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TRAINING
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Literacy and skill development

Every year International Literacy Day (ILD) is celebrated on 8th of September by the declaration of United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in November 1965. It was first celebrated in the year 1966 with an aim to highlight the importance of literacy to individuals, communities and societies by UNESCO. Now celebrations take place all around the world. This annual celebration was initiated with the recommendation of the world conference of Ministers of Education on the Eradication of illiteracy. The celebration of ILD provides an opportunity to review improvements in literacy rates and develop strategies for addressing the challenges of literacy. The issue of literacy is one of the important components of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of UN's 2030 agenda for sustainable development. The 2018 ILD theme is "literacy and skill development" which explores the approaches and strategies to support the development of literacy and skills for improvement of quality of life of the people.

World Economic Forum's Global Human Capital Report 2017 had ranked India 103 among 130 countries in the areas of education and skill development. When this rank is compared with the neighbouring countries, it is lower than Sri Lanka (70) and Nepal (98) and higher than Bangladesh (111) and Pakistan (125). The Global Competitiveness Report 2017-18 had ranked India at 63 in basic requirements and 75th position in Higher Education and Training, 91st position in Health and Primary Education. India gained 40th rank when compared to Sri Lanka (85), Nepal (88), Bangladesh (99), and Bhutan (82) in overall Index. The countries in Asia and Pacific region are recognising the important role played by skill based professional education in economic development.

The annual celebration of ILD is observed world - wide with the aim to sensitise and mobilise public opinion and to elicit their interest on literacy and to promote non-formal education for all, particularly for the excluded. Literacy is not merely a cognitive skill of reading, writing and arithmetic but it helps the individual to acquire life skills through acquisition of learning.

Education is a liberating force which enables the individual to rise from mere materiality to superior levels of intellectual and spiritual consciousness.

As estimated by the Global Monitoring Report on Education for All - 2015, 781 million adults live without basic literacy skills, out of whom two-thirds are women and approximately 103 million children have no access to school and are therefore, no learning to read, write or count. In India, adult literacy rate has increased from 48.2 per cent in 1991 to 72.2 per cent in 2015 growing at an average annual rate of 11.01. Progress of adult literacy rates may be the consequence of younger, better educated people replacing the less educated older ones.

Concept of Literacy and Education

Education is the most important element for growth and development of nation. India is in the process of transformation into a developed nation by 2020. Real education according to Mahatma Gandhi should enhance the dignity of human being and increase his/her self-respect. The nation should provide only such education which enables the student to assess the value



Tribal woman with Talking pen in Literacy Class

of education in the same manner as we assess the value of education. It is proved today that, economic success everywhere is based on educational success and literacy is the basic building block of education.

Literacy is also basic aspect of social cohesion and national identity. Kerala provides striking example of how higher levels of literacy lead to a more and informed public. Nobel Laureate in Economics Dr. Amartya Sen reminded us that the elimination of ignorance and of needless inequalities in opportunities are objectives that are valued for their own sake. They expand our freedom to lead the lives we have reason to value. Rabindranath Tagore, the other Nobel prize winning Bengali Poet said that “where the mind is without fear and the head is held high: where the knowledge is free and where the mind is led forward... into ever widening thought and action”. This can only be developed by literacy.

India has the second largest education system in the world after China. Over one-thirds of population is below 18 years of age, that is 19 per cent of the world’s children reside in India. Every third illiterate person in the world is an Indian. There are problems relating to drop-out rate, low level of learning

UNESCO CONFUCIUS PRIZE FOR LITERACY

Maniyamma, an octogenarian tribal woman of Palakkayam colony in Chaliyar gram panchayat used to struggle with books and slates in her endeavour to become a neo-literate. But a ‘talking pen’ which reproduces the sound of a written text made matters easy for her and so many other indigenous people of the area. They moved the electronic pen across the alphabets and words of songs to hear and learn them simultaneously with ease. Below the roofs of Jan Shikshan Sansthan, Malappuram an NGO under the sponsorship of Union HRD Ministry, 320 scheduled tribes including Maniyamma made their way into the world of letters and education. Here they not just learn letters but garner valuable lessons in health, sanitation, de-addiction, financial literacy and entrepreneurship. It is this talking pen and other such innovative efforts in literacy and skill development programmes which helped Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS), Malappuram to bag the coveted UNESCO Confucius Prize for Literacy, 2016.

achievement and low participation of girls among scheduled tribes and other disadvantaged groups. The Right to Education Act states that it is the school’s responsibility to ensure all children in their neighbourhood have access to education. The increasing transition rates and retention rates, participation in lower and upper secondary education

youth into the largest source of skilled manpower.

National Literacy Mission Authority (NLMA)

National Literacy Mission Authority was set up in May 1998 with an objective to assess the strength and weaknesses of the earlier programmes on emphasis of goals and targets. The emphasis of this authority is not only on mere enrolment of learners but also on attainment of certain predetermined norms and parameters of literacy, numeracy and functionality along with institutionalisation of post-literacy and continuing education.

