

IMPACT OF VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS (VDBs) IN NAGALAND

**Thesis submitted to Nagaland University, in partial fulfillment for the
award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History**

GIDEON PHESAO



Department of History & Archaeology

Nagaland University

Kohima Campus, Meriema

Kohima, Nagaland

August, 2023



DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

NAGALAND UNIVERSITY

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that Mr. Gideon Phesao bearing registration No. Ph.D/HAR/00020, 17/08/2016 has completed his research work on “Impact of Village Development Boards (VDBs) in Nagaland” under my guidance and supervision.

The present work is original in its content and has not been submitted in part or full for a degree or diploma in any other university.

It is further certified that the candidate has fulfilled all the conditions necessary for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy under Nagaland University.

Dated

(Dr. R. Chumbeno Ngullie)

Supervisor
Department of History & Archaeology
Nagaland University
Kohima Campus, Meriema.

**DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY****NAGALAND UNIVERSITY****DECLARATION**

I, Mr. Gideon Phesao hereby declare that the Ph.D. Thesis, titled, “Impact of Village Development Boards (VDBs) in Nagaland” submitted for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History has been carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. R. Chumbeno Ngullie. The work is original and, the thesis or a part of it has not been previously submitted to any other university or institute.

CANDIDATE :

HEAD:

SUPERVISOR:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The entire process of carrying out this study has involved so many people to whom I am grateful. Nevertheless, there are a few that I would like to specifically mention.

Firstly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. R. Chumbeno Ngullie, Assistant Professor, Department of History and Archaeology, Nagaland University, whose patient guidance has helped me to complete my study on this particular topic. Throughout this research, she has done more than what is required of a supervisor; she has been a mentor to me. I am truly grateful for her understanding and constant support, and I consider myself fortunate and blessed to have worked under her able guidance.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to all the surveyed villages; Village Councils, Village Development Board secretaries and members, youths, villagers and students' unions, whose valuable time, insights and contributions have made this study possible.

I also extend my special thanks to Department of Rural Development (RD), State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Department of Information and Public Relations (IPR), Directorate of Economics and Statistics, and Nagaland Legislative Assembly staffs for providing data and materials without which my study would not have materialized.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to the University Grants Commission (UGC) for funding my research, without which, it would have been a difficult road for me.

I also express my earnest gratitude to Mrs. Sano Vamuzo, Er. Kevimelie Linyü, Dr. Meneno V. Rhakho, Vilazolie Kreditsu and Mr. Sovenyi Nyekha, who have rendered their time, resources and insights towards this study and helped in bringing it to completion.

Special gratitude to all my family members and well wishers for their constant prayers and encouragement, which have been a source of inspiration all throughout my study. Without them, it would not have been possible for me to complete my research. Above all, my utmost gratitude to God, the presence I felt all through this endeavor.

Gideon Phesao

CONTENTS

Supervisor's certificate.....	(i)
Candidate's declaration.....	(ii)
Acknowledgement.....	(iii)
Content.....	(iv)-(vii)
List of Figures.....	(viii)
List of Charts.....	(viii)
List of Tables	(viii)
List of Plates.....	(ix)-(xi)
List of Abbreviations.....	(xi)-(xiii)
Chapter 1: Introduction	1– 17
1.1 Conceptual background	
1.2 Rural Development in India	
1.3 Literature Review	
1.4 Statement of the Problem	
1.5 Objective of the Study	
1.6 Research Hypothesis	
1.7 Significance of the Study	
1.8 Methodology	
1.9 Study Area	
Chapter 2: General Characteristics of Nagaland.....	18 – 38
2.1 General idea of Nagaland	
2.2 Geography	

2.3 Demography

2.4 Rural Developmental History in India

2.5 Rural Development in North-East India

2.6 Naga Villages and Administration

2.7 Naga Socio-Economic Pattern

2.7.1 Naga Indigenous means of Subsistence

2.7.2 Agriculture

2.7.3 Land Use Pattern

2.8 An Overview of Socio-Economic Development in Nagaland

2.9 Rural Development in Nagaland

Chapter 3: Background and development of Village Development Board.....39 – 72

3.1 Historical Background of Village Development Board (VDB)

3.2 Compositions, Powers and Functions of the Village Council

3.3 Composition, Powers and Functions of the Village Development Boards

3.4 Distribution, Management, and Inflow of Funds under the Village Development Board

3.5 Programmes and Policies of Rural Development in Alleviating the Rural Economy

- (i) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)
- (ii) Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G)
- (iii) National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM)
- (iv) Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban (SPMRN) National Rurban Mission (NRuM)
- (v) Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY)
- (vi) Rastriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)
- (vii) Grant In Aid To Village Development Boards (VDBs) (GIA)

(viii) Matching Cash Grant (Fixed Deposit)

(ix) Promotion of Micro-Financing Activities through Village Development Boards

Chapter 4: Socio-Economic Impact of Village Development Boards (VDBs).....73 – 122

4.1 An overview of Village Development Boards

4.2 Socio-Economic Characteristics of Surveyed Villages

4.3 General Attitude towards Village Development Boards

4.4 Subjective Norms towards Village Development Boards

4.5 Village Development Boards and Rural Development Policy

4.6 Village Development Boards' Profile

4.7 Local Networks, Economy and Village Development

4.8 Administration and Social Aspects in Village Development

4.9 Politics and Village Development Boards

4.10 Geography affecting Village Development

4.11 Implementations of Programmes accompanied With Awareness on Management and
Conservations of Natural Resources

4.12 Rural migration and Village development Boards (VDBs)

4.13 Agricultural Development through Village Development Boards (VDBs)

4.14 Infrastructural development

4.14.1 Road and Transport in Rural Areas

4.14.2 Footpaths, Water Tanks and Drainage

4.14.3 Vegetable and Animal Production

4.14.4 New Avenues of Development: Tourism

4.15 Natural Resources and Rural Development

4.16 Well-Performing Village Development Boards in Nagaland	
4.17 Communitization and its Implications	
4.18 Self Help Groups (SHGs)	
Chapter 5: Conclusions	123-137
5.1 Discussion	
5.2 Drawbacks in the Effective Implementation of the Village Development Boards:	
5.3 Limitation and Recommendations for Further Analysis	
5.4 Conclusion	
Bibliography	138-162
Appendix I Extract from The Nagaland Village and Area Councils Act, 1978.....	163-177
Appendix II Extract from Village Development Boards Model Rules 1980 (Revised).	178-182

Lists of Figures

- Figure 1 Interdependence of nature, human capital, sustainable livelihood and rural development programmes & policies.
- Figure 2 Map of Nagaland indicating the study area.

Lists of Charts

- Chart 1 Growth of Rural Development Blocks and Village Development Boards in Nagaland (1980 to 2020)
- Chart 2 List of Blocks and Village Development Boards in Nagaland (district wise) as of 2023
- Chart 3 Opinions of Villagers on Village Development Boards

List of Tables

- Table 1 Names of Districts and Villages under Study
- Table 2.1 Urban and rural population
- Table 2.2 Total number of households in Nagaland from 1980-81 to 2016-17
- Table 3.1 Initial Total Number of VDBs in Nagaland (1980-81)
- Table 3.2 List of blocks and Village Development Boards in Nagaland (district wise) 2021
- Table 4.1 Growth of Village Development Boards (VDBs) in Nagaland from 1980 – 2019
- Table 4.2 List of blocks and Village Development Boards in Nagaland (District wise) 2023
- Table 4.3 Villager's opinion on Village Development Board
- Table 4.4 Opinions of Village Development Board Secretaries on Village Development Boards
- Table 4.5 Number of SHGs in Nagaland FY 2021-2022

Lists of Plates

- | | |
|----------|--|
| Plate 1 | Practice of Jhum cultivation at Anatongre village (Kiphire district) |
| Plate 2 | Paddy field at Yorüba village (Phek district) |
| Plate 3 | Tools used for agricultural purposes |
| Plate 4 | Village reserve forest at Longwa (Mon district) |
| Plate 5 | View of Kütsapo community forest (Phek district), measuring about 500 hectares |
| Plate 6 | View of Kutsapo village |
| Plate 7 | First VDB library building constructed in memory of Late Shri Vamuzo & Late Shri A.M. Gokhale at Kütsapo village (Phek district) |
| Plate 8 | Community hall at Punglwa village under Peren district |
| Plate 9 | Community hall at Diezephe village under Dimapur district |
| Plate 10 | Community hall at Kütsapo village under Phek district |
| Plate 11 | Marketing shed at Losami village under Phek district |
| Plate 12 | Marketing shed at Longwa village under Mon district |
| Plate 13 | Marketing shed at Azetso village under Kiphire district |
| Plate 14 | Farm pond at Kütsapo village under Phek district |
| Plate 15 | Water reservoirs and tanks constructed under MGREGA scheme at Kezoma (Kohima district), Jotsoma (Kohima district), Anatongre (Kiphire district) and Phek village (Phek district) respectively. |
| Plate 16 | Drainages constructed under MGNREGA at Totokchingyu (Mon district), Bade (Chumukedima district) |
| Plate 17 | Drainages constructed under MGNREGA at Shamator (Shamator district) and Azetso village (Kiphire district) respectively. |

- Plate 18 Protection walls and road culverts constructed at Kiphire village (Kiphire district) Diezephe (Dimapur district) and Jotsoma village (Kohima district) respectively
- Plate 19 Approach road constructed under MGNREGA at Anatongre (Kiphire district), Jotsoma (Kohima district) and Agri link road at Ziphenyu village (Tseminyu district) respectively.
- Plate 20 Protection wall and footpaths constructed under MGNREGA at Settsu village (Zunheboto district)
- Plate 21 House constructed with PMAY-G scheme at Yorüba village (Phek district)
- Plate 22 House under construction with PMAY-G scheme at Yorüba village (Phek district)
- Plate 23 House constructed with PMAY-G scheme at Azailong village (Peren district)
- Plate 24 Renovated traditional well at Kohima village (Kohima district)
- Plate 25 Construction of Village Community Hall through Grant-In-Aid at Kezoma village (Kohima district)
- Plate 26 VDB members distributing rice under Public Distribution System (PDS) at Yorüba village, Phek district
- Plate 27 Water reservoir constructed at Kezoma village (Kohima district) under MGNREGA scheme.
- Plate 28 Losami VDB bus at Losami village (Phek district)
- Plate 29 Alayong VDB sumo at Alayong village (Longleng district)
- Plate 30 Village tea plantation MGNREGA project at Mon village (Mon district)
- Plate 31 Agri Link Road constructed at Alayong Village (Longleng district)
- Plate 32 Agri Link Road at Seleku village (Wokha district)

- Plate 33 Agri link and approach road at Ziphenyu village (Tseminyu district)
- Plate 34 Approach road at Poilwa village (Peren district)
- Plate 35 Approach road and VDB Village bus at Phek village (Phek district)
- Plate 36 Toilet constructed at Diezephe (Dimapur district)
- Plate 37 Waste bin constructed at Ziphenyu village (Tseminyu district) and Yongam village (Longleng district) respectively
- Plate 38 Water tank constructed by VDB Mitelephe under MGNREGA scheme (Kohima district)
- Plate 39 Drainage constructed under MGNREGA scheme at Kiphire village (Kiphire district)
- Plate 40 Footpath at Azetso village (Kiphire district)
- Plate 41 Footpath constructed under MGNREGA scheme at Jotsoma village (Kohima district)
- Plate 42 Water tank and footpath at Poilwa village (Peren district)
- Plate 43 VDB office cum tourist lodge at Sohomi village (Phek district)
- Plate 44 Village fishery pond and beautification project at Kutsapo village (Phek district)
- Plate 45: Phek village, Village Development Board (VDB) commercial building at Phek town
- Plate 46: Village Development Boards (Women wing) weaving assets at Phek village (Phek district)

List of Abbreviations

ADC =	Additional Deputy Commissioner
BRGF =	Backward Regions Grant Fund
CGI =	Corrugated Galvanised Iron
CDP =	Community Development Programme
CADS =	Compact Area Development Scheme
DBT =	Direct Benefit Transfer
DC =	Deputy Commissioner
DRDA =	District Rural Development Agency
DPDB =	District Planning and Development Board
GB =	Gaonbura
GIA =	Grant-in-Aid
IAY =	Indira Awaas Yojana
IRDP =	Integrated Rural Development Programme
LADP =	Local Area Development programme
MCG =	Matching Cash Grant
MPs =	Member of Parliaments
MoPR =	Ministry of Panchayati Raj
MSMEs =	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
MGNREGA/NREGA =	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act / National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
NSRLM =	Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission
NRLM =	National Rural Livelihood Mission

NBDA =	Nagaland Bamboo Development Agency
NABARD =	National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development
NNDP =	Naga National Democratic Party
NREP =	National Rural Employment Programme
NER =	North Eastern Region
NGO =	Non Governmental Organisations
NRuM =	National Rurban Mission
PMAY-G =	Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin
PDS =	Public Distribution System
PRI =	Panchayati Raj Institution
RD =	Rural development
RGSA =	Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan
RLEGP =	Rural Landless Employment Guarantee Programme
SAGY =	Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana
SHGs =	Self Help Groups
SGSY =	Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana
TRYSEM =	Training of Rural Youth for Self Employment
UDF =	United Democratic Front
VC =	Village Council
VCC =	Village Council Chairman
VDB =	Village Development Board
VEC =	Village Education Committee

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Conceptual background

Change and development have been a part of evolution since the earliest existence of humankind. Even prior to the coinage of the term, ‘development’, evolution of strategies and planning for better living conditions through different means have existed. Adaptation and affinity towards a better livelihood and sustainability have been a major part of human progression.

Rural development is the process of improving the socio-economic conditions in rural areas with an aim to enhance the quality of life for rural communities by implementing strategies and policies that address a wide range of issues that affect the community, such as – agriculture, infrastructure, education, healthcare, and employment opportunities, etc. With globalization, Rural Development has become a worldwide phenomenon and appears as a new goal in strategies and planning for various systematic developmental models and paradigms. Hence, transition, transformation and evolution of rural developmental processes have been significant factors in studying socioeconomic conditions. In the present context, the goal of rural development is to create sustainable and inclusive development that benefits the entire population for the long term, and in areas that are far from urban areas. Moseley defines “rural” as an area with low population density scattered in hamlets, villages and small towns in a practical sense (2003, p.1).

Christopher L. Atkinson defined rural development as involving “efforts that are economic and social in nature intended to encourage concepts of retention, growth, and

expansion in areas outside cities, including improving quality of life for rural residents through such activity.” (2017, p.1)

According to the United Nations, the global rural population is about 3.4 billion. Africa and Asia have around 90 percent of the world's rural population, where India has the leading rural population of 893 million, followed by China with 578 million (UN World Urbanization Prospects, 2018). In developing countries, rural development is given more importance as most of the population in these countries resides in rural areas. A significant percentage of the world's population resides in rural areas, where most of the communities still depend directly or indirectly on nature for sustenance.

Rural growth and rural development are concepts with unique implications for economic progress in rural areas. Rural growth mainly focuses on the output while rural development encompasses qualitative improvements which utilize the existing resources (Schumpeter, as cited in Irwin *et al* 2010, p.533). So, rural growth primarily refers to the quantitative increase in economic activities, such as agricultural output or industrial production, within rural regions. On the other hand rural development deals beyond mere quantitative expansion and delves into the qualitative transformations of rural communities. It focuses on uplifting the overall well-being of rural communities by enhancing infrastructure, education, health care and social services. Both concepts are essential for sustainable rural progression and require proper policies and strategies to achieve their respective goals.

Rural development therefore means the transformation of rural areas into semi-urban or urban areas with better standards of living and livelihood. In doing so, the Governments of different nations frame, plan and implement various rural developmental approaches suitable to their requirements. Since the existence of humankind, developmental ideas and initiatives, opting

for a better livelihood have been a significant aspect of life. No doubt, a wave of differences in the ideas for development has also emerged with the passage of time unlike the past system of development which was mostly concentrated on sustainability. With an increasing population, ecological imbalances and human resource development, rural development has become a multidimensional aspect. Thus, the rural developmental study is a multifaceted undertaking where population, environment, social and economic dimensions all come into play. However, depending on the region, the various aspects, such as – the geographical conditions, ethnic markets, employment, and socio-economic conditions have to be considered as they are superficially alike but fundamentally different. As rural studies involve a multidisciplinary approach, insights and knowledge of history, anthropology, sociology and literature will have a prominent impact (Castle 1998, p.626). Chukwuma and Olorunfemi provide an insight into the endeavors of rural development in the context of Nigeria. In their opinion a combination of various knowledge of theories, approaches and models suitable to the specific situation works best in executing rural developmental projects (Chukwuma & Olorunfemi 2021, p.103). Rural developmental studies thus require a multidimensional approach.

Rural development is a pressing concern for many world-class economists as it directly or indirectly affects the economy of every nation. Hence rural developmental planning and policies strive to promote and uplift the living standard of rural areas across the globe, be it in health care, human resources, infrastructure, transport, and communication. Rural development also encompasses the absorption of natural resources through employment, and employing of new ideas and concepts. With a rising population, pressure increases on geographical features and the environment. This thereby increases the absorption of natural resources which rural development planners and policy framers have to consider, since a significant percentage of the

world's rural population have a direct relationship with their adopted environment. Here, rural developmental policies on population and global warming have also become an insistent topic to consider.

Rural development programs & policies have an effect on nature and sustainable livelihood. Nature refers to the natural resources; human capital refers to human energy, mental ability and other human traits required for human sustainability or sustainable livelihood; and rural developmental programmes and policies refer to the advancement of human evolution when formal governing bodies were established. The programmes and policies are framed for rural development which in turn affects both nature and sustainable livelihood (Figure 1).

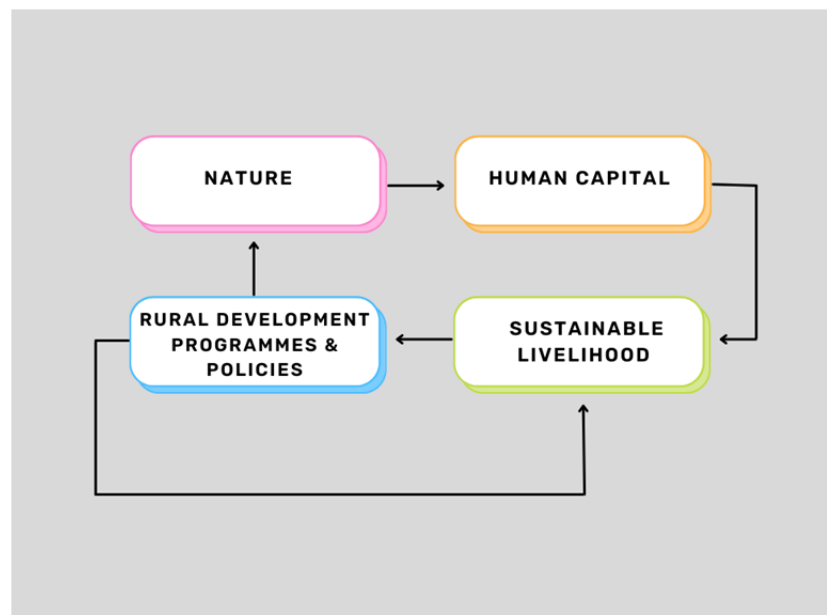


Figure 1: Interdependence of nature, human capital, sustainable livelihood and rural development programmes & policies.

The development of rural areas, therefore, requires two major considerations: human resources and nature. In the mid-20th century, different views emerged among economists on the idea that agriculture and natural resources were the two dominant factors in rural development.

By the 1970's the idea that agriculture was not the sole factor in rural development became the overriding opinion (Irwin and Isserman *et al*, 2010, p.525). Perhaps, reasons for yielding better results in rural developmental studies should incorporate the demographic and geographical issues and the different economic sectors involved.

Rural development involves the ethnic and traditional socio-economic practices of a particular region. The concept of rural development at present implies the adoption of new ideas and concepts, which in turn replaces the traditional mode of production and sustaining an area by modern means. Such a concept, then, greatly enlarges the scope of rural developmental studies, taking into the human evolutionary paradigm. In many developing countries, rural development occurs endogenously and most of it has been heterogeneously induced through globalization and other factors. Innayongdang expressed that, involvement of people in all the stages of planning and implementation and acceptance of science and technology by the rural people will improve the quality of life and efficiency of production, functions and social services in the rural areas (Innayongdang, 1986, p.2).

Rural development involves not only economic factors but social and political factors also have a role. For instance, a majority of significant decisions impacting the welfare of people residing in rural America are made in urban or metropolitan places. These urban regions are the centers of government, large corporate headquarters and offices of special interest groups where decisions are mostly made affecting the rural populace (Castle 1998, p.621). In addition to socioeconomic and political changes, human development and its impact on socioeconomic strata also affect rural development; hence, the concept of Rural Development also changes accordingly.

Here, the question lies – at what point of rural development can a rural area be called developed? Is there a limit in developing rural areas? What will be the consequences of developing rural regions that have synchronized with their environment?

1.2 Rural Development in India

In a developing country like India, rural development is one of the most important factors for economic growth, as the majority of the population lives in rural areas. Rural population has increased to 721.17 million in 2001 from 212.6 million in 1901 within a gap of century (Kapur, 2019, p.174). In India, numerous efforts have been made to develop the social and economic conditions of the country right from the day the country became independent.

The ultimate goal of socio-economic development has been to ensure that all sections of society are enabled to be a part of the developmental process. All must have equal access to the outcomes of development and equal opportunities for upward economic and social mobility. The main rural developmental programme in India has been the Community Development Programme, launched on 2nd October, 1952 (Nayar, 1960, p.1401), which the Planning Commission defined as an attempt to bring about social and economic transformation of village life through the efforts of the people themselves. This programme therefore, cuts across social barriers, caste, class, religion and economic differences. One important feature of the Indian Government's rural developmental policy is the decentralization system in rural socio-economic patterns which is intended to limit poverty, bridge the gap on economic inequality/disparity, conservation of villages' biodiversity, and help villagers generate employment and a better standard of sustenance and livelihood.

Rural development in India accelerated after independence starting with the introduction of the First Five Year Plan in 1951. The importance of planning was recognized prior to India's

Independence when prominent personalities like Dadabhai Naoroji, M.G. Ranade and R.C. Dutt wrote extensively on the social and economic problems of the Indian population; successive leaders placed these aims in the forefront of the National struggle for freedom which was not only political but also social and economic freedom. Mahatma Gandhi focused on these problems where employment was central to his thinking. Swadeshi Movement was the political expression for providing employment.

India is a country made up of villages with a rural population of 8,33,087,662 as of 2011 which is more than 68 percent of the total population (Census of India, 2011), where Nagaland is one of the States with a rural population of 1,40,7536 which is more than 71 percent of the total population in the State (Census Office, Kohima, 2011). As a matter of fact, the state of Nagaland has been playing one of the leading roles in communitization and decentralization of rural development in the country, giving priority to the grassroots level development through Village Development Boards as the means of attaining the State's economic self sufficiency and in villages in particular. In many countries, the central objective of rural development programmes has been to eradicate poverty. However, in the case of a State like Nagaland, rural development is a means to provide a better means of livelihood, infrastructure and human resource development.

Rural development can achieve a better result when policy framers and planners have better understanding of the village traditional values, occupations, needs, limitations, constraints/ challenges and inherent capabilities. One such programme in India where the above mentioned aspects were considered is the Village Development Board of Nagaland, which encompasses all the rural developmental activities carried out at the grassroots level.

Since its inception, the VDB has had enormous success in Nagaland as it has greatly benefitted rural people who comprise the majority of the State's population. However in the initial years, due to the lack of a suitable system, rural development sector had been stagnant for a very long time, and very often, despite the Government's noble plans and initiatives to help the rural people, corruption at various levels led to the help/assistance dwindling as it went down the ladder, and in some instances, the intended beneficiaries end up not even being aware of what belongs to, or is intended for them, let alone benefitting from it.

With some exceptions, the VDB on the other hand, has been able to effectively reach even the far flung areas in Nagaland and reach the intended beneficiaries as it fosters community participation in policy making and engages them in deciding for themselves what would best suit their needs. The success of the VDB has caught the attention of the Government of India as well, which will be discussed in another chapter. Down through the decades since its introduction, the fact that the VDB has been the sole agency of rural development in Nagaland, calls for a systematic and detailed study.

1.3 Literature Review

The scope and range for research on rural development is rather diverse, and there are certain distinct themes that have developed in recent years, particularly when it comes to rural development in Nagaland, Village Development Board (VDB) being one of them. The types of literature included in this review are books, theses, journal articles, Government reports, etc. on rural development and Village Development Boards, particularly those related to Northeast India and Nagaland in particular, which have helped to conceptualize the topic of this study, and also identify the gaps that are yet to be filled.

“Social and Economic Development in Northeast India” (1986) edited by S. Ahluwalia contains several articles by various authors on economic and social aspects pertaining to Northeast India. The book provides insights on the socio-economic scenario of Northeast India, which is crucial in understanding the present research work.

Banerjee and Karmakar (2008), in their article, *“Village Development Boards in Nagaland,”* which is a study on Village Development Boards and its functions, gives an overview of the background, Constitution and functions of VDBs. The article also stated that the District Planning and Development Boards (DPDB) provide the needed flexibility to ensure a responsive and holistic approach towards development for the districts where linkages to the grassroots through the VDB have been established for delivering the rural developmental inputs. These linkages have become vital for decentralizing governance and decision-making in the post-independence and Statehood eras. This article also highlights the various sources of funds and schemes including the Matching Cash Grant Scheme, which, is a prerequisite compulsory scheme to be implemented by every VDB. The implementations and impact of such schemes and funds on rural areas in Nagaland has not been dealt with, and therefore, the present paper tries to highlight on those aspects.

Mero (2015) also provides a sociological analysis on Village Development Boards in his thesis titled *“A Sociological Study of the Village Development Board in Nagaland,”* where he highlights the importance of The Nagaland Village and Area Councils Act, 1978 and the creation of the VDB in Nagaland, which comes under this provision. Mero also mentions the historical background, objectives of VDB, and how it was initially started in Kütsapo village. This paper, however, did not deal with the impact and effects of such institutions on the Naga social fabric;

hence, the present paper attempts to provide the socio-economic impact of Village Development Boards in Nagaland.

Sekhose (2017), in his dissertation on “*Local Governing Institutions in Nagaland with special reference to Village Council and Village Development Board (A Case Study of Dimapur)*”, provides the organizational structure from the State, district to block level, and states that Village Development Board is just a statutory body that works under the Village Council at the block level. While the author stated that the Village Council is the governing body of the village, Village Development Boards look after the developmental aspects of the village. Sekhose also provides a brief overview of how the VDB came into existence. The functions, roles and relations of the above mentioned two institutions and its impact on the rural condition can be dealt with in more detail. Hence, the present paper attempts to analyze and broaden the subject, focusing more on the impact across the districts in Nagaland.

Humtsoe (2013), in his article, *Village Council and Village Development Board in Nagaland (overview)* stated that VDB has been a vital link for decentralizing governance in Nagaland and decision making in the post independence and statehood eras. His article also provides Constitutional provisions in regard to the state of Nagaland under Article 371(A) of the Indian Constitution from where Village Council and Village Development Board came into existence. The article provides a generalized picture of the institution, and therefore, an attempt has been made in the present paper to provide more on the impacts and prospects concerning the institution.

Ao (1993) in the book, *Rural Development in Nagaland*, formulates some of the primary objectives and functions of VDB in Nagaland. The book also provides the organizational structure where Rural Development (RD) Department oversees the VDB programmes at the

State Level; the Deputy Commissioner (DC) or Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) who is the ex-officio chairman of the District Planning and Development Board approves all the village plans verified by BDOs at the block and village levels. Ao also highlights the limitations of Village Development Board as a catalyst agent of rural development. The limitations of such institutions affecting rural development in Nagaland can be studied further with data collected in the present context. The present study therefore, highlights more on the rural developmental scenario where various local institutions play an important role in executing the objective of rural developmental programs and also studies and highlights more on the limitations in support of Ao's views at different levels, viz., the State, District, Block to Village affecting the rural socio-economy in Nagaland at the present scenario.

Shimray (2014), in his article on *“Decentralization from Below: A Case Study on Nagaland,”* has examined the institutional and the organizational structures, and execution of various developmental programmes and activities under the decentralized form of local government in Nagaland through three institutional and organizational delivery mechanisms, viz., the Village Council, Village Development Board (VDB), and the Communitization scheme. The author has also highlighted the importance of decentralization and local governance which has effectively enabled an environment where decision making and services are brought closer to the locals who are better aware of their needs, and how it has become beneficial to the locals in Nagaland. The present study attempts to highlight on how the local self government, such as, the Village Council and Village Development Boards have helped and impacted the decentralization at the grassroots, be it in administration or in the developmental process since those aspects are missing, and studies on those issues will be made from a local perspective.

Maithani & Rizwana (1991) in their work *“Decentralised Development: A Study of Village Development Boards in Nagaland”* presents North-Eastern region as having a rich unique socio-cultural heritage. Their study also contributes on decentralised institutions like the Autonomous District Councils (ADCs) and Village Development Boards (VDBs) meant for socio-economic development. The work also provides the traditional and cultural implications on the decentralised institution of these regions mostly inhabited by tribals.

Nyekha (2014), in his book *“Evaluation of Rural Leaders and Leadership Development in Nagaland,”* highlights the changing scenario of rural leadership and how traditional practices have reconciled with the demands of modern inclusive development.

