

Unrolling ‘Amar Gaon, Amar Achoni’- A Study of The Role of Extension Training Centre (ETC), SIPRD, Amoni with Special Reference To The Nagaon District of Assam.

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The 14th Finance Commission’s rewards to the Gaon Panchayats of the country and its guidelines regarding participatory planning brought sea changes in the working pattern of the Gaon Panchayats of the state of Assam. Direct fund transfer to the Gaon Panchayats, preparation of holistic perspective plan by using Participatory Rural Appraisal tools by the villagers, preparation of resource envelop for generation of own source revenue etc. were not understandable by the PRI representatives, panchayat functionaries and by common people of Assam. So a huge capacity building task emerged and as the apex institute in the field of Training and Capacity Building, the State Institute of Panchayat & Rural Development (SIPRD) was entrusted with this responsibility. The study is confined in the role of Extension Training Centre, SIPRD, Amoni in providing much needed training to various stake holders of the planning process at the ward level of the Gaon Panchayats. Primary data regarding training were collected from the ETC, SIPRD, Amoni as well as the Block & Panchayat Offices. The study shows that panchayats have well initiated participatory planning process at the grass root level and also prepared a perspective plan in the form of Draft Status Report. Though everything was not right in the DSR yet planning for panchayat never remained a prerogative of a few.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY ARE

- i) To understand the process ‘Amar Gaon, Amar Achoni’.
- ii) To study the role played by the SIPRD, Assam in general and Extension Training Centre, SIPRD, Amoni in particular in providing support to the Gaon panchayats of the Nagaon district in preparation of ‘Amar Gaon, Amar Achoni’.
- iii) To study the plan prepared by the Gaon Panchayats of the Nagaon district in order to understand the working of the ‘Amar Gaon, Amar Achoni’.

METHODOLOGY

The paper is based on the data gathered from both the primary and the secondary sources. The secondary data have been collected from different books, journal, government circulars, guidelines, office orders etc. The data collection process was carried out in different phases. In the first phase, secondary data were collected to conceptualize the study and understand the research gaps. In this phase, literature was explored through using online search/web search and to state archives, and Panchayati Raj department, Govt. of Assam. Data regarding trainings were collected from the Extension Training Centre, SIPRD, Amoni and the panchayat offices of the selected panchayats.

In order to collect primary data all the 13 block offices of the district were visited. In order to collect primary data from the Gaon panchayat President and Ward Members as well as office bearers of the Gaon Panchayat, the data collection process was conducted through using qualitative tools and methods like Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and in depth interview. A comprehensive checklist was developed to gather the data through the process of FGD and in depth interview. The paper attempts to understand the process of institutionalization of participatory planning at the Gaon panchayat level through a study of the role of Extension Training Centre, SIPRD, Amoni with special reference to the Nagaon district of Assam.

The paper is organised in three segments. The part I is the Constitutional background, guidelines and provisions relating to participatory planning process of the Gaon Panchayats of Assam. The part II is the role of SIPRD, Amoni in carrying out the entire process of ‘Amar Gaon, Amar Achoni’. The Part III is findings and conclusions on the basis of plans prepared by the Gaon Panchayats of the Nagaon district.

Part-I

THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act was passed with the hope that it will transform our society from feudal to democratic mode by devolving 'power to the people' and alter our democracy from representative to participatory mode. It accorded constitutional status and institutional framework to Panchayats to strengthen grassroots level democracy through elected self-governing local bodies in the rural areas of the country. It also emphasised functional and fiscal decentralisation of powers to achieve good governance through people's participation and thus enabling transparency, responsiveness, equity, efficiency and accountability.

Article 243G of the Constitution provides for: "Powers, authority and responsibilities of Panchayat.- Subject to the provisions of this Constitution, the Legislature of a State may, by Law, endow Panchayats with such powers and authority and may be necessary to enable them to function as institutions of self government and such law may contain provisions for the devolution of powers and responsibilities upon Panchayats, at the appropriate level, subject to such conditions as may be specified therein, with respect to-

- The preparation of plans for economic development and social justice;
- The implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them including those in relation to the matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule."

The above provision is intended to empower the GPs by enabling the State Governments to devolve powers and authority including those matters listed in the Eleventh Schedule for planning and implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice. This will also cover the powers to impose taxes and provisions of funds to the Gaon Panchayats.

The Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution of India contains the following subjects:

1. Agriculture, including agricultural extension.
2. Land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation.
3. Minor irrigation, water management and watershed development.
4. Animal Husbandry, Dairying and poultry.
5. Fisheries.
6. Social forestry and farm forestry.
7. Minor forest produce.
8. Small scale industries, including food processing industries.
9. Khadi, village and cottage industries.
10. Rural housing.
11. Drinking Water.
12. Fuel and fodder.
13. Road, culverts, bridges, ferries, waterways and other means of communication.
14. Rural electrification, including distribution of electricity.
15. Non-conventional sources of energy.
16. Poverty alleviation programme.
17. Education including primary and secondary schools.
18. Technical training and vocational education.

19. Adult and non-formal education.
20. Libraries.
21. Cultural activities.
22. Markets and fairs.
23. Health and sanitation including hospitals, primary health centres and dispensaries.
24. Family welfare.
25. Women and Child Development.
26. Social welfare, including welfare of the handicapped and mentally retarded.
27. Welfare of the weaker sections, and in particular of schedule caste and schedule tribes.
28. Public distribution system, and
29. Maintenance of community assets.

The 14th Finance Commission; Awards and guidelines:-

Over the last two decades several initiatives have been taken by the State and the Central Government to encourage participatory planning process at the grass roots level. However, due to various challenges like resource constraints, inadequate facilitation and capacity gaps have hindered the pace of decentralization. Now, the 14th Finance Commission has awarded a substantial grant of Rs.200292.20 crores to be devolved over a period of five years exclusively for the Gram Panchayats for planning and delivering basic services as mandated to them. This is nearly a three time more than the award given by the 13th Finance Commission. Here is a list-

Serial No.	Finance Commission	Rupees in Crores	Time Frame
1	10 th Finance Commission	4,384	1996-2000
2	11 th Finance Commission	8,000	2000-2005
3	12 th Finance Commission	20,000	2005-2010
4	13 th Finance Commission	65,160	2010-2015
5	14 th Finance Commission	2,00292	2015-2020

(Source Finance Commission Reports)

Assam has been awarded with an amount of Rs 5,416.59 crores for the period of 2015-2020. Year wise distribution is as under-

State	FY 2015-16	FY 2016-17	FY 2017-18	FY 2018-19	FY 2019-20	Grand total FY 15 - 20
Assam	584.80	915.98	1,055.80	1,218.82	1,641.19	5,416.59

(Rs. In Crores, Source: 14th Finance Commission Report, 2015)

GUIDELINES REGARDING ALLOCATION OF FUND

- 1) The Commission has recommended grants for Gram Panchayats only (without any share for other 2 tiers) as GPs are directly responsible for delivery of basic services.
- 2) The grants are to be distributed to Gram Panchayats as per the approved formula recommended in the latest State Finance Commission (SFC) Report. However, in the absence of SFC formula, grant should be distributed using population of the Panchayat (2011 Census) with a weight of 90% and area of the panchayat with a weight of 10%.
- 3) The grant is to be used to support and strengthen the delivery of basic services including water supply, sanitation including septic management, sewerage and solid waste management, storm water drainage, maintenance of community assets, maintenance of roads, footpaths and street-lighting, burial and

cremation grounds and any other basic service within the functions assigned to Gram Panchayats under relevant legislations.

