

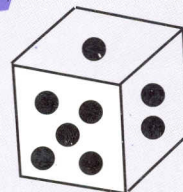
# WHAT WORKS

**A Resource  
Book on  
Training  
Techniques**



**Uma National  
Resource Centre  
Institute of Social  
Studies Trust,  
Bangalore**

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**“What Works”**  
**A Resource Book**  
**on**  
**Training Techniques**

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## Preface

In the last six years of our work with women in local governance, we came across a variety of techniques that were used by trainers to help women understand and effectively participate in panchayat activities. Depending on the organisation and the member's commitment therein, a suitable technique was adopted and mastered over time. In the course of our field activities and workshops, we found several groups using different techniques for neo-literates and barely literate women. These have compelled us to document them in a manner that will be interesting and immediately applicable to anyone who wishes to conduct such programmes.

It has been our experience that the Elected Women Representatives are very diffident and somewhat resigned to their fate. Therefore, it is difficult to make them talk about the hurdles they face as Panchayat members or envisage how much they are able to learn from the training sessions. It needs a lot of effort on the part of the facilitator to get them so involved that they come to a level of opening out and participating in the workshops wholeheartedly. It has been our experience that, when the session involves physical movements, singing, other types of performances, the facilitator can see the participants actually unfolding. They come out of their shells and express themselves freely and without any encumbrances. The responses of the participants varies which makes each workshops an enriching experience.

The resource book is divided into two sections. One deals with the techniques which can be taken up for group discussion, the other deals with games which requires full involvement of the participants. All these techniques in some way or the other are related to the empowerment of women in Panchayat Raj. These can be used in a variety of situations which enable women to experience the joy of sharing and learning. Hence each of these techniques has the potential of being used under broader areas of learning and enhancing communication skills through active participation and sharing.

November 1999



## SECTION ONE

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1	Cut-out Models	1	
	Role Play	3	
	Case Study	5	
	Street Play	8	
	Story	10	
	Participatory Lecture Method	12	
	Focus Group Discussion	13	
	Horizontal Interactions	16	
Mock Session	18		
Section 2			
	Games	Circle Game	20
		Stone Picking Game	22
		Snake and Ladder Game	23
		Mime	25
		Puppetry	26
		Disease Game	28

### Cut-Out Models

This training method uses models made out of card board. These cut-outs, representing different members of the village community have to be arranged on a thermocol sheet. This method can be used for teaching different issues relating to the working of Gram Panchayats. Eg: Gram Sabha, Model Village, Gram Panchayat, Societal Analysis etc.

*Topic:* Gram Sabha

*Purpose:* To make the EWRs understand how a Gram Sabha is conducted.

*Group Size:* 20 - 25 EWRs

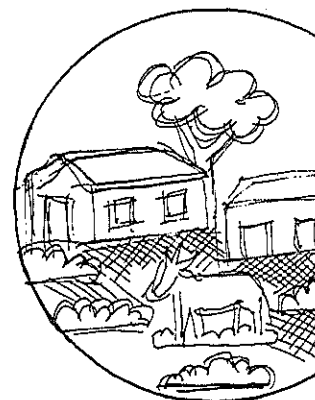
*Time required:* 1 hour

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A big room/hall

*Materials required:* A set of cut-out models depicting different village people, a thermocol sheet, *Jamkhana* /mat.

#### Procedure



*Step 1:* The facilitator asks the participants to sit in a circle on the mat.

*Step 2:* She gives a set of cut-out models and a thermocol sheet to the group.

*Step 3:* She introduces each model, giving them designations of the President, Vice President, Secretary etc.

*Step 4:* She asks the participants to arrange different models on the thermocol sheet in the pattern of a 'Gram Sabha'.

*Step 5:* The facilitator keeps observing while the participants arrange the models. She makes everyone participate and encourages them to give suggestions.

*Step 6:* Once the arrangement is over, she asks one of the participants to explain the placements.

(The EWRs arrange models accordingly to how they have seen a Gram Sabha that takes place in their village.)

- Trainer's Observation**
- President, Vice-President, Secretary and some village heads are made to sit on the stage or on a little heightened platform, even on a *katte* under a tree.
  - Men are made to sit in the front.
  - Only a few, or often, no women members are found.
  - Women, if at all, sit at the back.

- SCs/STs are made to sit in a corner.

**Trainer's Role** Based on the observation, the trainer asks the participant questions such as:

- Who are present in the Gram Sabha?
- Why are there few or no women present?
- Why men are made to sit in front?
- Why are SC/STs made to sit in the corner?
- How frequently should the Gram Sabha be held?
- Who should call the Gram Sabha? etc.

The trainer must ensure that each member participates in the discussion. After having got their answers, she must elaborate and build on the answers, correct them if they are wrong. The Trainer must also explain how a Gram Sabha should be actually held in the village.

**Outcome of the Method** It is the facilitator's responsibility to make sure that each of the EWRs understand how exactly a Gram Sabha is held, who should participate, how often should it be conducted, who should call the Gram Sabha, what are the roles and responsibilities of the President, Vice President, Secretary and other staff in the Gram Sabha.

Space for notes

## Role Play



One of the most effective methodologies used in training programmes/workshops is role play. It is a structured experience in which learners get an opportunity to act out problems concerning human relations and human interaction in front of a group of co-learners. This process is then subjected to critical reflection through feedback - given by both the observers and the actors. Since actual or close-to-life situations are enacted in a role-play, the dynamics of various roles are explored in depth. Since roles are explored from a distance, the learners do not feel threatened as in a real-life situation. This facilitates learning.

