BPHC, PHC and Health Sub-Centres – The Health & FW department has entrusted maintenance of all the health infrastructures mentioned above on the ZP, PS and GPs respectively and fund is being placed for that purpose. Capacities of the Panchayats will be augmented to discharge these responsibilities efficiently. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (u) in page 97]

3.3.13 Building Capacities of the Panchayats – The State Government will work to augment the capacities of the Panchayat functionaries, particularly those at the GP level for being able to converge all the activities related to public health, monitor the progress of implementation of various programmes and be able to plan and implement local interventions for better outcome of the existing programmes to be judged by reduction of burden of diseases and better nutritional status of the population. For reaching out to the communities in this respect necessary collaboration will be developed with the SHG Clusters and their capacities will also be built up appropriately. Institutional capacities of the higher tiers will also be built up, if necessary, in collaboration with professional bodies. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ii) - (v) to (x) in page 98]

3.4 Services Related to Universal Literacy and Elementary Education

3.4.1 The 86th Amendment of the Constitution confers right to all for receiving education up to the age of 14 years. The PRIs should work in association with the State Government for realizing the goal for their entire population. This is one of the most important sectors, where the Panchayats will have activities of all the types like the devolved function, the agency function and the collaborative function. For implementation of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), the Chairperson of the Zilla Parishad is involved as Chairman of the District SSA Committee and there is no institutional linkage with the Panchayats, which is not in consonance with the spirit of the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution. The Government of India is to take a decision in this regard for ensuring involvement of the Panchayats in implementation of the SSA in rural areas and the parallel committees set up for the purpose should be dissolved. However, the Panchayats play an important role even without direct assignment of any responsibility, in respect of enrolment and retention of children in schools. Also, the Village Education Committee is headed by the elected representative of the GP. The State Government will build the capacities of the

- Panchayat functionaries, particularly the members of the Standing Committees at all levels for universalization of elementary education. [Appendix reference: 3. - (iii) - (a) to (c) in page 98]
- 3.4.2 Lack of access to elementary education has been a major problem in universalization of education. The Panchayats of the State has been fully devolved the responsibility of supporting community managed education centres for primary and upper primary level education to provide necessary access to all children. This is being done under a special programme of the State Government for universalizing elementary education with focus on reaching the education related services to the backward areas and ensuring participation of all those sections of the community, who are lagging behind. The programme known as the Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi allows opening of Shishu Shiksha Kendra (SSK) for imparting primary education and Madhyamik Shiksha Kendra (MSK) for imparting upper primary education by the community after obtaining concurrence of the Panchayats. It will be the responsibility of the GPs to ensure 100% enrolment and their retention till class VIII standard using the State sponsored or Panchayat sponsored institutes. The responsibility of the State Government will be to augment the capacities of all the tiers of Panchayats for achieving this important goal. [Appendix reference: 3. - (iii) - (d) in page 98]
- 3.4.3 Around 82% of the students in SSKs and MSKs are from the Minority community, SC, ST and the Other Backward Castes most of whom are first generation learners. Capacities of the Panchayats will be augmented by the State Government for providing due support to these institutions keeping the need for providing quality education in those centres. That will promote more equity in attainment of elementary education in the rural areas. A cadre of officials under the Panchayat will be created at the level of the ZP and PS for this purpose. Infrastructures of these institutions are not adequate. Providing infrastructure of the SSKs and MSKs at par with the government sponsored schools will be achieved by the 11th Plan period for which necessary support will be extended by the State Government. The ZPs will also be supported by the State Government, on demand, in running vocational trainings in selected MSKs for improving livelihood opportunities of the rural youth. [Appendix reference: 3. - (iii) - (e) to (g) in page 99]
- 3.4.4 Achieving universal elementary education is also related to abolition of child labour. The Panchayats will be sensitized to the urgent need for abolition of child labour from respective areas and achieve the status of “No child labour GP” as soon as possible. It will be too ambitious to think that the problem will be solved by merely involving the Panchayats in achieving the same. However, this will be a priority of the Panchayats in addressing this issue for which necessary support has to be also provided by the State Government. [Appendix reference: 3. - (iii) - (h) in page 99]
- 3.4.5 Gram Panchayats work as an associate of the School Education Department in implementing the Mid Day Meal programme with due support from the upper tiers. The GPs have engaged the SHGs for cooking and distribution of food and also have constructed kitchen sheds for running the programme. The GPs will be associated for improving services related to the Mid Day Meal programme. [Appendix reference: 3. - (iii) - (i) in page 99]

- 3.4.6 The National Literacy Programme is being implemented through the Zilla Saksharata Prasar Samiti. The Panchayats support the programme whereas the need is to devolve the responsibilities on the Panchayats. Item 19 of the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution includes adult and continuing education as one of the subjects to be considered for devolving on the Panchayats. It is, therefore, quite natural that the activities related to adult and continuing education, which need to be taken up at the district or below that level, will be devolved appropriately on the local bodies. The Panchayats will also be associated in extension of library services for the people living within its area so that every GP has a public library which will also act as a centre for receiving information related to various programmes of the government and the Panchayats. [Appendix reference: 3. - (iii) - (j) and (k) in page 99]

3.5 Sports and Culture

- 3.5.1 While elementary education for all is a major thrust area, impact of different cultural activities and sports for full manifestation of human qualities should not be lost sight of. Every school especially the upper primary and secondary school should be encouraged to organize seminar, symposium, debating and drawing competition and such other activities among the students. In addition to the initiatives taken for the school children, the Panchayats of the lower tiers will encourage the local clubs and young men's associations/groups and women's associations for promoting sports and games in its area. The Panchayat Khel Kud Abhiyan of the Government of India and other supports of the State Government will be utilized by the Panchayats apart from its own resources for this purpose. [Appendix reference: 3. - (iv) - (a) and (b) in page 100]
- 3.5.2 West Bengal has a rich cultural heritage in folk songs, dance, dance-dramas and similar performing arts. These art forms are to some extent languishing in absence of institutional support. The Panchayats with the support of the officials of the Information and Cultural Affairs department, whose services have been placed with the Panchayats, will nurture these art forms by helping in formation of groups of folk artists, organizing performances for them and also assisting them by procuring instruments and equipments. Younger generation may also be encouraged to take up folk songs and other art forms as additional vocations. [Appendix reference: 3. - (iv) - (c) in page 100]

3.6 Road Connectivity

- 3.6.1 The Panchayat of the State are constructing and maintaining roads from the beginning of constitution of those bodies as an important civic service. A large share of fund under the control of the Panchayat is used for that purpose. Each Zilla Parishad has already developed a District Rural Road Plan (DRRP), of which some of the roads are owned by the Government and the rest are maintained by the Panchayats or are required to be constructed for providing all weather road connectivity to all the habitations of the State. All metal roads shown in the DRRP and constructed under PMGSY, RIDF or other programmes and not owned by the PWD or other government departments will be owned by the ZPs. Responsibilities of the PS and the GP will be to connect by semi-metal roads (with at least 3.0 meter carriage way for movement of small four wheel vehicles) all the

habitations not covered under the PMGSY and lying unconnected so far with the existing network of metal roads, depending on whose exclusive jurisdiction the road is located. Such constructions will be completed by the end of the 12th plan period. Construction of roads within one habitation or between two habitations within one GP will be the sole responsibility of the GP concerned. Those roads also should preferably have carriage width of 3.0 meter. All roads of the Panchayats having at least 3.0 meter carriage way for movement of small four wheel vehicles will be termed Panchayat road. Other roads with lesser width will be termed Panchayat track and will be made semi-permanent by the GPs as soon as possible and preferably by the end of the 12th plan period. The right to collect toll or impose condition on flow of traffic as per law will lie on the Panchayat body owning that road. Other responsibilities of the Panchayats related to road connectivity are as mentioned below. The responsibility of the State Government will be to build capacities at all levels of Panchayats for being able to take up the tasks mentioned above as well as those listed below. [Appendix reference: 3. - (v) - (a) to (e) in page 101]

- 3.6.2 **Panchayats to Maintain the List of Roads** – Based on the said principle all the Panchayat bodies will prepare a list of roads already owned by them. The maps should be GIS based for which PS/GP-wise GIS maps of existing roads and habitations will be provided by the State Government to all Panchayats. All the roads should be properly named and the identity of the roads should be unique so that every road can be identified. The list of existing roads will be maintained in a Road Register, which will be treated as a subsidiary Asset Register of the Panchayat body concerned. The entry should include exact length, specifications, investment of capital nature made on each road for construction and upgradation and the year of construction. Documentation of all roads, as mentioned above, will be completed by all Panchayats by the end of the year 2010-11. [Appendix reference: 3. - (v) - (f) and (g) in page 101]
- 3.6.3 **Preparation of a Perspective Road Plan by Each Panchayat Body** – Each Panchayat body should prepare the list of roads which are to be upgraded to reach the specifications and the new roads to be constructed to provide effective connectivity to all habitations under their jurisdictions as well as within the habitations and show the same in maps separately. Based on the said information all the Panchayat bodies should come out with a perspective plan showing the list of new roads to be constructed and the roads to be upgraded. The draft should be shared with the higher bodies before finalization of the same by the Gram Panchayats and the Panchayat Samitis. The plans will be prepared by all Panchayats by the end of the 11th Plan period. [Appendix reference: 3. - (v) - (h) in page 101]
- 3.6.4 **Maintenance of Roads Owned by the Panchayats** – Maintenance of roads is an important responsibility of the Panchayat body owning the roads and the body will allocate enough funds based on its resources for that purpose in the annual budget. The Panchayat bodies should take up construction of new roads with their resources only after ensuring that the existing roads are maintained properly. Any Panchayat body not having enough technical expertise or if it finds otherwise convenient may entrust repairing of a particular road owned by those body to the higher or lower tier of Panchayat on mutual consent and will also bear the related expenses. The Panchayat bodies should mobilize more revenue including collection of tolls from newly constructed roads to meet the

maintenance needs. The State Government will provide grant to ZPs for maintenance of only metal roads to meet the critical gap of resources after those bodies have deployed its own revenue to the extent possible for that purpose. Each Panchayat will develop the practice of an annual assessment of maintenance needs based on field survey, allocate adequate resources and complete documentation of maintenance work done during the year in a Maintenance Register by the year 2010-11. [Appendix reference: 3. - (v) - (i) and (j) in page 102]

3.6.5 Road Safety – The Panchayat body owning any road should be responsible to ensure safety of the roads to the extent possible. Some of the aspects are to be taken care of while designing the roads. The Panchayats should also arrange proper road signs particularly in sharp turns and by controlling traffic speed in congested areas and will educate the inhabitants about all safety measures. The Panchayat body should regularly monitor if there is any place, particularly on new roads, where accidents are occurring repeatedly for taking necessary corrective measures. The technical officer in charge of construction/maintenance of the road shall be responsible for monitoring the extent of risk element and initiate action accordingly. It is difficult to have a target related to road safety and this aspect will be imbibed more and more by the Panchayats in due course and the State Government will facilitate building capacities in this respect. [Appendix reference: 3. - (v) - (k) in page 102]

3.6.6 Street lighting – Section 21 of the State Panchayat Act has entrusted the responsibility for street lighting upon the Gram Panchayat. Street light should be provided in places where the road passes through habitations and deserves such facilities and in places where lighting is necessary from the safety point of view. The operational aspects like identification of the locality, rates to be imposed on the people and other related issues shall be decided by the Gram Panchayats. However, the ZP and PS will provide grant to the GP in maintaining street light on roads owned by those bodies. Lighting will be provided in all roads in need of that by the 11th Plan period. [Appendix reference: 3. - (v) - (l) in page 102]

3.7 Transport Services

3.7.1 One prerequisite for all-round development is existence of good transport system. Transport services are controlled by the Regional Transport Authorities. However, the Panchayats will mediate with appropriate authorities for improving transportation and will also encourage local entrepreneurs for operating possible services. Panchayat will also arrange plying of non-mechanized transports as per demand. Major responsibility of the Panchayats in this matter will be to maintain good roads with suitable width and other specifications. [Appendix reference: 3. - (vi) - (a) and (b) in page 102]

3.8 Irrigation, Drainage and Flood Protection

3.8.1 The Panchayats are providing irrigation facilities to the farmers mostly through surface water irrigation sources and individuals have been facilitated to own ground water installation. In some cases the Panchayats have also installed irrigation sources like deep

tube wells and river lift irrigation facilities, which are generally maintained by the users. All the three tiers have been involved in such works depending on the size and complexity of the irrigation system. The Roadmap for irrigation will be to utilize the available rainfall to create as much irrigation potential as possible and to sustain the same. However, medium and large irrigation, because of involvement of higher technical know-how, will be under the jurisdiction of the State Government. Every GP will prepare GIS based map showing existing irrigation system including all tanks used for irrigation and untapped potential within its area, with the help of higher tiers and the State Government, to work out sustainable water management plan with maximum irrigation potential by the 11th Plan period. [Appendix reference: 3. - (vii) - (a) and (b) in page 103]

- 3.8.2 Providing appropriate drainage facilities for each habitation will be important tasks of all the tiers of Panchayats depending on their geographical spread and technical complexity. The responsibility will primarily lie on the GPs and what cannot be taken up by the GP on ground that the same is beyond its technical competency or the command or impact area is spread over more than one GP the higher tiers will be involved. The State Government will provide support to the GPs and other Panchayats, on demand, to come out with a drainage plan for its area along with the plan for solid and liquid waste management as mentioned in paragraph 3.2.5. [Appendix reference: 3. - (vii) - (c) in page 103]
- 3.8.3 Flood protections from major rivers are done by the Irrigation and Waterways Department. The Panchayats maintain the traditional Zamindari embankments and also takes up other local measures. This will be generally the responsibility of the PS and the ZP will extend necessary technical assistance directly or with the support of the Irrigation and Waterways Department. The State Government will build up capacities of the Panchayats concerned and extend possible support on demand and because of the nature of works there will be no fixed target. [Appendix reference: 3. - (vii) - (d) in page 103]

3.9 Development of Habitat, Housing for the Poor and Other Civic Planning

- 3.9.1 Availability of durable houses with less vulnerability from natural disaster for all the households residing within any GP will be an important goal of all the GPs. Also, every household should have preferably at least two rooms, separate kitchen and toilet facility with piped water supply, proper sewerage and electricity connection. The present status is far behind the desired goal and the GP as well as the other tiers of the Panchayat should facilitate in all possible ways to reach the goal. Availability of homestead land and proper development of the habitat with less vulnerability and due environmental considerations and better access to citizen's services for healthy living are essential for realizing the goal related to housing for all. The GP will be responsible for development of such habitat for all the families living within its jurisdiction so that providing essential civic services to all the households becomes easier. The GPs will be assisted to acquire capacity for proper planning and development of habitat to accommodate every household, living within its geographical area, to have a durable house and will be extended necessary resources. Partnership with private bodies for this purpose may be sought for wherever possible. This is a vision to be shared by all Panchayats and it is difficult to work out any timeline for achieving the same. [Appendix reference: 3. - (viii) - (a) in page 103]

- 3.9.2 Families who are homeless or live in very weak structures need financial support for having even a single room for durable accommodation. Support for housing is now extended under the centrally sponsored Indira Awas Yojana. Targeting for the same will be improved with the help of the data base on families having poor housing condition derived from the household survey and absolute transparency on selection of beneficiaries will be maintained as per the scheme guidelines. Every GP will come out with a plan for those not having even homestead land and deserving assistance for constructing houses within the year 2009-10 and based on that the GPs will be assisted by the State Government to acquire land for developing settlement of those families. The State Government will also provide financial and technical assistance to take care of the housing of those who do not own any house and homestead land on a priority basis. Those living in very vulnerable areas will also be covered in deserving cases for developing new settlement. It is hardly realistic to prescribe a time frame for achieving such goals, which require flow of substantial resources beyond the reach of the Panchayats and even the State Government. [Appendix reference: 3. - (viii) - (b) and (c) in page 104]
- 3.9.3 The building plans, for which Gram Panchayats are the sanctioning authorities under the law, should also be regulated to ensure healthy living for every one. Each building should have abundance of light and air and installation of rain water harvesting structure will be encouraged. There should be access to adequate playing ground, space for the children and enough community space for healthy living. Capacities of the Panchayats will be increased to meet the requirement of technical expertise in sanctioning building plan and regulating habitat. Priority will be given to the urbanized GPs and those who will demand such support. [Appendix reference: 3. - (viii) - (d) in page 104]

3.10 Marketing and Other Facilities for Promotion of Economic Activities

- 3.10.1 There should be adequate marketing facilities for selling local products as well as for buying the commodities ordinarily required by the citizen within reach of all the habitations. With gradual transition of the economic activities from the primary to secondary and tertiary sector activities and keeping in mind the intense pressure on land in the State, the Panchayats will be responsible for creating infrastructure for taking up non-farm economic activities including activities in the service sectors. Each GP will be required to promote one marketing centre cum business hub for meeting their local needs unless bigger centres adequately catering to such needs are promoted by the PS or the ZP within its area. Planning and implementation of development of larger marketing centres for taking up wider range of economic activities will be the responsibilities of the PS and the ZP depending on the complexity and size of the same. Such development will be made keeping in mind the agricultural markets built up or proposed to be built up by the Department of Agricultural Marketing. [Appendix reference: 3. - (ix) - (a) and (b) in page 104]

3.11 Issuing Trade Registration Certificates and Licenses

- 3.11.1 The GP has the authority to issue trade registration certificate for carrying out any business within its jurisdiction. The GP will ensure prompt services for granting such certificates against prescribed fees and for renewal of the same. Similarly, the Panchayat Samiti is empowered to issue license for running certain offensive and dangerous trades and realize license fee for those. The State Government has issued notifications enlisting offensive and dangerous trades and the maximum rates of license fees and renewal fees that may be realized. Maximum rates that may be imposed as fees for issue of Trade Registration certificate for different trades have been laid down. The process of issuing trade license will be fully computerized by the year 2009-10 for improving quality of services and augmenting revenue. [Appendix reference: 3. - (x) - (a) to (c) in page 105]
- 3.11.2 The objective behind empowerment of the Panchayats for issue of such certificates/licenses is not limited merely to augmentation of their resources. It is expected that the Panchayats will take initiatives for providing required services through the network of trades and businesses in the locality, ensure environmental sanitation and eco-friendly ambience, safeguard against any practice leading to pollution, prevent unlawful business in the area and keep tab on trades and businesses within the area. Capacities of the Panchayats will be augmented in this regard along with those related to food safety as mentioned in paragraph 3.3.8.

3.12 Special Requirements of the Urbanized Gram Panchayats

- 3.12.1 Some of the GPs of the State are experiencing more rapid urbanization. 2001 census has identified 282 census towns and out-growths, which are located within the Panchayats. Because of higher density of population in those areas, there will be more need for improving certain types of civic services like solid waste management, drainage, street lighting etc. and the GPs should be more equipped in assessing building plans before passing the same. Areas of many of those GPs come under authorities formed under the Town and Country Planning Act and there is need for convergence and harmony of plans taken up under the said Act as well as the plans of the local bodies. They also need extra fund for providing civic services of higher order. A special initiative will be taken to build capacities of those GPs to improve the quality of lives of the people living in those areas. In order to identify the target areas and to prepare a blue-print of action, PRDD shall take up a study by an expert team. [Appendix reference: 3. - (xi) - (a) and (b) in page 105]

3.13 Management of Disaster

- 3.13.1 Proper management of disaster depends on due preparedness and many of those activities are to be taken up at the community level and at the levels of the local governments. All preparatory steps that involve local resources may be taken up by the GP and the PS for which separate devolution is not necessary. Major initiative is required to come from the GP, being nearest to the people. Each GP will be required to develop a Disaster Management Plan in consultation with the community for mitigating the impact of any disaster and to take as much pre-emptive action as possible. A major challenge is developing capacities of the local bodies and the community for that purpose. Steps will

be taken by the State Government for building up such capacities of Panchayats with emphasis on areas which are more prone to certain types of disaster like cyclone, flood etc. The State Government has already issued orders for involvement of the Panchayats in identifying beneficiaries in providing relief to persons in post disaster situations. Panchayats of the State have successfully handled such situations in the past and further capacity building of the Panchayats will include both better preparedness for minimizing loss of human life and property and imparting management skills for tackling such situation with total involvement of the community. [Appendix reference: 3. - (xii) - (a) and (b) in page 105 and 106]

4. DECENTRALIZED PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 It is very difficult to distinguish between what are the essential responsibilities of the nature of core services and what are the other responsibilities of the Panchayats for economic development and social justice as laid down in article 243G of the Constitution [inserted by the Constitution (Seventy-third Amendment) Act, 1992 coming into force with effect from April 24, 1993]. The line of demarcation in this respect is in many segments very thin or blurred. However, the previous chapter broadly describes mostly those civic functions which are essential for all those living in their jurisdiction irrespective of their social and economic position for living in a society. The present chapter describes more of those activities which are to promote economic development of the poorer sections and social justice. Most of these are being done by the Panchayats and the State interventions will be in augmenting capacities of those bodies in taking up those activities more efficiently and assessing the need at village level through decentralized planning process, which are being intensified.

4.2 Land Reforms

4.2.1 The State Government has already entrusted the responsibility of identifying beneficiaries of land reforms on the Panchayat Samiti. While the said responsibility will continue, the Panchayats will be more associated with improving land of the beneficiaries of land reforms so as to improve their productivity and helping those beneficiaries for accessing various inputs like bank credit etc. Development of degraded land, irrigation facilities and checking of soil erosion etc of the beneficiaries of land reforms will be taken up on a priority basis using fund available from NREGA or other programmes for sustaining agricultural productivity. [Appendix reference: 4. - (i) - (a) in page 106]

4.3 Better Management of Natural Resources and Improving Land Use

4.3.1 **Agriculture and allied sector** – The PRIs are already engaged in development of agriculture and allied activities. Their capacity will be augmented further in assessing availability of natural resources and in improving its utilization for generating maximum

economic gains keeping in mind the need for generating as much employment as possible and ensuring availability of food on a sustainable basis. Although land belongs to private individuals and crop planning is done in the private domain the Panchayats along with the State Government will work for necessary crop diversification and intensifying agricultural output. The role of the Panchayat will be to provide supporting infrastructure to ensure optimum and sustainable utilization of land and water. The same will include land reclamation utilizing fund from various employment generation programmes like NREGA so that every plot of land excluding the water bodies are either covered with crop or if the land is not suitable for cropping the same have tree cover. Degraded land is generally owned by the poorer sections having no means to improve the same and Panchayats will be responsible for improving all such land to at least have tree covers. Land which can bear crop should be cultivated at least twice for which the Panchayats will play a stewardship role to utilize the available State extension machineries and will also use its own resources. The officials of the line departments will provide necessary assistance for this purpose and the Panchayats, particularly the GPs will be allowed to develop para-professionals within its areas for utilizing their services. In order to improve the cropping intensity the PRIs will work for providing micro and minor irrigation and will also mediate with the State extension machinery for improved agronomic practices for higher yield. In order to introduce new crops or improving cropping intensity the Panchayats of all the three tiers will be at liberty to act concurrently with the State Government for providing mini-kits to the poor farmers. They will assess the crop yield every year and work for increase in total production and economic returns of the farmers. Some of the activities, for which the Panchayats have acquired competence, will be taken up directly by those bodies and in respect of other interventions requiring more resources or technical expertise they will mediate with the State machineries for achieving desirable goals. The PRIs will similarly promote activities related to horticulture, sericulture and cultivation of different commercial crops. [Appendix reference: 4. - (ii) - (a) to (c) in page 106 and 107]

- 4.3.2 **Promotion of agro-forestry and social-forestry** – These activities have been already devolved on the Panchayats for taking up plantation in all possible areas excepting those which are declared forests. Every GP will prepare nurseries of their own with the help of the local SHGs and take up plantation of only those species which are preferred by the community. The GPs will study the area to find out which land is unfit for cropping and irrespective of its ownership will either directly plant trees or assist the owner if they belong to the SC/ST families, BPL families or are land reform beneficiaries for planting trees. The other owners will also be motivated for improving tree cover for meeting the bio-mass need of the area. Promotion of horticulture and other species will be taken up for generation of further economic activities using the planted trees and the Panchayats will also develop their own assets in terms of plantation of valuable trees for generation of income on a sustainable basis. [Appendix reference: 4. - (ii) - (d) to (f) in page 107]
- 4.3.3 **Development of Water-bodies and Promotion of Fishery** – Water conservation by storing surface water is an important activity to which the Panchayats are already associated. This will be intensified further for growing at least two crops in the command area of such water bodies, which will be actively promoted by providing mini-kits to all poor farmers having land in the command area. There is an increasing trend of SHGs

taking lease of land for growing second crop and all such groups will be assisted to grow second crop and augment their income. The water bodies will be also intensively utilized for pisciculture. Those bodies owned by the Panchayats or for which Panchayats will spend fund for excavation will be given on lease preferably to the SHGs or the fisherman groups, for which enabling order has been already issued. Taking up composite culture of fishery and duckery together on such water bodies will be promoted for generation of more economic activities in their areas. The Panchayats at the intermediate level and as and when necessary at the Zilla level will also mediate with the officials of the Fishery Department for extension of technology and with banks for providing credit to the producers for higher production of fish. [Appendix reference: 4. - (ii) - (g) to (j) in page 107]

- 4.3.4 **Water and Soil Conservation Measures** – The Panchayats have been entrusted with the responsibility of taking up water and soil conservation measures out of various programmes including wage employment programmes and the watershed development programmes. This is in addition to what some of the Government Departments like the soil conservation wing of the Agricultural Department is doing. Technical supports for taking such schemes are available at the level of the PS. In case of need for higher level technical support the same will be provided by the DRDC of the Zilla Parishads as well as the soil conservation wing of the Agricultural Department. The State Government will be responsible for strengthening the technical capabilities of the Zilla Parishads through the DRDC and the WBCADC for supervising and supporting all activities of the lower tiers of the Panchayats in better conservation of soil and water within its area. Amendment in the WBCADC Act shall be done for creating this scope. Priority will be given for rain water harvesting for meeting as much of the demand of water as possible. [Appendix reference: 4. - (ii) - (k) to (m) in page 108]
- 4.3.5 **Environment Protection** – In their multidimensional functional domain, the Panchayats will not take any step which may lead to environmental degradation or may endanger biodiversity in the area. The PRIs will generate awareness for people’s participation in protecting and improving environment and bio-diversity. Preservation of green cover, water bodies, soil, air and animal & plant species will be the focus for such awareness building and local actions will be taken in all possible cases. [Appendix reference: 4. - (ii) - (n) in page 108]
- 4.3.6 **Promotion of Animal Husbandry** – The Animal Resources Development Department (ARDD) has issued an order (No. 206/PN/O/I/4P-5/06 dated 10.1.2008) to the effect that all Block Animal Health Centres as also Additional Block Animal Health Centres shall henceforth be run and maintained by the Panchayat Samiti. Likewise, Animal Development Aid Centres shall be run and maintained by the Gram Panchayat. As a consequence, service of Livestock Development Assistant has been placed with the Gram Panchayat. Similarly, Veterinary Surgeon and higher level technical officers shall continue to render technical support. Block Livestock Development Officer and Veterinary Surgeon shall also be under the functional control of the Panchayat Samiti. Activity mapping for this sector provides the responsibility of selecting beneficiaries in various government schemes and getting associated with the effort of the government for better extension of improved practices as well as taking other promotive measures. A

team of para-professionals identified by the GPs, known as *Prani-bandhu*, have also been developed by the ARDD to provide services to the community against payment. They remain tagged with the GP and provide useful support in the field of animal husbandry. In addition to being associated with the effort of the State, the Panchayats are promoting activities in this sector with their own fund as well as fund received from poverty alleviation programme. Providing inputs for animal husbandry like chicks, ducklings, kids and piglets etc. out of own fund of the Panchayats to the poor families and particularly the members of the SHGs have been found to be very useful for augmenting income. Capacities of the Panchayats will be augmented for intensifying those works as well as increasing the supply of inputs within its area by promoting breeding and hatching and augmenting necessary skill and infrastructure for that purpose. [Appendix reference: 4. - (ii) - (o) in page 108]

- 4.3.7 **Restructuring the West Bengal Comprehensive Area Development Corporation –** The West Bengal Comprehensive Area Development Corporation (WBCADC) is a statutory body under the Government of West Bengal. This organization came into being in 1974 for taking up intensive activities mostly in the agriculture and allied sectors in the notified project areas. The same was brought under the administrative control of the Panchayat and Rural Development Department from February 2004 with the intention to make them work in close association with the Zilla Parishads and provide support to the Panchayats in those fields. The Corporation has at present 21 notified Projects, which are located throughout the districts of West Bengal and all agro-climatic zones of the State are covered by the Projects. The State Government will restructure the WBCADC so that instead of taking up developmental activities in certain notified locations the project units function as technical support organizations of all agencies including the Panchayats working for promoting livelihood in the agriculture and allied sectors. The WBCADC also produce seeds of various crops and other inputs like horticulture saplings, fingerling for fish, chicks, piglets etc. The WBCADC will work for supplying inputs as per the requirement and will also provide extension support to Panchayats for introduction of new crops or adoption of new technology. [Appendix reference: 4. - (ii) - (p) in page 108]

4.4 Promotion of Livelihood Opportunities in Non-Farm Sectors

- 4.4.1 **Promotion of Livelihood Opportunities in Secondary and Tertiary Sectors –** The Panchayats will also work for expansion of livelihood opportunities in the secondary and tertiary sectors by developing appropriate infrastructure, arranging skill training for the people, particularly those from the poorer and weaker sections of the community. They will also mediate with the financial institutions for providing better access to credit for deployment of the skilled workers in production of goods and services. All those activities are normally done by the State Government. However, the nature of the activities are such that the Panchayats have no difficulty to promote those activities within their areas with their own initiatives and resources as well as mediating with the State machineries and other available institutions for better implementation of their plans and programmes in those sectors. [Appendix reference: 4. - (iii) - (a) in page 109]
- 4.4.2 **Household and Other Small Scale Industries –** In addition to the efforts being made by the State Government for promotion of small scale and household industries, with all

possible supports of the Gram Panchayats, the Zilla Parishads and the Panchayat Samitis are engaged in promotion of those activities. Some of those are taken up as part of implementing various schemes, including self-employment programme, which have been assigned to the Panchayats. They are allowed to hire experts to draw up special plans for that purpose, procure land and develop infrastructure, arrange skill training and mediate with banks for credit support. Identification of key economic activities and development of skill, common infrastructure including production infrastructure and marketing supports will be provided mostly through the District Rural Development Cell (DRDC) of the Zilla Parishads. The Panchayats will develop partnership with professional agencies for this purpose including that mentioned in paragraph 4.4.1, if necessary. The role of the State Government will be to increase the capacities of the PRIs appropriately and to create other enabling conditions for expansion of non-farm economic activities in all possible sectors and in every possible geographical location. [Appendix reference: 4. - (iii) - (b) in page 109]

- 4.4.3 **Promotion of Service Sectors** – The service sector is fast growing and has the potential to provide more employment. The benefit of expansion of service sectors has gone mostly to the urban areas because of available infrastructure and other supporting facilities. However, some of the services have potential to grow, with proper facilitation, even in interior rural areas. The Panchayats, particularly those located in peripheries of the urban areas, will be assisted by the State Government to facilitate the process with development of appropriate skill and infrastructure for growth of service sectors. As a part of planning exercise those will be identified for being promoted by the Panchayat themselves or by the State Government on recommendations of the Panchayats. Developing infrastructure for Promotion of new economic activities with larger employment potential like the IT and the ITES will be an important task of the Panchayat for which due assistance will be provided by the State Government. Developments of rural markets have already been assigned to the Panchayats and those bodies have also constructed several market complexes for private trades in the locality. It will be the responsibility of the Panchayats to create more space for conducting business by the local people. The viable proposals will be funded by the State Government. That will also include establishment of Rural Business Hubs, in collaboration with private partner, if suitable offer is available. [Appendix reference: 4. - (iii) - (c) in page 109]
- 4.4.4 **Promotion of Tourism** – Panchayats of all tiers will play their roles in development of tourism in their respective areas and to extend necessary support to the Tourism Department for promotion of tourism in the state by showcasing traditional local art and cultural activities of unique nature, rare specimen of flora and fauna, places of scenic beauty, phenomena of ethnic diversity, places and relics of historical, cultural and religious importance etc. that may entertain people and may have educative value. The tourist spots should be developed without disturbing the ecological balance or without impairing the aesthetic beauty. [Appendix reference: 4. - (iii) - (d) in page 110]

4.5 Alleviation of Poverty and Ensuring Social Equity

- 4.5.1 **Providing Wage Employment to the Unskilled Workers** – The Panchayats of the State have been implementing all wage employment programmes, which were supply driven.

