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# UNIT 5 PUBLIC RELATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT CONTEXT : CATALYST, PERSUASION AND MOTIVATION

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## 5.0 OBJECTIVES

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In the earlier units of this Block you have studied definitions, processes, public relations in PR, PR concept, ethical dimensions etc. In this Unit, you will learn about the role of public relations in the context of development. Public Relations acts as a catalyst for change by making use of the concepts of motivation and persuasion. On completing of this Unit, you should be able to:

- explain the role of PR as a catalyst for change;
- describe the significance of environment assessment in PR;
- describe the concept of development planning;
- state the importance of people's participation in development programmes and how it can be brought about;
- list the channels that may be used for disseminating publicity for development plans;
- explain the role of PR in development context;
- understand the interplay of various factors involved in effective persuasion; and
- describe the concept of motivation and how PR can help to motivate individuals and groups for achieving developmental goals.

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## 5.1 INTRODUCTION

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In the previous unit, we discussed the prospect of employment in Public Relations for the young and qualified persons. We have seen that in the government, non-government and industries, a lot of opportunities are waiting to be picked up by the new generation of PROs. In this Unit, we will examine the scope of PR efforts in persuasion and motivation and the use of persuasive techniques in bringing about the process of change and development.

This being the last Unit in this block, we shall proceed to the next new block *i.e.* Block II. We shall discuss various principles of PR and their implications in various areas of functioning.

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## 5.2 PUBLIC RELATIONS AS A CATALYST FOR CHANGE

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In order to help you understand the role of public relations as a catalyst for change, it is advisable that you have a clear idea of the concept of public relations. You have already studied some definition of public relations in the earlier units. But you must also examine some definitions that explain the role of Public Relations as a catalyst for change.

Edward L. Bernyas, a doyen of American Public Relations, defines Public Relations "as the attempt by information, persuasion and adjustment to engineer public support for an activity, cause, movement or institution." We would like to describe public relations as "management of relations and understanding between an organisation and internal and external publics to promote the corporate goals, ideas, actions, services or products."

Public Relations is an umbrella term applied to suit to the communication needs of different organisations. It offers several versions, such as :

- Public Relations helps an organisation and its publics to adapt mutually to each other.
- Public Relations is an organisation's effort to win the cooperation of the customers.
- Public Relations helps the various organisations to interact and communicate with their key publics.
- Public Relations helps organisations to anticipate signs of change and apply corrective measures constructively.
- Public relations makes an analysis of the people's reaction, and keeps the organisations informed with feedback and information.

Judged from these definitions, public relations serves as a two-way link between an organisation and the public, not only for informing the public about the policies and programmes of the organisation but also for keeping the organisation in turn informed of the pulse for the public. This undoubtedly creates the right environment and harmonious relations between the organisations and their respective publics. This is a prerequisite for an organisation to develop and thrive in a society because no institution can develop in a hostile environment. So, we would be justified in granting that PR plays a vital role in development by creating the right environment.

Public relations, even in the context of national development, plays a vital role between the administrative machinery for development and the beneficiaries of the development schemes. Its role lies not only in creating awareness about development programmes but also in making the beneficiaries partners in the implementation of the programme.

Let us now discuss how public relations plays the role of a catalyst for change. Before you reorient somebody towards the desired objective or goal, those whom you want to change, must be supplied with full information and thorough knowledge of the issue. This role is performed by public relations in various ways. There are five steps to this chain :

- 1) Information
- 2) Education
- 3) Motivation
- 4) Participation

## 5) Change

All these roles are played by public relations in bringing about a change in the outlook of people towards development. The concept of public relations as a catalyst for change in the developmental context has passed through different steps in India as Five Year Plan Publicity, Integrated Plan Publicity, Development Communication, Development Broadcasting, Development Journalism, etc. We have now reached a stage at which the concept of Development Public Relations has emerged as a catalyst for socio-economic development in the Third World countries.

### 5.2.1 Environmental Assessment

Any organisation, be it the government, the public sector or the private sector, has to function in tune with the prevailing socio-economic environment of the country. The changing trends are monitored through a process by public relations, called **environmental assessment**. This has two major aspects : (a) scanning of environment, and (b) monitoring. Scanning involves an examination of the social/economic/political conditions in the society within which the organisation functions. This is done to identify events that may signal the beginning of significant trends that may affect the organisation. Monitoring involves communicating the development of such trends which are significant to organisational planning.

According to E.W. Brody, the author of *Public Relations : Programming and Production*. "Environmental assessment fulfills multiple roles in public relations practice. As an ongoing process, it provides practitioners with continuing insights into individuals, organisations and the environments in which they function. Such information is central to the strategic planning process on which public relations programme is based."

