



Understanding of Local Self Governance Institutions (Rural)

PRIA

April 3, 2008

PRIA is an international centre for learning and promotion of participation and democratic governance





Governance

*Structure and process of decision making
about mobilization and use of public resources
for common public good*





Local Self Governance

- **Local Self Governance** refers to a sphere of decision-making that has been decentralized from the central state apparatus.



Types of Decentralization

1. **Deconcentration:** Dispersion of certain services from Central to Local 'Branch' offices
2. **Delegation:** Transferring certain decision making to Local Offices which are accountable to Central Government under Principal- Agent relation
3. **Devolution:** Transfer of Decision making, authority and management (3Fs: Functions, Finance and Functionaries) to local government which are accountable to their Constituents



Recent Developments in Local Governance

Last decade of last millennium witnessed spurt in decentralization experimentation in almost hundred countries in the world. The reasons were

- Political Strategies / Demands
- Fiscal/Financial Pressure
- Administrative Restructuring

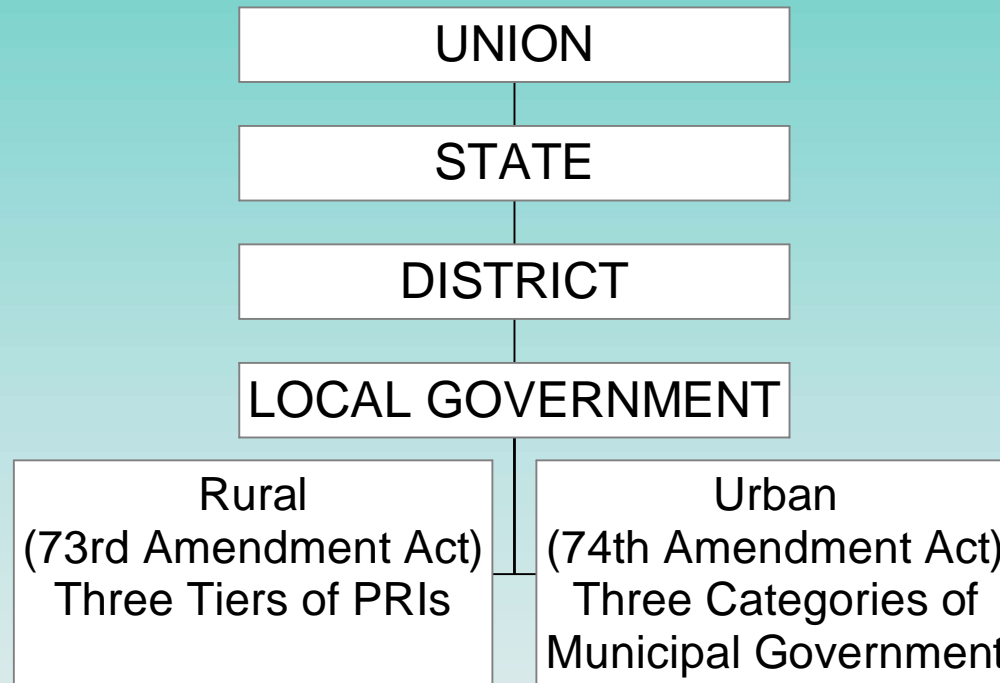


Significance of Local Self Governance

- *Space for citizens to **participate** in planning, implementation and monitoring of development services and resources.*
- *Provides space for local government and line departments to be **accountable to the citizens**.*
- *Ensure effective service delivery and utilisation of development resources*
- *Strengthens voices of the citizens, builds **active citizenship***

Spheres of Governance in India

73rd and 74th
Constitutional Amendment 1992





Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)

- Panchayat is an ancient term used to refer a body of 5 wise men (*Panch* means Five)
- PRIs are different from Panchayats of Past, which had degenerated to adopt Patriarchal and feudal characteristics
- Panchayati Raj Institutions are now Institutions of Self-Governance, as stipulated in Part IX of the Constitution of India. This part was inserted in the Statue book by 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992





