

National Advisory Council

TOWARDS INCLUSIVE DEVELOPMENT TO EMPOWER MINORITIES

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE 12TH PLAN

Introduction

India's designated religious minorities, as per the National Commission for Minorities Act 1992, constitute about 18.4% of the population numbering about 189.5 million people (Census 2001). Of these the largest, the Muslim minority, counts for 72.8% of the minority population, 13.4% of the total population and numbers nearly 140 million people. However, for several decades following Independence, religion based demographic data for development was not collected in India, and previous five year plans have suffered as a consequence of not being able to plan adequate interventions for religious minority communities. While much more disaggregated data needs to be continually collected in the coming years, the 11th Plan did have the benefit of insights from data generated by the Census 2001 as well as from analysis of several rounds of the NSSO (43rd, 50th, 55th, and 61st rounds) and from other sources. Much of this data was analysed and presented before the nation in the report by the Prime Minister appointed Committee headed by Justice Sachar, which examined the socio-economic and educational condition of Muslims. The picture that emerged was one of socio-economic deprivation, gross inequality, and considerable exclusion of the largest minority from India's progress on key development indicators since independence.

The tabling in Parliament of the Sachar Committee Report on the 'Social, Economic and Educational Status of the Muslim Community of India' on November 30th 2006, the Prime Minister's new revamped 15 Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities and the inauguration of several schemes for Minorities provided us with an opportunity to undertake a course correction in the 11th Plan period.

Today on the eve of the 12th Plan, we must embrace the lessons of the 11th Plan period, acknowledging not just the achievements, but also without hesitation the limitations of some of the efforts in correcting this enormous development deficit that is several decades old.

Overall, whereas a significant start has been made in addressing the development deficits of religious minorities, serious bottlenecks remain - a) the scale of government interventions must be large enough to make a dent into the numbers of the marginalized, the depth of their economic and educational deprivations, and denial of public services; b) the design and implementation structures of the programmes do not often target minority settlements and people directly and effectively; c) the institutional structures designed to implement these initiatives - from the Ministry of Minority Affairs to districts officials and below - require strengthening, of personnel, mandate, training, and support; d) the demand side needs to be strengthened as well: the administration needs to plan and monitor programmes for development of

minorities in more participatory ways (consulting and planning with women, youth and working men from poor minority communities), and also the leadership and community institutions of women, youth and working men from poor minority communities need to be actively fostered; and e) allocations overall need to be enhanced, given that religious minorities, including Muslims, constitute 18.4% of the population, but budgetary allocations for schemes designed for them is a little over 5% of total plan allocations. The per capita Plan allocation of resources for minorities in 2010-11 at Rs. 797 is significantly lower than allocations for other marginalized groups.

Recommendations

I. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BOTH MsDP & PM's NEW 15 POINT PROGRAMME:

a) Implement MsDP & PM's New 15 PP with a vision and an implementation target of assuring basic services during the 12th plan period

It is commonly observed that settlements, both rural and urban, with high proportions of minority residents, lack most basic services required for dignified survival. These deprivations are similar to the condition of SC and ST settlements as well, and they arise from strong structural bias and discrimination, and will not end unless this is recognised and directly targeted. It is therefore proposed that in the 12th Plan period we make a commitment that all such settlements, rural and urban, would have a minimum of the following basic services: ICDS services; clean drinking water, individual sanitation and sewerage; and drainage. This assurance of basic services should be demand driven, in that the appropriate government would be obliged to provide these services, on demand from any settlement, within a specified time frame, using funds available from MsDP & PM's 15 PP.

b) Unit of Targeting:

MsDP & 15 PP guidelines must make the natural settlement or hamlet in rural areas, and ward and slum in urban areas the unit of planning. The physical location of any infrastructure – economic, educational, civic – in these minority habitations must be a mandatory condition under both schemes, and any other service must be directly benefiting the minority population. Data at these levels of habitation must be made available for implementation and monitoring.

c) Disaggregated Data - Establish a credible DATA BANK:

Ensure that the Assessment and Monitoring Agency under the Planning Commission is operationalized on an urgent basis and it includes technical experts, academics and civil society members.

d) Participatory Planning:

District Planning Committees (which are the same for both MsDP & 15 PP) must be operationalized on a mandatory basis, with guidelines clearly instructing the inclusion of people's representatives, through local NGOs or development activists.

e) Monitoring and Mandatory Social Audits

- i. MsDP & 15 PP Guidelines must mandate a specific number of Social Audits to be undertaken prior to initiation of plans, and during the implementation period of each specific project. Detailed procedures and institutional support must be provided for social audits as in MG NREGA. Community / social audit conductors must have access to natural settlement/hamlet/ward annual targets and outlays. These must also be placed on websites for full transparency. Oversight and monitoring guidelines must make mandatory all public accountability procedures including proactive disclosure of information at all levels (natural settlement/hamlet, block, district).
- ii. Local NGOs should be formally engaged in each of the 90 current MCDs, as well as in any additional MCDs that MoMA proposes to include in the 12th plan period, to build community-centered monitoring processes, including capacity building of local communities to conduct such monitoring on their own in the future.
- iii. The monitoring and evaluation mechanism under existing guidelines for both MsDP and the 15 PP consists of quarterly review meetings in each State. It must be stipulated that these review meetings shall give adequate notice and invite civil society representatives to make formal presentations to the State level committee. Such formal presentations must be duly minuted and placed in the public domain.

