

---

# Leadership Under Constraints - Managing with Limited Resources



# Opening Thought

- In public service, constraints are not exceptions; they are the norm.

# Why This Matters

- Governance operates under constant limitations

*“In public service, constraints are not exceptions; they are the default setting.”*

- High citizen expectations


*“For a citizen, the system is only as good as the last service they received.”*

- Outcomes are non-negotiable

*“In governance, not delivering is not an option; it is a failure.”*



### Menti

Leadership traits word c...  

Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com) | use code **6566 2582**



#### Select which slide to add

Mentimeter

In your view, what will be your biggest constraint as a Deputy Collector?

✕ ✎

Mentimeter

From a Tokugawa development perspective, what is the MOST limiting constraint to achieving better outcomes?

✕ ✎

Mentimeter

What has helped you deliver results despite constraints?

✕ ✎

In your view, what will be your biggest constraint as a Deputy Collector?



menti.com  
**6566 2582**

0 of 3 responded



# Reality of Governance

- Limited budgets
- Staff shortages
- Policy rigidity
- Political pressures
- Lack of proper information

# Types of Constraints

- Financial
- Human resources
- Information
- Institutional
- Time

# Financial Constraints

- Budget limits
- Delayed fund flows

# HR Constraints

- Vacancies
- Skill gaps
- Ageing population

# Information Constraints

- Poor data quality
- Delayed reporting
- Lack of awareness

# Institutional Constraints

- Rules
- Legacy systems

# Time Constraints

- Urgency
- Crisis situations

From a Telangana development perspective, what is the MOST binding constraint to achieving better outcomes?

Mentimeter



menti.com  
6566 2582

0 of 3 responded



Menti

Leadership traits word c...



Select which slide to add

In your view, what will be your biggest constraint as a Deputy Collector?

From a Telangana development perspective, what is the MOST binding constraint to achieving better outcomes?

What has helped you deliver results despite constraints?

# Theory of Constraints (TOC)

- What is TOC?  
Developed by Eliyahu M. Goldratt
- Every system has at least one constraint (bottleneck)
- This constraint limits overall performance
- Improving anything else → no significant impact

# How Leaders Manage Constraints

→ Find the bottleneck

(What is slowing everything down?)

→ Use it effectively

(Focus it on what matters most)

→ Support it

(Align all efforts around it)

→ Fix it

(Remove or reduce the constraint)