Department of Rural Development, Kohima (1980-2005) and District Rural Development Agency (DRDA), Phek district (2005) in its 25 years of VDB Commemorative Souvenir provides a fragmentary work on the origin of the Village Development Board institution in Nagaland and how the idea of forming such institution based on the traditional village administrative line was initiated by Shri Vamuzo, former Chief Minister of Nagaland and Shri A.M. Gokhale, former Chief Secretary of Nagaland.

Moseley (2003) in his work, *“Rural Development: Principles and Practice,”* highlights the contrast of urban and rural areas. The author also provides a variety of rural development approaches being used across regions and the world.

“Rural Development in India Retrospect and Prospects” (2010), edited by K. Singha is a compilation of articles by various authors on the scenario and various aspects of rural development in India. The work also contains an article by Ratan Kaurinta on VDB and Rural Development: A case study of Peren district in Nagaland, where background on the organization

of VDBs and the unique features of Village Development Boards that follow the traditional system of rural development are highlighted.

The above reviewed works show the importance of decentralized planning, communitization at the grassroots level, i.e., village level through which developmental institutions and organizations like the Village Councils (VCs), Village Development Boards (VDBs), Village Education Committees (VECs) etc., act as links between the villagers and the Government, and also highlights the importance of Article 371(A) under which Nagaland Village and Area Councils Act, 1978 came into existence. However, the reviewed literary works on Village Development Boards has not been dealt with in detail about its impact.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Though there are a number of articles and books written by both local and non-local authors on VDB, they have provided a rather generalized overview of the subject. The historical background of the Naga villages and the evolution of the concept of Village Development Board, the initial stages of its success and the role played by the pioneers in making this unique institution are not studied in detail yet. Studies on how Nagaland became receptive to the Village Development Board have not been dealt with. Moreover, studies on the socioeconomic changes/transformation through Village Development Boards are also scanty.

1.5 Objective of the Study

The main objective of this study is to bring out the significance, implications and most importantly, the impact of Village Development Board (VDB) as a grassroot level developmental agency in Nagaland. The study outlines the historical background of the Naga villages prior to the introduction of VDB. The study also highlights the historical background of

Village Development Boards, how it was implemented successfully and how the State of Nagaland became receptive towards it.

Attempt has been made to study the impact of VDB on the rural areas, local community and the way it organizes and responds to the challenges for a sustainable developmental plan. The study also aims to make an intensive village survey across the districts in Nagaland to suggest on the limitations and shortfalls of Village Development Boards in the State. It also emphasizes on identifying the conditions to be met by a rural community in order to benefit from grassroots level developmental programs, and also through studying the different initiatives and programmes taken up by the Rural Development Department to establish the main problems and also to analyze up to what degree it is benefitting the rural community.

1.6 Research Hypothesis

- Community participation played a key role in the success of VDB in Nagaland.
- VDB is a very important agency in alleviating the economic problems faced by the rural population in Nagaland.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study enables us to gain more insights into the role and functioning of social innovations in rural development. The study brings out the economic development in rural areas under the initiative of the Village Development Boards. The study also elucidates the merits, effectiveness and limitations of this institution.

1.8 Methodology

The methodology employed for the study includes village surveys, observation and interview methods, group discussions, analyzing personal works, diaries and documents collected from the various departments. Secondary sources include books, documents, academic

journals, magazines, departmental reports, both published and unpublished documents and souvenirs.

The data collection was carried out with a structured and semi structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was categorized into three parts: (1) Awareness on the subject matter (2) Functions and implications of Village Development Boards, and (3) Benefits availed under VDB. These questionnaires are also supplemented with open-ended questions to draw a rational conclusion during evaluation.

1.9 Study Area

Villages were selected through random sampling across the districts in Nagaland (figure 2). These villages were also selected based on their proximity to the urban/district headquarters and some distant villages, with the aim of drawing analytical data through comparative studies.

Sl. No.	District Names	Villages visited as part of the Study Area
1.	Dimapur	Diezephe Village
2.	Kiphire	Anatongre Village, Azetso Village.
3.	Kohima	Mitelephe Village, Jotsoma Village.
4.	Longleng	Yongam Village, Yongphang Village, Alayong Village.
5.	Mokokchung	Meylong Village, Mokokchung Village.
6.	Mon	Goching Village, Mon Village, Totok Chingyu, Longwa Village
7.	Peren	Nzauna village, Punglwa Village, Poilwa Village.
8.	Phek	Sohomi Village, Phek Village, Losami Village, Kütsapo Village.
9.	Wokha	Seluku Village, Wokha village, Longsa Village
10.	Tuensang	Wapher Village, Tuensang Village
11.	Zunheboto	Mukhami Village, Phishumi Village, Settsu Village.
12.	Shamator	Shamator Village
13.	Tseminyu	TsonsaVillage, Ziphenyu Village
14.	Chumoukedima	Bade Village
15.	Noklak	Nokyan Village

Table 1: Name of Districts and Villages under Study



Figure 2: Map of Nagaland indicating the study area.

Chapter 2

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF NAGALAND

2.1 General idea of Nagaland

The term “Nagas” refers to the numerous tribes inhabiting Nagaland with each tribe having a distinct dialect, dress code, cultural features, customs and practices. Nagaland is a hilly state located in the north-eastern part of India, bounded by Manipur in the South, Assam in the West, Myanmar in the East, Arunachal Pradesh and a part of Assam in the North. Nagaland was inaugurated as the 16th state of the Indian union on 1st December, 1963. Nagaland was the first state in the country to be inaugurated as a fully fledged state of the Indian union with the least population and area of that time (Kumar, 2005, pp.10-11).

The term Naga was not used by Nagas themselves until the British arrived on the Naga frontiers because each tribe was an independent sovereign entity in their own village. There are more than 40 tribes and sub-tribes inhabiting the Naga hills for centuries at the tri-junction of China, India and Myanmar (Sanyu, 1996, pp.2-3). The etymology of the term “Naga” is still a matter of debate. The generic name became more widely used after the British came, and even more so after the Naga Club was formed in 1918, as people of the various tribes coalesced to form a common identity at a perilous point of time when their security and identity were being threatened by forces that surrounded them. And when the British left India without settling matters as per the Nagas’ request, which was for them to be left as they were before the British arrived, the newly formed Indian government assumed control over Naga territories. After the arrival of the British, the Naga village councils assumed importance and the British used the prevailing systems to aid in their administration and collection of taxes. Hence, the British also instituted the *Dobashis* (interpreters) and *Gaonburas* (village headmen/elders) (Vamuzo, 2011).

The British also introduced the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation in 1873, stated to be the first British administrative policy in Northeast as to let the tribals decide their own fate without the interference from the outside, commonly known as the Inner Line Permit (ILP) system at present, which is an offshoot of the Bengal Eastern Frontier Regulation of 1873. The Nagas feel remorse for the separation made by Great Britain and India. Divided first by the British in the 19th century and the creation of Nagaland State in 1963 by India, where “divide and rule” policy was put into practice (Sanyu, 1992, p.265). Sanyu’s view is from an insider’s perspective as the Nagas inhabited the present land even prior to the time the name “India” was coined and their democratic principles well organized prior to India’s adoption of the democratic system.

The Nagas presently inhabits four States in India – Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Assam and the present Nagaland state, and some in Myanmar. Nagas have been living in their present territory independently for centuries and have been fighting for self determination since the early part of the 20th century, which is also considered the longest ongoing political conflict in Asia.

The origin, and migration of Naga tribes to their present territory is still obscure and the exact traces of their migratory routes are lost due to the lack of written historical documents (Nuh, 2002, p.14). Cultural anthropologists and ethnologists still hold differing theories about Nagas and their origins. Nagas are also a highly oral society, with the main pool of their traditional and historical knowledge now lying with the elders in Naga villages, who have received the knowledge passed down to them through the oral tradition over several generations. Naga people’s history has continued to evolve as scholars – historians, anthropologists, archaeologists, sociologists, and other interested seekers alike continue in their search for remnants of the past through various means (Vamuzo, 2011). The Naga identity, no matter how

culturally diversified, is generally accepted to derive from one racial stock (Stirn & Ham, 2003, p.30).

George van Driem writes, “The Nagas speak languages of the Tibeto-Burman family. Yet, according to our present state of knowledge, the “Naga language” does not constitute a single genetic sub-group within Tibeto-Burman. What defines the Nagas best is perhaps just the label Naga, which was once applied indiscriminately by Indo-Aryan colonists to all scantily clad tribes speaking Tibeto-Burman languages in the northeast of the subcontinent (Driem, 2008, p.311). Nagas have remained self sufficient and self sustaining with their ingenuity of sustenance, living in synchrony with nature.

Verrier Elwin, a British anthropologist described the Nagas as “strong, and self reliant, good to look at, with an unerring instinct for colour and design, friendly and cheerful, with a keen sense of humour, gifted with splendid dances and a love of song” (Elwin, as cited in Stirn and Ham, 2003, p.10). With emerging archaeological evidences from archeologists and anthropologists alike, as well as through Naga oral traditions our understanding of the Nagas’ past is gradually materializing.

The village is the basic unit of a political system. Each tribe has its own self governing system from time immemorial (Joshi, 2001, p.1). Agriculture is the main source of sustenance, which is practiced through *Jhum* and *terrace* cultivation, and their society was based on an age old culture and traditional customs and practices. Nagas were opened up to the outside world with the entry of the British, coupled with the American Christian missionaries, who apart from spreading Christianity, imparted education, which opened up avenues for Nagas to western thoughts and ideas (Singh, 1972, p.55).

Initially, when Nagaland got its statehood, there were three districts, namely Kohima, Mokokchung and Tuensang. In 1973, four more districts were created, namely - Phek which was carved out of Kohima, Wokha and Zunheboto out of Mokokchung, and Mon out of Tuensang. Dimapur district was created in 2000 out of Kohima district and became the eighth district in the State. Later in 2004, three more districts, Peren from Kohima district, Kiphire and Longleng from Tuensang district were created. Presently Nagaland has 16 districts with the creation of Noklak, Shamator, Tseminyu, Chumoukedima and Niuland districts. There are seventeen recognized tribes in the State, viz., Angami, Ao, Chakhesang, Chang, Kachari, Khiamniungan, Konyak, Kuki, Lotha, Phom, Pochury, Rengma, Sangtam, Sema, Yimchunger, Tikhir and Zeliang.

2.2 Geography

The State of Nagaland covers an area of 16,579 square kilometres with Tuensang district as the largest district covering an area of 2, 536 sq. km. The State lies between 25°6' and 27 °4' North latitude and 93°20' E and 95°15' East longitude. The State of Nagaland also shares a common international boundary with Myanmar in the East (Nagaland Statistical Handbook, 2020, p.1).

Nagaland state is topographically hilly and mountainous, covered by rich and varied biodiversity of flora and fauna with a few square kilometres of plains along the western foothills and a few small valleys along the rivers. The vast majority of the villages in the State are located in the hill ranges and the altitude varies approximately between 194 metres and 3,048 metres above sea level. The hills ascend gradually to an altitude of more than 1000 metres which then spreads further towards east. The Patkai Range, considered as the highest mountain range in Nagaland has a height of 3,480 metres at its highest peak, i.e., Mt. Saramati, on the extreme east.

Nagaland has a bounty of springs, streams, lakes and rivers like Zungki, Milak, Doyang, Tizü, Dhansiri and Dikhu in the hilly terrain of Nagaland and the famous Doyang River, considered as the longest river in the state originating from the Japfü Hill and moves in a south west direction passing through Kohima district and flows northward into Zunheboto and Wokha district (Venuh, 2005, pp. 9-10).

2.3 Demography

In Nagaland, the majority of the population resides in the villages, which influences the political and social decisions in the State. The total population of Nagaland according to 2011 census is 19,78,502 with 14,07,536 comprising rural residents and 5,70,966 urban residents (Table 2.1).

The rural population comprises 71.14 percent and urban 28.86 percent of the total population. The population density of Nagaland is 119 per square kilometer (Nagaland Statistical Handbook, 2020, p.4). The indigenous inhabitants of Nagaland are entirely tribal and predominantly rural, scattered across the state, and inhabiting small villages. The 2011 census showed that out of the 11 districts of Nagaland state, i.e., Dimapur, Kohima, Tuensang, Mon, Kiphire, Phek, Mokokchung, Wokha, Zunheboto, Longleng and Peren, Dimapur, with a population of 3,78,811 (19.14% of the total population) is the most populous district in the state and Mon with 2,15,816 rural population (10.90% of the total population) occupies the highest percentage of population residing in rural areas. In Nagaland, there are 1238 recognized villages as of 2011 census with 2,84,310 households (Table 2.2). The above table 2.1 also shows rural and urban population distribution in Nagaland as of 2011 census, where, districts are predominantly rural.

District (2011)	Total	Rural	Urban
Mon	250260	215816	34444
Mokokchung	194622	138897	55725
Zunheboto	140757	113160	27597
Wokha	166343	131339	35004
Dimapur	378811	180942	197869
Phek	163418	138843	24575
Tuensang	196596	159822	36774
Longleng	50484	42871	7613
Kiphire	74004	57517	16487
Kohima	267988	146900	121088
Peren	95219	81429	13790
Total	1978502	1407536	570966

Table 2.1: Urban and rural population (Source: Directorate of Census Operations, 2011)

Sl. No.	Name of Districts	No. of household (1980-81)	No. of household (2016-2017)
1.	Kohima	10,790	26,102
2.	Mokokchung	11,247	22,646
3.	Tuensang	9,834	18,680
4.	Noklak	4429	5941
5.	Mon	12,568	19,686
6.	Wokha	5,786	12,802
7.	Zunheboto	7,770	13,537
8.	Dimapur	4860	14461
9.	Phek	8,175	20,513
10.	Kiphire	4,141	11,980
11.	Longleng	3,619	11,654
12.	Peren	3,115	11,242
	Total	86,334	189,244

Table 2.2: Total number of households in Nagaland from 1980-81 to 2016-17(Source: Detailed list of Village Development Boards (VDBs): 1980-81 to 2016-2017, Rural Development Department.)

2.4 Rural Developmental History in India

The saying that, India lives in its villages, is as close to reality now as it was in the pre-independence period. Rural development has been an important matter of concern in a nation made of villages like India, and it occupies an important aspect in the philosophies and thoughts of India's nation builders and thinkers from Gandhi's 'Nai Talim' and 'Swaraj' to Tagore's concept of Polli Somaj where the ideal village community is a model of village self-sufficiency and self-reliance, which has been upheld by both of them (Chakraborty, 2004, p.67).

In India different initiatives were carried out prior to India's independence: in 1903 the Sunderbans in Bengal where Daniel Hamilton formed a scheme to create model village in Sunderban (Bengal), Gurgaon experiment (1920), started by F. L. Brayne for rural upliftment in Gurgaon district, Shriniketan project (1921), which Ravindranath Tagore along with the help of Shri L. M. Hurst started for village development, etc. However, all these failed to have lasting impact or proceed in sustaining the rural economy due to various economic, political and social factors (Jagananda *et. al*, 2017, pp.6-8).

If we see the initial stages of rural development, we find that it was prioritized only after India's independence where community development was given importance in its First Five-Year Plan which sought to initiate transformation, both socially and economically in the villages. Hence, the Community Development Programme (CDP) which commenced in 1951 was an integral part of the First Five-Year Plan, where multipurpose and comprehensive approaches were integrated for rural development, which sought to initiate transformation both socially and economically in the villages.

In the post independence era, Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) has been one of the most effective and lasting programmes in India's endeavor of rural development. Thus, more content has been added to the programmes of rural development from Community Development approach during 1950s and 60s, to Panchayati Raj since the 1990s (Prasadarao 2019, p.2786). India has 6,40,867 villages as of 2011 census, which is an increase of 2279 villages in comparison to the 2001 census. Out of 1210.2 million population, rural population stands at 833.1 million and urban population at 377.1 million as per Census of India, 2011. Provisional population totals, and the majority of the population residing in the rural areas comprises weaker

sections with low income, illiteracy, unemployment and depends mostly on agriculture and concentrated on traditional activities for sustenance.

In light of the above population distribution, rural areas dominate an area of importance. Panchayati Raj remains an important programme for socio-economic upliftment in rural India. However, in a State like Nagaland, special privileges like the Thirteenth Amendment Act of 1962 of the Indian Constitution, Panchayati Raj failed to exert influence due to the existence of local self government like the Village Council and Village Development Boards where programmes and policies of rural development implemented by both the Centre and the State were looked after by the two institutions.

2.5 Rural Development in North East India

The North Eastern Region (NER) comprises the states of Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Mizoram, and Sikkim with a combined rural population of 32,523,012 (2001 Census). Among these states, Assam holds the highest percentage of rural population with 71.5 % of North East India. The region stretches between 21°50' and 29°34' N latitude and 85°34' and 97°50' E longitude. The NER has a geographical area of 26.2 million hectare, which is 8% of the area of the country inhabited mostly by tribals (Lahari 2004, p.14).

Almost all developing or underdeveloped countries are characterized by economic inequality, poverty and lack of employment opportunities especially in the rural areas, and India is no exception. Northeast India, which is situated in hilly and mountainous region essentially, is inhabited by farmers where agriculture plays an important role as a means of livelihood, sustenance and welfare of the rural population. The region is covered mostly by hilly terrain, and for this reason, rural development activities of constructing roads and communication are often hampered.

Rural development programmes in North East regions are mostly structured in a decentralized setting where rural economic upgradation or upliftment is based on locally available products and resources; therefore, it is the small and household industries that occupy rural developmental programmes. There were only 166 large and medium-scale industries till 1994 and out of these, 70% were in Assam.

Chakraborty writes that the distinct feature of economic development in the North East region is categorical and intriguing, but that, planning authorities and implementation agencies for rural development are also catching up with the diverse customary and traditional values of the region. He however pointed out that, due to lack of people's participation, the programmes and policies often fail to match the proposed target (Chakraborty 2004, pp.72-74). This argument on the lack of people's participation can be addressed by educating the rural populace, through awareness campaigns of the said programmes and policies before implementation, as most of the tribals inhabiting this region have a conservative social mindset and therefore, have reluctance in adopting changes alien to their tradition and cultural practices.

Rajput avers that the vicious cycle of socio-political instability and underdevelopment, which has trapped the North East (NE) economy for a long time, can be solved by economic development, supported by sound political measures. He underlined certain factors that are crucial for the long term development of the North East, such as – public sector investment, social sector development, self sufficient agriculture sector, development of village and small scale Industries, favourable attitudes of the people towards development and administrative efficiency; he further adds that the availability of the natural resources not only make a society developed but the mentality and attitude with openness to outside world can make this region develop rapidly in the coming years (Rajput 2004, pp.278-284).

2.6 Naga Villages and Administration

Nagas, since their inhabitancy in the present area, which encompasses the State of Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Assam, and even in Myanmar have been living in fragmentary villages. Naga culture is closely intertwined with Naga history, in that the cultural life of the past continues to form a vibrant element of contemporary Naga society (Vamuzo, 2011, p.35). The traditional and cultural diversity of the Nagas can be witnessed even in the present State of Nagaland where 17 indigenous tribes inhabit the districts. The basic unit of political, socio-economic administration is based in the village. Naga villages were not only economically self sufficient, but not long ago, were also self governing, independent political entities and for which they are often called “village states” or “village republics” (Luithui, 2001, p.10).

Socially, a tribe consists of subdivisions called clans. Naga villages were often built on top of the hills mostly on defensive considerations. The organization of the village community differs from tribe to tribe, and for some, extends from village to village of the same tribe. The Angami, Lothas, Rengma and Ao tribe villages have a more democratic political structure. The Nagas, though unaware of the western democratic ideals, lived in a system where democratic principles governed since time immemorial (Nuh, 2002, p.15-16).

Among the Angami, the village head is simply a nominal head chosen by the villagers, often for his physical prowess, diplomacy skill and wealth, and the authority exercised is also nominal (Singh, 1972, pp.32-33). The Semas practice hereditary chieftainship, the Chief is called *mighimi* and he is the overlord of the village, which is based on autocratic political system. The chieftain system among the Nagas is hereditary or in some cases, elected/selected and is more or less a republic type (Horam, 2018, p.53). Among the Aos, the village community is governed by

a council of elders called *Putu Menden* (Assembly of Elders), which is the highest decision making body among the Aos.

The village chief or head is called by different names as also the Village Council where such bodies exist. The Tangkhuls call their Chiefs '*Awunga*'; the Angamis '*Kemvo*'; the Aos '*Sosangs*'; the Lothas '*Ekyungs*'; the Semas '*Akekao*'; and the Konyaks '*Kedange*' (Horam, 1975, p.80). It is however, difficult to state the extent of his powers as the characteristics of Naga village community varies from tribe to tribe and even from village to village of the same tribe. For instance, the Angami, Chakhesang, Lothas and Ao villages have a more democratic outlook in their political organization where village community is governed by the council of elders, whereas the Semas and Konyaks have an autocratic political system in the form of hereditary village chief where the chief is the overall head of the village and also other dependent villages.

Referring to the establishment of Village Councils in Nagaland, Venuh states, "The traditional administration in Naga villages is based firstly on the fact that the whole village is divided into age groups to which the various communal duties are assigned; and secondly, the control of affairs lies with a council, whose method of election and tenure of office vary in the different tribes and language groups. The village council was the most important political institution in Naga society. However, changes took place when Nagas came in contact with the British in 1882. The British incorporated the Naga system of administration as it would suit and be conducive in maintaining law and order among the tribes. Hence, the age old traditional system of administration which suited the unique conditions of the Nagas and their society was reinforced." (Venuh, 2004, p.95).

In addition, owing to the influence of Christianity, education and modernity, many traditional and cultural practices among the Nagas have been organizations are made up of cross-

cutting group ties, individual and the household are autonomous in one sense and are integrated into larger functional units; lineages, clans, age groups and villages (Jacobs, 1990, p.53). Music is an integral part of Nagas, and varieties of indigenous folk and contemporary music are sung in every occasion. However, community and other local practices still occupy a prominent place in the village functions where every activity in the village circles around community efforts and contributions.

2.7 Naga Socio-Economic Patterns

Socially Nagas have strong community feelings. Naga social organizations are made up of cross-cutting group ties, individual and the household are autonomous in one sense and are integrated into larger functional units; lineages, clans, age groups and villages (Joshi, 2001, p.165). The socio-economic pattern of the Nagas today has undergone tremendous transformation. With the coming of American Baptist Mission, influence of western education and the various developmental programmes undertaken by the Government after the attainment of its statehood in 1963 have unleashed forces that prove far-reaching impacts on the old Naga tribal socio-economic pattern. With the spread of Christianity, a new ethos has replaced the old values and standards. Owing to influences of Christianity, the intensity of inter-village and inter-tribal feuds has been brought down to a manageable extent where it has paved ways for economic progress (Singh, 1972). Another important factor contributing to socio-economic changes has been the rise of literacy rate from 14.02 % in 1961 to 76.69 % in 2011 (Census of India 2011) where education can be considered an important medium of socio-economic change in the State. Transition from age old practices in the socio-economic pattern cannot be undermined as they can both be incorporated, which in turn can create a suitable system where the socio-economic structure benefits the people for a better sustainable and living condition.

2.7.1 Naga Indigenous means of Subsistence

The mainstay of Naga indigenous means of subsistence is agriculture. Nagas, like any other tribal community, have been an agricultural economy, basing its sustenance source on nature; in fact, most of its culture and traditions are centered on agricultural practices. Rice is the staple diet of the Nagas. Apart from agricultural practices, the Nagas also engage in hunting, gathering, gardening, forestry, fishery, horticulture, farming, animal husbandry, spinning, weaving, dyeing, bamboo work, wood work, blacksmith, pottery, leather work, stone work, etc. Through these, all basic necessities of social and domestic requirements were obtained. Trade and commerce were also prevalent; whenever there was a necessity of any article, it could be obtained through barter. Nagas had a self sufficient subsistent economy even prior to the advancement of British into the Naga Hills.

Nagas have remained economically independent with their primitive yet ingenious way of livelihood. In recent times, Nagaland indigenous methods of cultivations and subsistence have also undergone many changes with the interventions of Government policies and programmes, introduction of improved seeds, modern technology and assimilation of scientific knowledge with the Naga indigenous farming practices.

2.7.2 Agriculture

Nagas have rich land, flora and fauna and depend on nature for sustenance. They cultivate a diversity of crops such as - paddy, maize, millet and corn, pulses, sugar cane, sweet potato and several vegetables such as gourds, leafy greens, herbs and spice plants (Stirn & Ham, 2003, p.19). Agriculture has been the main source of livelihood for Nagas, and the festivals vary from one tribe to the other but they all generally follow the agricultural cycle. In fact agriculture

has been one of the significant contributors to the Net State Domestic product and largest employer of work force in the state.

Though the dependency of employment on agriculture has declined from as high as 96.50% in the 1950s to about 68% in 2000, it continues to be the main source of livelihood in rural areas. The two significant types of cultivation practices among the Nagas are *terrace* and *jhum* cultivation where about 70 percent have been practicing *jhum* cultivation (Plate 1).



Plate 1: Practice of Jhum cultivation at Anatongre village (Kiphire district)

Although steps have already been taken to convert shifting or *jhum* cultivation into sedentary farming due to its impact on environment, *jhum* cultivation is still the dominant agricultural system of the state, with only the Angami and Chakhesang tribes practicing *terrace* cultivation on steep slopes (Plate 2) with locally made tools (Plate 3). The cropping season which begins in March and continues up to August is Kharif while Rabi starts in September and ends in December every year. With rice being the affix food of the people, paddy is one of the major crops in the state.



Plate 2: Paddy field at Yorüba village (Phek district)

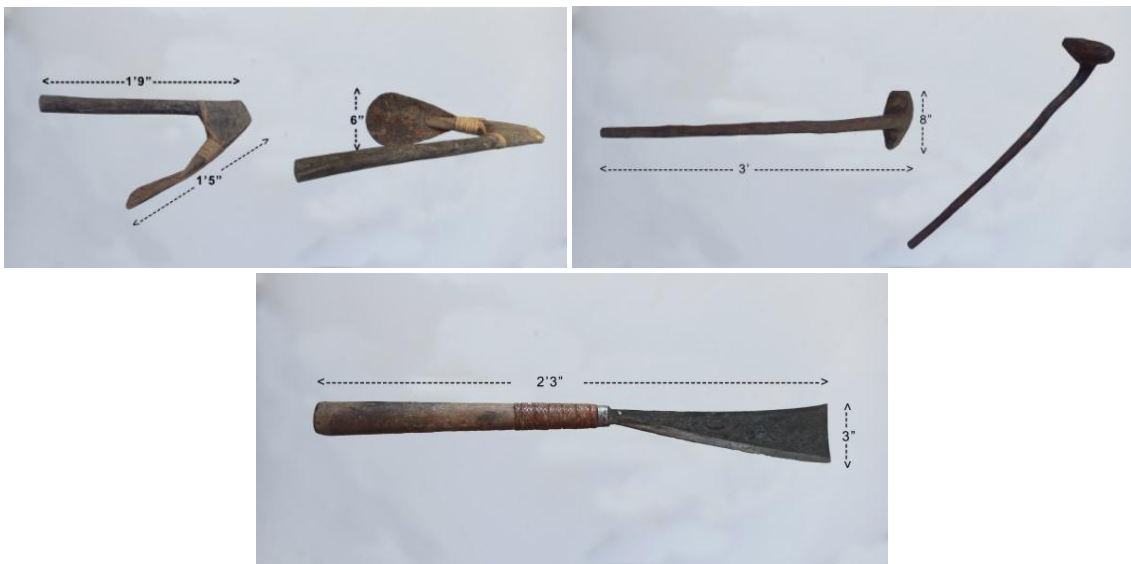


Plate 3: Tools used for agricultural purposes

Mechanization of agriculture and the use of modern technological innovations like improved seeds, fertilizers and better implements have been limited largely due to geographically hilly terrain, accompanied by low purchasing capacity of the farmers. Agriculture still absorbs an overwhelming majority of the workforce. The State Government also has a Department of Agriculture, which was established as a fully fledged department in 1963. The

Department has been providing tools and machineries like power tiller to the deserving farmers besides giving training for better and efficient way of production.

2.7.3 Land Use Pattern

Except in some cases where Chieftainship is practiced, village community among most of the Naga villages plays a substantial role in governing, management and use of land as a whole. The usages of land, however, differ from tribe to tribe and to some, extend from village to village of the same tribe. The traditional practices and customary laws administering the ownership and management of land are not usually codified. However, they still have Constitutional sanction and the enforcement of such laws and regulations rest on the Village councils or headmen among tribes that have more democratic characteristics of governance, and in some tribes where chieftainship is practiced, it rests on the village chiefs like that of Konyaks and Semas.