II. Multi Sectoral Development Programme (MsDP) for 90 Minority Concentration Districts (MCD).

- a. **Allocation:** Substantially enhance allocation in 12th plan
- b. **Need-based Proposals for MsDP with Synergy between Plans of MsDP and 15 PP rather than duplication:**

Revise MsDP guidelines and re-focus the programme away from topping up existing CSS schemes under the 15 PP. MsDP must take up works that are need-based, rather than preferring projects that aim to saturate coverage of already existing national programmes, particularly infrastructure projects (IAY/ICDS/PHC bldg. /classroom). While current scheme guidelines permit need-based plans, there is emphasis throughout the guidelines towards saturation of 15 PP schemes. Revised MsDP guidelines must removing this emphasis on 15 PP and instead emphasize local need-based plans to overcome local development deficits. This would enable poor settlements of minorities to identify what they believe are their most urgent needs and to focus resources on these, which could be drinking water, drainage, livelihoods support, electrification, support to dying vocations such as handlooms innovations in skill-based education, training to artisans with backward and forward linkages into

new markets, equipping technical institutes with adequate equipment and infrastructure, remedial school support for children of first-generation learners, education using new media for training and advocacy and so on. MsDP and 15 PP need to work in synergy rather than duplicate, such that 15 PP takes care of sectoral investments/ongoing CSS across the country, and MsDP fills gaps that particular communities /or settlements face, and which are not be covered by existing CSS.

c. Bottom-up Planning through information dissemination & public participation

- i. Since the entire scheme rests on the suitability of the district plans prepared by the District level committees, these must be preceded by prior dissemination of information throughout in the minority concentration areas (hamlet/ward). Such information dissemination must include traditional and locally accessible forms of communication, and not remain restricted to placement of information on the website of the concerned department/government.
- ii. Further a wide and visible series of public consultations, in the minority concentration areas (hamlet/ward) of the District must be part of the pre-condition for plan approval by MoMA.
- iii. The MsDP Empowered Committee in MoMA, must induct some civil society representatives, and additionally invite other civil society groups/institutions/activists representing minority groups in a District to make their views known, before approving District level plans. Further MsDP Empowered Committee must meet once every quarter for oversight and monitoring, and civil society representatives from the concerned State/District must be invited and given adequate notice to give the Committee their feedback.

III. Prime Minister's New 15 Point Programme for the Welfare of Minorities

- i. A limited number of schemes are included in the 15 PP. There is scope for expansion of the 15 PP to include other schemes, such as small and medium industries, youth affairs, agriculture, and MG NREGA.
- ii. Ensure effective earmarking of funds by ensuring Central ministries lodge those funds in a separate minor head of account.
- iii. Achievements under 15 PP should be disaggregated to enable monitoring that minority settlements and beneficiaries are actually gaining directly. Suitably revise monitoring guidelines to ensure ground level impact-based monitoring rather than monitoring of physical and financial outlays. Central Ministries 15 PP annual targets /outlays (and associated work plans) must be broken down consistently to the natural settlement/hamlet/ward level, so these too have 15 % targets / outlays. These must also form the basis of reporting achievements.

IV. Institutional Mechanism

Ministry of Minority Affairs to take the lead in creating an institutional mechanism at the District level, to secure effective integration between MsDP and PM's 15 PP; to ensure need-based planning through people's participation; to ensure on-going ground level impact-based monitoring which can feed into planning and implementation.

V. Education

a. Scholarship Schemes

- i. Make Pre-matric scholarship 100% CSS
- ii. Make Pre-matric and Post-matric scholarships demand-driven and universal schemes
- iii. Increase scholarship amount for Post-Matric Scholarship with rationalized and differing scholarship structure for different categories (10+2, Basic Degree Courses, Professional Degree Courses)
- iv. Increase amount and numbers of Merit-cum-means and Maulana Azad National Fellowships
- v. Ensure a radical simplification of procedures at all levels to make schemes accessible to those who need them most

b. Residential Social Welfare Hostels for Minority Children from Class VI-XII

To establish residential social welfare hostels in the educationally backward minority districts as determined by Ministry of Minority Affairs.

c. Residential Schools in Minority Blocks & Towns/Cities

In order to provide the best quality education, it is also proposed that one Residential School along the lines of Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas be established in a phased manner in minority concentration blocks and minority concentration towns/cities. Norms in these schools must guarantee admission to at least 50% children belonging to minorities.

