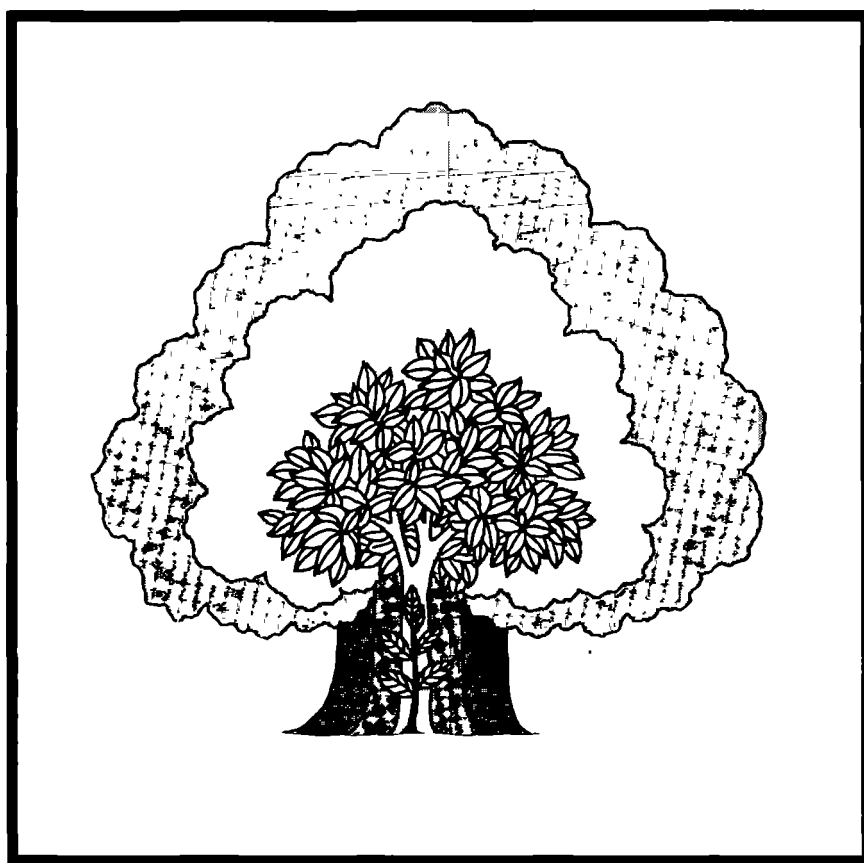
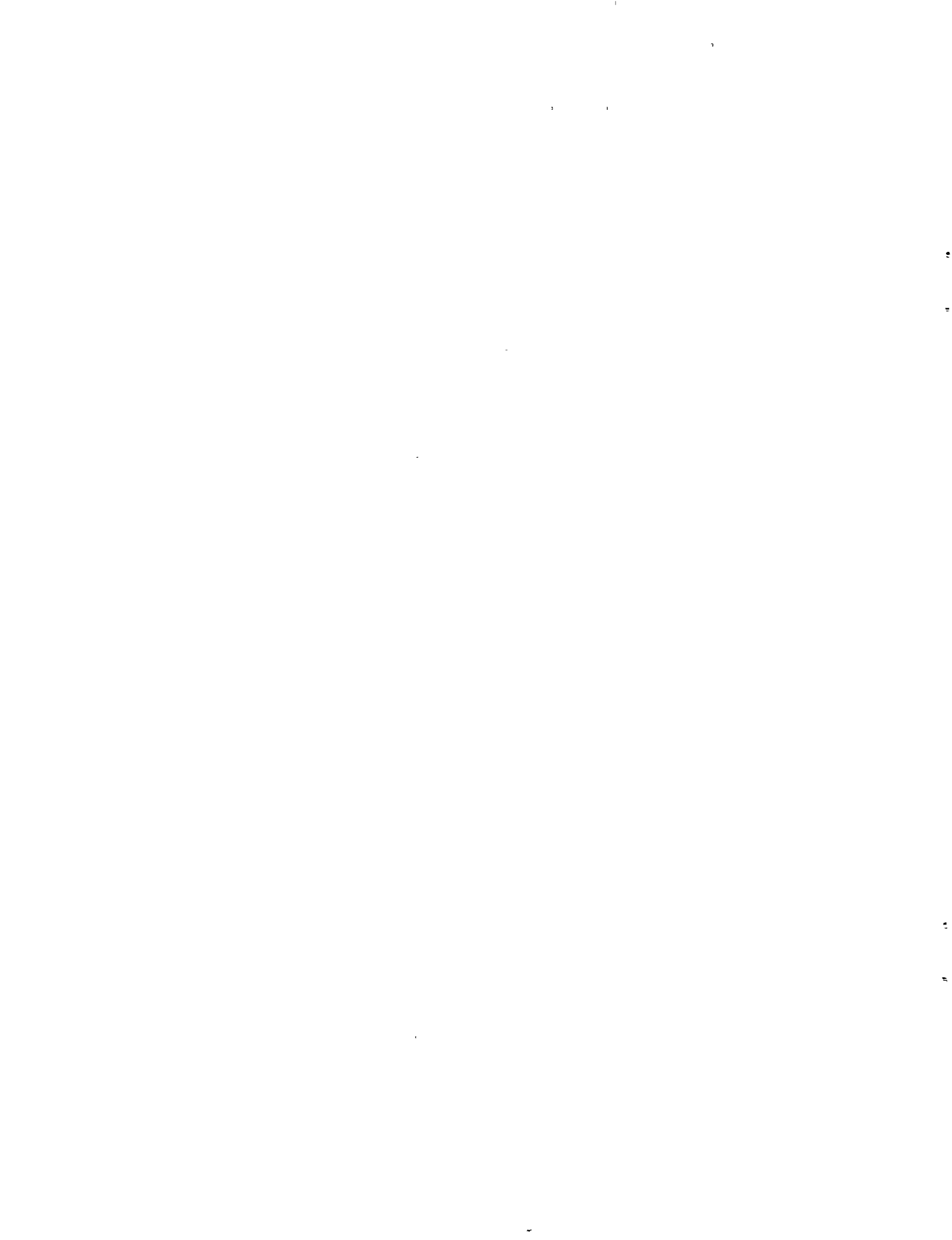


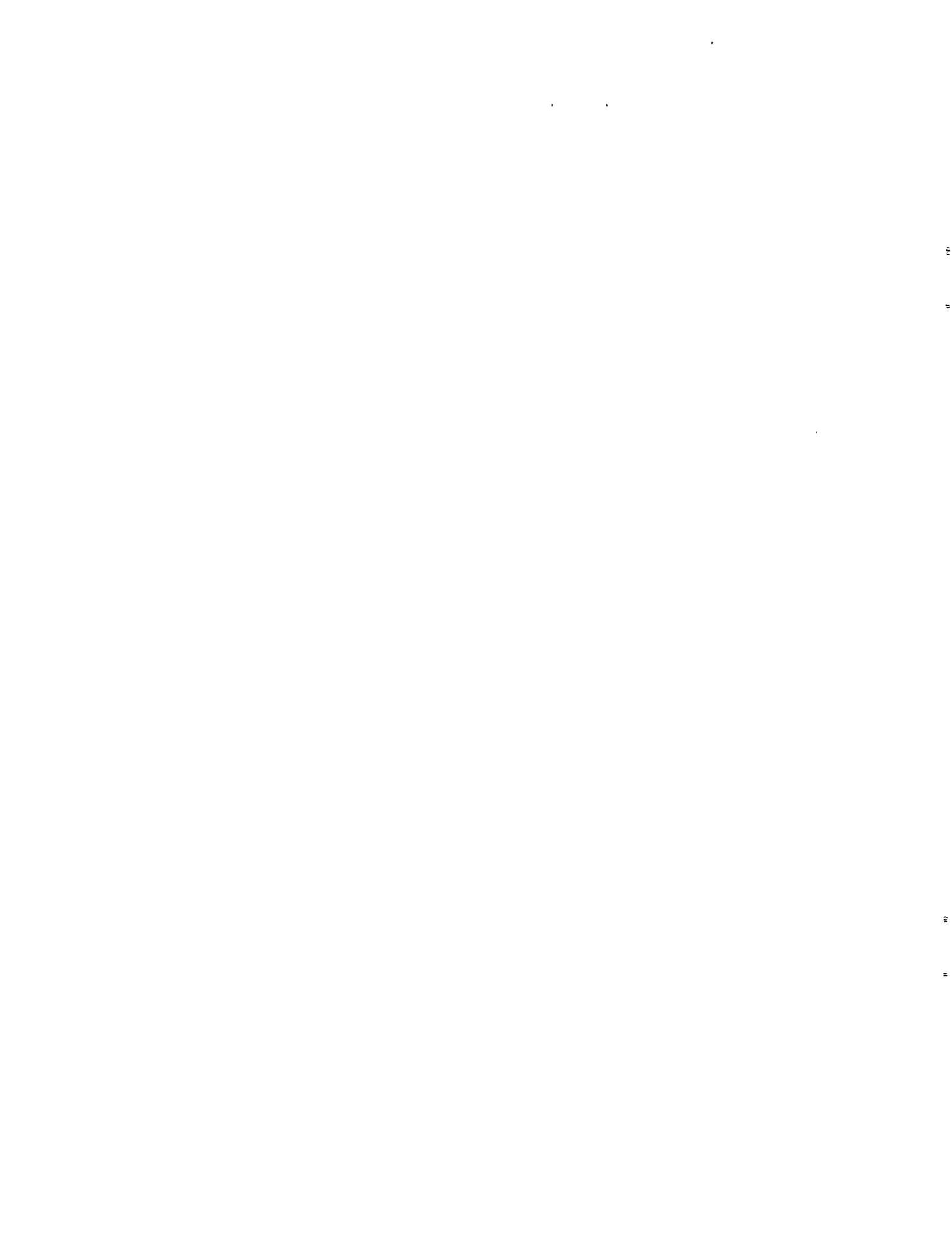
Process Documentation In Social Development Programme