Due to the diverse practices in general, the land use pattern differs among the tribes. Community land is however, administered by the Village Councils or council of elders in olden days in the case of tribes that have democratic outlook, and the chief in the case of villages that have an autocratic political system. One significant feature among the Naga villages is the existence of village community land or forest in almost all the Naga villages. In Longwa, they have village community reserve forest (Plate 4). Also in Kütsapo village under Phek district, the village has community forest measuring around 500 hectares (Plate 5)



Plate 4: Village reserve forest at Longwa (Mon district)

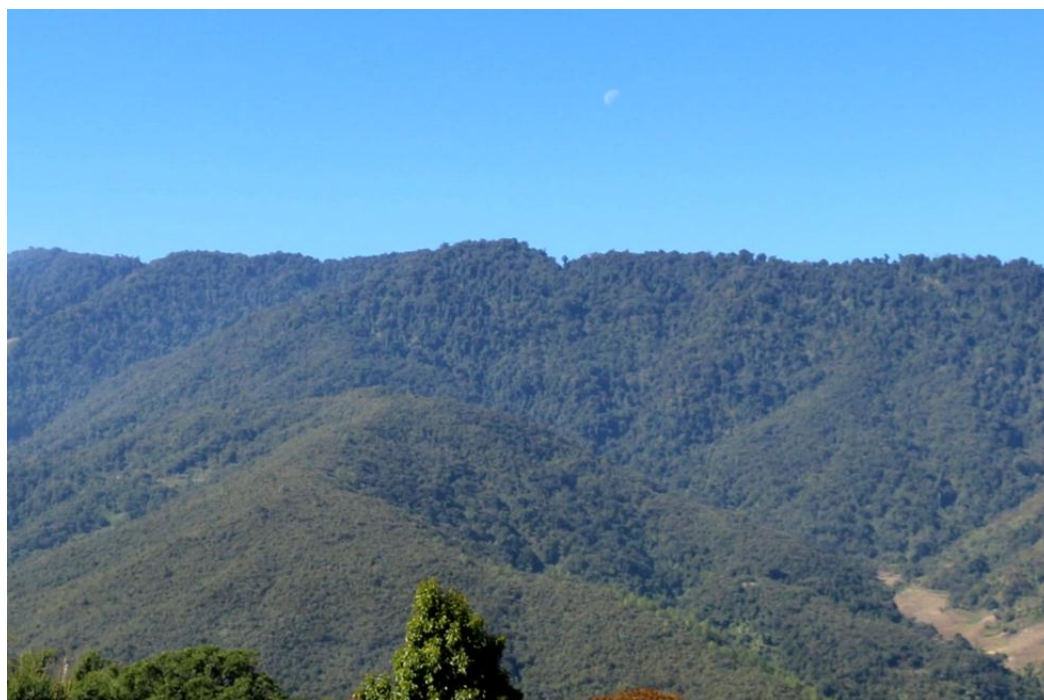


Plate 5: View of Kütsapo community forest (Phek district), measuring about 500 hectares

The right to use community land in most of the tribes is free, but with prior consent and approval of the Village councils and chiefs who are entitled to set regulations and restrictions on community land usages. Due to such complexity in land use pattern, developmental projects and programmes have to synchronize with the indigenous system of land usages.

In Nagaland, about 92% of the land is unclassified and are under the community ownership, which may fall under any one of the recognized four categories- chief's land, community land, clans land, and individual/private land. The State government owns just about 7% of the total land area (Department of Land Resources, Government of Nagaland: State Perspective and Strategic Plan (SPSP) of Nagaland.). From this, an assumption can be drawn where most of the land and forest which still lay dormant can be used for self sustaining village economic activities without hampering nature as most of this area are categorically classified as under rural areas.

2.8 An Overview of Socio-Economic Development in Nagaland

Prior to India's independence, British occupation of the Naga hills did not leave much significant socio-economic development of the region since the British followed least interference policy towards the Naga traditional way of life, and also as it was not their objective.

Government of independent India, on the other hand, was different from the British administration and it pledged to work as a democratic welfare state giving special concessions and provisions to the tribal communities in India. Subsequently, on 31st March 1952, an organization known as Community Projects Administration was set up under the Planning Commission to administer the programmes relating to community development and with that, the establishment of community development programme was inaugurated on October 2, 1952. Nagaland was then still part of an undivided Assam, and this was an important landmark in the

history of the rural development. This programme underwent many changes and was handled by various Ministries¹.

As part of Ministry of Food and Agriculture, the Department of Rural Development came into existence on October 1974 in India. Thus, with the existence of Ministry of Rural Development, welfare activities in the rural areas started functioning effectively with the vision of sustainable and inclusive growth of rural India through different programmes, strategies and policies. The main objectives of this Ministry were to improve the standard of living in rural areas and reach the weaker sections of the society to correct the developmental imbalances.

In the context of Nagaland, socio-economic development began to take proper shape with Nagaland becoming a full-fledged state of the Indian union in 1963, which can be regarded as the beginning of socio-economic development in this region. Though Community Development Programme was launched in the North East region since the early 1950s, in Nagaland, rural development in the region began to function effectively with the inception of Village Development Board in 1980, where, active participation of the village community and grassroots level participation and planning for development became a reality in Nagaland, and socio-economic developmental prospects took an overhaul.

2.9 Rural Development in Nagaland

The objective of rural development is to find ways to improve rural lives with the participation of rural people themselves, so as to meet the required needs of rural communities both qualitatively and quantitatively.

Nagas have been living in community as far as the oral tradition can uphold. For long, the administration of rural areas and its development have been a pressing concern, and thus, the

¹ Source: Ministry of Rural Development, retrieved on 5th August 2023 from <https://vikaspedia.in/social-welfare/rural-poverty-alleviation-1/ministry-of-rural-development>.

Department of Rural Development which was initially started as a cell of the Planning and Coordination Department in the early 1950s, has become a full fledged Rural Development Department with its Directorate in Kohima, capital of Nagaland since 1978. It has been carrying out numerous developmental programmes and policies for improving the living conditions of the rural population.

The Rural Development Department got leverage with the establishment of the unique institution of the Village Development Boards (VDBs). The idea of grassroots level planning at the village level became a reality with the inception of Village Development Boards in 1980-81 in Nagaland where every rural developmental activity is now carried out through this institution.

Collective actions through community initiative are always a common trait among the Nagas and Village Development Boards have been one such institution at the village level where village development depends on the community as a whole. In order to gain meaningful and sustainable development in Nagaland, certain existing reality needs to be considered, such as, the ethos of social structure, community practices, traditional skills and modes of livelihood and occupation in order to yield a better result in executing the different programmes and policies. The existence of a functioning Village Development Board in each recognized village in Nagaland, looking after all the developmental activities from footpaths, water supply, drainage, village roads to the individual household, have garnered more positive responses to engage in common activities for the village and rural areas which in turn strengthens the bond of community which the Nagas revere with utmost importance.

Chapter 3

Background and Development of VDB

3.1. Historical Background of Village Development Board (VDB)

Rural developmental approaches have a wider perspective than merely creating incentives for agricultural or resource based businesses. Education, health and wellbeing, roads, entrepreneurship, social infrastructure, etc., all play an important role in developing rural regions. India in its Five Year Plan has launched massive programmes for rural development, which has resulted in increased average per capita income, industrial production and agricultural output to some extent; however, according to (Gopalakrishnan, 2002, p.40), the programme has still not been effectively trickled down to the grassroots level in rural areas.

Major developments in the socio-economic sector started with the setting up of the Planning Commission and the introduction of First Five Year Plan. Through these initiatives, the Government of India has given major emphasis on Community Development Programme, which also focuses on the welfare of the rural population. It is a multi-faceted programme designed to attract active community participation and initiative in the developmental process for all round development, touching every section of the population.

“Development is largely a matter of the dynamism of individuals and of a local community. These can be supplied only by generating local, responsible initiative and multiplying human energies. Development, therefore, requires rapid growth of human talents and opportunities to employ them” (Bag, 2001, p.9).

In the case of a state like Nagaland, there are 1285 recognized Villages and 2,50,315 taxpaying households as of Department of Rural Development Annual Administrative Report of

2018-2019; the percentage of rural population is 71.03% as of 2011 census (Census of India 2011: Nagaland profile), which is higher than that of 68.84% in India.

With the establishment of the Rural Development Department, over the years of transition in the rural economy, developmental programmes have undergone several policy reforms to make it receptive and adaptable to the Naga society. The policy reforms were carried out under the influence of political changes, traditional socio-economic practices and other requirements in order to make rural developmental programmes effective. Regardless of the fluctuations in the dynamics and effects of reforms in rural development, the Five Year Plan of the Indian Government, starting with the Third Five Year Plan (1961 – 1966) and Nagaland's attainment of statehood in 1963 have played a key role for designing and implementing rural development policies, strategies, and programs. All these programmes achieved their purpose with the establishment of Rural Development Department and the mobilization made possible with the establishment of Village Development Boards in Nagaland.

One of the basic objectives of rural development is to find ways to improve the rural lives/ livelihood through maximum participation of rural community at the grassroots level, so as to meet the required needs of rural communities both qualitatively and quantitatively. Rural development strategies should therefore, be well integrated with traditional values, skills, crafts, occupations and also be aware of the aspirations of the villagers, their needs, constraints, limitations, and inherent capabilities.

One such aspect of rural developmental programme can be seen through the VDB introduced in Nagaland during the latter part of 1970s. The institute of Village Development Boards has also enhanced village community participation be it in planning, implementation of

rural developmental programmes and policies and managing village projects/works to a great extent.

An attempt to analyze the impact and significance of Village Development Boards (VDBs) in Nagaland as an important rural developmental agency would be incomplete without understanding the background, aims and objectives and changes that have occurred with its establishment.

The idea of the Village Development Board was first conceptualized by Shri Vamuzo, the former Chief Minister of Nagaland beginning with his work, “Develop Your Own Village: An Approach to Grassroots Planning and Development.” This became the foundation of his various rural oriented developmental policies of his government, and the rural-oriented schemes and programs that would soon follow. The Village Development Board in particular, has been widely welcomed by the villages across Nagaland. Shri Vamuzo, being raised from a village (Yorüba village, Phek district), had a clear understanding of the compact and consolidated nature of Naga villages, and could foresee that if Nagaland was to be developed, it had to start at the grassroots level, i.e., in the village. He identified with the ethos, struggles, and sufferings of the villagers and intricacy of village development².

According to Sovenyi Nyekha, as a Minister, Shri Vamuzo masterminded the birth of Village Development Board (VDB) and as the Chief Minister, he engineered and instituted the Local Area Development Programme (LADP, formerly known as Compact Area Development Scheme (CADS)), and now renamed as District Rural Area Development Programme (DRDP). Both VDB and LADP can be rightly seen as an attempt to decentralize power on the one hand by way of upholding the traditional village institution and leadership, and on the other, to bring

² Interview with SovenyiNyekha

about uniform development to the people of the state by giving opportunities to every local politician to initiate developmental activities that best suit the interest of the people in their constituencies.

Sovenyi, who had also interviewed Shri A.M. Gokhale at one point of time, stated in the interview, that the transfer and posting of Shri A.M. Gokhale (IAS) in 1976 as Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Phek District when Nagaland was under President's rule was instrumental in taking forward the idea of Village Development Board. He said that before Shri Gokhale could take charge of his office as DC, Shri Vamuzo, who was formerly the Minister of Public Works Department, PWD (1974-1975), and Phek being his district headquarters, came to know about him and made it a point to meet him as he was then camping at Circuit House, Kohima. In his meeting with Shri Gokhale, he shared with him his desire and vision to strengthen the Naga village institutions. He articulated the importance of developing the village economy by directly making the governmental funds available at the doorstep of the village people so that the people can develop their own villages by prioritizing their own needs.

After a detailed discussion with Shri Gokhale who took equal interest in the development of villages, Shri Vamuzo is said to have entrusted him to study the possibilities and accordingly work out the appropriate modalities to make it a workable system. Shri Gokhale grasped the immense implications of this vision and took no time to work out the modalities and translated the concept of this noble development programme into a reality³.

This programme became successful when Shri Vamuzo's Regional Party, the United Democratic Front (UDF) which was renamed later as Naga National Democratic Party (NNDP) came to power (from 1977-1982) under the Chief Ministership of Shri Vizol Angami (1977-

³ Interview with Sano Vamuzo

1980) and Shri J.B. Jasokie (1980-1982) and where Shri Vamuzo was made the Minister in charge of Finance and Rural Development⁴.

The unique institution of Village Development Board with the concept of decentralized grassroots level planning in Nagaland was first introduced at Kütsapo village under Phek District, Nagaland on an experimental basis in December 1976⁵. Kütsapo means “dense forest” and it lies at an altitude of 1400 metres above sea level with 455 households and a population of 3021 as of 2018 (Plate 6). The first Village Development Board Library building was also constructed in memory of Late Shri Vamuzo (former Chief Minister of Nagaland) & Late Shri A.M. Gokhale (IAS) at Kütsapo village for their tireless contributions towards the Naga society through their noble initiative, the Village Development Board (Plate 7).



Plate 6: View of Kütsapo village

⁴Interview with Sovenyi Nyekha

⁵ Interview with Dükhüyi Vadeo of Kütsapo village, first Village Development Board Secretary



Plate 7: First VDB library building constructed in memory of Late Shri Vamuzo & Late Shri A.M. Gokhale at Kütsapo village (Phek district)

On seeing the coverage and the success of the Kütsapomi Village Development Board, a mass campaign was launched from 1980 onwards to expand the coverage of this unique institution throughout the State during the 7th Plan Period i.e., Rolling Plan which came into effect from 1979 – 1980 and a number of Village Development Boards were constituted in all the districts of Nagaland (Table 3.1).

The Village Development Board is where, therefore, the concept of decentralization gradually constituted and institutionalized into the remaining parts of the State with the enactment of Village Development Board Model Rules, 1980 (Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland, 2016). The number of Village Development Boards has been growing since then (Chart 1). Table 3.2 shows the growth of Blocks and Village Development Boards in Nagaland from 1980 to 2020.

Sl. No.	Name of Districts	No. of VDBs (1980-81)
1	Kohima	84
2	Mokokchung	72
3	Tuensang	111
4	Mon	73
5	Wokha	90
6	Zunheboto	143
7	Dimapur	85
8	Phek	83
9	Kiphire	62
10	Longleng	23
11	Peren	59
	Total	885

Table 3.1: Initial total number of VDBs in Nagaland (1980-81)

(Detailed list of Village Development Boards (VDBs) 1980-81, Rural Development Department)

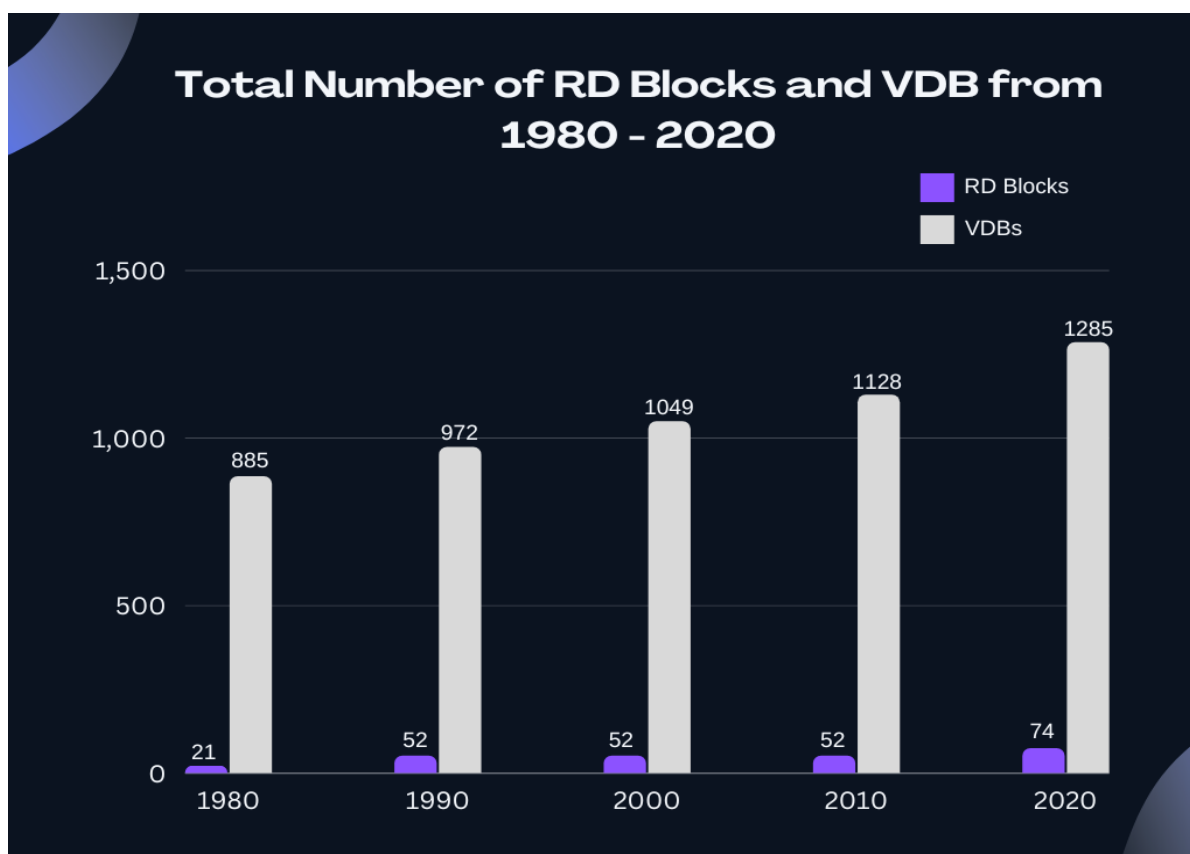


Chart 1: Growth of Rural Development Blocks and Village Development Boards in Nagaland from 1980 to 2020

Year	No. of Blocks	No. VDBs
1980	21	885
1990	52	972
2000	52	1049
2010	52	1128
2020	74	1285

Table 3.2 Growth of Blocks and Village Development Boards in Nagaland from 1980 to 2020

Ever since the Constitution of the Village Development Boards (VDBs) in all the recognized villages of Nagaland, the concept of Community Development Programmes has

intensified on a large scale. With the direct involvement of VDBs in the planning and implementation of the development at the grassroots level, there is no denying the fact that there has been a facelift in the rural economic scenario of the State.

The initial objective of VDBs was to make a village self sufficient and to seek participation of villagers at the grassroots level in planning developmental process. Within a span of 4 decades, the areas for rural development through Village Development Boards have broadened, where women empowerment through Self Help Groups, avenues for entrepreneurial activities, human resource development and health and sanitation have all come into operation.

As of 2019, the Department provided income generation and sustainability programmes and services to 1285 Village Development Boards across the State. It is through the involvement of the Village Development Boards that several major schemes and programmes like the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), Grant-in-Aid (GIA), Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojana (SGSY/NRLM), and Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) are being successfully implemented, and its resources mobilized at the grassroots level. Ninety-nine percent of villages in Nagaland have been connected by roads through difficult terrain through these various schemes. Almost every village has a community hall (Plate 8, 9, 10) and educational institutions. Several villages have attained 100% housing coverage and most of the villages now have the basic infrastructure requirements at their convenience. The concept of Village Development Board has made Nagaland the pioneer in the country's concept of decentralized planning where active participation of the Village community at the grassroots level was sought in the developmental process.



Plate 8: Community hall at Punglwa village under Peren district



Plate 9: Community hall at Diezephe village under Dimapur district



Plate10: Community hall at Kütsapo village under Phek district

The state of Nagaland has been exempted from the purview of the 73rd Amendment of the Constitution due to the existence of traditional local self-government bodies like the Village Councils and the Village Development Boards (Manual of Rural Development Department Nagaland, 2016). As we study the role and functions of Village Councils and VDB, it is imperative that the Constitutional provisions in regard to the state as enshrined in the Constitution of India are understood.

In terms of Article 371(A) of the Indian Constitution, No Act of Parliament in respect of -

- (i) Religion or social practices of the Nagas
- (ii) Naga customary law and procedure
- (iii) Administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga customary law
- (iv) Ownership or transfer of land and its resources

Shall apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution, so decides. It would therefore be observed from the above Constitutional provisions and safeguards that no Act of Parliament can be made applicable particularly in relation of land and customary laws of Nagaland unless the State Assembly decides in its favour. It is in this context that the Village Council assumes significance and its powers and duties as enshrined in the said Act, provide to constitute a Village Development Board, and also to formulate Village Development schemes to supervise proper maintenance of water supply, roads, forest, education and other welfare activities.

To understand the role of Village Development Board, it is important that both Village Council and Village Development Board are studied together as an organization of a village community where the Village Councils oversee the village administration while the Village

Development Board is the development agency of the villages, and where all developmental activities in the village are conducted through the Village Development Board, which functions under the Village Council.

The pragmatic concept of rural development through decentralized planning and active participation of the village community began during the 7th Plan Period and it was in 1980-81 that the idea of grassroots level planning and development became a reality, following the enactment of “The Nagaland Village and Area Councils Act, 1978” (Appendix I).

3.2 Compositions, Power and Functions of the Village Council

Under the Nagaland Village and Area Council Act, 1978 (Appendix I), every recognized village shall have a Village Council. Where a recognized Village means an included area by the Government of Nagaland, an area that fulfills the following conditions namely:

- a) The land in the area belongs to the population of that area, or given to them by the Government of Nagaland, if the land in question is a Government land or land given to them by the lawful owner of the land; and
- b) The Village is established according to the usage and customary practice of the population of the area.
- c) A Village Council shall consist of members, chosen by villagers in accordance with the prevailing customary practices and usages, the same being approved by the State Government, provided that hereditary village Chiefs GBs and *Anghs* (Konyak chiefs) shall be Ex- officio members of such Council and shall have voting right.

The Nagaland Village and Tribal Council Act, 1978, further outlines the Powers and Duties of the Village Council, which include:

The Village Council shall have the following powers and duties:

- (1) to formulate Village Development Schemes, to supervise proper maintenance of water supply, roads, power, forest, sanitation, education and other welfare activities:
- (2) to help various Government agencies in carrying out development works in the Village,
- (3) to take development works on its own initiative or on request by the Government,
- (4) to borrow money from the Government, Banks or financial institutions for application in the development and welfare work of the Village and to repay the same with or without interest as the case may be,
- (5) to apply for and receive grant-in-aid, donations, subsidies from the Government or any agencies.
- (6) to provide security for due repayment of loan received by any permanent resident of the Villages from the Government, Bank or financial institution.
- (7) to lend money from its funds to deserving permanent residents of the village and to obtain repayment thereof with or without interest,
- (8) to forfeit the security of the individual borrower on his default in repayment of loan, advanced to him or on his commission of a breach of any of the terms of loan agreement entered into by him with the Council and to dispose of such security by public auction or by private sale;
- (9) to enter into any loan agreement with the Government Bank and financial institutions or a permanent resident of the Village.

- (10) to realize registration fees for each litigation within its jurisdiction.
- (11) to raise fund for utility service within the Village by passing a resolution subject to the approval of the State Government, Provided that all monetary transactions shall be conducted through a scheduled Bank or the Nagaland State Co-operative Bank,
- (12) to constitute Village Development Board;
- (13) power to do certain acts in the event of an epidemic. On the outbreak of an epidemic or infectious disease Village Council shall initiate all preventive measures. [Section 14. Deleted Vide Amendment Act, 1985]

The Village Council is composed of members elected/nominated by the villagers in accordance with the customary law of that particular area, and the Chairman is chosen among the members by the Village Council. In most of the Naga villages the Village Council members comprise clan elders who also act as representative of the clan/khel. However, the selection of Village Council Chairman and its members have to be approved by the State Government, i.e., Nagaland State Government.

The Chief, *Anghs* or *Gaonburas* (GB) acts as the ex-officio member of the council. The Village council is the decision making body of a village, every community programme and activity within the village cannot be carried out without the Village Council's notice. The Village Council also has the power to settle disputes within the village jurisdiction, and approve village development schemes, funds and projects. Therefore, every Village developmental activities, be it Village Development Board's usage or management of funds for village development are carried out with Village Council's approval.

3.3 Composition, Powers and Functions of the Village Development Boards

The composition powers and functions of the Village Development Boards are given in the Village Development Boards Model Rules, 1980 (revised) (Appendix II). However, some key points under the Village Development Model Rules 1980 (Revised) are cited below for a quick glance at the composition, powers and functions of the Village Development Board:

All permanent residents of a Village constitute the Village Development Board's General Body. A minimum of 5 (Five) members should comprise the Management Committee of the Village Development Board, and the maximum number should not exceed 25 (Twenty-five) members, where, $\frac{1}{4}$ (one fourth) of the total number of management committee members should be women.

The Members of the Management Committee shall select one among themselves as Village Development Board Secretary. The Deputy Commissioner/Additional Deputy Commissioner is the ex-officio Chairman of the VDB in their respective districts and independent sub-divisions. The Village Development Board has the power to manage or operate grant in aid, matching cash grant and other schemes and programmes for village development jointly with the Village Council Chairman.

The Village Development Board, subject to such directive which the Village Council may issue from time to time, shall exercise the powers, functions and duties of the Village Councils enumerated in Clauses 4,6,7,8,9 and 12 of Section 12 of the Act, subject to the prior approval of the Chairman of the Village Council (Appendix I).

The Village Development Board shall also, subject to such directives as the Village Council may issue from time to time, formulate schemes, programmes of action for the

development and progress of the Village as a whole or groups of individuals in the village, or for individuals in the village, either using the village community or other funds.

3.4 Distribution, Management, and Inflow of Funds under the Village Development Board

The funds for VDB come from the Central Government, State Government and VDB common fund bank (State Bank of India) savings for which the villagers receive interest against the savings. Funds provided by the Central and State governments for village development goes directly to the respective VDB bank accounts (which every Village Development Board has to possess).

The funds are used or withdrawn from the VDB bank accounts by the VDBs with the approval of Village Council Chairman (refer Appendix II for more details). With the introduction of MGNREGA (presently known as NREGA) Job card system, the wages of villagers goes directly to the individual beneficiaries through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT). In some cases, individuals from a village bypass the VDB and carry out rural developmental projects and work with Rural Development funds in their own capacity.

Drawing, usages and management from the Village Development Board bank account requires the consent and approval of the Village Development Board members and the Village Council Chairman (refer appendix II for more details). In most of the villages, the Village Council and Village Development Board members comprise representatives from all the clans or Khels, whereby, community participation for every village programmes, works or developmental activities is encouraged.

3.5 Programmes and Policies of Rural Development in Alleviating the Rural Economy

Nagaland has 11 districts, each headed by a Deputy Commissioner assisted by 18 Additional Deputy Commissioners and 19 Sub-Divisional Officers (Civil) according to 2011 census. Altogether, there are 1285 recognized villages (Rural Development Annual Administrative Report 2018-2019) headed by a Village Chairman (VC), Gaonburas or the traditional headmen who look after the administrative functioning of the villages. Each village has a Village Development Board headed by the VDB Secretary, who serves with his board members as a decision making body, as well as implementing agency for all developmental works at the village level.

Nagaland has been the forerunner in bringing the concept of decentralized planning with the involvement of village communities in planning developmental activities at the village level. The idea of decentralized planning took shape during the 7th Plan Period and the idea of grassroots level planning at the village level became a reality with the inception of Village Development Boards in 1980-81 in Nagaland.

Through Village Development Board as a developmental agency, the Department of Rural Development has been implementing numerous Central and State sponsored programmes. Some of these major programmes are furnished below:

(i) Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)

This scheme is an employment generation programme which was implemented in accordance with the enforcement of the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA), 2005. The scheme is collectively funded by both the State and Central Government on the basis of 90% being funded by the Central Government and 10% by State Government.

Objective and Achievements of MGNREGS

- a) Since the main objective of this scheme was to generate employment, it provides 100 days of guaranteed employment in a financial year to every household in the village, who are willing to do unskilled manual works.
- b) In order to provide income generation avenues, the scheme aims to strengthen the livelihood resource base of the rural poor by constructing marketing sheds dig out farm ponds, horticulture, tree plantation, and so on (Plate 11, 12, 13, 14).
- c) Since its aim was to provide durable assets in rural areas, it has carried out construction of water dams, drainage, underground dykes and spring shed development (Plate 15, 16, 17).
- d) With the objective of enhancing the livelihood security of the rural poor, irrigation canals, protection walls, road culverts etc. were also constructed (Plate 18).

Earlier the wage was Rs. 100, however under the programme, the Government of India, through their notification, has raised the unskilled wage from Rs. 118 per day per person to Rs. 135, which was further raised to Rs. 155 from the fiscal 2014-2015 and presently it has been raised to Rs. 205 from the financial year 2020-2021 onward for the State of Nagaland. Men and women are paid equal wages under the scheme.

One interesting feature of this programme is the Unemployment Allowance condition where a person who is registered under the scheme and who has applied for employment, but is not given employment within 15 days shall be entitled to receive unemployment allowances at the rate of 1/4 of the daily wage for the first 30 days and thence, 1/2 of it per day beyond that.

The number of active workers under this scheme stands at 5.77 lakhs with 7.21 lakhs registered workers and a total of 4.33 lakh job card holders in the State as of Department of Rural Development Annual Administrative Report 2018 – 2019.

The actual implementation of the scheme started only in 2006-2007 and was able to cover all Districts in the State under NREGA. All MGNREGS programmes and works are implemented through the active participation of respective Village Development Boards of each District in the State. Basic amenities and infrastructural development like water tanks, footpaths, approach roads, protection wall has positively impacted the living condition of the villagers (Plates19, 20).



Plate 11: Marketing shed at Losami village under Phek district



Plate 12: Marketing shed at Longwa village under Mon district



Plate 13: Marketing shed at Azetso village under Kiphire district



Plate 14: Farm pond at Kütsapo village under Phek district



Plate 15: Water reservoirs and tanks constructed under MGREGA scheme at Kezoma (Kohima district), Jotsoma (Kohima district), Anatongre (Kiphire district) and Phek village (Phek district) respectively.



Plate 16: Drainages constructed under MGNREGA at Totokchingyu (Mon district), Bade (Chumukedima district)



Plate 17: Drainages constructed under MGNREGA at Shamator (Shamator district) and Azetso village (Kiphire district) respectively.



