LITERACY AND LIVELIHOOD IN URBAN CONTEXT

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ABSTRACT

In urban areas, the significance of literacy is recognized at all levels from nursery schools to university education. There is a close connection between literacy and livelihoods, possession of literacy skills are imperative to secure enhanced livelihoods. Livelihoods are understood not only in terms of generation of income, but also comprise of a much broader range of activities, such as, acquiring and retaining access to resources, possessions and opportunities, dealing with risks and unfavourable consequences, negotiating social relationships within the household and managing social networks and institutions within the communities and the city. Emphasis put on the livelihood initiatives of urban households and communities serves to highlight the significance of human competencies and capabilities. This focus is not meant to obscure the susceptibilities of people in poverty, or to emphasise upon the opportunities available to them in their efforts to earn incomes, create agreeable environments and develop positive social relationships.

Keywords: Literacy, Livelihood, Urban, Household Strategies, Innovative Approaches, National Urban Livelihoods Mission

INTRODUCTION

The main aspect of this research paper is to study the literacy and livelihood in urban context in India. In India, there have been developments and advancements taking place in urban contexts. There are reputed schools, colleges, and universities that have the main aim of improving literacy skills amongst the individuals. With the institution of housing, hospitals, health care centres, organizations, offices, banks, financial institutions, organizations and clubs, provision of civic amenities, infrastructure and other facilities, much progress has been viewed within the livelihoods of the individuals. The urban slums are characterized by the mass rates of illiteracy, lack of skills, reliance to monetized and informal economy, inadequate housing, lack of civic amenities, and vulnerability to diseases, environmental hazards and social fragmentation. The individuals, residing in these conditions experience depressing livelihoods and measures need to be put into practice to improve them (Report on Urban Livelihood Profiling Study, n.d.).

In urban areas, the individuals belonging to the poverty stricken households contribute a significant section of the economy. They are able to sustain their livelihoods by obtaining assistance from state run organizations like urban local bodies and financial institutions (Report on Urban Livelihood Profiling Study, n.d.). The individuals migrate from rural areas to urban areas in search for better livelihood opportunities. When they migrate, they lack the awareness regarding various areas, hence in most cases reside in backward conditions and are engaged in minority jobs of the construction worker, labourer, carpenter, electrician, plumber, welder, painter and so forth. Measures have been formulated to make the individuals recognize the significance of literacy. When parents are engaged in minority jobs, they send their children to school, so that

they are able to acquire literacy skills and obtain a good employment opportunity. It is vital to discover the possible livelihood opportunities to improve the lives of the deprived and marginalized sections of the society in urban areas.

SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERACY IN URBAN CONTEXT

Literacy is considered fundamental for all individuals to secure their livelihood. Individuals belonging to different categories and backgrounds should work to acquire at least the basic literacy skills of reading, writing and arithmetic to enhance their living conditions. In the performance of household chores, in carrying out monetary transactions, in child development, in taking care of the requirements of the elderly individuals, to develop effective communication skills, and to get engaged in employment opportunities, it is vital for individuals to enhance their literacy skills. In urban areas, the system of education is much improved, as compared to rural areas. In urban areas, there are higher educational institutions that are making use of more advanced and innovative techniques and methods for promoting education. The individuals are able to become more diligent, resourceful and conscientious. It is ensured that learning needs and requirements of individuals, belonging to different age groups and backgrounds are met through equitable access to learning and life skills programs (Patel, 2009).

In urban areas, education and development of literacy skills is given significance. The individuals, who belong to reputed and wealthy families, they are able to make provision of enhanced educational opportunities to their children. In the present existence, most of the individuals are going to foreign countries to acquire education. In the urban areas, there have been expansion and improvement in education at all levels, including early childhood care and education, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of the society. It has been ensured that by 2015, all children, especially girls have access to free and compulsory education of good quality, this is primarily focused upon the girls belonging to minority groups and those who have experienced difficult circumstances (Patel, 2009). Ensuring that learning needs of all young individuals and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programs. The women, who have not received the opportunity to attend educational institutions and do not even possess the basic literacy skills of reading, writing and arithmetic, are made available the opportunities to get enrolled in educational institutions and training centres to improve their literacy skills.