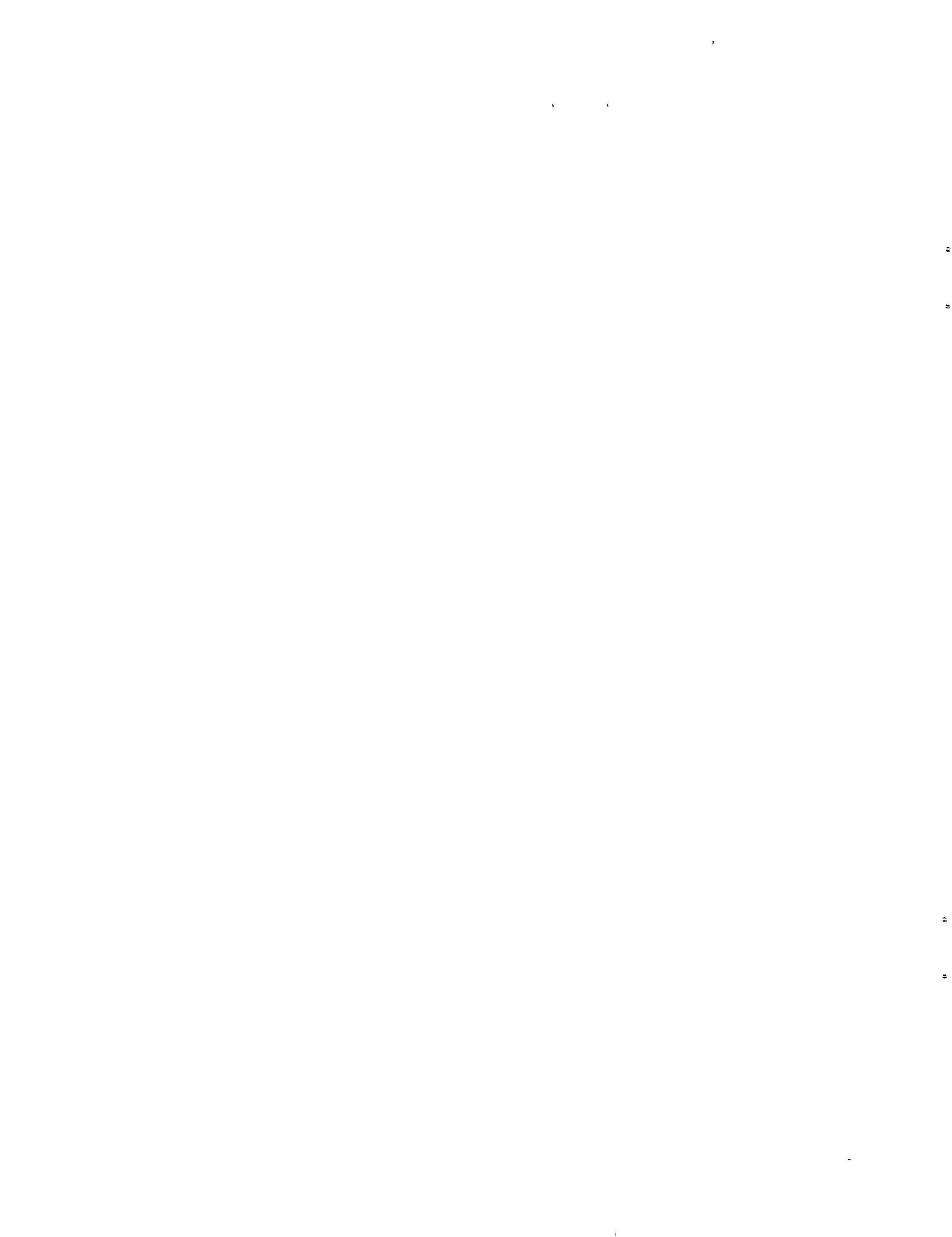
Process Documentation In Social Development Programme

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Contents

1. Preface
 2. The Context and Meaning of Process Documentation
 3. Methodology of Process Documentation
 4. Methodological Issues
 5. Conclusions
 6. Facilitator's Reflection
-



Preface

While in the course of working with grass roots development NGOs, it has been increasingly felt that each organisation or project is unique in itself. The conceptualisation, evolution, growth and implementation strategies differ from one organisation to another. Each project or agency provides many deeper insights into the enigmatic subject of social development. Each case has something to contribute in the learning process on social development as there is no "blue print" approach. Hence, understanding the process is of immense relevance to strengthen the social development project implementation. We have experienced that the documentation of processes help in creating systematic information to articulate the intervention strategies and develop the flow chart of a programme. This helps the project or organisation to find out more about the needed field intervention methods, coordination, management requirements, financial management and human resource development policies. Not only the project conducting Process Documentation takes benefit from this but other similar projects and agencies can use the outcome as a model in their formulation and implementation methods.

This document has been prepared based on the experiences gained from the process documentation of twelve developmental agencies of India. These agencies are:

1. Shramik Bharati, Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.
2. Health project of Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA) Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
3. Girl Child project of CINI, Calcutta, West Bengal.
4. SRED, Tamil Nadu.
5. SEARCH, Gadcharoli, Maharashtra.
6. SANCHETANA, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
7. SHARAN, New Delhi.
8. Lok Jagriti Kendra, Madhupur, Bihar.
9. Urmul Trust, Bikaner, Rajasthan.
10. SIRD, Tamil Nadu.
11. Disha Kendra, Thane District, Maharashtra.
12. CHETNA, Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

These twelve organisations were taken up under a Ford Foundation funded project between 1988 and 1992. The Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) in collaboration with some regional resource agencies was involved in facilitation of the Process Documentation processes with the above agencies.



This booklet aims to make a conceptual articulation about the methods of Process Documentation based on the above twelve case experiences. It is not a manual or a prescriptive note. It only highlights the salient features of Process Documentation based on the twelve cases.

This booklet has been prepared by Binoy Acharya, Shalini Verma and Rajesh Tandon. It is being published jointly by UNNATI, Organisation for Development Education, Ahmedabad and Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), New Delhi.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the twelve participating agencies and all the facilitators in contributing their experiences on Process Documentation (P.D) for the preparation of this booklet. We hope this booklet will provide some useful insights for pursuing P.D. in the development projects.

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The Context and Meaning of Process Documentation

In the last decade, the non governmental organisations involved in social development, be it health care literacy, environment protection, deforestation, or land development, there has been an increasing visibility and a well articulated positioning in terms of ideology and implementing strategies. Each NGOs' social development endeavour, irrespective of positioning have some light to throw on the theories of grass root development. Along with these theories the social development agencies are spending increasingly more time in developing the institutional mechanisms. Each development agency has its specific way of institution building. In an overall context, social development organisations are concerned about both programme execution and organisational development. But there is no one theory or one model to understand programme execution and organisational development. If one were to generalise some of the existing practices, one would see that some agencies give emphasis on the achievement of targets in a mechanistic way and others give importance to the process, i.e. collectivisation of ideas, participation at different levels, building people's capabilities, and enabling people to take responsibilities. Therefore, the entire development work can be broadly classified into target oriented and process oriented work. Although, there are many initiatives which adopt differential degrees of both target and process oriented work.

Often the term process documentation is understood to be mere documentation of activities. Hence, documentation of events, programmes, activities is considered as the main task. For those who are process oriented, documenting the processes takes priority, while documenting achievements and targets become the priority for target oriented programmes.

Whether it is the process or target approach, one needs to understand that each event culminates after a series of happenings. So, each occurrence is post-facto in itself. The happenings prior to an event include many apriori conceptual understanding of the group of participating people, their thinking and perspectives, the social context, social demands and expectations, and many other recurring activities. Hence, P.D. is increasingly seen as a research activity for understanding the manner in which the social development strategies and theories are formulated.

Meaning and Purpose of P.D.

Social scientists involved in social development projects have been trying



to conduct process documentation to develop theories, approaches and appropriate strategies for social development. In the third world countries we come across some well documented efforts of P.D.

Romana P. Reyes (1984) states that P. D. is a factual chronicling of events. Another definition (the Philippines Sociological Review, Vol.32) states that P.D. is a tool in social science research to collect information on the continuous happenings in the project, programme or activity. This information is usually used to examine policy and implementation strategy.

