

## FIELD WORK COMPONENTS

In Part II of this Field Work Journal we shall first list out the objectives of field work of First Year students of the Bachelor Degree in Social Work. Subsequently we shall move on to the discussion on various field work components.

### Objectives of Field Work for BSW (First Year)

- To develop professional attitude conducive to deal with human problems.
- Developing sensitivity towards the needs and problems of individuals and families.
- Developing skills to deal with human problems, skill in teamwork, skills in developing and maintaining rapport with individuals and agencies.  
To familiarize the students with the professional role of social workers.
- To develop self awareness and orientation to teamwork.
- To develop skills in report writing and use of supervision.  
To develop skills in facing professional social work teachers/instructors, participating in discussion and seeking guidance during individual and group conferences.

The sequential arrangement of the components of Field Work is as follows:

- 1) Orientation visits
- 2) Placement
- 3) Agency client relationship
- 4) Assignment of tasks
- 5) Nature of social work process
- 6) Teamwork
- 7) Administrative assignments
- 8) Recording
- 9) Field Instruction

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### COMPONENT 1 ORIENTATION VISITS

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Initial tasks or activities assigned to the student are to visit some of the agencies engaged in social welfare activities. We may call it orientation visits (in case of induction programme), agency visits (in case of field work practice/placement) and exposure visits (usually for educational purpose).

The major objectives of orientation visits are: to acquire observation skills and develop a spirit of inquiry; to understand society responses to social problems through various services; to understand, appreciate and develop ability to critically evaluate the initiative of voluntary and government programmes. Orientation visits also aims at developing an appreciation for social work intervention in these programmes by recording relevant information about the client system and the problem/concern;

the selection of programmes/strategies for solving the problem and its relevance to the client system; the role of the social worker and its relevance to the client's needs and the problem; the relationship between the micro problems and the macro problems, the appropriateness of the organization's resources and the nature of intervention; gaps identified and suggestions.

The following settings can be visited depending upon the availability of the agencies though it would be better to visit as many agencies as possible for maximum exposure. The student is encouraged to observe the similarities and differences in the way social work is being practiced in different settings and find out the causes for the same. Differences can be observed in the practice of methods in same settings also. The agency's values, the practitioners approach, the requirement of the client, the resources of the agency may be some of the factors influencing the practice of various methods of social work.

### 1) **Health Settings** – hospitals, community health centres, primary health centres, clinics

Health settings are an important setting for the social workers. In hospitals social workers work along with the medical practitioners, nurses, physiotherapists and other para-professionals as medical teams. Their major functions include counselling patients suffering from serious or terminal diseases, counselling patients involved in accidents and suffered loss of body parts, and counselling HIV infected individuals. Social workers also counsel family members of the patients and enable them to adjust to the new situation and make necessary changes in their life situation so that recovery of the patient is facilitated. Social worker also helps raise resources for the treatment and rehabilitation of the patients.

In mental health settings the social worker is part of the mental health team along with the psychiatrist and psychologist. The primary functions of the psychiatric social worker is to counsel the patient and his family members, implement behavior modification techniques, conduct home visits, facilitate the return of the patient into his/her normal functioning as a student, housewife or employee.

In the community health centre the social worker studies the health needs of the community and based on that develops awareness programmes to change the behavior pattern of the community. He also organizes health camps, conducts health surveys; organize the people to demand health programmes and looks for ways and means to improve the same. To begin with one may have to motivate and facilitate the community to be hygienic in the day-to-day life.

Health settings as can be seen gives the social worker a wide variety of situations to practice the methods of social work and thus an important learning opportunity,

### 2) **Correctional Settings**

Correctional settings include prisons, police stations, juvenile justice systems, training schools and administration of parole services. The major functions are to counsel the inmates helping them adjust to the institutional settings, deal with inmate family problems and assist in their rehabilitation and resettlement in the community. The social worker acts as a link between prisoners and the institution to improve the services being provided.

