

TWENTY20 VISION OF CSR IN KIZHAKKAMBALAM

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Abstract *A prospective ideology and a value system are the core of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and the same is being disseminated through the welfare activities. Thinking beyond the mandatory requirements and getting involved with the lives of the people in the community to alleviate the social problems and thereby creating resilience is the true reflection of such a strong philosophical foundation. The much discussed 'Kizhakkambalam' model had the true beginning as a CSR initiative of Kitex group and now this has grown as a model attracting the attention of policy makers, industrialists and academic community. The involvement of professional social workers and other welfare workers are very well evident in this model with the integration of community people. This article makes an attempt to document the model developed by Kitexgroup in 'Kizhakkambalam' based on a case study. The overall methodology of the study reflects a mixed application of quantitative and qualitative techniques. A base line survey conducted by the Kitex has been considered to understand the target population in the area and the in-depth interviews and group discussions were conducted among the stakeholders, including professionals engaged in the CSR initiatives to study the model. Sufficient literature has also been incorporated to explain the background and theoretical perspective of this study.*

Keywords *Development Perspectives in CSR, Twenty20 Vision of Kizhallambalam, Community Engagement, Development Model in Business*

INTRODUCTION

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) today is a much discussed term in academia and in the business all over the world. In recent years it has become a term with much business and professional attention. The Global Compact, the voluntary initiative between the United Nations (UN) and the business organisations, has been promoting corporate responsibility in the areas of human rights, core labour standards and the environment since its inception in 1999. The modern CSR is a recently evolved concept out of an idea with long history of social philanthropy (Gupta, 2014). CSR is viewed as involving the efforts of the corporate (the business organisation) to meet the social and economic needs of the society as catalyst of change. It is a part of the responsible business and bridges the gap within different stakeholders in business. The socially responsible behaviour of business is very much acclaimed by the national and local governments, non-government organisations (NGOs) and civil society members. In recent days, as observed by Banerjee (2007), many books have been produced (70% books on CSR has come out in last 10 years' time) targeting business practitioners, policy makers and social workers. This highlights the increased participation of policy practitioners and social workers in CSR activities. The models of CSR activities evince that CSR has gone beyond mere charity and donations / philanthropic activities in India. In many instances CSR is a well-planned and strategically

implemented need based programme among the stakeholder population. 'Many Indian businesses are known for staying one step ahead of the government, as far as the welfare of employees and societies is concerned' (Agarwal, 2008. P.11). One of such examples is practiced in Kizhakkambalam (Grama Panchayath in Ernakulam District of Kerala State in India), where business and social development has become two sides of a same coin. This paper has three major parts; the first part discusses the general context in which CSR philosophy and guidelines have been conceived by the corporate organisations; the second part of the article details the demographic features, socio-economic conditions of the people in Kizhakkambalam and the final part of the paper describes the model adopted by the CSR initiatives, people's participation and the changes in the socio economic life of people. The first part is theoretical in nature and it constitutes the background of the study. The second part is based on the empirical analysis conducted by the Kitex group prior to the scientific intervention in the locality and the last part is based on the qualitative analysis organised by the author by applying, interviews, focused group discussions and observation.

BACKGROUND AND CONCEPT

CSR is defined as the ethical behaviour of a company (or say business) towards society. It means engaging directly with local communities, identifying their basic needs, and

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integrating their needs with business goals and strategic intent (Agarwal, 2008. P.12). It is one of the best ways of considering CSR and explaining their fashion of operations. According to EU Commission (as cited in Crowther & Aras, 2008) CSR 'is a concept whereby companies integrate social and environment concerns in their business operations and in their operations and in their interaction with their stakeholders on a voluntary basis' (p. 10). Governments consider CSR as a business portion to the community wellbeing and community considers it as their share of participation in the business whereas no coercion or compulsion can instill an ideology of social welfare to the corporate as it must come from within the fundamental believes of the company. Many authors agree to the fact that one single entity can never make radical changes in Indian society but the corporations have made it clear in many instances that they have expertise, strategies, manpower, and money to bring in desired changes in the society (Agarwal, 2008; Gupta, 2014).