David Korten (1980) says that P.D. is a collection of all available data on a project to provide learning to check the objective, to set the working methods, to develop monitoring systems and human resource development planning. He points out that P.D. is a "learning approach" for development projects rather than a "blue print" approach.

In the Indian social development projects, the systematic information on the projects is done at the time of evaluations. The information collected in the evaluation provides insights in post facto. In the twelve cases where P.D. has been undertaken we have experienced that P.D. provides concurrent insights, hence, proving to be of timely relevance. Information collection on programmes is the key aspect of P.D. But P.D. is different from all the other social science researches in the sense that it finds out occurrences of similar events or deviations and searches for the causative factors in an ongoing manner. Hence, it results in constant thinking, reflecting and analysing of the development concepts and implementing strategies.

As David Korten puts it, in social development projects there are no set rules, criteria or one model. Methods are situation and context specific. Hence, P.D. is a process of collection of authentic data on recurring phenomena on an ongoing basis to provide insights into programmes, implementing strategies and organisation development mechanisms. It is as David Korten puts it, P.D. of each organisation provides a different model.

Since P.D. is based on the learning approach, before setting up of large scale projects, P.D. conducted for small projects (pilot study) provides insight in the policy formulation and setting criteria for making bigger projects. Any agency working in an overall similar context can use the P.D. of another agency for its own reflection. If in the P.D. process the key actors in the programme are involved, like, managers, supervisors, community leaders etc, the process of data collection itself builds participation. The insights and analyses of processes begin during the data collection process itself.

Hence, P.D. not only provides insights into the programmes and strategies but also builds the capacities of the organisation. P.D. also provides



interlinkages between different agencies, facts, systems, which are not conventionally thought of in a developmental model. Lastly, P.D. helps in collectivising the mission and strategies amongst different members who join the agency at different stages and also serves the purpose of orientation and team building.

- SHARAN achieved the purpose of reorienting its staff on its field strategy. The team became more clear on the implementation strategy.
- CHETNA and SANCHETANA were able to bring together the old and the new members and orient them about their work. The team experienced closeness with each other and could also identify themselves with the organisation's mission.
- Shramik Bharati collectively articulated the principles behind choice of activities and the implementing strategies.
- SEWA health project was able to examine its strengths and weaknesses of programme execution systems and procedures.

Methods of Process Documentation

Conventionally P.D. is the domain of Social Science Research in development projects. It is primarily done in pilot projects and all informations are collected as frequently as possible in seven days to one month interval. The social scientists take the responsibility of collecting information and identifying the processes. But, in a participatory P.D. process this responsibility shifts from the social scientist to the key actors involved in the project. The role of a social scientist in P.D. remains as a facilitator.

In the conventional P.D., participant observation, study of reports and interview of key persons are the predominant methods used. But in a participatory framework, since the key actors are actively involved, their thinkings, memories, analysis, and reflections constitute the major source of data. Since, each project or organisation is unique in itself there is no established method of data collection. However, the data collection is guided by two major factors:

- 1 Conceptual and theoretical understanding of the project theme and the required organisational management aspects. As for example for a community health project or an urban slum sanitation project there is already some available understanding about nature of services available, poor people's access to services and nature of project implementation strategies. This available understanding guides in setting up the framework of data collection. From the twelve cases we also found that the broad development and organisational framework are used to spell out the steps for data collection.



- 2 The second guiding factor is the actual context. Each project has its own course of direction which does not strictly follow any framework, theory or paradigm. The day to day happenings constitute a major source of data collection. We have experienced that the key actors' narration of their understanding of the 'conceptual framework' and the 'actual' is the sole basis for data collection. The word narration needs to be understood in project specific context.

Wherever the key actors are articulate and feel confident to narrate both positive and negative, empowered and disempowered experiences, there narration is not a problem. If the actors feel that by narrating the actual, their position is at stake, there the data gets contaminated. In such cases, the P.D. facilitators' main objective is to remove participants' unfounded assumptions, fears and make them feel empowered to get involved in the narration exercise. Process documentation of pilot projects does not give much problem since the purpose of P.D. is to develop insights only. But P.D. of an ongoing programme /action / project, where the concept of P.D. is new, it is difficult to expect open participation from the actors in the data collection. The insiders feel that it might be a process to evaluate them, to review their performances or to examine the validity of their work. This agenda is full of stakes, hence threatening in nature. Therefore, P.D. data collection exercise needs to be contextualised in the framework of organisational development.

All issues related to the process need to be constructed on the basis of available authentic data. Who sets the process is immaterial. Conventionally, it is the role of the social scientist, but in a participatory framework, the facilitator presents the data in such a manner that the key actors themselves identify and articulate the processes and derive insights into the different aspects of the programme. Since, the people themselves articulate and derive insights the future action plan becomes the responsibility of the insiders. By and large in a P.D. process, role of facilitator is extremely crucial because the data itself can be threatening, can lead to unnecessary personalised understanding of processes or the immediate problems may get overemphasised. The facilitator's role is to smoothen the process towards a forthright and candid data collection, analysis and reflection. Hence, looking at the overall P.D., it can be rephrased into the concept of Process Documentation and Reflection (PDR).

Routinisation of Process Documentation

Process Documentation is still an emerging research area in social development. The methods of P.D. cannot be generalised. It needs to be developed in every organisational context. When the organisation develops a framework of P.D. for itself, spelling out the people to be



involved, duration, frequency, areas and use of methods, it takes the P.D. process in a much more systematic way. Without an organisational specific framework, it is difficult to sustain a P.D. process. Moreover once a P.D. method is articulated, it should be refined from time to time to serve the desired purpose. In a sense P.D. itself and its outcome is a continuous learning exercise. Since, P.D. takes care of theoretical and conceptual aspects as well as day to day happenings, it is an open ended process. The data which emerges is used for research, reflection, strategy formulation, mission rearticulation, organisational diagnosis, development and evaluation. Hence, P.D. provides insight into all the areas in which social scientists and management experts have been engaged in from a long time.



Methodology of Process Documentation

The various steps under which a process document exercise is undertaken throws light on the methodology. The broad steps are:

- i Familiarisation and Rapport Building
- ii Establishing the focus of P.D. and Developing the Frame of Reference (FOR)
- iii Facilitating the Process Identification
- iv Review of P.D. Processes
- v The Process of Closure.

i Familiarisation and Rapport Building

The concept Process Documentation (P.D.) is overloaded with the word documentation. Documentation generally results either due to external demand or internal desire to record. However, for conducting Process Documentation, authentic information on the organisational culture, system, evolution and history of the organisation are the basic requirements. The agency or programme people may not be always ready to get into such an information collection process. P.D. always demands for a common agreement of the purpose. The scope and limits of P.D. need to be understood right at the outset. People join organisations at different stages, and they have different understanding about the organisation, activities, systems and culture. Moreover, the P.D. facilitator may not be well acquainted with the organisation. Therefore, there is a relevance for building a common ground of understanding on P.D.

The facilitation of P.D. in twelve agencies has brought out the importance of using documents of the organisation, related to formation of agency (constitution and byelaws), project proposals, annual progress reports, records of monthly/ annual meetings for getting information. Along with this information, many times there are information within people's thoughts and experiences. Building rapport helps in getting access to these experiences of people and disclose them for the purposes of analysis .

In cases where the facilitator and inside actors have shared a long relationship with each other as well as with the agency then much time is not required for building rapport.

- CHETNA - The facilitator had prior experience of working with the agency in an intensive participatory evaluation exercise. The P.D. exercise followed the evaluation. Hence, rapport building for P.D. process did not take much time.



- **SEARCH** - The facilitators did not have any prior professional association with the agency. The agency virtually examined the attitudes, ideology and stand point of the facilitators repeatedly. The agency even wanted to know the exact methods to be used in P.D. Two visits were spent in just rapport building and familiarisation.
- **Shramik Bharati** - The facilitators had had long relationship in terms of being members in the boards, and being supportive in the programme areas, yet the agency was cautious in accepting the facilitators. In this case the facilitators were known to the top level of the organisation and not so much with the grass root workers. The grass root workers wanted to get familiar with the concept of P.D. and what purpose it was going to serve.

Since P.D. is an understanding of processes beyond the programme areas, agency feels hesitant to accept the facilitators for undertaking the P.D.

Initially neither the agency nor the facilitators know the net outcome as there is no standard definition or methodology of P.D.. The method and steps open up as the agency starts articulating the need, begin setting up the steps and take responsibility to get involved in the P.D. process.

As for example, all the agencies wanted to be clear about the methods of P.D. from the very beginning. Since, methods cannot be selected apriori there are no ready made answers. The other concern is about the purpose of P.D. When the agency is clear about the P.D. purpose, it does not look at the documentation of events in a mechanistic way. If the agency has organisational development and diagnosis as the purpose, P.D. becomes an integral part of organisational activity and the methods of P.D. are developed rather than decided apriori.

Agreement on P.D. is always smooth when an agency has the need to look at itself holistically and diagnostically. To set the initial context for P.D., it is better to hold a workshop of a day or two to discuss the concept of P.D. and its contemporary organisational relevance. This kind of educational programme takes care of differences, confusions and sets a common context.