### 3) **Civic Administration**

Civic administration includes social welfare departments, education departments, health departments, municipal offices, panchayat offices, collectorates, block offices and so on. The social worker will have to get knowledge about the various government programmes, the delivery mechanisms, their limitations and advantages. The student can observe the functioning of the related offices and interview the officials. Their opinion on the programmes and their problems in implementing them can be noted. Familiarisation with the functioning of these departments/agencies is very important for the social worker,

#### **4) Education Settings**

Education settings are school, college and non-formal/adult education institutions. In school and college settings social workers have the following functions; enable the student to adjust in the institution, deal with problems of drop outs, ragging, drug addiction, juvenile delinquency, absenteeism, emotional crises, learning and motivation problems, and act as link between the institution and the student-teacher-parent community.

In the non formal/adult education settings the role of the social worker is to approach the community, identify suitable candidates for attending classes, motivate them and their families to attend classes and see that they continue to do so till the course completes. After the course is over it is important that necessary follow up action in terms of refresher courses is undertaken.

#### **5) Home for the Destitute, Disaster Afflicted, Refugees and Migrants**

The problems of the individuals who stay in temporary and short stay homes are diverse in nature. For the migrant and disaster affected the needs providing immediate basic needs, counselling to recover from the trauma and shock caused due to the tragedy, provision of legal aid, initiation of rehabilitation efforts and linking up with government agencies and other NGOs.

#### **6) Homes for Weaker Sections — Women, Children, Beggars and Elderly**

A number of homes are run for destitute and abandoned women. Social worker counsel the inmates, organize events to create awareness, assist them in availing government programmes and legal aid to help the women cope with the problems. In adoption agencies the Social Worker is responsible for checking the suitability of the prospective parents and their compatibility with the child to be adopted. In old age home the social worker is responsible for maintaining the physical and mental health of the inmates. She/He has to help them cope with loneliness, neglect and help them to adjust to the new situation.

#### **7) Community Services**

Many NGOs in India provide community related services. Some of them specialize in a single activity e.g. health, education while others provide multiple services. Most of them have Social Workers working for them. Their major tasks include study and research of the community, identifying the felt needs of the people, organizing awareness programmes, mobilizing people, identifying leaders, setting priorities, suggesting alternative means to solve the problems, implementing programmes and evaluating them. The community setting gives the social worker ample opportunities to use the integrated methods of social work.

#### **8) De-addiction and Rehabilitation Centers**

These centres provide drug addicts, alcoholics and other substance abusers medical and psychological support to end their addiction and become useful members of the society once again. Social workers are involved in counseling the patient and his/ her family members helping them to end the addiction and prevent lapse in future.

#### **9) Palliative Care Centers**

The family at times neglects terminally ill patients or the patients themselves feel that they are a burden to the family. In such cases very often there involves medical care, which is neither available in the home nor a trained personnel. Palliative care centres allow such patients to live and die with dignity. The role of the social worker is mainly to provide emotional support to the patients and organize some events to ease their painful stay in the centre.

There may be other similar settings, which are local specific. The FWS will do the needful to provide appropriate exposure to the student keeping this in mind.

While you may be visiting a wide variety of agencies this year, it is recommended that you focus on the study of development projects. Some agencies may be providing number of services other than development projects while others may be implementing only development projects. When visiting the former you should give special attention to agency's efforts in the development sector by asking them the 'what, how, whys' of the projects.

Development projects are important activity in third world country like ours. India's main problem, poverty, is caused mainly due to the lack of resources among the people, lack of awareness and information and exploitative structures. Development projects facilitate quantitative and qualitative changes in people's lives by providing the necessary resources and information.

Training people in vocational skills and leadership skills, providing credit facilities, arranging for technology transfers, creating infrastructure and forming self-help groups are some of the activities of development projects.

**INFORMATION REQUIRED**

**Name of the Institution**

**Address**

**Mission statement/Motto(if any)**

**Institutional objectives**

**Chief Executive Officer/Executive Officer**

**Board members**

**Type of work**

**Number and Nature of beneficiaries**

**Geographical area of work**

**Whether the agency is registered or not**

**Organizational structure** (A simple diagram may be drawn. If the agency is a branch of a larger organization its place in the larger organization can be shown)

Number of staff members and Nature of Staff

<b>Level</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Qualification</b>	<b>Position Held</b>
Professionals			
Support staff			
Volunteers			
Total			

**History of the Organization**

The student is expected to trace briefly the history of the organization from its inception. The growth or decline in the number of activities, the increase or decrease in the areas in which these services are being offered, and changes in the staff strength over the time can be noted. Most importantly the agency's rationale for the services provided, the reasons for the changes in approach over the years and the results of the changes are to be studied.