The environmental assessment process is designed to identify and monitor emerging issues or trends that ultimately create problems or opportunities for the organisation. These issues are identified through scanning, and tracked by monitoring. Environmental assessment techniques in public relations practice include :

- a) Interaction with the publics and opinion leaders,
- b) Media monitoring,
- c) Organisational monitoring,
- d) Continuing education.

Therefore, public relations as an art of dealing with public has to be sensitive to the environment. This is more significant much more in the developmental context, as our process of planning usually top-down communication. Instead of this approach, one must focus on factors that can make development projects more relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries. In other words, it should be a bottom-up approach which is a two-way communication. Environmental assessment gives a clear picture of the grassroots situation, which would go a long way towards designing suitable plans appropriate to the needs of the public.

### 5.2.2 Bringing the Public together for Mutual Interaction

Bringing the publics together for mutual interaction and benefit is the major responsibility of Public Relations. The success of any organisation is basically linked with the interest of the chief four types of public :

- The top management;
- The employees;
- The customers; and
- The community at large, including the opinion leaders.

In fact, these groups constitute the four strong pillars on which an organisation rests firmly. A successful organisation is one which provides a forum to bring these publics together for regular mutual interaction and benefit. Such a forum will enable the different categories of publics to understand each others problems, which, in turn, helps in the smooth running of the organisation. But, managements tend to implement communication programmes for each group

of these publics independently through internal communication with the customers. In the Indian setting, it is rarely that an integrated approach is made to bring these four groups on a single platform for mutual exchange of views. This has great advantages for it helps to reduce or eliminate the distrust and suspicion among these groups because of their conflicting interest. A common forum and open communication paves way for mutual understanding. Similarly in development tasks, the bringing together of beneficiaries, policy makers, planners administrative machinery communicators helps in proper formulation and smooth implementation of the programme.

**Check Your Progress 1**

**Note :** i) Answer the following questions briefly in the space provided.

ii) You may compare your answers with those given at the end of this Unit.

1) How does a Public Relations Practitioner serve as a catalyst for change ?

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2) Why is environmental assessment important to Public Relations?

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### **5.3 PUBLIC RELATIONS IN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

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Planning means drawing up of an action programme to accomplish a task. Planning is a prerequisite for any development tasks. A continuous process of formulating, reformulating and implementing a set of related goals, plans, programmes, activities and tasks for realising the selected objectives in a prescribed time schedule is called planning. All major projects and economic development schemes in our country are the result of planning.

#### **5.3.1 Development Planning**

Different authors have defined "development" in different ways although the substance of these definitions are the same. Let us first examine what the term "development" means.

It is now recognised that development is a multi-dimensional process, in which the non-economic dimensions are as important as the economic dimensions. Therefore, 'development' entails the simultaneous achievement of a number of objectives, such as growth and equity. Social groups that were previously passive now insist on participating actively in the development process, and sharing equitably in the fruits of productivity. Privileged groups, on the other hand, are not too keen to share the power they have previously monopolised with their fellow citizens.

Development, therefore, is a process, the goals of which are to realise the total human potential. Its success hinges upon the satisfaction of these goals.

Rogers defines it as 'a widely participatory process of directed social change in a society, intended to bring about both social and material advancement for the majority of the people through their gaining greater control over their environment.'

Development is a planned integrative process that first came into practice in the 1920s in the Soviet Union. In the United States, planning became a normal practice for big corporations.

However, its government still prefers the term policy for what is in fact very similar to what is called planning.

“Development Planning” is the scientific discipline that studies the mechanisms of mobilisation and re-allocation of resources in a developing country with a view of optimal attainment and pursuance of global process of change lending to a self-reliant, self centered, needs-oriented and sustained development

As it is, today most of the underdeveloped nations have established planning machinery and have produced plans for economic development. The plans may differ sharply in character and in quality. Some of them have been built on a solid factual foundation; others have been put together with figures picked out of the air. The targets set in some plans may be modest; in others, ambitious but realistic; while still others may be simply beyond reach. Some planners have adopted the criteria of efficiency to govern the allocation of development resources, and have applied these criteria in the evaluation of project applications and in the establishment of priorities. Others have adopted no governing criteria; still others have conducted little in the way of project evaluation. In some cases, the provisions of development plans have been systematically incorporated in the government budget, but in others they have been ignored by the budgeting authorities. Some plans have been put into effect, in greater or lesser part. Others have remained on paper.