- In all the cases under study, except CHETNA, workshops were organised. The forum of workshop was considered irrelevant in CHETNA as the facilitators had written documents made available to the agency to understand the context of P.D..
- Key actors at different levels have varied understanding of P.D. In case of Shramik Bharati, the grass roots programme people felt that P.D. would increase their writing/documentation work. Whereas, in almost all the cases, the head of the institution felt that P.D. would help them in preparing a comprehensive report about organisation and its activities.



The identification of process and analysis of the processes generally do not form a part of collective agenda at the beginning. So, in the initial familiarisation the need to emphasise on process identification, reflections and analysis and developing a collective understanding should be put on top priority.

Before the frame of reference of P.D. is set, it is essential to clarify who are the actors to be involved in the P.D. process. Whether the process is initiated by the donor or by an internal research agenda should be made clear. Since, this is an intensive internal exercise, if the key actors including the facilitators' involvement are not made clear right in the beginning, it may create confusions while taking the process forward.

The P.D. frame of reference cannot be set in a hurry. The P.D. facilitators need time to set the context for P.D. and so does the agency to initiate P.D. and finalise the methods involved.

• In case of Shramik Bharti before approaching the P.D. frame of reference two rounds of discussions were held with the head of the institution and other staff members for understanding the scope and limits of P.D. The facilitators did not have an answer to their query on P.D. method and steps. The agency was very determined to know the answers. In retrospect, the agency was asking this question just to figure out the end product of the exercise and how it would feel to undergo the process. But in the first two visits, the facilitators spoke to all actors together and also individually, visited the field with the staff and also spent time in the organisation observing their work style, organisational systems etc. During this process of initial familiarisation, behaviour, events, systems that showed a trend or a deviation were identified and informally explained to the staff members that the purpose of this exercise was to find the causes behind these trends and deviations. The causes, as it was found out later, were a result of a combination of factors - personal, systemic, temporal and philosophical. Hence in this process, it was for the team to find out the real causes to get in-depth insights into the organisational processes. The initial observation and informal explanation of the P.D. process and its outcome substantiated with few organisational examples helped in setting the stage. Without this initial observation and explanation perhaps Shramik Bharti would not have opened itself and proceeded to the next phase of P.D.

(ii) Establishing the Focus of P.D. and developing the Frame of Reference

The setting up of the focus and frame of reference (FOR) for P.D. is the first step towards entering into the P.D. process. At this stage if the purpose is not collectivised it will lose its strength to facilitate collective analysis and reflection. Therefore at this stage

1. Identification of key actors to be involved in the process and
2. Expectations of the agency, scope and limitations of the process needs to be made clear.



Often the P.D. exercise starts with an informal consultation with just a few top level members of the agency. Hence, the focus and F.O.R of P.D. has to be made with the entire agency team.

For a P.D. facilitator, P.D. is documentation of processes for the purpose of analysis, reflection, planning, diagnosis and organisational development. While accepting these higher level of objectives, the agency might put forward the day to day needs like preparation of an organisational document on its history and programmes, development of internal mechanisms and systems for documentation of events or documenting the key features and methodology of work to share with others for duplication/replication or for preparing a leaflet/booklet reflecting its work and work processes for purely publicity purposes.

Multiple P.D. Agenda

- Shramik Bharati had a clear purpose of developing internal documentation systems.
- CHETNA wanted to document its history and work process to use for staff orientation.
- SANCHETNA and SHARAN wanted to look into the process of rearticulation of mission and its relevance in its day to day work.
- Girl Child project of CINI entered the P.D. exercise to document process of the pilot project so that others could learn from these experiences and use P.D. for systematic reflection and future planning of the project.
- Health project of SEWA expected to receive suggestions on different systems of evaluation, training and record keeping.

While the organisational requirements need to be respected and understood, it is necessary to highlight the primary purpose ie. documentation, reflection and analysis.

At this stage the opening up begins and many times the list of expectations become longer. The agency might ask for quick suggestions for introducing systems, help in developing a system of organising a monthly meeting or the agency might expect the facilitators to work on these topics immediately. At the beginning, during the process of finalising the frame of reference (FOR) of the P.D., the facilitator may be asked to play an advisory role. But at this stage such temptations should be checked consciously and forthrightly.

Dilution of P.D. Focus

- In case of both Shramik Bharati and Health project of SEWA, the need to develop internal systems and documentation of events was put forward as the key focus of P.D. and advice from facilitators was sought. The facilitators were tempted to



get into these advisory roles. But in the facilitators' internal discussion, it was felt that it would be a wrong entry point. The facilitators therefore clarified that under the purpose of P.D. this could not be taken up. This stand point created tensions in relation to setting the scope and F.O.R for P.D.

Along with the purpose clarification, the process of role clarity begins. The role of facilitators, the agency and the different set of actors need to be made clear. The roles need to be allocated as per the desired/expressed purpose of the actors or set of actors. If a set of actors in the organisation are interested to develop the organisational systems like meetings, staff development, decision making or if another group is interested to understand the organisational strategy, choice of programme they need to be actively involved in their respective areas of interest. In other words, while specific roles have to be given to people depending on the expressed interest, it needs to be made clear that everyone should be involved in all the activities to be undertaken in P.D. At this stage facilitators need to emphasise P.D. as a pedagogical process as opposed to an empiricist framework of understanding an organisation.

It should also be made clear that the extent of process identification is dependent on the openness of members to look at the different aspects. The focus can be limited to activities, strategies, mission or the overall organisation.

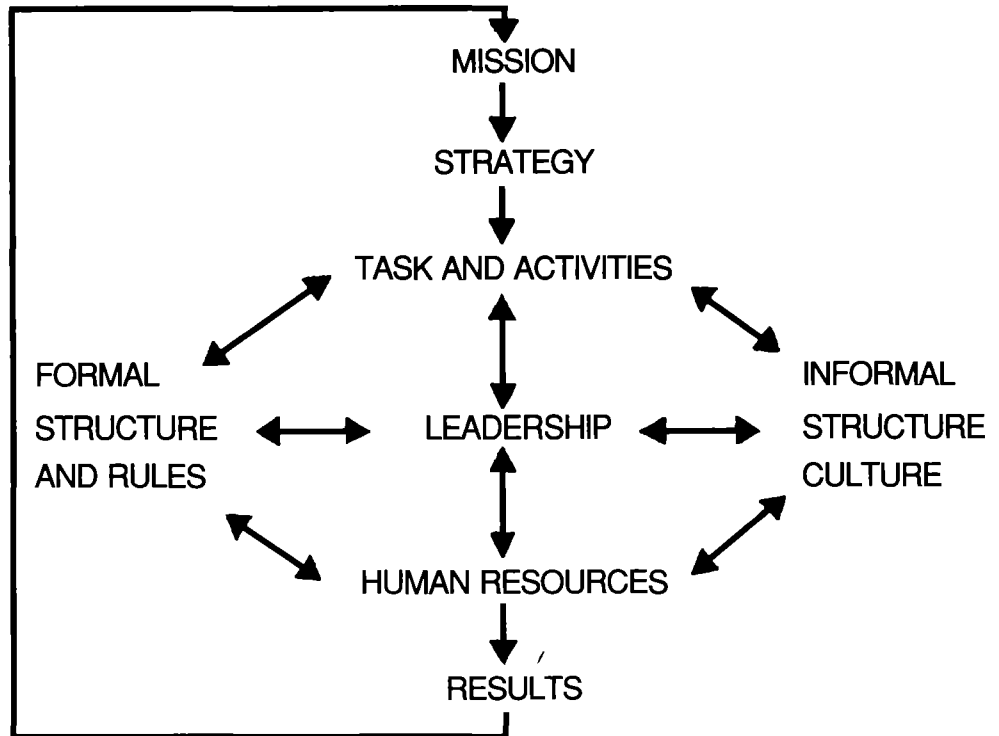
- The Girl Child project of CINI and Health project of SEWA are activities of larger organisations. P.D. was limited to knowing only about these activities. It was clear that during the P.D. process, organisational strategies, missions would not get priority. Hence, key members involved in the strategy and mission formulation of the organisation were not involved in the P.D. process.
- SHARAN which was undergoing a process of rearticulation of its strategy and mission looked at the P.D. process in an overall organisational development context and hence all key members were involved in the P.D. exercise.

(iii) Facilitating the Process Identification

The process identification can be taken up depending upon the preparedness of the agency and the issue of their concern. But a systematic process identification is always guided by the organisational framework. The organisational framework views the issues in an interlinked fashion. Hence, the use of organisational framework (table No. I) helps to start looking at the processes.



TABLE - I



As for example the process can start by examining the result and outcome and move into examining leadership, policy formulation, nature of tasks activities, strategies, mission and informal culture. Or it could commence from reexamining the mission and move into other areas.

- CHETNA started its P.D. process after its evaluation. It reexamined the evaluation results along with the identified processes related to organisational structure, human resource development strategy, leadership skills etc.

Whereas

- SANCHETANA, Health project of SEWA and Girl Child project of CINI, started P.D. by examining the tasks/activities and moved into areas of organisational structures and leadership. SHARAN straight away started by examining the processes involved in strategy formulation and moved into choice of programme, leadership, human resource etc.