In Indian context the initiative of the Government is basically on framing policies and encouraging the corporations to follow those policies. Ministry of Corporate Affairs has provided some guiding principles based on the values of human worth and dignity of individuals to the companies. All these underpin the basic principle that no external forces can instill the value base of CSR in the corporate. The Companies Act, 2013, lays the policy foundation for the provision of spending at least two percent of the average net profits of the company on CSR activities. The business organisations with specified financial capabilities are encouraged to initiate and promote the activities that eradicate extreme hunger and poverty, promoting education and gender equality, empowering women, reducing child mortality and improving maternal health; combating human immunodeficiency virus, acquired immune deficiency syndrome, malaria, and other diseases; ensuring environmental sustainability; providing employment enhancing vocational skills; taking

up social business projects (Ministry of Corporate Affairs, 2012).

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO CSR ACTIVITIES

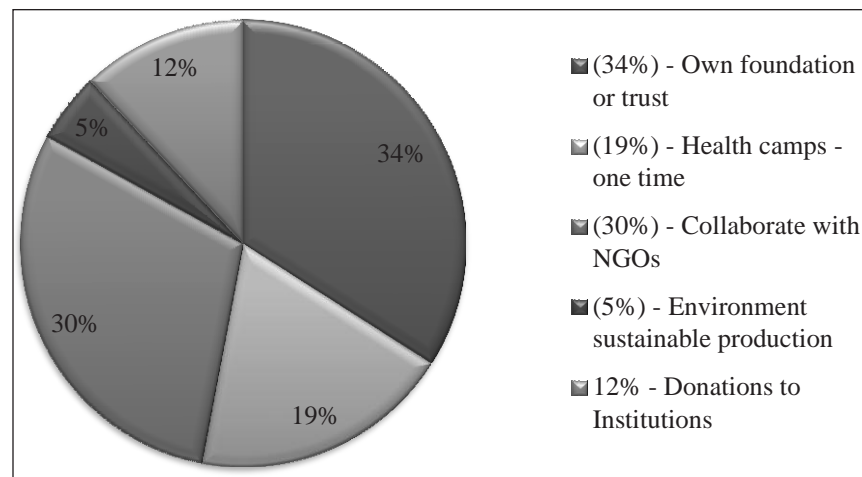
In India the companies with an annual turnover of Rs. 1000 crore or more, or a net worth of Rs 500 crore or more or a net profit of Rs 5 crore or more, as per the Companies Act 2013, spend 2% of their average profit in the last three years for CSR activities. The corporate companies spend the amount on promoting health, education, community/rural development, and on environment protection initiatives. Table 1 shows the different sectors and their percentage spending on various development activities in India during 2012-13.

The approaches of the companies vary based on their manpower availability, ideology, networking, stakeholder relations, expertise, and policy. The organisation system, the communication of the system with internal as well as external components, and the type of influence the corporate wishes to exert on the elements also decide the approaches and strategies to CSR initiatives (Riese, 2010). In some cases the business organisations take challenging roles to be socially responsible and they try to infuse a socially responsible behaviour among the stakeholders not through procedures but through positive attitudes. The major approaches in implementing the CSR initiatives by the companies are; a) forming own NGO (trust or society); b) collaborating with some NGOs whose objectives match with the CSR interests of the corporate; c) organising onetime events primarily that of health camps; d) providing individual or institutional donations; and e) ensuring environment sustainable production methods in the company. It is evident that majority of the corporate organisations either form an

Table 1: Industry wise contribution to the CSR in India during 2012-13

Industry	Health	Education	Community Development	Environment	Total
Oil & Gas	23.50%	35.29%	29.41%	11.76%	100%
Automobile	40.00%	10.00%	40%	10%	100%
Consumer Durables	24.76%	21.34%	15.25%	28.75%	100%
Iron & Steel	35.29%	23.53%	35.29%	5.88%	100%
Banking and financial Services	8.57%	20.00%	48.57%	35%	100%
Power	10.00%	10.00%	45%	35%	100%
Infrastructure	8.35%	30.55%	44.44%	16.66%	100%
Cement	22.20%	25.00%	29%	23.80%	100%
Paper & Pulp	19.90%	24.10%	18%	38%	100%
Pharmaceutical	30.00%	28.00%	22.00%	20.00%	100%

Source: Shachi and Sangeeta (2014)



Source: Shachi and Sangeeta (2014)

Fig. 1. Distribution of Approaches Adopted by Organisations in India during 2013-14

NGO as their own or they associate with some NGOs to mark their social responsibility. Fig. 1 shows the percentage distribution of various approaches adopted by the business organisations in India during 2013-14.