PRIAs: Main Features

- Gram Sabha,
- Reservation of seats at all levels for women and marginalised castes
- State Election Commission to conduct regular, free and fair elections
- State Finance Commission to make recommendations for financial strengthening of Local Governments
- XIth Schedule in Constitution provide indicative lists of areas/issues of work of Panchayati Raj Institutions





PRIAs: Mandated Responsibilities

Article 243-G: Economic Development and Social Justice

(29 Items of XIth Schedule of the Constitution)

- Agriculture and Land Development
- Minor Forest and Social Forestry
- Minor Irrigation and Water Management
- Education
- Health, Drinking Water and Sanitation
- Social and Family Welfare
- SC/ST and Women Empowerment
- Poverty Alleviation
- Cultural Development
- Maintenance of Community Assets



Gram Sabha

- Gram Sabha is a permanent body of All Adult members (Voters) of Village(s) in a Gram Panchayat
- Gram Sabha elects members of Village, Block and District Panchayats
- Gram Sabha supports and guides Gram Panchayat in decision makings related to planning for Economic Development and Social Justice: Bottom-up Planning
- It also monitors Implementations of the Plans.

(Film)

District Planning Committee

Three Tiers of PRIs

District: District Panchayat
Sub District: Block Panchayat
Village: Village Panchayat

Categories of Municipalities:

Large: Municipal Corporation
Medium: Municipality
Small: Town Panchayat

**District Planning
Committee**

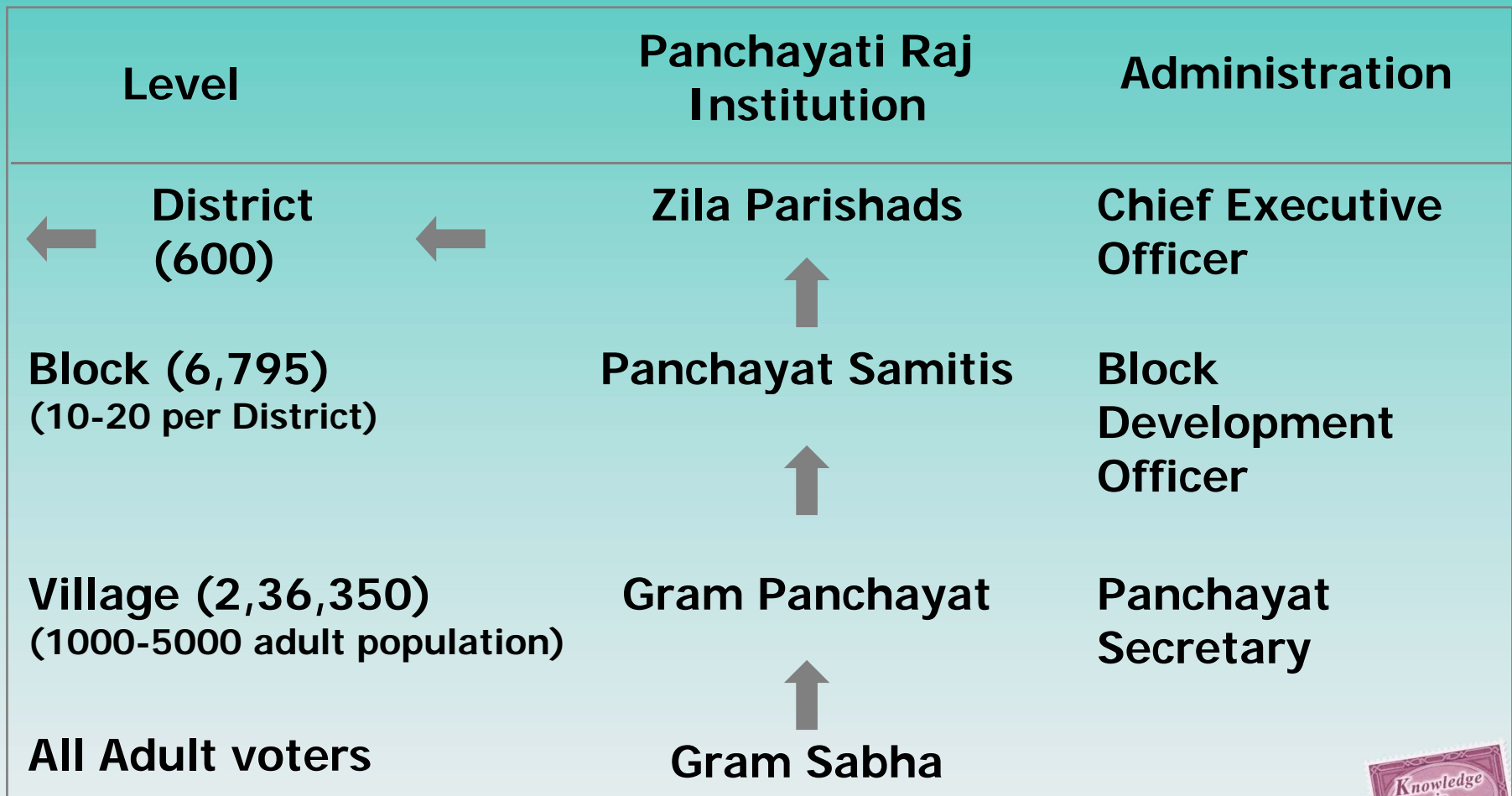
Spheres of Governance

	National	Provincial	Local
Legislature (No. of Members)	Parliament (790)	Assembly (4000)	PRIs-Rural/ Municipalities-Urban (3+ Millions)
Conduct of Elections	Election Commission of India		State Election Commission
Devolution of Resources	Finance Commissions (Five Yearly)		State Finance Commissions
Subject Matter Jurisdiction	Exclusive	Shared	Shared (Schedules 12 &13)



Scale of Institutional Reach

Purposes : Economic development & social justice



PRIA is an international centre for learning and promotion of participation and democratic governance





Why to Work with PRIs

- **Institutional Framework for Community Participation
Constitutional Mandate to Lead Local Economic
development with Social Justice**
- **Pan India Presence: Scale and Breadth of Panchayati
Raj Institutions cover more than 96% of Rural
Population**
- **Sustainability of Institutions through Periodic
Democratic Elections and Periodic Resources Transfers
for Financial Autonomy of Local Governments**
- **Gram Sabha: Platform for People's Participation to raise
Demands and To ensure Transparency and
Accountability in Responses of Panchayats**
- **Emergence of New, Educated and More Assertive
Leadership of Women, Dalits and Tribal at Local levels**

PRIA is an international centre for learning and promotion of participation and democratic governance





How to work with PRIs

- **Perspective Building.**
- **Understanding Micro Realities and Macro contexts**
- **Gram Sabha is most important unit to generate demands and ensure accountability**
- **Building Capacities of New Leadership**
- **Enabling/Facilitating/Handholding Bottom-Up Planning**
- **Advocating Devolution**
- **Engaging other Actors (scale and diversity)**





PRIAs leading the Development: NREGA as a case

NREGA, National Rural Employment Guarantee Act, 2005 seeks to provide at least 100 days of Employment in a year to a every Household in rural areas of selected districts whose adult members

- **Are interested in Manual Work**
- **And demand Employment as per stipulated mechanism**



Role of Panchayats in NREGA

- Gram Panchayats are Principle Authorities for Planning & Implementation
- Gram Panchayat responsible for Registration of Applicants, Issuing Job Cards, Identification of works to be done under NREGS, Allocating works to Applicants and Maintain Muster Rolls, etc
- Gram Sabha/Ward Sabha to recommend such works. Monitor execution of Social Audit.
- And, Gram Panchayat to execute & supervise works



Social Audit in Gram Sabha

Salient Features

- Participatory Approach
- Multi Dimensional
- Verification and Proactive Disclosure
- Enforce Accountability
- Continuous Process





Learning to Work and Working to Learn: PRIs

- **Constitutional Institutions of Local Governance, mandated to Lead Local Development: Not Parallel Bodies**
- **Highly Contested Political Terrain and Heterogeneity in local leaderships**
- **Local Hub to converge all developmental efforts**
- **Have Patience, Play Enabler/Facilitator Roles but build your capacities (information, knowledge) first to hold hands of dynamic institutions of Local Self Governance**