Plate 18: Protection walls and road culverts constructed at Kiphire village (Kiphire district), Diezephe (Dimapur district) and Jotsoma village (Kohima district) respectively



Plate 19: Approach road constructed under MGNREGA at Anatongre (Kiphire district), Jotsoma (Kohima district) and Agri link road at Ziphenyu village (Tseminyu district) respectively.



Plate 20: Protection wall and footpaths constructed under MGNREGA at Settsu village (Zunheboto district)

(ii) Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G)

The Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin which was earlier named as Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY) was implemented since 1st January 1996. Thus Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G) renamed in 2016 strives to provide housing for Below Poverty Line (BPL) households in rural areas with its main objective of providing permanent shelter to the shelterless poor in the village. This Scheme is funded collectively by the centre (90%) and the State (10%).

The Department of Rural Development has been implementing the programme through Village Development Boards and can be considered one of the most successful schemes implemented by the Rural Development Department till date with wide village community participation in its implementation, and the benefits the village poor gain from this scheme in terms of durable CGI roof can even be seen after more than two decades.

Presently, the selection of the beneficiaries is done by the Village Development Boards of the respective villages, and the community's contribution in the form of labour and building materials that are locally available, such as, special trunk for post, timber, bamboo and so on are also given free of cost to the beneficiaries which proves the importance of community involvement in making the programme successful. Nagaland in 2009 received the Bharat Nirman Award under Small State Category for effective implementation of housing programme from "India Today."

As of Rural Development Department's Annual Administrative Report 2018-19, against the target of 8481 houses, 8738 beneficiaries have been registered and 5655 proposed site of house construction have been geo-tagged and 3072 houses have been sanctioned (Plates 21,22,23). The State, in addition to the existing beneficiaries, has identified 36700 beneficiaries to be added for assistance under the Scheme.



Plate 21: House constructed with PMAY-G scheme at Yorüba village (Phek district)



Plate 22: House under construction with PMAY-G scheme at Yorüba village (Phek district)



Plate 23: House constructed with PMAY-G scheme at Azailong village (Peren district)

(iii) National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM)

The National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM), since its inception in June 2011 under the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India aims to alleviate poverty in the rural areas through self employment generation and organization of rural poor in the form of

building grassroots Community Institutions, such as Self Help Groups (SHGs). The mission aims to reach out to the poor rural women and enable them to come out of poverty through meaningful engagement in livelihoods.

According to Rural Development Department Annual Administrative Report 2018 – 2019, Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission (NSRLM) has mobilized 55168 rural households into women-run functional grassroots institutions of 6070 Self Help Groups (SHGs) and their higher level institutions of 282 Village Level Organizations (VLO), harnessing the latent potential of the community to come and work together. So far, the state mission has trained and engaged 1060 community level cadres who are providing need based support and professional service to these institutions of poor⁶.

(iv) Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban (SPMRM) National Rurban Mission (NRuM)

This mission was launched after the Government of India realized the importance of development of clusters of rural areas with the vision of preserving and nurturing the essence of rural community life. The mission also focuses on equity and inclusiveness uncompromising with facilities apparent to be essentially urban in nature, thereby creating a cluster of “Rurban Villages”. The mission was approved by the Union cabinet on 16th September, 2015 and launched by the Prime Minister of India on 15th February, 2016.

Some of the main objectives of this mission were to bridge the rural-urban divide through economic, technological and other required developments related to facilities and services, stimulating local economic development, giving emphasis on eliminating poverty and unemployment in rural areas and to attract investment in these regions.

⁶Source: Rural Development Annual Administrative Report 2018-2019: 7

In Nagaland, the programme was launched at Ngwalwa under Peren district. Initially the Ministry of Rural Development has released Rs. 405 lakhs as 1st installment under central share assistance and an amount of Rs. 167 lakhs has been earmarked under State Plan as 10% State matching share. Some of the development receive under these programme were renovation or construction of traditional well (Plate 24) and providing other urban facilities to rural areas be it in economic, technology and other projects and programmes created to bridged the gap between rural and urban.



Plate 24: Renovated traditional well at Kohima village (Kohima district)

(v) Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY)

Another important rural development programme concentrating broadly on the development in the villages which includes social development, cultural development and spreads motivation among the people on social mobilization of the village community is Sansad

Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) which is based on Mahatma Gandhi's vision of a model village, the concept of transforming "swaraj" into "suraj." The programme was launched on 11th October 2014 by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi on the birth anniversary of Jayaprakash Narayan

The distinct feature of this Yojana (ancient way of measuring distance but in this context it refers to planning or project), is that it is (a) demand driven (b) inspired by society (c) based on people's participation.

The objectives of Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY) was to spark off the processes which lead to a holistic development of the identified Gram Panchayats by substantially improving the standard of living and quality of life of all section of the population through improved basic amenities, higher productivity, enhanced human development, better livelihood opportunity, reduced disparities, access to rights and entitlements, wider social mobilization, enriched social capital and to set models of local level development and effective local government which can motivate and inspire neighboring Gram Panchayats to learn and adapt.

Till date, in Nagaland, the Members of Parliament (MPs) have adopted 6 model villages mostly under Dimapur districts-

i) MP Lok Sabha:

- a) Seluophe under Dimapur District during 2015 – 2016
- b) Longwa under Mon District during 2016 – 2017
- c) Kubza under Mokokchung District during 2017 - 2018
- d) Longidang under Wokha District during 2018 – 2019

ii) MP Rajya Sabha:

- a) Ikishe under Dimapur District during 2015 – 2016

b) Bade under Dimapur District during 2016 – 2017

(vi) Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA)

Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) is a unique scheme launched on 24th April 2018 during National Panchayat Day by the Prime Minister of India with the purpose of developing and strengthening the Panchayati Raj system in rural areas across India which in turn would lead to development of the whole country.

This programme is implemented by giving several responsibilities of rural development to the Gram Panchayat leaders where schemes for several capacity building and training centres were formed for training the Gram Panchayats at several levels like Gram Panchayat level, block level, and Zilla Parishad level. The programme is thus carried out through each state along with centre's assistance in arranging training centres and skill development workshops for the elected members of the Gram Panchayat and Panchayat officials in order to enhance their capacity and effectiveness of Panchayats and the Gram Sabhas, and also to strengthen the democratic local self-government, decision making, accountability in panchayats and to promote people's participation.

The funding pattern of the scheme has been 75% by the Central Government and 25% by the State Government. However, in the case of North-Eastern States, it is: Centre: 90% and State: 10%.

As of 2018 – 2019, Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) has approved a total plan of Rs. 876.00 lakhs for Nagaland, where the State received Rs. 394.00 lakhs under Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan (RGSA) as its first installment for preparation of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) and capacity building with an amount of Rs. 87.60 lakhs earmarked as State Matching Share.

(vii) Grants-In-Aid to Village Development Boards (VDBs) (GIA)

There are 1285 Village Development Boards (VDBs) with 2,50,315 taxpaying households as of Department of RD Annual Administrative Report 2018-2019 in the State of Nagaland and Grant-In-Aid to Village Development Boards (VDBs) is one of the major programmes sponsored by the State, introduced in 1980-1981 and is being implemented by the RD Department through the Village Development Boards (VDBs). For implementation of developmental activities, fund under this programme is allocated on the basis of number of taxpaying households.

This scheme provides an important platform for active participation of the village community as it ensures taking up developmental activities suitable to their own condition. This programme ensures participation of all sections of the rural people where, 25% of the allocated fund is earmarked for the women folk and 20% for the youth in all the recognized Naga villages for ensuring all-round development. This scheme has thus enabled villagers to participate in the developmental process and take up income generation programme as well as infrastructural development suitable to their needs at the grassroots level.

In addition, a mandatory scheme called VDB Welfare Fund is also placed where funds are deposited at Rs. 10,000 for villages having 50 households and below and Rs. 200 per household for villages having 51 households and above from the general allocation to mobilize resources for the VDBs to supplement their activity.

The deposits are made annually for a period of six years, and at maturity, the interest accrued will be utilized for the scheme and the seed money is re-invested, creating a continuous cycle of resource to supplement the grants provided by the state. Most of the community halls in

the villages are also constructed through this aid from the State Government, one such hall was at Kezoma village with Grant in aid from 2012 to 2018 (Plate 25).



Plate 25: Construction of Village Community Hall through Grant-In-Aid at Kezoma village (Kohima district)

(viii) Matching Cash Grant (Fixed Deposit)

Matching Cash Grant is an important scheme introduced in the latter part of the 5th Five Year Plan with the aim of making a village become self sustaining through household contributions, donations, taking up village projects through community participation or through other innovative means. This programme is instrumental in making Village Development Board a success in Nagaland.

Under this programme, every recognized village has to maintain a Fixed Deposit (FD) or Term Deposit account in banks through respective Village Development Boards (VDBs); the fixed deposit account is initially for a period of five years and the same is renewed on maturity. In return, the Government gives a matching cash grant i.e., the double amount the village has deposited as fixed deposit. The maximum ceiling amount of the fixed deposit was initially Rs. 75,000 which is now enhanced to Rs. 2.50 lakhs for each Village Development Board. The VDB can derive maximum benefits out of the matching grants received from the Government. The

village common fund can thus be utilized for availing bank loans for its socio-economic development and provide much needed security to the villagers. The amount accrued from this grant is use as honorarium of Rs. 3000 to Village Development Board's Secretary and also in managing meetings, official visits and other activities in the village.

(ix) Promotion of Micro-Financing Activities through Village Development Boards (VDBs)

This pilot scheme was launched in the early part of 2004 – 2005 where Nagaland was also being the State selected for experimenting the Pilot scheme. In this scheme the VDBs have to take up the responsibility of obtaining loans from the banks and distribute to the beneficiaries and also for recover the same. Initially, 25 Village Development Boards (VDBs) selected were declared as financial intermediaries for the purpose.

For implementation of this programme initially a corpus fund of Rs.1 lakh was created through contribution of VDBs at 40%, Government of India at 20%, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) at 20% and Government of Nagaland, 20%. However, it has been revised now: NABARD: Rs. 100,000/-, State Government: Rs. 100,000/- and Village Development Board: Rs 40,000/-.

This Corpus Fund is kept in the Savings Bank Account and the Bank in turn will initially provide a matching share of Rs. 1 lakh, the Corpus Fund and the matching share together would be the Revolving Fund Assistance (RFA) that will be available to the Village Development Boards for loan. After experiencing the successful implementation of the Pilot Project, the Department selected 406 more VDBs during 2006-07 & 2007-08 in the 21 unbanked blocks. This innovative programme will go a long way as the State Government plans to cover all the Village Development Boards as financial intermediaries in phase manner which in turn will provide credit facilities to the people particularly in the rural areas.

The various mentioned model rules and schemes, programmes and policies which the Government has been implementing through Village Development Boards in Nagaland has a major impact on rural areas, and impacting agriculture, transportation, communication to a great extent, and the employment of rural populace to some extent which will be discussed in further detail in the following chapters. Village Development Boards as a link between the Government and the rural populace has a wider scope which cannot be denied to further leverage the rural economy where more skills and ideas at the grassroots level can be tapped and help make rural areas a self sustaining village.

Chapter 4

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS (VDBs)

4.1 An overview of Village Development Boards

Nagaland has been a self sufficient, self sustaining region all throughout the history. When we talk about transformation that occurred in the socio-economic sector, we are basically dealing with the term modernization, where people strive to attain a better standard of living and all the modern means that a person can possess to have a better and efficient way of livelihood.

The village development characteristics are examined by variables related to the year of village recognition by the State Government, number of households in a village, distance with district headquarters, and operation. Descriptive statistics was employed to describe and compare the basic features of the sample data to determine and measure the socio-economic characteristics of the surveyed villages and the past behavior before and after the Rural Development support and the establishment of Village Development Boards.

The existence of a functioning VDB in each recognized village looking over all the developmental activities from footpaths, water supply, drainage, village roads to individual households have increasingly influenced more positive intentions to engage in common activities for the village and rural areas. This in turn has strengthened the bond of community which the Nagas revere with utmost respect.

Villagers' actions are led by complex processes which are influenced by socio-economic and psychological variables as well as the village's resources. Better understanding of the motivation, along with accompanying information on resources and constraints, can adequately explain and predict village development opportunities/avenues. The socio-economic development in rural areas in Nagaland can be strengthened by a better understanding of the

traditional socio-economic condition of the rural population. Therefore, rural development approach like the Village Development Board has been tailored according to the local mentality, which is crucial in understanding the socio-economic improvement of rural areas and the quality of life of rural people.

The study was conducted across the 16 districts in Nagaland, covering approximately 34 villages where, 2-4 villages represented each district through random sampling. Some of the data were excluded from the final database due to lack or inconsistencies in the respondents' answers. The main difference between the districts is the existence of Chieftainship in some parts of the region, and in others, a more collective form of leadership. Findings from this study show that majority of the villagers agree that, with the establishment of Village Development Board, developmental activities have intensified in the village, but has not greatly impacted the provision of income generation avenues particularly for rural youths where significant migration of rural youths to urban areas is evident.

The VDB initiative for village development as a whole has been found to be more effective rather than the individual development, given that the original intent was mainly influenced by traditional community ideals. In general, all respondents believe that the institution of Village Development Boards has yielded different benefits and contributed to village development. Such positive opinions on the institution are supported by the approval of villagers and local organizations like village youths, women and student bodies alike.

The institution's positive impact on the Naga villages can also be affirmed through the growth of Village Development Boards since its inception in 1980 (Table 4.1). Table 4.2 and chart 2 also show the list of district wise Blocks and Village Development Boards in Nagaland as of 2023.

In general, all respondents affirmed that they have received different benefits individually from rural development support through Village Development Boards, such as - tools, rice, sugar, and other such essentials, as well as benefits from the various schemes (Plate 26). Such positive opinions on Village Development Boards in management and distribution are supported by both the village leaders and villagers alike though unfortunately, it is not as transparent as it should be in some villages.

This network helps the villagers become more engaged in official socio-economic interactions which play a significant role in promoting and facilitating communication and cooperation that are basic preconditions for rural development policies to succeed.

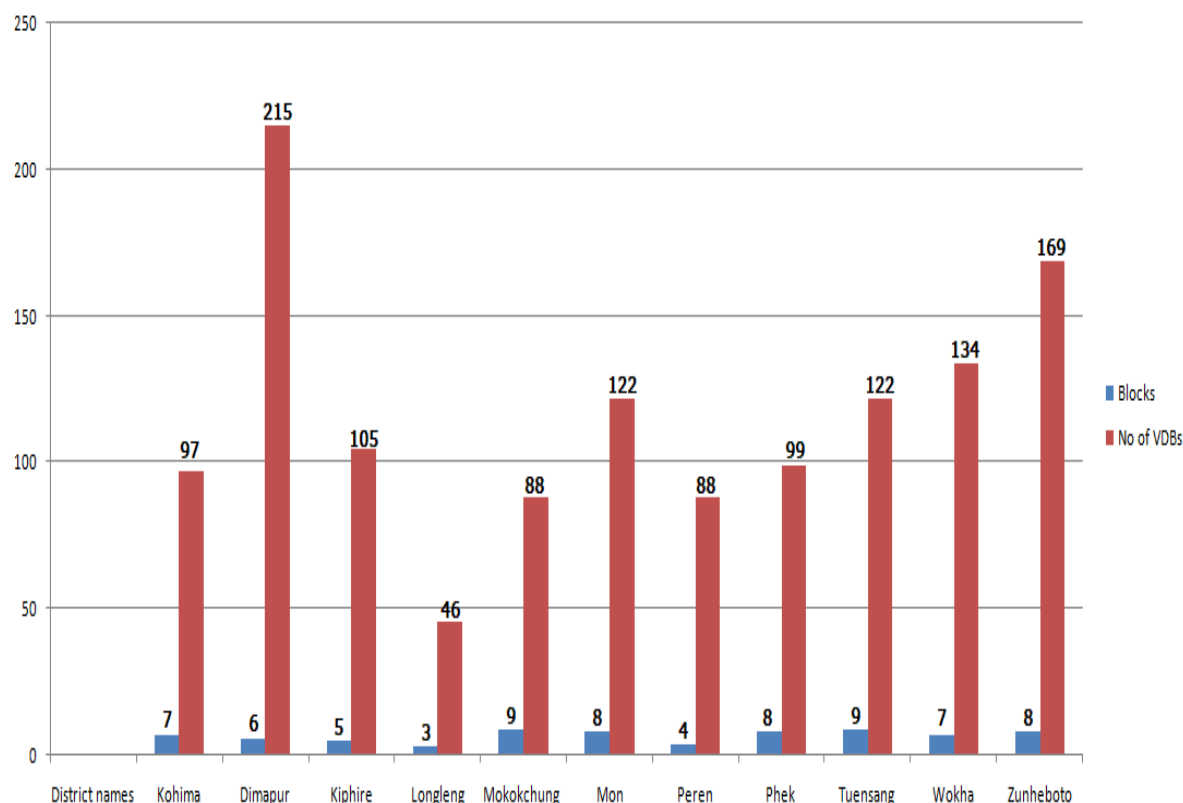


Chart 2: List of Blocks and Village Development Boards in Nagaland (district wise) as of 2023



Plate 26: VDB members distributing rice under Public Distribution System (PDS) at Yorüba village, Phek district

Years	Total no. of VDBs
1980	885
1981	875
1982	879
1983	886
1984	861
1985	866
1986	865
1987	952
1988	1001
1989	972
1990	972
1991	1001
1992	1017
1993	1025
1994	1025
1995	1036
1996	1037
1997	1034
1998	1039
1999	1049
2000	1049
2001	1049
2002	1049
2003	1072
2004	1083
2005	1086
2006	1089
2007	1097
2008	1113
2009	1128
2010	1128
2011	1143
2012	1175
2013	1175
2014	1175
2015	1238
2016	1238
2017	1238
2018	1285
2019	1285

Table 4.1: Growth of Village Development Boards (VDBs) in Nagaland from 1980 – 2019
(Source: Detailed list of Village Development Boards (VDBs) 1980-81 to 2016-2017 and Annual Administrative Report, Rural Development Department)

Sl.No.	District names	Blocks	No. of VDBs
1.	Kohima	7	97
2.	Dimapur	6	215
3.	Kiphire	5	105
4.	Longleng	3	46
5.	Mokokchung	9	88
6.	Mon	8	122
7.	Peren	4	88
8.	Phek	8	99
9.	Tuensang	9	122
10.	Wokha	7	134
11.	Zunheboto	8	169
	Total	74	1285

Table 4.2: List of blocks and Village Development Boards in Nagaland (District wise) as of 2023 (Source: Rural Development Department as of 31st March 2023)

From the surveyed villages, majority of the villagers have a positive attitude towards rural development policy, affirming that it is beneficial to have Rural Development support from the government. Most villagers in all the districts positively assess the Rural Development support through Village Development Boards for village development. However, findings also show poor awareness about the opportunities that Rural Development Department provides.

4.2 Socio-Economic Characteristics of Surveyed Villages

Rural areas in Nagaland are mostly made up of self governing independent villages where private initiatives are not so much encouraged. The strong cultural heritage and the pride of the local inhabitants are well known in a state like Nagaland. The historic traditional values have contributed in shaping the mentality of the locals into one typical societal structure. Hence, with a conservative mindset, there has often been a resistance when it comes to socio-economic changes. Despite this, due to necessity, and as a result of the influence of Christianity coupled with education, the local communities have gradually become more receptive to the various changes and developmental initiatives. People are more open and are able to access and avail Government financing programmes and policies, and invest in new socio-economic sectors for better livelihood.

The social and economic identities of villages influence the development and the specific characteristics of rural areas in Nagaland. Therefore, understanding their socio-economic nature should go beyond the narrow framework of agriculture and should contribute in defining programmes for rural development policy enforcement.

Though Naga socioeconomic structure has been deeply embedded in agricultural conditions and practices, with the introduction of rural developmental policies and programmes and the introduction of Village Development Boards in 1980, the socioeconomic scenario has taken a drastic turn from traditional agricultural practices which are produced only for consumption, to incorporation of new methods in its practices, as well as introduction of new commercial avenues where entrepreneurial activities have been gaining importance.

4.3 General Attitude towards Village Development Boards

The general attitude towards Village Development Boards (VDBs) has been positive, though the attitude in the sample slightly differs with reference to the functions, yet not significantly. In terms of bringing public benefits there is very strong agreement; whereas, for motivational and income aspects which bring personal benefit, the responses are mixed.

This overall positive stance is additionally confirmed as over 69.28% of villagers included in the survey in all districts' villages declared that the VDB has been the sole institution of village development. In villages closer to urban areas, the respondents agree more with this statement compared to the other villages. In villages closer to urban areas, the attitudes are more positive, most likely because of better facilities, such as, transport and communication facilities accompanied with higher literacy rate due to better educational facilities, given their closer proximity with urban areas.

Most villagers in all the districts positively assess the Village Development Board for the developmental activities, as well as for projects of common interest in the village. Most villagers identified the significant role the VDB has played in village development activities, and in improving the standard of living in the village. Greater enthusiasm from the villagers is shown with regard to the projects, especially those that are for the common interest of the village. The benefits of Rural Development policy implemented through VDB for stronger development of rural areas in terms of protection of environment, closer networking and communication, improvement of infrastructure, implementation of better living standards and development of rural tourism have been significant.

The various rural developmental programmes initiated through VDB in respective villages have had immense impact, particularly on infrastructural and irrigation systems, which,

no doubt has improved the quality of life of the rural population. The villagers generally intend to apply for, and use the VDB's support fund on loan for their own income generation activities. However, data collected from the questionnaire reveals the lack of awareness of the villagers (general members) about their role in the Village Development Boards in most of the surveyed villages.

Among the 34 villages in 16 districts where findings were drawn, majority of the villagers were not aware of the purpose of Village Development Boards' existence (Table 4.3) (Chart 3), and quite surprisingly, even 62.5 % of the VDB secretaries were unaware of the objective and purpose of the existence of VDBs (Table 4.4).

Options for questionnaires	Whether VDB has helped the growth of village economy	Whether VDB is providing employment opportunities to the villagers	Whether VDB is successful in checking the migration of rural youths	Attending general body meeting	Awareness on the objective and purpose of VDB's existence
A-yes	124(69.27%)	70 (39.10%)	26 (14.52%)	48(26.81%)	41(22.90%)
B-yes, to some extent	46 (25.69%)	81 (45.25%)	24 (13.40%)	50(27.93%)	55(30.72%)
C- No	09 (5.02%)	28 (15.64%)	129(72.06%)	81(45.25%)	83(46.36%)

Table 4.3: Villager's opinion on Village Development Board

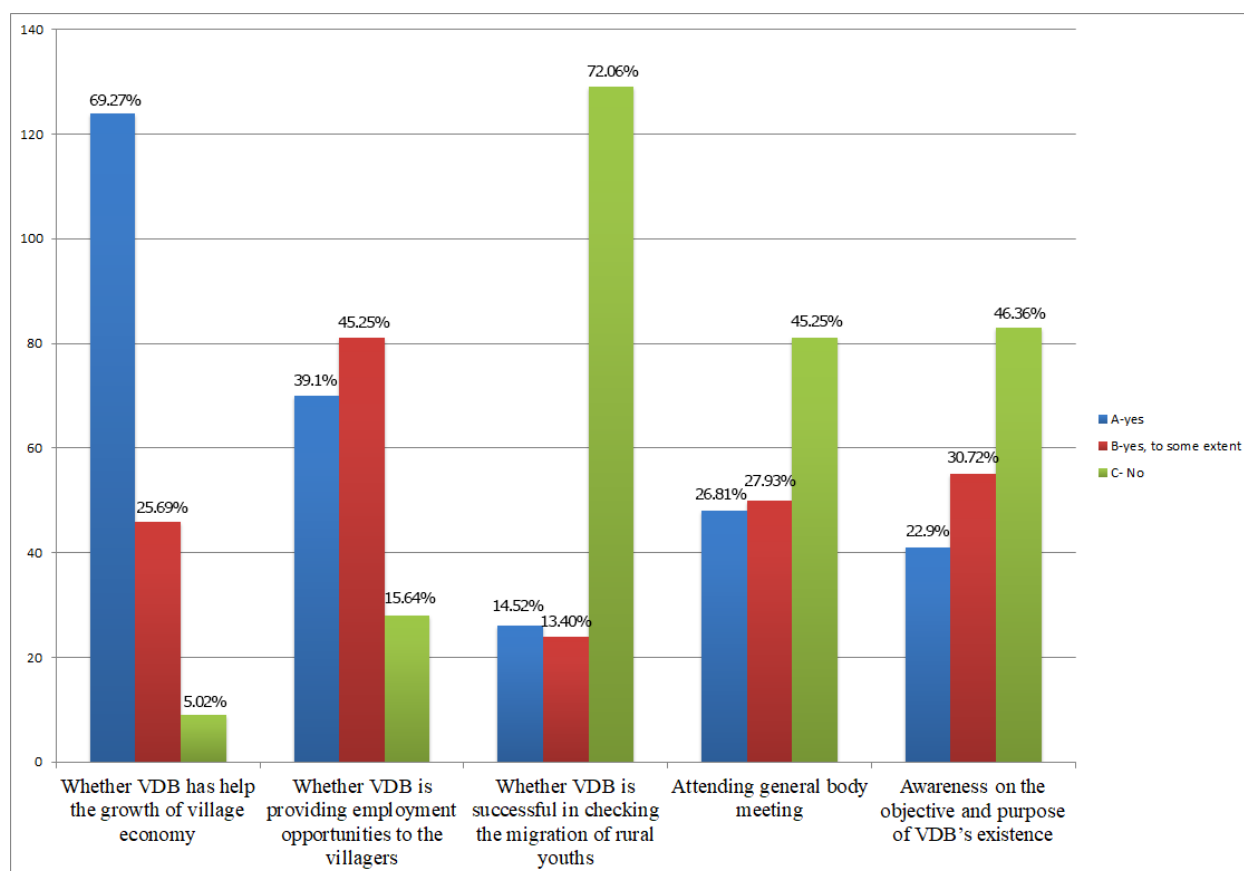


Chart 3: Opinions of Villagers on Village Development Boards

Sl. No.	Sample villages/ district	Whether VDB has helped the growth of village economy	Whether VDB is providing employment opportunities to the villagers	Whether VDB is successful in checking the migration of rural youths	Awareness on the objective and purpose of VDB's existence
1.	Sohomi, Phek district	Yes	Yes	No	No
2.	Losami, Phek district	Yes	Yes, to some extent	Yes, to some extent	Yes
3.	Phek village, Phek district	Yes	Yes, to some extent	No	No
4.	Alayong, Longleng district	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
5.	Punglwa, Peren district	Yes	Yes	No	No

6.	Poilwa, Peren district	Yes	Yes	No	No
7.	Anatongre, Kiphire district	Yes	Yes	No	No
8.	Wapher, Tuensang district	Yes, to some extent	Yes, to some extent	No	No
9.	Goching, Mon district	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
10.	Nzauna, Peren district	Yes	No	No	No
11.	Wokha Village, Wokha district	Yes	Yes	Yes, to some extent	Yes
12.	Seluku, Wokha district	Yes	No	No	No
13.	Bade, Chumoukedima district	Yes	Yes, to some extent	No	No
14.	Ziphenyu, Tseminyu district	Yes	Yes, to some extent	No	No
15.	Mokokchung Village, Mokokchung district	Yes	No	No	Yes, to some extent
16.	Tuensang Village, Tuensang district	Yes	Yes, to some extent	No	Yes, to some extent

Table 4.4: Opinions of Village Development Board Secretaries on Village Development Boards

The following table includes responses of 179 respondents from across the 16 districts in Nagaland. All the respondents were permanent residents of a village.

Though one can find the profound impact of Village Development Boards in the secondary sector of villages in Nagaland since 40 years of its inception, more can be done in the primary and tertiary sectors. From the surveyed villages, one can also find how corruption and manipulation of funds meant for rural development has been practiced, which has reached even to the grassroots level.

In the case of a village like Nzauna under Peren district, even the Village Development Board Secretary has been robbed of his salary and Grant-in-Aid. However, ignorance of the villagers also plays a role as their lack of awareness on the institution has shown higher percentage, and if more respondents were taken from common permanent residents of a village, the percentage could be much higher.

4.4 Subjective Norms towards Village Development Boards

Every Naga lives in a well defined community social structure where villagers value the opinion of their family, clan and other people they respect. Thus, villagers acknowledge and respect the village community decision in all aspects and oblige with positive response. This shows that in rural areas, social norms have an impact on decision-making, and therefore, strongly influence the VDB planning and success. The status, power, role, and capability of village elders, especially the Village Council Chairman (VCC) are very complex issues influenced by a wide range of interplaying traditional, social and economic factors. The basic point to get insight into such complex phenomena is to understand the structure of social connections which is shaped by government policy makers in accordance with the traditional village socio-economic set up and the type of system they prefer.

The structural relationships between the policy makers, agents (VDBs) and the villagers are the basis for the creation of bridging and relational social ties, which enable faster, efficient exchange of information and access to the resources, which are otherwise, unobtainable.

In all the surveyed villages, the majority of respondents were aware of the existence of Village Development Boards in the village, but were unaware of its purpose and their role in the system. These may have been due to ignorance, negligence, or denuded information, or simply lack of awareness. The lack of information, lack of time, and exclusiveness were found to be the

most prominent reasons behind general members' low participation in the Village Development Board meetings and activities in all the surveyed villages.