- 4) Grants will be provided in two parts namely- i) Basic Grant and ii) Performance Grant.
 - i) Basic Grant: The grants will be released to Village Panchayats for the delivery of basic services such as water supply, sanitation including septage management, sewerage and solid waste management, storm water drainage, maintenance of community assets, maintenance of roads, footpaths and street-lighting, and burial and cremation grounds.
 - ii) Performance Grant: The Performance Grant will be provided on the basis of receipts and expenditure received through audited accounts and increase in own revenues. The Performance grants shall be released the next year based on the following criteria:
 - (a) The Village Panchayats shall utilize 80% of the Basic grants and shall submit the Utilization Certificates along with the list of activities performed and such other reliable data as may be required.
 - (b) In case 80% of the Basic grants are not utilized, then 80% of the physical activities shall be completed.
 - (c) The Gram Panchayat shall enhance the revenue collection at least by 5% every year.
 - (d) Every Gram Panchayat shall update data in the IT enabled software.
- 5) It was advised that panchayats will utilize the grant mainly for providing basic services to the community only after proper plans are prepared by the panchayats in accordance with relevant rules, regulations, processes and procedures applicable in the state.
- 6) Enabling Local Participatory Planning ; - The MoPR, GoI, issued various guidelines from time to time on Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GPDPs), advising the State Governments to devise their own customized guidelines in order to enable the GPs to prepare decentralized participatory plans, taking into account the evolving scenarios of increased allocations under the 14th Finance Commission.
- 7) The Comptroller and Auditor General of India will audit and release the grant-in-aid. The C&AG will also conduct audit of expenditure in select panchayats in accordance with technical guidance and support.
- 8) The FFC has recommended that no further directions or conditions other than the directions given by the Commission, be imposed by the Union government or the state governments for release of fund to the local bodies.

Thus, GPs have been mandated for the preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) for economic development and social justice utilizing the resources available to them. The GPDP planning process has to be comprehensive and based on participatory process, which inter alia involves the full convergence with schemes of all related Central Ministries / Line Departments related to 29 subjects enlisted in the Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution.

What is Participatory Planning?

Participatory planning is a process by which the citizen in the village undertakes planning exercise for achieving the identified socio-economic goal by diagnosing the problems and finding solutions. The best way to initiative participatory planning is to ask people directly, what their problems are and what they see as possible solutions to their problems. Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is a well accepted process of participatory planning. Social map, resource map, seasonality diagram, Focus Group Discussion, transect walk are some of the tools and techniques of participatory planning. In Assam no GP have practised participatory planning prior the arrival of the 14th FC guidelines.

What is Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP)?

The GPDP is the development plan of the Gram Panchayat which is prepared through a participatory process involving all stake holders matching peoples' needs and priorities with available resources. The plan is

prepared through a village wide survey using participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) techniques done by the villagers themselves. Gram Panchayats are responsible for delivery of basic services to local citizens and address vulnerabilities of poor and marginalised ones. This can only be achieved through implementation of well thought out plans through efficient and responsible utilisation of available resources. The participation of villagers and the elected representatives in plan preparation will help the Gram Panchayat to:

1. Understand the gaps in the overall development and socio-economic needs of the village.
2. Assess the felt needs of the people and identify the magnitude of development gaps and problems
3. Prioritize the issues and problems existing in the village.
4. Identify available financial resources and match them to identified needs.
5. Formulate plan to address the problems by matching resources with needs.
6. Prepare a GP development plan in a scientific and participatory manner and
7. Ensure direct accountability of the GP to its citizens.

What does GPDP do?

The GPDP is a comprehensive plan for all round development of the Gram Panchayat which is prepared through a participatory process involving all stakeholders. The GPDP does three essential things-

- (i) It provides a VISION of what the people would like their village to look like.
- (ii) It sets out clear GOALS to achieve that vision, and
- (iii) Gives an ACTION PLAN to reach those goals.

GPDP actually aims to expand the governing space of the Gaon Panchayats. Different departments and agencies implement different schemes in the villages. Village Panchayats can perform as a platform to integrate and converge all these activities. GPDP is a comprehensive plan to build such a platform.

INITIATIVES BY THE GOVT. OF ASSAM

In the light of the 14th FC guidelines, the Govt. of Assam has decided to institutionalize the participatory Planning Process in the GPs of Assam under the title 'Amar Gaon Amar Achoni' i.e. 'Our Village Our Scheme'. Effort was made to prepare a holistic integrated gaon panchayat development plan through direct participation of rural people. Actually it was for the first time that participatory planning process was adopted in all the Gaon Panchayats of Assam.

OBJECTIVES OF AMAR GAON AMAR ACHONI

The prime objective of the planning campaign was to institutionalise a participatory planning process at the grass root level by involving different stakeholders like frontline workers of various line departments, SHGs and villagers through different Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) exercises to capture the felt needs and requirements of the rural masses before presenting them in the Ward Sabhas and Gram Sabhas.