In the 1990s, India experienced progress in the improvement of the literacy situation. The rate of literacy increased from 52.1 percent in 1991 to 65.4 percent in 2001 for the population, belonging to the age group of seven years and above. Improvement in the literacy rate has been observed in both urban as well as in rural areas. The Census 2001 shows that the all-India literacy rate has been increased by 13.2 percentage points and improvement is considered obvious for all the states and Union Territories. The most striking change was visible in the Census 2001 in relation to the female literacy rate. In the year 2001, about three-fourths of the male population and more than half of the female population were literate (Patel, 2009). With improvements and advancements coming about in the system of education and growth in the literacy rate, the individuals belonging to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes also

have reserved seats in educational institutions. In educational institutions at all levels, males and females of all categories and backgrounds are regarded as equal and it is unlawful to discriminate against them on the basis of class, caste, ethnicity, religion, gender, occupation and socio-economic background.

AREAS OF LITERACY IN URBAN CONTEXT

The main areas that highlight literacy in urban areas have been stated as follows:

Usage of Technology – In the present existence, the usage of technology has played a significant part in the enhancement of skills and abilities amongst the individuals. In educational institutions at all levels, there are usage of technologies to make provision of knowledge and information to the individuals. In higher educational institutions, individuals are engaged in the preparation of projects, assignments and reports through utilization of technology. It has played an important part in performing tasks and functions in a rapid manner. On the other hand, in rural and tribal areas, individuals are not making major usage of technology in educational institutions as compared to urban areas.

Honorary Teaching – In urban areas, there are individuals, who make provision of honorary teaching to particularly individuals of all age groups, belonging to deprived, marginalized and economically weaker sections of the society. These individuals mostly include retired professors or house ladies, who spend their time in providing free classes in their houses to children belonging to minority groups. These children may or may not get enrolled in educational institutions, but their parents, who in most cases are not educated, possess the viewpoint that education is a basic requirement and send their children for coaching classes. In these coaching centres, where free education is made available, the students are also able to obtain free books, stationary, clothes, bags, food items and so forth.

Extra-Curricular Activities –In urban areas, in educational institutions, emphasis is put upon making provision of extra-curricular activities. The main extra-curricular activities that are part of the school curriculum include, artworks, handicrafts, sports, physical activities, dance, music, and dramatics. These activities stimulate the mind-sets of the individuals and makes learning more pleasurable. There are majority of students, who take pleasure in participating in these activities. These activities are put into operation by the students mostly in the case of organization of festivals, events, functions and competitions. Students belonging to all age groups participate in competitions and events relating to extra-curricular activities.

Teaching-Learning Processes and Instructional Strategies –The teaching-learning processes and the instructional strategies are more advanced in educational institutions in urban areas. As it has been stated above, usage of technology has played an imperative part in their enhancement. Within the classroom settings, the teachers usually make use of strategies that promote learning amongst the students in a manageable way. Providing notes, verbal explanation, organization of question and answer sessions, conducting tests, exams, and quizzes, class assignments, home-work assignments, projects, articles, research papers and so forth are

important strategies that are put into practice by the teachers to promote learning amongst the students.

Performance Appraisal Methods - In educational institutions, within the urban areas, significance is given to performance appraisal methods. The main purpose of these methods is to assess the performance of the students and if there are flaws and inconsistencies, then what kinds of measures need to be taken to make improvements. The various methods that are adopted in order to assess the performance of the students include, tests, which may be oral or written, events, functions, competitions, class assignments, and home-work assignments. The students, who perform well gain appreciation from their teachers, professors and supervisors. On the other hand, students who achieve low scores, their teachers usually make attempts to make improvements in the teaching methods or pay extra attention to the students to enable them to perform better in future.

