

## Integrated Village Development

*Hamara Gaon*

### Models for Development

The year 2015 marked India's commitment to the United Nations 2030 Global Agenda on Sustainable Development and its reaffirmation to combat all forms of poverty and ensure improved lives and livelihoods of communities everywhere.

Poor and marginalised communities across India suffer numerous deprivations that impact the quality of life of their inhabitants. Poor infrastructure degraded local natural resources and inadequate linkages to markets combine to create a poverty trap from which village economies usually find it difficult to escape. While there are probably no simple interventions, 'silver bullets', that could enable the rural communities to break out of a systemic traps of poverty and deprivation, it is possible to devise packages that promote triple bottom wellbeing that can set their economies onto a trajectory of sustainable socio-economic development. An integrated triple bottom line approach focused on economic, social and environmental well-being targets issues related to the environment, economy and society systemically, as a whole, helping communities realise the benefits of development more synergistically and speedily. A focus on any one of these aspects in isolation usually cannot lead to the holistic transformations necessary to make them self-propelling for the future. This need for adopting such integrated models is also reflected in the global sustainable development discourse which highlights the significance of creating synergies between the sustainable development goals.

### The Existing Landscape of Rural Development

The current rural development systems follow a siloed approach that fails to capitalise on the principle of the whole being more than the sum of its parts. The implementation of development programmes by various departments and ministries is often disintegrated and fail to leverage on one another to maximise resource effectiveness and development impact. Without building a perspective on integrated development, these programmes are implemented in a supply driven mode without identifying needs or capitalising on opportunities - often failing to deliver on sustainable development outcomes.

Integrated development and decentralised planning schemes such as the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAANJHI) and decentralised district planning initiatives in the recent past have presented an opportunity to overcome the limitations of the current isolated approach. By demonstrating the potential of planning and implementing comprehensive sustainable development models, they can help reorient current systems to be decentralised and demand driven. In order to do so, it is

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imperative to inform policy and action on planning, implementing and monitoring such integrated models within a sustainability framework. Moreover, if they are aligned to the vision and approach of the sustainable development goals, local development processes are streamlined to achieve national and global development goals.

### TARagram Yatra 2016: Identifying enablers and policy shifts required for achieving integrated models of development

Development Alternatives (DA) is undertaking the development of its integrated village development programme - Hamara Gaon (an etymology that emphasises people's right to decide their development pathway as informed and empowered communities) – with the support of la Caixa Banking Foundation and the Coca Cola Foundation in Bundelkhand. The initiative targets issues related to the economy, environment and society systemically, helping communities achieve social and economic prosperity in harmony with nature.

TARagram Yatra 2016 is being conducted to develop a multistakeholder perspective on how to effectively plan, implement and monitor integrated models of development. The programme will include two field visits to Hamara Gaons. One of the field visits is to areas where we have strengthened local institutions and governance as drivers for change. The other will be to areas where village planning has been driven by the imperatives of securing natural resources for sustainable development. This will be followed by a round table consultation which will focus on identifying enablers and policy shifts required for integrated development planning and action to achieve the SDGs at the local level. Ground level practitioners, subject matter experts, policy makers and government representatives will discuss and deliberate some of the following key issues:

- How can local and decentralised planning processes (the bottom-up) be streamlined into the national and state planning and delivery (top-down) systems?
- How do you create a conducive environment to inspire communities to undertake action for triple bottom line wellbeing?
- How can locally achieved outputs and outcomes be tracked within the framework of the sustainable development goals?

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