Women seem to experience what they have not experienced in their lives in the role-plays. They actually enact the hurdles they face as Panchayat members and also act out the resolutions through the role play method. The first step is to select a suitable theme or problem for the role-play. Next, different roles are allocated amongst the learners. Half an hour is given for preparation.

*Topic:* Gram Panchayat: Its access to various departments

*Purpose:* To make the EWRs and village people aware of the different departments they can approach to get their needs met

*Group Size:* 45 - 50 participants

*Time required:* 40-45 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A big room/hall

*Materials required:* Departmental clock available from ISST, Flip charts with the names of different departments

**Procedure** *Step 1:* Assign the role of EWRs to 5-6 participants and make them sit in a circle facing outwards.

*Step 2:* Select 38 participants and assign them the role of government officials of different departments, i.e. these officials represent the 38 departments which can be approached by the EWRs. These officials should form a bigger circle outside.

*Step 3:* The remaining participants can act like the general public with different problems.

*Step 4:* The facilitator should place the flip charts in front of the officials according to the specific department they



represent like PWD, Banks, KEB etc.

**Step 5:** The participants who represent the general public should approach an EWR with a specific problem who in turn, takes that participant to the department through which the problem can be solved. The EWR can do this with the help of the flip charts placed before each 'department'.

**Step 6:** Various government departments can be approached for specific problems. In this process, the participants also come to know of the different government departments and the officials whom they should approach.

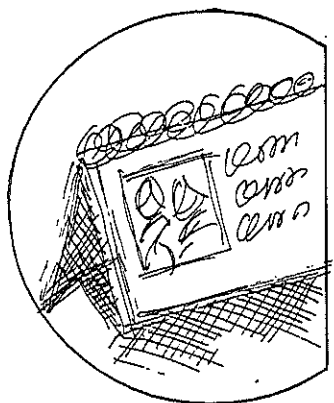
**Step 7:** The facilitator, then, can explain the same theme/issue/topic with the help of the departmental clock.

**Trainer's Observation**

- The facilitator should observe how an EWR approaches the departments.
- She should find out how many departments the EWRs are familiar with.

**Trainer's Role**

- She should tell the EWRs how to approach different departments and talk to the officials
- She should also tell them to be firm on their issues and get things done.
- Finally, there can be a sharing and analysis session, where the discussion should be focused on the observations, feelings and understanding and not on suggestions.
- The focus of analysis should not be on the individuals and their ability to role-play but on the theme or the problem chosen for the role-play. Different groups can be given different themes for role-plays.
- Alternatively, the same situation can also be enacted by different groups. This helps in highlighting different sets of perceptions and different ways of tackling the same problem.



**Outcome of the Method**

Since the EWRs are themselves involved in the play, the instances where they could approach various departments act deeply embedded in their minds. With this knowledge they can carry out the panchayat activities efficiently, and to every body's satisfaction.

**Case Study**

There are always some women in a particular group who are more assertive and have innate leadership qualities in them. They are effectively able to establish their authority. The trainers should collect such case studies and present them to subsequent groups. The case study method is actually a learning process whereby a particular case study helps others. All the participants get involved without any external pressure on them. Hence their responses too are spontaneous.

The case studies bring to light major social issues and problems, which can be discussed openly as they relate to a third person. Case studies help in presenting a wide range of options when faced with similar problems. This also helps in generating awareness, developing and planning analytical skills and drawing strength from the experience of others. Sharing a positive experience with others gives a renewed faith and confidence for one's own work and struggle.

Finding appropriate and relevant case studies is however often difficult, and collecting information to prepare case studies can be time-consuming. The facilitator has to be alert, asking questions, probing further, clarifying ideas and drawing parallels with the existing reality. Case studies help the facilitator to impart information regarding the importance of woman in panchayats, gram sabhas, gram panchayat meetings, decentralisation, communication skills, leadership quality, etc. very effectively.

This can be illustrated with the help of an example.

*Topic:* Don't women have the right to know?

*Purpose:* To make the EWRs realise the existing gender discrimination

*Group Size:* 20 - 25 participants

*Time required:* 30 - 45 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A big room/hall

*Materials required:* None

**Procedure** *Step 1:* The facilitator requests the participants to sit in a semi-circle.

*Step 2:* She stands in the middle and is visible to all the participants.



**Step 3:** She starts narrating the story of Gouramma, a Gram Panchayat member. "Gowamma became a panchayat member for the first time. She was greatly moved by the plight of poor women in the village. She wanted to work for the womenfolk in her village, and worked to see that women got their rights. She had heard about some government programmes which were aimed at helping women improve their economic status, and wished to get more details about them.

In the panchayat meetings, she attempted to get this information from the Adhyaksha, Upadhyaksha, Secretary and other panchayats members. But each time she was ignored, snubbed and shouted down. They would always say, "You have just entered the Panchayat and you talk so much", or "You leave it to us. We have more experience".

Not satisfied with the answers given, she decided to meet the BDO. But this experience was even worse. The official was very rude. Irritated, Gowamma threatened the official that she would approach higher officials. The officer arrogantly replied that he was not bothered even if she went to the DC, Vidhan Soudha or Delhi.