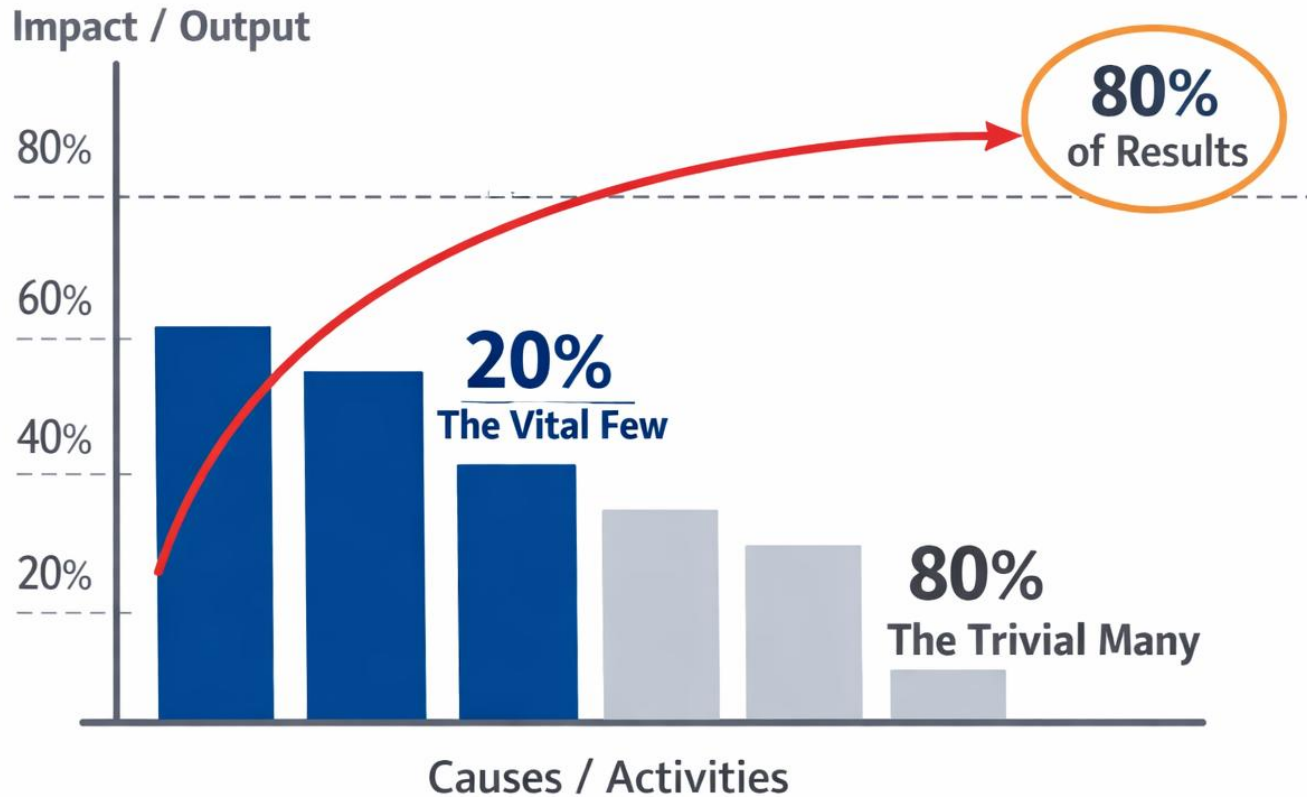
→ Repeat

(Next bottleneck will emerge)

# The Core Challenge

- Delivering outcomes without ideal resources
  - Identify what is **actually limiting outcomes**
  - Focus on the **key bottleneck**

# Pareto Principle (80/20 Rule)



What has helped you deliver results despite constraints?





menti.com  
6566 2582

0 of 3 responded



Menti

Leadership traits word c...  

Select which slide to add

In your view, what will be your biggest constraint as a Deputy Collector?

How do "strong development constraints" affect a "best-of" strategy in a competitive market?

What has helped you deliver results despite constraints?

INNOVATION

# Mindset Shift

- From ideal conditions to working within constraints

# Traditional vs Constraint Leadership

## **Traditional Leadership**

Wait for resources

Control through authority

Seek perfect solutions

Avoid risk

Plan extensively

## **Constraint Leadership**

Start with what exists

Influence through networks

Deliver workable solutions

Manage risk

Execute iteratively

# Decision-Making Under Constraints

- Use judgment with incomplete data
- Avoid over-analysis
- Recognize cognitive biases

# Four Cells: CEOs and their Pets

---

Fact: 94% of Fortune 500 CEOs had a childhood pet

The respondents asserted that pet ownership had helped them to develop many of the positive character traits that make them good managers today, including responsibility, empathy, respect for other living beings, generosity, and good communication skills.



*--Management Focus Magazine*

# Four Cells: CEOs and their Pets

---

Critical Question: How many *non*-CEOs had childhood pets? (i.e., what is the “base rate” of pet ownership?)

*Mgmt Focus* Tip for Success:  
100% of Fortune 500 CEOs brush their teeth!

Lesson 1: Need to look at all 4 cells to detect relationship.  
Beware incomplete search!

Lesson 2: Correlation does not imply causality

- Third variable problem
- Reverse causality

E.g., Waterbed Ad: “People who sleep on waterbeds have fewer back problems!”