However, it has been increasingly felt that focussing the process identification on tasks and activities (programmes execution strategy, roles and responsibilities) is non threatening to start with. Since, almost all the key actors are involved in tasks and activities, focus on programme provides opportunity for all to get involved in the process. The focus on programme also provides a cue for moving into the other aspects.

The process of process identification highlights different elements depending upon the focus of exercise. In social development projects, the focus of the P.D. exercise are primarily of two types.



- 1 Project focussed
- 2 Overall organisation focussed

In a project focussed P.D., the area of data collection for process identification are:

- Choice of particular programme
- Implementation mechanisms
- Project management, structure, systems, linkages with overall organisation

Whereas in an overall organisational context, areas of data collections are much wider, such as:

- Initial thinking of founders
- Evaluation of agency
- Initial mission and strategy formulation
- Shifts/changes
- Organisational systems/culture formulation and its shifts.
- Human resource development mechanisms
- Internal analysis and reflection mechanisms
- Linkages with outside world.

Project focussed

- SEWA (Health) and CINI (Girl Child) are project focussed P.D. Health project of SEWA focussed on programme implementation mechanisms. Girl Child project of CINI focussed on the origin of Girl Child project in the overall CINI organisation's mission context. It also wanted to examine the appropriateness of the strategy of using Mahila Mandal in the project in overall CINI context and the linkages with the other programmes.

Organisation focussed

- SANCHETANA, SHARAN, Shramik Bharati looked at the process of overall organisational systems, culture, rearticulation of mission and strategy.

The process identification are made by involving all the key actors to narrate all the major events, happenings, thinkings and decisions taken on a particular issue. This recall on a particular issue can be structured. It has been experienced that it is convenient to move from present to the past, but this whole history can be made in a phased manner. This phasing can be only done if the facilitator has a comprehensive understanding on the history of the organisation. The phasing cannot be done in an adhoc manner. It should be phased with a natural flow.



- In SANCHETANA, the three shifts/phases were
 - 1 Health programme and other non health activities,
 - 2 focus on organising
 - 3 focus on women's group building

- In the case of CHETNA, the recall exercise was divided into four phases
 - 1 present set of activities
 - 2 phase of consolidation
 - 3 new initiatives
 - 4 project approach

- Shramik Bharati being a new organisation the P. D. Processes could not be identified dividing the history in phases. Even the questions for recall could not be appropriately structured so that the members could bring out various elements related to that issue.

- In case of SANCHETANA, in the second phase questions like the following were asked.
 - 1 why did we take up new activities ?
 - 2 What happened to the previous activity (clinic) ?
 - 3 What insights do we derive from our work and how ?
 - 4 how do we use those insights ?
 - 5 What were the major difficulties, tensions during this time and why ?
 - 6 What are the significant things happened to you as members ?

The reverse chronological order of recall creates an environment for all staff members to get involved in the process. All members present are party to the present happenings. So, moving from present to past ensures high participation. When P.D. is conducted in an organisational context certain organisational tensions create bottlenecks for open involvement of participants. It has been found that talking about organisational strengths and weaknesses enable people to develop trust towards the process.

- In most cases the recall started on programmatic areas but in case of SHARAN the members began by discussing organisational strengths and weaknesses which helped to break the ice and made people more open and candid in the discussion. This led to the discussion on the articulation of the mission.

Such recall data collection process can be done leisurely. The organisation needs to take time off from its other day to day engagements to get fully involved in this process. Many times during the process of data collection, reflections and analysis triggers off.

Many times the 'here and now' tensions and problems take precedence over other organisational processes. While these tensions are worth taking up, getting stuck to these problems hinders the opening of the processes and issues. While data collection is going on, it is difficult to stop all other



organisational processes. It has been found that data collection process if done during different time slots rather than in one go, provides space for both P.D. and other organisational processes to take place. In our experiences the whole data collection process takes time ranging from six months to two years. But in this time period, the actual involvement is only for 15-20 days. If the whole data collection is not properly phased, then whatever data is collected in the first round will lose relevance and it will be difficult to move to the next round of data collection.

- In case of Shramik Bharati, after the first two rounds of data collection, the third round which was supposed to look into organisational issues got delayed by a year. And in this one year period, the programmes made many shifts. The process of data collection had to start again. In case of SANCHETNA, CHETNA and SHARAN there was meticulous planning and phasing of data collection. The P.D. was completed in just six months.

(iv) Review of P.D. Processes

The data that emerges from the P.D. facilitation needs to be put in a proper perspective to understand the processes. The organisational framework discussed in the previous section and congruence between the different elements of the organisation is the standard key to club the processes together in a given perspective. The key processes are:

- 1 Processes related to mission and strategy articulation.
- 2 Processes related to the formation of the organisation structure, system (communication and decision making process), culture.
- 3 Processes related to choice of programmes.
- 4 Processes related to leadership building and developing internal competencies.
- 5 Processes related to internal coping mechanisms, relationship, leadership, credibility building and relationship with external constituencies.

Key Processes Identified In Some PD Exercises :

CHETNA

- Process of growth and articulation of mission
- Process of involvement in different programmes
- Process of choice of projects
- Process of developing programme strategy



— Process of building organisational credibility and competency

— Process of building organisational systems and structures

— Process of organisational culture

— Process of future directions

— Process of process documentation

SHRAMIK BHARATI

— Process of origin and shifts

— Process of changing the programmes

— Process of team building

— Process of looking at the future.

— Process of process documentation

SANCHETANA

— Process of origin and shifts

— Process in emergence of programmes

— Process of formation of organisational structure, systems, role and culture.

— Process of team building

— Process of shaping the future

— Process of process documentation

SEWA

— Process of developing programme focus and perspective development

— Process of implementing strategies

— Process of documentation and record keeping systems

— Process related to internal reflection.

— Process related to emergence of tensions.

The facilitator presents all the processes based on concrete and authentic data generated during the P.D. data collection process. The processes need to be published in a very precise and articulated manner. This publishing needs to be done before all the key actors. This is not only a process of spelling out the processes but also is the phase of collective analysis and reflection for future development. It is a very crucial step and hence, needs to be well planned in a form of two - three day workshop.

This two-three day workshop requires good facilitation skills. If the purpose is to identify the processes and lead it to reflection, perhaps the facilitator



or anybody from the agency can present the processes and initiate reflection. If the purpose is also to develop internal competencies for process identification and reflection, perhaps, the group could be encouraged to articulate the issues based on the available data. So, availing data for process articulation is the key task. The group can itself identify the processes soon after the collective recall process.

The P.D. process identification should be placed near the end of the data collection process. If there is a time gap, the members may not be able to relate to the processes due to the information loss in relation to the processes .

During the process analysis, some members try to rationalise the undesirable processes as valid, and useful. As members are personally associated in some of the growth processes they take it personally and do not like to see the processes as they are. In such situations there are chances of organisational tensions. These tensions can be between programmes in case of programme processes, between the founder and the new members in case of mission objective and strategy, between old and new members in case of organisational culture etc.

- In the case of one agency, the women's programme coordinator tried to define the repetitive closure of activities as a process of building gender sensitivity into the programme. Whereas the available P.D. data showed that the activities were launched without looking into sustainability factors, so each activity had to be closed. There were tensions amongst members during reflection.
- In the case of another agency, the founder members rationalised all activities as useful and rationalised all the successive phasing out of the activities. Infact the data showed that all the activities were donor driven and taken up to build an image of the organisation rather than choosing the programmes based on a concrete strategy. Hence, during the presentation, there was tension between founder members and new programme staff.

The process analysis can be a very academic exercise, hence, care should be taken to make it interesting, so that everyone gets involved, particularly so, in situations where different levels of people try to participate. The whole analysis can be done by using innovative methods. It provides data not only for desired and undesired growth processes but also provides hints to different individuals on styles, contributions, patterns of behaviour, actions in the organisation. Hence, the P.D. review process needs to be taken both at individual and organisational level. Space should be created for individual as well as for collective reflection.

It is useful to document not only the data but also the whole P.D. process. This document is like a vivid autobiography. Such a document can be used for internal orientation. It can also be used by similar others for learning lessons. The emphasis on both documentation on one side and



analysis and reflection on the other side should be given equal weightage. There is a tendency of the task oriented people giving weightage to documentation and process oriented people giving emphasis to analysis and reflection. Out of the twelve cases undertaken under the P.D. study, six agencies provided emphasis on both documentation reflection and analysis and four provided weightage only to reflection, while two abandoned the process as they found it time consuming and intensive.

(v) The Process of Closure

P.D. itself is an ongoing event as the organisation is always in a dynamic state. In order to use the identified processes, a definite time frame should be evolved. In order to make P.D. a learning process for organisational development and growth, the P.D. has to be undertaken in a specified time frame. In the context of the time frame, processes need to be identified and should have definite closure so that future P.D. can be planned. The steps and methodology used in the current process need to be articulated for further reference,. Each time the method has to be spelled out looking into the organisational needs, priorities and the context. The instrumental determination of P.D. methodology leads to mechanistic involvement of the actors in the P.D. process. Hence, the P.D. process needs to be used for taking forward a set of emerging concerns and with openness to adopt appropriate methods.