Eventually she met a woman member, the Upadhyaksha of the Zilla Parishad who was on a visit to the village. The aggrieved Gowamma poured out her troubles to the sympathetic Upadhyaksha. She told her about the non-cooperative attitude of the male members of the Panchayat and BDO.

The angry Upadhyaksha immediately shouted at the BDO and asked him to perform his duties properly. She firmly told him "Don't underestimate women. She is a member of the Panchayat and you have a duty to co-operate with all Panchayat members".

From that day onwards, Gowamma found that the officials were far more cooperative and this went a long way in helping her perform her roles effectively.

**Step 4:** A discussion on the theme.

**Trainer's Role** The facilitator should emphasise that knowledge can be acquired through interacting with others, by cultivating a desire to ask questions and a willingness to be open to new experiences and learning.

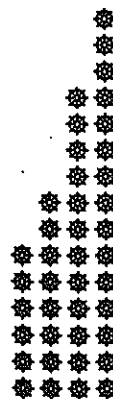
The facilitator should reflect how the voices of the



marginalised have become feeble in a social context that has repressed them. This case study can be used to demonstrate how panchayats provide spaces for the marginalised, especially the poor women (who are among the most victimised) and that these spaces should be used to stake claim over the resources that reach the village in the name of the poor and the marginalised. This information can be supplemented along with inputs on the federal structure of the Indian polity, the three tiers of Panchayat Raj as well as finances and resources of panchayats.

**Outcome of the Method** Such positive cases of women members boost confidence in other women members and they can take up activities and the challenges of the panchayat with greater courage.

*Space for Notes*



## Street Play

### Status of women in society

This method is useful when any information or message has to be passed on to a large group. This is done at the doorsteps of the participants through enacting a drama. No stage and costumes are either needed or used.

*Objective:* This session deals with a play being enacted to show how a woman is directly or indirectly looked down upon, from the time she wins the panchayat election.

*Group Size:* 5 - 10 participants

*Time required:* 45 - 60 minutes

*Facilitator:* A team of experienced trainers

*Physical setting:* A playground or any place where all the village people can gather

*Materials required:* A garland

**Procedure** *Step 1:* The village people are made to assemble in the ground

*Step 2:* The trainers starts with a small comedy skit to get the attention of the audience

*Step 3:* The team starts enacting the actual play. The whole play consists of four scenes which are as follows:

In the first scene, a procession of a man with a garland is being held. Some men carry him shouting loud praises. Others, who are supposed to be the villagers, follow them. On the other side two women are talking.

*First Woman:* "Why is this procession taking place?"

*Second Woman* (in a soft voice): "He is Ramappa, the husband of Shantamma who has recently won the Gram Panchayat election".

*First Woman:* "She has won, but why is he being congratulated?"

*Second Woman:* "This is what happens".

In the second scene, Shantamma is getting ready to go out with a letter in her hand which has come from the panchayat office informing her about first panchayat meeting, its venue, date and time.

*Ramappa:* "Where are you going?"

*Shantamma:* "To attend the Panchayat meeting".

*Ramappa:* "What will you do there? You will not understand anything. You better take care of household

activities". Saying this, he goes to the panchayat office.

In the third scene, a notice informing the second meeting of the Panchayat comes. Ramappa is not in station. The elected woman member of the neighbouring village force Shantamma to come for the meeting.

Meantime, Ramappa comes back to the village. As his wife is not at home, he enquires from the neighbour and is told that she has gone to attend the panchayat meeting. He angrily rushes towards the panchayat office.

In the fourth scene, the Panchayat meeting is going on. Everybody is involved in a serious discussion. Suddenly Ramappa enters into the office and pulls his wife, with her hair, out of the panchayat office, scolds and beats her. Others who are present there, look on helplessly.

**Trainer's Role** At this point, the facilitator speaks to the crowd, "All this time you saw how a woman is treated by her husband. This is the case of most EWRs." Then she says, "Have you ever faced a similar situation? How can you tolerate it?" With this an opportunity for a discussion among the participants is created.

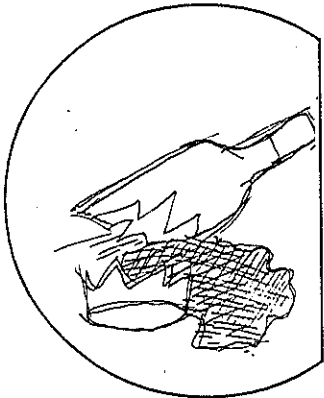
**Outcome of the Method** The facilitator makes the audience understand that unless women come forward to fight for their rights and empower themselves, the situation will remain the same.

Space for notes





## Story



Storytelling is one of the very effective methods of training because it creates a mental picture which involves the teller as well as the listener. And since a story has a beginning and an end and a moral attached, it becomes easier for the facilitator to convey a message to the trainees who are, to a large extent, semi-literate. Stories also involve the listeners to the extent that they start imagining themselves in a particular role which gives them courage to take on their responsibilities as members of the panchayat. Stories are hence both, entertaining and educative.

Stories can always be interpreted in more than one way, they can also have more than one goal. There are stories which highlight the importance of self-realisation, decentralisation, importance of women in panchayats, the stereotype image of a public figure, the benefit of team spirit, group thinking, etc.

The facilitator is not only a story teller, but stimulates thinking and criticism in the trainees. She should, by the way of tune, gestures, in between songs or pictures, involve the trainees that they understand a particular story and the message.