The responsibility of the Panchayats has reached a new dimension with the introduction of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 as a right based and demand driven employment generation programme. The GP is the implementing agency for most of the schemes and the PS are entrusted with implementation of larger schemes. The PS and the ZP will oversee the planning and implementation of works and will ensure that demand for employment is met in respect of its area and will provide support to the lower tiers for achieving the objective. Panchayats do not have enough capacity for properly planning and following all the processes prescribed in the Act for proper implementation of the same. The problem is further aggravated due to non-availability of enough land and prolonged monsoon in the state leading to generation of large demand for employment to be met over a smaller period. The role of the State Government will be to augment the capacities of the Panchayats to implement the Act properly and to simultaneously build up employment potential through better management of natural resources and to create such assets so as to increase employment potential in the private domain leading to lower demand of employment within the state. [Appendix reference: 4. - (iv) - (a) in page 110]

- 4.5.2 **Implementation of Watershed Development Programmes** – The Panchayats have been fully entrusted with the implementation of the watershed development programmes under the centrally sponsored Hariyali schemes as well as other watershed development programmes. In this case also the major constraint is that of inadequate capacities and the Roadmap will be to gradually develop capacities at all the three tiers for proper implementation of the watershed development programmes. Major focus of such schemes will be those Blocks covered under the DPAP and other blocks facing land degradation. [Appendix reference: 4. - (iv) - (b) in page 111]
- 4.5.3 **Self Help Groups and Self Employment** – As mentioned at paragraph 2.3, organizing the poor in SHGs and empowering them will be a strategy for improving participation of the poor in the affairs of the Panchayats. That will also help the poor to be the prime mover for their own development by drawing support from the Government, including Panchayats. Role of the Panchayats in this context will be to facilitate the process and to ensure convergence of all the interventions at the community level through the SHGs, wherever possible. The GPs will maintain information of all SHGs formed under its area and will encourage them, irrespective of the programmes or institutions responsible for formation of those groups, to come under one umbrella. The present system of reviewing the progress of SHG movement every second Saturday of the month in all GPs will be strengthened. All the three tiers of Panchayats will be encouraged to utilize their resources for strengthening the SHG movement. Capacities of those bodies will be developed to facilitate the process without imposing their decisions on the SHGs so that the organizations of the SHGs may have freedom to grow. Providing support for acquiring necessary production infrastructure, skill and non-credit inputs like giving lease of vested land, saplings, seeds, chicks, kids and piglets etc. by the SHGs will be given priority by the PRIs. They will also mediate with professional bodies for providing marketing support and with the financial institutions for smooth flow of credit to the SHGs and their umbrella organizations. The Clusters and Federations will be assisted to develop their own offices for proper functioning. Panchayats, particularly the ZPs will provide all possible support for imparting training on augmentation of livelihood

opportunities for the members of SHGs. The Panchayats will take steps for building capacities at all levels for developing adequate strength and dynamism in functioning of the groups and all forms of SHG clusters so as to unleash the productive potential of the rural poor for their gainful employment and ultimately making it possible for them to come out of poverty. The related goals to be achieved in the next five years in this regard will be:

- (i) at least 80% SHGs will have access to credit through either cash credit account or scheme-based lending
- (ii) at least 50% of the SHG members will be linked with micro-enterprise so that those members can earn at least Rs. 1000 per month and the average income of all such SHG members can be at least Rs. 1500 per month.

All such responsibilities have been already devolved on the Panchayats and the Roadmap boils down to augmenting capacities of the Panchayats of all the three tiers for achieving the objectives as stated above and as fast as possible. This will also require intense orientation of the Panchayat members for utilizing the untied fund for directly addressing poverty through SHGs. [Appendix reference: 4. - (iv) - (c) to (n) in pages 111 to 113]

4.5.4 Reduction of Poverty and Providing Other Support to the BPL Families – Steps like Land Reforms, better use of natural resources in a sustainable way, providing wage employment and augmenting self-employment initiatives through organizing the poor and promotion of non-farm activities, as narrated before, will be the main interventions for alleviating rural poverty. A general thrust of all developmental activities will be towards faster reduction of poverty. In order that programmes targeted towards the poor are properly implemented, the families belonging to BPL should be identified as correctly as possible and will be required to be updated. The Panchayats will be required to play important role for both identification of the poor as per prescribed procedure and its updating, particularly by circulating the list and helping the families in raising claims and objections for correction of the list as well as to vet the list at the Gram Sansad meetings. The PRIs will also have the responsibility of utilizing the list for delivering all services aimed towards the poor. [Appendix reference: 4. - (iv) - (o) and (p) in page 113]

4.5.5 Economic Development of the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and those from the Minority Community – Within the broad framework of the programmes administered by the Backward Classes Welfare Department of this Government and the Department of Minorities Affairs and Madrasah Education, the Panchayats will extend possible help to such people. Such roles should centre around (i) identification of beneficiaries of income generation schemes under Special Central Assistance to Special Component Sub-Plan for BPL SCs and STs, (ii) meeting training needs for selected trainees from among poor SC/ST/Minority families for income generation activities, (iii) selection of different community development schemes in SC/ST/Minority areas and other backward areas, (iv) review and monitoring for speedy implementation of all such schemes and (v) intense monitoring for selection and implementation of income generation schemes under Special Central Assistance to Special Component Sub-Plan and Special Central Assistance to Tribal Sub-Plan. Details of such interventions by the Panchayats at various levels shall be worked out in consultation with the Backward

Classes Welfare Department. Such interventions will be collaborative and in consonance with the guidelines and orders issued by that Department. [Appendix reference: 4. - (iv) - (q) in page 114]

- 4.5.6 **Interventions in Special Areas and Backward Villages** – There are certain areas with special problems like repeated flood, river erosion, closed tea gardens, which require special attention. The Panchayats will be oriented to pay due attention to address problems which are within its capacity and the State Government will provide additional support to meet the developmental needs of those areas as well as to help those bodies to acquire capacities in designing appropriate interventions for those areas. The State Government has identified 4,612 villages as backward compared to others based on certain objective criteria. The Panchayats will focus their development initiatives in respect of those areas and critical support for meeting the development needs of those villages will be extended to the Panchayats so that those villages becomes at par with other villages by the Eleventh Plan period in terms of at least the economic indicators. Capacities of the Panchayats will be augmented to be able to take care of the developmental needs of all the special areas mentioned above. [Appendix reference: 4. - (iv) - (r) in page 114]

4.6 Measures for Social Security

- 4.6.1 **Food Security** – Programmes like the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) provide food security to the poor people. The Panchayat is responsible for approving the list of beneficiaries for the Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY) and the list of BPL households after those are identified prima-facie from the score based ranking of the households as per survey. The selected families are to be given ration cards for that purpose to exercise their rights by lifting food grains as per entitlement. The Panchayats are associated with educating the people on the methodology for the survey and to help them in raising claims and objections. The GP has also been empowered to identify families wrongly included in the BPL list with the help of the Gram Sansads so that no benefit earmarked for the poor are extended to any ineligible family without conducting further enquiry. There is much gap in level of awareness of the rural people, particularly the poorer section to understand the process of identification of the BPL families and to assert their rights related to receiving benefits of various programmes concerning food security. The head of the Panchayats at different tiers are also associated as chairpersons of various monitoring committees, from the fair price shop level to the district level, formed by the Food & Supplies Department, for proper functioning of the public distribution system (PDS). Those committees are responsible to supervise functioning of the PDS. The Panchayat members need to be oriented on both proper identification of the BPL families and delivery of the entitled benefits related to food security through the PDS. The role of the State Government will be to orient the Panchayat members to play their role properly and to mediate the need of the poorer sections, who are not empowered enough to assert their rights related to food security. Another major responsibility will be to proactively furnish the list of all beneficiaries of the food security programmes for transparency and knowledge of the community. The

Panchayats will also be responsible to organize Grain Banks by the SHGs in areas having more incidence of poverty and fund will be provided to the SHGs for that purpose by the Panchayats so that they can buy food grains after harvesting and store it for supplying their members at reasonable price during the time of their hardship. [Appendix reference: 4. - (v) - (a) to (g) in pages 115 and 116]

4.6.2 **Implementation of the SAHAY programme** - The State Government has launched a programme named SAHAY for making the state free from hunger. The GP has been made the implementing body for the SAHAY. The State Government as well as the other two tiers of Panchayats are to extend necessary support, including providing financial grants for implementation of the programme. The GP will also utilize its resources for the same. Implementation of the programme will require tremendous amount of facilitation, which will be carried out by the State Government so that all the GPs may identify the target group of families, prepare family-wise intervention plans for their economic rehabilitation and decent living and implement the same while in extreme cases arranging cooked food for those who are unable to gather enough food for them. The target will be to bring more than 50% of the destitute families under the programme by the year 2009 and the remaining families by the end of the 11th Plan period. The State Government will also provide all possible assistance so that all the GPs may ensure that all the citizen living in their areas are free from hunger by the said period. [Appendix reference: 4. - (v) - (h) in page 116]

4.6.3 **Social Security Measures** – There are a large number of pension schemes for which the beneficiaries are mostly selected in consultation with the Panchayats and one scheme namely the Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme (IGNOAPS) is directly administered by the Panchayats. The new pension scheme for the widows (40 years and above) [Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme (IGNWPS)] and for those with severe disability and living below the poverty line [Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme (IGNDPS)] announced by the GOI during February 2009 will also be implemented by the Panchayats. The other pension schemes are – (i) Old Age Pension Schemes for poor people attaining 60 years of age, (ii) Widow Pension Scheme for deserving widows residing for at least 10 years within this State, (iii) Disability Pension Scheme for persons afflicted by more than 40 per cent of disability, all three schemes presently being administered by the Department of Women & Child Development and Social Welfare of the State Government, (iv) Fishermen Old Age Pension Scheme for old fishermen attaining 60 years of age administered by the Fisheries Department, (v) Farmers’ Old Age Pension Scheme for poor old farmers attaining 60 years of age administered by the Agriculture Department, (vi) Artisans’ Old Age Pension Scheme for deserving old artisans administered by the Micro and Small Scale Enterprises and Textiles Department and (vii) Old Age Pension Scheme for poor tribal people attaining 60 years of age administered by the Backward Classes Welfare Department. All these schemes are at present implemented by the respective administrative departments and a complete data base of the pensioners are not available with the Panchayats. The Panchayat bodies will be provided with the list of all those beneficiaries so that list of all beneficiaries may be available at the GP level, the same may be easily shared with the community and the GP may also monitor delivery of pensions to those families. In order to improve delivery of pension in respect of the IGNOAPS, all payments will be done

through by banks or post offices after opening accounts of the beneficiaries (unless the beneficiary is too old to visit those institutions for opening accounts in which case they will be paid the pension in cash at their residences). The State Government will augment the capacity of the Panchayats to be able to deliver pension more efficiently on a prefixed date and within the first fortnight of the month in which the pension becomes due. [Appendix reference: 4. - (v) - (i) to (k) in pages 116 and 117]

- 4.6.4 **Provident Fund for Landless Agricultural Labourers and Unorganised Workers** – The State Government has introduced two schemes for provident fund; one for the landless agricultural labourers (PROFLAL) and the other for the unorganized workers in non-agricultural sectors (SASPFUW). The administration of the schemes is done through the Panchayats. There is need for improving the quality of services in respect of the two schemes and each GP will be required to provide the basic services for collection of monthly subscriptions, maintaining accounts and returning the matured amounts or extending the benefit on the event of death of a participating member. The target in respect of this activity is acquiring more capacity for timely collection of contributions, for maintaining proper accounts and computerizing the entire database for more efficient management of the programmes and prompt disbursement of the matured amounts. These are being proposed to be achieved within the year 2010-11. [Appendix reference: 4. - (v) - (l) in page 117]
- 4.6.5 **Implementation of the National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS)** – The scheme is to provide one-time assistance of Rs. 10,000 only to the family members of any deceased person in the age group of 18-64 years who was living below the poverty line and was the prime breadwinner of the family. The same is administered by the Panchayats of the State. Application from eligible beneficiary is received by the GP and eligible cases are forwarded to the PS for sanction. It has been observed that such benefit do not reach all the potential beneficiaries because of lack of awareness about the scheme and poor delivery system. The target will be to cover each and every eligible family under the scheme and to reach the benefit within a month of receiving application by the GPs. The processes of sanctioning such cases and releasing fund have been streamlined recently. State Government's role will be to build capacities of the PRIs for improving delivery of services further and generating awareness about the scheme. [Appendix reference: 4. - (v) - (m) in page 117]

4.7 Planning from Below for Economic Development and Social Justice

- 4.7.1 All the activities narrated in the earlier chapters require a planned approach and the target groups of people are required to participate in preparation and implementation of the plans for maximizing their gain. Under Article 243G of the Constitution of India as well as the Panchayat Act of the State all the three tiers of Panchayats require to prepare plans for their areas. The State Government has conducted various experiments on planning from below by the Panchayat bodies and a simplified procedure for preparation of people-centred and participatory plan has been evolved in terms of its format for data collection and analysis in respect of different sectors. The process has been standardized by taking up a pilot exercise of preparing plans for six GPs of the State in five different districts during the year 2004-05. PRA (Participatory Rural Appraisal) exercise for

mapping of natural and social resources are taken up by the people of each Gram Sansad for identifying their needs and priorities and planning for what is possible within their existing resources and identifying those which are beyond the capacity of GP, to be incorporated in the plans of the PS and the ZP. Those will also be utilized for preparation of the District Plan as envisaged in the Constitution. Experience shows that it requires tremendous amount of sustained facilitation by dedicated experts for being able to prepare GP plans and therefore, takes time to replicate. The external facilitation also leads to acquisition of local capacities for replicating such exercises in future. Preparation of such holistic and bottom-up plans started for 304 GPs of the State during 2006-07 in six districts and has been extended to 921 GPs of 14 districts in 2008-09. The target will be to bring all Gram Panchayats of the state to take holistic planning by the Eleventh Five Year Plan period. However, facilitation has to continue over a longer period for improving the quality of plans and adopting various good practices to be collected from across the state for dissemination to all concerned. The role of the State Government will be to build up capacities at all levels of Panchayats through training, handholding, showing good practices and exposure visits etc. Such capacity building will include ability to use data from the RHS and the Self Evaluation Reports, reports from various programmes, collection and collation of other relevant data related to various programmes. The Panchayat plans will be duly integrated into the District Plans. [Appendix reference: 4. - (vi) - (a) to (d) in page 118]

- 4.7.2 In order to improve the quality of planning and monitoring, GIS (Geographical Information System) maps of all the GPs showing important social, economic infrastructures and natural resources will be prepared and those maps will be utilized by the Panchayats for spatial planning. The State Government will make such GIS maps available to all Panchayats by the year 2009-10. The important natural resources, road connectivity, social and economic infrastructure of the area will be shown in the maps. All those will be available in different layers with facility for superimposition for ensuring convergence of different interventions on selected geographical areas. The Panchayats will prepare plan based on those maps and the State Government will build the capacity of the PRI to use and update those maps locally. The basic capabilities in this regard will be achieved by all the Panchayats by the year 2010-11. [Appendix reference: 4. - (vi) - (e) in page 118]

4.8 Establishing MIS (Management Information System) Cells in PRIs

- 4.8.1 In order to have adequate data base as well as to monitor the progress of implementation of plans and its outputs as well as outcome (wherever possible), MIS cells will be developed in the ZP and the PS with support of necessary professionals. The GP employees will also be oriented to collect and compile data related to planning as well as to generate information in structured formats in respect of all programmes under implementation by those bodies. The role of the State Government will be to build up capacities of the PRIs to utilize appropriate ICT applications for data management and monitoring of plans under implementation by those bodies. [Appendix reference: 4. - (vii) - (a) and (b) in page 119]

4.9 Developing Panchayat-Private Partnership

4.9.1 Some of the services that are required to be delivered may be better achieved in partnership with private organizations. The functioning of the RSMs, described before, is an example of such partnership. The Panchayats will be encouraged to enter in to partnership in respect of delivery of services on a commercial basis. The principle of social marketing will be followed in all such cases where the price realization from the people will be decided in consultation with the Panchayats and they will also be engaged in monitoring quality of the services and its access by all concerned. The PRIs will also be encouraged to enter in to partnership with professional bodies for receiving services to meet their obligations to their residents more efficiently. It is neither possible nor desirable to prepare an exhaustive list of areas of such partnership however the same will be developed wherever feasible. [Appendix reference: 4. - (viii) - (a) in page 119]

4.10 Partnership for Adoption of New Technology

4.10.1 Due emphasis will be given in developing partnership in the field of adoption of new technology for improving quality of life of the people in a sustained and environment friendly manner. Harnessing non-conventional energy, better management of available water and use of bio-technology for promotion of production, adoption of new technology for augmentation of livelihood opportunities in the villages etc will be the areas of priority in this regard and the State Government will mediate this process. No timeframe is possible to be fixed for this. [Appendix reference: 4. - (ix) - (a) in page 119]

5. AUGMENTING PANCHAYAT FINANCE AND IMPROVING FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Current spending by the Panchayats of the state is too little to make a substantial impact on the economic and social life of the people within a reasonable period indicating that they should have more resources under their command. Besides, the Panchayats are presently unable to fully utilize the resources available with them. The Panchayats have a poor resource base for own source revenue (OSR), which is insignificant compared to the total fund available with them. At the same time those bodies are unable to utilize the entire potential of collection of OSR because of many factors. Therefore, several measures are to be taken for both augmenting availability of fund with the Panchayats including OSR and at the same time there is need for augmenting capacities of Panchayats and putting several systems in place for effective and faster utilization of available resources and maintaining transparency and financial norms of a high standard for minimizing fiduciary risks. The present chapter describes the current initiatives and steps to be taken for realizing the broad objectives related to both augmentation of OSR as well as proper management and utilization of fund.

5.2 Mobilization of Own Source Revenue

- 5.2.1 Only the GP has the power to collect tax from homestead land and building and from advertisement. Other sources of revenue of all the tiers are through various tolls, fees and rates in exchange of providing various services. All the tiers also collect non-tax revenue through various remunerative assets. Sincere effort has been made for augmentation of OSR of the PRIs of the State during the last few years. Though under Section 223 of the West Bengal Panchayat Act 1973, it is mandatory for every Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad to adopt a bye-law for enhancement of resources, many of the PRIs did not prepare and adopt any bye-law. In the year 2003, model bye-laws were prepared by this department and the Panchayats were motivated to frame their own bye laws. The bye-laws cover basically the non-tax sources of revenue mobilization. Because of these initiatives OSR of the PRIs has increased from Rs 51.91 crore during the year 2003-04 to Rs 112.84 crore in 2007-08 i.e., the same has registered a simple annual growth of around 30% during the previous four years. Total availability of fund with the PRIs of the State (excluding fund that flows per year to those bodies from different line departments of the State Government, which is estimated to be of the order of a hundred crore or so) during this period has increased from Rs 962.85 crore to Rs 3230.43 crore during the same period. It works out that availability of fund with the PRIs of the State has grown at a simple annual rate of around 59% during the last four years. As a result, in spite of rapid growth of OSR its share with the total revenue of the PRIs has declined over the years. Share of own revenue is an important indicator of strength of the local bodies and low share in respect of PRIs of the State at present calls for more emphasis on collection of OSR by the PRIs by augmenting the revenue base as well as improving efficiency of collection.
- 5.2.2 There is scope to improve collection of property tax by the GP. Assessment of that tax requires huge collection of data of individual property-holders. The GP has little capacity to collect and handle the huge database and to assess property tax properly. In the year 2006, the West Bengal Panchayat (Gram Panchayat Administration) Rules, 2004 has been amended, which provides that every assessee has to submit a self-declaration of properties under his/her control and their market values. Introduction of self-declaration will help the GP to take a leap towards adoption of a scientific tax assessment approach. This self-declaration process will be effectively introduced in all the Gram Panchayats by 2009-10 resulting in preparation of tax assessment list based on such declaration from the financial year 2010-11. This also requires computerization of the tax demand and progress of collection for which necessary application software will be developed and capacity of the GPs will be augmented for its use by the said period. [Appendix reference: 5. - (i) - (a) and (b) in page 120]
- 5.2.3 Previously there was no enabling provision in the rules for assessment of non-tax revenue. The amendment of the West Bengal Panchayat Act in 2006 has introduced the system of assessment for non-tax sources as well. These assessments will be based on bye-laws in most cases and all Panchayat bodies will adopt appropriate bye-laws for themselves and collect rate, fee, toll etc. using all clauses of their adopted bye-laws. Meanwhile, in order that full revenue potential of the Panchayats is realized a list of assets of all the Panchayats is being compiled. This will help to develop the resource base of PRIs. The task of filling up of both tax and non-tax assessment list will help to assess the revenue base of the GPs in the days to come. These will be completed within the year

2010-11 and drive to higher collection out of the demand will be improved on a continuous basis. [Appendix reference: 5. - (i) - (c) and (d) in page 120]

- 5.2.4 This process of preparation of a proper and scientific assessment list requires time, attention and will of Panchayats. Resource mobilization was never a preferred area of attention of the PRI members. Most important step initiated for improving OSR is orientation of the members on the need for augmenting OSR and constant monitoring on the performance. The same will be taken up in the right earnest by organizing orientation camps of PRI members and officials directly as well as through Lokasiksha Sanchar [satellite based Training and Development Communication Channel (TDCC)], campaign through radio programmes and through better monitoring at all levels. More involvement of the GUS in preparation of assessment list has been advocated in the amended rule. People, generally feel reluctant to pay tax and the GUS will be oriented to make people aware of their responsibilities. It has been observed that the people feel at ease to pay tax when the payer can relate paid tax with justified spending out of this fund and there are quite a few success stories in this regard. The State Government will facilitate percolation of this idea for more visibility of spending out of the own revenue of the local bodies, more disclosure of information related to both collection and utilization of OSR for better appreciation and compliance to payment of tax and other revenue by the people. [Appendix reference: 5. - (i) - (e) in page 120]
- 5.2.5 Expenditures out of OSR are also being tracked for the purpose mentioned above, which reveals that the expenditure for development purpose is still not at the required level. The amendment in 2006 lays down, inter alia, that a Gram Panchayat should utilize at least 50 per cent of OSR collection for development work in the area. The GPs will be motivated to implement this provision for improving tax compliance. In 2007-08, ZP and PS respectively utilized 65% and 60% of their OSR for contingent expenditure, i.e., not for development purpose. More attention will be paid to track the expenditure pattern of the PRIs and to sensitize those bodies for better utilization of the OSR for meeting their critical needs. A cell has already started functioning as a part of the programme for Strengthening Rural Decentralization to analyse all information related to resource mobilization and its utilization. That will help sensitizing the Panchayats in better utilization of their own resources. [Appendix reference: 5. - (i) - (f) in page 120]
- 5.2.6 Twelfth Finance Commission has recommended maintaining parity for release of grants with the resource mobilized by the respective PRI. Weightage has been given on OSR in working out the formula for allocation by the State of fund received as grants from the 12th Finance Commission. This has been able to enliven the attention of the PRIs towards the need for resource mobilization. In the years to come, complete dissemination of this information of incentive grant will help to change the mindset of the PRI functionaries. An incentive scheme has also been launched by the State Government to encourage collection of OSR, which has further stimulated the collection of OSR. It is expected that the OSR of GPs will increase at a compounded rate of at least 25% and that of the other tiers will increase by at least 10% over the next five years. Emphasis will be given on improving scope and quality of services being delivered by the Panchayats as well as creating more income generating assets in the coming years for augmenting the revenue base of the Panchayats. Apart from these initiatives, some more new avenues of resource

mobilization will be explored for which proposal has been submitted before the Third State Finance Commission for consideration. Appropriate steps will be taken after receiving recommendations of the Finance Commission. [Appendix reference: 5. - (i) - (g) and (h) in page 121]

5.3 Improvement of Budgetary Control and Financial Management

- 5.3.1 Since many of the components of expenditure by the Panchayats are scheme based the practice of proper budgetary control has not received enough attention, rather observance of only the scheme guidelines and maintaining scheme based fund utilization became the sole criteria. However, when the fund is credited to a Panchayat any expenditure has to be duly authorized by the competent authority and actual expenditure should be subject to budgetary control. The target will be to ensure that each Standing Committee / Upa-Samiti will have positive contribution in preparation of budget and will exercise due budgetary control on expenditure related to its domain of activities and appropriate management practices will be followed for proper application of fund. In order to achieve that there will be need for capacity building of all personnel associated with financial management of the Panchayats. Such capacity building can be better facilitated through computerisation of all accounting and financial management related activities, putting appropriate system for monitoring financial performance in place and organizing training of all the functionaries for efficient functioning of the system. Norms and formats for essential disclosure related to financial management of the Panchayats will be developed for better accountability to the respective Sansads. The members of the Standing Committee on Finance will be oriented for completing budgetary exercises on time, ensuring better budgetary control on all expenditure and monitoring financial performances including utilization of fund and avoiding time and cost overrun on a regular basis. The State Government monitors the financial performances of all the ZPs every month and the ZPs have been advised to take up similar monitoring for all the PS and the GPs within their areas. Capacities of the ZPs will be appropriately augmented for undertaking that task. [Appendix reference: 5. - (ii) - (a) to (e) in pages 121 and 122]
- 5.3.2 In order that the PRIs have assured flow of fund based on activities assigned to those bodies by various departments a Panchayat Window (budget head in the State budget for earmarking funds to be allotted to Panchayats) is required to be opened by every department concerned in their annual budgets. Three departments, namely, Animal Resources Development department, Public Health Engineering department and Women & Child Development and Social Welfare department, have opened Panchayat Window in their budget from the financial year 2008-09. Health & Family Welfare department and Backward Classes Welfare department are also releasing fund from their budgets to Panchayats. The target will be to create Panchayat Window in the State Budget for all the departments having assigned responsibilities on the Panchayats. [Appendix reference: 5. - (ii) - (f) in page 122]

5.4 Improvement of Accounting Practices and Computerisation of Accounts

5.4.1 Better financial management demands better maintenance of accounts. New rule for maintaining double entry system of accounts for the ZP and the PS has been introduced from the financial year 2003-04 and that for the GP has been introduced from the financial year 2008-09. With introduction of double entry accounting system it has become easier to track fund received from different sources and to exercise necessary budgetary control. However, the same can be done easily only when the accounts is computerized. Two software have been developed in-house for this purpose. Gram Panchayat Management System (GPMS) has been designed to serve the Gram Panchayats and the SARAL-IFMAS (Integrated Fund Management and Accounting System) has been developed to fulfill the needs of the upper two tiers of the Panchayats viz. Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad. It is observed that the locations where such initiatives have successfully been adopted, time taken for various accounting operations have been minimized, accuracy level have been increased and the quality of accounting have been improved and uniform standard of accounting has been established. Since the starting of this initiative in 2005-06, accounts of all the Zilla Parishads have been computerised. At the end of February 2009, 281 out of 333 Panchayat Samitis have been brought under the coverage of the SARAL-IFMAS software and 215 of them are using the software satisfactorily. The GPMS software has been installed at 1800 Gram Panchayats (out of 3354 GPs) and 634 Gram Panchayats are working with the software with desired level of satisfaction at the end of February 2009. The introduction of SARAL-IFMAS and GPMS at all the PSs and the GPs will be completed by the year 2009-10 and 2011-12 respectively. This will also entail necessary capacity building of all concerned and the same, including those for adoption of the double entry & double column cash books of the GPs as per the West Bengal Panchayat (Gram Panchayat Accounts, Audit and Budget) Rules, 2007 will be completed within the said timeframe. Software has also been developed for transferring financial data efficiently, which will help the higher tiers to analyse the financial performance and advise on improving better financial management. [Appendix reference: 5. - (iii) - (a) and (b) in page 122]

5.5 Improving Efficiency and Transparency in Procurement and Payment

5.5.1 One aspect of improving efficiency of using financial resources is to procure goods and services efficiently. It has been decided that all ZPs will adopt e-procurement measures gradually beginning from the year 2008-09. The process has started with publication of all procurement above Rs. 10 lakh in the website of the department and the ZP concerned and will be initially a hybrid combination of both manual and electronic processes. The process will be completed by automatic evaluation of the bids without any manual processes. Adoption of e-procurement measures entirely will be completed by all the ZPs by the year 2009-10. This will result in reduced delay in procurement, lesser amount of resources getting locked up for such delay and will also improve transparency of procurement, which is important for good governance. Documentation of all procurement including various engineering works will make it possible to improve contract management, which will also lead to more efficient utilization of available resources. All payment by the ZPs against procurement is planned to be made electronically by the year 2009-10. Similar measures will be taken for the Panchayat Samitis from the year 2010-11

or earlier and will be completed over a period of three years. [Appendix reference: 5. - (iv) - (a) and (b) in page 123]

5.6 Internal Audit of Panchayat Accounts

- 5.6.1 Accounts of all the tiers of Panchayats are being audited at present by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG). There is need for follow up of the audit reports for improvement of the system. The audit set up at the field levels will be appropriately strengthened for that purpose. For monitoring the whole arrangement the Directorate of Panchayat and Rural Development will be strengthened by opening an Audit & Accounts Cell. Training of all personnel concerned on accounts, audit and related matters of financial management will be strengthened with the help of the SIPRD and the ETCs as well as other professional training institutes. Since this is a continuous process, no timeframe is suggested in the Matrix. The State Government however expects that conducting internal audits on time and complying the audit paras on time of both internal audit and audit by the CAG shall be achieved by 2011-12. [Appendix reference: 5. - (v) - (a) and (b) in page 123]

5.7 Social Audit

- 5.7.1 If a reliable system of social audit is built up, it will have multi-dimensional salutary effects. It will bring transparency in proper use of fund and will also eliminate misutilisation of fund to a large extent. The system will also bring in its wake more sensitisation of the common people, increase their awareness and will encourage their closer participation in the development process. A system has already been built where the Gram Panchayat will place the annual plan, budget, half-yearly and annual income and expenditure statement and the audit reports and action-taken reports following internal audit as also annual audit by the Examiner of Local Accounts, in the meeting of the Gram Sansad and the Gram Sabha for scrutiny, debate and recommendation. Though any body can access information related to any financial parameter using the RTI Act, norms for minimum disclosure of financial information before all the Sansads will be prescribed by the PRDD by the year 2009. In addition to that, norms for reporting to the citizen on a regular basis in the (a) wall of the Panchayat office, (b) notice-board in front of the Panchayat office, (c) display boards in prominent places and other means will also be prescribed. Apart from the aforesaid measures, steps will be taken to put in place a more structured system of social audit, to be conducted by a group of persons consisting of primary stakeholders who will function under some specified norms and procedure as has been done for the NREGS, in respect of all the programmes. This will be achieved by the year 2009-10. [Appendix reference: 5. - (vi) - (a) to (c) in page 123]

5.8 Scrutiny of Panchayat Accounts by the Legislature

- 5.8.1 There was no formal arrangement for scrutiny of the accounts of the Panchayats by the State legislature. Necessary change in the West Bengal Panchayat Act has been made very recently for allowing formal scrutiny of the Accounts of the Panchayats based on the report of the Comptroller & the Accountant General of India. That will improve the

accountability of the Panchayats as well as more scrutiny of Panchayat Accounts will help in improvement of the system.