Some of the business organisations also associate with the Government initiatives to provide social welfare measures to the needy people. One of such examples is from Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Bharti Foundation, an arm of Bharti Enterprises, who joined in the 'Swachh Bharata' mission by spending Rs 100 crores each to construct toilet in schools from their CSR expenditure (Times of India, 2014). Effective partnership between the business, Government and NGO sectors are very much vital and imperative in placing India's social development on a faster track, (2014).

METHODOLOGY

This case study applied a mixed method to integrate the research. The primary focus was to understand the socio-economic life of people and the model practiced by the CSR organisation to bring in overall changes in the community. This model claims to prepare the whole community to be the model one in India by 2020. The secondary data source based on the survey conducted by the CSR organisation in the Kizhakkambalam Grama Panchayat was considered to understand the platform on which the model has been developed. The model practiced, methods applied, changes happened were studied using qualitative analysis techniques like; in-depth interviews, focused group discussion, and observations. In-depth interviews were taken from the Managing Director of the organisation, three professionals engaged in community mobilisation and integration and local citizen who are the primary stakeholders of CSR activities.

Kizhakkambalam is a 'Grama Panchayat' Local Self-Government Organisation (LSG) in the District of Ernakulam and in the Vashakkulam Block Panchayat (LSG organisation in the Block level). This Grama Panchayat has 19 wards in the 31.57 sq. KM (LSG website). There are 8000 families and 36000 people in the area (as per the records of Twenty20). This is an agrarian community and people cultivate rubber, plantain, tapioca, and coconut. The literacy rate in the area as per the 2011 census Kizhakkambalam has the literacy rate of 94.74 percent, and this is higher than the state's average of 94 percent.



Fig. 2. Area Map of Kizhakkambalam

ANNA KITEX GROUP

The Anna group has started its business organisation in 1968 with its Anna Aluminum company under the leadership of Sri M.C. Jacob. Kitex Garments Ltd, a part of the renowned Anna-Kitex group of companies was established in the year 1992. Complying with quality standards and global business outlook the company revenue has gone up to a turnover of over INR 524 Crores in 2014-15 from INR 1.8 Crores turnover in the year 1995-96. It is the second largest private employer in the state of Kerala and the second largest producer of children's apparels in the world (Kitex website). Its business operations are organised and managed in Kizhakkambalam. The companies are now headed by Mr. Sabu Jacob and Mr. Bobby Jacob.

The Twenty20 vision of Kizhakkambalam

Among the various approaches, the Kitex follow 'own NGO' approach and they found it effective for the integral development of Kizhakkambalam. Hence Twenty20 has been registered as a Society in 2014 (Reg no. EKM/TC/944/2014). Now Twenty20 is a vision as well as an organisation to implement various CSR activities. This CSR venture aims at turning Kizhakkambalam into a model Panchayat in India by the year 2020. The 'Twenty20' has a team of 164 people working towards the community integration, capacity building and empowerment. The team is consisted of professional social workers, doctors, nurses, civil engineers, electrical engineers, field workers, etc. Professional social workers with post-graduate degree in Social Works are appointed with a vision to coordinate the activities in each ward (Panchayat wards) and in the organisation. 'Social Workers are appointed as they are committed and professionally sound in dealing with the community interventions' (from the interview with the Coordinator of Twenty20).

The basic philosophy behind the CSR initiatives of the Kitex group is set by the founder as 'we live in this society, when our business grow the society must also grow'. It is basically the mutual relation with the society and being united to the society where we live in. Starting from the beginning the group believed in this ideology and all members in the group firmly stood together to fight against poverty of any type.

Integral development perspective

The CSR initiatives of the Kitex group had an integral development perspective right from the beginning. The terminology 'TSR- Total Social responsibility' has been used by the Kitex group for its CSR as the initiatives are focused on '*Giving Back to the Society in Totality*'.