Stories can be remembered easily. Usually familiar stories are narrated so that the trainees can easily relate to them. Stories selected depend upon the topic. A trainer should also use her communication skills to reach out to a simple villager.

*Topic:* Self as a role model - "Confident Parvathi"

*Objective:* To develop confidence in the EWRs. To build up inner strengths.

*Group Size:* 20 - 25 participants.

*Time required:* 30 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A big room/hall.

*Materials required:* A mat/Jamkhana

**Procedure** Step 1: The facilitator requests the participants to sit in a semi-circle

Step 2: The facilitator stands near them so that he is visible to everyone.

Step 3: She addresses the audience saying, this is a true story of Parvathi who set an example before her village



folks by taking right decisions at the right time.

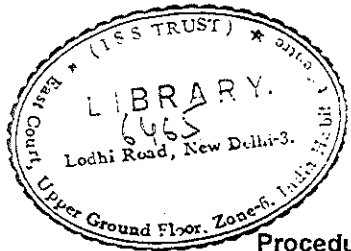
"Parvathi was a village woman who spent all her life looking after her family, taking care of the household matters. She also contributed towards the family income by running an arrack shop. When the government decided to elect women to Panchayats, life took a turn for Parvathi. She did not know what Panchayat was. But she was a very confident woman. She decided to contest the elections with spirit and vigour. As luck would have it, she won the election and became the Adhyaksha of her panchayat. But even with this, Parvathi continued to work as before.

One day, she noticed a crowd in front of her shop. She closed her shop and went out to enquire what the matter was. She found a crowd standing in front of a man who was lying on the road. His clothes were torn and he was in a miserable condition. On enquiring, she was told that it was because of her that the problem spewed. She was also told that arrack was one of the main causes of these village fights. She was told that the man had misbehaved with an adolescent girl.

This gave a rude shock to Parvathi. She decided to close her shop. She also took part in the anti-arrack movement and decided to make her village arrack free. She took the help of the villagers in banning the arrack sale. Her next step was to get some monetary compensation to the people who were selling arrack. In the end, Parvathi with the help of the villagers "succeeded".

**Trainer's Role** At this point, the facilitator should stop and stimulate the group to think and comment on the story. She should further explain how Parvathi, using her inner strength, could analyse her own responses and decide the course of action for larger goals.

**Outcome of the Method** The facilitator ensures that everybody understands and recognises their inner strength and builds it up. She makes them realise that confidence always helps win a situation.



## Participatory Lecture Method

This is a type of lecture method wherein the participants are involved in the discussion. Most of the information is extracted from the participants themselves. Filling the gaps is done by the facilitator. Every participant will have the chance to speak and share their experience. Everybody will feel one with the group. The facilitator can make use of charts, posters, resource books, etc. while teaching.

*Topic:* Gram Panchayat Funds

*Purpose:* To make the EWRs aware of the existing Gram Panchayat Funds and how to utilize them.

*Group Size:* 20 - 25 participants

*Time required:* 45- 60 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A room

*Materials required:* Charts, Posters

### Procedure



### Trainer's Role

*Step 1:* Make the participants sit in a semi-circle so that all of them can see the visual aids used in the session.

*Step 2:* Introduce the topic and initiate discussion.

*Step 3:* Ask them - "Do you know how much money is sanctioned by the government to the Gram Panchayats.

*Step 4:* If they do not know the exact amount, then you tell them the exact amount, i.e one lakh.

*Step 5:* Initiate a discussion on how to utilize these funds.

*Step 6:* After getting the responses from them, the facilitator can show (with the help of the charts) how exactly the funds should be utilised.

*Step 7:* Later, the facilitator can ask them "From where else can the funds be driven into panchayats?". To this they may answer - from shops, water tax, electricity bills, house tax, rent, road, auction of trees, garbage, etc.

The facilitator has to see that there are no gaps during the discussions. Whenever she senses it, she should quickly fill in the gaps and initiate further discussions. At no point of time, she should take up the whole explanation.

### Outcome of the Method

At the end of the discussion, the EWRs feel happy about their contributions. Before the commencement of the discussion, they feel that they are ignorant about the topic. But as the discussion progresses, it is they who do all the talking. This boosts their confidence about their ability and their experiences.

## Focus Group Discussions

Focus groups are formally constituted, structured groups of people, brought together to address a specific issue within a fixed time frame. It must not last more than one and half hours as the participants tend to get tired after this. It is a group discussion that gathers together people from similar backgrounds/experiences to discuss a specific topic. One must remember that it is not a group interview, so the group should be able to talk to each other freely about the topic of interest. Opportunity to agree or disagree with each other must be given to the participants. Focus groups indicate the range of a community's beliefs, ideas or opinions.

Focus group discussion generally produce a lot of information far more quickly and at a lesser cost than individual interviews. This method is excellent for obtaining information from an illiterate community. It discloses attitudes and opinions that might not be revealed in a survey questionnaire because of its flexibility. It allows follow-up responses as the researcher can be present at the session. It is well accepted by the community because group discussion is a form of communication found naturally in the community. It is good fun.

The trainer should help the group participate in a natural discussion. She should be aided by a pre-prepared question guide. But she should memorize the questions that have to be asked in order to conduct a smooth and natural conversation.

Various issues like Gram Sabha, Gram Panchayat meeting, decentralisation, societal analysis, etc., can be taken up in focus group discussions.

