

**EVALUATION REPORT ON LOK KARYA KSHETRAS
(PUBLIC COOPERATION CENTRES), 1967.**

1. The Study

A great deal of emphasis had been laid in the successive Five Year Plans on the importance of securing public cooperation and participation in carrying out development programmes. Many voluntary organisations had played commendable role in this sphere and Bharat Sevak Samaj (BSS) was an important one among them. The B.S.S operated in the rural areas through the agency of Public Cooperation Centres known as Lok Karya Kshetras (LKK). The main objectives of the L.K.K. -were to create social consciousness, develop local leadership and secure people's participation in various development programmes in rural areas. The Programme Evaluation Organisation undertook second evaluation study of the L.K.Ks at the instance of Planning Commission to assess the coverage of organisation and administration of Lok Karya Kshetras as well as the general. impact of the programme in the Kshetra areas.

2. objectives

The objectives of this study were to make an assessment of the following aspects of the operation and impact of the Lok Karya Kshetras:

- i) The organisation and administration of the programme at the various levels:
- ii) Method of programme planning and implementation, nature, . content and depth of the activities taken up in, different areas;
- iii) Extent, of mobilisation and utilisation of resources for different types of activities,
- iv) People's reactions and attitude towards the Lok Karya Kshetra Programme and the workers; and
- v) Collaboration and coordination with other development agencies such as the Block Panchayat, Cooperatives etc.

3. Sample Size/Criteria for Selection of Sample

The study was confined only to the Lok Karya Kshetras in the Central Sectors initiated before April, 1962. The total member of L.K.Ks was 141. The sample coverage was about 27 per cent. Out of the 38 Kshetras selected for the study, 31 were run by the Bharat Sevak Samaj, 2 by the Bhartiya Grameen Mahila Sangh and one each by the Bhartiya Adajati Sevak Sangh, Kasturba National Memorial Trust, Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development, Pragananda Jana Seva Sangh and the Rajasthan Vidya Peeth.

Three villages per Kshetra and 15 households per village were selected according to random sampling. Besides this, 3 or 4 knowledgeable persons in the Kshetra area were also interviewed. In all, a sample of all sample villages, 1904 villagers including knowledgeable persons and 79 workers were taken for collection of data.

4. Reference Period

The study was conducted in 1964 and the data were collected for the years 1961-62 to 1962-63 and April to December 1963.

5. Main Findings

1. The Lok Karya Kshetra had given more attention to carrying out social education activities than others. Local works, mainly repair of village roads, were widely undertaken in the Kshetra area. The average value of the community works, per sample village of the Kshetra, was estimated to be about Rs.2200, of which works undertaken exclusively by the Lok Karya Kshetra (LKK) accounted for about 37 per cent.

2. The Lok- Karya Kshetra programme, by and large, relied almost entirely on the grants from the Govt. As already pointed out in the first evaluation report, this had created an impression that the Bharat Sevak Samaj, which was the central coordinating agency for the programme, had acted only as an agent for the distribution of some limited government grants. No change had been noticed over the years.

3. The average annual income per reporting Kshetra was Rs.4536 in 1961-62 and Rs.4368 in 1962-63. Grants from the Planning Commission accounted for 97 per cent in 1961-62 and 89 per cent in 1962-63.

4. The percentage of expenditure to total income was around 92 both in 1961-62 & 1962-63.

5. Out of the 38 Lok Karya Kshetras studied , 21 reported having some record of accounts, in the remaining 17 kshetras, the accounts were not satisfactorily maintained. The accounts of many kshetras were not regularly audited. As regards utilisation of grants given to the kshdtras, it was abserved that, by and large, these grants were utilised properly by most of the kshetras. only in seven cases, some instances of irregularity in use of funds or supplies were reported.

6. The contracts and communication between the L.K.K. and other agencies, interested in development programmes, the block, the Panchayat Samiti and the Panchayat had not been established on a firm basis.

7. The spirit of self reliance and self help had **not taken** strong roots to any significant degree.

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8. Though the area generally covered by kshetra was almost the same as that of V.L.W. circle, there were on an average, two full time workers, sometimes assisted by part time workers also in kshestra, in contrast to only one VLW.

9. The system of appointing part time workers for doing some specific activities had not given substantial returns and whenever part time workers, happened to be local influential persons, they were not found to be accountable to the Mukhya Sahyogi. Enquiry had also revealed that the workers did not receive the salary regularly every month.

6. **Major Suggestions**

For better supervision and guidance, the Lok **Karya Kshetra** (L.K..K.) worker should maintain a daily diary of work done by him.

2. The programme should be brought closer to the functioning of the Panchayati Raj institutions. The Panchayati Raj institutions and other Departments should be induced to entrust the L.K.K with funds and programmes as had been reported in a few states.

3. The area of operation of a worker in the L.K.K, should correspond to a V.L.W circle and the kshestra area to 2 to 3 V.L.W. circles according to the number of workers in position. This would facilitate integration of the work of the Kshetras with that of the V.L.Ws as well as the coverage of the block area within a reasonable period of 3-4 years.

4. It should have proper leadership and directions at all levels.

5. Funds should be ear-marked for organising certain activities on a regular basis such as craft classes, recreation centres, literacy classes etc. In view of this, the role of the, sahyogi should be re-examined and his functions more precisely formulated so that instead of relying on promotional work only his time can be utilised in other gainful ways.

6. In the light of the experience gained, it would be better to concentrate on consolidation and revitalization of the kshetras already established, rather than on expansion of the programme.