Vocational Education –The establishment of vocational colleges in urban areas are of interest to many individuals. There are individuals, who have interest in a particular area, such as, electrician, plumbing, carpentry, painting and so forth. This education enables an individual to specialise in a particular area. After acquiring training, they either have the opportunity to join an organization or obtain self-employment. These individuals, if work wholeheartedly and diligently in their fields are able to secure their living conditions in a well-organized way. Vocational education helps the individuals to encourage their creative thinking through participatory group activities. Individuals, either make use of their skills independently or in groups.

Government Schools – When individuals migrate from rural to urban areas in search of better living conditions, then they usually get their children, who are mainly within the age group of three to sixteen years, enrolled in Government schools. These children are provided education free of cost and they are able to easily secure admission, even if they have been enrolled in schools in rural areas before. These schools make provision of all the basic concepts to the students and subjects include, mathematics, science, social science, English, Hindi, artworks, handicrafts, and extra-curricular activities. The students, who have dropped out of schools or have never been to school before are also able to secure admission.

Early Childhood Education –In urban areas, there have been development of number of reputed nursery schools, where students get enrolled belonging to age groups of three to five years. Early Childhood Education establishes the foundation from which the learning of the child takes place. In most cases, parents belonging to all categories and backgrounds get their children enrolled in nursery schools, where they are able to begin their learning with play and gain familiarity with the outside world. The students are able to realize at this level that outside their home also there is a world, which they have to become familiar with.

Evening or Part Time Classes – The students in school usually join tuition centres in the evening to acquire extra classes in difficult subjects. There are coaching centres available, which provide training to the individuals to prepare for entrance examinations in professional courses, like medical, engineering, Masters of Business Administration (MBA) etc. In urban areas, individuals are able to find opportunities to get engaged in employment in the morning and get

enrolled into evening courses. These courses are of various subjects, such as, management, arts, education, counselling and guidance, travel and tourism, technology and so forth. When individuals have an interest in a particular area, they can pursue a short term course, which is primarily of three to six months duration.

Total Literacy Campaigns, Literacy Campaigns and Operation Restoration – These programs, have the main objective of imparting basic literacy skills and to achieve the pre-determined levels of literacy. The main objective of these programs is to make the individuals realize the significance of education. When the individuals will realize the significance of education, they will render a significant participation in these programs. The implementation strategies of these programs are, they are area-specific, time-bound, and include total coverage for the given age group. These are volunteer based, the building of the environment and mass mobilization are the areas that are focused upon. Improvements have been made in pedagogy, instructional strategies and teaching-learning processes (Patel, 2009).

THE SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOOD APPROACH

The sustainable livelihoods (SL) approach focuses upon the ways of understanding the practical actualities and priorities of poverty stricken men and women, what they in reality do to make a living, the assets they are able to draw on and the problems they experience in putting into practice various tasks and functions. The foundation is, the better this is understood, and they will be able to design the policies and programmes that are addressing the issues of poverty to identify the points of involvement and appropriate strategies in an enhanced manner. Ideally, efficacious strategies under the SL approach should function to improve and obtain access of the poverty stricken individuals to have control over assets, thereby, cultivating their livelihoods, and helping to make them less vulnerable to stressful situations, health problems and other hardships. These include serious illness, natural disasters or loss of employment opportunities, which could otherwise lead to a downward cycleof acknowledgement and destitution (Farrington, Ramasut, & Walkar, 2002).

When the aspect of livelihood is taken into consideration, it is more than income and includes areas, such as, capabilities, assets, stores, resources, claims, accessibility and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable, which can cope with and recuperate from pressures and problems, maintain or improve its competencies and assets, and provide sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation, and which contributes net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and within the long and short term time period. The general development principles underlying the SL approach are conditions for good practice, which are seen as vital if the SL development objective is to be realised, although it is also maintained that some of these principles, i.e. the need to work in partnership relate more comprehensively to good development practice, and are not essentially core features of SL approaches. These principles state that development activities should possess the following characteristics: (Farrington, Ramasut, & Walkar, 2002).

People-centred - Beginning with people's own interpretations of their priorities, opportunities and requirements, and thereby approachable and participating.

Differentiated - Recognising that poverty, and appropriate policy responses, differ among different groups of poverty stricken women and men, and therefore SL methods must be designed to be contextually precise.