5.9 Electronic Transfer of Fund

- 5.9.1 The PRDD has already introduced a fund transfer mechanism with the help of State Bank of India (SBI). In the present system the Panchayat has to maintain one extra account with SBI. The system will be improved further, for which the matter has already been taken up with RBI and other banks so that fund is transferred electronically to the existing accounts of the Panchayats. The same is proposed to be done by the year 2008-09. Information on release of fund is being published in the website of the PRDD, which some of the GPs are yet to access. A project for ‘Mobile Governance’ has been taken up and it is expected that all information on fund release will be possible to be communicated to the persons concerned through SMS service by the year 2008-09. [Appendix reference: 5. - (vii) - (a) and (b) in page 124]

6. FUNCTIONARIES OF THE PANCHAYATS AND BUILDING THEIR CAPACITIES

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 More devolution of functions and increasing availability of fund with the Panchayats are resulting in growing demand for dedicated and competent manpower with those bodies. The problem is more acute in Panchayats located in remote and difficult areas because of non-availability of adequate and good quality manpower against posts already created. Even outsourcing of such manpower in difficult areas is a standing problem. The other alternative is to gradually build up capacities of the existing manpower and of those who are willing to work in lower tiers, which takes lot of time. More work is gravitating towards the lower tier and the GPs are facing more problem of capacity mismatch. The upper tiers need more capacity to provide professional support related to planning, implementation and monitoring of various services, which the GP should deliver to the people. There is also need for introduction of better establishment related practices starting from recruitment and framing related rules for optimum utilization of the available manpower. Improving their competence and maintaining high level of moral standards and commitment to work for the people is crucial for proper functioning of the Panchayat bodies. The present chapter describes all those matters in terms of current situations and what is to be achieved within suitable time frame.

6.2 Employees of the Panchayats

- 6.2.1 In West Bengal a cadre of Panchayat employees has been established. All the employees of the GP, excepting those who belong to group D category, now constitute district level cadres of Panchayat employees. There are four such cadres comprising the Executive Assistants, Secretaries, Nirman Sahayaks and the Assistants of the GP. This has facilitated management including recruitment and deployment of those employees. All

the employees are appointed by the Executive Officer of the Zilla Parishad and their services are placed with the GP. Similar arrangement has been made for the employees of the PS and they constitute different cadres of Engineers, Block Informatics Officers, Samiti Education Officers, Accountants, Cashiers, Data Entry Operators and clerical assistants. At the ZP level several posts have been created recently. Some of those at the higher levels will belong to state level cadre of own employees of the ZP. These include engineers, IT experts, professionals in the field of Public Health and Education, etc. Professionals in the field of administration, accounts and some of the engineers are also deputed from the State cadre of officers. At present services of some of the government employees are utilized by the Panchayats though salary is paid by respective departments. In some cases services are formally placed with the Panchayat bodies by the Panchayat and Rural Development Department and salary is being paid by the Panchayats. The West Bengal Panchayat Act has been amended recently to allow other Government Departments to place their employees with the Panchayats. A study will be made to assess further requirement of own manpower of all the tiers of the Panchayats. The study will also identify areas where better services can be provided by engaging para-professional on contract and to work out proper arrangement between the service providers and the Panchayats. The remuneration of such professionals will be either directly collected by the professional for rendering services or the same will be partly or fully compensated by the Panchayats against charges to be collected by them for providing services. The Roadmap will be to ensure that the Panchayats at every level get the services of mostly own employees, formally deputed employees, government employees whose services have been placed for being used by the Panchayats but salary continues to be given by the departments concerned as well as professional service providers or trained para-professionals to bear the work load of the Panchayat bodies. The exercise is proposed to be completed by the year 2010-11. The accountability mechanism of the employees will also be improved for enhancing their outputs. [Appendix reference: 6. - (i) - (a) to (c) in page 124]

- 6.2.2 The reorganized recruitment system as mentioned in the preceding paragraph has resulted in a pronounced role of the district level Panchayat, i.e., Zilla Parishad in selection of most of the Panchayat employees within the district at the initial stage of recruitment as also at the time of promotion. The new system has improved quality of recruitment, promotion and administrative control over them for ensuring better service. It has also opened up promotional opportunities for the employees fostering their keener interest in rendering quality service. Besides, the scope for regular transfer of the employees belonging to superior cadres will ensure cleaner and more transparent and responsive administration. The updated rules regulating discipline and control of the employees also confers all necessary powers to the Panchayat bodies on curbing the role of the government officers as was prevalent earlier. Such control is expected to enhance the allegiance of the employees towards not only the Panchayat bodies but also towards the ideals and goals of the Panchayat system. It is felt that the overhauled process will lead to further development of better and more effective and pro-people delivery mechanism in the Panchayat administration.
- 6.2.3 Practice and procedures related to processing documents, maintaining files and preservation of records in the Panchayats need to be improved substantially. This will

require proper analysis of the processes and re-engineering the same for better management including using IT to the extent possible for improving efficiency of functioning. One study will be conducted towards that and appropriate practices and procedures to be followed will be codified in manuals for properly adopting those. The task is proposed to be completed by the year 2011. [Appendix reference: 6. - (i) - (d) in page 124]

6.3 Capacity Building of the Employees and Other Functionaries of Panchayats

6.3.1 The term capacity building is being used in a broader sense which covers training for individual development, building of institutional capacities as well as other enabling measures for fully utilizing the potential of the employees and elected functionaries associated with the Panchayats. The following measures will be taken for building up capacities of the various functionaries associated with the Panchayats.

- (a) At present arrangement of training of the employees working for the Panchayats is not adequate. There is need for ensuring both induction level and in-service training of all the employees working for the Panchayats. A plan has been drawn up to ensure that from the year 2009-10 all new recruits are trained on the basic skills required at that level as well as to orient them for working as an employee of the local bodies, preferably within three months from their joining the services. The employees working at the GP level will be trained by the ETCs and the employees of the PS will be trained by the SIPRD. The employees of the ZP will be trained by both the SIPRD as well as other state and national level institutes. In service training for upgrading their skill will be organized as and when felt necessary and in any case all of them will be given reorientation once in every five years. Since computer is now an essential equipment for office administration, a programme for computer literacy will be made an integral part of all such training programmes. The aim will be to make all such officials computer savvy as early as possible. A system will be introduced for tracking the trainings imparted to the functionaries by the district offices to plan for their further training. [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (a) to (c) in page 125]
- (b) New Panchayat bodies have been constituted in all the three tiers in the year 2008 following the Panchayat General Election. The strategy adopted this time was to impart training to the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of all the three tier Panchayat bodies within three months of their assuming office. The target for completing the training of the Chairpersons of the Standing Committees and Sub-Committees was six months from their election as Chairperson. The general members will be imparted training within one year from their election. Except the general members, all others are being provided direct classroom based residential training. For the general members the training will be a mix of classroom and distance mode. For completing these huge tasks within a short period of one year, infrastructures of the Extension Training Centres have been significantly developed and 30 new District Training Centres (DTC) have been set up on a temporary basis. All the GP level functionaries are to be trained at the ETCs and DTCs. PS level functionaries are to be trained at the ETCs and SIPRD. ZP level functionaries are to

be trained at the SIPRD except the Sabhadhipatis and Sahakari Sabhadhipatis who have already been trained directly by the PRDD in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta. Same strategy will be adopted in future. In order to do so at least one DTC will be established in each district by the year 2010-11. [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (d) to (g) in page 125]

- (c) It is felt that there is need for imparting additional training for the women members of the Panchayats. Appropriate training modules will be developed for the same and all the women members will be imparted additional training on their roles and responsibilities. This will also be attempted to be completed within one year of their election. Another training need relates to the Chairpersons and Secretaries of the Gram Unnayan Samitis. This also is a challenging task. However, an elementary training process followed by handholding support has been planned in the select Gram Panchayats covered under participatory planning initiatives of SRD-BRGF. For the other Gram Panchayats training will be provided through distance mode. The training of all the Chairpersons and Secretaries of GUS will be completed within two years of their election. [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (h) and (i) in page 126]
- (d) Appropriate manuals have been developed for functioning of each tier of Panchayats. A lot of training materials, both in print and electronic media, have been prepared for training of all those persons. All those will be reviewed to identify gap in training materials, particularly in the context of distant learning using the recently installed satellite based facilities. Those improved manuals will be ready before the next Panchayat general election, due in May 2013. [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (j) in page 126]
- (e) Apart from classroom based training for the Panchayat functionaries more emphasis will be given on peer learning from exposure visits and sharing of best practices on good governance. Documentation of best practices in various fields and increasing access to those materials will be given due emphasis. [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (k) and (l) in page 126]
- (f) Training cells will be established in all districts so that there are dedicated persons in each district to look after training need of the elected functionaries on tying them up with the DTCs, ETCs and SIPRD for meeting their training requirement. [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (m) in page 126]
- (g) Suitable training infrastructure has been developed at the DTCs and ETCs where trainings are being organized on a residential basis. The infrastructure of the WBCADC will be developed further for providing livelihood related training for the Panchayat functionaries of the district. Support for infrastructure development in the training centres will be provided by the State Government. In order to provide training locally a resource pool of trainers in various disciplines will be developed in each district. [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (n) and (o) in page 127]
- (h) There will also be need for organizing non-residential training, particularly for the representatives of the GP and the PS. For that purpose suitable training infrastructure will be created, if the same does not exist at present, in each PS office. The infrastructure for distant learning using the satellite channel, as mentioned in paragraph 6.6.1, will be utilized for that purpose. A pool of resource persons will be

developed in each district to facilitate such distant learning. One classroom for providing training will be developed in each GP for day training and the same will be completed by the year 2009-10. Support for infrastructure development will be provided by the State Government. [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (p) to (r) in page 127]

- (i) In spite of all efforts adoption of correct procedures related to financial disciplines, good governance and proper utilization of scheme specific fund and untied fund lags behind what is desired. Experience shows that hand holding training by experts, particularly to the GP level functionaries, can increase their efficiency substantially. Teams of properly oriented retired persons have been formed for that purpose for assisting the functionaries in selected GPs of the more backward districts. The same will be scaled up for providing support to more number of GPs in all the districts, which are not performing at par with others. [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (s) in page 127]
- (j) Along with expansion of capacities of the elected and appointed functionaries there will be need for wider dissemination of knowledge about functioning of Panchayats for enabling the citizen to participate more effectively. The same will be improved by continuing the interactive radio programme which is held for one hour every week at Akashbani Kolkata-Ka, running the helpline (telephonic) at the State headquarter as well as setting up Common Services Centres (CSCs) [the issue of CSC has been detailed out in paragraph 6.5.2] [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (t) in page 127]

- 6.3.2 Capacity building of the functionaries through training and other exposures is not the end in itself. It is necessary to effectively utilize the freshly acquired knowledge and competence for organising improved delivery system. For this purpose, recruitment and promotion processes will take attempt to put the right person in the right place for maximizing the benefits obtained from the process of capacity building. PRDD shall work out a methodology in this regard, which will be developed with a realistic functional mix of elected representatives and appointed officials. [Appendix reference: 6. - (ii) - (u) in page 128]

6.4 Strengthening the SIPRD, the ETCs and the DTCs

- 6.4.1 In order to build up capacities of the Panchayats the SIPRD, the ETCs and the DTCs will be required to play a more proactive role. Those institutions will be strengthened to meet the demand of training as came out throughout the Roadmap. The ETCs were not functioning well till recently. Those have been revamped now and all the four sanctioned ETCs as well as the facility at Rajarhat have been strengthened so as to start organizing training of the newly elected Panchayat members. All the ETCs, including Rajarhat will be provided with facilities for providing training on computers and computer laboratories will be set up in all those places. The DTCs will also be provided with adequate infrastructure to take care of training of the functionaries and some of the employees of the GPs. [Appendix reference: 6. - (iii) - (a) to (c) in page 128]
- 6.4.2 Strengthening the training institute is not merely to provide adequate infrastructure of the training centres but augmenting capabilities of the trainers associated with those institutes. Also, the focus is on learning and not on teaching, which requires the trainers to be proficient in facilitating participatory learning through sharing of mutual experiences and learning together for making sustainable impacts on their understanding those issues. There will be orientation of all the trainers on teaching methodology and augmenting their capabilities in facilitating learning. Materials will also be prepared for learning using multi-media means of communication to cover all the types of trainings to be handled by those centres. [Appendix reference: 6. - (iii) - (d) and (e) in page 128]

6.5 Use of Information and Communication Technology in PRI

- 6.5.1 Appropriate use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become an essential need for efficient functioning of the Panchayat bodies. Steps taken for computerization of accounts have been described earlier. Suitable software packages for other activities of the Panchayats will be developed for being adopted by those bodies. The areas to be given priority will be management practices relating to proper utilization of available resources, revenue mobilization, Management Information System (MIS) for monitoring progress of works and reporting to higher tiers including adoption of web-based reporting, management of procurement and contract for avoiding cost and time overrun, adoption of standard engineering practices, sharing information with the citizen through CSCs. Web-based reporting from the block level for the important programmes has been already initiated. The process will be gradually strengthened in future and ultimately all the reports from the block and the Gram Panchayat will come in soft form.

Similar MIS will be developed for the institutional issues also for proper monitoring from higher levels. For the GPs broadband connectivity will be established using the State Wide Area Network (SWAN) or using the service provided by other service providers including those being established for connecting the CSCs being located in the GP offices. E-mail facilities will be utilized wherever available. For better exchange of information and documents between GP and other offices fax machine will be provided in every GP. Thus Government orders may be sent easily to the GPs in a faster and cheaper mode. Fax machines have been already installed in around 90% of the GP offices and the rest will be installed by the year 2009. [Appendix reference: 6. - (iv) - (a) to (e) in page 129]

- 6.5.2 The CSC referred to in the preceding paragraphs needs some elaboration. Primary purpose of CSC is to allow easy access to the citizens for obtaining information and government as well as private services, which may be delivered electronically. The CSCs are to be set up in the villages for every 6,000 population in the rural areas as per the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP). The CSCs will also be utilized for dissemination of information on functioning of the Panchayats to promote better participation of the citizen in affairs of the Panchayats. Information to be disseminated as per Section 4 of the Right to Information Act will also be provided through the CSCs. In West Bengal it has been decided that one CSC will be located in every GP and PS office. This makes the figure 3695 and in addition, centres will be set up in another 3102 prominent places making the total tally to 6797. This will provide easy access to information relating to the programmes and schemes run by the Government, the Panchayat institutions and different private sector service – bringing economic and social benefits to the people. It is expected that the ambit of information and services shall gradually extend to empower the citizens for their economic prosperity and better living conditions, which will be actively facilitated by the Panchayats. These centres shall also be utilized by the Gram Panchayats and higher level Panchayats as also other institutions for receipt and dispatch of information, reports and returns, if necessary. Panchayats will utilize the service of the CSCs for outsourcing some of their works. 2251 CSCs have been made operational by the end of January 2009. The progress of the work will depend on the NeGP and almost all the CSCs are expected to be set up by March 2010. [Appendix reference: 6. - (iv) - (f) in page 129]

6.6 Use of Satellite-based Lokashiksha Sanchar

- 6.6.1 Another initiative for dissemination of information, training and interactive monitoring has been initiated by putting in place a Training and Development Communication Channel (TDCC) in the name of Lokashiksha Sanchar. All the ZPs, SIPRD and ETCs have been brought into a satellite based two-way video and two-way audio network. The Block offices, the DTCs and the offices of District Panchayat & Rural Development Officer have been connected by a one-way video and two-way audio system (supplemented by phone-in facility). This has substantially boosted the communication and training capacity in terms of number as well as outreach. The facility will be utilized intensively for orientation of Panchayat functionaries. [Appendix reference: 6. - (v) - (a) in page 129]

6.7 Strengthening the Office of the Directorate and Field Offices of PRDD

- 6.7.1 The directorate is required to be strengthened for more proactive facilitation of the institutional aspects of the Panchayats. Manpower available with the directorate will be restructured for that purpose. One Audit & Accounts cell, one Fund Management cell, one Resource Mobilization cell, one Training cell and one Public Grievance-cum-Inspection cell will be established in the directorate to give special emphasis in those areas within the next three years. The responsibility of the first cell will be to take follow up measures of the audit reports of particularly the GP and the PS. The Fund Management cell will be responsible for transfer of fund to the Panchayats directly through respective bank accounts maintained with the SBI. For those branches having internet facilities fund will be transferred directly to the Panchayats using on-line banking facilities by this cell. However, fund under some of the centrally sponsored schemes will be transferred by the respective programme wing as before. The Training cell will coordinate with the training cells proposed to be established in all districts for training of all the Panchayat functionaries and the employees, particularly of the Gram Panchayats. The Public Grievance-cum-Inspection cell will remain responsible for handling public grievances related to functioning of the Panchayats as well as conducting prompt enquiry and follow up actions in respect of serious allegations of violation of rules and financial impropriety. In other cases such grievances will be addressed through the district offices and redressal of all grievances will be monitored by this cell. This cell will also keep close liaison with the newly constituted Lokayukt (Ombudsman). [Appendix reference: 6. - (vi) - (a) in page 130]
- 6.7.2 Office of the District Panchayat & Rural Development Officer (DPRDO) is very vital for functioning of the Panchayat and Rural Development Department and also monitoring the performances of the Panchayats, particularly those concerning the institutional issues. Apart from that DPRDO is the nodal person in charge of all the training initiatives in the district and has been designated as the District Training Coordinator. One Assistant Training Coordinator has been provided in all the districts to assist the DPRDO in organizing training of the PRI functionaries. Functioning of the office is proposed to be studied for necessary restructuring by the year 2009-10. [Appendix reference: 6. - (vi) - (b) in page 130]

6.8 Participation of NGOs and Academic Institutions in Capacity Building Initiatives

- 6.8.1 Although the Panchayat has been assigned the centre-stage in all matters related to rural development, the role of different non-government and voluntary organizations and individuals cannot be underestimated. Their rich contributions in different fields of activity in social and economic sectors have significant impacts in the endeavour. It is felt that their expertise, experience, intimate knowledge of local conditions and the data-bank developed by them through their long period of activity should be utilized for building up capacity of the elected as well as appointed functionaries. Linkage has been established with various renowned academic institutions for utilizing expertise of those bodies in functioning of the PRIs. PRDD shall strengthen this process in future to secure participation of NGOs and academic institutions for their involvement in various collaborative works with the Panchayats. [Appendix reference: 6. - (vii) - (a) in page 130]

7. HARMONISATION OF ACTS AND RULES CONCERNING FUNCTIONING OF THE PANCHAYATS

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 In terms of Article 243G of the Constitution of India, every Panchayat has been recognized as an institution of self-government with power and authority to prepare plans for economic development and social justice and implement them. In the perspective of such constitutional mandate, Panchayat bodies can no longer be treated as mere agencies of the State Government to execute its plans and programmes. They have to be perceived as the government at the third stratum with a clear functional domain of their own. If such an exclusive functional domain for the Panchayats is carved out in conformity with the spirit of the Constitution, then many State or Central laws on different subjects now under operation in the state will have to be amended for several reasons. Firstly, some of such laws come in conflict with the functional domain of Panchayats and restrict their autonomous status. Secondly, in some cases parallel bodies created by some statutes impinges upon the legitimate functions of local bodies. Lastly, Panchayat's direct participation in functions specified in some of the subject laws would contribute towards fulfilling the objectives of such laws. Also many acts were framed before introduction of the Panchayat system in its present form and therefore require amendments to make functioning of the Panchayats harmonious with provisions of the act.

7.1.2 In the above background, various statutes in force at present in West Bengal have been examined to find out whether the powers to be exercised, the functions to be performed and the duties to be discharged under such statutes have any bearing upon the Constitutional responsibilities vested in the Panchayat institutions and if so, how Panchayat bodies may be conferred appropriate rights, functions or duties so that they may perform the functions entrusted upon them with full justice to the constitutional obligation and to the aspirations of the people. For the aforesaid purpose, 44 Acts have been scrutinized out of which 6 are Central Acts and the other 38 are State Acts. These acts are either regulatory in nature or contain provisions having implications on local development. There is a group of legislations dwelling on regulatory functions which contain description of certain offences, penal actions for such offences and the enforcing machinery guarding against the offences. No role for the Panchayats is envisioned in such legislations. A case in point is the Rice-Milling Industry (Regulation) (West Bengal Amendment) Act, 1974. However, there are a few regulatory Acts which safeguard the interest of the general public and calls for support and co-operation of the people for their success like the Bengal Tanks Improvement Act, 1939. In such cases, it has been proposed that the Panchayat bodies should be vested with certain powers and authority without impairing the authority of the executive machinery so that both the agencies may work in tandem towards the common goal. There are some other regulatory Acts such as the Cattle Trespass Act, 1871, which are best administered by the Panchayats at the grass root level having very close touch with the people and the bureaucratic machinery may be disengaged from their administration.

7.1.3 With respect to the Acts on development matters like the West Bengal Livestock Improvement Act, 1954, it is advisable that the Panchayat institution should play some

definite role in enforcing the provisions, while the executive machinery should have its role reduced. The technical and other supports requiring specialized knowledge may however continue to be provided by such machinery. Proposals have been given accordingly. Again, an Act like the West Bengal Khadi and Village Industries Board Act, 1959 lays down the procedure for constituting an apparatus for administration of economic schemes. Within the general framework of such schemes, there are certain matters where involvement of Panchayats will be beneficial for fulfilling the objectives of the Act. One such matter, for example, is selection of the beneficiaries on priority basis. Hence, the local bodies should also be a part of the machinery for supervision and monitoring of the programme envisaged in the Act.

- 7.1.4 Within the framework of the aforesaid principles, proposals for amendment of 32 Acts (6 Central Acts and 26 State Acts) will be considered by the State Government. It requires in depth analysis of those acts by the department concerned and wider consultation before making any amendment. It is difficult to state in the Roadmap what amendments will take place and by when. However the proposals mentioned below will be taken up for consideration as soon as possible by the departments concerned. In order to expedite the process, PRDD shall set up a small in-house committee to look into the issue. The committee shall examine different Acts for suggesting possible amendments. Then the administrative department shall be approached with the specific proposals for taking appropriate actions.

7.2 Acts to be Amended

- 7.2.1 **The Bengal Ferries Act, 1885 (Bengal Act I of 1885)** – Under this Act, control and superintendence of all public ferries within the district are vested in the District Magistrate. However, in terms of section 35 (inserted by way of amendment at a later stage), it is lawful for the State Government to order that a public ferry shall be managed by a local authority having jurisdiction when such local authority shall exercise all the powers of the District Magistrate. Meanwhile, in pursuance of the policy adopted by the State Government in this behalf, control and management of practically all public ferries within the State have been transferred to the Panchayat bodies of different tiers depending on the importance and the volume of traffic. Now, under the present scenario, section 35 providing that the local body may exercise power of the District Magistrate appears inadequate. In the fitness of things, the Panchayat should now be directly empowered to exercise control and supervision over the ferries, which are at present under their management. With this objective in view it is suggested that:
- (a) Sections 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21 and 33 will be amended to appropriately empower the Panchayat bodies for regulating the ferry service in their respective areas;
 - (b) Sections 26 and 32 will be amended to make provisions for the Judiciary to act as an appellate authority and
 - (c) Section 35 becoming redundant will be omitted.

7.2.2 **The Cess Act, 1880 (Bengal Act 9 of 1880)** – The objective of this Act is to tap resources for the purpose of construction and maintenance as also related supportive and ancillary jobs of roads and other means of communications and other public works in the district. The Act lays down the methodology for valuation of land, rates for road cess and public works cess, administrative machinery for their collection, channel for utilisation of fund and penal provisions for breach of the law. It may be mentioned that most of the provisions are procedural, establishment-related and regulatory although one or two provisions deal with the role of the Zilla Parishad. When the Act was initially codified, the local bodies were non-existent either in concept or in statute. Naturally, the entire task of assessment, collection and utilisation of cess fund was left with the government machinery. Later by an amendment Act of 1963, utilisation of cess fund was made the responsibility of the Zilla Parishad. However, even now certain amendments are necessary to update the Act. For this purpose,

- (a) Sections 4, 91 and 109 of the Act will be amended to bring the present Panchayat set up within the fold of this Act.
- (b) Besides the entire corpus of funds after deduction of collection expenses is at present allocated to the Zilla Parishad. Provision will be made for apportionment of the amount with the Panchayat Samitis within the district.
- (c) Since commencement of this enactment the entire land tenure system as also the socio political environment have undergone major changes. Various references like intermediary and subsidiary rights on land in the Act are now outdated. It shall therefore be more appropriate to introduce a new act instead and repeal the existing one.

7.2.3 **Bengal Embankment Act, 1882 (Bengal Act II of 1882) and The Embankment Act, 1873 (6 of 1873)** – These enactments were brought in force for the construction, maintenance and management of embankments and watercourses in the State. The Act of 1873 was repealed in part and amended by the Act of 1882. Although the Act of 1882 is in force on being adapted last by the Adaptation of Laws Order, 1950 (Constitution Order No. 4 dated January 26, 1950), apparently it has since become non-functional. There are copious references of intermediary and subsidiary right on land, which have since been abolished. Besides, the role of the collector is pivotal in this Act although the offices of the Irrigation and Waterways Department are in these days discharging all responsibilities relating to construction, maintenance and management of the embankments and the watercourses. Apart from the role of general supervision, the District Magistrate and Collector steps in only when relief work or law and order issues come to the surface. It is suggested that

- (a) Unless the issues relating to the Act of 1873 are already covered by another or more than one enactment commencing on later dates, it is advisable to frame a new Act. Various issues which are no longer relevant will then be dispensed with and certain new provisions in conformity with the concept and policy of these days will be incorporated in the new Act. Since the geo-physical condition of the State, lateral flow of surface and sub-surface water, ground water level and such other things have undergone various changes, the Schedules annexed to the Act should also be modified.