**Sources of Funding**

Funding especially foreign funding has become a controversial issue in the recent past. Special care should be given while dealing with this sensitive issue. *You should not insist on knowing the funding sources if the agency officials are reluctant to divulge that information.*

The following categories are suggested for **collecting** the information

Foreign sources and Indian sources.

Foreign sources – International organizations, Governmental and non-Governmental resources. And within non-governmental – private institutional donors and private individual donors.

Indigenous sources – Governmental – central, state governments and panchayats. Non-governmental sources – private institutional donors, private individual donors

Community owned resources

Methods For raising funds and achieving financial stability

### **Infrastructure Facilities**

#### **Buildings**

You should see whether the building wherein the agency operates is suitable for the activity it has undertaken. For e.g. a short stay home for women will require the necessary rooms, toilets and bathrooms so that women can stay with necessary comfort. Besides the area should be secure so that inmates live without fear.

#### **Transport**

You should see whether the agency has the required transport facilities to perform its function. For e.g. in community development programme there may need for regularly traveling to far flung areas and the staff may be depending on a number of transport facilities. In hospitals or old age home there may be need for ambulance to transport the patients.

#### **Communication aids**

Phone, Internet, etc. In your own placement you can familiarise yourself with the uses the agency puts the computer to and see whether they can be better utilized.

#### **Audio video equipment**

Projectors. Video players, radio meant for public education purposes.

Relationship with other agencies

#### **1) Relationship with other welfare agencies**

Coordination and cooperation with other NGOs working in similar areas

Are there other agencies working with the similar objectives in the area? Is there any cooperation between the agencies working in the area? Are there any conflicts between the agencies working in the same area or field?

#### **2) Relationship with government departments**

Whether the agency receives government funding or not. Whether the agency cooperates with the government in implementing programmes. In the opinion of the agency how do government officials deal with them. Do the Banks in the area support the agency?

#### **3) Relationship with Panchayat Raj Institutions (PRIs)**

Is the agency cooperating with the PRIs? What are the areas in which the agency is cooperating with the PRIs? Does the agency officials think that PRIs are functioning well?

4) Relationship with community based organizations

The number of CBOs working in the field. The method of their formation. Self-initiated or started by government, by other agencies etc. How old are they and if they are dissolving what are the reason for the same. If the CBOs are increasing in strength then the reasons for the same can be noted. What are the areas of cooperation between the agency and the CBOs?

5) Relationship with **other** organizations like religious organizations, associations etc.

Opinion on the **relevance** and **quality of** services provided by the Agency

Opinions can be collected from the staff members, clients, management and government officials working in the area.

Collection of the information will require talking informally to the beneficiaries.

Problems faced by the agency and proposed remedies

1) **Internal problems**

Internal problems can be related to funding, infrastructure, staff, **management** and objectives of the agency.

2) **External problems**

External problems can be related to the target population. For e.g. the lack of cooperation from the community or hostility from the leaders. External problems can be related to the agency relationship with government departments, other NGOs, panchayat institutions etc.

The student can also note down how the agency plans to face these problems, relationship with the donors and their demands.

Future plans

The agency plans for expansion and the future can be described. This will include the new programmes the agency would start and how it plans to initiate the same.

Recognition and awards

Mention whether the agency was awarded/rewarded/given recognition for its contribution for social uplift.

Affiliations

Mention whether the **agency** is affiliated to any institutions such as councils, higher educational institutions, network etc.

**Any** other information

For example, the agency participation in relief activity in disaster prone area or the political nature of the activity if applicable.

**Learning** process

- . You can write your own impressions on the agency. Further you can compare the agency with the other agencies you have visited and note down the strengths and weaknesses of the agency in comparison with the other.
- . You can give your opinion on the **importance** of the agency to the community, its objectives and its functioning. You may agree or disagree with the method used by the agency to attain its objectives and give reasons for the same.