Community development is about building active and sustainable communities based on social justice and mutual respect. It is about changing power structures to remove the barriers that prevent people from participating in the issues that affect their lives (as cited in website: <http://changesuk.net>). The initiatives and the changes people experience as part of the Twenty20 vision best matches with this outlook and Twenty20 succeeded in coming forefront to rule the panchayat in the local self-government elections. The people approved the changes they experience. 'We voted for the change' is the reflection of people on selecting Twenty20 candidates in Kizhakkambalam. The community mobilisation initiatives focus on community empowerment by ensuring wellbeing of community.

The community empowerment is an act of practicing community development principles like; learning, equality, participation, cooperation and social justice (International Association of Community Development-IACD, 2007). This makes communities confident, inclusive, organised, cooperative and influential in decision making. In Twenty20 vision the professional social workers follow these principles in their practice with the community. The increased overall polls in the LSG elections in Kizhakkambalam, participation of people in the social action movements are some of the examples of inclusiveness and confidence of people in Twenty20 (The Hindu Daily, 2015).

The major CSR initiatives

A scientific beginning requires learning and research is one of the tools of learning and articulating. The social workers organised a socio-economic assessment in all the 19 wards of the Panchayat and conducted house visits. The house visits were also used as a tool to build rapport with the community. The assessment resulted in classifying people into different categories, based on their economic and social support resources. The classification aimed at providing assistance as well as to set priority in including as stakeholders in the projects. Different stakeholder cards were issued to the people based on the assessment. The cards are named after colours (Blue, Green, Yellow and Red) and each card represents a category. Fig. 3 makes the structure of assessment more clear. The information regarding the family is also created in the online data bases and the information can be retrieved from the network. So the stakeholder information is available at all the points of intervention with the Twenty20 and service delivery to the stakeholders are based on the information stored in the databank. Social workers update the latest changes after community meetings and during project evaluations.

After the socio-economic assessment and resource mapping of the community the needs of the community were prioritised. The drinking water scarcity and related