(b) It will also be considered whether the role of the collector shall be substituted by the similar role of the Zilla Parishad. This body arguably will be more suitable to administer this Act provided it gets the available technical support/machinery and the required fund.

7.2.4 **Canal Act, 1864 (Bengal Act 5 of 1864)** – This Act was framed to amend and consolidate the law relating to the collection of tolls on canals and other lines of navigation and for the construction and improvement of lines of navigation within the State. The Act was repealed in part in 1873 and 1903 and was amended in 1981. The Act empowers the State Government to extend the provisions of this Act to any navigable channel by notification and may fix the rates at which tolls may be levied for any vessel entering or passing along the said channel. The State Government is also empowered to appoint any person (the word includes any company, association or body of persons, whether incorporated or not) for administration of any provision of this Act. The State Government also have power to authorise a person to widen or deepen any channel or close or take any action to improve it or remove any obstruction or encroachment to the channel. It is neither practicable nor desirable for the State Government to control and manage or collect tolls in respect of all channels within the State. The Act itself provides for delegation of all such responsibilities by the State Government. For this reason,

(a) It is required to vest the powers and responsibilities under the Act to the Zilla Parishad. For this purpose sections 3, 8 and 13 will be amended so that the State Government and the Zilla Parishad can share the responsibilities for administration of this act.

- 7.2.5 **The Bengal General Clauses Act, 1899 (Bengal Act 1 of 1899)** – In section 3, in clause(23) defining the word ‘Local authority’, the word ‘District Board’ will be substituted by the word ‘Panchayats’ as defined in clause (15b) of section 2 of the West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1973 (West Ben. Act XLI of 1973).
- 7.2.6 **The Bengal Money-Lenders Act, 1940 (Bengal Act X of 1940)** – Despite perceptible growth of banks and other financial institutions in rural areas, it is a sad reality that the ordinary village folks depend willy-nilly on private money-lenders. It is not difficult to visualise that there are some unscrupulous money-lenders and the illiterate, semiliterate and gullible persons are taken by them for a ride. Considering this scenario, representatives elected in Panchayat bodies should be assigned some role for assisting the people in relation to this Act. In this connection, sections 6(A) and 14 will be suitably amended to empower the appropriate Panchayat functionary to inspect and control the functions of the money lenders. It is also necessary to debar the Panchayat functionaries themselves to act as moneylenders.
- 7.2.7 **The West Bengal Public Land (Eviction of Unauthorised Occupants) Act, 1962 (West Bengal Act XIII of 1962)** – The Act centres around empowerment of the Collector to order eviction of an unauthorised occupant from any public land, which includes land under a local body (section 4), after serving a notice (section 3) if necessary on using force (section 5). Panchayat Samiti, Zilla Parishad and the Municipal bodies will be given authority under this Act, especially in respect of lands under their control.
- 7.2.8 **West Bengal Land Reforms Act, 1955** – This is an Act to codify afresh, under the present context, the laws relating to land tenure system, rights and obligations of the land holders, maintenance of records of land holdings, land revenue system and certain laws relating to land reforms. Since the Act lays major emphasis on various procedural matters relating to rayati right, change of character of land, land revenue, designs for maintenance of record of rights, the provisions are rigidly systematised, methodology-oriented and somewhat technical in nature. There are, however, certain provisions in the Act which have some social impact with a human angle where closer participation of the Panchayat bodies are considered desirable. On this view
- (a) Sections 4(2A), 14C(1), 21D, [entailing amendment of rule 141(1) (a) (ii) of the West Bengal Land reforms Rule 1965], Chapter V (sections 39 to 48A), and 49(1) and (2) [entailing amendments of Land Reforms Rules 1965] will be amended so as to assign definite roles to the Gram Panchayats and the Panchayat Samitis in the matters of distribution of khas and vested lands, changes of characters of land, according permission for transfer of land belonging to the scheduled tribes persons, consolidation of land holdings and cooperative farming.
 - (b) Besides, Block level Land Reforms Advisory Committee will be dissolved and all its functions shall be assigned to the Bon O Bhumi Sanskar Sthayee Samiti (Standing committee on Forest and Land Reforms) of the Panchayat Samitis on enlarging its composition if necessary. Annulment of the settlement of khas /vested land shall also be the responsibility of this body by changing the present system where the appointed bureaucracy has been made entirely responsible.

- 7.2.9 **West Bengal Primary Education Act, 1973** – Primary education in general is administered by the West Bengal Board of Primary Education and the District Primary School Councils constituted under the provisions of the West Bengal Primary Education Act, 1973. The responsibility of guiding, supervising and controlling the primary education in the State including determining the curriculum, approving or preparing text books, mode of teaching, training of teachers, conducting examination etc. rests with the West Bengal Board of Primary Education. Day-to-day management of primary schools is the responsibility of the District Primary School Council (DPSC) and this includes appointment and transfer of teachers, opening of new schools or expansion of existing schools, awareness building for enrollment, development of infrastructure etc. Primary education is traditionally a local government subject. This is one of the important functions under Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution reserved for the Panchayats. In many states, this function has been given to the Panchayats. Even in West Bengal, Panchayats have been given major responsibility for implementation of Shishu Shiksha Karmasuchi. But when it came to the subject of managing the mainstream primary schools, DPSCs were created under the West Bengal Primary Education Act. By creating this parallel body, this Act has made an unnecessary intrusion into the functional domain of the Panchayats. It is accordingly necessary to make major amendments of the Primary Education Act of West Bengal. The objective of such amendment should be to abolish DPSCs and transfer all their powers and functions to the Panchayat system. While the major responsibility of the existing functions of the DPSC concerning non-academic matters will have to be borne by the Zilla Parishad, some of the functions will be decentralized among the Panchayat Samiti and Gram Panchayat. For efficient management of primary schools such decentralisation is necessary. In fact, the Panchayat bodies have already been assigned certain responsibilities (as distinguished from authority) in these matters. In view of the above,
- (a) Chapters III to VIII of the Primary Education Act containing sections 19 to 74 will be amended. Consequent upon the abolition of the DPSC, needs may arise for amendments in some other sections also.
- 7.2.10 **The West Bengal Animal Slaughter Control Act, 1950 (West Bengal Act XXII of 1950)** – This enactment aims at controlling and regulating animal slaughter in the State of West Bengal. Section 4 read with sub clause (b) of clause (iii) of section 3 shows that the Sabhapati (which expression includes any person nominated by him) of the Panchayat Samiti is a signatory of the certificate declaring an animal fit for slaughter (the other signatory is Veterinary Surgeon). Under the authority of section 6, the Sabhapati is empowered to inspect any premises to prevent violation of any provision of this Act. The authority for nomination under clause (iii) (b) of section 3 should not be exercised by the Sabhapati individually but there should be institutional involvement of the PS.
- 7.2.11 **The Bengal Diseases of Animals Act, 1944 (Bengal Act of 1944)** – This piece of legislation had been framed to prevent the spread of diseases among animals. Under the Act, specified diseases and some other diseases as may be notified by the State Government from time to time have been declared as contagious diseases. There are provisions for identification and segregation of the diseased animal(s), declaration of infected areas, imposition of certain restrictions to prevent spread of disease and some

other provisions. It need not be mentioned that since the time of original enactment in 1944, the situation has undergone vast changes. The administrative machinery has been transformed to a considerable extent. The Panchayats and Municipalities have been recognized by the constitution as the institutions of self-government. Communication facilities have vastly improved rendering total segregation very difficult. Also, people are more educated and conscious and medical science has also advanced tremendously. Notwithstanding all such changes, the Act has not totally lost its relevance especially in the context of any outbreak of epidemic. But it requires adjusting itself with the new realities. In the circumstances, either a new Act should be drawn up or this Act should be amended to make it more effective. Accordingly,

- (a) It is felt that in consonance with the aforesaid observations especially sections 2(6), 3, 5, 6, 10 and 16 require major changes. A new provision will also be inserted accentuating the role of the Panchayat Samiti on outbreak of an epidemic.

7.2.12 The Bengal Tanks Improvement Act, 1939 (Bengal Act XV of 1939) – This statute had been formed for the purpose of improvement of tank for its meaningful utilization for irrigation. It empowers the State Government to requisition derelict tank and to improve it either with the help of its district machinery or through any other local body or person. Although there are at present other statutes and projects under which a derelict tank/ water body may be reclaimed and fruitfully utilized, this Act has not yet outlived its efficacy. It is however true that the socio-economic scenario at the time of its enactment in 1939 is widely divergent from that obtaining today and some conceptual and functional changes need to be incorporated in the existing provisions. In order to make the statute more people-oriented and dynamic, the Panchayat institutions will be empowered and made proactive, role of bureaucracy will be eliminated, pisciculture will be accepted as one of the objectives of the programme and agriculture will be taken to encompass orchard cultivation as well. With these views

- (a) Sections 2(a1), (1), (2), (7) and section 6 will be suitably amended. Besides, sections 27 will be redrafted to make the Zilla Parishad and the State Government to act as the appellate authorities as may be appropriate. Section 34 will also be amended to enable the Zilla Parishad to delegate its authority to other Panchayat bodies and/or the officers.

7.2.13 West Bengal Inland Fisheries Act, 1984 (West Bengal Act XXV of 1984) – Successful implementation of any programme for development of inland fisheries calls for various technical inputs by the persons having specialized knowledge on the one hand and unstinted support and participation of the people on the other. Such popular support and participation can be ensured through the representatives in the Panchayat bodies constituted in the locality. It is therefore necessary that the Panchayat Samiti functionaries be involved in the task of implementation of the provisions of this Act. On these views

- (a) Sections 8, 9, 14, 17A, 17B and 17C will be suitably amended to bring in the role of Panchayat Samiti and the Gram Panchayat in the functions envisaged in development of inland fisheries.

- 7.2.14 **Indian Forest Act, 1927 (16 of 1927) & The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (2 of 2007)** – It is understood that the Indian Forest Act is no longer in use although it has not been repealed. In its primary interest in protecting flora and fauna in the forest, this Act totally missed the rights of the forest dwelling tribes and other communities. This imbalance has been largely corrected by the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act brought into force in 2007. However, the former Act should either be repealed entirely or some of the sections such as 10(5), 16, 25, 28 to 31, 35, 36 should be repealed or amended to bring them in conformity with the principles enunciated in the latter Act. This latter Act of 2006 has sympathetically safeguarded the interests of the people depending on forest not only for their livelihood but for their cultural, religious and social life. However, the definitions of ‘other traditional forest dweller’ in clause (o) of section 2 of the Act, appears to be a little rigid and unrealistic when occupation of at least three generations (one generation means 25 years) has been insisted upon. In the tea garden areas in North Bengal, because of population growth and other reasons, a large number of non-workers can be found. It is likely that some of these families for compelling reasons have relocated themselves in the nearby forest land, especially unclassified and undemarcated forest, primarily because they were forest dwellers before they were recruited as tea garden workers. Besides, in the wake of partition of the country, a huge number of families migrated from Bangladesh as it is now known. Although in a limited scale, some of them might have been forest dwellers coming from western or north-western forest region of that country and may have resettled themselves in the forest lands across the international border. Unless the clause is made a little flexible, the District Level Committee should be given the authority to liberally interpret/relax this provision to accommodate such families. Another issue also merits consideration. Rule 13 cites a large kind of evidences including evidence of elders, for determination of forest rights. Even then, considering the educational level etc. of these people living in the fringe area of the society, it is felt that some of them may be incapable of citing any of these evidences. Their in situ position as on 13th December, 2005 should be taken as the most important evidence in such cases. The District Level Committee will be empowered for this purpose.
- 7.2.15 **Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980** – This Act is in reality supplemental to the Indian Forests Act, 1927. It has total five sections among which there are only three operative sections. There is only one issue which may be mentioned in relation to this Act. Section 3 provides for constitution of an Advisory Committee to advice on grant of approval under section 2 and on other matters on conservation of forest. Now, forest area and the rural areas under the Panchayat system are interrelated and inter-dependent. So, it is necessary that this Committee should have members with insights of forest-Panchayat interface and expectations and problems of the people. Following this concept, suitable members and office bearers of the local or contiguous Panchayat(s) shall be made members of the Advisory Committee. Selection of the particular person to be the member(s) of the Committee shall be the discretion of the Panchayat body concerned.
- 7.2.16 **The Bengal Public Parks Act, 1904 (Bengal Act II of 1904)** – The Act contains provisions, for declaration by the State Government of a new public park in addition to those enumerated in the schedule appended to the Act and for superintendence and

management of such park. The enactment envisages, although not specifically stated, establishment of such park within urban areas. Under the rules framed in terms of West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1973 (West Bengal Act XLI of 1973), the Gram Panchayat is empowered to establish parks within its area. Considering the said position, a new provision will be inserted after section 3 (or any other suitable place) providing that in the rural area, any such park declared as such shall be transferred under the control and management of the Gram Panchayat, area of which comprises the Park and the said Gram Panchayat may take measures for maintenance of the parks.

- 7.2.17 **The West Bengal Preservation of Historical Monuments and Objects and Excavation of Archaeological Sites Act, 1957 (West Bengal Act XXXI of 1957)** – This enactment provides for preservation, restoration and maintenance of historical and antiquated monuments and objects and also empowers the State Government, for excavation of archaeological sites in West Bengal. There are instances where a state-protected monument or object may not require continuous supervision or support from experts or other persons with specialized knowledge in diverse fields or need considerable fund for maintenance and upkeep. On the other hand, such object or monument may signify past glory and pomp of the locality and may be a source of local pride. On such occasions, the owner as also the local Panchayat may be interested in undertaking the responsibility for preservation and maintenance of the said monuments and objects. On this view it is necessary to allow some space for the Panchayat bodies to play their legitimate role in the effort for preservation of ancient monuments and relics. With this object Sections 2, 4, 5, 7, 12, 13 and 15 will be amended in appropriate manner for defining their role.
- 7.2.18 **The West Bengal Children Act, 1959 (West Bengal Act XXX of 1959)** – This act enables the State Government to establish and run the reformatory or Borstal schools. Since its efficacy lies in proper running of these establishments, flawless management by well structured machinery is the essence of the system. There is however a human and social aspect for which involvement of local body representatives is necessary. Sections 8, 9 and 11 will therefore be suitably amended to bring in the role of the Panchayat Samiti or its representative in appropriate manner when such establishments are located in the rural areas.
- 7.2.19 **The West Bengal Khadi and Village Industries Board Act, 1959 (West Bengal Act XIV of 1959)** – This Act provides for organization, development and regulation of khadi industries and village industries and also other matters supplemental and incidental thereto. For this purpose, the Act has made provision for constitution of a Khadi and Village Industries Board. Now, the aims and objectives of this Board are noticeably in concurrence with those of the three tier Panchayats constituted under the mandates of the Constitution of India and in pursuance of the State Panchayat Act. In fact, the objectives of the Panchayat subsume the objectives of the Khadi and Village Industries Board and a close liaison between their activities shall not only help both the organizations in implementation of their respective schemes and programmes but shall satisfactorily serve their central purpose of socio-economic upliftment of the people. Considering the significant role of the Board in organizing Khadi and Village industries mainly in the rural area and of the Panchayat bodies conversant with and responsive to the needs and

expectations of the community, a functional integration between them is necessary. In order to achieve this objective, sections 4 and 12 will be suitably amended so that the Panchayats have some definite say in the matters encompassing the interest of the local people. There is however one specific matter that merits consideration. District Industries Centre (DIC) referred to in section 14A (admittedly, this centre is not created under this Act) and other officers implementing the programmes of the WBKVIB (e.g. Handloom Development Officer) will be more closely linked with the Zilla Parishad. Without prejudice to the distinct identity of the DIC or other officers, the Zilla Parishad particularly Khudra Shilpa, Bidyut O Achiracharit Shakti Sthayee Samiti (Standing Committee on Small Industries, Power and Non-Conventional Energy) will have greater symbiotic relationship with the DIC and other officers. The General Manager, DIC (and other officers if deemed necessary) will have a Zilla Parishad related additional designation. While granting assistance to the artisans, groups and institutions under different programmes, local Panchayat bodies / members will be consulted for identification and prioritization of beneficiaries and in the matter of implementation of various stages of the programme.

7.2.20 The Essential Commodities Act, 1955 (Act 10 of 1955) – This Act has been brought into force in order to ensure steady and adequate supply of the commodities essential for sustenance of life by controlling their production, supply and distribution. Obviously, the Act is of regulatory nature and aims at keeping the production and marketing channel of certain specified commodities in proper condition on one hand and also keeping unscrupulous businessmen on leash so as to prevent them from manipulating marketing channels. It is felt that enforcement of such law will be easier if the Panchayats are involved in the administration of certain provisions of the Act. Besides, under the Eleventh Schedule, public distribution system is one of the functions that have been entrusted to these bodies. In consideration of this, Sections 3 (3b) and section 5 will be amended in appropriate manner. The Act mainly dwells on different ingredients of the offences dealt with, penal provisions and composition and jurisdiction of different penal authorities. Obviously, it has been framed from regulatory point of view. The approach obfuscates the role of people who are not only beneficiaries but have a major role in production or processing of the commodities in question. The objective will be served more satisfactorily if the Act provides space for participation of people in safeguarding their own interest. Accepting this idea on principle, the Act will have enabling provisions to utilize the services of the Panchayats and the urban local bodies effectively.

7.2.21 The Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961 (28 of 1961) – Objective of this piece of legislation is to prohibit the evil practice of giving and taking of dowry in connection with marriage. The measures in the Act are regulatory in nature with penal provisions. However, the issue dealt with is actually a social malady stemming from the syndrome of male chauvinism prevalent in the society coupled with lack of economic independence of women in the society. Eradication of this affliction can be achieved only by creating social awareness in the society and through economic and social empowerment of women. However, some modification in the framework of the existing law may be helpful in achieving the goal. In this connection, sub-sections (1) and (2) of section 8B will be amended to involve the Panchayat bodies in the administration of this Act. Besides, a district-level advisory committee will be constituted with the Sabhadhipati as

chairperson with the District Magistrate, Superintendent of Police and a number of social workers with high proportion of women as members. It will monitor the progress in this regard and may also guide other advisory committees in their efforts.

- 7.2.22 **The Bengal Water Hyacinth Act, 1936 (Bengal Act XIII of 1936)** – This Act provides for the steps to contain propagation and ultimately to destroy the water hyacinth growing on any river, watercourse, tank, pond or any other land or water-body. Under the Act, most authority is vested in Collector or any person authorised by him. Certain decisions are left with the State Government. In terms of section 27 of the West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1973 (West Bengal Act XLI of 1973), the Gram Panchayat is vested with the power to direct any person to prevent growth of water hyacinth and destroy all water hyacinth already grown from any land or water body. Although the Act of 1936 is more elaborate with some minor details, the provision in the State Panchayat Act is adequate to meet the situation. Necessity of having two Acts on the same subject will be examined for taking a view.
- 7.2.23 **The Bengal Local Self Government Associations (Recognition) Act, 1936 (Bengal Act XVI of 1936)** – Aims and objectives of this Act are to extend recognition by the State Government to an association formed by the local bodies. It was also envisaged that the association would run primarily with contributions from the local bodies. At present, such an association may be utilized as a platform for exchange of views and experiences among different local bodies and for building up common strategies and approaches on issues of mutual interest. The Act will be examined to consider whether the objectives may be met by appropriate amendment of this Act and also the State Panchayat Act and how functioning of such associations, if formed, may be facilitated.
- 7.2.24 **The West Bengal Vaccination Act, 1973 (West Bengal Act XXXVII of 1973)** – This is an Act to make vaccination compulsory for the purpose of eradication of small pox. The provision of the Act, inter alia, enjoins upon every resident and every traveler coming to this State to get himself/herself and the children under his or her care vaccinated unless they are already protected. This statute also enunciates the authority, duty and responsibility of the medical and para-medical personnel associated with the programme and also contains some penal provisions for breach of law. However, one lacuna in the present Act needs to be eliminated. There is little scope in the statute for participation of the Panchayat bodies or members in the campaign although mass awareness and participation cannot be realized without support of the grassroots level representative bodies. With this end in view, sub-section (2) of section 10 will be suitably amended to bring participation of the Panchayat bodies in the matter without eroding the authority and responsibility of the government machinery.
- 7.2.25 **The West Bengal Acquisition of Homestead Land for Agricultural Labourers, Artisans and Fishermen Act, 1975 (West Bengal Act XLVII of 1975)** – This is an Act to provide for the acquisition of land in rural areas on which homestead has been constructed by any person who is an agricultural labourer, an artisan or a fisherman and conferment of title of such land in favour of such person. This Act has been framed practically to empower the executive machinery to perform certain quasi-judicial functions. Since, however, the disadvantaged section of the community is the target

group of this Act, it is imperatively necessary to disseminate the scope of this legislation, motivate and support the target group people to come up with their legitimate claims and to assist the families after acquisition of land for construction or repair of pucca houses, where necessary, under rural housing programmes. Panchayats have appropriate roles to play in these directions. Suitable provisions will be inserted in this Act reflecting the aforesaid objectives.

- 7.2.26 **The Cattle Trespass Act, 1871 (Act 1 of 1871)** – The Act aims at preventing stray cattle from damaging crops. The punitive measures relating to any damage caused by the cattle left by the owner to move freely, not only check quarrels and feuds in the countryside, but assure safety of the standing crop thereby contributing to food production. Obviously this is a matter very much within the functional ambit of a local body instead of the Collector or any other government officer. It is, of course, admitted that the role of the State Government in certain matters cannot be dispensed with. Now, although section 31 empowers the State Government to transfer to any local authority all or any of the functions under this Act, this does not appear adequate to create an atmosphere conducive to achieving the objects of the Act. On analysis of the ground realities, it appears most effective to empower the Gram Panchayat in the statute to take all actions under the Act. With this object in view, sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 14, 17, 19 and 27 will be amended to bring in the role of Gram Panchayat and Panchayat Samiti by abrogating those of the District Magistrate and other government officers. On introduction of such amendments section 31 will become redundant and will be omitted.
- 7.2.27 **The West Bengal Comprehensive Area Development Act, 1974 (West Bengal Act XXXIX of 1974)** – This piece of legislation prepared a structure for development of the state through area-based development programme for increased agricultural and allied activities and maximization of benefits of the cultivators. After commencement of 73rd Constitutional amendment, the Panchayat bodies have emerged as the major vehicle for area-based as also family-based development programme in the countryside. The Panchayats are also playing a big role in the efforts for capacity building and creating livelihood opportunities for the rural people especially the marginal farmers, farm labourers and poor rural artisans. In the context of this changed scenario, the interventions envisaged in this Act, may be profitably utilized by the Panchayat bodies in their efforts for all-round development. Besides, the machinery created under this Act is still in existence. Although its independent existence may remain undisturbed, it may provide much-needed personnel support to the Panchayats. In view of the above, this Act will be appropriately amended in order to provide technical support to the programmes undertaken by the Panchayats in various fields of development activities and to forge a symbiotic relationship of the existing set-up with the appropriate Panchayats bodies.
- 7.2.28 **The West Bengal Tanks (Acquisition of Irrigation Rights) Act, 1974 (West Bengal Act XXIII of 1974)** – This is an Act to provide, in the public interest, for acquisition of the right of using water of derelict tanks for the purpose of irrigation and incidental matters. All powers and authorities under the Act are vested in the collector. Section 4 of the Act empowers the collector to acquire the right of using water of a tank for the purpose of irrigation when such tank is derelict and the public has no right to use its water for irrigation, although the tank if excavated is capable of irrigating adjoining

lands. In terms of section 5, the collector after such acquisition, may excavate and improve the tank in any manner for irrigation or authorize any person or persons to perform these jobs. Again, under section 6 of the Act, collector is empowered to take any action in terms of section 5 in respect of a tank where the public has the right of irrigation and the owner or owners are not providing the facility. Instead of employing the bureaucratic machinery, it is more advisable to vest the entire right and responsibility to a representative body or to one of its authorized members. In these circumstances amendments will be made so that,

- (a) After acquisition under section 4, the collector will authorize the Panchayat Samiti concerned under section 5 to perform all or any function under the Act with liberty to assign any job to the Gram Panchayat having jurisdiction, or
- (b) Amend section 4 in such manner that the collector shall acquire the right of irrigation on requisition by the Panchayat Samiti and hand over the right to the requiring body.

There are other enactments as well for acquiring and utilizing the irrigation facility in public interest. Apparently, it will serve people better if the laws are consolidated and framed into one piece of legislation.

7.2.29 West Bengal Agricultural Produce Marketing (Regulation) Act, 1972 (West Bengal Act XXXV of 1972) – In order to safeguard the interests of the producers and prevent nefarious trade practices, this Act sets forth the codes for regulating the process of marketing agricultural produces in West Bengal. It endeavours to regulate transactions entered into by the traders. It also provides for constitution of a Market Committee and the State Market Board delineating their powers and authority and functional domains. The Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution enumerates, inter alia, agriculture including agricultural extension and markets and fairs as subjects on which the Panchayats as institutions of self-government should formulate and implement plans for economic development and social justice. By logical interpretation of the mandate of the Constitution, marketing of agricultural produces also comes within the functional domain of the Panchayats. Although such powers vested in the Panchayats are not exclusive, constitution of another authority for the same task gives rise to unnecessary dissipation of energy and resources with occasional incidence of conflicting measures adopted by different agencies in the field. Such situations may be avoided if closer ties are built between the Panchayat and such Authority. After commencement of the 73rd Constitutional amendment and introduction of matching provisions in the State Panchayat Act, certain provisions in the Act need be revisited. In view of the above, sections 2(f), 3(1) and (2), 4 and 5 will be appropriately amended in order to bring closer ties between the Panchayats and the Local Market Committee. Besides, it may be mentioned that under section 117 of the West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1973, an owner or a lessee of a hat or market or an owner or a lessee of land where a hat or a market is intended to be set up, is required to take a license from the Panchayat Samiti of the area. This provision should have clear recognition in this act under discussion.

7.2.30 The West Bengal Town and Country (Planning and Development) Act, 1979 (West Bengal Act XIII of 1979) – Objective of this Act is to constitute a body adequately

equipped with expert knowledge for identification of a planning area, preparation of a spatial plan for the area and execution of related area development schemes. At the time of commencement of this Act, there was no other planning body in existence. The scenario has meanwhile undergone vast change. In terms of Article 243G of the constitution, a Panchayat institution (Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad) is endowed with the authority to prepare plan for its area and execute schemes in pursuance thereof. In terms of Art 243W, a Municipality, which includes a Municipal Corporation also, is endowed with similar authority. Again under Article 243ZD, there will be a District Planning Committee (DPC) empowered to consolidate the plans prepared by the Panchayats and the Municipalities and for preparation of a draft development plan for the district as a whole. Similarly, Article 243ZE mandates constitution of a Metropolitan Planning Committee (MPC) for each metropolitan area with the responsibility for preparing a draft development plan for the metropolitan area as a whole. Both these bodies are also endowed with the responsibility of preparing spatial plans for the district and metropolitan areas respectively after taking into consideration the needs and interests of rural and urban areas. This Act of 1979 has created confusion in the matter. The entire area of the State is now encompassed by either an urban or a rural local government institution (3-tier Panchayats have overlapping jurisdictions) and a DPC or MPC. They are empowered under the constitution to prepare and execute development plan. A planning and development body as envisaged in the 1979 Act can hardly find area left for their preparation and execution of development plans and they cannot subsume or control the institutions created by the Constitution. It is felt necessary to address this anomalous situation to resolve the impasse. Otherwise, different development agencies will be working at cross-purposes and may soon be vying with each other for their authority in the planning process. Besides, it is clear that the Panchayats, Municipalities, DPC and MPC are constitutional authorities for preparing local level plans, including spatial plans. Another planning body cannot take away this authority. Even if a separate body is created, it has to function within the framework envisaged in Part IX and IXA of the Constitution. It cannot exercise any power or authority independent of this constitutional framework. Apparently, this Act in the present form is in conflict with some of the Constitutional provisions and, hence, needs thorough amendments. These amendments will be enacted to bring this Act in conformity with the Constitution.

7.2.31 These amendments have been referred in Appendix 9.1. [7. - (i) - (a) and (b) in page 130]

7.3 Amendment of the Panchayat Act and Rules

7.3.1 **Initiatives for Further Amendment of Panchayat Act** – In recent times, quite a few amendments have been made in the State Panchayat Act in order to make the Panchayat bodies more representative, people-oriented and transparent, to improve their accountability and functional ethos. Further amendments are also under contemplation [Appendix reference 7. - (ii) - (a) in page 130] which are mentioned below:

- (1) The powers and functions of the Gram Panchayat, Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishad shall be reframed so as to clearly define their respective roles in different fields of activities with convergence among different tiers.

- (2) An internal audit system in different tiers shall be built up for the purpose of monitoring utilization of fund and maintenance of accounts by the institution itself in a regular manner and also to ensure timely reply to statutory audit paragraphs.
- (3) Composition as also functional procedures of the District Council for Panchayats shall be changed.
- (4) The Panchayats have been allowed very little space for generating its own resources. The Gram Panchayat may raise some amount of revenue through imposition of tax on land and buildings. Even this meager source is not available to the Panchayat Samiti and the Zilla Parishad. All three of them are mostly dependent on the non-tax revenue for which the existing net is not very wide. Efforts will be made to explore new avenues for all the three tiers for augmenting their resources. However, that demand intensive discussions at multiple level and will require considerable time for specific action.
- (5) It is felt that the State Government should have some supervisory role over the Panchayats as facilitator. The latter may also require guidance and support on different issues. The State Government should derive all such authorities through legislative process. However, authority of the Government should not gravitate towards precipitating a crippling effect on their endeavours for economic development and securing social justice for the people. Distinction between these two aspects is not easily discernable and tends to overlap. It is however necessary to ensure that the self-government status of the Panchayats are not eroded. A careful scrutiny of the existing provisions in the Act and Rules shall be made for specific actions in this direction.
- (6) Necessary provisions in the wake of amendment of various subject laws will also be incorporated.

