

TOT on “Strengthening Civil Society Organisations; A Step Forward in De-centralised Planning & Management” A Joint program of HDF School of Management, Bhubaneswar & XIMB

Introduction

The Indian Constitution 73rd & 74th amendments, brought in to effect in April 1992. That envisaged a major reform of Governance in the country focusing on great changes needed in attitude; administrative, planning, financial, personnel systems, institutions and methods of working including moving for E-Governance. That gave a new lease of life to Panchayati Raj Institutions (**PRIs**) by creating the space for them with adequate responsibilities, powers & functions to enable them to function as the “**Institutions of self-government**”. More than 18 years have passed, as of now, & with surprise, a very little progress is reported. Certain pro-active state Governments have tried and moved further with some tangible results with power devolution to PRIs. The road is still ahead to reach the goal. To everyone's utter surprise, PRIs have not been able to acquire the status of a more capable & responsive people's bodies. Of course, several factors contributed to this such as the absence of regular elections, arbitrary & prolonged super-sessions, insufficient representation for weaker sections, inadequate power devolution, bureaucracy serving for patrician ends & lack of financial resources. More than this, PRIs in many places have become victims of the “Devolution trap” where they have been transferred with liabilities & head-aches than assets & revenues. Often the political & bureaucratic system felt reluctant to share the power with PRIs which they enjoyed over the years, since the country's independence.

Panchayats are not new and it existed in India as long as the country existed. They are the living proof of its age old heritage of Democracy & an inseparable part of its civilization. The origin & thoughts are deep rooted with its philosophy of “PANCH”, Biradari or village Panch Parameswar. That gave the bright picture of our first Civil Society Organisations (**CSOs**) as grassroots governance highlighting Participative development. CSOs no doubt, have come playing a very powerful, legitimate, influential & facilitating role. CSOs to their credit, tried to upkeep the much inherited values such as social freedom, cultural heritage, communication in the community, fight corruption & human rights, participation & peaceful co-existence; handling conflicts in a most desirable-consultative process, being accountable before the community, responding to emergencies & so on and so forth. Today with the changing time, it heads for a Wider Debate and may be one more revolution in relation to its best practices while being in its traditional garbs vrs the new roles facing different development challenges. The challenge before all of us are that can Gandhiji's “**Gram Swaraj**” be realized & can the **Palli Sabha & Gram Sabha** be empowered to play the effective roles as the most powerful village parliament and successful implementers of their own programs.

Training and development in this context, is visualized to enhance the knowledge, skills and abilities of the PRIs, and make them move to a new paradigm of thought & action; so the importance of such a TOT.

Objectives

- To acquaint the participants with the changing concepts of CSOs & learn from its earlier best practices vis-à-vis the 73rd & 74th Constitutional amendments; focusing on a historical perspective.
- To provide them an update on “Devolution of Power & Decentralised Planning in India”.
- To strengthen CSOs like Palli Sabha & Gram Sabha empowered with adequate tool-kits, training & development to conduct effective micro level (decentralized) planning & make successful implementation, being accountable to its own community.
- To engage CSOs in new knowledge partnership, development of professionalism, new leadership & sustain local self-governance addressing community mandates & priorities.

Coverage

- o CSO-its origin, concepts & current status; a historical perspective.
- o The 73rd & 74th Constitutional amendments in India & Devolution of Power to People.
- o CSO- A Wider Debate in relation to its values, roles & Guiding principles vrs the growth of new Technology like information revolution, leadership, e-governance, professionalism, participation & other aspects.
- o CSO Emerging as a most potential force for facilitating change-creating an Enabling Environment & partnering for sustainable development through Palli Sabha & Gram Sabha.
- o CSO Capacity Assessment, Capacity Building; A framework for Empowerment Building & Sustainability in Decentralised Planning- A step forward.
- o Information & knowledge management requirements at different levels of PRIs.
- o Dynamics of New Panchayati Raj System in India; E-Panchayat -Vrs- E-Governance.
- o Meeting the transformational Technology & its incorporation in work places.
- o Need of Strengthening the Institutional mechanism for CSOs to address the emerging Challenges & Beyond as effective partners in development.
- o Transfer of Learning to the Workplace- An Action Plan.

Methodology

The training process will focus on both theoretical understanding and actual practice. The program shall be covered in an interactive and experiential manner, and will include case discussions, role plays, presentations, and lecture sessions. It will include individual as well as group work sessions and sharing best practices from the country.

Expected Outcomes

- Participants will develop a critical understanding about the 73rd & 74th Constitutional amendments in India & its Devolution of Power to People vis-à-vis its problems & prospects.
- They will have clarity on the role of village parliament in decentralized planning & management of people mandated programs based on a scientific assessment & planning for the CSO member's capacity Building in view of several changes and Challenges facing the current society by using result oriented tool kits.
- They will build new knowledge partnership, development of professionalism, new leadership & sustain local self-governance addressing community mandates, issues & priorities and manage the new role more effectively.

Expected Participants

The course would be useful for Government Officers in different Departments, Development Practitioners working with NGOs and CBOs, Panchayati Raj Representatives and Executives from Corporate houses in both Private and Public sectors, who are involved with or aiming at their involvement in future Decentralised Planning & Management.

Programme Directors

Dr. GN Reddi, Mr. Saroj Dash &
Mr. Subrat Rout

Duration

3 days: September 14-16, 2009

Venue

Bhubaneswar