STATE SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Assam is one of the states in the country that came up first with the state specific guidelines for preparing the Gaon Panchayat Development Plan. The process and steps proposed in the guidelines were tested and validated at the field level with Gram Panchayat members, frontline workers, SHGs and villagers. Every step included in the guidelines were finalised after discussing with the different stakeholders in the field. In accordance with the State Guidelines, Planning Manual on Gaon Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) was prepared both in English and Assamese languages. Every step in the preparation of the plan was tested in the field before incorporating in the manual. The whole process has been rolled out by SIPRD, Assam.

The planning manual, as prepared by the SIPRD, Assam mentioned about 13 steps for preparation of Amar Gaon Amar Achoni. Out of these 13 steps 11 steps are concerned with preparation of GPDP- while 2 steps

are related with implementation process. These steps and corresponding objectives are illustrated below in table-1.

Table -1

Steps	Particular work	objective
1	Panchayat Committee Sitting.	Activity planning to initiate GPDP process
2	Initial Gaon-sabha.	Formulation of Working Group and Campaign Committee.
3	Training at Panchayat level	Capacity development of rural folk to conduct participatory planning.
4	Situation analysis.	Understanding situation of the field for preparation of DSR.
5	Gaon Panchayat Sitting.	For presenting the DSR.
6	Visioning and Prioratising Gaon-sabha.	For approving the. DSR
7	Draft Plan Preparation	Making the plan document.
8	Project Preparation.	Making project out of the plan.
9	Panchayat Committee Meeting.	For discussing the plans and projects.
10	Plan approval by Gaon Sabha.	For approving plan in Gaon Sabha.
11	Final preparation of GPDP.	To shape the final GP development plan.
12	Implementation of projects.	To ensure people's participation in implementation of projects.
13	Project Monitoring Mechanism.	Monitoring the quality of projects.

(Source planning manual, SIPRD, Assam.)

Formation of Resource teams, Working Groups & Campaign Committees

The department of Panchayat and Rural Development, Assam came out with a circular for formation of one Resource Team, four Working Groups and two Campaign Committees in GP to act as the GP Plan Facilitation Team.

Resource Team:-The Resource Team of the panchayat consisted of 6 members including the GP President, Vice-President, GP Secretary and 3 Volunteer Resource Persons who are capable of supporting the Panchayat for the entire duration of GPDP. They will be referred as Panchayat Resource Persons and have to act as the planning cell of the GP. It is the sole responsibility of the GP to select the PRP- which should have at least female member.

Working Groups: According to the state guidelines regarding GPDP, there will be four working groups in each panchayat. Each Working Groups are to be consisted of 8 to 10 members- out of which minimum 2 will be women. Working Groups are required to support the GP in the process of planning. The Working Groups are as under-

- a) Agriculture and allied sectors,
- b) Poverty reduction and employment generation,
- c) Health, education, Sanitation, drinking water and Nutrition, Women and Children,
- d) Infrastructure and basic amenities.

The Working Group in Agriculture and allied sectors will be consisted of 8 members- out of which 3 will be Ward members, 3 will be VLEWs and 2 will be progressive cultivators of the locality. The working group in Poverty reduction and employment generation consists of 2 ward members, 2 Gram Sahayakas, 2 social workers and 2 CRPs from ASRLM. The Working Group in Health, education, Sanitation, drinking water and Nutrition, Women and Children, consists of 2 Ward Members, 1 Awanganwadi Worker, 1 Asha Worker and 3 social workers. The Working Group in Infrastructure and basic amenities consists of 3 Ward

Members, 1 Accredited Engineer, 1 Junior Engineer and 3 persons who are technical expert in various fields.

Campaign Committees:- The state guidelines also stipulated for creation of 2 Campaign Committees- GP level Campaign Committee and ward level Campaign Committee in each Ward.. The panchayat level campaign committee may have more than 100 members. The GP President was designed as Chairperson while the GP Secretary was the convenor of the Campaign Committee. At the ward level, under the chairmanship of concerned ward member, a campaign committee consisting of 20-25 members was also constituted for the purpose of environment generation regarding amar gaon amar achoni.

The members of the Campaign Committees are drawn from amongst retired government officials, members of NGOs, CBOs, members of Self-Help Groups, Mahila Mandals, youth clubs etc.