7.3.2 **Framing/Amendment of Rules** – Gram Panchayat Administration Rules [The West Bengal Panchayat (Gram Panchayat Administration) Rules, 2004] has recently been amended extensively. The Accounts Rules for the Gram Panchayats [The West Bengal Panchayat (Gram Panchayat Accounts, Audit and Budget) Rules, 2007] in substitution of the existing rules framed in 1990, have been framed very recently. The West Bengal Panchayat (Panchayat Samiti Administration) Rules, 2008 has also been framed very recently. There are proposals to freshly prepare the Zilla Parishad Administration Rules and amend Gram Panchayat Administration Rules with presently required provisions. These will be done by 2009-10. [Appendix reference 7. - (ii) - (b) and (c) in page 130]

8. ROAD AHEAD – STRATEGY FOR ACHIEVING THE GOALS

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 The foregoing chapters describe the various dimensions of the Panchayat system and the road ahead for its improvement. It is evident that the journey ahead along the road will not be easy and totally predictable. All the issues related to improved rural local

governance are to be addressed by each of the Panchayat body as well as the State Government to play their respective roles in tandem with a common understanding keeping the local context in mind. That makes the process complex and diverse and different components of the same, which are strongly interrelated, are to be understood and acted upon by all concerned. Another important aspect is that as against any isolated approach, the journey ahead has to be undertaken by each of the Panchayat of the State and the road ahead for the State will essentially consist of the sum total of journey to be undertaken by all the Panchayats, each of which may take a different course converging to an ultimate common goal. The major achievable components will be the goals in terms of specific outcomes, the institution that has to be developed to own and work upon the goals, strengthening the institutions to follow the processes for good governance, the capacities to be developed for the institutions to take up the journey and the services that are to be delivered to the citizen. The course charted undoubtedly requires strengthening and in some cases re-engineering of the processes, augmentation of fund, personnel and the infrastructure which will be required to accomplish the task. The State Government, being fully aware of the dimensions of all such requirements, will try its best to accomplish the tasks ahead within the timeframe mentioned for each activity. However, some of the processes have to unfold gradually to reach higher level of maturity and will be a continuing one. There may be need to amend the Roadmap depending on the circumstances and the same will be adopted as and when necessary. It is proposed to review the progress every two years for an evaluation of achievements. Attempt will be made to help all the Panchayat bodies to internalize the processes prescribed in the Roadmap for owning the same and to act as an agent of change locally to reach the goal. Participation of all those bodies will be most crucial for bringing in the desired changes. Those aspects along with the strategy to be followed are briefly described below.

8.2 Sharing the Vision in terms of Human Outcomes and Setting Goals Locally

- 8.2.1 The vision should be in terms of outcomes related to human development and minimum level of wellbeing for the entire citizen. While there is no end to further improve the status in respect of education, health and income but some minimum level of achievement across all Panchayats should be the immediate milestones to be achieved. There should also be ways to measure the outcomes directly or through proxy indicators at the local level. In terms of education the milestones will be what are already accepted as rights in terms of ensuring elementary education for all. Thus the milestone that each GP will be required to achieve is that every child in its jurisdiction completes class VIII standard of education and are in schools up to the age of 14 years. It should also be ensured that no child within that age-group works as child labour. The other related outcome should be to improve literacy rate through adult and continuing education as well as to reduce the gender gap in literacy. There cannot be any argument as to the common goal like the first two components but each GP will have to work out its target and thrust area based on ground realities. The outcome in the field of health will be reduction in IMR and MMR, which is a major component of multi-dimensional interventions in the field of public health. It will not be easy to calculate IMR or MMR at the GP level and to set goals for all those bodies but what is possible is to monitor all events of death of infants and pregnant mothers and to work for reducing the figures

through the interventions described in chapter III. In respect of income the immediate goal will be to take all the families out of poverty, which may take different time span in different GPs to achieve the same while admittedly it may in general take a long time. The goal is to be achieved through several types of interventions. The immediate outcome to be observed is to augment the income of the unskilled wage earners, who are in the lowest step of the economic ladder. The progress will be measured by a combination of number of days they get employment from market and out of government programmes as well as the difference in wage between the peak rate and the rate prevailing in the lean season in a year, which should increasingly get reduced. The other observable phenomenon to be monitored is the extent of reduction of seasonal migration out of the area in distress, which should be brought down to nil. The worst victims are those who are physically challenged and are unable to perform manual labour and are consequently out of employment. Those are destitute families and the goal will be to provide them social security through various measures like providing pensions and food security. The goal will be to provide social security to all such families. All those are important goals of the State and it is utopian to think that simply assigning those goals on the Panchayats will result in improvement. Many of the goals envisioned are beyond the capabilities of the Panchayats and are dependent on, inter alia, various socio-economic factors. Even then the Panchayats are assigned primary responsibility for required interventions as because they are in the best position to locate the problem areas in their respective jurisdictions, to identify the persons/families requiring facilitation and shall be capable to taking tangible and effective measures to reach the goals. Besides, since the Panchayat bodies are close to the people and familiar with their travails and constraints, they can easily instill confidence in the minds of the people and may sensitize and motivate them for their uplift. Nevertheless, achievement on all those fronts will depend on contribution from every level of government and the Panchayats will actively share the vision to work out what they can mutually contribute in achieving those ultimate goals. The task of the State Government is to make the Panchayats internalize those basic goals related to human development and overall wellbeing, shape all their plans and programmes to pursue those goals and based on the local context set their goals of what is achievable and in what time frame so that all their actions augmented with the actions of the State Government in the same field, follow the goals to be set by themselves. Thus every GP will have their own Roadmap for achieving milestones related to the said outcomes, which they will monitor locally and mobilize all their resources and actions for pursuing the same. The outcome has to be assessed annually and shared with the people for their participation in achieving the goals. The State Government will facilitate the process and strengthen those activities which are beyond the competence of the Panchayats but are required to be performed so that the Panchayats can achieve their goals. The Zilla Parishad will identify those activities and will play a stewardship role and will mediate with the State Government and other institutions for the desired outcome. This is easier said than done and the task will be to strengthen the institution and let them acquire capacities for accomplishing the tasks.

8.3 Strengthening the Panchayat Institutions

- 8.3.1 Several institutional aspects of the Panchayats have been discussed in chapter II. The Roadmap for the State will be to let the Panchayat functionaries internalize the institutional aspects of good governance as process of development and work out their own goals including the timeframe and measurable parameters for assessing the progress. The aspects which are to be covered are participation of the people, horizontal sharing of responsibilities, ensuring rule of law including financial disciplines and integrity, inclusiveness in participation of members from political parties in opposition in various Standing Committees, responsiveness to the poorest sections, developing partnership with civil society organizations, promptness in decision making, transparency and accountability to the people, efficient mobilization of resources and effectiveness in use of available resources. It is difficult to set goals centrally by the State Government for all the Panchayats in terms of those parameters. The role of the State Government will be to take up intensive advocacy for self monitoring of those processes and continuous improvement through their own initiative. The process has started rolling and every Panchayat has been asked to evaluate various institutional aspects through a self-evaluation schedule (available in Bengali in www.wbprd.nic.in). The same are being filled up by all the Panchayats and are being assessed primarily by themselves for working out their own goals. The role of the State Government will be to facilitate the process and to identify the weak Panchayats in terms of those parameters so as to make more intensive facilitations by sending teams of experts on a regular basis. However, the major strategy will be to allow the Panchayat to assess various aspects on their own, internalize the process and set goals for themselves and seek the help of experts if and when they so want for strengthening their own institutions [Appendix reference of self-evaluation: 1. - (i) - (a) and (b) in page 82 and 1. - (ii) - (a) to (c) in page 82].
- 8.3.2 Role of Panchayat in the process of human and economic development of the people, especially those belonging to disadvantaged section of the society and also ensuring social justice for them is finding increasingly more space in the whole spectrum of development interventions of the State. It is found that the Panchayat can play significant role in the field of health, nutrition, education and development of the women and children. Agriculture and other allied activities like pisciculture, animal resources development, cottage industries and small scale-industries etc. can also be promoted by the PRI with due support of the State Government. The PRI will also be instrumental in development of productive skill of the rural people and infrastructure in the countryside that will have a sustaining effect on economic development. The major thrust on such development will be augmentation of livelihood and employment opportunities. The other crucial area for the PRI to play increasingly important role will be reduction of social disparities through empowerment of women, strengthening social security measures, promoting other aspects of social welfare including welfare of the backward classes, caring for the destitute and physically challenged persons and involving the community in management of disaster. In short, Panchayat shall have an accentuated role in holistic development in its area. The proposed amendment of the State Panchayat Act referred to earlier in paragraph 7.3.1 shall encapsulate this role of the Panchayat in the development matrix. Without augmenting capacities of the Panchayat in the projected development efforts, it cannot be expected to achieve this uphill task on its own. The State Government shall have a major role in building up higher capacity of the Panchayat in various fields. It will require functional improvement, technical capability, augmented

resources and the capacity to utilize such resources. The role of the Panchayats shall be complementary to the role of the State Government in those areas. Panchayats shall perform especially such functions that require local knowledge and responses to the demands of the local community and shall identify the schemes, their locations as also the beneficiaries of different schemes. The Panchayats shall also create awareness among the people about the programmes and schemes and shall facilitate delivery of various services ensuring their equitable distributions. Such functions of the Panchayats have been captured throughout the matrix showing implementation strategy in Appendix 9.1.

8.4 Delivery of Services for Social Justice and Economic Growth

8.4.1 The Panchayat institutions are to deliver a range of services and should also mediate with higher tiers for proper delivery of services to be arranged by those bodies for reaching the same to all for whom the services are designed. The details of the services have been described in Chapter III and Chapter IV. The outcome to be achieved in various aspects of human development will depend on the access and quality of services available to the citizen. Each GP will be required to assess the availability of services to be delivered by the Panchayats and the State Government to find out the gap in access and quality and work out plan for improving the same. In respect of services delivered by the State Government the Panchayats will mediate for bridging the gap and making best use of available resources to reach the same to the most marginalized families. In this case also it is difficult to prescribe roadmaps of individual Panchayats from above. The same has to be worked out by each Panchayat by assessing their present status, the constraints and the possibilities for improving the same. An exercise for self-assessment of available services by the Panchayats themselves has been initiated. This self-evaluation exercise serves the dual purpose of sensitizing the Panchayats on the importance of availability and quality of those services as well as to identify the deficiencies for working out the plan for improving the same. It also helps the State Government to rank the Panchayats in terms of delivery of those services so that more facilitation can be provided to the poor performing Panchayats. This exercise will also be utilized by each Panchayat to work out their Roadmap for planning and implementing various interventions in improving both social and economic services towards the citizen. One important component of the exercise will be to also identify gap in basic infrastructure related to services needed for human development and economic growth so that the same could be bridged by proper planning and deployment of resources available with the Panchayats. The exercise for self-evaluation will be carried out annually and since the status will be assessed on a score-based ranking, the progress can be to some extent quantified. However, being self-evaluation there could be tendency for overrating the performance, which will become more objective in due course, making it easier to follow a definite course of planned actions for improvement. The process will be helped by preparing Citizen's Charter and Citizen's Report Card described later.

8.5 Acquiring Capacities by the Panchayat Institutions

8.5.1 While the goals can be set, and may be uniform for all, the achievement will vary widely depending on the maturity of institutional process and ultimately on the capacity of the

Panchayats. The issue of capacity building is extremely important and most crucial in influencing the outcome. This has again various components like capacity for mobilizing people and taking up decentralized planning exercises including internalizing the issues and focusing on the right priorities, capacity for mobilizing and effectively utilizing resources, managing delivery of various services and implementation of various programmes assigned on those bodies, evaluation of the output and the outcome and building up necessary social capital and economic infrastructure for sustaining growth. In this case also it is impossible for the State Government to set target and chart a Roadmap for all the Panchayats. The same has to be carried out by each Panchayat based on their local context. Even when it comes to building up the manpower resources by training the official and elected functionaries the same training input may lead to different learning outcome based on many factors. The strategy will be to plan certain activities related to training and capacity building, as has been described in Chapter 6, for all the Panchayat functionaries to reach some minimum level of understanding. More emphasis will be given on identifying best practices in each district and organize extensive exposure visit for peer learning. The same will be facilitated by handholding support to the weak Panchayats as already described. The State Government will also provide necessary infrastructure and allied supports as mentioned in Chapter 6 for developing training infrastructure, providing computer and train personnel for use of ICT, which will enable the Panchayats to function more efficiently.

8.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

- 8.6.1 One of the responsibilities of the State Government will be to closely monitor the progress of strengthening of the Panchayats. As already mentioned the Panchayats will be made to assess their performance through self-evaluation. That will help the State Government to rank progress on various aspects of performances of the Panchayats to plan more facilitation and other interventions. However, apart from self-evaluation there will be studies and evaluation by expert organizations to evaluate the progress. The evaluation reports will be shared with the Panchayats for internalizing the findings and taking corrective measures of their own. In respect of the existing programmes and services effort will be made to understand the achievement and failures by compiling figures GP wise. In order that census and similar other data, which are collected revenue mouza-wise by other agencies can be compiled for each GP it is necessary to ensure that no GP contain a part of the mouza. At present there are around 16% of the mouzas which are spread over more than one GP which makes it difficult to compile data GP wise. Steps will be taken to split those mouzas before the next census so that census data can be compiled GP-wise. That will help to verify locally compiled data with data from census or similar other operations.

8.7 The Citizen, Panchayat and the Citizen's Charter

- 8.7.1 Inherent value of Panchayat governance system, its efficacy and justification are derived from its closer proximity to the people, particularly its weaker sections. Various interventions of the Panchayat also centre around their aims and aspirations, their deprivations and needs and their weaknesses and strengths. In pursuance of this concept,

the role of Panchayat is not confined merely to building up a sustainable delivery mechanism for opportunities created by it or by the Government and other agencies but also to create consciousness among the people about their right for better livelihood in one hand and their duties and responsibilities in realization of their rights on the other. It is therefore necessary for the Panchayats to sensitize and motivate the people through spread of information, education and communication so that they may raise their demands on their primary needs of life in an informed and effective manner. They should also be made conscious and responsive about their duties and responsibilities in the process of realization of these demands. In other words, the citizens should be brought to have participatory role in the whole process of development.

- 8.7.2 In order that the citizens are aware of the services they are supposed to receive from the Panchayats there should be a Citizen's Charter incorporating therein peoples' rights to get services along with the procedure for redressing their grievances (if any) and obligations to enjoy these rights. The obligations and responsibilities, needed to be fulfilled to enjoy the rights, of the people shall accentuate their participatory roles at different stages of development. The PRDD will advocate for drawing of appropriate Citizen's Charter by every Panchayat body and will extend necessary support for that purpose. Such charter shall be widely circulated and discussed in different forums so that people may realise their rights and duties. In addition to such charter, there will be a Citizen's Report Card through which Citizens will evaluate the performance of the Panchayats with respect to the primary services provided by the Panchayats and their declared Citizen's Charter.
- 8.7.3 It is ultimately the people, who are the most important stakeholder of the Panchayats. The success of establishing a more responsive and efficient Panchayat system has to be judged by the people, who have the ultimate power to take corrective measures for improving the system. The State Government will carry out advocacy measures for wider dissemination of information related to functioning of the Panchayats to encourage ordinary people to remain engaged with functioning of the Panchayats in protecting their interests. The strength of the Panchayat system should be derived primarily from the people and not merely from the statute or the upper tiers of government for better functioning of the Panchayats as institutions for self government. It should be the citizen who should own the Roadmaps for realizing the same as their goals by participating actively and making the Panchayats carry out the process as their representative bodies.

9. THE APPENDICES

9.1 Benchmark for Implementation Strategy of the Roadmap

Subject	Issues	Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
1. Assessment of present status of Panchayat functioning and follow-up intervention	(i) Self-evaluation of institutional functioning of the three tier Panchayats	(a) Developing schedule for the three tiers (b) Circulating and explaining self evaluation formats to all Panchayat bodies and facilitating PRIs to complete self-evaluation	(a) PRDD (b) Panchayats Development Officer (PDO) and Panchayat Accounts & Audit Officer (PAAO) for GP, District Panchayat & Rural Development Officer (DPRDO) for PS and Commissioner, Panchayats & Rural Development for ZP	(a) The month of March in every year (b) The month of April in every year	(a) Giving opinion for developing the schedule (b) Understanding the objective, the schedule and taking necessary action to complete the self-evaluation process involving all concerned and sending the self-evaluation scores to the State Government	(a) The Panchayat body as a whole at all the three tiers (b) The Panchayat body as a whole at all the three tiers	(a) The month of January in every year (b) The month of June in every following year
	(ii) Follow-up action on self-evaluation	(a) Validation of the self-evaluation scores for disbursement of Incentive Grant (b) Disbursement of Incentive Grant to the best GP in a Block, to the best PS in a District and the best ZP in the State (c) Analysis of the self-evaluation data and taking necessary actions	(a) Block Development Officer (BDO) for GP, District Magistrate for PS and Commissioner, Panchayats & Rural Development for ZP (b) Panchayat & Rural Development Department (c) DPRDO for District level analysis of GP & PS data, SRD Cell for State level analysis of all the three tiers	(a) The month of July in every following year (b) The month of August in every following year (c) The month of September in every year	(a) Participating in the validation process and providing necessary documents in support of the scores (b) No activity (c) Identification of weak areas and taking remedial actions by themselves and seeking support from State Government and other higher bodies	(a) The Panchayat body as a whole (whose scores are to be validated) at all the three tiers (b) Nil (c) The three tier Panchayat body as a whole	(a) The month of July in every following year (b) Nil (c) From the month of August in every following year

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Subject	Issues	Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
2. Strengthening democratic functioning of the Panchayats	(i) Participation at the village level	(a) Advocacy and facilitation in formation of Gram Unnayan Samiti (GUS) in all the Gram Sansads where people demand formation (b) Capacity building of the GUS members to make the GUSs proactive (c) Dissemination of important information to the citizens through media and display advertisements	(a) PRDD, DPRD, DPRDOs, Block level officials and the GP level officials (b) Same as (a) (c) State Government at the State, District and Block levels	(a) No timeframe as it is a demand driven process (b) One year from the formation of GUS (c) No timeframe as it is a continuous process	(a) Formation of GUS in all the Gram Sansads where people demand formation (b) Capacity building of the GUS members (c) Facilitating the State Government and taking own initiatives for dissemination	(a) The Gram Panchayat with necessary help from the Block (b) The Gram Panchayat with necessary help from the Block, District and State (c) All the three tier Panchayat bodies	(a) No timeframe as it is a demand driven process (b) One year from the formation of GUS (c) No timeframe as it is a continuous process
	(ii) Organizing the poor for their participation in Panchayats	(a) Advocacy, facilitation and guidance for organizing the poor, particularly the women, in Self Help Groups (SHGs) aiming that every poor rural family has at least one member included in an SHG (b) Capacity building of the SHGs to improve their understanding of the socio-economic situations, to ensure their participation in local development and to enable them to avail services for their socio-economic advancement (c) Lending support to provide access to credit from banks/ financial institutions for all SHGs	(a) PRDD, District Rural Development Cell (DRDC), Block level officials (specially Block Nodal Officer) (b) Same as (a) (c) Same as (a) by negotiating with the banks/ financial institutions, if needed, through State/District Level Bankers Committee	(a) March 2012 (b) Continuous process (c) March 2012	(a) Organizing the poor, particularly the women, in SHGs (b) Playing pro-active role to improve understanding, participation of the SHGs and to enable them to avail services (c) Negotiating with the banks/ financial institutions to provide access to credit for all SHGs	(a) Sishu O Nari Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran Sthayee Samiti of the PS; Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samaj Kalyan Upa-Samiti of the GP along with the SHG Clusters and the Resource Persons (b) Same as (a) and the Federations (c) Office bearers of the Panchayats (PS and GP)	(a) March 2012 (b) Continuous process (c) March 2012

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
2. Strengthening democratic functioning of the Panchayats	(ii) Organizing the poor for their participation in Panchayats	(d) Advocacy, facilitation and guidance for formation of SHG Sub-Clusters in all Gram Sansads	(d) PRDD, DRDC, Block level officials, specially Block Nodal Officer	(d) March 2012 (e) September 2012 (f) March 2012 (g) Ongoing process	(d) Formation of SHG Sub-Clusters in all Gram Sansads (e) Formation of SHG Clusters in all GP and setting up their own offices in the immediate vicinity of the Panchayat offices (f) Formation of SHG Federations in all PS and setting up their own offices in the immediate vicinity of the Panchayat offices (g) Building capacities of the next level Panchayats to utilize the Sub-Clusters, Clusters and Federations	(d) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samaj Kalyan Upa-Samiti of the GP with the help of Executive Assistant of GP, SHG representatives and Resource Person (e) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samaj Kalyan Upa-Samiti of GP (f) Sishu O Nari Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran Sthayee Samiti of the PS with the help of Cluster members (g) ZP to build capacity of PS and PS to build capacity of GP	(d) March 2012 (e) March 2012 (f) March 2012 (g) Ongoing process
	(iii) Strengthening functioning of the Upa-Samitis and Sthayee Samitis	(a) Facilitating the Standing Committees and Upa-Samitis so that they can play a stewardship role in respect of district sector schemes of line departments (b) Facilitating the Standing Committees and Upa-Samitis in planning the district sector schemes to be implemented by the Panchayats	(a) PRDD, DPRD, District/Block level officials of various departments (b) Same as (a)	(a) Ongoing process with more effective facilitation from 2009-10 (b) Ongoing process	(a) Providing input for planning the district sector schemes of line departments and ensuring convergence of those schemes with its own activities (b) Planning the district sector schemes to be implemented by the Panchayats	(a) The Panchayat body in general and the concerned Sthayee/Upa-Samiti in particular with the help of the concerned line department officials (b) Same as (a)	(a) Ongoing process with more effective role from 2009-10 on release of fund and specific assignment (b) Ongoing process

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy						
		State Government Level			PRI Levels			
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	
2. Strengthening democratic functioning of the Panchayats	(iii) Strengthening functioning of the Upa-Samitis and Sthayee Samitis	(c) Splitting all development schemes into two groups – (i) to be implemented by line department machinery and (ii) to be implemented by local bodies along with necessary flow of fund and technical support	(c) All administrative departments of the State Governments who implement schemes falling under the 29 subjects of the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution of India	(c) March 2012 (d) The process will be operational by March 2010 and it will continue after that (e) Same as (d)	(c) No activity (d) Ensuring that the elected members of the Sthayee Samitis of the Zilla Parishads effectively participate at the interaction programmes and fully realize the task ahead (e) Ensuring that the elected members of the Sthayee Samitis of ZP and PS effectively participate at the interaction programmes and fully realize the task ahead	(c) Nil (d) Karmadhyaksha and Secretary of the concerned Sthayee Samitis of Zilla Parishads (e) Karmadhyaksha and Secretary of the concerned Sthayee Samitis of ZP and PS	(c) Nil (d) Ongoing process, to be more effective after March 2010 (e) Same as (d)	
		(d) Conducting interactions between the State level functionaries, including ministers in charge of departments and the members of the Sthayee Samitis of the Zilla Parishads at least once in a quarter for guiding and apprising them of the State policy and development programmes on the one hand and knowing the demand-driven needs and initiative of the Panchayats on the other	(d) Various State Government departments, the nodal role to be played by the Development and Planning Department					
		(e) Facilitating interactions between the functionaries of Zilla Parishad Sthayee Samitis and the members of the Sthayee Samitis of the Panchayat Samitis	(e) District level officials of various State Government departments attached with the Sthayee Samitis to assist ZP in taking initiatives					

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
2. Strengthening democratic functioning of the Panchayats	(iii) Strengthening functioning of the Upa-Samitis and Sthayee Samitis	(f) Facilitating interactions between the Sthayee Samitis of the Panchayat Samitis and the GP level Upa-Samitis	(f) Block level and higher level officials of various State Government departments (along with assisting PS in taking initiative)	(f) The process will be operational by March 2010 and it will continue after that	(f) Ensuring that the Panchayat Samitis organize quarterly meeting between the Sthayee Samiti and the related Upa-Samitis and also ensuring that the elected members of the Upa-Samitis of the GPs effectively participate in those meetings and fully realize the task ahead	(f) Karmadhyaksha and Secretary of the Sthayee Samiti (SS) and the Sanchalaks of the related Upa-Samitis (US) with the help of the office bearers of the PS and GPs respectively	(f) Ongoing process, to be more effective after March 2010
		(g) Building capacities of the Panchayats for making appropriate interventions on the assessed local needs	(g) PRDD, DPRD, District/Block level officials of various departments	(g) Ongoing process, to be more effective after March 2010	(g) Ensuring that the Panchayat members, especially the Sthayee/Upa-Samiti members, join the capacity building programmes effectively	(g) Office bearers of the three tier Panchayats	(g) Ongoing process
		(h) Building capacities of the Sthayee/Upa-Samiti members for preparation of Sthayee/Upa-Samiti wise budget	(h) Same as (g)	(h) Same as (g)	(h) Preparation of prior allocation and working out Sthayee/Upa-Samiti wise budget	(h) All the Sthayee/Upa-Samitis of three tier Panchayats	(h) 2009-10 for ZP and PS and 2010-11 for GP
		(i) Building capacities of the Sthayee/Upa-Samiti members for proper functioning	(i) Same as (g)	(i) Same as (g)	(i) Ensuring that all the Sthayee/Upa-Samitis function properly	(i) All the members of the Sthayee/Upa-Samitis, especially the Chairpersons and Secretaries	(i) Ongoing process, to be more effective after March 2010
		(j) Monitoring the functioning of the Panchayats, especially of the Sthayee/Upa-Samitis and encouraging the Panchayats for self-monitoring	(j) PRDD, DPRD, District/Block level officials associated with PRDD	(j) Ongoing process, to be more effective after March 2010	(j) Self-monitoring of the functioning through self-evaluation and monitoring the functioning of the lower tier Panchayats	(j) Same as (i)	

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
2. Strengthening democratic functioning of the Panchayats	(iv) Defining the roles of the members who are not office bearers	(a) Taking steps for defining their roles as people's representatives for constructive appraisal of the functions of the Panchayat body emphasizing their rights and responsibilities and setting up mechanism for their capacity building and monitoring of the progress	(a) PRDD, DPRD, DPRDO and Block level officials, specifically PDOs and PAAOs	(a) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11	(a) (i) Ensuring that the members join the capacity building programme through an interactive process and properly discharge their roles in practice (ii) Encouraging members to participate in the deliberations and giving due regard to the views expressed in the meetings	(a) (i) & (ii) : The concerned Panchayat body as a whole and the office bearers in particular	(a) (i) & (ii) : Ongoing process, to be more effective since 2010-11
	(v) Increasing participation of the political parties in opposition	(a) Capacity building and continuous encouragement for development of right attitude of the majority group members to pay heed to the voice of the minority group, accept good suggestions and place all facts before them to justify decisions, if taken without accepting the minority opinion (b) Capacity building of the members of the minority along with continuous facilitation so that they may give constructive suggestions and do not feel discouraged and frustrated and may continue to participate meaningfully and effectively	(a) PRDD, DPRD, DPRDO and Block level officials, specifically PDOs and PAAOs (b) Same as (a)	(a) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2011-12 (b) Same as (a)	(a) Ensuring that the members join the capacity building programme and work to create conditions for participation of the members from the political parties in opposition freely with mutual respect and dignity (b) Ensuring that the members of the minority group join the capacity building programme and try to participate meaningfully and effectively	(a) The concerned Panchayat body as a whole and the office bearers in particular (b) The concerned Panchayat body as a whole and the office bearers and the leader of the opposition in particular	(a) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2011-12 (b) Same as (a)

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
2. Strengthening democratic functioning of the Panchayats	(v) Increasing participation of the political parties in opposition	(c) Initiative for active involvement of political parties in building a consensus approach towards the development process with the realization that the process will be beneficial to all the political parties since all of them are in opposition in one or the other Panchayat bodies	(c) PRDD, DPRD, DPRDO and Block level officials, specifically PDOs and PAAOs	(c) Ongoing process, to be more effective since 2011-12	(c) Creating conducive environment for consensus building	(c) The office bearers of ZP, PS and GP	(c) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2011-12
	(vi) Vigilance and redressal of grievances – District Council and the Lokayukta	<p>(a) Strengthening the District council for more effective functioning along with strengthening its staff support for augmenting the delivery mechanism</p> <p>(b) Capacity building of the Panchayat bodies for systemic recording and redressal of grievances</p> <p>(c) Restructuring the Directorate of Panchayats and Rural Development, West Bengal for effective monitoring of the grievance redressal processes</p> <p>(d) Building awareness of the common people on the functioning of the Lokayukta to get their grievances redressed through that body</p>	<p>(a) PRDD, DPRD</p> <p>(b) PRDD, DPRD, DPRDO and Block level officials, specifically PDOs and PAAOs</p> <p>(c) PRDD</p> <p>(d) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials</p>	<p>(a) March 2011</p> <p>(b) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11</p> <p>(c) 2010-11</p> <p>(d) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11</p>	<p>(a) Facilitating the functions of the District Council on maintaining a conducive atmosphere following the rules and procedure in force and giving due regard to the observations and recommendations of the Council</p> <p>(b) Systemic recording and redressal of grievances against the functioning of the Panchayat body</p> <p>(c) No activity</p> <p>(d) Making publicity on Lokayukta</p>	<p>(a) The Panchayat bodies in general and the Zilla Parishad in particular</p> <p>(b) The office bearers of the three tier Panchayat bodies</p> <p>(c) Nil</p> <p>(d) All the three tier Panchayat bodies</p>	<p>(a) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11</p> <p>(b) Same as (a)</p> <p>(c) Nil</p> <p>(d) May gather momentum from 2010-11</p>