Multi-level - Developmentof approaches which create a connection between the local level perspectives acquired by SL into higher level progressions of designing and implementing policies which impose on the deprived and economically weaker sections of the society i.e. creating micro-macro connections.

Partnership - Conducted in partnership between public, private and community sectors.

Sustainable –The perspective of sustainable livelihoods are looked upon from several dimensions, economic, institutional, social and environmental.

Dynamic – In response to the fact that the poverty stricken individuals manage complex portfolios of the number of activities, changing the balance amongst them by bringing about changes in opportunities and constraints that they experience.

Holistic – On the basis of the livelihood strategies that are diverse and depend upon the wide range of assets, meaning that they require integrated multi sector responses.

The securing of livelihood opportunities in urban context have the following factors: (Farrington, Ramasut, & Walkar, 2002).

Vulnerability - This means the insecurity or well-being of the individuals or communities in the face of bringing about transformations within the environmental conditions include, ecological, social, economic, and political. These are in the form of sudden blows, long term trends or seasonal cycles. The extent of susceptibility relates both to the level of external threats to a household's, individual's or community's welfare and to their flexibilityin struggling and recovering from external threats.

Assets - These are the resources on which people draw in order to carry out their livelihood strategies. These resources include a broad range of financial, human, social, physical, natural and political capital. Assets are not always owned by men and women, who use them in their livelihood strategies, rather, they may have varying extents of access to and control over these assets. Issuesare mainly relating to availabilityof assets and how the conditions of poverty stricken, deprived and socio-economically weaker sections of the society can be improved.

PIPs - These refer to the policies, institutions and processes. PIPs cover a wide range of social, political, economic and environmental factors that governindividual's choices and assist to enhance their livelihoods, such as, institutions recognized ways of doing things, such as, social norms and belief systems, organisations, policies or legislation. They are pertinent at all levels, from households to global progressions. They are the main areas in determining access to various types of capital assets that women and men make use of in pursuing their livelihood strategies, either through acting as conduits to make assets available to them, or as impediments within the course of their accessibility.

Livelihood strategies - These are the planned activities that men and women carry out to build their livelihoods. They commonly include a range of activities aimed to build asset basis and access to goodsand services for utilization. Livelihood strategies include, coping strategies considered to respond toshocks in the short term, and adaptive strategies designed to improve the circumstances in the long term. Livelihood strategies are determined by the assets and

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opportunities available to men and women, which are in turn affected by PIPs and changes in the vulnerability framework, as well as by the selections and aspirations of men and women.

Livelihood outcomes - These are the results of women and men's livelihood strategies and feedback into the vulnerability framework and asset basis, with efficacious strategies allowing them to build asset basis as a buffer against any kinds of stressful situations, as opposed to deprived livelihood outcomes, which reduceasset basis, thereby, increasing vulnerability and apprehensiveness. Livelihood outcomes may therefore, lead into either righteous, worthy or negative outcomes.

HOUSEHOLD STRATEGIES AND URBAN LIVELIHOOD SYSTEMS

The reproduction of households from one generation to the next is not an automatic process. For some of the deprived and marginalized families, it is difficult to provide means to sustain their daily existence. Others are able to secure means of survival, while others are able to lead a prosperous life. Urban individuals, who are residing in the conditions of poverty and backwardness, particularly have been compelled into numerous, innovative and resourceful strategies for leading to their survival and advancement. Indeed, household level strategies have become an important focus of social research in urban areas. Adjustment has put increasing pressure on the households. When individuals migrate from rural areas to urban areas, they experience problems in adjusting to the urban environment. The main concern is safety, this applies mainly to women and girls. Their main objective is to generate income and provide welfare for themselves and their families.The welfare provided by the state has been replaced with the caring capacity of families and communities (Beall, & Kanji, 1999).