Your gain in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude can be noted. You can report if the visit was a waste of time and give reasons for the same. Suggestions can be made to make these visits more productive.

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## **COMPONENT 2 PLACEMENT**

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Placement is an important part of the field work. You are expected to do at least 25 full working days at the agency. You may be already working in an agency and in such cases your Field work Supervisor will help you to get maximum exposure in practicing those skills, which cannot be practiced in your agency.

Social workers are always part of a team. You will wherever possible, be placed in teams of three to six. The aim of this exercise is to enable the student to adjust to new situations and with people from different backgrounds; to gain experience in reconciling different approaches towards the same problem and ensure effective service delivery; to learn from the knowledge and experiences of other professionals; to learn to divide responsibilities, discard egoistic attitudes and promote group goals; to develop leadership skills, communication skills and improve self awareness. Questions related to this are given in the Teamwork Section.

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## **COMPONENT 3 AGENCY CLIENT RELATIONSHIP**

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One of the aims of the Social Worker is to improve the social functioning of the client. It is by establishing a relationship with the client that the social worker achieves that aim. The process starts when the client on his/her initiative or on the persuasion of others approaches the agency for help. Sometimes this action of the client is as a result of a programme conducted by the agency itself. For e.g. an awareness campaign on HIV-AIDS will encourage individuals who suspect that they are infected to approach the agency. In other cases he/she will be referred to by other organization to the agency. The agency then allocates the case to the social worker. The role of the agency is to provide the necessary resources. The client is the centre of the whole process and therefore the client-social worker-agency system is to be understood properly.

The client approaches the agency with some expectations and may be with some apprehensions. He/She has his/her own world view based on his/her value system, individual experiences and position in the social structure. The client may have certain ideas on the social work process. For example a person with financial problem may expect some monetary help and feel that whole process of counselling is a waste of time. On the other hand the agency has its own ideology and its own limitations. They have to proceed on the basis of these values and ideology.

The social worker has his/her own value system based on professional values and ethics. It is important that personal values formed by specific personal experiences don't affect his/her perception of the client. Social Work principles like non-judgmental approach and controlled emotional involvement emphasize the need for that quality on the part of the social worker. The social worker therefore should develop a certain level of self-awareness to limit the influence of personal experience in the relationship.

- 1) Discuss and list down your own likes and dislikes with regard to your social functioning like your choice of friends and kind of work you enjoy or dislike and such matters, which you consider to be important.
- 2) What are the first impressions of an individual/group/community and whether it changed after subsequent sessions and after the availability of more information?



- 3) How does the client see the agency and why?
  - a) Helper b) friend c) relative d) broker e) doctor f) professional' g) any other
- 4) How does the agency see the client?
  - a) Poor and helpless b) resource less

The rationale for providing the service to the clients can be discussed here. Some of the important reasons for the provision of the service are religious, philanthropic, professional, entrepreneurial and to improve public relations.
- 5) How does the agency see the social work professionals'?
- 6) Do you think that the agency is fulfilling the purpose it is meant for? If yes give reasons and if no, give reasons.
- 7) How do the beliefs, traditions and preconceived notions of the client system influence the perception of the agency?
- 8) Understand the implications of existing bureaucratic set-up and legislation on the services provided.

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#### **COMPONENT 4 ASSIGNMENT OF TASKS**

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The aim of doing specific tasks is to expose the student to situations where the Social Work methods in rudimentary form are used. The task itself may not be related to social work but the preparation of the same may require meeting individuals and groups, interacting with them and enabling them to plan the task and implement it. The task can be chosen depending on the need of the target population and the resources available.

Describe the various steps followed to organize the event

##### **I) Initial stage**

- Initial contact with the group.
- Rapport building.
  - Studying the situation and getting to know the felt needs of the target population.
- List out objectives of the programme in qualitative and quantitative terms.
- Choose the appropriate task or activity to attain these objectives after consultation with agency officials, community members and beneficiaries. If permission has to be taken from the concerned authorities you should do so.
- Develop a realistic time frame for conducting the activities.