*Topic:* Analysing the felt needs of men members and women members

*Purpose:* To prove the importance of having women in Panchayat Raj Institutions.

*Group Size:* 20 - 25 participants

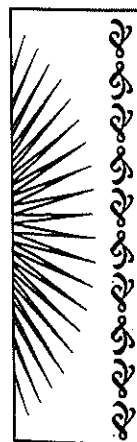
*Time required:* 60 - 90 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A room

*Materials required:* None

**Procedure** *Step 1:* The facilitator must inform the date and time of the discussion to the particular panchayat selected in advance so that the preliminary preparations are made.



**Step 2:** On the day of the discussion he should see that everybody is present - Adhyaksha, Upadhyaksha, Secretary, other panchayat members and others.

**Step 3:** The focus group discussion should start with the warming up session followed by a mutual introduction.

**Step 4:** The facilitator should start the session with a general question regarding their perception about Panchayat Raj System. The responses should start coming up gradually.

**Step 5:** She should further ask who leads all the three tiers and what population constitutes a Gram Panchayat?

**Step 6:** After a discussion on the above questions, she probes into the issue of reservation policy and why women are in the panchayats? Here quite a few come out with their knowledge of 33 percent reservation for women. Some say, because of this reservation policy, they were able to come out of their homes and see what the outer world was like. It also gives them a chance to fulfill their needs.

**Step 7:** The facilitator, immediately, at the mention of the word 'needs', diverts the discussion towards 'felt needs' of both men and women of that particular village/panchayat.

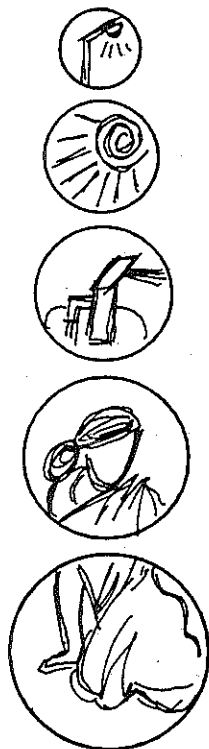
**Step 8: Men's felt needs can be listed as:**

- (i) A good transport facility so that they can commute to nearby towns easily.
- (ii) A community hall where entertainment and important functions, marriages, etc, can take place. This also fetches income.

**Women's felt needs can be listed as:**

- (i) Drinking water facility near their houses as the borewell is far off and one has to walk a long distance to fetch water.
- (ii) Street lights are necessary.
- (iii) A good hospital
- (iv) School for children

**Trainer's Role** At this point the facilitator should analyse the felt needs listed out by both men and women members. The felt needs expressed by women are important to their day to day life. There are their immediate wants, where as those mentioned by men can be postponed to be met at a later stage. With this analysis, the trainer shows the role of a



woman in panchayat. She should make statements like, woman comes in direct contact with family and society. She is the one who manages her family, right from taking care of each member, cooking, to even budgeting. If she can take care of her family so well, it is understood that she can efficiently handle a small society like that of a village, provided she has a proper training and guidance. A trainer should then assert the importance of having women in panchayats.

- Note 2**
- The questions asked should be flexible enough to allow the group to take the discussion ahead.
  - The trainer has to encourage the group to speak, and participate rather than she herself dominating the discussion.

**Outcome of the Method** The EWRs realise the importance of their presence and their role in the panchayats.

Space for notes



## Horizontal Interactions

In this method a team of elected representatives is taken from one Gram Panchayat to another Gram Panchayat to meet the elected representatives of that Gram Panchayat. An interaction between the two groups is arranged wherein various issues/information pertaining to their particular panchayats, their performance, their participation etc., is discussed, exchanged and shared. Here the trainers just facilitate the meeting and the two groups express their problems and come out with their solutions.

*Topic:* "Participation of Women in Panchayat activities and their achievements"

*Purpose:* To share each other's views with a feeling of solidarity.

*Group Size:* Two groups of 10-15 each

*Time required:* 60 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A room

*Materials required:* None



**Procedure** Step 1: The EWRs of a particular Gram Panchayat gather at the Panchayat office of the village that is being visited.

Step 2: The facilitator introduces the two groups to each other.

Step 3: She explains the significance of the visit. She says to the group, "We are here to listen to your achievements and your constraints. It would be interesting to hear this from you directly, rather than from anybody else".

Step 4: The group starts talking about their work, their activities, how they manage both the house and the panchayat office, their achievements, what constraints they face and how they overcome and solve their problems.

Step 5: Later, the visiting group also shares views, their work and activities.

**Trainer's Role** The facilitator has to see that there is a healthy discussion between the two groups. She should only facilitate the discussion so that the two groups interact, come out with their problems and try to solve this themselves, looking at each others' abilities and ways of solving them. She should ensure that the groups do not feel that she is imposing on them.

## Outcome of the Method

This type of interaction leads to an understanding between participants. When people from different geographical backgrounds meet with a specific intention of having mutual discussions, arguments and exchange of regional, social and cultural differences a thrilling environment for learning is created. Both groups feel proud to display their achievements.

Space for notes



## Mock Session

**M**ock sessions are used to highlight the importance of conducting the Gram Sabha, proceedings of Gram Sabha, proceedings of Gram Sabha meetings, importance of people's participation and functions of Gram Sabha.