Generally, development plans are drawn up for three differing durations :

- There is a long-term plan, running to as long as two decades. This sets forth in broad terms the intended direction, pattern and rate of development, and explains the strategy by which it is to be achieved.
- Next, is the medium-term plan, covering approximately five years the kind adopted by our policy makers. It details the development effort in a way that is consistent with the design of the long-term plan.
- Finally, there are short-term annual plans, which contain the part that is to be undertaken in each fiscal year.

### **5.3.2 Five Year Plans**

You must be familiar with some details about the Indian Five-Year Plans. The ongoing Eight Five Year Plan was embarked on with an aim “to consolidate the impressive gains of the past, address traditional concerns with a renewed sense of vigour, take the nation to new heights of economic achievement, and to reach the fruits of development to all people, especially the deprived, the weak and the under-privileged”. The plan envisages a total investment of Rs. 8,98,000 crores, of which the public sector outlay is estimated at Rs. 4,38,100 crores. The share of the public sector investment is around 45% of the total plan outlay. An interesting feature of the plan is, that for the first time in the history of planning in India, the private sector has been assigned a major share of Rs. 450,000 crores higher than the public sector outlay. The overall growth rate of the gross domestic product (GDP) is targeted at 5-6 per cent per year.

### **5.3.3 People’s Participation**

Newer approaches to development in developing countries are increasingly departing from the earlier approaches of top-down communication. They are now encouraging people’s participation in the development process. This is done through use of mass media, interpersonal and group communication as well through use of folk/indigenous media.

The Five Year Plans and the development projects, which are aimed at the overall development of the people, can be successful only when the beneficiaries concerned are aware of such schemes, and make use of them for their economic betterment. Therefore, people’s cooperation and people’s participation, both in the stage of formulation and implementation of planned development programmes, are of high importance. Every Five Year Plans has emphasised the need for people’s participation in the developmental process as partners in progress. Such participation can be ensured only when the people are involved in the process.

In the case of agricultural development, the farmers should be active participants to adopt improved practices with understanding and knowledge. Here, comes the role of information. Unless information on the plan schemes is disseminated widely, the required awareness about

such schemes cannot be created. The amount of information made available and the spread of its dissemination are key factors in the development process. Do you agree ?

It has been said that the eradication of "information poverty" is a pre-requisite for the eradication of economic poverty. This means that for economic development the eradication of information poverty is necessary. In fact, information and development should go hand-in-hand. The question naturally arises — who will do it ? As in the case of economic development, there should be an agency to handle and dissemination of information too. This job is entrusted to the Information and Public Relations Agency. Removal of information poverty through various media of communication is the prime concern of the information and public relations agencies. Thus emerges the role of information and public relations agencies in reaching feedback information from the grass-roots to the planners for effective decision-making.

Each Five Year Plans and in its objectives clearly highlights two important aspects, namely, providing the plan information and seeking the people's cooperation. The First Five Year Plan document said, "A wide-spread understanding of the plan is an essential stage in its fulfillment". While underscoring the people's participation, the plan document stated. "The plan has to be carried into every home in the language and symbols of the people, and expressed in terms of their common needs and problems." In the Third Five Year Plan it was made clear that "sincere efforts should be made to involve people in the process of development". Mention may also be made of the Seventh Five Year Plan, in which prominence was given to the role of information services. "The major thrust of the plan relating to mass media will be to raise the level of people's consciousness and enrich their cultural and social life to make them better informed citizens ..... stepping up the pace of development programmes and sensitise the people towards national and international events of importance. The media will act as a vehicle of education and extension to narrow information gaps faced by the people from different walks of life".

If you study the Eight, Five Year Plan, one of its objectives relates to the role of 'Public Relations in Planning, and It reads; "To make people's participation in the formulation and implementation of plans, through Panchayats in rural areas and popularly elected municipal bodies in urban areas. The idea is to involve people and democratic bodies from the grass-roots level, both in the formulation and implementation of plan schemes". True participation should facilitate conscientisation which is possible only in the communication education that is receiver centered. The above can enable the disadvantaged to perceive their needs, define their priorities, identify constraining factors, and seek solutions.

**Check Your Progress 2**

- Note :** i) State whether or not you agree with the following statements.  
ii) Give reasons for your answers.  
iii) Compare your answers with the ones given at end of this Unit.  
iv) Use the space given below for your answers.

1) Development is a multi-dimensional process.

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2) Information dissemination is a key factor in development process.

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3) People's participation is necessary for the success of five year plans.