	No Pets	Pets
CEO		
Not CEO		

# 5 Common Traps in Decision-Making

## 1 Anchoring

→ Over-relying on first information

*“First report becomes final truth”*

## 2 Status Quo Bias

→ Preference for existing systems

*“We’ve always done it this way”*

## 3 Sunk Cost Fallacy

→ Continuing due to past investment

*“We’ve already spent too much to stop”*

## 4 Confirmation Bias

→ Seeking supporting evidence only

*“Only hearing what we want to hear”*

## 5 Overconfidence

→ Overestimating own judgment

*“I know this will work”*

# System 1 vs System 2 Thinking

- Fast (intuitive) vs Slow (analytical)
- Both are necessary

*This is why decision-making under constraints is difficult, you don't have the luxury to always use System 2, but relying only on System 1 can be risky.*

# Better Decision-Making Under Constraints

## **-Ask Critical Questions**

Do I have relevant data?  
Am I missing alternatives?

## **-Challenge Yourself**

Play devil's advocate  
What if I am wrong?

## **-Change Perspective**

Think like an outsider  
Step back from the problem

## **-Use Analogies**

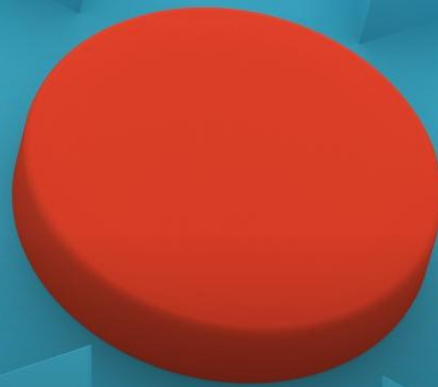
Has this happened before?  
What worked elsewhere?

## **-Use Structured Thinking**

Simple models > pure intuition  
Data-informed decisions

## **-Use Teams**

Multiple perspectives  
Better problem definition



# Principle: Prioritization

Focus on high-impact tasks

**If you had 10 problems and could solve only 2,  
how would you choose?**

- Where is the binding constraint?
- Where can I act quickly?
- Where is the maximum impact?



## Leverage

Use partnerships (NGOs, private sector, community, technology)



