Society & Social Justice · GS - II

Do you agree with the view that increasing dependence on donor agencies for development reduces the importance of community participation in the development process? Justify your answer.

EXAM YEAR	PAPER	SUBJECT
2022	GS - II	Society & Social Justice

MARKS	WORD LIMIT
15	~250 words

Answer Hint

Donor agencies can provide finance, technical expertise and institutional support, but donor-driven priorities may weaken local ownership if communities are excluded from planning and implementation. Sustainable development requires partnerships in which external assistance strengthens, rather than substitutes for, community participation.

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Model Answer

Introduction

Donor agencies contribute financial resources, technical knowledge and implementation support to development programmes. However, excessive dependence on external priorities can marginalise local communities and weaken participatory development.

Body

How Dependence Can Weaken Participation

1. Externally Determined Priorities: Projects may reflect donor objectives rather than the actual needs of local populations.

2. Reduced Local Ownership: When decisions are made by external agencies, communities may perceive projects as imposed initiatives rather than shared responsibilities.

3. Weak Accountability: Development organisations may prioritise reporting to funders over accountability to beneficiaries.

4. Unsustainable Outcomes: Projects may struggle after funding ends if local institutions lack the skills, resources or ownership required to maintain them.

Why Donor Support Remains Valuable

Donors can finance infrastructure, introduce innovative technologies, strengthen public services and provide specialised expertise. They can also support marginalised communities where domestic resources are inadequate.

Way Forward

Participatory needs assessments, Gram Sabha consultations, community monitoring, transparent budgeting and local capacity-building should be integrated into donor-funded projects. Funding agreements must include community-defined outcomes and long-term sustainability plans.

Conclusion

Dependence on donor agencies can weaken participation when development becomes externally controlled, but donor assistance itself is not inherently harmful. The ideal approach combines external resources and expertise with community ownership, local knowledge and democratic accountability.

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