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
2. Strengthening democratic functioning of the Panchayats	(vii) Improving accountability and transparency	(a) Making social audit of all important programmes a regular activity of GP	(a) PRDD, DPRD, District & Block level officials	(a) March 2011 (b) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2009-10	(a) Conducting social audit of all important programmes (b) Ensuring attendance of Pradhan, Upa-Pradhan, Sanchalaks and GP employees in the Gram Sansad meetings	(a) The office bearers and the employees of GP (b) The office bearers of GP (c) The office bearers and the key officials of PS and ZP respectively	(a) March 2011 (b) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2009-10 (c) Ongoing process, significant achievement from 2011-12 (d) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11 (e) Ongoing process
	(viii) Other ethical steps for good governance	(a) Developing citizens' report card and introducing the same (b) Developing capacity of the citizens to collate, sift and evaluate information available from the citizens' report card (CRC) and from other means	(a) PRDD (b) PRDD, DPRD, District & Block level officials	(a) March 2010 (b) Ongoing process, significant progress by March 2011	(a) Initially giving feedback in developing the citizens' report card and after the card is introduced, accepting the concept and acting accordingly (b) Building capacity of the citizens for CRC	(a) The respective Panchayat body in general and the office bearers and officials of that body in particular (b) Same as (a)	(a) March 2010 (b) Ongoing process, significant progress by March 2011

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
2. Strengthening democratic functioning of the Panchayats	(viii) Other ethical steps for good governance	(c) Taking up advocacy programmes for the people to demand highest standards of honesty, integrity and objectivity in Panchayat activities (d) Facilitating CSSP for engagement of civil societies to work for objectivity and integrity in functioning of the Panchayats	(c) PRDD, DPRD, District & Block level officials (d) Same as (c)	(c) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2009-10 (d) Ongoing process	(c) Facilitating the advocacy programmes for the people (d) Facilitating CSSP in transparent manner	(c) The three tier Panchayat bodies (d) Same as (c)	(c) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2009-10 (d) May gather momentum from 2010-11
	(ix) Interface between Panchayat and civil society	(a) Ensuring that the expected obligations of consultation are followed at all levels and encouraging the civil societies to be involved in that processes (b) Taking all possible steps for promotion of civil societies and for creation of an ambience so that the Panchayats and the civil societies may mutually reinforce each other in better understanding of the issues and strengthening the processes of good governance (c) Making Panchayats more accountable to the people through effective engagement of civil societies with those bodies	(a) PRDD, DPRD, District & Block level officials (b) Same as (a) (c) Same as (a)	(a) Ongoing process, significant development expected by March 2012 (b) Continuous process from 2009-10 (c) Ongoing process	(a) Facilitating the initiative taken from the State Government level (b) Same as (a) (c) Engaging effectively with the civil societies to make the Panchayats more accountable to the people	(a) The respective Panchayat bodies (b) Same as (a) (c) The three tier Panchayat bodies in general and the office bearers and the key officials in particular	(a) Ongoing process, significant development expected by March 2012 (b) Continuous process from 2009-10 (c) May gather momentum by 2010-11

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(i) Drinking water supply and sanitation	(a) Handing over all the existing piped water supply schemes (except the very large and technically complex schemes) to the lowest tier Panchayats within which a particular scheme area is fully located	(a) Public Health Engineering Department (PHED) (b) PHED (c) PHED (d) PRDD (e) PHED (f) PHED	(a) March 2012 (b) Ongoing process, technical support to be continued also after handing over (c) March 2012 (d) March 2011 (e) To be continued from 2009-10 (f) Ongoing process	(a) No activity (b) Management of the handed over schemes and providing day to day maintenance (c) Distributing water at the household level with appropriate cost recovery (d) No activity (e) Developing data base about habitations with inadequate supply of drinking water, facing seasonal shortage of supplies or having water quality problems (f) Ensuring adequate supply of safe drinking water to all the habitations by developing habitation based small piped water supply schemes based on surface water and providing other appropriate solutions in the areas facing contamination from arsenic and fluoride and having other problems	(a) Nil (b) Janaswasthya O Paribesh Sthayee Samiti of ZP, PS and Shiksha O Janaswasthya Upa-Samiti of GP (c) Shiksha O Janaswasthya Upa-Samiti of GP (d) Nil (e) Janaswasthya O Paribesh Sthayee Samiti of PS with support from ZP, SWID and local level organizations (f) Shiksha O Janaswasthya Upa-Samiti of GP and Janaswasthya O Paribesh Sthayee Samiti of PS and ZP	(a) Nil (b) Continuous process after the handing over (c) Ongoing process, to be more strengthened from 2011-12 (d) Nil (e) To be continued from 2009-10 (f) March 2014

Key Issues	Implementation Strategy						
	State Government Level			PRI Levels			
	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	
3. Improving core civic services	(i) Drinking water supply and sanitation	(g) Building capacities of Rural Sanitary Marts (RSM) and other NGOs for delivering water supply related engineering services	(g) PHED and PRDD with the help of District and Block level officials	(g) Continuous process from 2010-11	(g) Utilizing the services of RSM and other NGOs for water supply related engineering services	(g) Janaswasthya O Paribesh Sthayee Samiti of PS and Shiksha O Janaswasthya Upa-Samiti of GP	(g) Continuous process from 2010-11
		(h) Establishing and running water quality testing laboratories in partnership with RSM and other NGOs	(h) PHED and PRDD	(h) Ongoing process	(h) No activity	(h) Nil	(h) Nil
		(i) Building capacity of the Panchayats for water testing and purification	(i) PHED and PRDD with the help of District and Block level officials	(i) Ongoing process	(i) Ensuring water quality testing of all drinking water sources and taking up measures for purification of contaminated water with the help of RSM and other NGOs	(i) Sample collection : Shiksha O Janaswasthya Upa-Samiti of GP, Water testing and purification: Janaswasthya O Paribesh Sthayee Samiti of PS, Supervision : Janaswasthya O Paribesh Sthayee Samiti of ZP	(i) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11
		(j) Advocacy, facilitation and monitoring for 100% access to safe sanitary toilets in all households and in all institutions	(j) PRDD, DPRD, District & Block level officials	(j) March 2012	(j) GP/Block wise plan for such 100% coverage in each district depending on the present progress and keeping the area free from open defecation	(j) Janaswasthya O Paribesh Sthayee Samiti of PS, Siksha O Janaswasthya Upa-Samiti of GP and the entire progress to be monitored by the Janaswasthya O Paribesh Sthayee Samiti of ZP	(j) March 2012
		(k) Advocacy, facilitation and monitoring to ensure sanitation facilities at all public places	(k) PRDD, DPRD, District & Block level officials	(k) Ongoing process	(k) Providing sanitation facilities at all public places along with maintenance	(k) Janaswasthya O Paribesh Sthayee Samiti of ZP/PS and Siksha O Janaswasthya Upa-Samiti of GP following the principle of subsidiarity	(k) March 2012
		(l) No activity	(l) Nil	(l) Nil	(l) Awareness generation among the people for maintaining a good level of personal hygiene and environmental sanitation	(l) Siksha O Janaswasthya Upa-Samiti of GP with the help of PS and ZP	(l) Ongoing process

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(i) Drinking water supply and sanitation	(m) Capacity building of the PRI functionaries for sewerage and solid waste management and also for providing conservancy services in the areas where it is necessary (n) Monitoring the progress of sewerage, solid waste management and conservancy arrangement (o) Assisting the Gram Panchayats in disposing the solid waste in eco-friendly manner and generating organic manure where possible	(m) PRDD, DPRD, District & Block level officials (n) PRDD, DPRD, District & Block level officials (o) PRDD, DPRD, District & Block level officials	(m) Continuous process from 2009-10 (n) Same as (m) (o) Same as (m)	(m) Developing one or more pilots for sewerage, solid waste management and conservancy services (in the areas where it is necessary) for all habitations in selected GPs and ensuring successful implementation of the pilots (n) Putting in place sewerage, solid waste management and conservancy services (in the areas where it is necessary) for at least 50% of the habitations in the rural areas (o) Disposing the solid waste in eco-friendly manner and generating organic manure where possible	(m) Pilots to be developed by Janaswasthya O Paribesh SS of ZP and implementation by the Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP with the support from Janaswasthya O Paribesh SS of PS (n) Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP with the support from Janaswasthya O Paribesh SS of PS and ZP (o) Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP with the support from Janaswasthya O Paribesh SS of PS and ZP	(m) March 2012 (n) March 2017 (o) Continuous process from 2009-10 in the select GPs
	(ii) Services related to public health	(a) Advocacy and campaigning for hundred percent registration of birth and death (b) Capacity building and facilitation to maintain and analyse vital statistics	(a) PRDD, Health and Family Welfare Department (HFWD) (b) PRDD, DPRD, SIPRD, District and Block level officials	(a) Ongoing process (b) Ongoing process, to be more strengthened from 2010-11	(a) Hundred percent registration of death and birth (b) Maintaining vital statistics properly and analysing it for reaching services related to family planning, mother care and child health interventions, campaign for following the legal provision related to the age at marriage etc.	(a) Gram Panchayat (b) Gram Panchayat as a whole and Artha O Parikalpana US in particular	(a) March 2014 (b) Ongoing process, expected progress by March 2012

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(ii) Services related to public health	(c) Ensuring that basic immunization of 6 diseases are available at the Primary Health Centres (PHC) and at the Sub-Centres (SC) on fixed days	(c) HFWD, Block Medical Officer (Health) [BMOH], Health workers of PHC and SC	(c) March 2010 (d) Ongoing process (e) Continuous process from 2010-11	(c) Monitoring whether the service is available and if not, mediating with BMOH to ensure the service (d) Mobilizing the parents and the community to take benefit of the immunization services (e) Maintaining the immunization data child-wise with the help of the Auxiliary Nurse and Midwives, Angan Wadi Workers and GUSs	(c) Monitoring by the Siksha O Janaswasthya US of GP and mediating with BMOH by the Janaswasthya O Paribesh SS of PS (d) Siksha O Janaswasthya US of GP and the GUSs (e) Siksha O Janaswasthya US of GP (f) Siksha O Janaswasthya US of GP with the help of Health & ICDS workers	(c) March 2010 (d) March 2010 (e) Continuous process from 2010-11 (f) Ongoing process (g) March 2010 (h) (i) Ongoing process, full or near-full coverage is expected by March 2012 (ii) Continuous process from 2009-10
		(d) Campaign and awareness building for hundred percent immunization of new born babies	(d) Same as (c) and PRDD, Block and GP level officials	(f) Ongoing process (g) March 2010 (h) Ongoing process	(f) Organizing necessary outreach camps for immunization related services in the areas located far away from Sub-Centres	(e) Siksha O Janaswasthya US of GP (f) Siksha O Janaswasthya US of GP with the help of Health & ICDS workers	
		(e) Assisting the GPs in maintaining the immunization data child-wise in computers	(e) HFWD, PRDD and District and Block level officials of these two departments		(g) Monitoring whether the service is available and if not, mediating with BMOH to ensure the service		
		(f) Assisting GPs in organizing outreach camps	(f) Same as (c)		(h) (i) Mobilizing the community with the help of Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHA), women SHGs and GUSs to ensure that the poorer section of the community avail services like the tetanus vaccination, pre-natal and post-natal medical check-ups (ii) Taking follow-up measures including medical check-ups in deserving cases	(g) Monitoring by the Siksha O Janaswasthya US of GP and mediating with BMOH by the Janaswasthya O Paribesh SS of PS (h) (i) Siksha O Janaswasthya US of GP (ii) Siksha O Janaswasthya US of GP	
		(g) Ensuring availability of tetanus vaccination and provision for pre-natal and post-natal check-ups at the Sub-Centres (SC) and at the Primary Health Centres (PHC) on fixed days	(g) HFWD, Block Medical Officer (Health) [BMOH], Health workers of PHC and SC				
		(h) Campaign and awareness building for availing services related to safe motherhood	(h) Same as (e) and PRDD, Block and GP level employees				

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Key Issues		Implementation Strategy						
		State Government Level			PRI Levels			
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	
3. Improving core civic services	(ii) Services related to public health	(i) Ensuring arrangements for at least 80% institutional deliveries	(i) HFWD (j) HFWD and PRDD with the help of District and Block level officials	(i) March 2012 (j) Ongoing process (k) Ongoing process	(i) Taking appropriate measures (a. developing infrastructure at the headquarter Sub-Centres and other suitable places, b. providing the service with the help of ANM and/or skilled birth attendants in those places and c. awareness generation among the communities) for achieving at least 80% institutional deliveries	(i) Siksha O Janaswasthya US of GP with the help of GUSs (for c.) (j) Same as (i) (k) Same as (i) (l) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samajkalyan US of GP with the help of GUSs, ICDS workers	(i) March 2012 (j) March 2012 (k) Ongoing process (l) March 2012 for perceptible achievement but the process will continue	
		(j) Making arrangements for training traditional birth attendants	(k) Same as (j)	(l) Ongoing process	(j) Making arrangements to ensure that the remaining births are attended by skilled persons			
		(k) Capacity building of the GPs for monitoring maternal and infant death and taking preventive measures accordingly	(l) PRDD, Women & Child Development and Social Welfare Department (WCDS WD)		(k) Monitoring maternal and infant death and taking possible preventive measures			
		(l) Ensuring that all nutritional support programmes operate with full efficacy			(l) (i) Ensuring that all children up to the age of three years are brought under regular surveillance through the ICDS programme or otherwise, (ii) Monitoring, aggregating and analyzing nutrition related data for all possible interventions, (iii) Sharing necessary data with higher levels with recommendations for remedial actions, (iv) Monitoring and analysis of the weight at birth and latter months of all the babies, (v) Identifying the malnourished children and ensuring that they get adequate supplementary nutrition, (vi) Increasing awareness of the people for promotion of adequate nutrition for all, (vii) Spreading awareness related to breast feeding and promotion of low cost nutrients including motivating the poorer families for developing kitchen garden (viii) Ensuring proper functioning of various feeding programmes at the ICDS centres and schools			

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(ii) Services related to public health	(m) Providing financial support to GPs for construction and maintenance of ICDS centres	(m) WCDSWD (n) HFWD (o) HFWD	(m) Ongoing process (n) Ongoing process (o) Ongoing process	(m) Construction and maintenance of ICDS centres (n) (i) Participating in all such programmes and utilizing the resources available to prevent communicable diseases by ensuring active participation of the people and adding their own efforts and resources for effective implementation of all those programmes (ii) Passing on incidence of outbreak of communicable diseases to the appropriate agencies and providing all local supports to government interventions along with taking up local measures for preventing recurrence of such incidents (iii) Taking initiatives for control and home management of diarrhea and prevention of other water-borne diseases through awareness building and skill training (iv) Assisting in building up awareness on diseases like AIDS (v) Awareness building on Thalasemia, including motivating the people to check the blood groups of the prospective bride and groom before marriage	(m) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samajkalyan US of GP (n) Janaswasthya O Paribesh SS of ZP and PS and Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP (o) Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP in convergence with the GUSs	(m) Ongoing process (n) Ongoing process, due progress is expected by March 2012 (o) March 2011
		(n) Ensuring that all programmes of the Government to prevent communicable diseases operate with full efficacy (o) Ensuring that vector control measures operate where needed			(o) Taking local measures for vector control and ensuring participation of the people in all such measures and keeping the area free from open defecation		

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(ii) Services related to public health	<p>(p) Taking up capacity building measures and advocacy for adoption of food safety measures by the Panchayats</p> <p>(q) Conducting audit of death of children and pregnant mothers and reporting the causes to the GP</p> <p>(r) Providing assistance to the GPs, where no BPHC/PHC exists, to run a dispensary by engaging a graduate doctor from prescribed system of medicine</p> <p>(s) Sending allopathic doctors of PHC in some of the remoter GPs on rotation to provide outdoor treatments</p> <p>(t) Support to develop proper infrastructure at the head quarter sub-centres</p> <p>(u) Augmenting capacities of the Panchayats for maintenance of all health infrastructures</p>	<p>(p) HFWD and PRDD with the help of District and Block level officials</p> <p>(q) Health Supervisors of HFWD</p> <p>(r) HFWD, PRDD with support from the Panchayats</p> <p>(s) HFWD</p> <p>(t) HFWD, PRDD</p> <p>(u) HFWD, PRDD</p>	<p>(p) Ongoing process</p> <p>(q) Ongoing process, significant coverage to be ensured by March 2011</p> <p>(r) March 2011</p> <p>(s) Continuous process from 2009-10</p> <p>(t) Ongoing process</p> <p>(u) March 2011</p>	<p>(p) Adoption of certain broad hygienic measures in respect of sale of cooked and exposed food to prevent infectious diseases and linking the same with issuance and renewal of trade licenses for food related business or vending of food in public places and fairs</p> <p>(q) Acting on the basis of such reports by taking up suitable interventions locally as well as mediating with the higher tiers as well as the officials of the Health & Family Welfare Department for initiating possible measures in preventing such deaths</p> <p>(r) Running and managing the dispensaries by sharing the expenditure of doctor and medicine with the State Government</p> <p>(s) Making sitting arrangement for doctor and provide necessary support</p> <p>(t) Developing proper infrastructure at the head quarter sub-centre as per model plans circulated for that purpose</p> <p>(u) Maintenance of all health infrastructures subject to the availability of fund from the HFWD</p>	<p>(p) The GP as a whole</p> <p>(q) Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of the GP in general and the mediating role to be played by the GP office bearers and higher tiers of Panchayats where necessary</p> <p>(r) Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP</p> <p>(s) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP</p> <p>(t) The GP as a whole and the Shiksha O Janaswasthya US in particular</p> <p>(u) Janaswasthya O Paribesh SS of ZP and PS and Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP</p>	<p>(p) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11</p> <p>(q) March 2011 for significant coverage</p> <p>(r) Ongoing process, all uncovered GPs to be covered by March 2011 subject to availability of doctors</p> <p>(s) Continuous process</p> <p>(t) March 2012</p> <p>(u) Ongoing process</p>

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(ii) Services related to public health	(v) Augment capacities of the Panchayat functionaries, particularly those at the GP level for being able to converge all the activities related to public health, monitor the progress of implementation of various programmes and be able to plan and implement local interventions for better outcome of the existing programmes (w) Building capacities of the SHG Clusters (x) Building up institutional capacities of the higher tier Panchayats, if necessary in collaboration with professional bodies	(v) HFWD, PRDD with the help of District and Block level officials (w) Same as (v) (x) HFWD, PRDD	(v) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11 (w) Same as (v) (x) Continuous process from 2010-11	(v) Internalizing the process and augmenting their own capacity (w) Developing necessary collaboration with the SHG Clusters for reaching out to the communities (x) Internalizing the process and developing a collaborative approach with the professional bodies	(v) PRIs as a whole Janaswasthya O Paribesh SS of ZP and PS and Shiksha O US of GP (w) Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP (x) ZP and PS as a whole and Janaswasthya O Paribesh SS of ZP and PS in particular	(v) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11 (w) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11 (x) Same as (w)
	(iii) Services related to universal literacy and elementary education	(a) Approaching Government of India to take a decision for ensuring involvement of the Panchayats in implementation of SSA in rural areas and dissolving the parallel committees set up for this purpose (b) Capacity building of the Panchayats for playing important role in respect of enrolment and retention of children in schools (c) Building capacities of the Panchayat functionaries, particularly the members of the Standing/Sub-Committees for utilizing available infrastructure for universalization of elementary education (d) Augmenting capacities of three tier Panchayats for achieving the goal of 100% enrolment and their retention till class VIII standard	(a) PRDD and School Education Deptt. (SED) (b) Same as (a) (c) Same as (a) (d) Same as (a)	(a) March 2010 (b) Ongoing process (c) Ongoing process (d) Ongoing process	(a) No activity (b) Taking proper initiative for enrolment and retention of children in schools (c) Utilizing available infrastructure for universalization of elementary education (d) Ensuring 100% enrolment and their retention till class VIII standard using State/Panchayat sponsored institutions	(a) Nil (b) Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP with the help of GUS and SHGs (c) Shiksha, Sanskriti, Tathya O Krira SS of ZP/PS and Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP (d) Same as (c)	(a) Nil (b) Ongoing process (c) Ongoing process (d) Ongoing process, near-full coverage is expected by March 2012 and March 2015 at the primary and upper primary levels respectively

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(iii) Services related to universal literacy and elementary education	(e) Augmenting capacities of the Panchayats for providing due support to impart quality education by creating a cadre of officials under the Panchayats at ZP and PS levels (f) Extending necessary support for providing infrastructure at SSKs and MSKs (g) Supporting ZPs on demand for conducting vocational training in selected MSKs (h) Sensitizing the Panchayats along with providing necessary support for abolition of child labour (i) Building capacities of the GPs for improving services related to the Mid Day Meal programme (j) Devolving the activities related to adult and continuing education appropriately on the local bodies (k) Providing support for extension of library services to ensure that every GP has a public library within its area	(e) PRDD (f) PRDD (g) PRDD (h) Women & Child Development and Social Welfare Department (WCD-SWD) (i) School Education Department (SED) and PRDD (j) Mass Education Department (MEED) (k) MEED and PRDD	(e) March 2010 (f) Ongoing process (g) Continuous process from 2010-11 (h) Ongoing process (i) Ongoing process (j) March 2012 (k) Continuous process after 2010-11	(e) Providing due support to SSKs and MSKs for imparting quality education (f) Ensuring that the SSKs and MSKs have proper infrastructure at per with the government sponsored schools (g) Conducting vocational trainings in selected MSKs for improving livelihood opportunities of the rural youth (h) Abolition of child labour from respective areas and achieve the status of "No child labour GP" (i) Improving services related to the Mid Day Meal programme (j) Running Literacy and Continuing Education Centres after devolution (k) Extension of library services for the people so that every GP has a public library to act also as a centre for receiving information related to various programmes of the government and the Panchayats for dissemination to the people	(e) Shiksha, Sanskriti, Tathya O Krira SS of PS/ZP and Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP with the help of VECs (f) Same as (e) (g) Shiksha, Sanskriti, Tathya O Krira SS of ZP (h) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samajkalyan US and Artha O Parikalpana US of GP with support from Sishu O Nari Unnayan and Janakalyan O Tran SS and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP (i) Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP with the help of GUSs (j) Shiksha O Janaswasthya US of GP with support from Shiksha, Sanskriti, Tathya O Krira SS of PS and monitoring to be done by the same SS of ZP (k) Same as (j)	(e) Continuous process after March 2010 (f) March 2012 (g) Continuous process from 2010-11 (h) Significant progress is expected by March 2015 (i) Ongoing process (j) Continuous process after devolution (k) March 2015

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(iv) Sports and culture	<p>(a) Providing support to Panchayats for encouraging every schools, especially the upper primary and secondary schools, to organize co-curricular and cultural activities among the students</p> <p>(b) Advocacy and facilitation for utilizing Panchayat Khel Kud Abhiyan and other supports to promote sports and games</p> <p>(c) Facilitating Panchayats in promotion of folk songs, dance, dance-dramas and similar performing arts</p>	<p>(a) Information and Cultural Affairs Department (ICAD), Youth Services Department (YSD) and PRDD</p> <p>(b) Sports Department (SD) and PRDD</p> <p>(c) District and Block level officials of ICAD</p>	<p>(a) Continuous process from 2010-11</p> <p>(b) Same as (a)</p> <p>(c) Same as (a)</p>	<p>(a) Encouraging every schools, especially the upper primary and secondary schools, to organize seminar, symposium, debating and drawing competition and such other activities among the students</p> <p>(b) Utilizing Panchayat Khel Kud Abhiyan and other supports of the State Government apart from its own resources to encourage local clubs and young men's associations/groups and women's associations for promoting sports and games in its area</p> <p>(c) Coming forward to nurture folk songs, dance, dance-dramas and similar performing arts by helping in formation of groups of folk artists, organizing performances for them and also assisting them by procuring instruments and equipments and encouraging the younger generations to take up folk songs and other art forms as additional vocations</p>	<p>(a) Shiksha, Sanskriti, Tathya O Krira Sthayee Samiti of PS with support from the same Sthayee Samiti of ZP</p> <p>(b) Shiksha, Sanskriti, Tathya O Krira Sthayee Samiti of PS and Artha O Parikalpana Upa-Samiti of GP</p> <p>(c) Same as (b)</p>	<p>(a) Continuous process from 2010-11</p> <p>(b) Same as (a)</p> <p>(c) Same as (a)</p>

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(v) Road connectivity	(a) Building capacity of ZP for construction of metal roads	(a) PRDD (b) PRDD (c) PRDD	(a) Ongoing process (b) Ongoing process	(a) Construction of metal roads following District Rural Road Plan (DRRP)	(a) Purta, Karya O Paribahan SS of ZP	(a) As per DRRP (b) March 2017
		(b) Building capacity of PS and GP for construction of semi-metal roads	(d) No activity (e) PRDD, District	(c) Ongoing process (d) Nil	(b) Connecting all the habitations not covered under the PMGSY and lying unconnected so far by semi-metal roads (with at least 2.5 meter carriage way for movement of small four wheel vehicles) with the existing network of metal roads depending on whose exclusive jurisdiction the road is located	(b) Purta, Karya O Paribahan SS of PS and Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP	(c) March 2017 (d) March 2017 (e) Ongoing process
		(c) Building capacity of GP for construction of habitation level roads	(f) Same as (e) (g) Same as (e) (h) PRDD, DPRD, SIPRD, District	(e) Ongoing process (f) Ongoing process (g) Ongoing process (h) Ongoing process	(c) Construction of roads within one habitation or between two habitations preferably having carriage width of 2.5 meter	(c) Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP (d) Same as (c) (e) Purta, Karya O Paribahan SS of ZP and PS and Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP	(f) March 2011 (g) Ongoing process from 2010-11 (h) March 2012
		(d) No activity			(d) Making all other roads with lesser width semi-permanent		
		(e) Capacity building of the Panchayats for collecting toll and imposing condition on flow of traffic and monitoring the same to ensure adherence to law			(e) Collecting toll or imposing condition on flow of traffic as per law		
		(f) Capacity building of the Panchayat bodies to prepare a list of roads already owned by them in Road Register			(f) Preparation of list of roads owned by them in Road Register with necessary details		
		(g) Providing GIS based maps of existing roads and habitation to Panchayats along with necessary capacity building to update the same			(g) Identification of all the roads with unique identification in the GIS maps		
		(h) Capacity building for preparation of perspective road plan and showing the proposed list of roads in maps			(h) Preparation of a perspective road plan through preparation of the list of roads which are to be upgraded to reach the specifications and the new roads to be constructed to provide effective connectivity to all habitations under their jurisdictions as well as within the habitations and showing the same in maps separately		

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(v) Road connectivity	(i) Providing grant to ZPs for maintenance of metal roads after those bodies have deployed its own resources to the extent possible (j) Capacity building of Panchayats for annual assessment of maintenance needs and preparing Maintenance Register (k) Capacity building of the Panchayats for introducing road safety measures (l) Advocacy for street lighting in the roads owned by the Panchayats	(i) PRDD (j) PRDD, District and Block level officials (k) Same as (j) (l) PRDD, District and Block level officials	(i) Ongoing process (j) March 2011 (k) Ongoing process (l) Ongoing process	(i) Maintenance of roads owned by them from their resources and also by mobilizing toll charges (j) Developing the practice of an annual assessment of maintenance needs, allocate adequate resources and complete documentation of maintenance work done during the year in a Maintenance Register (k) Introducing road safety measures such as putting up proper road signs particularly in sharp turns, controlling traffic speed in congested areas, educating the inhabitants about all safety measures and monitoring if there is any place where accidents are occurring repeatedly for taking necessary action (l) (i) Lighting on the Panchayat owned roads where it passes through habitation or require lighting on safety ground and maintenance of the arrangements (ii) Determination of the rates to be imposed on people for street lighting and related issues (iii) Providing grant to GPs for maintaining street light on roads owned by them	(i) Purtakarya O Paribahan SS of ZP and PS, Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP (j) Same as (i) (k) Same as (i) in general and the technical officer for construction/maintenance of the road in particular (l) (i) Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP (ii) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP with inputs from Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP (iii) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZP and PS	(i) Ongoing process (j) March 2011 (k) Ongoing process (l) (i) March 2012 (ii) On-going process (iii) On-going process
	(vi) Transport Services	(a) Facilitating Panchayats for improvement of transport services (b) No activity	(a) RTA and District level officials of Transport Department (b) Nil	(a) Ongoing process (b) Nil	(a) Mediating with appropriate authorities for improving transportation and encouraging local entrepreneurs for operating possible services (b) Arranging plying of non-mechanized transports as per demand	(a) Purtakarya O Paribahan SS of ZP and PS (b) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP	(a) Ongoing process (b) Continuous from 2009-10