In urban areas, the individuals, who have their own residences, have a proper source of income and are able to meet their needs and requirements in an effective manner are able to secure a sustained livelihood. They get their children enrolled in reputed educational institutions, have reputed jobs are able to hire helpers, such as drivers, cooks, sweepers and even join organizations, clubs or associations to get engaged in recreational activities or social work. Various categories of individuals are engaged into various employment opportunities to earn their livelihoods. They may be professionals, such as, doctors, lawyers, teachers, researchers, educationists or may have their own businesses or may be employed in financial institutions, educational institutions, as non-teaching staff and so forth. This point highlights the fact that in urban areas, individuals are wealthy and are able to carry out their household chores with assistance from helpers. They may live in nuclear families or joint families, nuclear families comprise of husband, wife and their unmarried children, whereas, joint families comprise of two or more nuclear families residing under the common roof.

In urban areas, there are number of individuals, who migrate from rural and tribal communities to enhance their livelihoods. In most cases, these individuals obtain jobs of minority workers. The jobs that they are mostly engaged in include, painter, plumber, carpenter, electrician, sweeper, construction worker and domestic help. Women feel more vulnerable as compared to men, the reason being, in urban areas, there has been an increase in crime and violence against women. They usually experience problems in obtaining a proper residence and either are homeless or manage to obtain just one room rented accommodation. Their income is

usually meagre when they migrate to urban areas, but some of the individuals are fortunate enough to have an increase in their income, send their children to schools and obtain property. When they are able to obtain a secured income, they send some of it to their parents in villages to help them sustain their livelihoods. Therefore, it can be stated that urban areas are more developed as compared to rural areas and individuals with hard work and resourcefulness are able to improve their livelihood.

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO LIVELIHOODS

The areas that highlight the innovative approaches to livelihoods have been stated as follows: (Innovative Approaches in Creating Livelihoods, 2010).

Labour Sector –In the labour sector, livelihood is best understood by taking into perception the financial, physical, social, natural and human endowments. The human element is stated to be the most crucial. The utmost concern when designing of the strategies takes place for the livelihood of the labour is to address the challenges that are experienced by these individuals. The most important concern is to implement innovative strategies and methods to alleviate their conditions of poverty and backwardness and make provision of opportunities to them, so that they are able to sustain their living conditions in a well-organized manner. There have been number of constitutional, administrative, institutional and legal initiatives and the evolution is still continuing. The innovativeness initiated by the Labour Net has competently leveraged the use of cell phone and internet to make provision of a technology enabled platform for creating a network to give the workforce access to work and make improvements in the standards of living conditions. Market needs and requirements of the clients have been accurately identified by Labour Net.

Institutional Approach in Livelihood Promotions –In any livelihood promotion project, institutions play an important role of not only as administrators, but also as friends, philosophers and guides. When implementation of any kind of project takes place, then the non-government institutions have an edge over the governmental institutions in terms of innovative ideas, flexibility in execution and professionalism in inclusive management. When institutional approach in livelihood promotions is researched upon, one is able to acquire sufficient information regarding various institutions. IFFDC has created a Primarily Livelihood Development Cooperative Society (PLDCS) to achieve the main objective of promotion of livelihoods amongst Self-Help Groups. An important institution in Gujarat is SEWA, on the basis of organizing the poverty stricken individuals within the rural communities for their livelihood promotion. This institution has adopted the approach towards organizing the community to improve their bargaining power. Government of Rajasthan has created a special institution in mission mode i.e. Rajasthan Mission on Skill and Livelihoods (RMoL) to address the issue of livelihood promotion within the state.

On the Trail of Migrants – Migration of labour from one place to another in search for a better livelihood is a fundamental area. Every individual, belonging to different categories and backgrounds aim to obtain livelihood opportunities, therefore, when they feel they are residing in a region, where there is not much availability of opportunities, they consider migrating to other

regions. In the present world, migration is observed as an alternative for sustainability. Aajeevika Bureau is a pioneer agency in southern Rajasthan to work on the issue of migrants. It addresses the needs of migrants through counselling, guidance, skills development support services at the destination centres, facilitation of remittance, legal counselling, safety and so forth. The migrants need information regarding various areas, especially when they move to another state. It is important for them to generate awareness, so that they do not experience major problems in transferring to other places or in communicating with individuals. There has been emphasis put upon reduction of migration and in certain cases, it can be reduced by making provision of alternative means of livelihood to destitute farmers, who tend to migrate. When there will be provision of facilities that would lead to security of livelihoods, then there would be a decline in the migration of individuals.