VI. Basket of Schemes to build social capital among minorities and to enhance outreach of the ongoing programmes

It is important that minority youth, women and others are assisted to develop the organization and skills to demand and monitor government programmes designed for their development. Thus while the Government is the vanguard of the 'push' factor for development of minorities, the minority community will themselves have to be in the vanguard of the 'pull' factor and reach out to systems of governance to make them responsive. Several schemes are therefore proposed to enhance the long-term outreach and efficacy of all on-going programmes.

a. COMPREHENSIVE SCHEME FOR LIFE, LIVELIHOOD & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OF MINORITY WOMEN

The Scheme for Leadership Development of Minority Women that was approved in the 11th plan with a small allocation is yet to be rolled out. This pilot scheme must be re-designed and rolled out in the 12th plan, with a planned review at the end of the 12th plan period. This will be critical in providing experience, from which we can learn, derive realistic benchmarks, and refine effective strategies through which to launch upon more ambitious programming for minority women across the country in subsequent years. The pilot scheme which involves local NGOs in its operational plan will also go a long way in helping NGOs and civil society overcome their lack of experience of working with Minorities as a deprived socio-economic group, and begin the process of constructive and sustained engagement with these groups. It is therefore proposed that the Planning Commission re-design the scheme for the 12th plan and allocations be enhanced to Rs. 500 crores.

b. PILOT SCHEME FOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING (WITH 10 REGIONAL CENTRES) FOR YOUNG DEVELOPMENT LEADERS AMONG MINORITIES

Train 20,000 young men and women leaders across the country every year (1 lakh young leaders in the 12th plan period) towards the goal of:

- Perspective building, sensitization, awareness creation, community mobilization among people & community towards development of minorities
- Provide the active link between local government and community towards successful implementation of government schemes
- Train them in using IT-based and new media for advocacy and communication
- Training them as trainers, for capacity building of members of village/ district / state committees (of 15 PP/MsDP)
- Training them for social audit processes
- Training them to providing technical support to community mobilization/ project planning /audit.

The Leadership Training may be linked to the Centres for the Study of Social Exclusion and Inclusive Policy set up by UGC in the 11th plan period.

c. PILOT SCHEME FOR URBAN YOUTH SUPPORT-LINES

There is an urgent need for an intervention that helps the Youth in building their human, cultural and social capital. This can best be done by leveraging technology for the rebuilding of social and institutional networks and linkages, creating space for dialogue between community and state actors, and recognizing and overcoming trauma/ psychosocial concerns. This intervention will specifically include information

dissemination on career counseling and employment opportunities to youth from poor and working class backgrounds.

A pilot scheme to be established with a ‘hub and spoke’ hybrid technology model with an Urban Youth Support-line as the hub, supported by community outreach nodes that serve as spokes.

Model for the Proposed Urban Youth Support-line (UYSL)

The UYSL will be a 10-seater call centre working from 10 AM to 6 PM. It will be operated entirely by youth who will be part of the localities in cities where the project will be implemented. It will have the initial capability of handling 600 calls a day and can be scaled up as required. The following services will be provided by the proposed UYSL: Career Guidance: education, vocational training, Access to Government Schemes/Programmes, Placement Services, Facilitation for Certification, Institutional Linkages (financial etc), Sensitive Counseling (women’s issues, health issues, legal issues, identity, security). In addition to the services provided by the call centre the UYSL will provide location based outreach services in co-ordination with NGOs/CBOs/Ward Offices.

These would include:

- 1. Advise by trained counselors*
- 2. Skill Registry*
- 3. Life skills and Employability Training*

Indicative Budget: 1 Year for One Support-line in a City: Rs. 20 lakhs

A pilot scheme for setting up such Urban Youth Support-lines in 100 minority concentration towns and cities needs to be taken up in the 12th Plan. These will be accessible to Urban Youth of all communities.

d. SOCIAL AUDIT SCHEME THROUGH GRANT-IN-AID TO NGOS:

NGOs across the country should be invited through grant-in-aid mechanisms, to undertake Social Audits on an on-going regular basis on the schemes and programmes for minority development. 12th plan may specify that funds for this will be made available from the administrative costs of monitoring and evaluation from the MsDP and PM’s 15 PP.

VII. Maulana Azad Educational Foundation (MAEF)

- i. Since 1989, **over a period of 22 years since its establishment**, there has been no independent evaluation of the MAEF in the public domain. Thus there needs to be an independent evaluation and institutional restructuring of the MAEF with a view to transforming the Foundation from its current charity/welfare mode toward empowering practices. MAEF has the potential to turn into an independent hub of excellence for incubating innovations, pilots that may be up-scaled, and dissemination of best practices for minority empowerment, cutting across sectors and schemes within the broad framework of ending social exclusion, promoting integration and citizenship rights. The MAEF may undertake these pilot initiatives

through grant-in-aid mechanisms in a broad range of educational arenas such as - community based education, innovations in skill-based education, training to artisans with backward and forward linkages into new markets, training for empowerment of women & youth, equipping technical institutes with adequate equipment and infrastructure, remedial school support for children of first-generation learners, capacity building for good governance, education for civic empowerment, education for advocacy, and so on.

- ii. Institutional restructuring of this kind will require developing a blue print of changes in the governance, including structures and processes of decision making, and in the management for implementing these decisions; including the creation of a new organizational structure, roles and positions, criteria for the allocation of resources to various activities, the allotment of tasks to various units, and regular performance evaluation. The Planning Commission should initiate such a restructuring exercise in the 12th plan, and allocate resources for this purpose.

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