Saakshar Bharat Mission

Saakshar Bharat is the Centrally sponsored nation-wide literacy scheme launched on International Literacy Day in 2009 with the objective of achieving 80 per cent literacy level at national level, by focusing on increasing women’s literacy in India with a focus to reduce the gap between male and female literacy to not more than 10 percentage points. The mission aims to promote and strengthen adult learning, reaching out to those who missed the opportunity to access or complete formal education as well as basic literacy/basic education. It covers vocational education and skill development, applied science and sports. It has four broader objectives, namely imparting

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As estimated by the Global Monitoring Report on Education for All – 2015, 781 million adults live without basic literacy skills, and approximately 103 million children have no access to school.
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has increased since 1999. Inequality persists in the transition from primary to secondary school. Adult education programmes in high income countries appear to have mostly served those who completed secondary education rather than the adults who lack the basic skills. The Indian Education system has been focusing on developing on brilliant minds but lacking in the skill sets required for specific jobs. There is huge gap between the talent that is coming out of colleges and universities. The need of the present day is for appropriate skill development and training which can convert the

functional literacy and numeracy to non-literates; acquiring equivalency to formal educational system; imparting relevant skill development programme; and promoting a learning society by providing opportunities for continuing education. The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj was the nodal institution under SBM for capacity building of PRI functionaries.

Adult Education Centres (AEC): Lok Shiksha Kendra

The Adult Education Centres are the operational arm of Saakshar Bharat, responsible for organisation and delivery of classes. AECs are established at gram panchayat on the basis of one per population of 5,000. One AEC is set up in every village and is manned by two paid *preraks* (coordinators) of whom at least one is a woman. This reflects the drive to encourage and reinforce gender equality throughout the programme. The centre offers various services, registration, a venue for teaching, a library and reading rooms. It is also used as a centre for promoting and practising sports, adventure and cultural activities. To impart functional literacy to non-literate adults, a mass campaign approach is adopted. A literary educator (volunteer), who is a local resident, acts as mobiliser, trainer and teacher and is responsible for imparting literacy on an average of 8-10 hours. In a gram panchayat many adult education centres are organised on the basis of required number of non-literate adults in different areas of a village.

The primary goal of the programme is to impart functional literacy to 70 million non-literate adults in the age group of 15 years and beyond. This includes coverage of 14 million scheduled castes (SCs), 8 million scheduled tribes (STs), 12 million minorities and 36 million others. The overall coverage of women is aimed at 60 million. 410 districts belonging to 27 States/UTs of the country were identified to be covered under Saakshar Bharat. Impact of SBM is to decrease the number of illiterates from 304 to 272 million after successful implementation.



Literacy class

Jan Shikshan Sansthan

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (formerly known as Shramik Vidyapeeth) have a challenging mandate of providing vocational skills to non-literate, neo-literate as well as school dropouts by identifying skills that have a market in the region of their establishment.

The scope of work of Jan Shikshan Sansthans (JSSs) includes the following:

- Develop/Source appropriate curriculum and training modules covering vocational elements, general awareness and life enrichment components.
- JSSs are encouraged to undertake training equivalent to courses designed by the Directorate of Adult Education, National Institute of Open Schooling and Director General, Employment & Training.
- Provide training to a pool of resource persons and master trainers for conducting training as also availability of infrastructure and training - specific equipment.
- Administer simple tests and award certificates.
- Network with employers and industries for trainees to get suitable placements.

Skill Development Mission

The Government of India recognised the need for skill development and launched the Skill India Mission in 2010 which aims to provide solution to address the gaps in talent, to skill over 40 crore people by 2022 and enhance their employability by training them in skill sets of their choice. Skilled human resource is essential for inclusive growth. Skill development cannot be seen separately but it has to be an integral process of skill training and education. Today there is a huge mismatch between education, skill training and employment. We need skilled manpower and more importantly skilled youth. For example, in Korea more than 93 per cent of their workforce is skilled whereas, in India only about 10 per cent are formally trained in some useful skills. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has been launched by Government of India after realising the problem of unskilled manpower. The vision of Make in India focusses on Skill Development of 150 million youth by 2022, skilling about 45,000 youth each year over a period of next 10 years.

Today India's demographic dividend is benefited due to rise of working age-group as compared to dependent population. Under the leadership of our Hon'ble Prime Minister, various schemes

are launched for developing skills focusing on employability. At present, around 91,91,675 people are trained and 35,77,444 are placed after getting trained through around 290 training partners and 4926 training centres.