Part-II

THE ROLE OF SIPRD, ASSAM IN AMAR GAON AMAR ACHONI

The SIPRD, Assam was instrumental in operationalising the Amar Gaon Amar Achoni in the state. The institute has developed the planning manual in both english as well as assamese language and also worked in preparation of guidelines. The planning manual prepared by the SIPRD, Assam was accepted nationally and it was translated to 16 regional languages by different states. The institute also developed 75 Master Trainers, more than 13000 Resource Persons, Field Facilitators and Mentors for the entire process. The institute imparted training to 117888 persons in 1889 courses covering different clientele groups during the year 2015-16. This process has been undertaken on campaign mode in each of the 2200 GPs of the state covering 22000 wards or villages. Massive campaigns for awareness building among rural masses were taken up in each of the 22000 villages / wards of the panchayats. The GPs arranged procession, bicycle rally, motorcycle Rally, street Play etc. for creating the awareness among peoples. Field level participatory exercises for situation analysis and collecting of secondary information were taken up with the exercises like Social mapping and resource mapping, Transact walks, Seasonal diagramming, Van Diagramming, Pair wise ranking matrix, Focus group discussions etc.

The SIPRD, Amoni and its role:- The SIPRD, Assam has 12 Extension Training Centers (ETC) in different parts of Assam and ETC, SIPRD Amoni is one of them. It was established in the year 2006 for imparting training to Block and GP level officials covering three districts- undivided Nagaon i.e. Nagaon and Hojai, undivided Karbi-Anglong and a part of Morigaon district covering 10 Gaon Panchayats of two blocks- namely Kapili Development Block and Moirabari Development Block.

The Amoni extension training centre has a fine auditorium hall having 350 seat capacity, two training halls having a total 110 seat capacity, a well furnished conference hall having 40 seat capacity and a satellite training unit having 50 seat capacity. It has also 3 hostels which can accommodate 150 persons. Besides the Principal of the institute, it has 4 to 5 faculty members and other office staffs. It normally hairs services of Resource Persons- who are duly trained by SIPRD, Guwahati as well as paneled resource persons of NIRD, Hyderabad.

Using these infrastructures the Extension Training Centre, Amoni has conducted several rounds of trainings for different clientele groups to operationalise Amar Gaon Amar Achoni in Nagaon district. The following tables indicates year wise data of training programmes regarding *Amar Gaon Amar Achoni*.

In the initial years of unrolling of the Gaon Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), the institute organised 4 day long orientation programmes for 239 GPs of undivided Nagaon and 10 GPs of the Morigaon District. The GP President, GP Secretary and the AP Member from the GPs were invited. The basic guidelines of the 14th FC and the operational guidelines of *Amar Gaon Amar Achoni* were discussed. It also started training of Resource Teams from GPs. Thus a total 15 training programmes were conducted with 891 participants during 2015-16.(Table 1)

Table-1: (Year - 2015-16)

Sl. No	District	Target Group	No. of Training	No. of	Remarks
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			Prog.	Participants	
1	Nagaon	GP President, AP Member, GP Secretary.	3	274	1 day Orientation programme
2	Morigaon (10 Panchayats)	GP President, AP Member, GP Secretary.	1	27	1 day Orientation programme
3	Nagaon	Resource Team	10	540	3 days prog.
4	Morigaon (10 Panchayats)	Resource Team	1	60	3 days prog. (In campus)
		Total =	15	891	
			Programmes	Participants.	

Source:- Official record of the ETC, SIPRD Amoni.

During 2016-17 all Resource Teams as well as Working Groups from Nagaon, Morigaon and Karbi Anglong Districts were trained. Trainings were provided to ACOs for using software like plan plus as well as preparation of DSR. VLFs from the GPs were also trained up to work as torch bearers in conducting Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) in the Wards of the GPs. During this period members of Self-Help Groups, AWW as well as ASHA workers were provided training regarding their role in preparation of Perspective Plans for their GPs i.e Amar Gaon Amar Achoni.