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## 5.4 PLAN PUBLICITY

The concept of "Plan Publicity" was evolved during the First Five Year Plan, as a measure not only to disseminate plan information but also to generate people's cooperation and their participation. The term 'Plan Publicity' is something much wider than mere publicity for the development projects and the Five Year Plans. It has to touch the emotions of the people. As the plan comprehends the entire life of the community through its effective implementation, it needs a unified national outlook, calling for considerable discipline and sacrifice on the part of the people. The objective of plan publicity is not only mass enlightenment but also the creation of an emotional urge for development, in the minds of the people: It should inculcate a broad understanding of good citizenship, and enhance the desire for a feeling of self-help amongst people. The feeling should be positive and responsive so that the public cooperation becomes a self-generating force in accelerating the national constructive activity.

### Integrated Plan Publicity

As a part of the Five Year Plans, an integrated plan publicity programme was involved incorporating the publicity schemes of the Five Year Plans for various media units of the Government of India and the same was implemented. Ever since the scheme was inaugurated in 1953, the All India Radio, Directorate of Advertising and Visual Publicity, Publications Division, Press Information Bureau, Photo Division, Song and Drama Division, and the Films Division have designed special plan publicity schemes to create awareness among the people about the Five Year Plans. Similarly, the state Information and Public Relations Department have created plan publicity cells in their respective departments to give a boost to the plan schemes. *Yojna*, a fortnightly Publication of the Publication Division in English, Hindi and other regional languages is devoted to planning and development. *Kurukshetra* is yet another similar monthly magazine, in English and Hindi. In addition, the Directorate of Field Publicity Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, carries the message of planning to the doorsteps of people in rural India. The Song and Drama Division using traditional folk media has played a great part in creating awareness among the rural folks with useful information like how to get a bank loan, use of contraceptives etc.

Thus all these coordinated efforts, made by different media units and by the State Governments aim at creating plan awareness and making the people "partners in progress". That is the key objective of the Integrated Plan Publicity with a multi-media approach.

### Check Your Progress 3

Note : i) Answer the following question in the space provided below.

ii) Compare your answer with the one given at the end of this unit.

1) How is publicity achieved for the five year plans?

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## 5.5 EMERGENCE OF DEVELOPMENT PUBLIC RELATIONS

The term 'publicity' itself changed to 'Public Relations' as it was realised that one way communication and dissemination of information alone could not bring about development. The plan publicity schemes were merged into the normal functioning of the media units and the State Information and Public Relations Departments. The information and publicity aspects of planning and development schemes have now become part of the:

- respective media units in the Central Government,
- the State Information and Public Relations Departments in the State Governments, and
- the Public Relations Cells of the respective public sector enterprises.

You must be familiar with the term 'Development Communication'. This refers to the use of communication to facilitate development either in a general way through extension workers or by using of mass media for greater exposure of messages development project such as population control. This is also referred to as **Development Support Communication**. Whether one calls it plan publicity or development communication, it is only a public relations support for development programmes being handled by the information workers and public relations agencies in India for the purpose of creating awareness among the people on planning and development programmes. Thus public relations as a two-way communication process has a vital role to play in the planning and development of our country. However, the task does not end with informing. The most important problem to be tackled by these agencies is the change to be brought about in the attitude of the people by creating awareness about the possibility of a better quality of life. It is total transformation of the traditional society into a well-developed, fully advanced society where there would be a good living standard for every one and where life would be free from poverty, unemployment and ignorance. Public Relations has to shoulder this stupendous task to bring about the required transformation in the society. Public Relations here acts as a catalyst for change.

Development Public Relations facilitates the process of socio-economic development. It embraces number of functions in the developing countries towards the path of modernisation and industrialisation. In fact, development Public Relations is the effort of information and Public Relations agency to create better awareness among the people about planning and development schemes through a process of two-way communication to seek people's participation in the economic development process.

### **Integrated Rural Development:**

Here is an example how Public Relations may bring about socio-economic change in society through the Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP).

The IRDP is a beneficiary oriented programme intended to benefit the rural families with an annual income of Rs. 6400/- or less to cross the poverty line. The target group consists of small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, and rural artisans. The programmes are implemented through District Rural Development Agencies (DRDA) at the district level. Active participation of the local people in the implementation of the programme starts with the associations of the entire village community with the procedure for identification of the beneficiaries. In addition, the prominent voluntary action groups and bodies engaged in socio-economic activities with the objective of rural upliftment are also actively associated with the programme. The Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas (DWCRA) is a sub-scheme of (IRDP) with the primary objective of focussing attention on women members of the rural families below the poverty line, and to provide them with opportunities of self-employment on a sustained basis. The need arose for a special programme designed exclusively for the women members of the IRDP families because they were not availing of the benefits of that programme in adequate measure. The target group for DWRCRA is the same as for IRDP. Both IRDP and DWRCRA are good examples of development schemes aimed at the upliftment of the poorest of the poor in rural India.