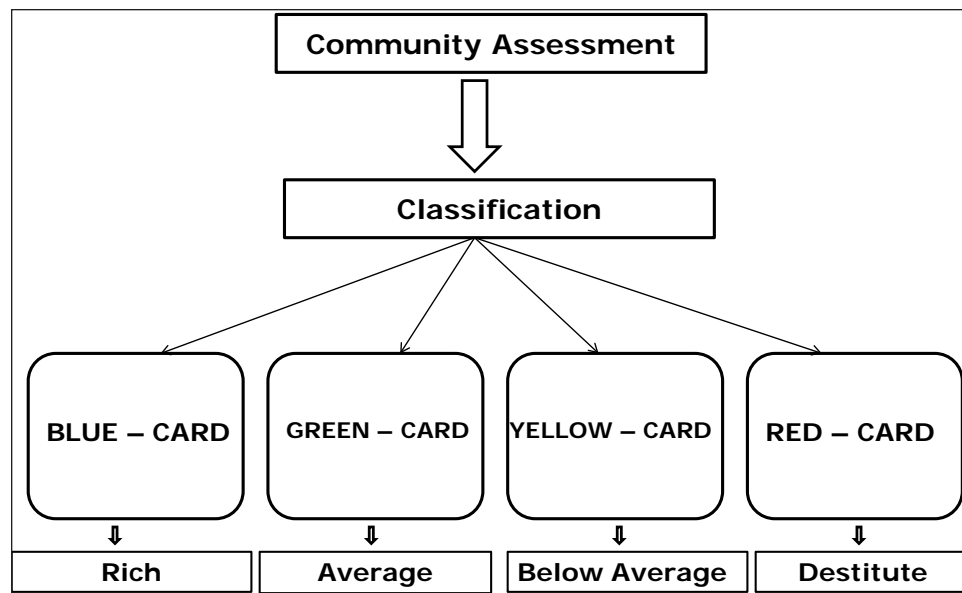


Fig. 3. Structure of Assessment

health problems were identified as the most prompting one to be tackled. Community water tanks with individual pipe lines, digging of wells were implemented in 17 water projects under the CSR initiatives. The quality of water is also periodically monitored and the results are published near the water tank constructed. More than 1000 people benefited directly from the water projects. Adding more value to these initiatives the efforts to raise the ground water level by planting trees, controlling pollutions, bringing people back to 'agriculture' were result oriented and they had immediate positive results. The agriculture was promoted by providing financial assistance, training, latest technologically powered equipment, manpower assistance, and organic farming techniques. With the support of machineries farmers found the manpower and expenses as manageable and agriculture as profitable one. This sustained the new trend of continuing with farming. With the aim of agricultural self-sufficiency and raising the agriculture revenue in Kizhakkambalam to '16 Million US dollars' in 2020 (target planned, as cited in the documents), 450 acres of land utilised for paddy cultivation, 190,000 banana plants, 10,000 nutmeg saplings, 9,000 coconut trees, 2,000 Rambutan trees, 2,000 Mangosteen trees, same number of mango trees, 1500 guava trees, 1,500 Sapota trees, nearly half a million high yielding vegetable seeds and saplings were supplied to the community. Along with agriculture promotion, dairy farming, umbrella-making, lottery ticket sale, and corner shops were encouraged among the most deserving stakeholders. Hens, ducks, goats, and cows were distributed to the farmers and imparted trainings to manage their Income Generation Programmes (IGP) in a sustainable manner.

Basic infrastructure development in the community was another target of the Twenty20. As a part of it roads and maintenance activities of many public infrastructure facilities were taken up with the participation of people. Housing of the poor in the community was a major initiative and there were hundreds of people either with no house to live in or with inadequate houses. The Twenty20 constructed and reconstructed 222 houses and expects to complete the target- 'all with proper housing' by the year 2018. 'All houses with toilet facility' was another project of Twenty20 and it was accomplished by constructing 110 new toilets and reconstruction of 280 toilets. Probably Kizhakkambalam could be the first county in the country with toilet facility in all the houses. All the 110 houses that did not have electricity facility were provided with the electricity connection with proper cabling and fittings.

Food security programme of the Twenty20 is the most popular one in Kizhakkambalam with maximum stakeholder participation. Twenty20 has started with supplying free food kits in 2013, when heavy rain destroyed the livelihood of the poor people and it was later expanded like a Public Distribution System (PDS). Twenty20 provides all the food items including oils, cereals, vegetables etc. at half the price of market rate. It works as a regular programme and 'Twenty20 Nagar' (a place where things are sold at half prices) also opens avenues for the small scale farmers, handloom workers, micro-investment units to display and sell their products. This project of Twenty20 helps people to have 'sufficient food and food items at affordable price'.

As a part of the CSR initiatives a multi-specialty health camp was organised in 2013 with 105 doctors, 245 supporting staff and more than 3800 people participated in it. Following