A mock session is quite similar to a role play but it differs slightly from it in the sense that in a mock session, minimum two or more roles are necessary whereas a role play can be conducted by a single individual also. This is an effective means of learning because the participants themselves get involved and enact the different roles.

A Gram Sabha can be best understood with the help of this technique. The foundation of a democracy lies in the Gram Sabha where villagers can articulate their concerns, problems and aspirations about their own village as solutions to the problems of the village are best expressed by those most affected by them. Institutions and governments situated at distant places cannot offer appropriate and correct solutions needed for the village.

The Gram Sabha provides a forum where there can be a free and frank discussion of the problems confronting a village. Thus it is of great importance that Panchayat representatives understand the potential of a Gram Sabha.

*Topic:* Gram Sabha

*Purpose:* To understand the role of women in the Gram Sabha

*Group Size:* 20 - 25 participants

*Time required:* 60 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A room

*Materials required:* None

**Procedure** *Step 1:* The facilitator first introduces the topic to the participants. She asks whether Gram Sabhas are held in their villages.

*Step 2:* When they say they have seen Gram Sabhas, she asks them to enact the same.

*Step 3:* She gives them 15 minutes time for preparation during which they can choose their President, Vice-President, Secretary, other Panchayat members and the villagers and do some sort of preparation.

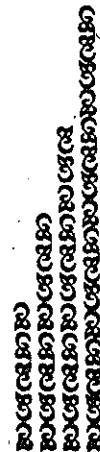


**Trainer's Role** After analysing the session, the trainer should explain to the participants the importance of the functions of a Gram Sabha, how it should be conducted, when it should be conducted and who can attend the Gram Sabha with special reference to the role of women in the Gram Sabha.

**Outcome of the Method** This session makes a great impression upon the participants. They even come out with their views. Some say, "We have never had such meetings in our villages". Some say, "We had Gram Sabha meetings but it was quite different from what you describe". Some others say, "We had a Gram Sabha but it was only a loan sabha".

Thus through this session the EWRs get a clear picture of what a Gram Sabha is and what should their role be in the Gram Sabha.

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## SECTION TWO

### GAMES

#### Circle Game

It is important that the representatives take decisions which are in favour of the community and not just for themselves. Projects implemented by the government should involve people from all sections of the community.

Decisions taken in the Panchayat deal with community problems. To address these problems, the community needs money which it generates within itself. For an equal distribution of money, power should be equally divided between all the people. Because of this, the government has decided to reserve seats in the Panchayat for the Scheduled Castes, tribes and the backward castes. Also according to the 73rd Amendment, 33 percent of the seats are reserved for women. Reservation is important otherwise common people would not be chosen, as power is always linked with possession.

*Objectives:* To make EWRs understand what reservation and dissemination of power means. To make EWR realise why reservation is important for the backward and the scheduled castes and tribes.

*Group Size:* 10 - 15 participants.

*Time required:* 30 - 45 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A circle drawn in the centre of the room.

*Materials required:* Chalk piece and a whistle

- Procedure**
- Step 1:* The facilitator requests the participants to stand along the circle drawn.
- Step 2:* The participants are asked to go around the circle.
- Step 3:* As soon as the facilitator blows the whistle, the participants should enter into the circle. Whoever stands outside the circle is out of the game.
- Step 4:* The facilitator reduces the size of the circle and again the participants to run around the new circle and get into it once the whistle is blown.
- Step 5:* Similarly everytime the circle is reduced in size the number of participants also reduces.
- Step 6:* At the end the size of the circle becomes such that only one person can stand inside it and she will be the winner.

**Trainer's Role** At this moment of time the trainer interrupts and explains that, this is how power needs to be taken with effort. It cannot be obtained without any effort, in spite of reservation. Reservation can only help a step, the next has to be made through individual struggle.

**Outcome of the Game** Further the facilitator elaborates and instructs the trainees to co-operate such that maximum number can fit in the small circle and thereby share the power.

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## Stone Picking Game

Power has traditionally always been in the hands of the upper caste people, mainly men. The Majority remained voiceless and oppressed. Since the panchayat deals with community issues and more and more power is given to the representatives, it is important to have representation from different castes and gender. This is also mentioned in the Panchayat Raj Act of 1992.

**Objective:** To make the EWRs understand how power can be acquired with the use of strength to make them realise that power has to be shared - irrespective of caste and gender.

**Group Size:** 10 - 15 participants

**Time required:** 30 minutes

**Facilitator:** An experienced trainer

**Physical setting:** A room

**Materials required:** Stones

**Procedure** *Step 1:* The facilitator throws the stone and asks the participants to pick as many as they can.

*Step 2:* Some pick up lot of stones and who are either shy or introverts pick only few.

*Step 3:* The facilitator asks those who have picked up more stones to give equal number of stones to the others.

**Trainer's Role** The facilitator makes the EWRs realise the tendency to hoard all power within oneself based on whether they agree to give stones or not. She also makes them observe how one asks for more stones. This is related to the restraints of her socio-economic cultural background.

**Outcome of the Method** The EWRs, through this game, will be able to analyse the imbalance in the society and have an understanding that power is meant for all and that it should not be only one person's asset.



## Snake and Ladder Technique for a Model Gram Panchayat!

In recent years Panchayat Raj Institutions are considered to be the ladder which will lead to women's empowerment at the grassroots level. The PRI greatly helps women to recognise and understand their roles and identifies in their routine interactions with the other members of society.