Common Ground –The interventions that come under the section, common ground put emphasis upon the use of local resources in the creation of wide ranging opportunities for the promotion of livelihood. The decrease in the common property resources has strengthened the occurrence of conflicts over the use of resources. The families that are poverty stricken are adversely affected, in some cases, they even experience scarcity of water and unavailability of civic amenities and other facilities. The privatization of the common resources and the imposition of Clean Development Mission (CDM) has further augmented the problems. The common ground is the tangible alternative for the poverty stricken individuals to address their needs of fodder and to provide adequate nutrition to themselves and their families. The Foundation for Ecological Security (FES) has shown that development and management of common property can lead to not only restoration of degraded forest, but also a source of livelihood for the vulnerable sections of the society. In Rajasthan's Seva Mandir, it is an organization that guides the rural households through the joint forest management program. Watershed development, afforestation program, water resource development and agriculture productivity enhancement are the areas that are emphasized upon through Seva Mandir's natural resource program.

Adding Value – Community based planning, designing and management of natural resources have been improved to a major extent and have rendered an effective contribution in the promotion of livelihoods amongst the individuals. The most strong and the cost effective means of adding value to any issue and concern is by the way of deploying appropriate technology. Digital green is the technology that is most effectively made use of in the agricultural sector. The participatory video and the mediated instruction for agricultural extension are achieved through a participating process for material production, a locally generated video data base, a humane mediated instruction model for training and a regimented sequence to initiate new communities. The results of this intervention have assisted farmers in bringing about the diversification of the agricultural activities to a large extent. Jal Bhagirathi Foundation (JBF) in the Marwar region of Rajasthan had identified water resources as the pivot, upon which the management of livelihood opportunities are focused upon. The selling price of water, at the price of 50 paise per litre has brought about transformations in the lives of the villagers.

Innovative Government Initiatives – In creating livelihoods, the role of the Government is the most crucial. Given the diversity and magnitude of the challenges in promoting sustainable

livelihoods, it is essential to obtain support from the Government. Throughout the country, various state governments on their own or in collaboration with other multi-national agencies have initiated more innovative livelihood projects. Madhya Pradesh Rural Livelihood Project (MPRLP) has the main aim to improve the livelihoods of the individuals in tribal dominated districts through an inter-linked two strategies. First by strengthening the resource base and second is to promote viable enterprises. One of the main approaches to the project is to bring co-operation by integrating schemes and programs. The project has set up an example for the better management of the programs. These projects and programs are important in playing an imperative part in enhancing the livelihood of the farmers and agricultural labourers. When these individuals are able to secure their livelihoods in rural areas, then they do not feel that they need to migrate elsewhere.

NATIONAL URBAN LIVELIHOODS MISSION (NULM)

The NULM mission is to alleviate the conditions of poverty and vulnerability amongst the individuals residing in urban areas. This can be implemented, in a number of ways, one of the most imperative is by making provision of skilled wage employment opportunities, and acquisition of self-employment that may contribute to sustainable livelihood opportunities. The mission also aims in making provision of shelters with essential services to the urban homeless individuals. In addition, the mission would also address livelihood concerns of the urban street vendors by facilitating access to suitable spaces, institutional credit, social security and skills to them for accessing emerging market opportunities. Therefore, the main focus of this mission is put upon generating a source of income as it is a primary requirement of the individuals. The guiding principles of NULM have been stated as follows: (National Urban Livelihoods Mission, n.d.).

The individuals, who are residing in the conditions of poverty are entrepreneurial and have the major aim to alleviate their conditions of poverty and enhance living conditions. They possess the inherent aspiration to utilize their skills and abilities to sustain their livelihoods. The first step in this process is to motivate these individuals to form their own institutions. They and their institutions need to be provided appropriate capability, so that they can accomplish the external environment, access finance, develop their aptitudes, enterprises and assets. This requires continuous and judiciously formed handholding support. An exterior, devoted and committed support structure, from the national level to the city and community levels, is required to encourage social mobilisation, institution building and livelihood promotion.

