

INTRODUCTION TO ADOPTION OF VILLAGES BY NSS:

NSS volunteers generally work with villages, slums and voluntary agencies to complete 120 hours of regular activities during an academic year. As per the fundamental principles of National Service Scheme, a volunteer is expected to remain in constant touch with the community. Hence, it is of vital importance that a particular village/slum is selected for implementation of NSS programmes. As the NSS volunteer is to live with the members of the community and learn from their experience during his/her tenure in NSS, the village/slum should be carefully selected for adoption by NSS unit.

Adoption of Villages

Adoption of a village and area is a very meaningful programme in NSS. It is far better to concentrate attention on one village and take up the task for development perspective, than to fritter away energy in many locations involving too many activities which may not be completed at all or where the follow up action may not be possible. From this point of view, village adoption programme should ensure continuity of work vis-a-vis sustained action, evaluation and follow up work.

Contacting Village/Area Leaders

As a first step in this programme, it is necessary to establish contact with more than one village which would help to select a village where 'Leadership' is well established. In other words, selecting a village with proper leadership is very important as the sustained follow up action and evaluation is ensured in such places. To start with, the NSS unit can take the help of the Block Authorities, District Panchayat Officer, District Tribal Welfare Officer, District Medical Officer, Extension Officer of Agriculture, Irrigation and Education Departments for the selection of the village. It is to be noted that the selected villages should be within a short distance from the college so that constant contact can easily be made.

Survey of the Village/Area

Before drawing up the plan of action, it is absolutely necessary to conduct a comprehensive survey of few villages situated at a short distance from the college. The assistance from the teachers and students of agriculture, economics, commerce, geography, statistics, home science, social work, medicine, psychology and education etc. have to be sought for the purpose. Conducting socio-economic survey can be an interesting field activity which has direct bearing on the curriculum of economics, commerce, statistics, psychology, health education etc. The report of

such a survey will provide up-to-date information about the problems and potentials of the village and help in programme planning for village development. The applied field work will help the students to increase their analytical ability and deepen their thinking. Further, this will help them to identify the problems which have been left unnoticed. The survey work can also be accomplished with the help of PRA exercises (Participatory Rural Appraisal)

Identification of Problem(s)

It is on the basis of this need assessment that projects/programmes are to be formulated. The programme officers should use their discretion and should identify the projects which can be completed by seeking assistance from the communities/other agencies.

As the aim of adoption of village or area is to give new ideas of development to the villagers which would improve their living conditions. Once the trust of the communities is won, they start cooperating with the NSS volunteers and approach them for solution of their problems. One of the important services that can be rendered by NSS volunteers is disseminating information about the latest developments in agriculture, watershed management, wastelands development, non-conventional energy, low cost housing, sanitation, nutrition and personal hygiene, schemes for skill development, income generation, government schemes, legal aid, consumer protection and allied field. A liaison between government and other development agencies like Banks, IRDP, ICDS, NREP, DWCRA, JRY etc. can also be made.

The Programme Officers (PO) should motivate the communities to involve themselves with NSS for the community development work undertaken by the NSS unit. Further he or she will have to seek the help of various government departments and agencies for technical advice and financial assistance. Therefore, he/she must establish a good rapport with the government officials and development agencies. For this, it is better if the administration is taken into confidence by prior consultations.

The following villages were adopted by the NSS organization for their overall development under the scheme for the year 2012-13 spread over five core areas which are as under:-

1. Environment including preservation of natural resources and conservation of cultural/historical heritage;
2. Health, Public sanitization and Personal hygiene;
3. Rural development including Project identification, Programme Formation, Implementation and Evaluation;
4. Education and literacy including Legal awareness;
5. Emergency interventions including Trauma Care, Initial Counselling and data Collection.