##### **II) Planning stage**

- Prepare a plan.
- List out the tasks to be done.
- Anticipate expected problems and unexpected problems by brainstorming.
- Allocate the responsibilities to individuals and groups or both. Mention clearly the

responsibilities. Communicate the responsibilities to the concerned persons preferably in a meeting where every one involved is present.

- Mobilize the internal and external resources. The community resources have to be mobilized;

### III) Implementation stage

- Implement the plan.
- Unexpected assistance that helped you to implement the programme

### IV) Evaluation and feedback

- Have the objectives set been attained?
- What is the effect of the programme on the target population?

Tasks that can be undertaken (some illustrative activities)

#### Individual related activities

- 1) Arrange a job for person who has to be rehabilitated.
- 2) Arrange a loan/government scheme for a needy person helping him/her during the various stages of his/her application.
- 3) Arrange for loan/scholarship for the children/adults from private/public sources.
- 4) Arrange for a patient to be taken to hospital using a volunteer. You should not take the patient yourself and claim that it's a valid assignment.
- 5) Arrange for cost of medication for the children/adults from private/public sources.

#### Group/community related programmes

- 1) Organize a picnic, visits to places of interest like museums, temples, historical places etc..
- 2) Arrange for adult education classes/non-formal classes/tuitions for the various categories of the people in the community.
- 3) Organize an awareness camp related to health, education, government programmes, human rights to improve the knowledge level of the people.
- 4) Organize street plays with the actors being the members of the community.
- 5) Conduct a health camp for the people: It can be a nutrition camp or immunization camp.
- 6) Conduct surveys for use in the formulation of future programmes.
- 7) Organize a fund raising event. For example, a **bal mela** can be organized in the school.
- 8) Organize a sport programme in the school or the community.
- 9) Organize leadership training programme for the informal leaders of the community.
- 10) Organize a **dharna** or **demonstration** for focusing on a people issue.
- 11) Arrange for filing Public Interest Litigation for a social problem.
- 12) Arrange for legal aid for the afflicted persons and follow up till the issue is satisfactorily resolved.
- 13) Arrange for the vocational training for the disadvantaged sections.

### **Describe the problems encountered in organizing the event**

Some of the problems can be the following.

- 1) Lack of cooperation or even hostility from the people and target population.
- 2) Lack of resources. Internal resources include organizational resources like funds and staff. External resources like community resources, community participation and infrastructure.
- 3) Target population related problems
  - First, the group or community may be riddled with factions whose previous conflicts may enter the planning and implementation of the current programme.
  - Two, the presence of a dominating individual or group may reduce participation by others, leading to dissatisfaction among others.
  - Three, some individuals and group may try and use the common programme for private use.
  - Lastly, weaker sections of the population like women, schedule caste and the poor may not be able to participate due to lack of motivation or lack of convenience.
- 4) Problems related to participants
  - Inconsistency of the people's interest levels in the task which they have decided for themselves. There may be high enthusiasm in the beginning that may lower after some time.  
Individuals who accepted responsibilities may neglect it later and give various excuse or may not appear at all.
  - By making alternative arrangements like giving the responsibility to someone else and so on.
  - Within yourself — that is controlling your emotions of being let down etc, from negatively influencing your performance.
  - By discussing the situation with the concerned persons or confronting the participants.

It would be beneficial if you write down how you faced these problems.

**Discuss your reactions with your FWS.**

### **Describe the achievements of the programme**

- 1) **In terms of the objectives of the programme**
  - i) Participation of the people — in terms of gender, communities and groups of the community especially the weaker sections of the community.
  - ii) Quality of participation.
  - iii) In terms of the change wanted by you.
- 2) **In terms of the larger programme of the agency**
- 3) **In terms of the people needs**
  - i) What specific need did the programme satisfy?
  - ii) What further programmes should be conducted to attain the objectives set by you?
- 4) **In terms of the people's participation in future programmes.**

## Learning

You should realize that the task itself is **not** as important as the experience itself. You **should** note the skills, which you **find** useful in performing the task. Also you should look at the weaknesses in your skills, knowledge and attitude that had caused some of the shortcomings in the **programme**. Especially **important** is the **manner** in which you deal with frustrations caused by the failure of others **to meet** your **expectations** - when they disagree with your meaningful suggestions, break their commitments for trivial reasons (according to you) or even **attach** false **motives** to your actions. Also important are the **problems** you **should** have anticipated but could not as you had not observed or had not been able to interpret the observations that you had seen.