Methodological Issues

While the steps in conducting a process documentation is explained in the previous section, perhaps it will be appropriate to raise some of the issues that are crucial in facilitating a Process Documentation process.

(i) Meaning of Process Documentation

The term P.D connotes `documentation of a process but does not specify how such documentation be done and for what purpose such documentation be used. The answer to the question of purpose of process documentation is bound to be situation specific and invariably influenced by the organisation's philosophy and nature of activity. Hence, the nature and characteristics of the concept are bound to differ for different contexts in which the organisation or development project is situated.

In the literature available so far, the reference to the concept of process documentation shows it as a technique of project implementation and monitoring with the involvement of experts and communities. While at some other instances it is projected as a technique of documentation based on participant observation. The process documentation is a means to achieve efficient information systems on the implementation and monitoring aspects of the project. While such interpretation may be valuable, process documentation can make immense contribution in experiential learning for individuals and the collective growth. It also contributes towards conceptual and philosophical refinement. The purpose of process documentation can be to improve the implementation and monitoring methods and to strengthen involvement of people responsible for the intervention.

Such conception implies that the scope of process documentation needs to include targets, tasks and organisational structure, systems and mechanisms. For this the process documentation needs to take all the process that constitute life of an organisation along with their multiplicity and interdependence as sources of learning for growth. P.D. broadly focuses on three aspects of a development agency or project.

The first set of processes are related to tasks and activities. Under this the choice of the programme implementation strategy, division of role and responsibility, evaluation and monitoring systems and their shifts are included.

The second set of process are those emanating from the organisation's interaction with its primary constituency i.e. the sections of society with



which the organisation primarily works and acquires distinctive importance in the course of growth of the organisation. These processes manifest itself in activities and programmes that an organisation takes up in order to move in the desired direction. Since, activities and programmes are a significant aspect of a development organisation, their congruence with purpose and perspective of the organisation is very important. The processes contributing in establishing such congruence is a significant element of P.D.

A segment of such a process is rooted in the organisation's interaction with broader socio-political and cultural environment in which it exists and grows. This environment consists of various segments that affect organisation tangibly or intangibly on an ongoing basis. The growth of an organisation in its stated and designed direction is subject to its dealings with 'pulls' and 'pressures' that are treated by elements of the environment covertly or overtly. The dynamic nature of the environment and the interdependence of various elements of environment on each other makes this task further complex in nature and strategic in characteristic.

The third set of processes relate to the structure of the organisation and interaction among its various elements. The structure of an organisation is shaped by five essential elements i.e. people, tasks, division of labour, accountability and decision making.

The subsets of such processes are :-

- i The processes rooted in interaction between individual goals and organisational goals, individual competence and task requirement, individual values and organisational culture, individual growth and organisations' future requirements.
- ii Nature of functioning related to participation, communication, leadership, decision making and problem solving.
- iii Processes rooted in dialectics between formal structure of the organisation and informal culture.

All such processes put together form the universe of learning which contributes to strengthening of organisations in accomplishing its mission. The process of P.D. needs to address all these processes and build a knowledge on that basis for appropriate action. This contributes towards the growth of an organisation.

P.D. means documentation of organisational processes in an authentic databased framework. It values the processes in a historical (time-framed)



framework rather than taking the processes in its face value. P.D. understands the issue by understanding the recurrence of various facts which constitute the major data base. P.D. looks into the programmes and activities, hence, examines and develops management information systems (MIS), examines organisational development process, helps in building positive organisational climate, analyses the growth process and re-examines the organisational perspective and internal capacity. P.D. is not merely a faceless examining process rather it involves all key actors and emphasises a documentation -analysis -reflection process. It is a non-evaluative, non-threatening process.

ii A Collective Process

While initiating a P.D. process it is difficult to set a common agreement on the purpose of P.D. In any organisational set up, a new process always creates resistance by some key actors with the fear of getting overburdened with work or it being an evaluation of performance and other such pressures. In case of P.D., it is necessary to involve all the key actors and make them understand that it is for both individual and organisational development.

If the meaning of P.D. places centrality on learning from experiences related to the existence of organisation in its totality, it then places several prerequisites on methodology that may be conducive for that purpose. The first and foremost prerequisite is related to philosophical premise of the methodology without which any permutation and combination of tools and techniques will not be able to solicit learning from the type of processes mentioned in previous section.

The foundation of such philosophical premise lies in our faith in people, their experiences, in their capacity to learn and willingness to change. While another fundamental dimension of such philosophical premise lies in our faith in experiences as a valid source of learning.

The most significant imperative of such a philosophical premise on methodology makes it facilitative in nature as against being inquisitive or investigative or prescriptive.

It implies that methodology should be able to make individual and collective introspection possible in a way that helps in establishing and understanding linkages between different aspects of various organisational processes. In order to be responsive to such requirements, the methodology needs to create such learning structures which provides space, opportunities and environment for introspection, sharing and collective analysis to occur. The choice of tools and techniques is then required to be made within this framework. Such tools and techniques certainly need to transcend the



limitation of prescribed formats and written words; and need to be evolved and innovated to suit each situation and people.

Since the action emerging from such a process of reflection will focus on both individual and collective changes, the methodology has the challenge of encouraging and establishing people's control over the whole process and its outcome.

Essential Fives to Make The Process Collective

- 1 Reflection and sharing of individual's experience with organisation as its member and person at various levels.
- 2 Collective recall and reflection on the history and the activities of the organisation.
- 3 Collective introspection on organisation's history in terms of its purposes, its perspective and its relationship with various elements of wider environment.
- 4 Common understanding of critical events or happenings and turning points or shifts in priorities and strategy.
- 5 Collective articulation of organisation's future direction and shape.

Since P.D. is a long and ongoing process, members may develop apathy and boredom towards the reflection exercise. Sometimes the processes, during reflections are not easily identifiable thus members may lose faith in the process of P.D. In such situations faith in the process of P.D. has to be rebuilt by making periodic examination of data and using them for the ongoing programmatic and organisational work.

During the initial phase in the life cycle of an organisation the anxieties of primary tasks completion takes precedence over process and process reflection. At the same time lack of common experience base also contributes in limiting the possibilities of collective reflection and sharing. Whereas, the P.D. process helps in developing the collective analysis and reflection process.

iii Primary and Secondary issues

Two broad kinds of issues are generally seen in all the identified P.D. processes. One is regarding processes related to issues emanating from the history of growth, programmes, systems, structures and the second is related to organisation's 'here and now' issues like an interpersonal conflict, salary raise etc. But P.D. process emphasises on the issues related to organisational and programmatic processes only.



In the organisations that place importance on learning, they look at the issue of organisational growth with an evolutionary perspective. Such processes are created in organisation's informal culture, and formal functioning. However, in many cases systematic documentation of collective reflection somehow takes a back seat. Thus, integration of documentation, retrieval and utilisation mechanisms into the mechanism of organisation's functioning becomes the task of process documentation exercise. In organisations where the issues of organisational growth are not addressed under P.D., only the here and now issues are highlighted it becomes more like a crisis management exercise.

Interestingly enough, in both the cases, process documentation exercises lead to some or the other kind of intervention or alteration in organisation's current functioning. This has certain implications on the organisation and its leadership that wishes to undertake the P.D. exercise or wishes to incorporate process reflection and documentation mechanisms into its functioning.

The first and foremost implication is on the perspective of organisation building. Since, in social change mission organisations the issue of organisation building is not an end in itself, it is important that the practices and structures we develop should not only correspond to the requirements of primary objectives and activities but also be able to keep pace with everchanging and dynamic nature of social reality that it intends to deal with. A developmental or evolutionary perspective for organisation building thus becomes a necessity. Some kind of acceptance on the part of organisation's leadership and its core members for such a perspective is an important prerequisite for effective P.D.

Since, leadership type and style historically has been most consequential to the life of an organisation, demonstrated 'will to change' by leadership becomes critical precondition for the effectiveness of such reflective processes. The cognitive, affective and operational support that is usually available to the organisation approaches the issue from problem-solving and techno-managerial view point thereby giving centrality to the needs and requirements of leadership in scheme of change. The change requirements that come up as a result of reflection process across organisation may not always be convenient for the leadership. Once the outcome of an intense reflective process is not holistically used or acted upon its de-motivating effect is not easily compensated for and possibility of collective reflection and sharing is lost for a long time. Hence, leadership's explicitly stated will to change is a necessary prerequisite for beginning a process reflection exercise.



iv Role of Facilitator

Another set of implications relate to the issue of facilitation of P.D. within

organisation. A culture of openness, consultation, mutuality and togetherness is essential for a reflective process to be effective. Such elements are present in different degrees in an organisation, but need to be specially built upon for the P.D. exercise.

External facilitator in fact is not needed at all once the concept of P.D. suitable for the specific situation of an organisation is understood and imbibed in the organisational functioning. However, the experience shows that the intervention of external facilitator sometimes helps in starting the process but ultimately the organisation has to build its own capacity to carry it forward. The role of external facilitator as experienced by us during this process may be understood in the following stages:

(a) Familiarization and Entry

The most comfortable situation is if the external facilitator has a priori relationship or familiarity with the organisation. Otherwise, this phase needs to be handled with lot of patience, caution, and care. Understanding of and sensitivity towards the organisation's forms, norms and culture holds the key for external facilitator at this stage. The capacity to relate and interact with various levels in an organisation and various aspects of organisation is a very essential requisite.