Table-2: (Year - 2016-17)

Sl. No	District	Target Group	No.of Training Prog.	No. of Participants	Remarks
1	Nagaon	Resource Team	15	740	3 days prog.
2	Morigaon (10 Panchayats)	Resource Team	1	45	3 days prog.
3	Nagaon	Working Groups	32	1597	3 days prog.
4	Morigaon (10 Panchayats)	Working Groups	2	46	3 days prog. (In campus)
5	Karbi Anglong	Working Groups	01	31	3 days prog. (In campus)
6	Nagaon	VLF* (10 members from each panchayat)	97	7760	3 days prog. (In campus)
7	Morigaon (10 Panchayats)	VLF (10 members from each panchayat)	02	86	3 days prog. (In campus)
8	Karbi Anglong	VLF	03	117	3 days prog. (In campus)
9	Karbi Anglong	BDO, JE, AE	05	271	Day long Ori- entation Prog.
10	Karbi Anglong	VDC* Chairman	02	98	3 days prog. (In campus)
11	Nagaon & Morigaon	GP President & Secretary	03	237	Day long Workshop.
12	Nagaon & Morigaon	Accountant Cum Computer Operator (ACO)	06	250	3 days prog. (In campus)
13	Nagaon & Morigaon	Accountant Cum Computer Operator	12	550	Daylong prog. On Plan Plus.

		(ACO)			
14	Nagaon & Morigaon	Accountant Cum Computer Operator (ACO)	03	183	2days prog. on Writeshop.
15	Nagaon & Morigaon	Gram Sevok/Sevika	04	118	2 days prog. (In campus)
16	Karbi Anglong	Gram Sevok/Sevika	05	206	2 days prog. (In campus)
17	Nagaon & Morigaon	Self-Help Group Members	15	670	3 days prog. (In campus)
18	Nagaon & Morigaon	AWW	32	1990	3 days prog. (In campus)
19	Karbi-Anglong	AWW	03	115	3 days prog. (In campus)
20	Nagaon & Morigaon	ASHA Workers	06	330	Nagaon & Morigaon
21	Nagaon & Morigaon	Awareness Programmes (1 in each GP)	273	28049	Daylong prog. in each GP.
22	Nagaon, Morigaon & K/A	BDO, JE, Secretary etc.	08	213	Daylong Review Meeting
		TOTAL	540 Training programmes	43702 Participants	

Source:-Official record of the ETC, SIPRD Amoni.

Year 2017-18

Sl. No	District	Target Group	No.of Training Prog.	No. of Participants	Remarks
1	Nagaon	Rural People	130	11696	Gaon Sabhas attended by Faculty Members & RPs of SIPRD,Amoni
2	Nagaon	AWW	36	1760	3 days Prog.
3	Nagaon, Morigaon & K/A	ASHA Workers	260	20800	2 days prog. on PRI-SHG Conversion
4	Nagaon, Morigaon & K/A	ACO, DPM	08	811	Daylong Workshop on DSR Preparation.
5	Nagaon & Morigaon	Block & AP Functionaries	02	461	GPDP Mission Mode
6	Karbi Anglong	VDCs chairman & members	01	96	2days prog. on Village Development Plan preparation.
		Total =	437 Training Programmes	35624 Participants	

Source:- Official record of the ETC, SIPRD Amoni.

Year 2018-19

Sl. No	District	Target Group	No.of Training Prog.	No. of Participants	Remarks
1	Nagaon & Morigaon	GP Secretary, ACO	05	280	Daylong Satellite Training.
2	Nagaon & Morigaon	VLF	20	1700	Daylong prog. on DSR Preparation
		Total=	25 Training Programmes	1980 Participants	

Source:- Official record of the ETC, SIPRD Amoni.

Thus the ETC,SIPRD,Amoni has undertaken a total of 1057 training programmes for various stakeholders of the *Amar Gaon Amar Achoni* in the campus as well as at the villages. A total 81,197 participants were trained from undivided Nagaon, Morigaon and Karbi Anglong districts of Assam on the *Amar Gaon Amar Achoni*. All the GPs were visited and 130 Gaon Sabhas were attended by the faculty members and other office bearers of the of the ETC,SIPRD, Amoni alongwith the Resource Persons. Here is a list of resource persons of the ETC, SIPRD, Amoni.