NULM is of the viewpoint that any livelihood promotion programme can be scaled up in a time-bound manner only if determined by the poverty stricken individuals and their institutions. Such strong institutional platforms sustain the poverty stricken individuals in the formation of their own human, social, financial, and other assets. This in turn, enables them have access to rights, entitlements, opportunities and services from the public and private sectors, while improving their solidarity, voice and bargaining power.

As per the Constitution (74thAmendment) Act, 1992, poverty alleviation in urban areas is a legitimate function of the Urban Local Bodies (ULB). Therefore, ULBs would need to

undertake a lead role for all subjects, matters and programmes concerning the urban poor in cities and towns, including development of skills and livelihoods.

NULM would aim at widespread coverage of the urban poor for skill development and credit facilities. It will endeavour for skills training of the urban poor for market-based jobs and self-employment, facilitating easy access to credit.

Street vendors constitute an important segment of the urban population and they are at the bottom of the hierarchy. Street vending is a source of self-employment and is a measure for the alleviation of the conditions of poverty without major intervention on the part of the Government. They have a noticeable place in the urban supply chain and are an essential part of the economic growth process within urban areas. NULM would aim at simplifying access to suitable spaces, institutional credit, social security and skills to the urban street vendors for carrying out their tasks and functions in accordance to the emerging market opportunities.

In urban areas, there are individuals, who are homeless and do not have proper shelters. They are without shelter, protection and social security and constitute the most vulnerable class. They are engaged in minority jobs and their income is meagre to meet all kinds of living requirements. The lives of the homeless individuals involves surviving continuously at the edge, in a physically dehumanized and intimidating environment. There is a need for appropriate policy intervention to address the problemsexperienced by homeless individuals, with regards to shelter, social housing and social protection. Accordingly, NULM has the objectiveof providing shelter equipped with important services to the urban homeless in a phased manner.

NULM would place high emphasis on convergence with schemes and programmes of the pertinent line ministries, departments and programmes of state governments dealing with skills, livelihoods, entrepreneurship development, health, education, social assistance, social security and so forth. An alliance strategy will be sought with all concerned departments to stimulate skills training of rural and urban migrants as a bridge between the livelihoods of the poverty stricken, deprived and marginalized individuals in rural and urban areas.

NULM would aim at partnership with the private sector in providing skill training, employment and building of shelters for the homeless individuals. It will make an attempt for active participation of private and civil society sectors in providing shelters to the urban homeless individuals, skill training and placement of the urban poor and in assisting technological, marketing and landholding support for the urban poor entrepreneurs, who have the desire to acquire self-employment and set up their own small businesses, or productionand manufacturing units.

CONCLUSION

Research has indicated that there has been much improvements made about in literacy and livelihood opportunities within the urban context. The main aspects that have contributed in leading to progressions are use of innovative strategies and methods, diligence and conscientiousness on the part of the human resources, implementation of rules and policies, formulation of appropriate measures, initiation of skill development opportunities and infrastructural development. In urban areas, different conditions are likely to be found in distinct areas, with spatial variations on the basis of factors, such as income, ethnicity, occupations,

religious backgrounds, ethnicities, and educational qualifications. There is a social mix of residents, and utilization of land, which include, retail, residential, industrial, mixed, formality or informality of neighbourhoods. Thus by observing the characteristics of urban sustainable livelihoods, these may be misleading as many urban areas and populations, may have more in common with rural areas as compared with other parts of the city.

In educational institutions and training centres, there are usage of modern and innovative techniques and methods. The provision of teaching-learning methods, instructional strategies, performance appraisal systems and extra-curricular activities have contributed an imperative part in enhancing learning and in acquisition of knowledge amongst the individuals. Obtaining good education and development of skills, securing good and well paid employment opportunities, medical and health care facilities, proper housing, infrastructure and civic amenities and facilities have contributed in the improvement of livelihoods amongst the individuals.

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