

*This is based on the model developed by Bureau of Police Research and Development in 2003*

## **BEAT POLICING**

**AIM OF BEAT POLICING** - to develop better community- police relations through personalized people oriented policing.

***Comment:** While interacting with police personnel across Chhattisgarh it was evident in 2002-2003 that beat policing although was a commonly recognised term in policing, was defunct due to various reasons. Perhaps the primary reason was that there is severe shortage of staff at police stations across the state. However, as the study has been going on, the facilitators have been trying to emphasize that through community policing the police will be able to maintain the law & order even with minimum staff.*

## **OBJECTIVES BEHIND APPOINTING BEAT OFFICERS**

- to develop an informal yet acknowledged channel where individual or collective aspirations of sub-communities can be transmitted to the local police leadership
- to reduce fear and apprehension amongst individuals towards the police
- to generate understanding amongst the rank and file of the police towards the concerns of the community by bringing them in direct contact with it
- to develop capacity and instil a positive self-image amongst subordinate staff by placing trust in them through their appointment as beat officers and assistant beat officers
- to change public perception that the police is a peripheral organisation through active involvement in community life

## **DESIGNATION OF BEATS**

In the rural police station, each village situated in the jurisdiction of the police station will be designated as a beat. In the urban police station, each locality/residential colony under the police station area may be designated as a beat.

***Comment:** While CHRI has been working in the jurisdiction it realised that each village may not be designated as a beat. Instead each village will have a CLG which along with other CLG's of other villages will fall under one beat. In Maana there are 11 villages and one refugee colony with a police station of 22 staff. The police station area was divided into 4 beats with 3 villages under each. Each beat has a beat officer who is a head constable and is supported by a constable. Whenever, a beat officer is on leave or is away on duty and there is a meeting the person is replaced by other members of the thana or the SI himself attends the meetings.*

## **APPOINTMENT OF BEAT OFFICERS**

Beat Officers will typically be Constables/Head Constables with at least three years service. Constables with less than three years service in the police station will be designated as Assistant Beat Officers and will help Beat officers in discharging their functions. In case there is shortage of staff at the police station, a Beat Officer may be required to take up more than one beat.

## **SUPERVISION OF BEAT OFFICERS**

The work of each Beat Officer will be supervised by a Sub-Inspector. The Beat Officer will be required to report to his concerned Sub-Inspector after patrolling a Beat. Beat Officers will also be required to brief the SHO before any police- CLG meeting.

## **FREQUENCY OF BEAT PATROLLING**

In rural beats, Beat Officers must visit their beat at least once a week. In urban beats, Beat Officers should visit their beat daily.

***Comment:** Since Maana has a small area and has fewer villagers under its jurisdiction, it is possible for the beat officers to visit the villages at least once a week. However, there are police stations with 200 villagers and little staff and vehicles, in these circumstances it may be difficult for the beat officers to visit once a week; In these cases the frequency of the visits may be reduced and a greater coordination with the CLG, the Kotwar and the panchayat members may be organised.*

## **POLICE RELATED FUNCTIONS OF A BEAT OFFICER**

- to attend all meetings of a CLG with the SHO
- to assist in investigation and detection of crime in the beat
- to collect and collate crime related information in the beat
- to serve and execute summons in the beat
- to carry out verifications in the beat
- to be part of any arresting party in the beat
- to personally attend distress calls in the beat
- to compile information on the households/establishments in the beat

***Comment:** While it may be difficult for the police themselves to collect the information household wise in large areas, the services of the NSS or the NCC students may be roped in here in the different areas.*

## **COMMUNITY RELATED FUNCTIONS OF A BEAT OFFICER**

- developing familiarity with individuals residing in the beat
- listening to individual grievances

- communicating needs and complaints of the individuals to the concerned Sub-Inspector and SHO
- educating residents on crime prevention measures
- assisting in resolution of petty disputes (beat officer can take assistance of his supervising sub-inspector if required in this )
- oversee neighbourhood watch schemes and community policing initiatives in the beat
- socially integrating themselves into the life of the community through informal police-public contacts such as :
  - participation in local functions and festivals
  - interfacing with children at schools and organizing police station walkthroughs for them
  - interfacing with senior citizens
  - helping people tackle civic problems
  - helping senior citizens
  - organizing sports and cultural activities
  - assisting in social welfare programmes

***Comment:** In Maana the personnel have assisted the community to solve even civic problems such as to stop a polluting factory, remove garbage etc. The police are not expected to perform these tasks yet since the panchayat was virtually non-functional for some time the police had taken up the role to solve the community's problems. However, since the time the panchayat members are attending the meetings, these problems have reduced and the burden of responsibility has been taken over by the panchayat members with the community liaison group members.*