In all surveyed villages, non participation of villagers in the village development activities in co-ordination with Village Development Board varied statistically. Such results suggest a sense of skepticism towards the institution, which can be an important factor behind the villagers' lack of awareness, and lack of information on the system that is ever changing.

4.5 Village Development Boards and Rural Development Policy

Prior to the analysis, a comprehensive research on the available literature and national statistical sources showed an overall background of socio-economic characteristics and conditions of Naga rural areas. This part of the analysis established an understanding for the environment in which the Rural Development Department functions through the Village Development Board.

The research faced a lack of data concerning some villages; those available were often not comparable, nor were compatible. This is partly due to the differences in functionality of VDBs in villages even within the same concerned district, as well as the data not being fully harmonized with state statistics. However, the analysis confirms the existence of vast differences in the socio-economic structure of rural areas between the villages, as well as among surveyed villagers and their households.

Agriculture is the main source of income in Naga villages, but because it is characterized with fields and farms' productivity for their own consumption, commercial agro food products does not ensure sustainable livelihoods for villagers in Nagaland. The agrarian policy is undergoing a process of reform, and is largely driven by a pragmatic commerciality approach, ad-hoc solutions, and traditional structures in policy creation and implementation. The low and

unstable level of rural development support, which also varies in terms of scope and measures applied, does not address enough of the problems faced in the rural areas. It slows down the ability to solve some of the key problems of structural reforming of rural areas, including poverty, environmental degradation, and generation of new jobs. To face these challenges the Nagaland State Government through Rural Development Department has also developed mechanisms, such as guarantee funds, as well as encouraging banks to intensify their involvement in rural crediting and investments in rural areas like the Cooperative and Rural banks.

Most villagers in Nagaland have low levels of education, but with years of experience in agriculture and allied activities, agricultural production has increased to some extent. The average age of farmers is over 35 years, with high variation within the sample. The villagers in remote areas in Nagaland almost exclusively rely on agriculture, whereas in a majority of the surveyed villages closer to urban areas, many farmers have additional household income from other sources.

The number of villages which applied and received funds (Grant-in-Aid) from Rural Development Department differs in each village as it is considered based on the number of household and population. This, to some extent, creates difference in availing rural development measures in the districts. Among villages, those who received higher amounts of funds are aiming at higher investments, for example, raising orchards and animal husbandry. This is mostly common among villages closer to district headquarters and urban areas.

In these villages, the familiarity is significantly different even between villages of the same district. In villages closer to urban areas and district headquarters, Village Development

Boards are more familiar with Rural Development support, which is not surprising, since the majority of village developmental activities depend on Rural Development funds and schemes.

4.6 Village Development Boards' Profile

The VDB secretaries are predominantly males. The age of respondent VDB secretaries ranged from 33 to 75 years, and the mean age of VDB secretaries in the surveyed villages were in their 40s. To cover demographically viable villages, the criteria for the selection of villages were to at least have a functional Village Development Board. This was the reason why recognized villages were prioritized.

The age structure of Village Development Board secretaries in the western part of Nagaland are younger, showing flexibility towards evolving social norms such as elders being revered with utmost respect. As a consequence of the adoption of young active VDB secretaries, changing village socio-economic scenario in these areas are visible. The reason behind those villages with older people serving as VDB secretaries can also be attributed to the high number of youth migration trends, caused by low income generation avenues, educational necessities, and government servants and most importantly, seeking better means of livelihood.

Very often, obtaining government finances through various governmental programmes requires the filling up of complex applications, and most villagers and even many VDB officials are incompetent in administrative and technical aspects. They therefore, fail to grasp the technicalities, and this limits the ability of the villagers to access various governmental financing programmes.

Socio-economic impact of any programme or institution in a given context can be understood through analyzing the standard and quality of life, taking into consideration the surroundings of the concerned population. Socio-economic impact can also be viewed taking

into account the absorption of the rural development funds and the economic networking of rural populace; thus, increasing the effectiveness of the rural development policy. Because of the lack of systematic data, the socio-economic situation of rural areas in Nagaland cannot be represented by standard indicators related to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of rural areas and their structures. Therefore, the overview focuses on the different aspects of the local market, employment, incomes of rural households, and characteristics of agricultural sector.

Nagaland has a rich biodiversity and favorable natural conditions for agricultural production. Land and natural resources are diverse, ranging from fertile plains, river valleys and mountainous areas. Rural areas are characterized by great heterogeneity, fragmented territories, and heterogeneous landscape among and within each village. Regardless of the rich natural resources, their socio-economic sectors are faced with numerous challenges, including political turmoil, low competitiveness, technological backwardness, and slow progress with structural reforms. These conditions have deeply impacted the socio-economic progress, overall economic activity, and income generation in rural areas, and have caused demographic imbalances and threat to rural sustenance.

In the initial years of its establishment, the Village Development Boards in Nagaland had significantly impacted the village developmental activities, which is not only said but observed since no developmental programmes can be said to have had positive progress without a marked difference. For example, Corrugated Galvanised Iron (CGI) sheets distributed in all corners of Nagaland still serves as the roof in place of the roof made out of Thatch and *Luh* or *Luhchak* (roofing materials still used in eastern part of Nagaland) in many villages. Also in the long tradition of agricultural activities, joint activities of farmers and government has continued to increase over the decades with better networking and communication through the decentralized

VDB institution. The same goes for other forms of village community planning, whose activities on rural development are limited and poorly visible at this juncture.

The status and role of Village Development Boards in rural development has created new forms of developing trend where population at the grassroots level can independently plan, organize and manage the developmental activities according to their required needs through availing different funds and schemes from the Government. Thus, one of the major impacts of VDB lies in the decentralized planning at the village community level. The accession process of the Government's rural developmental agencies at the village level to a large extent is achieved through the establishment of the Village Development Boards.

In the more than 40 years since the inception of Village Development Boards, the village communities in Nagaland have benefitted immensely in the field of basic necessities like shelter, water supply (Plate 27), road and transports (Plate 28,29), as well as village self sustaining agricultural activities(Plate 30).



Plate 27: water reservoir constructed at Kezoma village (Kohima district) under MGNREGA scheme.



Plate 28: Losami VDB bus at Losami village (Phek district)



Plate 29: Alayong VDB sumo at Alayong village (Longleng district)



Plate 30: Village tea plantation MGNREGA project at Mon village (Mon district)

In addition, a major scheme earlier mentioned, called Matching Cash Grant (MCG), through fixed deposit from household contributions and fund raiser is in place where funds are deposited at Rs.10,000 for villages having 50 households and below, and Rs. 200 per household for villages having 51 households and above. The deposits are made annually for a period of 5 years and at maturity, the interest accrued will be utilized for schemes and village development and the seed money is reinvested, creating a continuous cycle of resource to supplement the grants provided by the State. In the beginning, Village Development Boards' Bank deposit was Rs. 17 crore, according to Shri A.M. Gokhale⁷. As of 2017, the Rural Development Department in Nagaland was covering 1238 Village Development Boards under 74 R.D. blocks and the face value of fixed deposit rose to Rs. 90,07,14,545 as of 2016-2017 (Detailed Village Development Board Fixed Deposit (FD) Nagaland 2016-2017).

⁷As stated in Nagaland Post, June 5, 2000. vol. x No. 152

4.7 Local Networks, Economy and Village Development

Transitioning and emerging socio-economic heterogeneity across the rural areas can be experienced and seen with VDBs as the link between the villagers and the Government. Barriers to rural development, which are multiple, and socio-economic and environmental considerations can be tackled more effectively through the VDB.

Village Development Boards have contextualized the local socio-economic situation, which has influenced the formation of social networks between the policy makers and villagers that have facilitated the development of shared social norms, values, identity, and trust. This in turn has resulted in bringing out policies and programmes suitable for the local milieu. The implementation of rural development programmes and impact assessment studies strongly depend on the Village Development Board's capacities and requires continuous strengthening.

An intermediate institution like the Village Development Board is socially embedded and is able to recognize the needs of the village with the support and cooperation of the village community. If judiciously executed, it is able to effectively impact the management of the village's resources. Through such an institution, the community's knowledge is also retained. Village Development Board thus ensures better targeting of rural development programmes and can be used as a platform from which local accountability may be demanded and guarded, as a prerequisite to increase general trust and a culture of cooperation between the Government and the villagers at the grassroots level.

Since decentralization is the basic principle of rural development, planning and participation at the grassroots level is essential. Efforts in this trajectory must be spontaneous and include the participation of the widest circle of villagers. Hence, a variety of information

campaigns, promotional activities, and awareness generating operations are essential to reach the masses at grassroots level.

4.8 Administration and Social Aspects in Village Development

The real administrative and political unit of all Naga tribes is the village. The diverse tribes of Nagaland have never been united under one head. Each major and minor ethnic group has its own head. The head of a tribe is regarded as the most revered person, and is therefore, treated with great respect. Besides the chief or the village head, every Naga tribe has some sort of a village governing body in which the village judicial, executive and administrative functions are carried out, usually clan-wise where communal duties, village administration and developmental works are assigned. Most Nagas in rural areas are conversant with the traditional laws, customs and usages, most of which are still very much relevant, and the Village Council still plays a crucial role in its functioning and execution of the system.

With the coming of Village Development Boards, the Village Councils' functions have been limited to administrative and judicial with all village development activities being done under Village Development Boards functioning under the Village Council. It can therefore, be said that the VDB is the developmental branch of the village.

Politically, mention of chieftainship and council of elders or councilors are found in several references by local as well as non-local authors, where chief and village councils were called by different names among the various tribes of Nagaland.

The extent of the chief's powers varied from tribe to tribe and even from village to village among the same tribe. However, besides the chief, every Naga tribe has some sort of a village body or council where every village activities and developmental works are carried out. From the surveyed villages, there is 100% available community forest or land which the Village

Council and Village Development Board look after, except in the case of Semas and Konyaks where decision for such reserved community forests for village development or for other usages rests with the chief.

4.9 Politics and Village Development Boards

Changes in political systems affecting the socio-economic development of a Nation or a State throughout the globe need to be looked at while studying village development or development in any sphere. For this, the above sub-heading was taken to briefly present some findings from the press, and also information obtained through some interviews conducted locally with regard to Village Development Boards in the State of Nagaland, since every change in the power be it at national or state level, significantly impacts the local socio-economic conditions.

Findings from this study show that before the establishment of Village Development Boards, Rural Development was unproductive and failing miserably with no elected ministers wanting to hold the portfolio in charge of Rural Development Department. Although the Government of India was generously granting funds to the State for development, there was no effective mechanism to either implement them or ensure equal distribution of funds to the people in the villages. All the funds were centralized at the State level. Although 80% of the Nagas lived in rural areas, there was no separate fund earmarked for the development of the villages. Consequently, only the privileged few, the educated/urbanized, enjoyed the benefits of the central funding. There was hardly any fund for the development of the villagers in the remote areas who lived in ignorance, oblivious to what the Central Government had allocated for the people of the State.

It took some time to contextualize and connect the Department with the fact that the majority of Nagas live in rural areas and depend on agriculture for sustenance, and therefore, to bring them into the developmental planning process. During the 1977 election, the United Democratic Front (UDF) party came to power and gave a major impetus to rural development in Nagaland. Shri Vamuzo was made the Minister of Finance and Rural Development. In 1979, the proposal which was submitted by the State Government in 1978 to the Planning Commission of India to introduce a rural oriented development policy for decentralization of planning and development at the grassroots level in the State was approved and finalized.

As a result, the Matching Cash Grant (MCG) programme was introduced in the latter part of the Five Year Plan to encourage the institution of Village Development Boards, which was the first scheme to be availed by the villagers in the State. The Model Rules of the Village Development Board came into effect in 1980. The VDB has since benefitted all recognized villages and communities across Nagaland.

Over the years, the success of the local self development institution of the VDB in Nagaland became visibly clear not only among citizens of Nagaland, but to the world beyond. It may be mentioned that while Shri Vamuzo was the Chief Minister of Nagaland (1990-1992), the Planning Commission of the Government of India sent a delegation to Nagaland in order to replicate certain strategies from the VDB Scheme in the Panchayati Raj⁸. In effect, more than two decades later, an article in a local daily newspaper informed:

“Having studied the hugely successful Village Development Board concept that originated in Nagaland, the Government of India under Prime Minister Narendra Modi, is mulling over replicating it to prosperous states like Maharashtra, Punjab, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, etc... According to highly placed sources in the PMO, the Government of India seeks to emulate

⁸Interview with Sovenyi Nyekha

the rationale, grass-root planning, people-friendly, benevolent and beneficent governance VDB concept. The VDB has made huge impact in Nagaland for decades by making villages self-sufficient which is hitherto unknown even in the most highly developed states of India. The community caring and sharing by village councils has kept development within reach of the common people in the rural areas. An official closely monitoring the process of replicating the Nagaland VDB said its unique display of unity and yet, “individual development of every village in uniform fashion”, was being assessed, judged, supervised so as to fathom the ingenuity of the concept.”⁹

The source also pointed out that the Panchayati Raj, which has been implemented all over India, was also inspired by the VDB concept.

This study has also looked at how the political preferences evolved in the forty years since the establishment of Village Development Boards in the rural areas of Nagaland. One can notice the politics of the State affecting the rural development in Nagaland, where more than ten or eleven different political parties with a variety of ideologies have affected the village economy in the region, whether positively or negatively. In the past decades of changing political scenario, beginning with the attainment of Statehood in 1963, the first General Election in 1964 and Naga political turmoil – all have diversely impacted the rural economy. Mention may also be made of the observation that the regional political parties have given more emphasis and importance on the local self government and regional socio-economic structure or the traditional system. However, we can witness that over time, the various elected political parties gradually began to prioritize on local self government and rural development.

⁹Nagaland Post, *Central Govt. to Replicate Nagaland's VDB Model*, October 22, 2015 issue, Vol. xxv No.

An interesting aspect worth mentioning among the rural populace in the region is the tendency of the people to vote for the parties rather than the person as most villagers consider the party's past deeds on their community rather than the credibility of a candidate. Studies on rural development should not overlook the electoral process since a region might be rich in natural resources, but political power vested on a particular candidate or party significantly influences the management and usages of the entire rural natural resources.

4.10 Geography affecting Village Development

Nagaland is situated on a mountainous region where some villages fall under a steep hilly terrain, and thus, transport and communication becomes a major issue. Comparison and contrast data clearly shows the differences among surveyed villages in developmental activities. The rural areas of Nagaland have been confronted with economic problems for a very long time especially due to the hilly terrain, conditioning them to primitive mode of production. This restricts the rural population from producing surplus products for exporting or for commercial purposes. As a result, the inhabitants began to exploit the natural resources only for self sustenance and survival. The ability of the village communities and local authorities to access various business avenues is facing depletion due to illiteracy among the aging villagers. Moreover, there is increase in village youth migration to urban areas due to inadequate infrastructural facilities in rural areas. With the dawn of the 21st century, the rural developmental agencies through Village Development Boards have all been bringing out ideas to promote village economy, some of which are - construction of approach roads (MGNREGS), agri link roads, etc. (Plate 31, 32, 33, 34, 35) in order to usher in new types of economic activities and to improve the local entrepreneurship.

4.11 Implementation of Programmes accompanied with Awareness on Management and Conservation of Natural Resources

Nature has been the sole source of sustenance for human kind. Hence, the promotion of village economy through different programmes, policies and new innovations should incorporate various land management and conservation systems of natural resources for improving the quality of life in rural areas and encouraging the diversification of economic activities without hampering the environment. Unfortunately, however, findings from this study have shown that the majority of villagers are yet to comprehend the developmental implications on natural resources.

This is an issue that needs to be addressed urgently in order to maintain the ecological balance as resources can be drained out, and it would cost them dearly. Village developmental activities should therefore, accompany ways for renewing the natural resources especially in the field of forestry, which continues to be an important source of village sustenance. Hence, application of modern technology on agriculture, farming and infrastructural activities should be closely monitored as it can have enormous impact in the long run. Implementation of Government policies and programmes and developmental activities should always be accompanied with awareness on sustainability, conservation and maintaining the balance.

It may be said that the studied villages still have a wide scope for development, be it infrastructural, agricultural, or transport and communication, etc. with enormous unexplored avenues for generating self sufficient villages, and in the employment sector with due consideration given to suitable approaches receptive to the village socio-economic structure.

4.12 Rural Migration and Village Development Boards (VDBs)

Migrational trend affects the socio-economic aspects of a village directly or indirectly. The State of Nagaland recorded the highest rate of migration in the country with 6.4 percent per annum from 1991 to 2001. The growth of urban population is largely attributed to migrant population who return to village occasionally or once a year during festivals, agricultural seasons, etc. (Aier & Kithan, 2011, p.13).

India has seen migration at an unprecedented level from rural to urban areas where about 90 percent migrated from the rural areas while only about 9 percent were from the urban areas. Out of the four types of migration streams according to Aier & Kithan, namely rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to rural and urban to urban for the different periods of migration, it has been found that in the recent years, percentage share of internal migrants decreased for the rural to rural movement, while for each of rural to urban, and urban to urban movements increased. (Aier & Kithan, 2011, p.15)

In Nagaland, migration of rural population especially rural youths to urban areas has immensely affected the rural economy. The outcome involves low agricultural production, increasing illiteracy rate, unemployment and decline in village economic initiatives. The most common reasons for migration in Nagaland are, search for better avenues of employment, entrepreneurial activities, healthcare, education and some who are employed as Government servants, which provides better standards of livelihood.

In the past several decades since the attainment of statehood in 1963, Nagaland has been witnessing migration of village population to administrative blocks, headquarters and many youths to other parts of the country. Findings from this study show that unemployment and lack

of proper educational facilities seems to constitute two of the major cause for rural to urban migration.

Numerically, people living in rural areas constitute 82.3 percent of Nagaland's population in 2001, as against 90 percent in 1971, which is from rural to urban areas which also increased remarkably with the spread of literacy and proliferation of new occupations in urban areas (Aier & Kithan, 2011, p. 4).

Nagaland has been struggling with providing employment avenues which is one of the major outcomes of rural migration, where 81% of the studied populace agreed that Village Development Boards have failed on this aspect. Initially, one of its main objectives was to generate employment opportunities for villagers in order to make them self reliant and self sufficient units. This in turn would have checked migration of the rural populace.

However, general findings from this study suggest that the above problem can be attributed to corruption, negligence and also ignorance of the villagers. Among the 34 villages in 16 districts where findings were drawn, 69.28% of the villagers were not aware of the purpose of the existence of Village Development Boards.

Mention may be made at this point, that after the passing of Shri Vamuzo in the year 2000, it was found recorded in his diary that his next plan after the success of the Village Development Boards, was to set up Youth Development Boards. He foresaw the need for a platform to cater to the needs of young people in rural areas, which unfortunately could not be materialized as he died before this plan could be implemented¹⁰. Incidentally, the findings of the present study have shown that, despite the community benefits availed through the VDB, the employment opportunities for youth, or avenues to engage them have been found lacking. This

¹⁰ Interview with Sano Vamuzo

could perhaps be addressed in the future as it is a genuine need of rural communities, which could contribute towards containing rural populations and controlling the migration issue.

4.13 Agricultural Development through Village Development Boards (VDBs)

Every rural developmental policy in one way or the other is based on agriculture as most of the rural population depends on it for livelihood or for survival though it differs from region to region. Agriculture being the most important component of the rural way of life, received a significant external finance during the Planning era in India in order to keep balanced growth between food production and population growth.

Nagaland remains an agricultural community with majority of the population living in rural areas and heavily dependent on agriculture for its livelihood. This is also evident with most of its culture and traditions having boundless association with agricultural practices. Seventy-three percent of the people in Nagaland are engaged in agriculture with 3,89,120 hectare areas under agriculture (Nagaland State Portal, 2017). Rice remains the staple food, occupying about 70 percent of the total cultivated area and constitutes about 75 percent of the total food grain production in the State¹¹. Thus, besides wood exploitation and mining, agriculture represents the major source of livelihood in rural areas.

The Department of Rural Development is involved in the development of rural agricultural community through the VDB. All recognized villages, therefore, through Village Development Boards mobilize resources and implement the agricultural schemes and programmes along with a strong village community support. Apart from supplying of agricultural tools and implements, one such scheme which has visible impact on the rural agricultural community would be Agri-link road constructed under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Agency (MGNREGA) throughout 1238 recognized villages in

¹¹ Source: <https://nagalandjournal.wordpress.com>.

Nagaland (Directorate of Rural Development, 2017). Approach roads were constructed and linked to every khel or colony in the village, and roads leading to paddy fields were also constructed (Plate 31, 32, 33, 34). This greatly boosted the agri and allied activities, and minimized the time and energy to a great extent. It also meant that modern technology and transportation could be used conveniently.

Significant contributions can also be seen among the illiterate rural poor cultivators where trainings imparted helped them improvise the method of cultivation by incorporating new technologies in various ways, such as - rearing fish in the cultivated field or other agro-allied activities, adopting new tools and implements, and learning to use machines supplied by the Department which in turn has resulted in more efficient cultivation and more production (Phesao, 2022, p.75).



Plate 31: Agri Link Road constructed at Alayong Village (Longleng district)



Plate 32: Agri Link Road at Seleku village (Wokha district)



Plate 33: Agri link and approach road at Ziphenyu village (Tseminyu district)



Plate 34: Approach road at Poilwa village (Peren district)

4.14 Infrastructural Development

Infrastructural development has been one of the major impacts of Village Development Boards under Rural development in Nagaland where various developmental projects and schemes are carried out through respective Village Development Boards, some of which are mentioned below:

4.14.1 Road and Transport in Rural Areas

In Nagaland, the means of communication and transportation network is solely terrestrial roads. This is the main significant restriction on its developmental activities especially due to its hilly terrain and steep slopes throughout the territory with slight exemption in rural areas under Dimapur districts where it is mostly plain. The hard road routes follow the rest of the districts connecting even to the remotest regions of the state. The length of state highways in Nagaland in 2003 was 398 kilometres; its highest was in 2013 with 1204 kilometres, which decreased to 722 kilometres in 2016. The length of national highways across Nagaland in India from FY 2003 was

369 kilometres which increased to 1547 kilometres in 2017¹². VDBs in every district have been taking immense initiative in the context of roads and even in possession of transportation assets (Plate 35) for achieving the desired development which can be seen with the increasing approach roads and transportation services all throughout the villages in the districts across Nagaland (Phesao, 2022, p.75).



Plate 35: Approach road and VDB Village bus at Phek village (Phek district)

4.14.2 Footpaths, Water Tanks and Drainage

At the village level, though there is clear difference with village areas nearer to district headquarters, the idea of hygiene, health and sanitation (Plate 36, 37) have been well maintained with Village Development Board in most villages taking the initiative along with NGO bodies like village youths and students' unions. Basic necessities like water supply and water tanks in most villages are well taken care of in surveyed villages – having two common water tanks on an average (Plate 38). Footpaths and drainages were constructed in almost all the Khels in the villages (Plate 39, 40, 41, 42). Even if we have to draw a line between east and west, western

¹² Source: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1078391/india-length-of-highways-nagaland/>

areas are characterized by a more advanced economic complexity than that of the eastern areas, with most of the population working in the secondary and tertiary sector of economy; while in the east, the population predominantly engages in primary sector of economy. However, there are not many differences in infrastructural development under village administrations (Phesao, 2022, p.76).

One major positive impact of these developments on the villagers is easy accessibility to water. Earlier, villagers had to walk 20 to 40 minutes to fetch 10 to 25 litres of water. However, with proper footpaths and construction of water tanks across the khels or colony in the village, such basic necessities became easily accessible and are carried out efficiently.



Plate 36: Toilet constructed at Diezephe (Dimapur district)



Plate 37: Waste bin constructed at Ziphenyu village (Tseminyu district) and Yongam village (Longleng district) respectively



Plate 38: Water tank constructed by VDB Mitelephe under MGNREGA scheme (Kohima district)



Plate 39: Drainage constructed under MGNREGA scheme at Kiphire village (Kiphire district)



Plate 40: Footpath at Azetso village (Kiphire district)



Plate 41: Footpath constructed under MGNREGA scheme at Jotsoma village (Kohima district)



Plate 42: Water tank and footpath at Poilwa village (Peren district)

4.14.3 Vegetable and Animal Production

Nagas have remained dependent on nature for its subsistence. Domestication of animals and growing of vegetables has been a regular art practiced for generations. Still, vegetation and animal husbandry have been very much in practice in Nagaland especially in villages. Every household in the village practices either domestication of animals, or keeping a gardening area for vegetation. With the inception of Village Development Boards in Nagaland, we can witness these practices transitioning to a commercial exercise.

VDBs, through various governmental funds and schemes have been able to build marketing sheds located mostly on the highways in their own village jurisdictions, and also provided loan for villagers who wish to take up animal husbandry. This in turn has made income generation possible for many villagers. Under animal husbandry, pigs, cows, and chickens are the most commonly reared animals in Nagaland.

4.14.4 New Avenues of Development: Tourism

Tourism, which has been a source of economic boost in many countries, has also found its place in Nagaland where Department of Tourism came into being as a fully fledged Directorate of Tourism about four decades ago in 1981. This new avenue has faced many hurdles in the past due to the political instability in the region, lack of proper infrastructural facilities and travel restrictions to the state. However, with the sheer effort of the State Government, Tourism Department has recently started growing remarkably with much concession on the above hurdles, and is becoming a promising sector in boosting the State's economy.

Touristic potential has been gaining significance in Nagaland due to its rich and diverse cultural heritage as well as its geographical location. Communitization of rural tourism assets to the village community through Village Development Boards has also proven an efficient way of

generating employment opportunities for rural youths, with the establishment of tourist lodge, home stays, guest houses and village scenery beautification (Plate 43, 44). This in turn has improved village economy in general by creating tourism avenues (Phesao, 2022, p.76).



Plate 43: VDB office cum tourist lodge at Sohomi village (Phek district)



Plate 44: Village fishery pond and beautification project at Kutsapo village (Phek district)

4.15 Natural Resources and Rural Development

Nagaland is a small state but natural resources are bountiful, and most of it is untapped with forests covering 13,345 (80.49 percent) of Nagaland's total area of 16,579 sq. km as of 2014¹³. According to a survey conducted in Nagaland¹⁴, coal occurs in Nazira coalfields (North of Dikhu River) in Borjan and Tiru Valley, Mon district; limestone occurs in Phek district; nickel

¹³ Source: Government of Nagaland portal

¹⁴ Survey conducted by ENVIS CENTRE ON ECO – TOURISM, hosted by Department of Science & Technology, Sikkim, and sponsored by the Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Government of India.

ferous chromite ore occurs in ultra basic belt at Pokhpur, Tuensang district. Occurrences of thin lenses of chrysotile asbestos near Panchimi and Kurani in the Tugu valley and Pyrites in Mokokchung and Tuensang districts were also reported. For petroleum and natural gas, the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has delineated a number of prospective oil structures in the foothills where sufficient prognosticated resources (600 million tonnes) hydrocarbon have been forecasted. Out of these, a reserve of over 20 million tonnes with recoverable reserves of approximately 6 million tonnes has been established from Changpang oil fields. In Chumoukedima area, three oil exploratory wells have been completed with no commercial outflow.

Exploiting the forest resources has always been one of the major economic development coordinates and wood is the major income provider for the rural population. Thus, every village surveyed from all the 16 districts of Nagaland under this study has village community forest reserves, protected and managed by the Village Council Chairman (VCC) and Village Development Board (VDB) for the village welfare and developmental activities in the village (Phesao, 2022, p.77).

4.16 Well-Performing Village Development Boards in Nagaland

Village Development Board has been playing a major role in village development across the districts in Nagaland. However, there are also some outstanding Village Development Boards performing better than the others; the reason being mutual cooperation among the villagers, proper understanding and adherence to Government guidelines and rules, such as Village Development Board Model Rule (Appendix II), educated Village Development Board Secretary which is also a major factor, and nomination instead of election of village leaders and Village Development Board Secretary – these are some factors that have been found to result in more

knowledgeable and efficient leadership. The following are some of the well performing Village Development Boards under this study:

- (i) **Alayong Village:** This village is under the administration of Longleng district, recognized by the State Government in 2002. It has 126 households with 1032 total population and has received the best performing Village Development Board (VDB) in Longleng District during the year 2016-17 and also best performing Open Defecation Free (ODF) village on 2nd October 2018. The village obviously has a well functioning Village Development Board and its meetings were held consistently depending on the work. The village has 5 Self Help Groups (SHGs), 284 Job card holders, 1 Vehicle (Sumo), community hall, community forest, 3 common water tanks and approach roads and footpaths were constructed connecting all through the village.
- (ii) **Punglwa Village:** This village is under the administration of Peren District and is located 18 kms north from district headquarters. The Village has about 280 household with around 1300 population. The village had received an award for best performing Village Development Board at the Block Level. There are 13 Self Help Groups (SHGs), community land, community hall and developmental works like water tanks, public toilets, drainage and linked roads were well constructed and maintained through community effort under VDB initiatives where meetings were held 6 to 7 times in a year or sometimes depending on the amount and nature of work.
- (iii) **Longwa Village:** The village is under the administration of Mon District and is located 42 kms east from district headquarters. The Village was recognized by the State Government in 1981 and as of 2019, has 744 households with 5673 population. The village is located on the border with Myanmar and one interesting feature is that they have received benefits from

both the countries in the form of educational institutions, water tanks, etc. There are 45 Self Help Groups (SHGs), village forests where final decision for its usages rest with the Angh (Chief). The village is located on a beautiful hill top where tourism is booming through Village Development Board initiatives like construction of tourist lodge, village beautification projects, and so on.