In order to seek people's participation in these two development schemes IRDP and DWRCRA, efforts are being made to disseminate information to the beneficiaries and the local public about the programme. Beneficiaries must be made aware of their own responsibilities in making the projects succeed finally. The information must be total and include answers to ques-



tions like — what is the programme ? What is its duration ? Who is eligible ? How is it beneficial ? What should be done to avail of it ? Whom to approach ? etc. When required, special motivation camps are also held to satisfy all queries and resolve any doubts in the minds of the beneficiaries.

Now, who does this job of disseminating information ? Which agency should be charged with this responsibility ? The answer is unambiguous. The services of the State Information and Public Relations Departments are utilised to provide publicity to these schemes. The various mass media and traditional media are also used by DRDA. The film, the cinema, public meetings, group discussions, photo exhibitions showing achievements of the programme, narrating the success stories of the beneficiaries are used. In addition, the officials of the DRDA are involved in motivating beneficiaries through personal contact or indirectly through village panchayats. In the house-to-house survey being conducted for the identification of beneficiaries, the DRDA creates awareness of the programme through oral media and opinion leaders. All these efforts are aimed at generating the awareness, education and motivation of the beneficiaries to make use of the rural development schemes, and these come under the concept known as PR support for development.

#### Check Your Progress 4

Note : i) Fill in the blanks of the sentences below.

ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this Unit.

- 1) Public Relations acts as a \_\_\_\_\_ for change.
- 2) Development PR aims at creating \_\_\_\_\_ among people about development schemes and seeks \_\_\_\_\_ in the development process.
- 3) The target group for DWCRA are \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_ is a beneficiary oriented programme for rural families.
- 5) Information and Publicity aspects of development schemes are carried out by \_\_\_\_\_.

## 5.6 PUBLIC RELATIONS IN PERSUASION

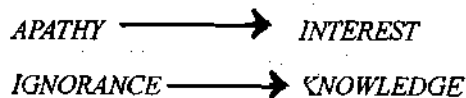
Winston Brembach and William Howell, two communication experts, have described persuasion as "communication to influence choices". Another description is "any communication, intended or not, that causes a change in a receiver's attitude, belief or action". It is "a process that changes attitudes, beliefs, opinion or behaviours".

Persuasion as an aid to PR is usually defined as a communicative process, the purpose of which "is to influence". A persuasive message has a point of view or a desired behaviour for the recipient to adopt in a voluntary fashion. Victoria O' Nuing. The interactive process involves a sender and a receiver are linked by symbols, verbal and non-verbal, through which the persuader attempts to influence the persuadee to adopt a change in a given attitude or behaviour because the persuadee has had perceptions enlarged or changed.

Transactional communication leads to effective persuasion. This is a two way process of persuasion where the target group and the development worker talk to overcome differences and arrive at an agreement. People respond to persuasion that promises to help that in some way by satisfying a want or need. That is why the persuader must think in terms of the persuadee's needs. Persuasion is a reciprocal process in which both parties are dependent upon one another.

Frank Jefkins, a renowned British author explains the role of public relations through an information transfer process mode as follows :

HOSTILITY → SYMPATHY  
PREJUDICE → ACCEPTANCE



Public Relations, therefore, endeavours in changing the attitudes of the people for the better both by understanding and prevailing human climate and creating mutual understanding between an organisation and its publics. In the process, the negative feelings and criticism of the organisation are changed into positive feelings. This type of public relations tactics can also be applied to the development process in changing the attitudes of the people towards progress.

Therefore, the strategy of persuasion is used by public relations, both in internal and external communications, because their objectives is to inform, educate, motivate and change the attitudes of people. Persuasion is used to :

- change or neutralise hostile opinions;
- crystallise latent opinions and positive attitudes; and
- promote favourable public opinions.

The most difficult persuasion task is to turn hostile opinions into sympathetic ones. In case of development, people in India are tradition-bound, and they hold conservative views. It is a difficult task for a PR practitioner, involved in development projects, to change those rooted in traditional thinking. Therefore, the development messages should be designed in such a way that they are compatible with people's general disposition about a subject. The easiest form of persuasion is communication that is reinforced with services and actions. Without promised action, the source loses his credibility *e.g.* a drive to promote female education should be concomitant with the setting up of a school/educational facility. Otherwise, it is meaningless. A number of factors are involved in persuasive communication, and the PR practitioner should be aware of them. These include :

- Audience analysis.
- Source credibility.
- Appeal to self-interest.
- Clarity of message.
- Timing and context.
- Audience participation.
- Content and structure of messages.
- Persuasive speaking.