(b) Clarification

This may appear to be incorporated in the phase of familiarisation but needs to be understood separately. The clarification of intentions is the most important aspect. The intentions or motives of external facilitator for its involvement in process of P.D. needs to be put explicitly or straightforwardly from the very beginning. The expectations of external facilitator and the organisation also need to be matched at this stage. All the negotiation related to incorporating the expectations are required to be settled before entering the next stage. Despite our good intentions and efforts, due to complexity of environment in which we operate, the need for clarification may crop up again and again at different stages. The external facilitator is required to be prepared to respond to such needs and be flexible enough to incorporate certain expectations which may not be articulated or expressed initially.

(c) Understanding about Sharing of Responsibility

Another crucial area for an intervening agency is of creating understanding about sharing of responsibilities for carrying through the process of P.D. between the organisation and itself. Generally, the external facilitator is expected to do most of the things, but if the process has to be geared to build capacity in the organisation it is necessary to



share responsibilities. The task for external facilitator at this stage is to exercise restraint and resist temptations of taking over the entire process. Despite the chances of extra investment of time and energy and repetition of work, the people involved with the organisation should be encouraged to take the maximum responsibility for the process of P.D.

A clearer understanding of sharing the responsibility at early stage helps the process.

(d) Feedback

The experience shows that role of external facilitator in providing feedback to the organisation and seeking feedback from key persons in the organisation is very crucial and consequential to the process. In case of process of P.D., the issue of feedback should not necessarily be held back for a particular stage. Infact, it begins quite early and runs through the whole process taking different forms and providing and seeking feedback both become equally important. It requires an extra sense of discretion to make mutual feedback as a pushing factor for process of P.D.

(e) Facilitating Reflection and Learning

The P.D. as described in context to social change mission organisations need to evolve a methodology which is reflective, educative and empowering. The experience shows that such methodology by nature is facilitative in nature and faces following challenges.

Facilitating Reflections :

The process of P.D. needs to be designed and operationalised in a way that facilitates reflection on linkages between different aspects of organisation and individuals' relationship to those aspects.

Facilitating Learning :

The process of P.D. needs to distinguish itself from regular project monitoring and evaluation concerns and rather focus on collective and individual learning. It is necessary to establish and re-establish at different stages of the process the educative aspect of P.D. Intended use of outcomes of P.D. and its perception of people involved in process has a crucial bearing on this. The popular practice of documentation for monitoring purpose in most of the organisations makes this challenge more formidable. The role of key functionaries of the organisation have central role to play in clarifying such perceptions by their conduct during the process.



Facilitating Empowering Process :

The process of P.D. by implication needs to lead to enhanced understanding of different aspects of organisation, enhanced understanding of each other and creation of a shared commitment to the future of the organisation. The process needs to address itself for building capacity of participants to be effective actors in P.D.

Choice of Methods :

The choice of methods for generation of information and documentation becomes a crucial issue. The methods need to encourage reflection at various levels in the organisation. The facilitator needs to select appropriate methods not only for information collection but also for eliciting participation.



Conclusions

Every social change mission organisation operates under its articulated ideology, mission and perspectives. A variety of processes take place during the articulation and furthermore during implementation. It is very difficult to capture all processes that undergo in a development organisation. P.D. is used as a tool to collect systematic data on various processes. P.D. is not an evaluation which essentially is a postfacto exercise. It is an exercise to gather all data for reflection and analysis and use it for reexamination of strategic and operational frameworks.

Although there is no well defined methodology for conducting P.D., the methods can be spelled out in specific context of agency needs. The key steps are:

- i The programme or agency need to articulate the purpose, scope and limits of the P.D. exercise.
- ii Expectations of both the agency personnel and P.D. facilitator need to be clarified and reach a common understanding on the process of the P.D.
- iii At the outset it is important to establish the focus and frame of reference for P.D. in which the expected outcome of P.D. need to be spelled out.
- iv P.D. needs to result in analysis, reflection, planning, diagnosis and organisational 'development' and also address the day to day needs of the organisation like preparation of an organisational document on its history and programmes.
- v Having an organisational framework in mind helps in the systematic identification of processes. This enables in identification of processes that could begin from the results/outcomes to leadership, policy formulation, strategies and mission or begin from mission and move on to other areas of organisational framework.
- vi The key actors' recalling or narrating the experiences, events, happenings and decisions form a large part of data. Structuring these and putting them in a proper perspective results in process identification.
- vii Analysis need to focus on both desired and undesired processes but also hint at the causes of processes and patterns.



viii The P.D. process should be defined within a particular time frame. The temporal aspect provides clarity for future use of data that has emerged from the P.D. process.

P.D. essentially enables the organisation to build internal mechanisms for continuous reflection and analysis based on authentic data. It is primarily used for developing appropriate system, structure, perspective and building the institution.



Facilitator's Reflection

I was involved in facilitating the process documentation exercise in three organizations. All these organizations are relatively small and new. One organization is eight years old and has a staff strength of twenty one, the second one is four years old with a staff strength of twelve and the third one is five years old with the staff strength of eighteen. Two organisations work in urban slums and the third one works among the tribals. The P.D. exercise was completed in two organisations. In the case of the third organisation, though many process facilitation exercises were undertaken related to programme planning and staff development, yet the P.D. process could not be initiated.

The three cases provided great opportunities of learning on the issues of the growth and development of organisations. However, the whole exercise had its moments of tensions, anxiety, joy and fun.

The idea of process documentation came when we at PRIA began to discuss organisational processes and organisational typologies as a result of our involvement in evaluations and facilitation in programme planning of voluntary organisations. In our analysis, we came to the conclusion that the various processes which an organisation undergoes are unique and distinct in their own way. We thought that the understanding of such processes might help us in enhancing our knowledge on types of organisational functioning. Moreover, such identification of processes would help the organisation to become conscious of them.

The Initial Fear

Though we were all set to start the process documentation and formed a team of two persons for facilitation of the P.D., we were not feeling very comfortable to facilitate the process. We all sat together and studied the existing literature on P.D. But I was very disappointed. Whatever little literature that was available was on developing mechanisms to ensure the maintenance of extension programmes. There was no reference towards our proposed objective. This did not help us at arriving at any definition of Process Documentation. But somehow, we gathered enough courage to go ahead and facilitate the P.D. I did not have any prepared instrument or technique for P.D. facilitation. I filled in the laundry list prepared by a colleague on what one should see while doing P.D. My plan was to see all that happens within an organisation.



A Broader Framework Helps

Along with one of my colleagues, I proceeded for the first P.D. exercise. We both knew the organisation very closely. So I was comfortable. The whole situation became very relaxed when the organisation accepted us as P.D. facilitators even before we finalised the contracting procedures. The question of what is P.D., how it would be done came repeatedly from the staff. We did not have any clear answer for it. We told them about how we had conceptualised P.D. and also made some tentative statements about the usefulness of P.D. Even though at that time we did not have a very convincing definition we felt that the organisation was open for P.D.

I approached the second organisation for P.D., while the first P.D. exercise was half-way through. We received a warm welcome and were told that they would be happy to help us in our research on process documentation. It seemed very clear that the organisation did not understand the P.D. objectives. We highlighted the mutual benefits of the P.D. But the organisation was not ready to accept that there was a possibility of benefitting from the P.D. process. The head of the organisation asked a series of questions. We tried our best to answer. I tried to narrate my experiences of involvement with P.D. and the usefulness of P.D. After this, even though I was involved in the facilitation of processes in programme planning and staff development, the process documentation exercise as such did not happen.

In the case of the third organisation, there was not much difficulty in finalising the contracting process. When we approached the organisation for P.D. they were planning to undergo a process of analysis of their past years of activity. In our initial rounds of discussion, they realised that P.D. could help them in analysing the process within their organisation and thus they agreed for P.D.

All the three organisations initially thought that P.D. was an exercise of interest to 'us' only. They thought that it was not going to help them. Our organisational principle believes in giving due respect to the needs or expectations of the partner organisation, even though, they do not fall within the framework of the project. This approach enabled us to relate to the organisation in a broader frame of reference. In case of the second organisation, where we could not initiate P.D., we had long discussion with the head of the organisation on the issues of organisational processes. Perhaps, it would have been very difficult to convince all the three organisations to enter the P.D. exercise, had we approached them as P.D. facilitators only. Our approach to respond to the organisational needs in order to strengthen the organisation provided us enough space to interact with the organisation in a more



relaxed way even though we did not have any clear and convincing answers to the questions of those organisations.