- (iv) **Anatongre Village:** This village is under the administration of Kiphire District and is located 25 kms north from the district headquarters. It was recognized by the State Government in 1979. The village has 674 households and about 3600 population as of 2019. The villagers mostly practice *jhum* cultivation. Village Development Board meetings were held 4 to 5 times in a year or depending on the work. The village has 17 Self Help Groups (SHGs), community forests, two common water reservoirs, community hall and developmental works like water tanks, public toilets, drainage and linked roads were well constructed and maintained under VDB initiatives.
- (v) **Phek Village:** The village is under the administration of Phek district. The village has 694 households and about 2744 population as of 2011 census. *Terrace* cultivation is one of their major occupations besides horticulture and animal husbandry. The Village Development Board apart from construction of VDB commercial building for village fund generation (Plate 45), it has been actively working with the villagers in bringing income generation avenues like ginger cultivation, piggery and weaving (Plate 46), besides building various approach roads, footpaths, water tanks, protection walls, etc. The VDB is also working to commercialize the local products like fruits, vegetables and locally made arts and handicrafts. In the words of Chivozo Soho, a citizen of Phek Village, he was able to get a profit of Rs 2

lakh from his piggery farm in 2018, which he started with Village Development Board fund¹⁵. This is one among many success stories of VDB.

- (vi) **Wapher Village:** This village is under the administration of Tuensang District and is located 20 kms south from the district headquarters, and was recognized by the State Government in 1982. The village has 287 households and about 1986 population as of 2019. The villagers practice *jhum* cultivation. Village Development Board meetings were held monthly, and the village has 9 Self Help Groups (SHGs), 2 community forests, two common water reservoirs, community hall and developmental works like water tanks, public toilets, drainage and linked roads were well constructed and maintained under VDB initiatives.
- (vii) **Jotsoma Village:** The village is under the administration of Kohima District and is located about 8 kms west from the district headquarters. The village has a population of 2458 as of census 2011. Village Development Board has been actively involved in building village roads, village beautification projects, protection walls, water tanks, public toilets besides working to provide avenues for local commercial goods. The village is also performing well in the tourism sector. The Village also received award 3 times for being the best performing Village Development Board in Nagaland (Phesao, 2022, p.78).

¹⁵ Source: Personal communication with Chivozo Soho



Plate 45: Phek village, Village Development Board (VDB) commercial building at Phek town



Plate 46: Village Development Board (Women wing) weaving assets at Phek village (Phek district)

4.17 Communitization and its Implications

Communitization in the context of rural development can be termed as an active process where the rural population participates and influences the policy makers in managing and executing various developmental projects and public institutions rather than merely benefitting from the projects. Communitization is mutually conditioned by people's participation – the involvement of the public at all levels from planning to managing the State owned institution.

If there is consistent people's participation, it can bring about a sea change in the approach towards rural development. Chakraborty (2004) is of the view that such is particularly

true in the case of India's northeast where traditional values and community principles are often mistakenly equated with factors inhibiting change and development. He further wrote, "After all, all human behaviour aims at satisfying a need or an aspiration, and people will only agree to change their habits when they are convinced that it will be to their advantage. So it is through informing, motivating and encouraging the people that we can best hope to improve their living condition. There lies the importance of people's participation." (Chakraborty, 2004, pp. 75-76).

Nagas have been living in communities as far as the oral tradition goes, and village ownership or community ownership of land still exists. Collective actions through community initiative are always common among the Nagas. In order to gain a meaningful and sustainable development in Nagaland, certain existing realities need to be considered, like the ethos of social structure, community practices, traditional skills and modes of livelihood and occupation in order to yield a better result in executing the different programmes and policies.

In Nagaland, Communitization of Public Institutions and Services Act, 2002, introduced by the State Government though not a strange system for the Nagas, supplemented and strengthened the indigenous system. It also gave impetus to the scientific community and policy makers, individuals, and motivated policy beneficiaries for the success of various Government policies on rural development. Nagaland also bagged a United Nations Public Service Award on 23rd June 2008 for this unique programme of communitization.

The existence of a functioning Village Development Board in each recognized village in Nagaland looking over all the developmental activities has strengthened the bond of community, which is valued greatly amongst Nagas; this has also been playing the role of planning and initiation, working out the various developmental activities that suit the village, be it in construction of roads, footpaths, drainage, water tanks or other income-generating activities for

the community through Self Help Groups (SHGs) and individuals, such as - farming, piggery, horticulture, etc. From this study, one can also suggest that if the institution is given more importance where Village Development Model Rules are adhered to effectively, one can expect more changes in the rural economic scenario in Nagaland.

The late Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, former President of India, visited Khuzama (Kohima district) in October 2003, and expressed happiness over the successful implementation of the communitization programme. He said that the initiative would bring greater accountability, sense of responsibility and belongingness among the people. He went on to say, “Once the whole state is brought under the communitization programme, it would be a model for the country to follow.”¹⁶

One important result of this Act can be seen in the field of education where certain responsibilities like management of academic, administrative and financial resources of the communitized schools have been transferred to the village communities through the Village Education Committee (VEC). The objective is to “develop institutions of excellence with the active participation of the community, the teachers and the support of the Government.”¹⁷

This initiative has yielded better results both in teachers’ and students’ attendance. Students’ enrolment and community participation has also shown remarkable improvement. Other achievements include availability of textbooks, community contributions through cash and kind, evening tuition to students free of cost, regular tests, renovation of buildings, furniture, footsteps, school grounds and compounds, construction of teachers’ common room and initiatives for school dropouts to rejoin school.

¹⁶ Source: Nagaland: State Human Development Report, 2004: 140-41

¹⁷ Source: Nagaland State Human Development Report, 2004: 139

In view of the overwhelming support and response from the communities and the record of success in its first year, the State Government has decided to communitize all elementary schools in the State. As a result, literacy rate from 1961 at 17.91%, increased to 66.59% in 2001, and in 2011 to 80.11% as per Provisional Population Totals of Census 2011¹⁸.

The programme was conceptualized and implemented when Shri. R. S. Pandey was the Chief Secretary to the Government of Nagaland, during 2002-2004. The programme still continues, and it has resulted in significant improvement in rural socio-economic condition where the State Government, in phase wise, handed over ownership and management of education, health care, water supply, electricity, tourism, and bio-diversity conservation to the local communities. This in turn achieved synergistic relationship between the Government and the communities to spur growth and development of institutions which is one of its main anticipated objectives.

4.18 Self Help Groups (SHGs)

Self Help Groups come under the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM). SHGs were launched by the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India in June 2011, and have left a mark in uplifting the rural socio-economic condition in Nagaland. The Mission has benefitted mostly the womenfolk in the villages. On an average, there are 8 to 15 Self Help Groups (SHGs) in each village, comprising mainly women. In Nagaland, the total number of SHGs has increased to 9175 Self Help Groups (SHGs) as of 2020. It has significantly helped in the empowerment of rural women. Seminars and trainings were imparted to these groups to build their leadership qualities and also help them generate their income and become financially more independent.

¹⁸ Source: Nagaland: State Human Development Report 2004: 123

Various trainings including food processing, crafting decorative items, packaging and preservation with the locally available/grown food products were also carried out. They also take group initiatives in weaving and handicrafts which were also sold in national and international markets. Plantation projects like Coffee, Tea, Ginger, etc. and farming projects like piggery and fishery were also taken up through mutual cooperation. Hence, the transition from traditional social constraint put on Naga women on social, political and economic sphere has lessened, and Self Help Groups (SHGs) have been one of the factors contributing in empowering the women to embark on this new journey of self-dependency. Through SHGs, the women in the villages are provided help for self sustenance, collective efforts and cooperation in their social and economic endeavor.

According to the activities and progress of the financial year 2021-2022 the Self Help Groups (SHGs) under Village Development Board institutions has provided those who are in Self Help groups with voice. Space and resources, through partnering with local self government, i.e., Village Councils (VCs), public service providers, banks, private sector and other mainstream institutions to facilitate delivery of social and economic services to the poor. As of 2021 and 2022 reports, the number of Self Help Group (SHGs) had risen to 12621 in Nagaland (Table: 4.5)

SI. No	District name	No. of SHGs
1	Dimapur	1367
2	Kiphire	700
3	Kohima	1091
4	Longleng	359
5	Mokokchung	1164
6	Mon	2014
7	Peren	766
8	Phek	1648
9	Tuensang	1559
10	Wokha	830
11	Zunheboto	1123
	Total	12621

Table 4.5: Number of SHGs in Nagaland FY 2021-2022 (Source: Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission (NSRLM) Annual Report 2021-2022)

SHGs have impacted the villages' socioeconomic conditions with their exposition to better ideas on cultivation, breeding of livestock, operation of modern equipments, markets and services, manufacturing of products with fruits, vegetables and other locally available items which are then shared with the common villagers. They are also playing an instrumental role in decision making within the village apart from taking part in village activities. Through the SHG, women are also able to develop their leadership skills, and become better at expressing themselves; through this platform, women also gain the courage to stand for themselves.

Through collective efforts they are able to carry out work effectively in village initiated programmes besides getting opportunities for better self sustenance. SHGs impact on the society was immensely felt during the COVID-19 pandemic where SHGs manufactured protective equipments like masks, gloves and sanitizers which have lessened the shortage of supply during those trying periods.

The State has 1285 recognized villages and the work of Nagaland State Rural Livelihood Mission (NSRLM) has covered 1241 villages and it is increasing across the 74 blocks in Nagaland with the objective of creating platforms to facilitate the rural population to increase their income by means of enhancing sustainable livelihood and better access to financial services. The State SHGs are also working with the aim of growing local products that suits the State markets and beyond.

An SHG member in a village shared, “Through SHGs we are able to carry out work which are beyond an individual capacity, be it in getting loan (in group they are able to get more amount from bank at low interest rate), in maintaining hygiene and cleanliness around the village. Through SHGs’ trainings we become more aware of operating technologies like smart phones besides equipping ourselves with ideas on improving the agricultural products, gardening, and livestock ”(Nüvosalu, 39 years, SHG member, 2023).

Referring to the impact of SHGs on women, Jamir and Longkumer (2005) stated that women Self Help Groups (SHGs) were found to be very effective in bringing about change through their collective efforts not only in their individual lives but in society as well. They further commented, “While in many cases VDBs were found to be focused on improving infrastructural development and rightly so, the SHGs were found to be more innovative and diligent in financial growth.” (2005, pp.77-78)

Self Help Groups offer not only financial but social support, and empower women with a strong network of supportive allies, and encourages female resilience and entrepreneurship. SHGs are also a potent conduit for altering the mindset of society on gender in the villages.

Chapter 5

CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Discussion

This final chapter brings a few points for discussion, drawing conclusions based on the findings of this study. Nagaland being a state of villages, where majority of the population reside in rural areas, this study mainly focused on the significance of the existence of the Village Development Board and its impact on the recognized villages in Nagaland.

On this note, it is pertinent to take a quick look at some of the reasons why the VDB has had a positive impact on villages in Nagaland, as highlighted below:

In the context of Nagaland, the Village is the nucleus where every socio-economic change, political decisions and implementation of new systems can only be successfully carried out with the consent of the villagers. Hence, the bottom up approach of the Village Development Board, where involvement of the villagers at grassroots level is sought in the planning and decision making process has been a contributing factor to its success. Another factor is the strong community participation, which enables the involvement of every citizen of the village.

Assistance in the form of funds, schemes and programmes from the Central and State governments have helped VDB function effectively, be it in infrastructural development, such as - roads, footpaths, water tanks, etc., or in empowering and encouraging the villagers through organizing trainings and programmes thereby equipping them for more effective implementation of the VDB. Through such initiatives, the VDB institution also gains the trust of the villagers.

Some VDBs have been found to be performing better than others due to various reasons, such as –

Those villages which are in close proximity with the district headquarters or urban areas, have the advantage of accessibility to better transportation and communication facilities, which is a huge contributing factor. They have easy access to government/district offices and other facilities that others in far flung villages have to struggle with. It also saves time as their official works can be done more quickly.

Data from this study shows that another major reason for VDBs performing better is, having educated VDB secretaries, who have a better knowledge of the system, the mechanisms, and procedures involved. They are able to carry out their duties and responsibilities more efficiently and are more aware and have a clearer understanding of the purpose of the VDB, and how it is meant to benefit the rural people.

Another contributing factor is the strong involvement of general body members i.e., involvement of the community, which has a positive impact on the performance of the VDB. The participation of the community means the voice of the people is heard, and they know what the genuine needs of the community are, and there is nothing like being able to speak for themselves and availing the benefits. There is more accountability from both the VDB members and the citizens as well.

Findings from this study have also shown that nominated instead of elected Village Council Chairmen or VDB secretaries in a village performs better because the latter tend to be more politically driven, and in some cases result in favoritism towards those who supported his election, while in the case of the former, the community through their observation nominates one who is capable and unbiased. Hence, when they are nominated, there is more cooperation with the community members as well.

Some of the key points on the significance of the existence of the Village Development Board in Nagaland, and its impact on the recognized villages are listed below:

- (i) Each village in Nagaland is allocated fund according to the number of taxpaying households. Hence, the record of taxpaying households remains an important factor for distribution of funds without discrepancy. However, findings from this study show inaccurate number of households and inconsistent figures even between the village and the administration; and there are no systems that exist to ascertain the actual taxpaying households in the villages.

It was also found that most villages manipulate the number of households, and add to it in order to gain maximum funds from the Government. It can be suggested that the Government ensure that this is checked in each village, and ensure that the Village Council and Village Development Board provide the accurate number of taxpaying households and limit the intentional increase in the number of households.

- (ii) Occupation of most of the villagers from the sample villages is agriculture with most of the village lands fertile for horticulture, vegetation, farming and other practices. However, due to lack of export marketing avenues and commercializing the products, most of the villagers fail to take up the venture of growing cash crops, fruits and vegetables which has wide scope of commercialization. Hence, most of them are grown only for consumption, though the Government through Village Development Board has been constructing marketing sheds, agri link roads and providing training for maximizing the production and systematic cultivation. Recommendations can be made on emphasizing on the commercialization and export of locally grown products

for employment of villagers and the economic growth of the village, and the Government can also facilitate marketing linkages to market their products.

- (iii) One unique feature that sets the VDB apart from other rural development programmes is that, one-fourth of the VDB members are to be women. Given the patriarchal nature of Naga society, this was a major leap forward for Naga women to be a part of the decision making process and also contribute their inputs in the development of their own villages. Jamir and Longkumer (2005) stated, “Women were, for the first time, inducted into formal developmental machinery through this institution with the clause that one-fourth of the Management Committee should be women and a reservation of 25 per cent of the total fund allocation to be utilized for women-centric development projects and programs in all recognized villages of Nagaland.” However, despite this innovative feature, according to them, “...other than inducting the mandatory requisite number of women in the VDB, not much headway could be made in regard to the 25 per cent fund allocation for women, mostly due to ignorance on the part of the women themselves.” (2005, pp.72-73) Women are yet to leverage their full potentials and exercise their privileges under the Village Development Boards; however, as found in this study, with awareness and more intensive trainings, and proper guidance, this can be addressed and it can be a channel through which women can excel and genuinely contribute towards their village development.
- (iv) In all the surveyed villages, road has been the only means in connecting the village with respective district headquarters or with other urban areas of the state. Though the Village Development Board has been successful at their level in maintaining and managing the roads within their respective villages, most of the roads leading to their

villages are in deplorable conditions, and non-pliable, especially during monsoon season, resulting in price rise of commodities, transportation charges and also affecting the villagers in times of medical emergencies.

With more importance given to road and transport on the part of the Government, the rural economy of the state has the potential of achieving new heights and where the main objectives of Village Development Board, i.e., village self reliance and self sufficiency, can be achieved.

- (v) In most of the villages, the mentality of the villagers is such that infrastructural and physical development are considered the only way of development, and hence, income generation programmes and schemes are mismanaged in many aspects. Most of the Village Development Boards have failed to initiate innovative programmes through which the villagers can generate income as well as provide employment to the rural youths. In this regard, the Government can initiate awareness programmes, provide clear guidelines on the purpose of Village Development Boards and share innovative ideas to village functionaries and the common villagers who are ignorant about the system and its purpose, as found evident in the findings elaborated earlier. As well, exposure trips can be organized for members to visit model villages in other districts or outside the state to get motivated and gain inspiration and creative ideas to develop their own.
- (vi) Audit of accounts should be held once in a year, making it known to the villagers about the fund utilization and the interest accrued from their bank deposits. However, from this study, we find that most of the villages have not audited their accounts, some villages to the extent of not having done so for almost 10 years. This can also be

affirmed by the fact that 88% out of the total respondents from sample villages that are common villagers, lacked knowledge on such accounting. In this regard, it can be suggested that the Government enforce more rigid system and ensure the Village Development Boards carry out regular audit of accounts, which would result in a more transparent functioning of the system.

- (vii) Involvement of concerned Government officials at the grassroots level has been weak with the exception of some villages that are nearer to district headquarters. In some villages, it was found that not even a single visit was carried out from the concerned Government officials in a year. In this regard, it has been learned that the officials concerning such villages sometimes even issue completion certificate without proper on-sight verification. In order to maintain transparency, and help bring villagers to the path of economic growth, it is imperative that the concerned Department have knowledge on such villages and ensure that visitation and inspections by concerned officials are frequently carried out so that development is genuinely reaching the intended beneficiaries, and the people in villages are educated on their entitlements and the opportunities available for them to develop their own villages.
- (viii) In Nagaland, at the heart of rural development is the Village Development Board, and therefore, it is doubtful that rural developmental schemes and programmes can be executed effectively without them. Nagas with their strong traditional customs, taboos and cultural practices where most of its economic activities are centered on agricultural activities, economic programmes and policies of alien nature would be hard to sync in without giving due consideration of their socio-economic factors. Nagas have been living in close-knit communities for centuries, where the State

Government owns only 11.7% of the forest lands while individuals, clans and communities own 88.3% (Ao.L., 2014, p.92), and privatization of property was not so much encouraged. Every village even in the remotest corner of the State has a community land or forest under the control of the village, which has been handed down for generations; these lands are protected under the article 371(A) of the Indian Constitution¹⁹. Thus, development, usages and exploitation of Naga villages' assets and resources cannot be achieved without their consent.

5.2 Drawbacks in the Effective Implementation of the Village Development Boards:

Some of the reasons why Village Development Board has been unable to achieve its desired goal over the years can be attributed to corruption, lack of awareness, negligence, inefficiency in regulating Village Development Board Model Rules, discrepancies and manipulation of data.

In some cases, as mentioned earlier, the Village Development Board even manipulates the number of households for higher allotment of funds while some rural developmental agencies and bureaucrats even hold for their own benefits, the machinery, tools and implements, essential commodities, etc., which are meant for villagers, and sometimes disburse them at their own discretion without prioritization. These are virtually taking place and the State Government has to stringently address this issue in order to ensure transparency, so that the intended beneficiaries can truly avail what is meant for them. The only way for genuine development and advancement of the State is to foster rural economy where majority of land, resources and populations are located.

¹⁹It may be mentioned that Nagaland enjoys special privilege under Article 371(A) which was inserted into the Part XXI of the Indian Constitution in the year 1962 of the Indian Constitution where no act of the parliament of the Indian Constitution in matters of religion, social practices, Naga customary laws, ownership and transfer of land and its resources shall apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Nagaland Legislative Assembly so decides.

Rural migration, especially of youths from rural to urban areas has become a major concern with almost all households in the surveyed villages having at least one family member migrated from the village to urban areas in search of better livelihood, or higher education. Rural-urban migration has caused fluctuation in urban population growth, resulting in unemployment, environmental exploitation and causing strains on limited urban services and infrastructure. This problem can be curbed by providing employment and income generation avenues at the grassroots level where one of the main objectives of Village Development Board in making a village self sufficient can be achieved, and where most of the village youths who migrate hesitantly due to financial constraints, can be checked by helping them become self reliant in their own respective villages.

Besides, in rural development, economic development should also be wisely tackled, and the risk of environmental destruction and recuperation of natural resources strategically planned, as it still remains the main source of subsistence for the Nagas and it is the area where village self sufficiency can be achieved. Out of a total of 16,579 square kilometres, forest covers 14,291 sq.km. (1995), which has decreased to 13,119 (2005) within a span of 5 years to 12, 486.40 Sq. km in 2018²⁰.

Implementation of Village Development Board plans are also hindered due to poor participation of Village Development Board general members, and lack of cooperation even among the members, where community works and projects lack unified effort as corruption becomes rampant. And in some instances, even the Village Development Board secretaries lack the required educational qualification to become a secretary, while in some villages enmity also arises among the villagers in competition to hold the post.

²⁰ Source: India State of Forest Report 2019: 193

Although it is not feasible to gain people's participation and to stop corruption in a day, in an attempt to reduce corruption and to attain community participation, measures must be taken to enhance awareness on the objective and purpose of Village Development Board's existence, and more guidance and training on their role should be provided to both villagers (general members) and members of the Village Council (VC) and Village Development Board (VDB) secretaries alike. Scheduled tribes from other parts of the State can also benefit from this concept of community participation approach as Village Development Board is an exemplary platform of a successful local indigenous approach with modern scientific methods for socio-economic development of rural villages.

In Nagaland, the community plays an important role in almost all Naga villages. In Kütsapo, under Phek District, the first VDB village, the greater part of the land is under the control of the Village Council. And at the same time, village development for economic sustainability would be inadequate without acquiring community land. Therefore, adequate land for economic sustainable livelihood can be managed through Village Development Board apart from conservation which will enhance the economic condition in the villages. Through this plan in involving Village Development Board in managing community land and forest, the Village Council can ensure more effective forest conservation methods and adaptation of new practices in cultivation. Innovative means of reorganizing institutions such as Village Development Boards can clearly demonstrate how a strategic institutional approach can transform and revive community oriented activities to improve quality of life at the village level and at the same time provide new ideas that are sensitive to local needs, and above all, creation of economic security at the grassroots level.

Generating rural self employment is an important step to improve, check rural migration and uplift the economic condition of the rural populace as well as reduce people's dependence on Governmental funds. Village Development Board has made a huge impact on Naga villages in the 1980s and 1990s; however, it can be observed that at present, the institution has not been able to maintain its past glory²¹.

Innovative attempts made by various Government departments like Department of Agriculture, Department of Land Resources, Nagaland Bamboo Development Agency (NBDA), etc. through Village Development Board, has enhanced the economic livelihood of the rural populace in Nagaland as they have also encouraged the villagers to plant and grow products beneficial to villagers, and which also have commercial value, like that of Ginger and also King Chilli, popularly known as Raja Mircha, etc., which have now become items of export in recent years, although since they are at the initial stages, the quantity is not much.

Development which utilizes the natural resources should be taken up in relation with population growth, culture and socio-economic factors, and most importantly, the rich biodiversity and environmental factors which are often given less importance as people are yet to grasp the seriousness of the issue. Thus, systematic methods and studies where production and conservation of our rich biodiversity go hand in hand, should be employed where tribal societies like most of the rural Nagas have been depending on.

Understanding the need to conserve the forest resources and protect the rights and interests of the various tribes, the Nagaland Legislative Assembly has enacted a series of forest conservation Acts under Article 371A of the Indian Constitution, viz., The Nagaland Forest Act, 1968; the Nagaland Rule for Protection of the Establishment and Control of Forest Villages, 1969; the Nagaland Rules for Protection of Forest from Fire, 1969; the Nagaland Village and

²¹ Interview with Sovenyi Nyekha

Area Council Act, 1970; the Village Development Model Rules, 1980; the Nagaland *Jhum* land Act, 1970, The Nagaland Land (Requisition & Acquisition) Act, 1965 and the Nagaland Tree Felling Regulation, 2017. Therefore, it is pertinent that developmental planning and policy makers should adhere primarily to the precautionary measures in developing villages without hampering the village ecology, production and market.

The villagers no doubt are benefitting; however, in some instances, funds through schemes or for projects are usually diverted to other areas where manipulation of such money goes unchecked. Specifically, with regard to the problem of such diversion and misuse of funds, the Government has started a Geographical Information System where increased surveillance satellite imagery provides complementary information about the fund usages.

Study of the Village Development Board from its historical standpoint in the State of Nagaland is a classic case of how rural development and its problem, understanding of the socio-economic, cultural, and political factors that are interlocked with rural development can be better understood. The study also provides some insightful information for highlighting and addressing through relevant strategies the underlying rural developmental problem for policy makers, development planners, government officials, law makers and other stakeholders and interest groups at all levels in the State of Nagaland, and to some extent in the northeastern states of India, which is mostly tribal.

Rural areas play an important role historically, culturally, as well as in socio-economic factors as well, where villages constitute an important asset in a State such as Nagaland. Thus, the following suggestive measures can be considered to help address village developmental problems:

Stringent conditions should be made, where those involved in manipulation, diversion and mismanagement of village funds be it the Village Council, Village Development Board secretaries or the government officials, are penalized.

Steps should be taken, where active community participation at all levels of village development and their involvement in the management of village funds is encouraged in order to achieve the desired objective, i.e., village self sufficiency.

In terms of the $\frac{1}{4}$ reservation for women in the Village Development Board member body, one common trend has been that women members are often told to prepare tea for the others, instead of attending the VDB meetings. It would make a huge difference, if instead women members too are encouraged to attend the meetings and contribute their inputs, their perspectives during the VDB meetings in order to ensure holistic development of the villages in all aspects of developmental planning. As Jamir and Longkumer state, “Armed with the right opportunities, privileges, training and expertise there is no reason why women VDB in the state cannot excel.” (2015, p.83)

Rural development policy makers should consider agro forestry where development and conservation of natural forest go hand in hand. Indigenous/local communities must also be included in policy making so as to formulate the gap between law and practices.

To improve the State’s socio-economic condition, village development must be given more importance. Rural developmental programmes should not only create awareness but get everyone involved in its objective of attaining village self reliance and self sufficiency.

In-depth and further research can be made to explore the scope and issues of rural development in relation to attaining and sustaining village economy and improving the livelihood of village communities in the face of rapid socio-economic changes and expansion of

the market economy in Nagaland. This includes better understanding of the socio-economy and relevance of traditional village or community institutions in order to re-enforce the value of close knit socio-economic character of villages in the state with regard to rural development; the result and findings of present rural development approach, both traditional and modern methods, for the sustainable livelihood of the rural communities; and the sustainability of village socio-economic resources within a modern competitive economy.

5.3 Limitations and Recommendations for Further Analysis

There are few issues concerning data inconsistency and methods applied on the villages in this study that pose limitations and affect the analysis. The availability and comparability of secondary data concerning most aspects of villages in Nagaland is very limited where possibility of compiling a consistent and comparable statistical data on the socio-economic situation in the Naga villages was limited. Therefore, having such insights about the socio-economic context on Naga villages could have helped better explain some of the research findings.

Such inconsistent data were caused due to manipulation of data, and the apprehensive mentality of the villagers, with a general hesitance of providing information. The only tangible data collected were from Government departmental offices, through structured questionnaires and from personal interviews.

During the survey, both formal and informal interviews were conducted; village elders, persons having knowledge on the subject, VDB secretaries, Village Council Chairman (VCC), village youth leaders participated. In some cases, excuses/explanations from targeted interviewees were faced, for e.g., "I'm busy", "I don't have time", hesitance to share information, and other reasons best known to them.

Due to the drawbacks mentioned above, while collecting data within the institution itself, it is not possible to provide concrete generalized conclusions. However, findings from the sample villages and different methods and approaches adopted in this study across the districts in Nagaland allows drawing conclusions that are reliable enough to represent the situation and can be used as a foundation for further studies. Case study can also be carried out on the target villages which would result in a narrower and clearer understanding and definition of the Village Development Boards and would further strengthen the outcome of the analysis.

The Village Development Board has remained an instrumental institution for rural development for forty plus years now since its inception in the state. Hence, Rural Development programmes and policies cannot be implemented or executed effectively without the involvement of Village Development Boards and its functionaries at the grassroots level. Through the findings of this study, one can suggest that if the institution and its rules are given more importance where Village Development Model Rules are adhered to more diligently, one can expect more changes in the rural socio-economic scenario in Nagaland.

5.4 Conclusion:

It is said that Shri Vamuzo's vision was to develop Naga villages where every Naga's roots lie, in such a way that the rural populace would not think of moving out of their villages, and migrating to urban areas; instead, they would want to remain in their villages, this with the active participation of the communities, and at their initiative. In so doing, he felt that the very essence of Naga villages would be retained, and the traditional village setup and all that comes with it would be safeguarded, with the historical, social, and cultural quality of the Naga village preserved²².

²²Interview with Smt. Sano Vamuzo & Sovenyi Nyekha

The findings from this study have shown that the VDB has greatly impacted Nagaland and transformed the rural areas in numerous ways. However, as observed, it can go much further and the impact can be far more extensive if only the various loopholes mentioned earlier are addressed, and all those involved in implementing the VDB at all levels, wholeheartedly carry out their responsibilities and duties sincerely and efficiently.

Several scholars have carried out studies on the Village Development Board; however, more intensive studies can still be carried out in this field to explore and bring to light the various facets and uniqueness of the VDB, and comparative studies can also be carried out with other rural development programmes. Such further research can generate ways on how they can be improvised and made relevant to suit the needs of the modern day rural populace.

Bibliography

Agarwal, A. K. (2003). Agricultural growth, rural industrialization and rural development in India. In Sham Bhat, K. (Ed.), *Indian economy under globalization process*. (pp. 183-198). Serials Publications.