#### Audience Analysis :

Any development message is intended for the people and should be related to the specific audience. The audiences' profile is to be analysed, taking into consideration their age, education, socio-economic background, etc.

#### Source Credibility :

The source should be trustworthy or an expert in the eyes of the receiver. A message is more believable to the intended audience if the source is perceived as credible by the audience. This explains the use of local opinion leaders and seeking of their help and cooperation by any extend source particularly for diffusion of innovation. Involving of village dais for family welfare programmes or the progressive farmer for adoption of scientific agricultural practices explains the success of a credible source. In case of the development process, the messages should be accompanied by actions or implementation of the scheme. Mere announcement of the development scheme by a source will not create credibility unless it is implemented, and benefits accrue to the people.

#### Appeal to Self-Interest :

Self-interest is an important factor in receiving messages; people get involved in issues and pay attention to messages when we appeal to their economic needs. The public relations per-

son, when structuring an angle for a message, must think first and foremost about the nature of the audience and what it wants to know. Where policy makers neglect understanding the priorities and the environment of the beneficiaries, the programme cannot be a success.

**Clarity of Message :**

Many messages fail because the audience find the message unnecessarily complex in content or words. The most persuasive messages are expressed in simple term, and contain only one primary idea. Public Relations personnel should always ask two questions. What do I want the audience to do with the message ? Will the audience understand the message ? Comprehension of development messages by the user-receiver is a prerequisite for proper decision making by the receiver. Therefore, greater attention to message development is called for to increase its fidelity among the intended beneficiaries.

**Timing and Context :**

A message is more persuasive if environmental factors support the message. A message relating to the introduction of high-yielding varieties of paddy should be conveyed and timed in the context of the agricultural season and the needs of the farmers. Context is also to be viewed for priorities. One cannot hope to succeed for a literacy campaign in a community of people whose bellies are empty and starvation is rampant.

**Audience Participation:**

A change in attitude or reinforcement of beliefs is enhanced by audience involvement and participation. The newer approach is not to treat the beneficiaries as passive adopters but to mobilise, organise to train them to participate effectively with the experts and authorities so that knowledge is shared rather than passed down one-way. In the final analysis, one must see that the audience participate in socio-economic programmes.

**Content and Structure of Messages :**

A number of techniques can make a message more purposeful. Expert communicators use a number of devices including (1) drama (2) statistics (3) examples (4) testimonials (5) mass media endorsement, and (6) emotional appeals. A judicious combination of necessary elements, suitable to the channel of communication, a logical order in presentation of argument targets with skill expertise and experience contribute to production of effective messages.

**Persuasive Speaking :**

Persuasive speeches give all sides as well as clear understanding of the issue. Speaking should be based on reasoning and empathy. Communication scholars now argue for interactive communication emphasising on knowledge sharing as between equals rather than top down flow and highly prescriptive teaching.

**Activity 1**

You would have been exposed to countless messages on family planning over TV, Radio, Print and Posters. Study and analyse at least five such messages for its persuasive quality.

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**5.7 PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MOTIVATION**

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If the objectives of PR is to create cordial relations between an organisation and its publics, motivation forms the key link in influencing the attitudes of either individual publics or institutional publics. Behind every action of an individual, there is a motive. Motivation, therefore, plays a vital role in the art of public relations. The theory of motivation is based on certain words, "want," "wish" or "desire", in order to fulfil the wants or desires, individuals act to reach certain objectives. Motivation is the 'drive' that makes people behave or act in a

The major purpose of the public relations practitioner is to have message received, properly understood and appropriately acted upon. This can be said to be the prime motive behind conveying the message whether it is messages of development or otherwise. The message must have the right 'drive' or appeal built into it. The receiver of such a message will respond according to the factor that motivates the person, generally in the context of the communication and the best experience of the sender. A lot depends on the credibility of the source also. If the goodwill has been established between the organisation and the publics, the motivation of the receiver, which helps to determine the response, will be different from where no such rapport has been built. Why do people respond; pond differently to the same stimulus — be it pressure or persuasion? What is it that motivates a farmer to try newer methods of cultivation; the traditional; an illiterate peasant girl to attend literacy class; an urban woman to undergo check up for cancer; or an employee to increase the work output? The PR practitioner has to consider the source of motivation which springs from the underlying social and cultural values of an individual.