Sl.No	Name	Designation	NIRD&PR Rank
1	Dr. Achuyat Akash Borah.	Principal,ETC,SIPRD,Amoni.	A
2	Mr.Nur Mahammed.	Faculty	B
3	Mr. Kularanjan Hazarika	Faculty	A
4	Mr. Kankan Medhi.	Faculty	A
5	Mr.Saptarshi Goswami.	Faculty	-
6	Dr. Sasindra Barthakur.	RP,(Rtd Professor AAU)	A
7	Mr.Harekrishna Borah.	RP, (Asstt. Professor)	A
8	Mr. Biju Borah.	RP, (Asstt. Professor)	A
9	Mrs. Nafisha Hussain.	RP, (NGO)	A

Source- ETC, SIPRD,Amoni

Part-III

There are 13 Blocks in the Nagaon district of Assam. The researcher visited Block Offices in order to understand whether the panchayats under its jurisdiction have prepared and deposited a copy of its DSR. The following are the points which came to our notice.

- 1) All the panchayats of the Nagaon District had constituted Resource Teams, Four Working Groups, and various environment generation committees. Panchayats took initiative to send members of such groups to the ETC,SIPRD, Amoni for training. Thus Capacity Building of those villagers took place.
- 2) As per the direction of the Panchayat & Rural Development Department, Govt. of Assam, each panchayat had to organize at least 3 awareness meetings in a day to sensitise the rural folk. All the panchayats in the Nagaon District had organized such meetings- which were attended by faculty members, Resource Persons with Office bearers of the SIPRD, Amoni. After such meetings, Padayatras, bicycle rallies etc were organized to aware rural folk regarding AGAA. Photographs as well as short video-clips of such activities were uploaded through specific software and thus it was monitored by both P&RD, Assam and SIPRD, Assam. Thus Capacity Building of the villagers on participatory planning took place.
- 3) All the panchayats of the Nagaon District successfully completed the process of DSR preparation. The First GP in Nagaon district which prepared DSR was the 'Dighaliati Gaon Panchayat' under the Raha Block. Other Gaon Panchayats of the district by and large followed it in preparation of their own DSR.
- 4) For the first time planning took place in open space and air with participation of all the stake holders of the society. Actually this planning process institutionalized 'Ward Sabha'- a non-existent in the Assam

Panchayat Act 1994. But some states of India have already included ward sabha in their panchayat acts in order to facilitate planning as well as participation of the people.

- 5) It was seen that attendance in Gaon Sabha meetings increased manifold.
- 6) For the first time in Assam, the rural folk used participatory rural appraisal tools like- social map, resource map, seasonality diagram etc to understand their strength and weakness i.e their resources and problems in order to formulate a holistic Gaon Panchayat Development Plan.
- 7) A close watch of the DSRs prepared by the GPs have shown that while giving insistence on social map they have not awarded due weight to the 'resource mapping'. As a result demand for construction of roads, community hall, community toilets, installation of street light etc. came to the forefront while schemes for tillers, fisherman were absent. Even required number of MGNREGA works were absent in the DSR. This is a huge mistake.
- 8) The GPDP guidelines indicated that there should be enough low cost, no cost works in the DSR so that Panchayat can carry out these functions continuously for the betterment of the villagers. But this was not happen. The DSR contained little of such works. Actually panchayats couldn't understand how to plan for low cost/no cost works and in which sectors.
- 9) The 14th FC guidelines also stipulated that the panchayats have to work to enhance their own source revenue in order to get performance grant. So it was expected that panchayats have to work on the issue of the resource basket i.e. human resources, natural resources, shops and business establishments etc. But nothing such happened. In Nagaon district no panchayat counted their various resources. Instead some panchayats constructed market shed in their GPs in order to raise revenue collection. Thus resource basket of the panchayats were not prepared.
- 10) For the first time planning by the panchayat were uploaded in the internet via plan plus, Priya Soft and such other software. Now it has become easy for the stake holders to look at the schemes of undertaken by their panchayats even using their android mobile phones.

CONCLUSION

These findings shows that 'Amar Gaon Amar Achoni' have introduced drastic changes in the planning process of the Gaon Panchayats of Assam. The GPs of the Nagaon district have done their dues to adopt the holistic planning process. The ETC, SIPRD, Amoni has undertaken huge task of capacity building of the rural folks as well as the PRI representatives and the functionaries of the panchayat. All the GPs were able to prepare a DSR of their own panchayats. However some lacking also took place. Absence of low cost/ no cost work in the DSR as well as absence of required works for Natural Resource Management component of the MGNREGA were some huge mistakes-which need rectification.

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