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## COMPONENT 5 NATURE OF SOCIAL WORK PROCESS

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- 1) Studying the client/community systematically and use it to formulate the appropriate programmes.
- 2) Initiating activities in the agency, along with fellow trainees and professionals by highlighting the needs of the clients and selecting relevant programmes to satisfy them.
- 3) Making contacts with other professionals, government officials, influential persons of the community.
- 4) Plan, organize and evaluate the activities with colleagues in the agency.
- 5) Learn interviewing skills in different settings.
- 6) Learn to do home visits and record the relevant information for future use.
- 7) Increase the levels of participation in the activities undertaken by the agency.
- 8) Note the patterns of interaction in the various groups you work with or the groups you work for and analyze social process like cooperation, conflict, association and resistance. Record and discuss with the Field Work Supervisor.
- 9) Suggest ways to the agency on how its programmes can be improved and staff can be motivated.

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## COMPONENT 4 TEAMWORK

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As mentioned earlier social workers have to work in teams and the team members may be other professionals like lawyers, doctors, nurses or volunteers. The approach of other professionals will be very different from social workers. The social worker in such cases not only has to take care of the psychological and social needs of the individual/s, but also has to humanize and integrate the various approaches.

It has been also observed that some professionals especially doctors in a medical setting try to marginalize the social worker's role in the healing process. This kind of response may be found in voluntary social workers especially those that are from the upper strata of the society who are impatient with the approach of the professional social workers, It is the social worker's responsibility that he/she adjusts in the situations keeping in mind the welfare of the client/s.

- 1) Explain your role in the team (individuals you work with directly in course of implementing your programme).
- 2) Observe and explain the affect of the way the team is functioning on the implementation of the programmes.
- 3) Does any team member show lack of understanding of the social work profession?
- 4) Instances of cooperation and conflict if any.

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## COMPONENT 7 ADMINISTRATIVE ASSIGNMENTS

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Begin to understand the agency, its policies and its rules and regulations. The importance of keeping records and preparing reports of the activities undertaken should be understood. Basic statistics regarding the income and expenditure of the agency should be understood. Learn to write official letters and maintain records.

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## COMPONENT 8 RECORDING

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Social work professionals have to maintain records for the following reasons — use it as reference and check the progress of the case; to facilitate consultation; for the growth of the knowledge of the discipline and professional growth.

A recording system envisages the following.

A proper format to record facts, opinions, suggestions and observations.

- A file or book to enter the information.
- A sound file system which will enable storage and quick retrieval

Cooperation from other employees in the maintenance of the records.

Since it is the first year Process Recording is suggested which means that you write down in your words the sequence of events as it took place. Your assessment of the problem, comments and observations are noted at the end of the reporting. As the work progresses you can attempt a diagnosis of the problem and suggest actions to remedy the situation. Evaluation and feedback received can be reported at the end of the programme.

For example, a case can be recorded as follows.

Personal information like name, age, education, qualifications, employment, income, nature of problems, past attempts to solve the problem and their results.

*First visit — the client description of the problem, the questions you asked him/her, the replies the client gave you. All this information is to be noted simultaneously during the interviews in form of points, which you later enter into the appropriate files. After that you give your observations and comments regarding the client.*

Second visit and third visit and so on.

Process recording or otherwise called verbatim recording means that you record the events as they occur with your comments at the end of the note.

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## COMPONENT 9 FIELD INSTRUCTION

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The relationship between you and the FWS is a crucial one. It is a professional one in which the FWS is your friend, philosopher and guide. It is up to you to make best use of the FWS.

Appendix-I

Proforma for Information Required from Orientation Visits

Name of the institution

Address

Mission statement/motto(if any)

Institutional objectives

Chief Executive Officer/Executive Officer

Board members

Type of work

Number and nature of beneficiaries

Geographical area of work

Whether the agency is registered or not

Organizational structure (A simple diagram may be drawn. If the agency is a branch of a larger organization its place in the larger organization can be shown).

Number of staff members and Nature of Staff