Dr. Abraham Maslow who did considerable research in motivation evolved a concept which came to be known as Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. According to him, the source of these needs are stronger and must be fulfilled first before the others. Therefore, in order to motivate a person he/she must be helped to advance up in the Hierarchy of Needs. However, these needs levels are overlapping and higher needs levels emerge before the lower needs are fully satisfied. In order to motivate a person, it is considered necessary to investigate factors that will incite him (incentives) and factors that will inhibit action (disincentives).

Research has shown that it is not financial incentives alone, but also non-financial incentives *e.g.* prestige, recognition, sense of achievement, working environment etc. That can be powerful motivators that management takes into consideration in dealing with situations *e.g.* absenteeism, falling productivity etc. sharing the gains of productivity, sharing of information, creating a sense of belonging, helping out employees in their personal problems are some of the ways used to secure employee motivation.

In the development context, the information worker or the change agent who works towards adoption of innovations, must consider options that will motivate the beneficiaries to change their attitude. This calls for thorough research into the beneficiaries backgrounds to assess their needs.

### **5.7.1 Group Motivation**

The attitude of a group towards any policy, programme or a product is reflected not by each individual member but through the group leaders, who are of strong personality and generally of a persuasive nature. Among the variables that influence human behaviour, reference groups, and organisational membership play an important part. Thus, communicators need to take into account the groups to which people belong. As members of a group, people tend to behave differently. Sociologists tell us that it is possible to evolve highly effective work groups with high performance goals. While group cohesiveness results in the group acting in a unified way the leader of the group can direct the energies of the group towards the organisational goals. It needs great skills to motivate people even to raise a task force of group of volunteers for development tasks.

Group motivation is developed by the sinking of individual motivation, brought about by skilled oratory and effective persuasion of the group leaders. Public Relations endeavours to exploit both individual and group motivation principles to change the attitudes of the public towards the corporate goals of organisations. Enlightened managements favour team activity and attempt to create a congenial organisational climate and avoid inter-departmental conflicts. The study of group dynamics is important for a PR practitioner. In development context, the finest example in India is the Kheda Project which was decentralised and participatory aimed at promoting rural development and social change after thorough audience research to assess their needs. Involvement of audience at all levels in programme production dealing with issues like alcoholism, exploitation, cooperatives, etc. was what led to the success of the campaign because the entire group was highly motivated.

### **5.7.2 How to Improve Motivation ?**

In the process of motivation, the public relations practitioners might confront the hostility, prejudice, apathy and ignorance of the public which affect mutual understanding. Here are some guidelines to improve the situation :

- Before communication PR messages, one should analyse the recipient's educational and social background. This will enable you to create a right motivating situation for them.
- Have empathy and make them also feel important. Listen to them attentively and encourage participation.
- Use such language, words and phrases as are within the range of public understanding.
- Avoid secrecy. Have open and frank two-way communication.
- Create groups and encourage team spirit.

If you are aware of the existence of hostility, prejudice or adverse motivation in the minds of the public, try to construct your messages so that they have the least possible changes of being disrupted by these conditions. Set examples by your own conduct.

Do not create credibility gap. Follow promises with prompt action and performance.

Endeavour to obtain feedback from your public to know whether the messages have had the effect you sought.

If public relations adopt the techniques of motivation as enumerated above, it would, undoubtedly, build a corporate personality and favourable image for an organisation, besides promoting corporate relations. The same guidelines hold good for development communicators.

#### Check Your Progress 5

Note : i) Fill in the blanks.

ii) Compare your answers with the ones given at the end of this Unit.

- 1) The five levels in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs are \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2) Non financial incentives include factors like \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_ can create a highly motivated group.
- 4) A person's behaviour is also influenced by the \_\_\_\_\_ that he/she belongs to.
- 5) Group \_\_\_\_\_ is important for high performance.
- 6) \_\_\_\_\_ into the receivers background helps to assess their needs.
- 7) To change public's attitude, PR must attempt to exploit both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ motivating principles.

#### Activity 2

Prepare a copy inviting volunteers to set up a citizens committee for a "keep your city clean" operation in your town or city.

## 5.8 LET US SUM UP

'Public Relations' is an umbrella term used by all individuals and organisations to create and maintain harmonious relations between them and their respective publics in the promotion of ideas services, or products. While playing the role of a catalyst, PR utilises the techniques of persuasion and motivation for changing attitudes of the public and directing it to promote mutual understanding. In the process, the behaviour, the attitudes and perceptions of individuals towards the services or goals of organisations become changed in its favour.