Aier, A. & Kithan, T. (2011). *Rural-urban migration, a thematic report 2009*. Nagaland: Department of Planning and Coordination, Government of Nagaland.

Angami, Z. (2008). *Nagaland village empowering laws: A compilation*. Kohima: M/S Novelty Printing Press.

Ao, A. L. & Sinha, A.C. (1993). *Rural development in Nagaland*. New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications.

Ao, L. (2014). *Deforestation in Nagaland: A historical perspective*. Thesis submitted to Nagaland University in partial fulfillment for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in History. Kohima Campus, Meriema: Department of History & Archaeology Nagaland University.

Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development. (1978) *Rural development plan of selected blocks in Nagaland: Volume 4 of Micro-level planning studies*. Association of Voluntary Agencies for Rural Development

Atkinson, C.L. (2017). Rural Development. In Farazmand, A. (Ed.), *Global encyclopedia of public administration, public policy, and governance*. Springer. Retrieve: 8th August 2023 from https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007/978-3-319-20928-9_1014

Bag, G. N. (2001). *Rural transformation in tribal areas*. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House.

Banerjee, G. D. & Karmakar, K.G. (2008). *Village Development Boards (VDBs) in Nagaland*. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

Becker, B. K. & Mabogunie A. I. (1885). *Rural development capitalists and socialist paths*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd.

Biju, M. R. (2012), *Rural development under decentralised governance (1st edition)*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.

Burma, R. B. K. (1984). *Towards poverty alleviation programmes in Nagaland and Manipur*. Delhi: Mittal Publications.

Calatrava, Javier. (2016). *Origin and evolution of rural development concept and policies: From rural communities to territories*. Old and New Worlds: the Global Challenges of

Rural History. International Conference, Lisbon, 27-30 January 2016. Retrieved: 4th April, 2022 from <https://lisbon2016rh.files.wordpress.com/2015/12/onw-02461.pdf>

Castle, Emery N. (1998). A conceptual framework for the study of rural places. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, Agricultural and Applied Economics Association, 80(3), Pg. 621-631. Retrieved: 14th April 2021 from <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1244569>

Census info of India 2011: *Nagaland Profile*. Retrieved: 7th June 2019 from <https://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/>

Census of India 2011-Provisional population totals. Retrieved: February 24, 2021 from: <https://censusindia.gov.in/nada/index.php/catalog/42611/download/46274/Census%20of%20India%202011-Provisional%20Population%20Totals.pdf>

Census Operation. (1971-2011), Department of Economics and Statistics, Government of Nagaland, Kohima.

Chakraborty, G 2004. *Peoples' participation in rural development in North East India*. In *Dimensions of Rural Development in North-East India*(Ray, B.D & Das, G. Eds) pp 67-81. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House.

Channa, S. M. (1992). *Nagaland a contemporary ethnography*. New Delhi: Cosmo Publication.

Chauhan, M. S., Dangi, K. L., Maheshwari, A. & Mundra, S. N. (2010). *Handbook of rural sociology*. Udaipur: Agrotech Publishing Academy.

Chukwuma, N. M. & Olorunfemi, G. C. (2021). *Theories, Approaches and Models Of Rural Development In Nigeria - A Thematic Review*. Nsukka: Seahi publications

Department of Agriculture, Government of Nagaland, *Introduction of the State Department of Agriculture*. Retrieved: July 12, 2022 from
<https://agriculture.nagaland.gov.in/introduction/>,

Department of Land Resources, Government of Nagaland: *State Perspective and Strategic Plan (SPSP) of Nagaland*. Government of Nagaland. Retrieved: 7th April, 2022 from
https://dolr.gov.in/sites/default/files/Nagaland_SPSP.pdf, Pg. 21

Department of Planning & Coordination, Government of Nagaland. (2004): *Nagaland state human development report 2004*. Pg. 23 & 140-141.

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland (1991). *Compact Area Development Scheme*.

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland, *Annual Administrative Report*, 2007-2008

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Annual Administrative Report*
2018-2019. Pp.7 &13.

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Annual Administrative Report*,
2009-2010

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Annual Administrative Report*,
2010-2011

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Annual Administrative Report*,
2011-2012

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Annual Administrative Report*,
2012-2013

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Annual Administrative Report*,
2013-2014

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Annual Administrative Report*,
2014-2015

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Annual Administrative Report*,
2015-2016

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Annual Administrative Report*, 2016-2017

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Annual Administrative Report*, 2017-2018

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Department of Rural Development: Souvenir* (1980-2005)

Department of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Right to Information Act 2005*, Nagaland: Kohima

Directorate of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. (2017). *Detailed list of Village . Detail list of Village Development Boards (VDBs) Nagaland 1980- 1981 to 2016-2017.*

Devi, A. I. (2010). *Amazing North East Nagaland*. New Delhi: Vij Books India Pvt. Ltd.

Directorate of Economics & Statistics Nagaland: Kohima (2021). *Survey on the number of villages in Nagaland 2021*

Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Nagaland (2020) *Nagaland Statistical Handbook 2020.*

Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Government of Nagaland. (2020) *Nagaland Statistical Handbook 2020*.

Directorate of Information & Public Relations, Government of Nagaland, Kohima. (1991) *Speeches of Vamuzo, Chief Minister of Nagaland (December 1990- November 1991, Volume –II)*.

Directorate of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. (2016) *A manual of Rural Development Department Nagaland*.

Directorate of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. (2017). *Detailed Village Development Board (VDB) Fixed Deposit (FD) Nagaland 2016-2017*.

Directorate of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. *Rural Development Programme and Right to Information Act (RTI Act): Information to Village Level Functionaries on Suo Moto Disclosures*.

District Rural Development Agency (DRDA). (2005) *Celebrating 25 years of Village Development Board in Phek district: Souvenir*. Organising Committee of Phek District VDBs Silver Jubilee.

Edwards, C. 1981. *The basis for regional growth: a review*. In L. R. Martin (Ed.), *A survey of agricultural economics literature (Vol. 3)*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Pg. 223-224.

Envis Centre On Eco – Tourism, hosted by Department of Science & Technology, Sikkim, Sponsored by Ministry of Environment, Forests & Climate Change, Govt. of India. *Resource and biodiversity base-Nagaland*. Retrieved: 16th August, 2021 from <http://scstsenvis.nic.in/index4.aspx?ssslid=162&subsubsublinkid=495&langid=1&mid=1>

e-PG Pathshala. An MoE Project: National Mission on Education through ICT. *Module 25: Rural development policies and programmes in India*. Retrieved: 18th June 2020 from http://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp_content/S000032SW/P001729/M021647/ET/1501588996Module-25_e-Text.pdf

Forest Survey of India. *India state of forest report (ISFR 2019)*, Nagaland 11. 20. P. 193. Retrieved: 14th April 2021 from <https://fsi.nic.in/isfr19/vol2/isfr-2019-vol-ii-nagaland.pdf>

Government of Nagaland (2004): *Nagaland State Human Development Report 2004*. Department of Planning & Coordination. (pp.23 & 140-141).

Horam, M. (1975). *Naga polity*. Delhi: B. R. Publishing Corporation

Horam, R. (2018). *Chieftainship and the village council of the Nagas*. Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR).Pp 53-62.Retrieved:14th August 2022 from <https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR1812708.pdf>

Humtsoe, J. (2013). *Village Council and Village Development Board in Nagaland (overview)*.

Retrieved: 7th March 2020 from

<https://nagalandjournal.wordpress.com/2013/04/06/village-councils-and-village-development-board-in-nagalandoverview/>

Imnayongdang (1986). *Levels of rural development in Nagaland: A spatial analysis*. Doctoral

Thesis submitted in part fulfillment for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Gauhati University. Geography Department, Gauhati University 1986.

India state of forest report 2019. Nagaland 11. 20. P. 193. Retrieved: July 13, 2021 from

<https://fsi.nic.in/isfr19/vol2/isfr-2019-vol-ii-nagaland.pdf>

Irwin, E. G., Isserman, A. M., Kilkenny, M., & Partridge, M. D. (2010). A century of research on rural development and regional issues. *American Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 92(2), (Pp. 522–553). Retrieved: 8th August, 2022 from

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40648001>.

Jacobs, J.(ed) (2012). *The Nagas: hill peoples of Northeast India*. London: Snoeck publishers

Jamir, T. & Longkumer, I. (2005). *Women and rural development: A study of women VDB in Nagaland*. State Institute of Rural Development, Nagaland.

Jamir, Y. I. (2016). *A study on the changing population structure in Nagaland*. Lumami

Joshi, H. (2001). *Nagaland past and present*. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House.

Kapur, R. (2019). *Historical Background of Rural Development*. Acta Scientific Agriculture
(ISSN: 2581-365X) Volume 3 Issue 7 July 2019.

Kaurinta, R. 2010. VD Band rural development: A case study of Peren district in Nagaland. In
Singha, K. (Eds.), *Rural Development in India Retrospect and Prospects* (Pp.66-89.
Concept Publishing Company, Pvt. Ltd.

Kikhi, K. (2006). *Educated unemployed youths in Nagaland: A sociological study*. New Delhi:
Akansha Publishing House.

Kilkenny, M. & Thisse, J. F. (1998). *Economics of location: A selective survey*. In Computers &
operations research 26 (1999). Pg. 1369 – 1394. Pergamon: IA.

Kothari, C. R (1991). *Rural Development Vol. II (Rural Development administration and tribal
welfare*. New Delhi: Manak publications Pvt. Ltd.

Kumar, B. B. (2005). *Naga Identity*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company

- Lahiri, T. B. 2004. *Rural Development in North-east: An overview*. In Dimensions of Rural Development in North-East India(Ray, B.D & Das, G. Eds) pp 13-37. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House.
- Longkumer, J. (2009). *Change and continuity in tribal villages A sociological study*. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House.
- Luithui, S. (2001). *Naga: A people struggling for self determination*. International Work Group for Indigenous affairs (IWGIA)
- Mabogunje, Akin L. *Systems approach to a theory of rural-urban migration*. Geographical Analysis. Retrieved: 2nd July, 2021 from <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/j.1538-4632.1970.tb00140.x>
- Maheswari, S. R. (1995). *Rural development in India : A public policy approach*. Asia-Pacific Journal of Rural Development, 5(2), Pg.121–126. Retrieved: 19th November, 2021 from <https://doi.org/10.1177/1018529119950208>
- Maithani, B.P. & Rizwana, A. (1991). *Decentralised development*. Hyderabad: National Institute of Rural Development.

Matari, S. (2017). *Rural – urban transformation and economic development in India*. International Journal of Research in Social Sciences (Vol.7, Issue 3), March 2017. Pg.1-14.

Mero, C. (2015). *A sociological study of the Village Development Board in Nagaland* [Doctoral thesis, North Eastern Hill University]. Retrieved: 13th September, 2020 from Shodhganga. <http://hd.handle.net/10603/245736>

Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India. (2014) *Manual for intensive participatory planning exercise for MGNREGA 2014-2015*. Retrieved: 2nd July, 2021 from <https://studylib.net/doc/7039612/manual-for-ippe-2014---mahatma-gandhi-national-rural>

Ministry of Rural Development: National Rurban Mission (NRuM). *Common review mission orientation*, Retrieved: 4th April, 2022 from https://rural.nic.in/sites/default/files/NRuM_PPT_CRM_Orientation.pdf.

Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation, Government of India. (2001) *Migration in India: 1999-2000*, NSS 55th Round, (July 1999 – June 2000), National Sample Survey Report No. 470 (55/10/8). Retrieved: July 14th, 2021 from https://mospi.gov.in/sites/default/files/publication_reports/470_final.pdf, Pg.27

Mohan Jha, U. (1995). *Rural development in India problems and prospects*. New Delhi: Anmol publications Pvt. Ltd.

Moseley, Malcolm J. (2003). *Rural development: principles and practices*. London: SAGE publication.

Nagaland Journal: *All about the people of the hills. Village Councils and Village Development Board in Nagaland (Overview)*. Retrieved: 15th June, 2021 from <https://nagalandjournal.wordpress.com/2013/04/06/village-councils-and-village-development-board-in-nagalandoverview/>.

Nagaland Post, Vol. xxv No. 317, *Central Government to replicate Nagaland's VDB model*, Dated: 22nd Oct. 2015.

Nagaland State Rural Livelihoods Mission (NSRLM), *Annual report 2021-2022*

Nayar, Balev Raj. (1960). *Community development programme: Its political impact*. The Economic Weekly. September 17, 1960. Pg. 1401-1410. Retrieved: 8th July, 2022 from [https://www.epw.in/system/files/ndf/1960 12/38/community development programmeits_political impact.pdf](https://www.epw.in/system/files/ndf/1960%2012/38/community%20development%20programmeits_political%20impact.pdf)

Nshoga, A. (2009). *Traditional Naga village system and its transformation*. Delhi: Anshah Publishing House.

Nuh, V. K. (2002). *The Naga Chronicle*. New Delhi: Regency publication.

Nyekha, C. (2014). *Evaluation of rural leaders and leadership development in Nagaland*. State Institute of Rural Development.

Palanithurai, G. & Ramesh, R. (2011). *Globalization and rural development*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, Pvt. Ltd.

Patra, S.C & Vachhani, A. (2012), *Socio-economic profile of rural India (series II)*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd.

Phesao, G. 2022. *Economic Development in the rural areas of Nagaland under the initiative of Village Development Boards (VDBs)*. Journal of History, Archaeology and Architecture ISSN: 2583-5106, Vol. 1, No. 1, 2022, pp. 73-79

Prasadaraao, V (2019), *Rural Development through Panchayatiraj in India*. Journal of Critical Reviews ISSN- 2394-5125 VOL 06, ISSUE 06, 2019. Pp 2783-2800

Rajput, K. S 2004. *Development of North-Eastern region; some issues to ponder*. In Dimensions of Rural Development in North-East India(Ray, B.D & Das, G. Eds) pp 278-284. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House.

Ray, B. D. & Das, G. (2004). *Dimensions of rural development in North-East India*. New Delhi: Akansha Publishing House.

Reddy, A.V. & Charyulu, M. Y (2008), *Rural development in India: Policies and initiatives*, New Delhi: New Century Publications.

Rural Research and Development Nagaland (RRDN), Chumoukedima, Nagaland. Nagaland Village Development Board: A grassroots level institution in Nagaland. Retrieved: 4th August 2022 from <http://naga-landofvillages.blogspot.com/2014/07/village-development-board-grass-level.html>,

Sah, S. (2013). *Rural development theory and practice*. New Delhi: Centrum Press

Saleh, S. I. (1989). *Nagaland economy's in transition since 1964*. New Delhi: Omsons Publications.

Samanta, R. K. (1991). *Rural development in North East India*. New Delhi: Uppal Publishing House.

Sanyu, V. (1996). *A history of Nagas and Nagaland*. New Delhi: Commonwealth publishers.

Scott, J. & Johnson, T. (1998). *The Community policy analysis network: A national infrastructure for community policy decision support*. Journal of Regional Analysis and Policy 28 (2). Pp. 49-63

Sekhose, N. (2017). *Local governing institutions in Nagaland with special reference to Village Council and Village Development Board, (4 Case Study of Dimapur)* [Master's Thesis, Lovely Professional University]. Retrieved: 23rd September 2021 from http://dspace.lpu.in:8080/jspui/bitstream/123456789/2780/1/1S12016_4_27_2017%2055942%20PMONLINE%20SUBMISSION%20pdf.pdf

Shimray, R.A. (2014). *Decentralization from below: A case study of Nagaland, India*. International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications (Volume 4, Issue 3). Pp.1-6

Singh, M. (1988), *Rural development administration and anti poverty programmes*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company Pvt. Ltd.

Singh, P. (1972). *Nagaland*. New Delhi: National Book Trust.

Singh, R. (2004). *Rural development administration*. Delhi: Anmol Publications Pvt. Ltd.

Singha, K. (2009). *Village development in North-East India*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company.

Singha, K. (2010). *Rural development in India retrospect and prospects*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, Pvt. Ltd.

State Institute of Rural Development, Government of Nagaland. (2006) *A comparative study of Village Councils of Nagaland and Panchayats of West Bengal*.

State Level Nodal Agency for IWMP, Department of Land Resources, Government of Nagaland. *State Perspective and Strategic Plan (SPSP) of Nagaland: Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)*. Retrieved: 19th May, 2022 from https://dolr.gov.in/sites/default/files/Nagaland_SPSP.pdf,

Statista. *Length of National Highways Across Nagaland in India from Financial Year 2003 to 2021*. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1078391/india-length-of-highways-nagaland/>, Retrieved: August 8, 2022

Statista. *Length of national highways across Nagaland in India from financial year 2003 to 2022 (in kilometers)*, Retrieved: August 8, 2022 from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1078391/india-length-of-highways-nagaland/>

Stirn, A. & Ham, P.V. (2003). *The hidden world of the Naga living traditions in Northeast India and Burma*. Munich: Prestel.

Stojcheska, A. M & Kotevska, A. (2015). *The Impact of socio-economic structure of rural population on success of rural development policy, Macedonia, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Association of Agricultural Economists of Republic of Macedonia

The Coffee Table Book Publication Committee, on behalf of the Government of Nagaland
(2013) *Fifty years of statehood: Nagaland 1963-2013. Fifty years on rural research and development, Nagaland.*

The Nagaland Information Commission, Government of Nagaland. (1992) *Evaluation report on Village Development Board programme in Kohima District of Nagaland* (Publication no.21), <http://nagaeval.nic.in/download%20publication/Pub21.pdf>, Retrieved: 6th October, 2021

The Nagaland Village and Tribal Councils Act, 1978 (Nagaland Act No.1 of 1979) Nagaland State Legal Services Authority.

The World Bank Group. (2022) *Rural population (% of total population)*
<https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.RUR.TOTL.ZS>. Retrieved: November 17, 2022

Thomas, C. J & Das, G (2002). *Dimensions of development in Nagaland*. Regency Publications.

Tiba, Th. R. (2010). *Schedule Tribes of North-East India and Development*. Delhi: B. R Publishing Corporations.

United Nation (*World Urbanization Prospects 2018*) Retrieved: November 17th , 2022 from
<https://www.un.org/uk/desa/68-world-population-projected-live-urban-areas-2050-says-un>

United Nations Development Programme (2020), *Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in North East India*. Export-Import Bank of India (India Exim Bank) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Retrieved 23rd March, 2021 from <https://www.eximbankindia.in/Assets/Dynamic/PDF/Publication-Resources/SpecialPublications/MSMEs-in-North-East-India03-03-21.pdf>

Vamuzo, M. (2011). *Contemporary challenges of Naga women in nation building* (Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation) Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario, Canada.

Venuh, N. (2004). *Naga society: continuity and change*. Delhi: Shipra Publications

Venuh, N. (2005). Land and people of Nagaland. In *National seminar on geology and energy resources of North- East India: Progress and perspectives* (pp. 9-10).

Verma, S. B. & Pawar, Y. T. (2009). *Rural empowerment: through Self Help Group (SHGs), Non Government Organizations (NGOs), and Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)*. Deep & Deep Publications Pvt. Ltd.

Vero, Yelhi (2012). Department of Economics, Nagaland University. *Socio-economic profile of Nagaland*, Retrieved: 19th May 2022 from <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/10603/48828/11/11%20chapter%203.pdf>,

Ward, W. A. & Hite, J.C. (1998). *Theory in rural development: An introduction and overview*.

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229779918> USA: Retrieved 29th June 2021

Oral sources

- Interview with Sovenyi Nyekha, of Süthozu village, Phek District, was 57 years old at the time of the interview conducted at Kohima on 27/03/2017. He was the former President of the Chakhesang Public Organization (CPO), and also a close associate of Late Vamuzo for several decades. When Vamuzo became the Chief Minister of Nagaland, Sovenyi served as the Special Assistant to the Chief Minister; and when Vamuzo became the Leader of Opposition, he served as his Personal Assistant.
- Interview with Sano Vamuzo, 78 years, , wife of Vamuzo; founding President of the Naga Mothers' Association (NMA), and first Chairperson of the Nagaland State Commission for Women (NSCW), at her residence in Kohima, 14th November 2018
- Interview with Vechikhoyi Lohe, 46 years, Kütsapo village VDB secretary at Pfütsero town (Phek district), 27th November 2018
- Interview with Zachihu Rhakho, 90 years, first VDB organizing committee convenor, Phek head GB at his residence in Phek town (Phek district), 28th November 2018
- Interview with Neichotsu Venuh, 75 years, VDB secretary at Phek village (Phek district), 28th November 2018
- Interview with Chivozo Soho, 57 years, VCC at Phek village (Phek district), 28th November 2018
- Interview with Shri Dükhyüi Vadeo of Kütsapo village under Phek District, was the First Village Development Board Secretary, who also worked in close quarters with Shri Gokhale during the initial stages of the establishment of Village Development Board. An

interview was conducted with him at his residence in Kütsapo village on 29/11/2018. He was 69 years old at the time of the interview.

- Interview with Chinehü Khesoh, 76 years, VEC at Kütsapo village (Phek district), 29th November 2018
- Interview with Vechizo Rhakho, 77 years, Kutsapo village (Phek district), 29th November 2018
- Interview with Zashevezo Rhakho, 57 years, Kutsapo village (Phek district), 29th November 2018
- Interview with Razukho, 61 years, VCC at Sohomi village (Phek district), 30th November 2018
- Interview with Kezuwelo Akami, 55 years, Losami village VCC at Phek town (Phek district), 29th November 2018
- Interview with Sikholie, 46 years, VDB general member at Kutsapo village (Phek district), 29th November 2018
- Interview with Vethiyilü Vadeo, 45 years, Women society chairperson at Kütsapo village (Phek district), 29th November 2018
- Interview with Kykathi Nusory, 52 years, VDB secretary at Sohomi village (Phek district), 30th November 2018
- Interview with Khrietuo Peseyie, 37 years, youth president at Jotsoma village (Kohima district), 6th February 2019
- Interview with Rulebie Senotsu, 35 years, VDB treasurer at Jotsoma village (Kohima district), 6th February 2019

- Interview with Vimeha Peki, 46 years, VCC at Mitelephe village (Kohima district), 6th February 2019
- Interview with Temjem Wati, 81 years, VCC at Meylong village (Mokokchung district), 24th March 2019
- Interview with Zayio Ezung, 48 years, VCC at Longsa village (Wokha district), 18th April 2019
- Interview with H. Chamgmgam, 32 years, VCM at Longwa village (Mon district), 20th April 2019
- Interview with Amao Taiwang Angh, 52 years, Angh (chief) at Longwa village (Mon district), 20th April 2019
- Interview with Tongam Angh, 38 years, VDB secretary at Mon village (Mon district), 20th April 2019
- Interview with Nyingching, 33 years, VDB secretary at Alayong village (Longleng district), 22nd April 2019
- Interview with Nunshu Phom, 53 years, VCC at Alayong village (Longleng district), 22nd April 2019
- Interview with Kiusumong ST, 41 years, VDB secretary at Anatongre village (Kiphire district), 23rd April 2019
- Interview with A. Susangkiu, 43 years, VDB secretary at Wapher village (Shamator district), 23rd April 2019
- Interview with Lemvipa, 35 years, Wapher Student President at Wapher village (Shamator district), 23rd April 2019

- Interview with Inakhu, 35 years, VCC at Settsu village (Mokokchung district), 24th April 2019
- Interview with Lumghei Haiming, 44 years, VDB secretary at Punglwa village (Peren district), 1st June 2019
- Interview with Kerihu Chuzho, 43 years, VDB secretary at Diezephe village (Dimapur district), 3rd June 2019
- Interview with Lungbang Hinglak, 40 years, VDB secretary at Poilwa village (Peren district), 3rd March 2020
- Interview with Hakiya Apon, 68 years, VDB general member at Tsonsa village (Tseminyu district), 22nd April 2023
- Interview with Rhunilo Tep, 44 years, VDB general member at Ziphenyu village (Tseminyu district), 22nd April 2023
- Interview with Heyalo Apon, 30 years, VDB general member at Tsonsa village (Tseminyu district), 22nd April 2023
- Interview with Y. Sorenthung Humtsoe, 35 years, Humtso village VDB general member at Wokha town (Wokha district), 23rd April 2023
- Interview with C. Renphamo Odyuo, 47 years, VDB secretary at Seluku village (Wokha district), 23rd April 2023
- Interview with N. Motsuthung Murry, 47 years, VDB secretary at Wokha village (Wokha district), 23rd April 2023
- Interview with Zhekuto, 58 years, VCC at Phushumi village (Zunheboto district), 23rd April 2023

- Interview with S. Kakiho Awomi, 61 years, Mukhami head GB at Mukhami village (Zunheboto district), 23rd April 2023
- Interview with Tiawati, 40 years, VDB secretary at Mokokchung village (Mokokchung district), 24th April 2023
- Interview with Nyeiwang Phom, 64 years, VCC at Yongam village (Longleng district), 26th April 2023
- Interview with Pangkai, 50 years, VCC at Totok Chingnyu village (Mon district), 26th April 2023
- Interview with C. Jacob, 33 years, VDB secretary at Goching village (Mon district), 26th April 2023
- Interview with Kahlak, 40 years, VCC at Yongphang village (Longleng district), 27th April 2023
- Interview with L. Thongsangkiu, 34 years, VCC at Shamator village (Shamator district), 28th April 2023
- Interview with K. S. Chingbou, 31 years, VDB secretary at Tuensang village (Tuensang district), 28th April 2023
- Interview with K. Ahukiu, 31 years, VDB secretary at Shamator village (Shamator district), 28th April 2023
- Interview with Khenho, 36 years, VCC at Noyan village (Noklak district), 28th April 2023
- Interview with Khathsomong, 37 years, VCC at Azetso village (Kiphire district), 29th April 2023

- Interview with Vevota, 50 years, VDB secretary at Bade village (Chumukedima district), 1st May 2023
- Interview with Bualei Disuang, 45 years, Nzauna village VDB secretary at Jalukie town (Peren district), 2nd May 2023
- Interview with Zapra Chakhesang, 74 years, Former Chairman of the Nagaland Public Service Commission (NPSC), and a close friend of A.M. Gokhale at his residence in Kohima, 17th July 2023

Appendix I



GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND

**THE NAGALAND VILLAGE AND AREA COUNCILS
ACT, 1978.**

Printed at the Nagaland Government Press, Kohima.

GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND

LAW DEPARTMENT

N O T I F A T I O N

Dated Kohima; the 13th March 1979

No. Law—232/78 : The following Act of the Nagaland Legislative Assembly which received the assent of the Governor is hereby published for general information.

Received the assent of the Governor on 9th March 1979.

The Nagaland Village and Area Council Act : 1978.

(Nagaland Act No. 1 of 1979)

Received the assent of the Governor on 9th March 1979.

An

Act

to consolidate and amend the law relating to constitution of Village and Area Councils in Nagaland and to regulate their duties and functions and for matters connected therewith

It is hereby enacted in the twentieth year of the Republic of India as follows :—

Short title ; extent and commencement

1. (1) This Act may be called the Nagaland Village and Area Councils Act ; 1978.

(2) It extends to whole of Nagaland.

(3) It shall come into force on such date as the State Government may by notification in the Gazette ; appoint ; and different dates may be appointed for different provisions of this Act.

Definition

2. In this Act unless the context otherwise requires :—

- (a) "appropriate authority" or "competent authority" means an authority having administrative jurisdiction with whatever designation called and notified by Government from time to time-
- (b) "Assembly" means the Nagaland Legislative Assembly;
- (c) "Gazette" or "the Gazette" means Nagaland Gazette;
- (d) "Prescribed" means prescribed by rules made under this Act;
- (e) "State Government" means the Government of Nagaland.

PTER

VILLAGE COUNCIL

3. Constitution - Every recognised Village shall have a Village Council.

Explanation: - Village means and includes an area recognised as a Village as such by the Government of Nagaland. An area in order to be a Village under this Act shall fulfil the following conditions namely:—

- (a) The land in the area belong to the population of that area or given to them by the Government of Nagaland, if the land in question is a Government land or is given to them by the lawful owner of the land; and
- (b) The Village is established according to the usage and customary practice of the population of the area.

4. A Village Council shall consist of members, chosen by villagers in accordance with the prevailing customary practices and usages, the same being approved by the State Government, provided that hereditary village Chiefs, GBs and Angs shall be Ex-officio Members of such Council and shall have voting right.

Qualification for members

5. A person shall not be qualified to be chosen as a member of the Village Council unless he:—

- (a) is a citizen of India, and
- (b) has attained the age 25 years.

6. (a) Every Village Council, unless otherwise dissolved by the State Government, shall continue for five years from the date of appointment; Provided that the said period may be extended by the State Government by a Notification in the Gazette for a period not exceeding one year at a time.

(b) All members shall hold office during the life of the Village Council;

Provided that a member chosen to fill in a casual vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the term of office of the member whom he replaced;

Provided further that a Village institutions which were traditionally established like the "Putu Menden" in Aomarea and recognised as Village Council shall continue to function as Village Council according to respective custom and usage.

Chairman

7. (1) The Village Council will choose a member as Chairman of the Council

3

(2) During the absence of the Chairman from any sitting of the Village Council a member of the Council nominated by the Chairman shall act as Chairman.

8. Secretary :— The Village Council may select and appoint a Secretary who may or may not be a member, of the Council. If the Secretary is not a member of the Council, he shall have no voting rights.