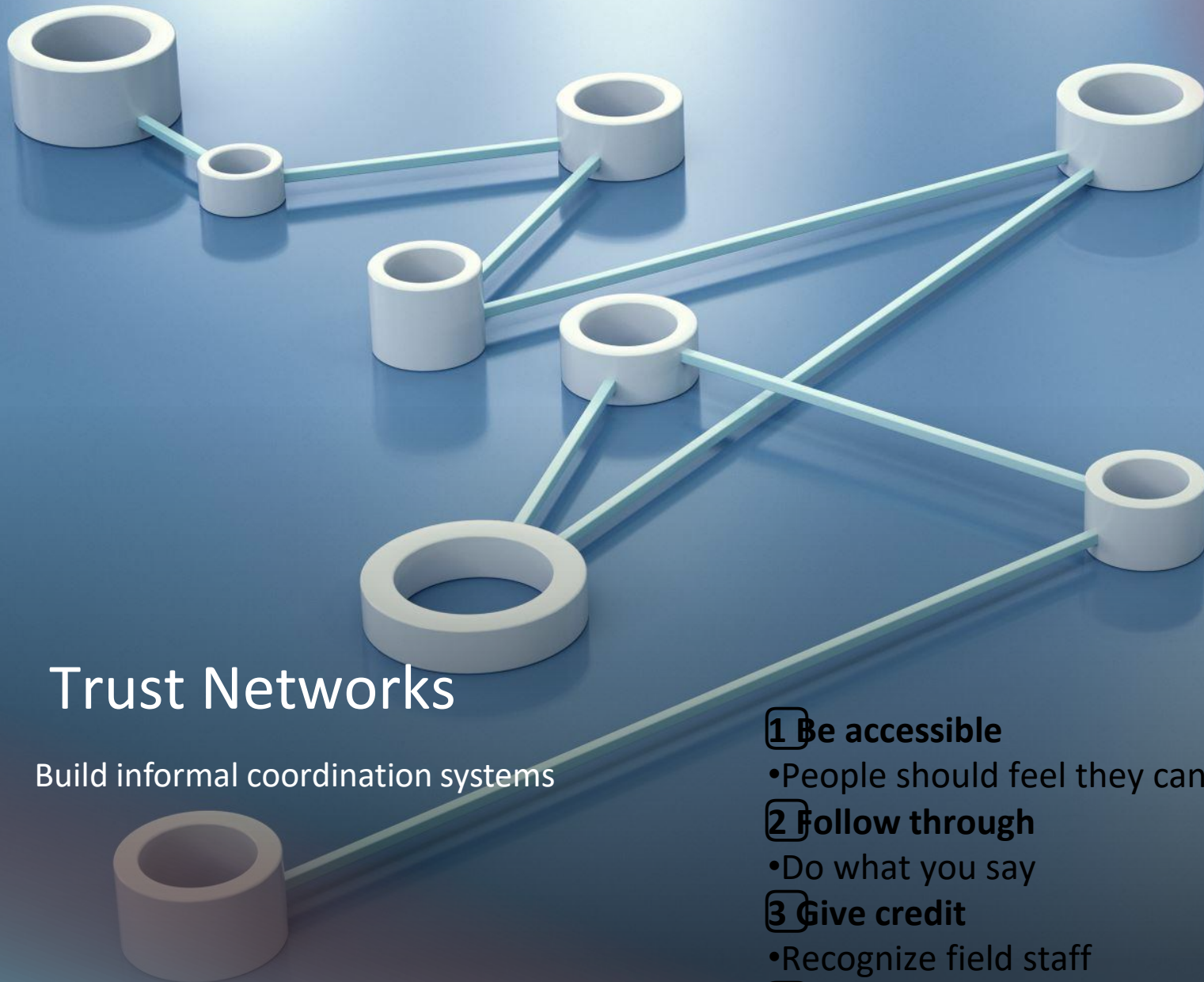
# Process Innovation

Redesign workflows before seeking funds



# Data Lite

Use good enough data to act



# Trust Networks

Build informal coordination systems

**1 Be accessible**

- People should feel they can approach you

**2 Follow through**

- Do what you say

**3 Give credit**

- Recognize field staff

**4 Listen to ground realities**

- Don't rely only on reports

# Social Influence — Driving Action Without Authority

## **Reciprocity**

→ People respond to support  
*“Help first → get commitment later”*

## **Social Proof**

→ People follow others  
*“Show success → others replicate”*

## **Authority (Credibility)**

→ People trust expertise  
*“Position gives power, credibility gives impact”*

## **Commitment**

→ People stick to what they promise  
*“Public commitment → higher follow-through”*

# Ethical Challenges

- Rationalization
- Authority pressure
- Shifting blame

# Leading Change Insight

- Change spreads through networks
- Follows S-curve adoption



# Telangana Vision 2047 — What Are the Targets?

## The Aspiration

**\$3 Trillion Economy by 2047**

## Baseline Reality (Without Major Reform)

~\$1.2 Trillion GSDP by 2047

Growth slows: 8% → 7% → 5.2%

Incremental growth is **not sufficient**

## Required Transformation (3 Core Targets)

### Human Capital

~1.75x increase in growth

Focus: education, skilling, health

### Productivity (TFP)

~1.7x increase

Driven by innovation, technology, efficiency

### Investment

Up to 52% of GSDP

Domestic + global capital mobilization

### Core Message

“Incremental change → \$1T

Structural transformation → \$3T”

# What Are the Constraints? (Ground Reality)

## 1. Investment Constraint

Current levels far below required ~50%+

Challenges:

- Private investment mobilization
- Financial intermediation

## 2. Productivity Constraint (Critical)

Inefficiencies in:

- Processes
- Governance systems
- Slow adoption of innovation

## 3. Human Capital Constraint

Gaps in:

- Learning outcomes
- Skills
- Health delivery

## 4. Coordination Constraint

Multiple departments

Siloed functioning

Weak convergence

## 5. Time Lag Constraint

Human capital & reforms take **years to show impact**

# Creative Constraints

If we keep doing what we are doing...  
we will get what we are getting.

...

And what we are getting is not  
enough to reach **\$3 trillion.**