**Purpose:** To make women representatives understand their role in Panchayat Raj Institutions.

**Group Size:** A minimum of two and a maximum of four

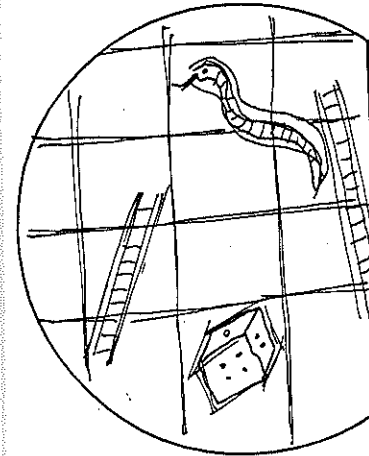
**Time required:** 30 minutes

**Facilitator:** An experienced trainer

**Physical setting:** A room

**Materials required:** Snake and Ladder board \*, dice, pawns of different colours

**Procedure** *Step 1:* Facilitator gives instructions of the game to all the participants. Each group or player start the game by throwing dice on the board. If the dice number falls on the House of the Snake's head, the player is bitten' and has to come down to its tail end. If the dice falls on the House of the ladder, the player not only climbs up the ladder but also gets one more chance to play. The facilitator explains the main aim of the game, representing ladder to the model way of Panchayats and the Snake, in reverse for the misuse of the powers and functions of the panchayat.



*Step 2:* The first player gets 2 and moves her pawn to the second house. That makes her entry with politics.

*Step 3:* The second player throws the dice and gets 5 and moves her pawn accordingly. It carries the message 'Help the poor' through the powers and function of the panchayat in eradicating poverty.

*Step 4:* The third player, at her turn gets 3 and climbs up the ladder. She also takes one more chance and gets 5. She places her pawn on the House. It carries the message working relationship with officials to carry on powers and functions of the Panchayat.

*Step 5:* Likewise, all the participants finish their first round and continue to play until they reach the last house of the board.

\*available from ISST

**Trainer's Role** The trainer explains the message of the game and how to help the people implement government programmes, and

peaceful functioning of the panchayats. At the end, she warns the EWRs not to be corrupt and negligent towards their works and adds 'it depicts their personality thereby leading them to unpopularity'.

**Outcome of the Method** When they are asked 'how did they feel?' each one of them expresses their feelings. "It is refreshing", "recreating", "nice" and so on. Through entertainment, they get some important messages about the path towards a model panchayat.

Space for notes

## MIME

**M**ime is a play where silence speaks through action. Here in this play, the problems of the village are expressed through speechless actions which is simple and more understandable.

*Purpose:* Enabling people to understand the power of decentralisation and to take part in the process of decision making at the Gram Sabha and Panchayat level.

*Group Size:* 20 to 25

*Time required:* 30-45 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A room

*Materials required:* A rope

**Procedure** *Step 1:* Facilitator explains the play to the participants where one acts as village head/gowda in whose hands the power is concentrated. Other players act as bonded labourers working under the signs of Gowda. They have no choice of say in their life.



*Step 2:* Gowda controls his labourers by holding each end of rope tied up around the wrists of the labourers.

*Step 3:* A social worker enters the village. He tries to liberate the people from the clutches of the gowda. But the ignorant people, who are accustomed to old practices refuse his advice.

*Step 4:* But the social worker is not one to turn tail at their first refusal. He keeps on paying visits to village to educate the people.

*Step 5:* Gradually each one of them will come out of the clutches (shackles) of Gowda and realise their role in local self-governance.

**Trainer's Role** The facilitator has to give a running commentary of the mime and then relate it to the conditions in their villages.

**Outcome of the Method** The age old custom of being ruled by the village head disappears as the people understand the strength in decentralisation of power and enjoy the fruits of democracy.



## Puppetry

Puppetry is used primarily to introduce certain topics on Panchayat Raj like Gram Sabha and types of Gram Panchayat meetings. Puppets help combine a basic understanding of Gram Panchayat procedures with relaxation and enjoyment. Puppets are tools through which puppetry as a technique can be employed in training the elected women representatives.

*Topic:* "Gram Panchayat Meetings"

*Purpose:* To make the EWRs aware of the Gram Panchayat procedures through entertainment.

*Group Size:* 20-25 participants

*Time required:* 45 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A room

*Materials required:* Hand puppet, a screen, 2 people who are experts in using hand puppets

**Procedure** *Step 1:* The facilitator has to make some preliminary arrangements before starting the session. He greets all the participants and makes them sit in a group.

*Step 2:* He holds a screen in front of the participants. Behind the screen rises a puppet who plays the role of a villager (Siddanna). Siddanna says 'Hello!', in a typical way and asks, "How are you?, How do you do?" All the participants are amazed at this. Some feel shy also.

*Step 3:* Another puppet (supposed to be an EWR) is seen walking swiftly towards the panchayat office. At this stage Siddanna asks

*Sidd:* What Parvatamma, you are in such a hurry. What is the matter?

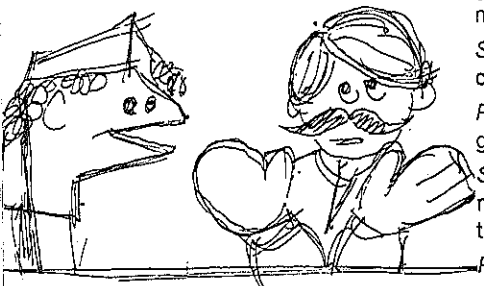
*Parv:* Hello Siddanna. It is true that I am in a hurry. I have got to attend an emergency meeting. I just got the news now and I have to go quickly.