Some Mistakes

While I initiated the P.D. in the first organisation, for some time I did not know for what purpose I was making my observations or initiating discussions. One of my colleagues in one of the preparatory meetings told me categorically not to make any early judgments or suggestions. But, while we were making our observations in the first round of P.D. exercise, the staff members of the organisation asked a series of questions, such as "how do you find our work?", "What are our mistakes in this approach?", "Do you feel we have developed the right kind of reporting system?" I, somehow avoided all these questions. But, before finishing the first phase of the P.D. exercise, when one of my colleagues and I were reviewing the first phase of the exercise with the staff members of the organisation, we felt that there was no system in the organisation to document the key happenings/events of the organisation. We suggested to them that they keep a diary where each member could write a few lines about various organisational events every day (both at the level of office and field). The organisation found it a good idea although a few staff members resented it as they thought that it would create more paper work.

As P.D. facilitation was a new exercise for us we had decided that after finishing every phase of the P.D. exercise we would analyse our experiences among ourselves. During the review, I received strong criticism regarding my suggestion to maintain a diary. I felt bad about it. I had given the suggestion after much thought. I thought that there were many small things which happen in the organisation which people forget very soon. If these were written on a daily basis, perhaps it would help in analysing the process. I later realised that the idea was to look at the existing processes and not to develop systems. The need of developing systems can be taken up separately. In the P.D. facilitation of the third organisation I used a new method to get to know as much as possible about events. I made the exercise more structured from the beginning itself. I asked the staff members to recall and note all the events which happened in the organisation since they joined. The collective recall process provided more information on the organisation.

Learning Through Experience

In the first case I was primarily looking at the processes of programmes and organisational functioning. Since, the organisation was just two years old, the analysis of processes finished very quickly. The next



step was to articulate the processes. I wrote a draft report. But it was very evaluative and it tended to blame the leader of the organisation for every thing. Most of the statements I made was centered around the deeds and mistakes of the leader. When I reread the report I could not believe what I had written. Around that time we were supposed to check the validity of our hypothesis on the processes with the agency. I could not go as I was sick. I briefed my colleague about the process and restrained myself from being judgemental. During this phase my colleague had a very frank discussion with the leader alone on the processes. The head of the organisation agreed to most of the observations and sought help to sort out some issues of concerns.

After this phase, we could not go to the organisation for a year. This was not a conscious decision. During this year, the organisation underwent changes, revitalising its programmes, structure and system. In view of these changes we later decided to continue with two more phases of P.D. facilitation.

In case of the third agency, I used an organisational model to cover various aspects of the organisation. I took various components of it one by one. I took a systemic approach to cover all aspects of the organisational processes. The aim was to cover most of the processes in as few phases as possible. Also the aim was not to leave any aspect to chances or fate. The staff members of the organisation were very happy with this approach. They discussed all aspects of the organisation. The whole exercise took three months to finish. During the facilitation period I was stationed very close to the organisation and as I could visit the organisation frequently, I got more ideas about the processes involved. In both the cases giving feed back was a very crucial part of the process..

Challenges in the Closure

Finalisation of the P.D. is a real challenge. In case of the first organisation, I did not know how to close the P.D. exercise. I made many changes in the draft report. It was reading more like an annual report with a separate section on P.D. I was not happy with the report. I gave a copy of the report to the head of the organisation. I told him that it would take two days to close the P.D. process. But, I felt that the head of the organisation was no more interested in P.D. He said that many new members had joined the organisation. It was therefore, necessary that they also learn about the P.D. process. Although I agreed to this, the head of the organisation did not appreciate my approach. I was determined to close the P.D. process. I was convinced that we had spent considerable time in the organisation and among staff members discussing the P.D. processes. Even though the head of the organisation was not ready for the closure, I put forward the



agenda. Everybody agreed to it. I outlined the processes on programmes, strategies, structure and system development and team building. I seemed to be rushing through. Infact my co-P.D. facilitator did not like the way I was rushing ahead. I made all efforts not to be evaluative. I just put forward the processes. I could see that the staff was very alert and listening to the processes carefully. While I was presenting the processes the staff themselves began to evaluate. The discussion continued for some time. The staff members were participating actively beyond my expectation. One member came up with a definition of process documentation and said that they should look at the processes every year while writing their annual report. While evaluating the P.D. exercise, most of the staff members felt that such an exercise was very useful.

In case of the second organisation, the draft report was discussed with the key staff members of the organisation before the presentation to the staff members. The staff members were eagerly waiting for the presentation of the processes. The enthusiasm of the staff members was visible. We planned to conclude the P.D. at a place away from the organisation. Going out itself was an added attraction to the staff members. I presented the process without making the slightest of evaluative remarks. Although all the members of the organisation were open throughout the process, during the presentation some members got defensive. This happened as they could not detach themselves from the processes. Some remarked that perhaps the facilitator had not understood their work completely. It happened despite my reiteration that the presentation of processes was not an evaluation of the organisation.

Personal Feelings

At the end of the exercise, I do feel satisfied. I have now started believing that if the purpose is clear, the method and techniques are secondary concerns. Facilitation of P.D. exercise is like a complicated dissection of the anatomy of the organisation without causing any pain. One needs to be patient. More than this, one must respect all the events and processes which have happened in an organisation. There is no need to make judgements. The members who are involved in the organisational activities are capable of evaluating their work. During the P.D. exercise, the persons in the organisation get a chance to look at the processes of which they were not aware. Hence, in facilitation of the P.D., one is touching many soft spots. It is necessary to keep restraint so as not to offend those who are involved in the organisation with their heart and soul. Looking at the processes itself generates many questions. Hence, there is no need to identify the areas of concerns outrightly. The processes which emerges out of the P.D. needs to be shared with warmth, respect and support.



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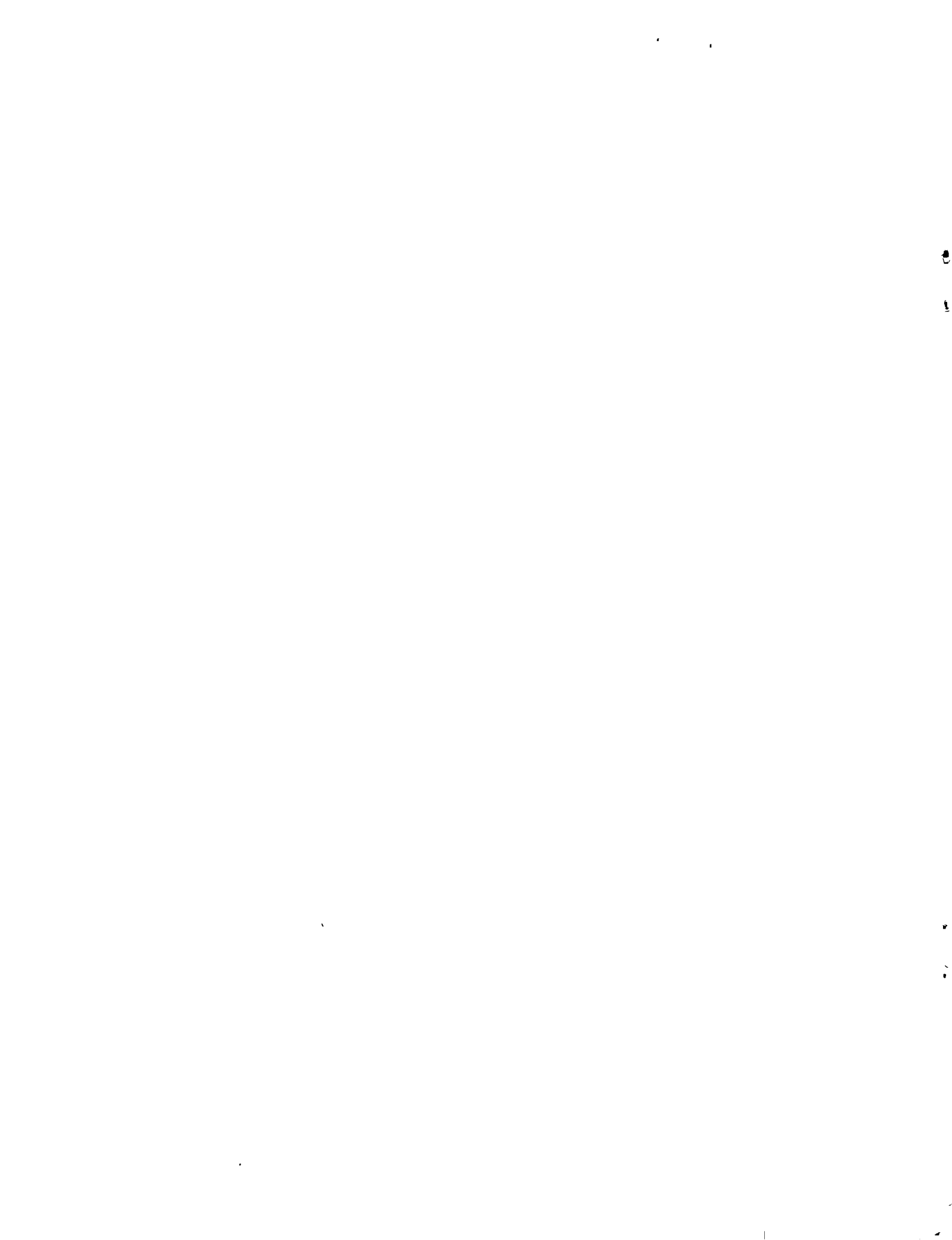
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