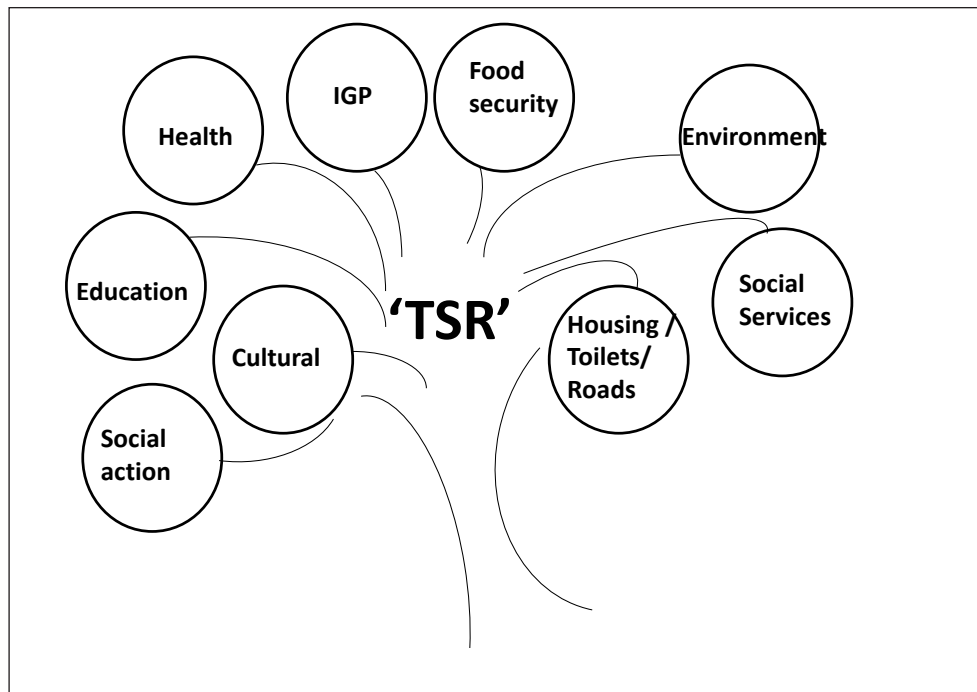


Fig. 4. Elements Connected by the TSR Vision

this Twenty20 has so far conducted 947 general surgeries, 632 eye surgeries and 1084 dental surgeries. Twenty20 also supports in cancer treatments, dialysis and provide free medicines and ambulance services to the people in the community. Education support, including infrastructure and vehicle facilities to the schools, free books and uniforms to the students, etc. are also facilitated. Social work professionals provide counseling, personality development trainings, career guidance, coaching, and family support services as part of the CSR initiatives. The cultural development of the community is facilitated through various celebrations, cultural fests, and family get-togethers. Religious festivals and important days are all observed in the community with the participation of people.

Twenty20 also get involve in social action programmes like, campaigns against alcohol, drugs and corruption. Rallies, demonstrations and marches were organised by the organisation. Participation of people made all those rallies and initiative notable and a mass letter signed by 16000 anti-alcoholism supporters were submitted to the local administrators. As a part of the de-addiction campaigns members from 35 families were treated and rehabilitated.

The total money spent on various activities in the community is more than Rs30 crore. Twenty20 has termed the CSR initiative as TSR (Total Social Responsibility) as the aim is the integral development of the community. A corporate is a social entity and along with business profit it must empower

the community in its totality. 'Development never can be partial; it must happen in its totality'. Fig. 4 displays the various elements connected by the TSR vision of Twenty20.

The role played by the professional social workers in this model panchayat is much significant. People now directly contact the social workers who facilitate and integrate development activities in each ward of the Grama panchayat. The approaches and strategies they follow (Fig. 5) include assessment and community mobilisation, participatory designing of projects, implementation of the projects, evaluation, documentation, feedback and follow up. During the community development practices they also involve in social action, advocacy activities. One of the practice models in social action is the displaying the list of provisions available in the ration shop (Unit of Public Distribution System- PDS). The social workers visit the ration shops in the Panchayat and they collect the details of each month's available stock which is published in front of the shop. This made the transactions more transparent and people developed a sense of confidence in social workers.

The qualities expected from a social worker in this Twenty20 vision is the commitment to the public cause, sensitive to the needs of public, mobilising community, developing projects, and documenting the progress of the community. When dealing with communities they were also involved in resolving conflicts, dealing with political pressure and dealing with groups of different vision and objectives. The

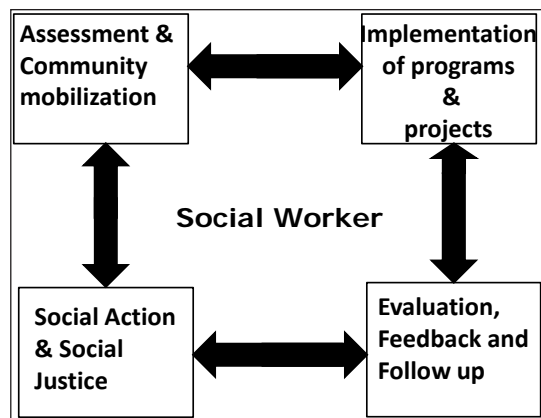


Fig. 5. Approaches and Strategies of Professional Social Work

vision Twenty20 is disseminated to the community by the social work professionals and for the profession it is one of the best models wherein a sizeable number of social workers are involved in the mission to make Kizhakkambalam a model Panchayat in India by 2020.

CONCLUSION

With the LSG elections in 2015, Twenty20 has stepped forward in becoming a model Panchayat by 2020. The people have 'voted for change' and Twenty20 won 17 seats out of 19 in the Panchayat. The candidates for the elections were trained and moulded to understand and respond to the needs of the community. In the history of Kerala a CSR initiative proved to be effective in bringing systematic changes in community and thereby becoming a significant power in local administration. Twenty20 is a vision with scientific approach to integral community development. Social workers and other professionals play a crucial role in integrating the needs, resources and empowerment initiatives. The Twenty20 has started an innings with democratic power, resources and a clear vision and 'five years' is a god time for evaluations.

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