*Sidd:* Hey! But you have to be informed much earlier. How can they inform you at the last minute?

*Parv:* Yes, I understand? But you see, this is an emergency meeting. So the rule does not hold good for this.

*Sidd:* Is it? You mean to say that there are panchayat meetings of different types? If so, how many types are there? Please explain them to me in detail.

*Parv:* Okay, But I will do it briefly because I am in a hurry.



Look, Siddanna there are three types of panchayat meetings like ordinary meeting, special meeting and an Emergency meeting. As you said for an ordinary meeting the Gram Panchayat secretary has to give a notice seven days earlier mentioning, the date, time, venue of the meeting. For a special meeting, the Secretary has to give a notice three days earlier and put it up on the notice board of the Gram Panchayat office. But for an emergency meeting these conditions do not hold good.

*Sidd:* Now, I have a fair idea of the Gram Panchayat meetings. But I heard that 4-5 members have not been attending the meeting.

*Parv:* In that case, we wait for the quorum for 30 minutes and if we do not have the necessary strength, then we postpone it to the next day.

*Sidd:* Wait a minute, you mentioned some word like 'quorum', what does that mean?

*Parv:* Siddanna, whenever a meeting has to be conducted there should be a 'quorum' i.e one third of the total panchayat members should be present. Otherwise, the President and other members have to wait for 1/2 an hour to see that there is a 'quorum'. If not, postpone the meeting to the next day or have it on a later date. Oh! I am getting late, let me rush to the panchayat office. Sorry Siddanna, I will clear your doubts later after the meeting. Maybe you can come to my house. Saying this Parvatamma walks away.

**Trainer's Role** The facilitator has to manage the puppet show very well. There should be a good coordination between the experts handling the hand puppets. The audience should not only enjoy the show, but also gain an understanding of the panchayat procedures.

## Outcome of the Method

When the facilitator holds a screen in front of them, the participants become curious to know what is happening and look at the facilitator questioningly. Initially participants feel shy to reply to the questions posed by the puppets. They hide their faces in their sarees and laugh. Gradually they overcome their inhibition and begin to talk freely.

There is a lot of entertainment in this process. However, it is not just amusement, but also a lot of learning. The EWRs remember it well since it is in the form of a play.

## Disease Game

This is a multipurpose game. It can be used in various situations based on the demand. It is mainly used in training programmes to find out the hidden qualities in the participants.

*Topic:* Disease Game

*Purpose:* To bring out the hidden qualities in the participants, To break the ice

*Group Size:* 15 - 20 EWRs

*Time required:* 30 minutes

*Facilitator:* An experienced trainer

*Physical setting:* A room/hall

*Materials required:* A chair kept in the centre of the room/hall

**Procedure** *Step 1:* The facilitator gives the instructions before the game commences

*Step 2:* Any participant is asked to occupy the chair voluntarily or as per the facilitator's orders.

*Step 3:* As soon as he/she sits on the chair, he/she act as though they have contacted some disease like cough, polio, etc.

*Step 4:* After having contacted the disease, she gets up from her chair and goes and touches another person sitting in a circle.

*Step 5:* The EWR who has been touched by the diseased person now proceeds acting in the similar fashion as the first one and takes her chair.

*Step 6:* As soon as the second EWR sits on the chair, she acts as though she has contacted a different disease and she too gets up from her chair. In a similar fashion, she repeats the act. This goes on till all the participants have had their chance to occupy the chair.

**Trainer's Role** The facilitator sees that everybody gets a chance to act. She can use this game to dig out the hidden skills in the EWRs. She can also use this game to break the ice. Some of the EWRs are shy and hesitant to open up. But in a big group they are able to express their skills and talents. Also through this game she gives some mental exercise to the participants. With the help of this game she deals with health aspects by telling that the chair is the source of disease. She uses the chair to explain how



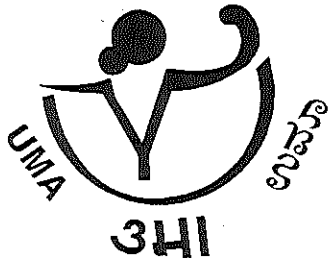
## Outcome of the Method

a village panchayat Pradhan works by making the chair as a symbol of power. She differentiates how a male Pradhan works, how a female Pradhan works, how an SC/ST or handicapped Pradhan works and so on, by making them act as different Pradhans, when they have occupied the chair.

The EWRs come to know about their hidden talents. It is a thoroughly enjoyable game. It stimulates their thinking. They also have an understanding about the responsibilities of the Panchayat Pradhan.

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### About Us

UMA is a Resource Centre for Women in Panchayati Raj, a project of the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST) located in Bangalore, Karnataka. ISST as an institution has made contributions in the area of research and documentation on issues relating to gender, poverty and Panchayati Raj.

UMA aspires to strengthen the solidarity and enhance the capabilities of women in politics by fulfilling the longfelt need for information exchange and networking among individuals and organisations working in Panchayati Raj.

UMA also publishes a newsletter related to issues in Panchayati Raj. A major component of the UMA project is the designing and implementation of training programmes for the women representatives elected to the Gram Panchayats.

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