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(vii) Irrigation, drainage and flood protection	(a) Capacity building and monitoring for surface water based irrigation system (b) Capacity building and facilitation to work out a sustainable water management plan (c) Providing support to Panchayats, on demand, to come out with a drainage plan for their area (d) Taking major flood protection measures and providing support along with capacity building for local flood protection measures taken by the Panchayats	(a) Water Investigation and Development Department (WIDD), PRDD, District and Block level officials (b) Same as (a) (c) PRDD, District and Block level officials (d) Irrigation and Waterways Department (IWD)	(a) Ongoing process (b) March 2012 (c) As and when demand arises (d) Ongoing process	(a) Utilizing available rainfall to create as much irrigation potential as possible and sustaining the same (b) Preparing GIS based map showing existing irrigation system including all tanks used for irrigation and untapped potential within its area to work out a sustainable water management plan with maximum irrigation potential (c) Providing appropriate drainage facilities for each habitation (d) Maintaining the traditional Zamindari embankments and taking up other local measures for flood protection	(a) Krishi, Sech O Samabay SS of PS and Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US of GP (b) Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US of GP, Krishi, Sech O Samabay SS of PS and ZP (c) Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP, Purta, Karya O Paribahan SS of PS and ZP based on the principle of subsidiarity (d) Purta, Karya O Paribahan SS of PS with technical support from ZP and same SS of ZP when the scheme is beyond the competence of PS	(a) Ongoing process (b) March 2012 (c) March 2017 (d) Ongoing process
	(viii) Development of habitat, housing for the poor and other civic planning	(a) Advocacy, campaign, assistance and monitoring to ensure availability of durable houses to all households and development of proper habitat for healthy living	(a) PRDD, District and Block level officials	(a) Ongoing process	(a) Providing durable houses to all households (including those who do not have any homestead land) and developing proper habitat for healthy living	(a) Artha O Parikalpana US and Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP	(a) Difficult to work out any timeline

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(viii) Development of habitat, housing for the poor and other civic planning	(b) Facilitating the GP to prepare a proper housing plan	(b) PRDD, District and Block level officials	(b) Ongoing process	(b) Coming out with a plan for those not having even homestead land and assistance to deserving families for constructing houses	(b) Artha O Parikalpana US and Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP	(b) March 2010
		(c) Assisting the GPs to acquire land for developing settlement for landless families and also providing financial and technical assistance to take care of the housing of those who do not own any house and homestead land on a priority basis	(c) Land and Land Reforms Department (LLRD), PRDD, District and Block level officials	(c) Ongoing process			(c) Acquiring land for developing settlement for landless families and taking care of the housing of those who do not own any house and homestead land on a priority basis along with developing new settlements in deserving cases
		(d) Increasing capacities of the Panchayats to meet the requirement of technical expertise in sanctioning building plan and regulating habitat with priority to the peri-urban GPs and those who will demand such support	(d) PRDD, DPRD, SIPRD, District and Block level officials	(d) March 2011	(d) Regulating building plans to ensure healthy living for every one	(d) Same as (b)	(d) Continuous process, significant progress is expected by March 2015
3. Improving core civic services	(ix) Marketing and other facilities for promotion of economic activities	(a) Advocacy and capacity building of GP to promote marketing centre cum business hub for meeting the local needs of the area	(a) PRDD, DPRD, SIPRD, District and Block level officials	(a) Ongoing process	(a) Promoting one marketing centre cum business hub in every GP for meeting the local needs of the area (unless the area is catered by bigger centre/s promoted by PS/ZP)	(a) Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP	(a) March 2012
		(b) Advocacy and capacity building of PS and ZP for developing of larger marketing centres	(b) Same as (a)	(b) Ongoing process			(b) Planning and implementation of development of larger marketing centres for taking up wider range of economic activities

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(x) Issuing trade registration certificates and licenses	(a) Advocacy and capacity building of GP for promptly issuing trade registration certificates targeting full coverage (b) Advocacy and capacity building of PS for issuing license of dangerous and offensive trades targeting full coverage (c) Advocacy and capacity building for computerizing the process of issuing trade registration certificates and licenses	(a) PRDD, DPRD, SIPRD, District and Block level officials (b) Same as (a) (c) PRDD, District and Block level officials	(a) Ongoing process (b) Ongoing process (c) 2009-10	(a) Ensuring prompt availability of trade registration certificates and renewal of the same targeting full coverage (b) Issuing license for dangerous and offensive trades and renewal of the same targeting full coverage (c) Computerizing the process of issuing trade registration certificates and licenses	(a) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP (b) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS (c) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS	(a) Ongoing process, near-full coverage is expected by March 2012 (b) Same as (a) (c) March 2010
	(xi) Special requirements of the urbanized Gram Panchayats	(a) Identification of the target areas and preparation of a blue-print of action through a study by an expert team (b) Capacity building of the urbanized GPs to make them more equipped to meet the demands for solid waste management, drainage and street lighting and assessing building plans	(a) PRDD (b) PRDD, DPRD, SIPRD, District and Block level officials with support from development authority (if the area is under it)	(a) March 2010 (b) Continuous process from 2009-10	(a) Assistance in identification of target area (b) Providing improved civic services like solid waste management, drainage and street lighting in convergence with the development authority (if the GP falls within the area of development authority)	(a) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS (b) GP as a whole and particularly the concerned USs in charge of the subjects	(a) As and when required (b) Continuous process from 2009-10
	(xii) Management of disaster	(a) Capacity building of the Panchayats for preparation of disaster management plan	(a) PRDD, DPRD, SIPRD, District and Block level officials	(a) Ongoing process	(a) Developing a disaster management plan for mitigating the impact of any disaster and to take as much pre-emptive action as possible	(a) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP with total involvement of GUS and community	(a) March 2010

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
3. Improving core civic services	(xii) Management of disaster	(b) Capacity building of the Panchayats with emphasis in disaster prone areas for better preparedness to minimize loss of human life and property and to impart management skills for tackling such situation	(b) PRDD, DPRD, SIPRD, District and Block level officials	(b) Ongoing process	(b) Better preparedness to minimize loss of human life and property by taking preemptive measures and tackling such situation with total involvement of the community for early restoration of normalcy	(b) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP with total involvement of GUS and community	(b) March 2012
		(a) Advocacy for improving the land productivity of the beneficiaries of land reforms by the Panchayats	(a) PRDD, DPRD, SIPRD, District and Block level officials	(a) Ongoing process	(a) Development of degraded land, irrigation facilities and checking of soil erosion etc. of the beneficiaries of land reforms for sustaining agricultural productivity and helping those beneficiaries for accessing various inputs	(a) Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US of GP and Krishi, Sech O Samabay SS of PS	(a) Significant coverage is expected by March 2012
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(i) Land reforms	(a) Capacity building of the Panchayats in assessing availability of natural resources and in improving its utilization for generating maximum economic gains keeping in mind the need for generating as much employment as possible and ensuring availability of food on a sustainable basis	(a) State, District and block level officials of Agriculture Department (AD) and PRDD	(a) Ongoing process	(a) Providing supporting infrastructure to ensure that every plot of land excluding the water bodies are either covered with crop or if the land is not arable the same have tree cover	(a) Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US of GP in collaboration with Krishi, Sech O Samabay SS of PS	(a) Ongoing process, significant progress is expected by March 2015
	(ii) Better management of natural resources and improving land use	(b) Providing assistance for improving cropping intensity and diversification of crop	(b) Same as (a)	(b) Ongoing process	(b) Developing para-professionals for facilitation, providing micro and minor irrigation, providing mini-kits, assessing crop yield and mediating with the State machinery for better agronomic practices	(b) Same as (a)	(b) Para-professionals will be effectively in place by March 2011 and the rest are ongoing process

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(ii) Better management of natural resources and improving land use	(c) Advocacy and capacity building for promotion of horticulture, sericulture and commercial crops	(c) Food Processing Industries and Horticulture Department, Micro and Small Scale Enterprises and Textiles Department, Agriculture Department and PRDD	(c) Ongoing process (d) Ongoing process (e) Ongoing process (f) Ongoing process (g) Ongoing process (h) Nil (i) Ongoing process (j) Nil	(c) Promoting activities related to horticulture, sericulture and cultivation of commercial crops (d) Setting up nurseries with the help of SHGs and plantation of locally preferred species (e) Field study to locate land unfit for cropping and directly planting trees and assisting or motivating the owners for planting trees for meeting the bio-mass need of the area (f) Promotion of horticulture and other species for generating economic activities with planted trees and creating assets by planting valuable trees (g) Growing at least two crops in the command area of the water bodies by providing mini-kits to poor farmers in the command area (h) Assisting the SHGs to take lease of land for growing second crop and augment their income (i) Utilizing the water bodies intensively for pisciculture (j) Leasing out water bodies owned by the Panchayats or for which Panchayats had spent fund for excavation preferably to the SHGs or the fisherman groups for promoting composite culture of fishery and duckery on such water bodies	(c) Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US of GP and Krishi, Sech O Samabay Sthayee Samiti of PS and ZP (d) Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US of GP (e) Same as (d) (f) Same as (d) (g) Same as (d) (h) Same as (d) (i) Same as (d) with support from Matsya O Pranisampad Bikash SS of PS (j) Same as (i)	(c) Ongoing process, significant progress by March, 2014 (d) Ongoing process (e) Continuous process from 2009-10 (f) Ongoing process (g) Near full coverage is expected by March 2013 (h) Ongoing process (i) Ongoing process (j) Ongoing process
		(d) Advocacy and capacity building for setting up nurseries by the Panchayats	(d) PRDD and Forest Department with their District and Block Level officials				
		(e) Facilitating direct plantation by the GPs and also in negotiation with the owners	(e) Same as (d) (f) Same as (d) (g) District and block level officials of PRDD and Agriculture Department				
		(f) Advocacy for generating economic activities with planted trees and creating assets by planting valuable trees	(h) Nil (i) Fisheries Department (FD)				
		(g) Providing support for growing at least two crops in the command area of water bodies	(j) Nil				
		(h) No activity					
		(i) Providing support for pisciculture					
		(j) No activity					

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(ii) Better management of natural resources and improving land use	(k) Capacity building for taking up water and soil conservation measures	(k) Soil conservation wing of AD and PRDD	(k) Ongoing process	(k) Taking up water and soil conservation measures in the required areas	(k) Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US of GP	(k) Ongoing process
		(l) Providing higher technical support for soil conservation	(l) Soil conservation wing of AD	(l) Ongoing process	(l) Providing technical support for water and soil conservation	(l) Krishi, Sech O Samabay SS of PS and DRDC of ZP	(l) Ongoing process
		(m) Strengthening the technical capabilities of the DRDC of ZP and the West Bengal Comprehensive Area Development Corporation (WBCADC) for supervising and supporting water and soil conservation activities of Panchayats	(m) PRDD	(m) March 2010	(m) Supporting and supervising initiatives of the lower tier Panchayats for water and soil conservation activities	(m) Krishi, Sech O Samabay SS of ZP through DRDC and WBCADC	(m) Ongoing process, to get more momentum from 2010-11
		(n) Capacity building of Panchayats for protecting and improving environment and bio-diversity	(n) Environment Department and PRDD	(n) Ongoing process	(n) Generating awareness for people's participation in protecting and improving environment and bio-diversity	(n) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Janaswasthy a O Paribesh SS of PS and ZP	(n) Ongoing process
		(o) Augmenting capacities of the Panchayats for intensive use of inputs for animal husbandry and increasing availability of inputs by promoting breeding and hatching and augmenting necessary skill and infrastructure for that purpose	(o) Animal Resources Development Department (ARDD) and PRDD	(o) March 2012	(o) Providing inputs for animal husbandry like chicks, ducklings, kids and piglets to the poor families, particularly to the members of the SHGs	(o) Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US of GP and Matsya O Pranisampad Bikash SS of PS	(o) Ongoing process
		(p) Restructuring the WBCADC to enable it to function as technical support organizations of all agencies including the Panchayats working for promoting livelihood in agriculture and allied sectors	(p) PRDD	(p) March 2010	(p) Supplying inputs and providing extension support to Panchayats for introduction of new crops or adoption of new technology	(p) WBCADC of Zilla Parishad	(p) Continuous process from 2009-10

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(iii) Promotion of livelihood opportunities in non-farm sectors	(a) Providing required support to Panchayats for expansion of livelihood opportunities in secondary and tertiary sectors	(a) PRDD, District and Block level officials (b) State and District level officials of Micro and Small Scale Enterprises and Textiles Department (MSSETD) and PRDD (c) PRDD	(a) Continuous process from 2009-10 (b) Ongoing process, to gather momentum from 2009-10 (c) Ongoing process, to gather momentum from 2010-11	(a) Developing appropriate infrastructure, arranging skill training for the people, particularly those from the weaker sections of the community, mediating with the financial institutions for credit inputs for production of goods and services for larger livelihood opportunities in the secondary and tertiary sectors (b) Hiring experts to draw up special plans, procuring land, developing infrastructure, arranging skill training, mediating with banks for credit support and providing marketing support for promotion of household and other small scale industries (c) Developing appropriate skill and infrastructure for growth of service sectors and for promotion of new economic activities with larger employment potential like the IT and the IT enabled services, developing markets and rural business hubs	(a) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZP and PS with support from Artha O Parikalpana Upa-Samiti of GP (b) DRDC and Khudra Shilpa, Bidyut O Achiracharit Shakti SS of ZP and PS and Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP in partnership with professional agencies (c) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZP and PS	(a) Continuous process from 2009-10 (b) Ongoing process, to get more momentum from 2009-10 (c) Ongoing process, to get more momentum from 2009-10

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Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(iii) Promotion of livelihood opportunities in non-farm sectors	(d) Establishing convergence with the Panchayats for promotion of tourism in the state	(d) Tourism Department and PRDD	(d) Continuous process from 2009-10	(d) Developing tourism and extending necessary support to the Tourism Department for promotion of tourism by showcasing traditional local art and cultural activities of unique nature, rare specimen of flora and fauna, places of scenic beauty, phenomena of ethnic diversity, places and relics of historical, cultural and religious importance	(d) Bon O Bhumi Sanskar Sthayee Samiti of ZP and PS and Artha O Parikalpana Upa-Samiti of GP	(d) Continuous process from 2009-10
	(iv) Alleviation of poverty and ensuring social equity	(a) Augmenting capacities of the Panchayats to implement NREGA properly and building up employment potential simultaneously through better management of natural resources and creating productive assets having employment potential through private initiatives	(a) PRDD, District and Block level officials	(a) Ongoing process	(a) (i) Estimating the demand for unskilled wage employment and its seasonality and identification and implementation of schemes to meet such demands (ii) Overseeing the planning and implementation of NREGS programme and ensuring that demand for employment is met with creation of assets and providing support to the lower tiers in the process	(a) (i) Artha O Parikalpana US, Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US and Shilpa O Parikathama US of GP, Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS, Purta, Karya O Paribahan SS and Krishi, Sech O Samabay SS of PS (ii) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana Sthayee Samiti, Purta, Karya O Paribahan SS and Krishi, Sech O Samabay SS of ZP and PS	(a) (i) & (ii) Ongoing process

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Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(iv) Alleviation of poverty and ensuring social equity	(b) Developing capacities of three tier Panchayats for proper implementation of the watershed development programmes	(b) PRDD, SIPRD, District and Block level officials	(b) Ongoing process (c) Ongoing process (d) Ongoing process	(b) Implementing watershed development programmes under Hariyali schemes as well as other watershed development programmes with major focus on Blocks under the DPAP as also blocks facing land degradation	(b) Krishi, Sech O Samabay SS of PS and Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US of GP	(b) Ongoing process (c) Ongoing process (d) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2009-10
		(c) Advocacy, campaign and facilitation to cover all poor families by bringing at least one member, particularly the women, under SHG	(c) PRDD, SIPRD, District and Block level officials with the help of DRDC	(e) March 2010 (f) Ongoing process (g) Ongoing process	(c) Facilitating the process of organizing the poor in SHGs and empowering them along with ensuring convergence of all the interventions at the community level through the SHGs, wherever possible	(c) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samaj Kalyan US of GP, with support from Sishu O Nari Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran SS of PS and DRDC	(e) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11
		(d) Advocacy and facilitation to bring the SHGs in an area under one umbrella	(d) PRDD, District and Block level officials		(d) Maintaining information of all SHGs and encouraging them to form Sub-Clusters, Clusters and Federations	(d) Same as (c)	(f) Ongoing process
		(e) Strengthening the system of reviewing the progress of SHG movement in every month on second Saturday	(e) Same as (d)		(e) Reviewing the progress of SHG movement in every second Saturday of the month in a more effective manner	(e) Same as (c) (f) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samaj Kalyan US and Artha O Parikalpana US of GP, Sishu O Nari Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran SS and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP	(g) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11
		(f) Encouraging the Panchayats to strengthen the SHG movement with their resources and to utilize untied fund for directly addressing poverty through SHGs	(f) Same as (d)		(f) Utilizing resources for strengthening the SHG movement and utilizing untied fund for directly addressing poverty through SHGs		
		(g) Developing capacities of the Panchayats to facilitate SHG movement without controlling their decisions	(g) Same as (d)		(g) Facilitating the process of SHG movement without controlling their decisions so that the organizations of the SHGs have freedom to grow		
						(g) Same as (c)	

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Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(iv) Alleviation of poverty and ensuring social equity	(h) Advocacy and facilitation of the Panchayats for providing support to SHGs on production infrastructure, skill upscaling and non-credit inputs	(h) PRDD, District and Block level officials (i) Same as (h) (j) Same as (h)	(h) Ongoing process (i) Ongoing process (j) Ongoing process, to be completed by March 2012	(h) Providing support to SHGs on production infrastructure, skill upscaling and non-credit inputs like giving lease of vested land, saplings, seeds, chicks, kids and piglets etc.	(h) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samaj Kalyan US and Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Sishu O Nari Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran SS and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP with support from DRDC	(h) Ongoing process (i) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2009-10 (j) Ongoing process, to be completed by March 2012
		(i) Advocacy and capacity building of the Panchayats for mediating with professional bodies and financial institutions for providing support to SHGs	(k) Same as (h)	(k) Ongoing process	(i) Mediating with professional bodies for providing higher skills, marketing support and with the financial institutions for easy credit to the SHGs and their umbrella bodies	(i) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samaj Kalyan US of GP and Sishu O Nari Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran SS of PS and ZP in general and the office bearers of three tier Panchayats in particular	(k) Ongoing process
		(j) Advocacy and capacity building of the Panchayats to assist the SHG Clusters and Federations			(j) Assisting the SHG Clusters and Federations to set up and run their own offices	(j) Artha O Parikalpana US and Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samaj Kalyan US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS and Sishu O Nari Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran SS of PS	
		(k) Augmenting capacities of the Panchayats for imparting training on new avenues of livelihood opportunities for the members of SHGs			(k) Providing all possible support for imparting training on new avenues of livelihood opportunities for the members of SHGs	(k) Sishu O Nari Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran SS of ZP with support from same SS of PS and DRDC	

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy						
		State Government Level			PRI Levels			
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(iv) Alleviation of poverty and ensuring social equity	(l) Augmenting capacities of the Panchayats for proper functioning of the groups and Clusters to unleash the productive potential of the rural poor	(l) PRDD, District and Block level officials (m) Same as (l) (n) Same as (l)	(l) Ongoing process (m) Ongoing process (n) Ongoing process	(l) Taking steps for building capacities at all levels for developing adequate strength and dynamism in functioning of the groups and all forms of SHG clusters so as to unleash the productive potential of the rural poor for their gainful employment and ultimately enabling them to overcome poverty	(l) Artha O Parikalpana US and Nari, Sishu (n) Unnayan O Samaj (o) Kalyan US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS and Sishu O Nari (n) Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran SS of PS and ZP (m) Same as (l) (n) Same as (l) (o) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP, to be facilitated and monitored by Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS and Khadya O Sarbaraha SS of PS	(l) Ongoing process (m) March 2014 (n) March 2014 (o) Ongoing process (p) Ongoing process	
		(m) Augmenting capacities of the Panchayats to ensure that at least 80% SHGs have access to credit	(o) Capacity building – PRDD, District and Block level officials, enforcement by the District and Block level officials associated with RHS	(o) Ongoing process (p) Ongoing process	(m) Ensuring that at least 80% SHGs have access to credit through either cash credit account or scheme-based lending			
		(n) Augmenting capacities of the Panchayats to ensure that at least 50% of the SHG members are linked with micro-enterprises	(p) PRDD, District and Block level officials		(n) Ensuring that at least 50% of the SHG members are linked with micro-enterprises to earn at least Rs. 1000 per month and to have average income of at least Rs. 1500 per month			
		(o) Capacity building of the Panchayats to enable them to play their part to prepare error-free BPL list in line with the state policies being enforced by the State machinery			(o) Playing required role in identification of the poor as per prescribed procedure and its updating, particularly circulation of the list and helping the families in raising claims and objections for corrections as well as to vet the correct list at the Gram Sansad meetings			
		(p) Keeping watch to ensure utilizing the BPL list for delivery of services targeting the poor and redressing associate grievances			(p) Utilizing the BPL list for delivering all services targeting the poor			

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(iv) Alleviation of poverty and ensuring social equity	<p>(q) Capacity building of the three tier Panchayats and collaborative functioning with the Panchayats for economic development of SC/ST/ Minorities</p> <p>(r) (i) Orienting the Panchayats to diligently address the problems of special areas and providing additional support to meet the development needs of those areas and helping them to acquire capacities by designing appropriate interventions for those areas</p> <p>(ii) Augmenting capacities of the Panchayats to be able to take care of the development needs of the backward villages and extending the critical support for meeting the development needs of those villages</p>	<p>(q) Backward Classes Welfare Department and Minorities Affairs and Madrasah Education Department</p> <p>(r) (i) PRDD, Water Investigation and Development Department</p> <p>(ii) PRDD</p>	<p>(q) Continuous process from 2010-11</p> <p>(r) (i) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11</p> <p>(ii) March 2012</p>	<p>(q) (i) Identification of beneficiaries of income generation schemes under Special Central Assistance to Special Component Sub-Plan for BPL SCs and STs,</p> <p>(ii) Meeting training needs for selected trainees from among poor SC/ST/Minority families for income generation activities,</p> <p>(iii) Selection of different community development schemes in SC/ST/Minority areas and other backward areas,</p> <p>(iv) Reviewing and monitoring for speedy implementation of all such schemes and</p> <p>(v) Intense monitoring for selection and implementation of income generation schemes under Special Central Assistance to Special Component Sub-Plan and Tribal Sub-Plan</p> <p>(r) (i) Addressing problems of special areas (with special problems like repeated flood, river erosion, closed tea gardens) and meeting the development needs of those areas through appropriate interventions and utilizing additional support from the State Government</p> <p>(ii) Focusing development initiatives in respect of backward villages and utilizing the State Government support for meeting the critical gap so that those villages may be uplifted at least to an average condition</p>	<p>(q) (i) - (v) The three tier Panchayat bodies in general and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana Sthayee Samiti of ZP and PS and Artha O Parikalpana US of GP in particular</p> <p>(r) (i), (ii) Same as (q)</p>	<p>(q) Continuous process from 2010-11</p> <p>(r) (i) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11</p> <p>(ii) March 2012</p>

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(v) Measures for social security	(a) Capacity building of the Panchayats for proper identification of Antyodaya Anna Yojana and BPL families (b) Capacity building of the Panchayats on the methodology of RHS (c) Capacity building of the Panchayats for identifying families wrongly included in the BPL list (d) Capacity building of the Panchayats to effectively run the monitoring committees of PDS (e) Capacity building of the Panchayats to ensure delivery of entitled benefits of food security to the poorer sections through the PDS (f) Advocacy and monitoring for furnishing the list of all beneficiaries of the food security programmes	(a) PRDD, District and Block level officials (b) Same as (a) (c) Same as (a) (d) Food and Supplies Department and PRDD, District and Block level officials (e) Same as (d) (f) Same as (d)	(a) Ongoing process (b) Ongoing process (c) Ongoing process (d) Continuous process from 2009-10 (e) Continuous process from 2009-10 (f) Continuous process from 2009-10	(a) Approving list of beneficiaries for the Antyodaya Anna Yojana and the list of BPL households (b) Educating the people on the methodology of Rural Household Survey and helping them in raising claims and objections (c) Identifying families wrongly included in the BPL list with the help of the Gram Sansads so that no benefit earmarked for the poor are extended to any ineligible family (d) Supervising functioning of the PDS through the monitoring committees (e) Mediating the need of the poorer sections, who are not empowered enough to assert their rights related to food security (f) Proactively furnishing the list of all beneficiaries of the food security programmes for transparency and knowledge of the community	(a) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP, to be facilitated and monitored by Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana and Khadya O Sarbaraha SS of PS (b) ZP, PS and GP as a whole (c) Same as (a) (d) Khadya O Sarbaraha SS of ZP and PS and Artha O Parikalpana US of GP in general and the Chairpersons and officials of the three tier Panchayat bodies in particular (e) The GP and PS members in general and Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS and Khadya O Sarbaraha SS of PS (f) Same as (a)	(a) Ongoing process (b) Ongoing process (c) Ongoing process (d) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11 (e) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2009-10 (f) Ongoing process, significant coverage by March 2012

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(v) Measures for social security	(g) Capacity building of the Panchayats for organizing Grain Banks by the SHGs	(g) PRDD, District and Block level officials (h) Same as (g) (i) Women & Child Development and Social Welfare Department, Fisheries Department, Agriculture Department, Micro and Small Scale Enterprises and Textiles and Backward Classes Welfare Department	(g) Ongoing process (h) Ongoing process (i) March 2010	(g) Organizing Grain Banks by the SHGs in areas having more incidence of poverty and providing fund to the SHGs for that purpose so that they can buy food grains after harvesting and store it for supplying their members at reasonable price during the time of their hardship (h) Implementation of SAHAY programme by identifying the target group of families, preparing family-wise intervention plans for their economic rehabilitation and decent living and implementing the same (utilizing its resources as well as resources from PS, ZP and State Government) including arranging cooked food for those who are unable to have enough food for them (i) Sharing the beneficiary lists of seven pension schemes administered by various departments with the community and monitoring delivery of pensions	(g) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS and Khadya O Sarbaraha SS of PS (h) GP as a whole with necessary support (including providing financial grants) from PS and ZP (i) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samajkalyan US of GP with support from Sishu O Nari Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran SS of PS	(g) Ongoing process, significant coverage by March 2012 (h) Bringing more than 50% of the destitute families under the programme by December 2009 and the remaining families by March 2012 (i) Continuous process from 2009-10
		(h) Capacity building of the Panchayats for implementation of the SAHAY programme along with providing all possible assistance including providing financial support to GP to ensure that all citizens in the rural areas are free from hunger by the Eleventh Plan period (i) Providing the list of beneficiaries of seven pension schemes administered by various departments to Panchayats					

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(v) Measures for social security	(j) Advocacy and facilitation (dealing with banks/ post offices etc.) for institutional payment of IGNOAPS benefit	(j) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials	(j) Ongoing process (k) Ongoing process (l) Ongoing process	(j) Making payments of all IGNOAPS beneficiaries through bank, post offices etc. except for old infirm beneficiaries who cannot go to these institutions and making cash payment to those old beneficiaries at their residences	(j) Same as (i) (k) Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samajkalyan US of GP (l) Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash US and Artha O Parikalpana US of GP with support from Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash SS and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS	(j) Ongoing process, full coverage by March 2010 (k) Significant progress by March 2010 (l) March 2011 (m) March 2012
		(k) Augmenting capacities of the Panchayats to be able to deliver pension more efficiently and on a prefixed day within the first fortnight of the month of pension	(k) Same as (j)	(m) Ongoing process	(k) Delivering pension more efficiently and within the first fortnight of the month on which the pension becomes due	(l) Krishi O Prani Sampad Bikash SS and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS	
		(l) Capacity building of the Panchayats along with monitoring in respect of PROFLAL and SASPFUW for timely collection of contributions, for maintaining proper accounts and computerizing the entire database and prompt disbursement of the matured amounts	(l) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials	(m) Ongoing process	(l) Timely collection of contributions, maintaining proper accounts and computerizing the entire database for more efficient management of the programmes and prompt disbursement of the matured amounts under PROFLAL and SASPFUW	(m) Sishu O Nari Unnayan, Janakalyan O Tran SS of PS with support from Nari, Sishu Unnayan O Samajkalyan US of GP	
		(m) Building capacities of the PRIs in respect of NFBS for improving delivery of services further and generating awareness among the people					

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(vi) Planning from below for economic development and social justice	(a) Building up capacities of Gram Panchayats through sustained facilitation, handholding, showing good practices and exposure visits to enable them prepare bottom-up participatory plans	(a) PRDD, District and Block level officials (b) Same as (a) (c) Same as (a) (d) Development and Planning Department through the District Planning Committees (e) PRDD, District and Block level officials	(a) Ongoing process (b) Continuous process from 2010-11 (c) Continuous process from 2011-12 (d) March 2013 (e) Continuous process from 2009-10	(a) Preparation of holistic bottom-up participatory plans in all GPs (b) Preparation of GP plan based PS plans in all PSs (c) Preparation of PS plan based ZP/MP plans in all ZP/MP (d) Nil (e) Updating the GIS maps locally with important natural resources, road connectivity and social and economic infrastructure and utilizing those maps for spatial planning	(a) The GP as a whole in general and Artha O Parikalpana US of GP in particular with the help of Gram Unnayan Samitis and with support from PS and ZP (b) The PS as a whole in general and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS in particular with support from ZP (c) The ZP as a whole in general and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZPin particular (d) Nil (e) GP in general and Artha O Parikalpana US of GP in particular, PS and ZP in general and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP in particular	(a) March 2012 (b) March 2013 (c) March 2014 (d) Nil (e) March 2011
		(b) Building capacities of Panchayat Samitis to prepare GP plan based PS plan					
		(c) Building capacities of Zilla/Mahakuma Parishads to prepare PS plan based ZP plan					
		(d) Integrating three tier Panchayat plans into District Plans					
		(e) Making GIS maps available to GPs, capacity building of the GPs to update the maps locally and capacity building of the three tier Panchayats to use these maps for spatial planning					

