

PRAGJYOTISH COLLEGE

GUWAHATI – 781 009

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INSTITUTIONAL SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT POLICY

স্থাপিত : ১৯৫৪

Formulated by:
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CELL
PRAGJYOTISH COLLEGE

SECTION A: INTRODUCTION

- **DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY:** It was Aristotle who first defined the word 'community' as a group established by men having shared values. However, this initial definition has been refined and expanded through the years as a consequence of changing patterns of human society. A community in the present-day context may be defined as a group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common or people with similar occupations. While we traditionally think of a community as the people in a given geographical location, the word can really refer to any group sharing something in common, e.g. place (city, neighbourhood), experience, interest or profession. However, these categories may be overlapping in their nature.
- **PARAMETERS THAT DESCRIBE A COMMUNITY:** understanding a community includes understanding it in a variety of perspectives and through different aspects.
Human aspects: Every community has a physical presence in some form or the other. It can be manifested in a defined geographical area, settlement patterns, etc.
Infrastructural aspects: The functioning of a defined set of community depends upon the infrastructural provisions that exist within the geographical territory, viz. communication infrastructure (e.g. roads, bridges, transportation, telephone networks, etc.), public amenities/ utilities (e.g. parks, public toilets, drinking water facilities, banks, post office, religious places, waste disposal facilities, etc.), commercial infrastructure (e.g. shops, markets, industries, etc.), educational infrastructure (e.g. schools, colleges, etc.), physiography and environment (e.g. rivers, hills, landscapes, etc.)
- **DEFINITION OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY:** Social responsibility is an ethical theory, that an entity, be it an organization or individual, has an obligation to act to benefit society at large. Social responsibility is a duty, every individual or organization has to perform, so as to maintain a balance between the economy and the ecosystem. Institutional social responsibility in the context of educational institutions can be viewed as an effective mechanism for promotion of social learning amongst the students and teachers, which in turn ensures leadership and team building skills.
- **DEFINITION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** This concept broadly refers to various interventions which ultimately leads to building a better life for the communities in question. Irwin T. Sanders (1953) suggest that community development is an organized effort to improve the conditions of community life. Ali (1970) stated that community development is one of the methods for involving people in the process of socio-economic development and improvement of their own conditions by supplementing government efforts in this regard. The United Nations defines it as a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems.
- **PREREQUISITES FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Before getting involved in any community development works, it is advisable to take out time to understand the community and create a community description. This will enable to tailor interventions and increase the chances of any initiatives that may be undertaken. This may include the following strategies, viz.
 - Establishing a rapport with the community (e.g. visit to the community, establish relationships, recognizing and respecting the community diversity, build trust, work with the formal and informal leaderships, seeking commitment from community organizations and leaders to create processes for mobilizing the community)
 - Getting familiarized with the various challenges/ issues faced by the community

- Getting a feel for the attitudes and opinions of the community on various challenges/ issues
 - Promoting community self-determination
 - Collaborating/ networking with partner organizations for working on challenges/ issues of common interests
- **NEED FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** Community development initiatives tend to serve various purposes:
 - Improved physical well-being of the communities and the community infrastructure
 - Enhancing connectedness of the community with the geographical territory, through the establishment of a greater sense of empowerment

SECTION B: POLICY ATTRIBUTES

- **AIMS OF THE POLICY:** The primary aim of this policy document is to create means and ways to provide a guiding framework for institutional social responsibility
- **OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY:** The various intended objectives of this policy document are stated below:
 - To identify the resources of the community and tapping those for enhanced societal benefit by maintaining a balance between the scarce resources and multiple needs of the community
 - To stimulate the interests of community members in social problems and creating motivation for action through participation and education
 - To involve the community members in thinking, deciding, planning and playing a proactive partner in the quality uplift of services that affect their daily lives
- **THRUST AREAS FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:** The different thrust areas of this policy document shall be related to issues concerned with:
 - Underprivileged educational institutions, *viz. infrastructural development/upgradation support, human resource support, etc.*
 - Environmental degradation and promotion, *viz. air pollution, water pollution, land pollution, sound pollution*
 - Societal distress related to natural calamities, *viz. floods, landslides, earthquakes*
 - Entrepreneurship and vocational education
 - Community well-being, *viz. career support mechanism, health and well-being, socio-psychological issues, etc.*
- **EXPECTED OUTCOME:** The broad expected outcome of the institutional social responsibility approach shall include:
 - Qualitative and quantitative upgradation of academic ambience in the target institutions
 - Creation of general awareness in the community regarding diverse environmental issues, leading to their proactive involvement in the intended objectives as envisioned in this policy
 - Minimization of hardships during the times of calamities, enabling the affected communities to tide over the crisis periods
 - Enabling economic independence of targeted members of the community
 - Enabling physical and mental well-being of the targeted members of the community

SECTION C: FUNCTIONING GUIDELINES

- **AREAS OF OPERATION:** All community-related activities/works/projects/events shall be executed in the following earmarked areas:
 - (a) Geographical territory confined to a maximum of 10 kilometers radius of Pragjyotish College
 - (b) Adopted villages

- **WORKING MOTTO:** *A healthy institution resides amidst a healthy community*

- **WORKING MODALITIES:**

FREQUENCY: All community-related activities/works/projects/events shall be conducted for a maximum of two (2) counts in every academic session

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS: All funding requirements that may be necessary for executing the planned/proposed community-related activities/works/projects/events, will be disbursed from the budgetary amount head earmarked for the financial year in question. In cases where MoU partner institutions/organizations are involved, financial obligations (if involved) will be shared in a joint mode between the two partner institutions/organizations.

MANPOWER ENGAGEMENT: All community-related activities/works/projects/events will be executed in the following mode:

- (a) Engagement of teachers and staff (teaching and non-teaching)
- (b) Involvement of NCC/NSS/BSG etc. volunteers
- (c) Involvement of other in-house wings/bodies
- (d) Involvement of MoU partner institutions/organizations
- (e) Involvement of miscellaneous individuals/ social organizations, who may directly or indirectly contribute to the objectives of this policy

WORKING PLAN: All intended activities/works/projects/events will be accomplished according to the plan approved through the annual general meeting of the CDC

- **CORE TEAM:** The Community Development Cell of Pragjyotish College shall form the nodal agency for executing this policy document.