The major step in the public relations process is the analysis of environment in which an organisation functions. Such analysis also indicates the current trends and signals, vital for the successful functioning of the institutions. The prevailing situation and the changing socio-

economic trends are monitored by Public Relations through a system called environment assessment. E.W. Brody says that the information obtained through the analysis of environment "is central to the strategic planning process of public relations". Environment assessment is done by obtaining feedback from mass media, opinion leaders and other publics.

Public Relations, as a catalyst, has the major responsibility of bringing the publics of an organisation together for mutual interaction and proper understanding so that they could understand the problems of each other. An integrated approach involving two way communication is considered more desirable and effective than a top-down, one-way communication. Public Relations assumes greater importance in the development context for the purpose of taking the message of planning and development to the people. The PR persons disseminate information through various channels of mass media or through extension workers. The Five Year Plans and the various schemes envisaged under the gigantic Eight Five Year Plan can be successful only when the people are aware of such schemes and participate in the programmes.

Therefore, public relations as a two-way communication process endeavours to eradicate information poverty as a prerequisite for the eradication of economic poverty. The effort of Information and Public Relations Agencies in the country, to create awareness about planning and development schemes among the people, for the purpose of seeking peoples participation, has emerged as 'development public relations'. Development public relations facilitates the process of socio-economic development. In fact, development administration and the information administration should go hand in hand, if an overall development is to be achieved.

Motivation of individuals and groups is vital for PR in the development context. This calls for thorough research into the beneficiaries background to assess their needs, priorities, etc. The development messages should be prepared with the right appeals, well structured design, well timed and comprehensible to the user receiver. Only then will persuasive messages find acceptance in bringing about the desired change and achieve the development goals.

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## 5.9 SUGGESTED READING

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- John W. Atkison : *An Introduction to Motivation Affiliated East-West Press Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi.*
- Everett M Rogers : *Communication and Development Critical Perspective, Newbury Park CA: Sage 1076.*
- Srinivas R Melkote : *Communication for Development in the Third World—Theory and Practice Publication, 1991.*
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## 5.10 GLOSSARY

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- Change Agent** : A professional person who attempts to influence adoption decisions in a direction that he feels is desirable.
- Information** : According to Rogers, information is patterned matter-energy that affects the probabilities available to an individual making a decision.
- Information Workers** : Individuals whose main job responsibilities are to gather, process and distribute information; or produce information technologies.
- Need** : A condition requiring supply or relief, the lack of anything requisite, desired or useful.
- Incentive** : That which invites to determination or action.
- Some Credibility** : Believability of the source — the degree to which a receiver perceives the source to be trustworthy depending on factors like his expertise, integrity etc.
- Transactional Communication** : A dialogue wherein the sender and receiver of messages interact over a period of time to arrive at shared

## 5.11 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS : MODEL ANSWERS

### Check Your Progress 1

- 1) PR, development context, acts as a link between the administrative machinery and the beneficiaries. As a catalyst for change, PR plays its part through dissemination of information, education, motivation and participation to bring about change in attitude or behaviour.
- 2) Environmental assessment helps to identify and monitor trends or issues that create problems or opportunities for the organisation. This information is strategic to planning PR programmes.

### Check Your Progress 2

- 1) Development has both economic and non-economic dimensions to it. Development is not just concerned with increasing productivity but also involves directed social change, helping people to realise their full human potential and gaining greater control over their environment by mobilising and reallocating resources.
- 2) Information and development go together. Information helps to create awareness which is a pre-requisite in development tasks. The amount of information available and its spread affects the attainment of development goals.
- 3) People's participation must be encouraged right from the stage of formulation of goals to its implementation. This alone helps to identify their needs, seek their cooperation and motivate them. Five-year plans stress the need to make people partners in progress by involving them in it.

### Check Your Progress 3

- 1) All media units under the government of India have been utilised to achieve integrated publicity for the plans. These include AIR, Doordarshan, DAVP, Publication Divisions, Song and Drama Division, Directorate of Field Publicity, PIB, Photo Division, Films Division, etc.

### Check Your Progress 4

- 1) Catalyst
- 2) Awareness, people's participation
- 3) Rural women and children
- 4) IRDP
- 5) Media units of Central government, State Information and PR cells.

### Check Your Progress 5

- 1) Physical needs, safety needs, love needs, self esteem needs and self actualisation needs.
- 2) Prestige, recognition, achievement, power, working environment.
- 3) Team spirit
- 4) Group
- 5) Cohesiveness
- 6) Research
- 7) Individual and group.