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
4. Decentralized planning and implementation for economic development and social justice	(vii) Establishing MIS cells in PRIs	(a) Developing MIS Cells in all ZPs and PSs along with capacity building for data management and monitoring plans under implementation (b) Orienting GP employees to collect and compile data related to planning as well as to generate information in respect of all programmes under implementation	(a) PRDD, District and Block level officials (b) Same as (a)	(a) MIS Cells : March 2011, capacity building : Continuous process from 2009-10 (b) Continuous process from 2009-10	(a) Utilizing appropriate ICT applications for data management and monitoring of plans under implementation (b) Collection and compilation of data related to planning as well as to generate information in respect of all programmes under implementation	(a) ZP and PS in general and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZP and PS in particular (b) GP in general and Artha O Parikalpana US of GP in particular	(a) Significant development to be achieved by March 2012 (b) Significant development to be achieved by March 2012
	(viii) Developing Panchayat-private partnership	(a) Advocacy and campaign for Panchayat-private partnership for service delivery on the principle of social marketing	(a) PRDD, District and Block level officials	(a) Ongoing process	(a) (i) Entering into Panchayat-private partnership in respect of delivery of services on the principle of social marketing (ii) Playing their part in deciding the price realization from the people (iii) Monitoring the quality of services and ensuring its access to all concerned	(a) (i), (ii) and (iii) GP, PS and ZP in general and the Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP in particular	(a) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11
	(ix) Partnership for adoption of new technology	(a) Mediating the process of developing partnership by the PRIs with the private bodies in the field of adoption of new technology for improving quality of life of the people	(a) PRDD, District and Block level officials	(a) Ongoing process commencing from 2009-10	(a) Developing partnership in the field of adoption of new technology for improving quality of life of the people in a sustained and environment friendly manner	(a) Same as (viii) (a)	(a) Ongoing process commencing from 2009-10

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
5. Augmenting Panchayat finance and improving financial management	(i) Mobilization of Own Source Revenue	<p>(a) Augmenting capacity of GP on collecting and analyzing self-declaration form and preparation of assessment list therefrom</p> <p>(b) Developing and installing application software for computerization of tax demand and collection in every GPs and capacity building of GP for the same along with analyzing progress of tax collection and taking necessary action</p> <p>(c) Augmenting capacity of GP on preparation of non-tax assessment list and improving collection of non-tax</p> <p>(d) Advocacy and facilitation so that all Panchayat bodies adopt bye-law for themselves and collect non-tax revenue using all clauses of bye-law</p> <p>(e) Advocacy and facilitation for justified and more visible spending of OSR, more disclosure of information regarding collection and utilization of OSR by the Panchayat bodies</p> <p>(f) Tracking expenditure pattern of PRIs and sensitizing those bodies for better utilization of OSR for meeting their critical needs</p>	<p>(a) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials</p> <p>(b) Same as (a)</p> <p>(c) Same as (a)</p> <p>(d) Same as (a)</p> <p>(e) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials</p> <p>(f) Same as (e)</p>	<p>(a) Ongoing process</p> <p>(b) To be initiated by 2009-10 and continuous process thereafter</p> <p>(c) Ongoing process</p> <p>(d) Ongoing process</p> <p>(e) Ongoing process</p> <p>(f) Ongoing process</p>	<p>(a) Effectively introducing self-declaration process and preparation of tax assessment list on the basis of such declaration</p> <p>(b) Computerization of the tax demand and progress of collection and taking necessary action</p> <p>(c) Preparation of non-tax assessment list to found a revenue base by all GPs and taking initiative to improve collection</p> <p>(d) Adopting bye-law by all GPs, PSs and ZPs and collecting non-tax revenue using all clauses</p> <p>(e) Ensuring justified spending of OSR, ensuring more visible spending of OSR and more disclosure of information regarding collection and utilization of OSR for better appreciation and compliance by the people</p> <p>(f) Utilization of OSR for meeting critical needs in local development</p>	<p>(a) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP with the help of GUS</p> <p>(b) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP</p> <p>(c) Same as (b)</p> <p>(d) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP, Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP</p> <p>(e) Same as (d)</p> <p>(f) Same as (d)</p>	<p>(a) 2009-10 (i.e. assessment list for 2010-11)</p> <p>(b) To be initiated by 2009-10 and continuous process thereafter</p> <p>(c) Assessment list to be prepared by 2010-11 and drive for improvement will be a continuous process after that</p> <p>(d) 2010-11</p> <p>(e) Continuous process, considerable development expected by March 2012</p> <p>(f) Same as (e)</p>

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Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
5. Augmenting Panchayat finance and improving financial management	(i) Mobilization of Own Source Revenue	(g) Capacity building of the Panchayats for improving scope and quality of service delivery as well as creating more income generating assets for larger revenue base	(g) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials	(g) Ongoing process (h) After the recommendations of the 3 rd SFC are put in place	(g) Improving scope and quality of service delivery by the Panchayats as well as creating more income generating assets for larger revenue base of the Panchayats (h) Collecting OSR utilizing the new avenues	(g) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP, Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP (h) Same as (g)	(g) Ongoing process, considerable development expected by March 2012 (h) After the recommendations of the 3 rd SFC are put in place
	(ii) Improvement of budgetary control and financial management	(a) Capacity building of all personnel associated with financial management of the Panchayats (b) Computerisation of all accounting and financial management processes, putting appropriate system for monitoring financial performance in place and organizing training of all functionaries (c) Developing and putting in place norms and formats for essential disclosure related to financial management of the Panchayats for better accountability	(a) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials (b) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials (c) PRDD	(a) Ongoing process (b) Ongoing process, significant progress is expected by March 2012 (c) March 2010	(a) Exercising budgetary control on expenditure in its domain of activities and following appropriate practices for proper financial management (b) Internalizing the new systems quickly and using them for better accounting procedure, budgetary control and financial management (c) Following essential disclosure norms related to financial management	(a) All the SS/US of three tier Panchayats, to be monitored by Artha O Parikalpana US of GP, Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP (b) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP, Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP (c) Same as (b)	(a) Ongoing process, considerable development expected by March 2012 (b) Same as (a) (c) Continuous process from 2010-11, considerable development expected by March 2012

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
5. Augmenting Panchayat finance and improving financial management	(ii) Improvement of budgetary control and financial management	(d) Orienting the members of the Standing Committee /Sub-Committee on Finance for completing budgetary exercises on time, ensuring better budgetary control on all expenditure and monitoring financial performances including utilization of fund avoiding time and cost overrun (e) (i) Monitoring financial performance of all ZPs every month (ii) Building capacity of ZP and PS for monitoring financial performance of PS and GP respectively (f) Creating Panchayat Window in the State Budget for all the departments having assigned responsibilities on Panchayats	(d) Same as (b) (e) (i) PRDD (ii) PRDD, DPRD and District level officials (f) Finance Department and the Departments having assigned responsibilities on Panchayats	(d) Continuous process from 2009-10 (e) (i) Ongoing process; (ii) Reasonable progress expected by 2010-11 (f) 2012-13, i.e., budget for the financial year 2013-14	(d) Completing budgetary exercises on time, ensuring better budgetary control on all expenditure and monitoring financial performances including utilization of fund avoiding time and cost overrun on a regular basis (e) (i) Monitoring financial performance of all PSs every month (ii) Monitoring financial performance of all GPs every month (f) Nil	(d) Same as (b) (e) (i) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZP (ii) Same SS of PS (f) Nil	(d) Continuous process from 2009-10, considerable development expected by March 2012 (e) (i), (ii) : Ongoing process, considerable development expected by March 2012 (f) Nil
	(iii) Improvement of accounting practices and computerisation of accounts	(a) Introducing SARAL-IFMAS software at all PS along with necessary capacity building of PS functionaries (b) Introducing GPMS software at all GP along with necessary capacity building (including for new double entry & double column cashbook system of accounting) of GP functionaries	(a) PRDD, DPRD and District level officials (b) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials	(a) March 2010 (b) March 2012	(a) Adapting to computerised accounting system quickly and discontinuance of manual accounting (b) Adapting to computerised accounting system quickly and stopping manual accounting	(a) The PS as a whole and the employees in particular (b) The GP as a whole in general and the employees in particular	(a) March 2011 (b) March 2013

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
5. Augmenting Panchayat finance and improving financial management	(iv) Improving efficiency and transparency in procurement and payment	(a) Putting the system for e-procurement including automatic evaluation of bids in place and their monitoring (b) Advocacy and monitoring so that all ZPs and PSs make all payments against procurement electronically	(a) PRDD (b) PRDD for ZP; PRDD, DPRD and District level officials for PS	(a) March 2010 (b) Continuous process from 2009-10 for ZP and from 2010-11 for PS	(a) Adoption of e-procurement measures entirely including automatic evaluation of bids discarding manual process by all ZPs (b) Making all payment against procurement electronically by ZP and PS	(a) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZP (b) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZP and PS	(a) March 2010 (b) Likely by March 2010 for ZP and likely by March 2014 for PS
	(v) Internal audit of Panchayat accounts	(a) Establishing Audit & Accounts Cell at DPRD for proper monitoring of financial management matters (b) Training of all personnel concerned on accounts, audit and related matters of financial management	(a) PRDD (b) PRDD, DPRD with the help of SIPRD, ETCs and other professional training institutes	(a) March 2010 (b) Continuous process	(a) Nil (b) Conducting internal audits on time and complying the audit paras on time of both internal audit and audit by the CAG	(a) Nil (b) The three tier Panchayat bodies and particularly Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP	(a) Nil (b) March 2012
	(vi) Social audit	(a) Prescribing norms for minimum disclosure of financial information before all the Sansads (b) Prescribing norms for reporting to citizen on a regular basis (c) Putting in place a more structured system of social audit like NREGS for all programmes	(a) PRDD (b) PRDD (c) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials	(a) December 2009 (b) December 2009 (c) March 2010	(a) Disclosure of financial information before all Sansads (b) Reporting to citizen using the wall, notice board of Panchayat office, display board in prominent places and through other means (c) Conducting social audit of all programmes	(a) The three tier Panchayat bodies and particularly Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP (b) Same as (a) (c) Same as (a)	(a) Continuous process from 2010-11 (b) Same as (a) (c) Continuous process from 2010-11

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
5. Augmenting Panchayat finance and improving financial management	(vii) Electronic transfer of fund	(a) Electronically transfer of funds to the existing accounts of the Panchayats and publishing the information in the website of the department	(a) PRDD, DPRD through State Bank of Inida	(a) March 2009 (b) March 2009	(a) Nil (b) Nil	(a) Nil (b) Nil	(a) Nil (b) Nil
		(b) Communicating all information on fund release to the persons concerned through SMS service under 'Mobile Governance' project	(b) PRDD, DPRD				
6. Functionaries of the Panchayats and building their capacities	(i) Employees of the Panchayats	(a) Commissioning a study to assess further requirement of own manpower of all the tiers of Panchayats and also to identify areas where better services can be provided by engaging para-professional on contract and to work out proper arrangement between the service providers and the Panchayats	(a) PRDD (b) Administrative departments of State Government whose activities are linked with the Panchayats	(a) March 2010 (b) Ongoing process, considerable progress is expected by March 2011	(a) Nil (b) Utilizing services of different employees with utmost efficiency ensuring maximum level of service delivery to the people	(a) Nil (b) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZP and PS and in particular and other USs and SSs of three tier Panchayat bodies in general	(a) Nil (b) Ongoing process, considerable progress is expected by March 2012 (c) Same as (b) (d) Same as (b)
		(b) Ensuring that the Panchayats at every level get the services of own employees, formally deputed employees, government employees whose services have been placed for being used by the Panchayats as well as of professional service providers or trained para-professionals	(c) PRDD, DPRD (d) PRDD, DPRD	(c) Ongoing process, considerable progress is expected by March 2012 (d) March 2011	(c) Ensuring accountability of the employees to the people through the body (d) Adoption of practices and procedures in the manuals on office management	(c) Same as (b) (d) Same as (b)	
		(c) Improving the accountability mechanism of the employees associated with Panchayats for enhancing their outputs					
		(d) Conducting a study to analyze the practice and procedures of processing documents, maintaining files and preservation of records in the Panchayats and re-engineering the same for improving efficiency in functioning along with codifying the appropriate practices and procedures to be followed in manuals for adoption					

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
6. Functionaries of the Panchayats and building their capacities	(ii) Capacity building of the employees and other functionaries of Panchayats	(a) Training all new recruits on the basic skills required at that level as well as to orient them for working as an employee of the local bodies, preferably within three months from their joining the services	(a) PRDD, DPRD, SIPRD, ETCs, District and Block level officials	(a) Continuous process from 2009-10 (b) Same as (a) (c) Continuous process from March 2010 (d) A periodical process after every Panchayat election with necessary continuum	(a) Ensuring that all the employees attend the training, utilisation of their acquired knowledge for good practices as also assessing their post-training competency level and giving feed back to PRDD through Block and District level officials (b) Same as (a) (c) Nil (d) Nil (e) Ensuring that all Karmadhyakshas/Sanchalaks attend training, assessing their post-training competency level and giving feed back to PRDD (f) Ensuring that all the members attend the training, assessing their post-training competency level and giving feed back to PRDD (g) Nil	(a) Respective Panchayat body as a whole and particularly Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP (b) Same as (a) (c) Nil (d) Nil (e) Same as (a) (f) Same as (a) (g) Nil	(a) Continuous process after every training programme (b) Same as (a) (c) Nil (d) Nil (e) A continuous process after every Panchayat election (f) Same as (e) (g) Nil
		(b) Organizing in-service training as per felt need ensuring reorientation of all employees once in every five year	(b) Same as (a)				
		(c) Introducing a system for tracking the trainings imparted to the functionaries	(c) District level officials of PRDD				
		(d) Imparting training to the Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of all the three tier Panchayat bodies within three months of their assuming office	(d) ZP : PRDD; PS : SIPRD, ETCs; GP : ETCs, DTCs	(e) Same as (d) (f) Same as (d) (g) March 2011			
		(e) Imparting training to the Chairpersons of the Standing Committees and Sub-Committees within six months from their election as Chairperson	(e) ZP : SIPRD; PS : SIPRD, ETCs; GP : ETCs, DTCs				
		(f) Imparting training to the general members within one year from their election	(f) Same as (e)				
		(g) Establishing one District Training Centre (DTC) in each district	(g) PRDD, DPRD				

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
6. Functionaries of the Panchayats and building their capacities	(ii) Capacity building of the employees and other functionaries of Panchayats	<p>(h) Imparting additional training to all the women members on their roles and responsibilities within one year of their election</p> <p>(i) Imparting training to all the Chairpersons and Secretaries of GUS within two years of their election</p> <p>(j) Reviewing the existing training materials, both in print and electronic form, to identify gaps and preparation of improved manuals</p> <p>(k) Arranging exposure visits of Panchayat functionaries for peer learning and sharing of best practices on good governance</p> <p>(l) Documentation of best practices in various fields and increasing access of Panchayat functionaries to those materials</p> <p>(m) Establishing Training Cell in all districts so that there are dedicated persons in each district to look after training and tying them up with the DTCs, ETCs and SIPRD for meeting training requirement</p>	<p>(h) ZP : SIPRD; PS : SIPRD, ETCs; GP : ETCs, DTCs</p> <p>(i) PRDD through distance mode (Lokashiksha Sanchar)</p> <p>(j) PRDD, SIPRD, DPRD</p> <p>(k) PRDD, District and Block level officials</p> <p>(l) PRDD, SIPRD, DPRD, District and Block level officials</p> <p>(m) PRDD</p>	<p>(h) A periodical process after every Panchayat election with necessary continuum</p> <p>(i) Same as (h)</p> <p>(j) March 2013</p> <p>(k) Continuous process from 2009-10</p> <p>(l) Same as (k)</p> <p>(m) March 2011</p>	<p>(h) Ensuring that all the women members attend the training, assessing their post-training competency level and giving feed back to PRDD</p> <p>(i) Ensuring that all the Chairpersons and Secretaries of GUS attend the training, assessing their post-training competency level and giving feed back to PRDD</p> <p>(j) Nil</p> <p>(k) Selecting appropriate persons and sharing their experiences after the exposure visit</p> <p>(l) Going through the best practice documents and applying those in own context</p> <p>(m) Providing necessary establishment support along with regular monitoring the activities of the Cell</p>	<p>(h) Respective Panchayat body as a whole and particularly Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP</p> <p>(i) GP as a whole and particularly Artha O Parikalpana US of GP</p> <p>(j) Nil</p> <p>(k) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP</p> <p>(l) Three tier Panchayat members and particularly the office bearers</p> <p>(m) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZP</p>	<p>(h) A continuous process after every Panchayat election</p> <p>(i) Same as (h)</p> <p>(j) Nil</p> <p>(k) Continuous process from 2009-10</p> <p>(l) Same as (k)</p> <p>(m) A continuous process during and after setting up the Cell</p>

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
6. Functionaries of the Panchayats and building their capacities	(ii) Capacity building of the employees and other functionaries of Panchayats	(n) Developing suitable infrastructure of WBCADC for providing livelihood related training (o) Developing local resource pool of trainers in various disciplines in each district (p) Creating suitable training infrastructure for non-residential training in each PS utilizing the infrastructure for distant learning (q) Developing pool of resource persons to facilitate such distant learning in each district (r) Developing one class room for day training in each GP (s) Providing handholding support to the GP functionaries (of those GPs who are not performing at par with other GPs) by mobile facilitators (t) Wider dissemination of knowledge about functioning of the Panchayats for enabling the citizen to participate more effectively through continuing <i>Panchayat O Gramonnayaner Asor</i> (an interactive Radio programme broadcasted through Kolkata - A of AIR on every Saturday from 8 p.m. to 9 p.m.), running the helpline (telephonic) at the State headquarter as well as setting up Common Service Centres (CSCs)	(n) PRDD (o) PRDD, SIPRD, DPRD (p) PRDD (q) PRDD, DPRD (r) PRDD, DPRD (s) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials (t) PRDD for Radio programme and helpline; PRDD, District and Block level officials for CSC	(n) March 2012 (o) March 2012 (p) March 2010 (q) March 2010 (r) March 2010 (s) Ongoing process (t) Ongoing process	(n) Providing necessary support for infrastructure development (o) Providing necessary support for selecting persons for the resource pool (p) Providing necessary support for infrastructure development (q) Facilitating the pool of resource persons for distant learning to function properly (r) Providing necessary support for developing class room for training (s) Creating enabling environment at the GP office so that the support team can provide handholding support to the GP functionaries along with ensuring that all concerned attend the interactive session (t) Intimating the community about the Radio programme, helpline and CSC and asking them to participate or to take access	(n) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS and Purtakarya O Paribahan SS of ZP (o) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of ZP (p) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS and Purtakarya O Paribahan SS of PS (q) Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana US of GP (r) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP (s) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP (t) All elected members and employees of three tier Panchayats	(n) As and when required by the State Government (o) Same as (n) (p) March 2010 (q) Continuous process from 2009-10 (r) March 2010 (s) Ongoing process after initiation of the support (t) Continuous process

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues	Implementation Strategy						
	State Government Level			PRI Levels			
	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	
6. Functionaries of the Panchayats and building their capacities	(ii) Capacity building of the employees and other functionaries of Panchayats	(u) Working out methodology through which recruitment and promotion processes are tuned to put the right person in the right place for maximizing the benefits obtained from the process of capacity building	(u) PRDD through a mixed team of elected representatives and appointed officials	(u) March 2011	(u) Nil	(u) Nil	(u) Nil
	(iii) Strengthening the SIPRD, the ETCs and the DTCs	(a) Strengthening SIPRD to meet the demand of training as came out throughout the Roadmap (b) Providing facilities for computer training and setting up computer laboratories in all ETCs including Satyajit Roy Panchayat Training Centre at Rajarhat (c) Providing adequate infrastructure in all the DTCs to take care of training of the functionaries and some of the employees of the GPs (d) Orientation of all the trainers on teaching methodology and augmenting their capacities to facilitate learning process (e) Preparation of learning materials using multi-media means of communication to cover all types of trainings to be handled by the training centres	(a) PRDD, SIPRD (b) PRDD, District level officials of the districts concerned (c) PRDD, District level officials (d) PRDD, SIPRD (e) PRDD, SIPRD, DPRD	(a) March 2011 (b) March 2011 (c) March 2011 (d) Ongoing process (e) Ongoing process	(a) Nil (b) Nil (c) Nil (d) Nil (e) Nil	(a) Nil (b) Nil (c) Nil (d) Nil (e) Nil	(a) Nil (b) Nil (c) Nil (d) Nil (e) Nil

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
6. Functionaries of the Panchayats and building their capacities	(iv) Use of Information and Communication Technology in PRI	(a) Developing suitable software packages to be used by Panchayats for efficient functioning (b) Bringing all PS and GP under web-based reporting (c) Developing MIS for institutional issues and also for proper monitoring (d) Establishing broadband connectivity in the GPs using State Wide Area Network (SWAN) or using the service provided by other agencies including those established for connecting the CSCs located in the GP offices and utilizing e-mail facilities wherever available (e) Installing fax machines in all GPs (f) Setting up 6797 Common Services Centres (CSC) and making those operational for providing access to information and services to common people	(a) PRDD (b) PRDD, District level officials with support from National Informatics Centre (NIC) (c) PRDD (d) PRDD with the help of service providers (e) PRDD, DPRD, District and Block level officials (f) PRDD, District and Block level officials in partnership with private entrepreneurs	(a) March 2012 (b) March 2014 (c) March 2011 (d) March 2014 (e) December 2009 (f) Setting up by March 2010 and operational by March 2011	(a) Using the developed software for efficient functioning (b) Sending all reports either through web or in soft form by all Panchayat bodies (c) Effectively using MIS in place (d) Effectively utilizing the communication means (e) Installing fax machines (f) Providing support for setting up CSCs in all GP and PS offices and in 3102 other prominent places	(a) Three tier Panchayat bodies and particularly Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana US of PS and ZP (b) Same as (a) (c) Same as (a) (d) Same as (a) (e) Office bearers of GP (f) Artha O Parikalpana Us of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS	(a) As and when the software packages are in place (b) March 2014 (c) As and when the MIS is in place (d) As and when connectivity is obtained (e) December 2009 (f) March 2010
	(v) Use of satellite-based Lokashiksha Sanchar	(a) Intensive utilization of Lokashiksha Sanchar (Training and Development Communication Channel) for imparting distance mode training	(a) PRDD, DPRD and various Administrative Departments of State Government	(a) Ongoing process	(a) Ensuring that the persons concerned attend the discussion sessions	(a) Artha O Parikalpana US of GP and Artha, Sanstha, Unnayan O Parikalpana SS of PS and ZP	(a) Ongoing process

Roadmap for the Panchayats in

Key Issues		Implementation Strategy					
		State Government Level			PRI Levels		
		Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe	Activity	Responsibility	Timeframe
6. Functionaries of the Panchayats and building their capacities	(vi) Strengthening the office of the Directorate and field offices of PRDD	(a) Setting up one Audit & Accounts cell, one Fund Management cell, one Resource Mobilization cell, one Training cell and one Public Grievance-cum-Inspection cell in the directorate to give special emphasis in those areas (b) Studying the functioning of the offices of the District Panchayat & Rural Development Officer for restructuring	(a) PRDD, DPRD (b) PRDD, DPRD	(a) March 2012 (b) March 2010	(a) Nil (b) Nil	(a) Nil (b) Nil	(a) Nil (b) Nil
	(vii) Participation of NGOs and academic institutions in capacity building initiatives	(a) Strengthening linkage with various NGOs and renowned academic institutions for their involvement in various collaborative works with the Panchayats	(a) PRDD	(a) Ongoing process, to be more effective from 2010-11	(a) Nil	(a) Nil	(a) Nil
7. Harmonisation of Acts and Rules concerning functioning of the Panchayats	(i) Acts to be amended	(a) Setting up a small in-house committee to examine and suggest possible amendments in 6 Central Acts and 26 State Acts (b) Approaching the concerned ministries of Central Government and concerned administrative departments of State Government with specific proposals for taking appropriate actions to amend the Acts	(a) PRDD (b) PRDD	(a) March 2010 (b) Specific timeframe cannot be set	(a) Nil (b) Nil	(a) Nil (b) Nil	(a) Nil (b) Nil
	(ii) Amendment of the Panchayat Act and Rules	(a) Amending the West Bengal Panchayat Act, 1973 under changed dimensions (b) Framing the West Bengal Panchayat (Zilla Parishad Administration) Rules (c) Amending the West Bengal Panchayat (Gram Panchayat Administration) Rules, 2004	(a) PRDD, Law Department (b) PRDD, Law Department (c) PRDD, Law Department	(a) March 2011 (b) March 2011 (c) March 2010	(a) Nil (b) Nil (c) Nil	(a) Nil (b) Nil (c) Nil	(a) Nil (b) Nil (c) Nil

9.2 Contributors on the Draft Roadmap

9.2.1 Lots of feedbacks have been received on the draft version of this Roadmap, the entire gamut of which is more than thousand pages. Special thanks to all the contributors who helped us immensely to shape the final Roadmap. The list of contributors is mentioned below.

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59. V. S. Kannan, President, Kizuvilam Gram Panchayat, Kerala (in the discussion forum organized by SDC-CapDecK, Thiruvananthapuram)

9.3 References

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9.4 Abbreviations

AAV	: Antyodaya Anna Yojana
AD	: Agriculture Department (Government of West Bengal)
ANM	: Auxiliary Nurse and Midwife
AIDS	: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ARDD	: Animal Resources Development Department (Government of West Bengal)
ASHA	: Accredited Social Health Activists
BAES	: Bureau of Applied Economics & Statistics (Development and Planning Department, Government of West Bengal)
BDO	: Block Development Officer
BMOH	: Block Medical Officer (Health)
BPHC	: Block Primary Health Centre
BPL	: Below Poverty Line
BRGF	: Backward Regions Grant Fund
CAG	: Comptroller and Auditor General of India
CSC	: Common Services Centre
CSSP	: Civil Society Support Programme
DFID	: Department for International Development (Government of UK)
DIC	: District Industries Centre
DPAP	: Draught Prone Area Programme
DPC	: District Planning Committee
DPRD	: Directorate of Panchayats and Rural Development (West Bengal)
DPRDO	: District Panchayat and Rural Development Officer
DPSC	: District Primary School Council
DRDC	: District Rural Development Cell

DRRP	: District Rural Road Plan
DTC	: District Training Centre
ETC	: Extension Training Centre
FD	: Fisheries Department (Government of West Bengal)
FW	: Family Welfare
GIS	: Geographical Information System
GP	: Gram Panchayat
GPMS	: Gram Panchayat Management System
GUS	: Gram Unnayan Samiti
HFWD	: Health and Family Welfare Department (Government of West Bengal)
IAY	: Indira Awas Yojana
ICAD	: Information and Cultural Affairs Department (Government of West Bengal)
ICDS	: Integrated Child Development Services
ICT	: Information and Communication Technology
IEC	: Information, Education and Communication
IFMAS	: Integrated Fund Management and Accounting System
IGNDPS	: Indira Gandhi National Disability Pension Scheme
IGNOAPS	: Indira Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme
IGNWPS	: Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme
IMR	: Infant Mortality Rate
IT	: Information Technology
ITES	: Information Technology Enabled Services
IWD	: Irrigation and Waterways Department (Government of West Bengal)
LLRD	: Land and Land Reforms Department (Government of West Bengal)
MEED	: Mass Education Extension Department (Government of West Bengal)
MIS	: Management Information System
MMR	: Maternal Mortality Rate
MOU	: Memorandum of Understanding
MPC	: Metropolitan Planning Committee
MSK	: Madhyamik Shiksha Kendra
MSSETD	: Micro and Small Scale Enterprises and Textiles Department (Government of West Bengal)
NeGP	: National e-Governance Plan
NFBS	: National Family Benefit Scheme
NGO	: Non-Governmental Organization
NIC	: National Informatics Centre
NREGA	: National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NREGS	: National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
NRHM	: National Rural Health Mission
OSR	: Own Source Revenue
PAAO	: Panchayat Accounts and Audit Officer
PDO	: Panchayat Development Officer
PDS	: Public Distribution System
PHC	: Primary Health Centre
PHE	: Public Health Engineering

PHED	: Public Health Engineering Department (Government of West Bengal)
PMGSY	: Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana
PRA	: Participatory Rural Appraisal
PRDD	: Panchayat and Rural Development Department (Government of West Bengal)
PRI	: Panchayati Raj Institutions
PROFLAL	: Provident Fund for Landless Agricultural Labourers
PS	: Panchayat Samiti
PWD	: Public Works Department (Government of West Bengal)
RBI	: Reserve Bank of India
RHS	: Rural Household Survey
RIDF	: Rural Infrastructure Development Fund
RSM	: Rural Sanitary Mart
RTA	: Regional Transport Authority
RTI	: Right to Information
SASPFUW	: State Assisted Scheme for Provident Fund of Unorganised Workers
SBI	: State Bank of India
SC	: Scheduled Castes
SC	: Sub-Centre
SD	: Sports Department (Government of West Bengal)
SED	: School Education Department (Government of West Bengal)
SHG	: Self Help Group
SIPRD	: State Institute of Panchayats and Rural Development
SMS	: Short Message Service
SRD	: Strengthening Rural Decentralisation
SS	: Sthayee Samiti, i.e. Standing Committee
SSA	: Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan
SSK	: Shishu Shiksha Kendra
ST	: Scheduled Tribes
SWAN	: State Wide Area Network
SWID	: State Water Investigation Directorate (Water Investigation and Development Department, Government of West Bengal)
TDCC	: Training and Development Communication Channel
TPDS	: Targeted Public Distribution System
US	: Upa-Samiti, i.e. Sub-Committee
WBCADC	: West Bengal Comprehensive Area Development Corporation
WBKVIB	: West Bengal Khadi and Village Industries Board
WCDSWD	: Women & Child Development and Social Welfare Department (Government of West Bengal)
WIDD	: Water Investigation and Development Department (Government of West Bengal)
YSD	: Youth Services Department (Government of West Bengal)
ZP	: Zilla Parishad