Power to remove members

9, (1) The State Government remove any member of a Village Council from his office :—

- (a) Who is convicted of any offence involving moral turpitude by a court of law, or
- (b) Who refuses to act, or become incapable of acting or
- (c) Who is declared to be insolvent, or
- (d) Who has been declared by notification in the Gazette to be disqualified for employment in the Public Service, or
- (e) Who without an excuse or sufficient ground in the opinion of the State Government absents himself from the majority of meeting in a year of Village Council, or
- (f) Who has been guilty of misconduct in discharge of his duties or of any disgraceful conduct, and two third of the total members of the Village Council at a meeting recommend his removal.

(2) No person who has been removed from his office under clause (a) or clause (d) of sub-section (1) shall be eligible for re-election except with the previous permission of the State Government obtained by such person in the prescribed manner.

Conduct of Business

10. The procedure for the conduct of business in a Village Council shall be as may be regulated from time to time by the Chairman thereof. The written record of the list of its proceedings shall be maintained.

11. The Village Council shall meet once in every 3 months : provided that the Chairman may summon the meeting of the Council at any time if requisition is made by one-third of the members.

Powers and Duties

12. The Village Council shall have the following powers and duties :—

- (1) to formulate Village Development Schemes, to supervise proper maintenance of water supply, roads, forest, education and other welfare activities;
- (2) to help various Government agencies in carrying out development works in the village ;
- (3) to take development works on its own initiative or on request by the Government :

- (4) to borrow money from the Government, Banks or financial institutions for application in the development and welfare work of the village and to repay the same with or without interest as the case may be
- (5) To apply for and receive grant-in-aid donations, subsidies from the Government or any agencies ;
- (6) to provide security for due repayment of loan received by any permanent resident of the village from the Government, Bank or financial institution ;
- (7) to lend money from its funds to deserving permanent residents of the village and to obtain repayment thereof with or without interest
- (8) to forfeit the security of the individual borrower on his default in repayment of loan advanced to him or on his commission of a breach of any of the terms of loan agreement entered into by him with the Council and to dispose of such security by public auction or by private sale ;
- (9) to enter into any loan agreement with the Government Bank and financial institutions or a permanent resident of the village :
- (10) to realise registration fees for each litigation within its jurisdiction
- (11) to raise fund for utility service within the Village by passing a resolution subject to the approval of the State Government;
Provided that all monetary transactions shall be conducted through a scheduled Bank or the Nagaland State Co-operative Bank;
- (12) to constitute Village Development Board;
- (13) Power to do certain Acts in the event of an epidemic.
On the outbreak of an epidemic or infectious disease Village Council shall initiate all preventive measures.

Administration of Justice

14 (1) The Village Council constituted under the Law in force from time to time shall administer justice within the Village limits in accordance with the customary law and usages as accepted by the canons of justice established in Nagaland, and the law in this respect as enforced from time to time.

(2) In case of disputes between villages falling in different areas or districts, two or more village Councils may settle a dispute in a joint session or refer it to the appropriate authority.

Village Administration

15 (1) The Village Council shall be auxiliary to the administration and shall have full powers to deal with internal administration of the village

- (a) maintenance of law and order :
- (b) In serious case offender may be arrested but such person should be handed over to the nearest Administrative Officer or Police Station without un—due delay.

- (c) to report to the nearest Administrative Officer occurrence of any un-natural death or serious accident.
- (d) to inform the police station of any absconders or suspects to the nearest Administrative Office Police Station;
- (e) to enforce orders of the local authority in the village as a whole.
- (f) to report out-break of any epidemic to the nearest Administrative Officer Medical Officer.
- (g) no transfer of immovable property shall be affected without the consent of the Village Council. Written record of this shall be maintained by the Village Council.

Disqualification

16. A person shall be disqualified from being selected as and for being a member of Village Council:—
- (1) If he is unsound mind and stands so declared by the competent court or such authority as may be recognised by the State Government; or
 - (2) if he is not a citizen of India or has voluntarily acquired citizenship of foreign nation or is under acknowledgement or allegiance to a foreign nation; or
 - (3) if he has been convicted by a Court in India for an offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years unless a period of five years or such less period as the State Government may allow in any particular case, has elapsed since his release; or
 - (4) if having held an office under any Council he has been found guilty of corruption, disloyalty or breach of such Council laws: unless a period of five years or such less period as the State Government may determine in any particular case has elapsed since his becoming so disqualified; or
 - (5) if he is an undischarged insolvent; or
 - (6) if he is a salaried Government servant or employee of an Area Council; or
 - (7) if he abstains himself from the majority of the meeting in a year and is unable to explain such absence to the satisfaction of the council; or
 - (8) if he is a member of any other Village Council; or
 - (9) if he has been dismissed from the service of the Government or any other local authority for misconduct unless a period of five years has elapsed from the date of dismissal.
17. If any question arises as to whether a member of Village Council has been subject to disqualification, the question shall be referred to the decision of the State Government whose decision thereon shall be final.

6

18. A seat shall become vacant (1) when a member dies : or
 (2) When a member resigns his seat in writing under his own hand :
 (3) When a member is removed by the State Government on becoming idisqualified.

Filing of Casual Vacancy

19. When a seat becomes vacant, the chairman shall call upon the Village concerned to choose a member

20. When a dispute arise as to the selection of any member of a Village Council, the matter shall be referred to the State Government whose decision thereon shall be final.

21. Every Village Council shall be a body, corporate by the name of the Village for which it is constituted and shall have perpetual succession and a common seal and shall by the said name use and be used through its Chairman, with power to acquire hold and dispose of property, both movable and immovable and to contract and do all other things necessary for the purpose as this Act.

Control of Village Council

22. Subject to the general superintendent of the State Government/the Deputy Commissioner/the Additional Deputy Commissioner or Sub-Division Officer (Civil) in-charge of the Sub-Division. Extra Assistant Commissioner or Circle Officer shall have control over all the Village Councils within his jurisdiction.

CHAPTER--II

AREA COUNCIL

Constitution

23. There shall be an Area Council for each Area to be notified by the State Government in the Gazette.

Composition

24. (1) The Area Council shall consist of members elected by the Village Council in proportion of one member for population of 500 and part thereof not below 250 ;

Provided that a recognised Village with population of less than 500 but having at least 250 shall be represented by one member ;

Provided further that a group of contiguous small recognised Villages may together elect a member to the Area Council having the same territorial jurisdiction on the basis of 250 population.

In the event of an Area Council Member to be elected by more than one Village, the member of the Village Councils shall be determined in proportion to the population of such villages.

(2) In the smaller Towns where there is no recognised Town Committees an Area Council member can be elected in proportion of one member for every 500 people and part thereof not below 250. The election shall be carried out by an Ad-hoc Committee of the towns people themselves to be constituted for the purposed by the local Administrative Officer.

(3) There shall also be two persons nominated by the State Government as members one of whom shall be a woman ordinarily resident of the area.

Qualification for membership

25. A person shall not be qualified to be elected as member of an Area Council unless he.

- (1) is a citizen of India;
- (2) has attained the age of 25 years; and
- (3) is a member of a Village Council.

Chairman

26. (1) There shall be a Chairman elected from among the member of the Area Council.

(2) During the absence of the Chairman from any sitting of the Area Council a member of the Council nominated by the Chairman shall act as Chairman.

(3) Every Chairman shall be Ex-officio member of the District Planning Board.

Executive Officer and Secretary

27. The Local Administrative Officer shall be the Ex-officio Executive Officer and Secretary to the Area Council.

Term of Member

28. Every Area Council unless otherwise dissolved by the State Government shall continue for five years from the date of appointment:

Provided that the said period may be extended by the State Government by a Notification in the Gazette for a period not exceeding one year at a time:

Provide further that a member elected to fill a casual vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the term of office of the member whom he replaced.

Power to Remove Member

29. (1) The State Government may remove any member of an Area Council from his office:

(a) Who is convicted of any offence involving moral turpitude by a court to law ; or

(b) who refuses to act, or become incapable of acting; or

(c) who is declared to be insolvent ; or

(d) who has been declared by notification in Gazette to be disqualified for employment in the public service ; or

o

(e) who without an excuse sufficient in the opinion of the State Government, absents himself from majority of meeting, in a year of the Area Council; or

f) who has been guilty of misconduct in discharge of his duties or of any disgraceful conduct and two third of the total number of the members of the Area Council at a meeting recommend his removal.

(2) No person who has been removed from his office under clause, (a) or clause (d) of sub-section (1) shall be eligible for re-election except with the previous permission of the State Government obtained by such person in the prescribed manner.

Power to do Certain Acts in the Event of an Epidemic

30. On the outbreak of an epidemic or infectious disease, the Area Council shall initiate all preventive measures within its jurisdiction.

Session

31. An Area Council shall meet at least twice and not more than four times in a year.

Conduct of business

32. The procedure for the conduct of business in an Area Council shall be as may be regulated by rules made from time to time by the State Government.

Power and Duties

33. (1) The Area Council shall examine the development scheme formulated by various Village Councils within its jurisdiction and after coordinating and consolidating all such schemes into one for the area submit it to the appropriate authority with its recommendation and priorities.

(2) The Area Council shall settle dispute;

(a) if it is voluntarily referred to it by two or more contending Village Councils; or

(b) if required to do so by the Deputy Commissioner; State Government; or

(c) any other matter referred to it by any other authority.

Fund

34. (1) The funds of the Area Council shall consist of grants or subsidies.

(2) The regular maintenance of accounts of the Area Council fund and its safe custody shall be the duty of its Executive Officer;

(3) The funds of Area Council shall be maintained and transacted through a Scheduled Bank or Nagaland State Co-operative Bank only.

Disqualification

35. A person shall be disqualified from being elected as and for being a member of an Area Council;—

- (1) if he is of unsound mind and stand so declared by the competent court or such authority as may be recognised by the State Government ; or
- (2) if he is not a citizen of India or has voluntarily acquired citizenship of foreign nation or is under acknowledgement of allegiance to a foreign nation; or
- (3) if he has been convicted by a Court in India for an offence and sentenced to imprisonment for not less than two years unless, a period of five years or such less period as the State Government may allow in any particular has elapsed since his release ; or
- (4) if having held an office under any Council he has been found guilty of corruption, disloyalty or breach of such Council laws; unless a period of five years or such less period as the State Government may determine in any particular case has elapsed since his becoming so disqualified ; or
- (5) if he is an undischarged insolvent ; or
- (6) if he is a salaried Government servant or employee of an Area Council ; or
- (7) if he abstains himself from the majority of the meeting in a year and is unable to explain such absences to the satisfaction of the Council ; or
- (8) if he is a member of any other Area Council ; or
- (9) if he has been dismissed from the service of the Government or any other local authority for misconduct unless a period of five years has elapsed from the date of dismissal.
- (10) if, and for so long as, there subsists a contract entered into by him in the course of his trade or business with the State Government for the supply of goods, or for the execution of any works undertaken by the Government.

Decision on Question of Disqualification of Member

36. If any question arises as to whether a member of an Area Council has been subject to disqualification the question shall be referred to the decision of the State Government whose decision thereon shall be final.

Vacation of Member's Seat

37. A seat shall become vacant :-

- (1) When a member dies, or
- (2) When a member resigns his seats in writing under his own hand ; or
- (3) When a member is removed by the State Government on becoming disqualified.

10

Vacation of Office of Chairman

38. A member holding the office of the Chairman of an Area Council shall vacate his office:—

- (1) on ceasing to be a member of the said Council ; or
- (2) when he resigns his seat in writing under his own hand addressed to the Secretary of the Area Council; or
- (3) when a resolution is passed by the Area Council presided over by the Executive Officer of the Council removing him from office by a vote of two-third of the total membership of the Council.

Filling of Casual Vacancy

39. When a seat becomes vacant, the Chairman shall;—

- (1) notify the vacancy in Gazette; and
- (2) call upon the Village Council concerned to elect a new member.

Election Disputes

40. If a dispute arises as to the election of any member of an Area Council, the matter shall be referred to the State Government whose decision thereon shall be final.

Incorporation

41. Every Area Council shall be a body corporate by the name of the Area for which it is constituted and shall have perpetual succession and a common seal, and shall by the said name sue and be sued through its Chairman with power to acquire, hold and dispose of property both movable and immovable and to contract and to do all other things, necessary for the purpose of this Act.

Control of Area Council

42. Subject to the general superintendence and control, of the State Government, the Deputy Commissioner, the Additional Deputy Commissioner or the Sub-Divisional Officer (Civil) shall have control over all the Area Councils within their jurisdiction.

CHAPTER -III

MISCELLANEOUS

Constitution of a State Level Advisory Board

43. (a) (1) The State Government may constitute by notification in the official Gazette, a Board consisting of the following members, namely:—

Chairman— Minister-in-charge (Councils)

1

- Members** **Agricultural Production Commissioner**
2. **Secretary Finance)**
 3. **Secretary Home) — nb: Secretary**
 4. **Three Members nominated by the State Government (like Member of Legislative Assembly)**

(2) Four of the members attending any meeting of the Board shall form the quorum for the purpose of transacting the business of that meeting of the Board.

(3) All members of the Board including the nominated members shall have one vote each and the Chairman shall have a casting vote in case of a tie.

(4) In the absence of the Chairman, the members present shall elect one among themselves to preside over the meeting.

44. Any non-official member may at any time resign his office and his resignation shall be effective immediately if it is accepted by the State Government.

45. The term of office of any non-official member shall be three years.

Provided that in case of members representing Legislature or Local Authorities, their terms of office shall terminate as soon as they cease to be members of such Legislature or Local Authority, as the case may be.

46 (1) The term of office of non-official members shall commence on such date as may be notified in this behalf by the State Government.

(2) A person ceasing to be member by reason of expiry of his term of office as described in section 45, shall be eligible for re-nomination.

47. The State Government may remove from the Board any member who :—

(a) refuses to act, or becomes incapable of acting or absents himself from three consecutive meetings of the Board and is unable to explain such absence to the satisfaction of the Board; or

(b) has so flagrantly abused in any manner his position as a member of the Board as to render his continuance detrimental to the public interest :

Provided that when the State Government proposes to take action under the foregoing provisions of this section, an opportunity for explanation shall be given to the member concerned and when such action is taken, the reasons thereof shall be placed on record.

12

48. (1) When the place of a member nominated by the State Government becomes vacant by his resignation, removal or death, the State Government shall appoint a person to fill the vacancy.

(2) The term of office of a member nominated under sub-section (1) shall be the remainder of the term of office of the member in whose place he has been nominated. Powers and duties of the State Level Advisory Board.

49. The State Level Advisory Board shall (i) review from time to time the working of various Village and Area Councils. (ii) advise the Government about allotment of funds to various Village Councils as grant-in-aid. (iii) perform such other duties as the Board may be required by the State Government.

50. (1) The State Government may by notification in the Gazette make rules consistent with this Act, to carry out the purpose of this Act.

(2) In particular and without prejudice to the generality of foregoing powers, such rules may provide for the following namely :—

- (a) for conduct of election to the Area Councils,
- (b) for delimitation of constituencies for election to the Area Council:
- (c) for pay and allowances of members and Chairman of the Area Councils:
- (d) appointment of officers and staff of the Area Councils and their condition of service ;
- (e) custody and disposal of Area Council funds :
- (f) procedure for maintenance of accounts and audit :
- (g) procedure for conduct of business of Village and Area Councils :
- (h) any other connected matter in respect of which it is necessary to make rules for the constitution and proper functioning of the Village and Area Councils.

(3) Every rule made under this section shall be laid, as soon as may be after it is made before the Nagaland Legislative Assembly while it is in Session for a total period of seven days, which may be comprised in one session or in two successive sessions, and if, before the expiry of the session in which it is so laid or the session immediately following, the Nagaland Legislative Assembly agree in making any modification in the rule the rule shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect as the case may be, so that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity anything previously done under this rule.

Repeal

51. Nagaland Village, Area and Regional Councils Act, 1970 (The Nagaland Act No. 2 of 1971) shall stand repealed

13

Provided that such repeal shall not affect :-

- (a) the previous operation of the said Act or anything duly done or suffered thereunder ; or
- (b) any right, privilege, obligation or liability acquired, accrued or incurred under the said Act ; or
- (c) any penalty forfeiture or punishment suffered in respect of any offence committed against the said Act ; or
- (d) any investigation legal proceeding or remedy in respect of any such right, privilege, obligation, liability, penalty, forfeiture or punishment as aforesaid :

Provided further that anything done or any action taken including any appointment or delegation made, instruction or direction made, certificate or registration granted under the Act hereby repealed shall be deemed to have been done or taken under the corresponding provision of this Act and shall continue to be in force accordingly unless and until superseded by anything done or any action taken under this Act,

Savings

52. All powers, rights and duties given by this Act shall be in addition to and not in derogation of any other powers, rights and, duties conferred by any act, law or custom and all such other powers rights and duties may be exercised and put in force in the same manner by the same authority as if this Act has not been passed.

Power to Remove Difficulties

53. (1) If any difficulty or doubt arises in giving effect to the provision of this Act, the State Government may by order published in Gazette, make such provisions, not inconsistent with the purpose of this Act as appears to it to be necessary or expedient for the removal of the difficulty or doubt ; and the order of the State Government in such cases shall be final.

(2) Every order made under this section shall be laid as soon as may be after it is made, before the Assembly while it is in session for a total period of seven days which may be comprised in one session or in two successive sessions and if, before the expiry of the session in which it is so laid or the session immediately following the Assembly agree in making any modification in the order shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect as the case may be so however that any such modification or annulment shall be without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under this order.

Dissolution

54. (1) If the State Government on receipt of a report from the Deputy Commissioner of the District or otherwise is satisfied that a situation has arisen in which Village or Area Council cannot function in accordance with the provisions of this Act, the State Government may, by order published in the Gazette, direct that the Council

shall be dissolved from such date and for such period as may be specified in the notification.

(2) When the Village or Area Council is dissolved under provisions of sub-section (1) :-

- (a) all members notwithstanding that their term of office has not expired shall from the date of dissolution vacate their office as such members.
- (b) all powers and duties of the Village or Area Council shall during the period of dissolution be exercised by such person or persons as the State Government may appoint in this behalf.
- (c) all funds and other property vested in the Village or Area Council shall during the period of dissolution vest in the State Government, and
- (d) as soon as the period of dissolution expires, the Village or Area Council shall be reconstituted in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

(3) Every order made under this section shall be laid as soon as may be after it is made, before the Assembly while it is in session for a total period of seven days which may be comprised in one session or in two successive sessions and if before the expiry of the session which it is so laid or the session immediately following the Assembly agree in making any modification in the order or the Assembly agree that the order should not be made the order shall thereafter have effect only in such modified form or be of no effect as the case may be, without prejudice to the validity of anything previously done under this order.

DARSHAN SINGH,

Joint Secretary,

Law Department.

Appendix II



GOVT. OF NAGALAND

**VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT BOARDS
MODEL RULES, 1980
(REVISED)**

**GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND
DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT,
KOHIMA**

**GOVERNMENT OF NAGALAND
DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

N O T I F I C A T I O N

Dated Kohima, the 21st November 1989

NO.RD/VDB RULES/89-90:- In exercise of the powers conferred by the sub-section I of Section 50 of the Nagaland Village and Area Council Act, 1978, the Government of Nagaland hereby revise the following VDB Model Rules of 1980 regarding the composition and functioning etc. of the Village Development Board constituted under Clause 12 of Section 12 of the aforesaid Act:-

(1) Short title and commencement:

These Rules may be called Village Development Model Rules 1980 (Revised).

(2) It shall be extended to the whole of Nagaland.

Duties of the VDB:

2. The Village Development Board, subject to such directives which the Village Council may issue from time to time, shall exercise the powers, functions and duties of the Village Councils enumerated in Clauses 4,6,7,8,9 of Section 13 of the Act, subject to the prior approval of the Chairman of the Village Council.

3. The Village Development Board shall also, subject to such directives as the Village Council may issue from time to time, formulate schemes, programmes of action for the development and progress of the Village as a whole or groups of individuals in the Village, or for individuals in the Village, either using the village community or other funds.

Composition:

4. (a) *All permanent residents of a Village* shall be Members of the Village Development Board and all such members shall form *The General Body Of The VDB's*. This general body of the VDB's shall hold atleast two general body meetings, of the VDB's during one financial year. During this general body meetings, the concern Village Development Board Secretary who shall be designated as Secretary of the Management Committee of the VDB, shall lay before the general body all details regarding the VDB Schemes implemented under various programmes, money drawn, loans issued against fixed deposits security, interest or fixed deposit drawn, manner of utilization of interest amount and any other issues concerning the VDB's on which the general body may like to seek clarification.
4. (b) There shall be a Management Committee of the VDB's which shall be entrusted with the management of the Village Development Boards and the funds of the VDB's, the members of the Management Committee of the VDB shall be chosen by the Village Council concerned. The tenure of the members of the Management Committee of the VDB shall be 3 (Three) years unless decided otherwise by the Village Council by resolution. The members of the Management Committee of the VDB may include members of the Village Council those persons who are not members of the Village Council or those who are ineligible to be chosen as, or for being members of the Village Council by virtue of the age or by virtue of tradition and custom. The minimum members of the Management Committee of the VDB's shall not be less than 5(Five) members and the maximum numbers of members shall not exceed 25(Twenty-five) members. The number of Women Members to be included in the Management Committee of the VDB should not be less than one-fourth $\frac{1}{4}$ of the total number of members of the Management Committee of the VDB's.
- 4 (c). Any resolution passed by the Management Committee of the VDB either for loan application, drawl of funds etc. shall be attended by quorum of not less than 51% of the total number of the

Management Committee, otherwise such resolutions passed shall not be valid and shall be liable to rejection by the Chariman of the VDB.

5. A member of the Management Committee of the VDB including the Secretary may be replaced by the resolution of the Village council, for reasons to be recorded in the resolution subject to the approval of the Chariman of the VDB, i.e., the concerned Deputy Commissioner or the Additional Deputy Commissioner.
6. The Deputy Commissioner/Additional Deputy Commissioner shall be the ex-officio Chariman of the VDB in their respect districts and independent sub-divisions.
7. The Member of the Management Committee shall select one among themselves as Secretary who shall be a person who is literate having a minimum education qualification of matriculation and above. He shall be paid a remuneration ranging from Rs.1000-Rs.3000 only per month as may be decided by the VDB concern commensurate with their funds/resources preferably from interest accrued from the concerned VDB fixed deposit. No Village council Chairman or Head GB or Village Administration Head etc. shall be permitted to hold the post of the VDB Management Chairman.

Procedures for operating bank Account:

8. The VDB shall operate its funds under Grand in Aid Matching Cash Grant, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and other programmes through suitable accounts shall be operated jointly by the Chariman and Secretary of the Management Committee of the VDB.
9. No Cheque shall be honoured unless it is accompanied by a copy of the Management Committee's resolution authorizing such withdrawals signed by all members present in the particular meeting, which must be attended by not less than 51% of the total membership of the Management Committee and there after approved by the concerned Chairman of the VDB.

Fixed Deposits:

10. No VDB shall be allowed to withdraw its Fixed Deposits since the Fixed Deposits form the main basis for the existence of the VDB.

VDBs which withdraw their Fixed Deposits will cease to exist and hence for the will NOT be eligible for any funds under Grant-in-Aid, Matching Cash Grant, Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and other developmental funds from the rural Development Department.

In respect of VDBs whose term Deposits have expired, the concerned Chairman (DC's/ADCs) shall direct these VDBs to renew their fixed Deposits Terms for another five years.

11. The same procedure as in 9 above shall also apply if the Management committee desires to spend out of any cash which may be in the hands of the Secretary.

Meeting:

12. The Management committee shall meet on the same date every month. The Management committee may decide the date and shall inform the Chairman of the Management Committee and the Chairman of the Village Council about such date.

The Members of the Management Committee shall give widest publicity about the date to their Khel people. Such meeting shall be open to public including members of the general body. Any change in the date shall be effective only after obtaining the consent of the Village Council and the Management committee Chairman.

13. In addition to the monthly meetings, the Management Committee may meet more frequently if any Member of the Management Committee gives notices to the Secretary. However, the resolutions of the Management committee in such meetings shall not be implemented until these resolutions are debated in the monthly public meeting.
14. Every decision or recommendation of the Village Development Board shall be in the form of resolution passed in a regular monthly meeting by all the members present in such a meeting.
15. The monthly meetings shall be attended by the following categories of persons:- (a) Village Development Board Management Committee. (b) Loanees (those persons who have obtained from the VDB or against the VDB's guarantee/recommendations). (c) Any other persons who have been asked by the Management Committee to attend. The monthly meeting shall be presided over by a member of the Management Committee/VDB Members for the occasion.
16. The meeting shall be in 3 parts. Firstly, the Secretary of the Management Committee will write the past month's account on a Black Board and invites questions with reference to the accounts and he shall answer the questions. Secondly, each loanee may be questioned by the Management committee Members and public. Thirdly, other issues in connection with Development will be debated. The Secretary of the Management committee will record the issues and decisions. Any person attending the meeting may ask questions. All questions which are not answered to the satisfaction of the questioner shall also be recorded by the Secretary of the Management Committee.

Intending Beneficiaries:

17. Persons desiring to obtain loans, or desiring to be included in any development schemes formulated by the VDB, shall express such desire in monthly meeting.
18. The Management Committee shall not disburse any loan unless the loanee furnishes in writing a promise to the Management committee to abide by declarations in his application and to attend the monthly public meeting until he discharges his liability to the satisfaction of the Management committee and promises to accept any penalty imposed on him by the Village Council in default of any condition of his loan, provided that the penalty shall be utilized for discharging the liability. Atleast one copy of such an agreement shall be kept in the VDB Chairman's Office.
19. Any person permanently residing in the Village may apply for a loan, but such an application shall contain atleast the following particulars:-
 - (a) The period in which the applicant proposed to repay the loan with interest.
 - (b) The amount of loan.
 - (c) The purpose for which such loan is sought.
20. Whenever the Management Committee passes a resolution authorizing the Secretary of the VDB Management committee to withdraw any amount from the Bank Accounts, 3 copies of such resolution signed by the VDB Management Committee Members present in the meeting shall be prepared by the VDB Management Committee and he shall personally meet the Chariman with these 3 copies.

When the Chariman receives these 3 copies, he shall examine them. If the Chariman finds nothing wrong, he shall record his approval on all the 3 copies.

Thereafter one copy will be attached to the Cheque. The second copy will remain in the Chairman's office and the third copy will be brought back to the Village by the Secretary of the Management committee to be read out in the next month's meeting.

Secondly, if the Chariman has some doubts, but not serious, he shall record his remark on the copy of the resolution to be kept on his office and record his approval on the other 2 copies. In such an event, the Chariman shall send the copies of his remarks to the members of the VDB Management Committee and the Chariman of the Village Council for their information.

Thirdly, if the Chairman has serious doubts the propriety of the resolution he may return the resolution with his remarks for reconsideration or fix a date for an open public meeting in the village and put the matter before the public or the General Body of the VDB for arriving at a decision.

21. At the end of each monthly public meeting the Secretary of the Management Committee shall write a letter to the Chairman of the VDB showing:-

- (a) Names of Village Development Board Members absent.
- (b) Names of Loanees absent.

22. The Secretary of the Management Committee shall maintain the following records which may be inspected by any member of the village in monthly public meeting:-

- (a) Register showing a record of meetings held. It will show the time and date and place and names of members and Loanees present and absent. It will show questions not answered by the Secretary of the Management Committee or loanees to the satisfaction of the questioner.
- (b) A file of Money expenditure resolution.
- (c) A cash register showing transaction of savings and current accounts and cash draws made under Grant-in-Aid, JRY and other developmental programmes of the VDB.
- (d) A separate register for Schemes selected under Grant-in-Aid JRY etc and details of money as well as disbursements under the above mentioned programmes.
- (e) Secretary of the Management committee shall check his record against the records kept in the Chairman's office every 3 months.
- (f) Secretary of the Management Committee shall keep a file for vouchers providing money transactions (payments & receipts).
- (g) Secretary of the Management committee shall keep a file letters to and from the Chariman.
- (h) Secretary shall keep a file for other letters.

23. Letters of Village Development Board addressed to every authority the village shall be in 3 copies. 1 copy will be sent to the Chariman of the VDB for information. 1 copy will be kept in Management Committee's record and 1 copy will be sent to the addressee.

Audit and Accounts:

24. The Village Council may cause the VDB's to be audited at such times as it may decide. The deputy Commissioner will render necessary assistance in auditing the accounts.

25. The Management Committee of the VDB shall place before the Village Council Annual Account before 30th April every year covering the period from 1st April of the previous year to 31st March of the current year. In addition, the Management Committee shall also place before the general body of the VDB annual accounts of all amounts received under Grant-in-Aid, JRY matching cash grant and other developmental programmes as well as draws of money made by the Secretary of the Management Committee, the matter of utilization of the amounts drawn, the position of repayment of loans taken by individuals or community as a whole etc., atleast twice a year. The Secretary of the Management Committee shall record any major decisions taken by the general body of the VDB during the course of the annual meeting which must be authenticated by the concerned Village Council Chairman. A copy of this may be sent to the Chairman of the VDB for information and necessary action.

Disputes and Interpretation:

26. All disputes, except those in which the lending institution is a party, arising out of the VDB Management Committee working and decisions shall be settled first by the Village Council.

27. On any disputes as to the interpretation of these rules, the Deputy Commissioner's/Additional Deputy Commissioner's decision thereon shall, be final subject to the approval of the Government.

Sd/-

LALHUMA

**Commissioner & Secretary to the Govt. of Nagaland,
Rural Development Department.**