



Knowledge. Voice. Democracy.

**PRIA**

July 2001

# Made Easy Guide to People Centred Plan Preparation

### **Rationale: Why People Centred plan in PRIs?**

1. PRIs are democratically elected bodies with reservations for women, dalits etc.
2. PRIs are the locus of decision making in relation to resource allocation, natural resource management and human capital
3. Gram Sabhas/Ward Sabhas are appropriate forum to
  - Articulate needs/prioritise them
  - Hold accountable decisions of PRIs
4. Top down/technocratic/bureaucratic decision making
  - a) has not brought about development (does not reflect local needs and priorities),
  - b) tends to exclude marginal groups and
  - c) are neither transparent nor accountable to communities.

A conscious effort has been made to set up a "goal-oriented change" a conscious change made to the existing situation so as to solve the problems experiences by the community. By inducing a participatory element into the planning process brings a clarity into the most difficult question "who needs what as defined by whom?" With the involvement of the people in their own planning process, a sense of ownership and greater understanding of their own situation increases.

**The objective of the Made Easy Guide:** To enable preparation of a doable and replicable' Panchayat level development plan for fiscal year with community participation.

### **'Doable' Model of People Centred Plan**

The lesson learnt in micro plan preparation in last five years have made us realise that Firstly, women elected members tend to be more sensitive to local needs;

Secondly the more faithful it is to local felt needs, the better the chances of success;

Thirdly time is of the essence - people appreciate quick turnover of an initiative;

Fourthly a needs-oriented planning process generates its own data and implementation base - no need to set apart time/resources for data gathering.

With above lessons in mind a model has been developed -which could be prepared by community and elected members without the help of experts. Govt officials at Panchayat, Block/Taluka and District level are involved from beginning of preparation. This model has been named as People Centred Plan instead of microplan.

The People Centred Plan is not an end but a means for future development of Communities.

The base of People Centred Plan is to build on the strength of each panchayat/mohalla/tola/purva/ward and try to overcome the shortcomings.

### **Objectives of People Centred Plan**

- To build capacity of people to prepare their own village and/or Panchayat plan and implement.
- To be able to work as a group in a village/Panchayat,
- To develop understanding of resources and information's,
- To identify the root cause and solve the problem,
- To increase their capabilities (quality of life).

- To be able to take decision.
- To improve upon social, economical and legal environment of the village/Panchayat.
- To be 'agents' in the process of development
- To negotiate with larger institutional frameworks.

**The Strategy:** Through mobilisation of elected members, youth groups/ Mahila mandals/Kisan Groups, Panchayat Secretary/Sevak/ Gram sevak (while keeping district and block officials fully in the picture).

### **The Steps in Preparation of People Centred Plan:**

**Step 1-** Orienting elected members to the concept of microplan (focus on economic, environmental and social needs) in panchayat meeting. (One day) (Role Play could also be used)

**Step 2–** Ward/tola/Muhallah/Purva level meetings simultaneously for understanding the concept of microplan focusing on economic and social, Human development rather than infrastructure development. Timings will be according to the suitability of ward panch and community. Identifying the major issues of the ward. Finding out the cause and the probable solution (Methodology- large group discussion). Identifying one or two intellectuals/ youth/ individuals (volunteers) who would be able to take part in preparation and implementation of microplan along with panch. Need for kind or cash contribution from community may be initiated (half a day or about two hours in each ward - total timings will be depending upon number of Wards/Tolas/Muhallah/Purvas).

**Step 3-** Consolidation of the major issues of wards, causes and probable solution at panchayat level. Preparation of rough plan. This will be done by elected members, Panchayat Secretary, ward level volunteers and other Govt officials. (One day)

**Step 4 -** Writing the People Centred Plan under following heads.

Head I • Introduction of panchayat (brief demographic, geographic and socio economic status • Map of the panchayat can also be inserted).

Head II - Issues and Priority of wards

Head III • Consolidation of priorities, probable solutions and appraisal of available resources.

Head IV - Plan based on solution with implementation responsibility

Head V- Proposed Budget with community contribution.

Head VI – Conclusion/ways ahead (one day)

**Step 5 -** Resolution passed from Ward/Gram Sabha (upto one day)

**Step 6 -** Getting it typed and making multiple copies. (one day)

**Step 7 -** Recording it on a Panchayat board.

**Step 8-** Submission and follow up by elected members to Block Dev office, Block Samiti and District Panchayat Officer. Other tiers of PRIs (zilla Parishad), MLA, MPs and DPC (Banks/NABARD/SHG etc. if need be).

### **Useful Tips**

- Scale of preparation - Ideally the efforts for People Centred Plan cover the entire panchayat or even a ward but due to varied reasons if it is not happening then to show the result a Mohala/Tola/Purva or part of a ward may be considered.

- Linking with two higher tiers - In the process of preparation of the People Centred Plan inviting/ involving members of above two tiers shall help in developing the linkages among the three tiers and

mobilising the resources available to other two tiers. (Also, as a basis for further negotiations with other institutions e.g. DPC).

- **Conflicting Interest Groups** - In every Panchayats there are conflicting interest groups, prior to starting the People Centred Plan care needs to be taken to involve them too.
- **Strike when Iron is hot** - Generally it was found that soon after the first meet elected members, volunteers and govt officials are enthusiastic forward level meets. It is better to conduct the ward level meetings immediately as the environment is conducive and people are enthusiastic after the first meet.
- **Secondary Data** - Prior to intervention for People Centred Plan secondary data needs to be collected. This helps in correlating the problems and probable solutions.
- **Initiation of Meetings** - All the meetings need to be initiated by elected members at ward level or Panchayat level or members of CBOs.
- **Learning Materials** - Some kind of learning materials if distributed during the meetings have better understanding of being absorbed by the community. An easy to do People Centred Plan process with objective and outcome may be disseminated. The language can be simple, font bigger and the content is short and comprehensible.
- **Media** - Media may be contacted prior to the intervention. This helps in replicating the process elsewhere.
- **The use of Link with NRC <-> SRC <-> PRC** - Most of the times technical inputs are needed for People Centred Plan preparation. The NRC and SRC shall have data base of various experiences available in this network. For example, in Haryana for addressing Sanitation problem technical advice was needed, which is readily available in HP. Here a successful low-cost technique for sanitation in School building has been done. This kind of information NRC and SRC should be able to provide.
- **Marriage between Top down and Bottom up Approach** - We are at present in a stage where bottom up and top down approach can be merged together in resource mobilisation for people Centred plan. This helps in involving community and implementation of the plan and is also useful for correcting the one-way relationship (top down only).
- **Sustainability** - Wherever there is a need-based process which could even solve at least some problem of tola, mohalla or purva • the people centred plan could be sustained. However, it must be located directly in the Gram/Ward Sabha and Gram Panchayat processes.
- **Distance** -The challenges of doing people centred plan in distanced /far flung areas of the block needs to be addressed.

This model is an idea. The way of doing it may differ from place to place, depending upon the situation and circumstances. However, our experience in 16 panchayats of Madhya Pradesh, 2 panchayats at Haryana, 1 panchayat each at Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh has helped in developing this model.

© 2001 PRIA. The text may be reproduced for non-commercial purposes, provided credit is given to PRIA. To obtain permission for uses beyond those outlined in the Creative Commons license, please contact PRIA Library at [library@pria.org](mailto:library@pria.org). Please use the following citation:

PRIA (2001): Made Easy Guide to People Centred Plan Preparation



**Participatory Research in Asia**  
42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area, New Delhi-110062  
Ph:+91-011-29960931/32/33  
Web: [www.pria.org](http://www.pria.org)