It is very clear from the above discussion that there is urgent requirement of focusing on the education enhancement and skill development in the Indian youth to make them employable. Employment generation is one issue

and employability and productivity is another issue. As per the India's skill report 2015, only 37.22 per cent of surveyed people were found employable. India ranked last among 60 countries on labour productivity (World Competitive Year Book 2012). There is need for more government interventions and policies to encourage various sectors and raise the employability through various vocational courses. Although the need for skill development is realised by many sectors,

still there is a need for generating more awareness among certain sectors. The age-group available to Indian economy is more influenced towards learning that has to be skilled so that they can contribute more to the economy instead of becoming the liability.

Dr. T. Vijaya Kumar

Associate Professor, CHRD

and **Dr. V. Lalitha**

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INTERVIEW

Local Self-governance – A Remarkable Discovery of Humanity



Shri S M Vijayanand, IAS, (Retd), Former Secretary, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, (GoI), Chief Secretary to Government of Kerala

There is no developed country in the world without an elected local government. Even a not-so-democratic country like China has very powerful local governments. I would say it is a discovery of mankind that you need elected local government for service delivery at the cutting edge level. Functions such as local welfare, local economic development, civic functions, and some regulatory functions can be done only by elected representatives. That's a lesson from history. Our economic reforms that started in the 90s are incomplete without

governance reforms. In the governance reform, the most critical is what happens at the point of service delivery, says Shri S M Vijayanand, Former Secretary, MoPR in an exclusive interview with Dr. R Ramesh, Associate Professor, CRI, NIRD&PR.

Q : Sir, you have a very rich experience in India's decentralised governance and on how it is taking shape in India – both as a concept as well as on how it is being practised in rural India. Also, you have played key role in strengthening Panchayati Raj System in India. What do you think

are some of the achievements of decentralised governance in India?

A : Post-Constitutional Amendment, we have had elections which are regular in almost all the States. That's a major achievement; secondly, States have constituted State Finance Commissions; which is almost 50 per cent achievement, in terms of fiscal decentralisation. One of the most significant social achievements is the reservation for SC/ST and women. Though the Constitution mandates only one-third for women, I think, nearly 20 States have mandated 50 per cent

reservation for women by law. I think, sooner or later, all States will reach 50 per cent. Post-MGNREGA, there have been few interesting developments. In all gram panchayats, you have some technical person like the Gram Rozgar Sahayak. Although in many States the BDOs control them, they work at the gram panchayat level. As per MGNREGA, only the gram panchayat can prepare a basic labour budget. I understand that in many parts of India the panchayats do not prepare a good labour budget, and the officials dictate what it should be, but it is yet a very powerful legal entitlement of the panchayats.

The role of panchayats in MGNREGA was decided after a great deal of deliberations. The first draft of the MGNREGA bill did not make any mention of panchayats. Lots of discussions took place before it became a panchayat-friendly Act. It's an entitlement and is for the gram panchayats to use it. Even if the States attempt to deviate, the panchayats can access the right later.

Then, a very interesting development took place. The 14th Finance Commission devolved more than ₹ 2,00,000 crore only to the gram panchayats. There, you find that the Ministry of Panchayati Raj was able to persuade the States to have what is generically called Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP). Almost all gram panchayats started preparing GPDP. With regard to the quality of plan, there is a lot of criticism, but the very fact that gram panchayats are preparing a plan, for the resources under their command, is a very significant development. That doesn't guarantee it will go on and on. Now, we have to deepen the process of planning and improve the quality of plans, guide them, give them technical support, etc. It's a huge challenge and I am also informed that both NIRD&PR and MoPR are trying to take it to the next level, launching a People's Plan Campaign from 2nd October. That's a very positive development.

Another recent development, which is a significant policy decision, something that has not been fully operational, is trying to bring about a partnership between the SHGs and the panchayats. It will be a mutually beneficial partnership.

Kerala had pioneered that. Now, many States like Assam, Jharkhand, Odisha and some other States are trying to adapt it. This is a huge potential. It will benefit SHGs because they will have access to resources - financial resources and the natural resources - under the panchayat's command. It will help the panchayats to strengthen gram sabha and have a very powerful support system, especially for the elected women representatives. It is a potentially synergetic relationship. These are some of the achievements of decentralised governance in India.

Q: India's Panchayati Raj System came into being with great fanfare – through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment. Do you think it has delivered what people expected that it was going to?

A: My frank judgement is that India's Panchayati Raj System is not delivering what many of us had expected from it. In that sense, it will not even get a pass mark, except from a few States like Kerala, Karnataka, West Bengal, Sikkim, and to some extent Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, I don't think a full-fledged Panchayati Raj System exists anywhere in the country, as a local government system. Just because the Constitution specifies, the States have constituted and given some low-end functions to panchayats. That is certainly far below expectations.

Q: The gram sabha and the elected body in gram panchayat have enormous powers to decide on 'what development means to them'. They can give shape to their mental model of development putting to use tools like GPDP and the financial facilitation offered by scheme convergence and funds from the 14th Finance Commission. It sounds fascinating as an idea, but why have we not been able to translate it on the ground?

A: It must be admitted that a gram sabha has not become a fully functional institution as envisaged in the Constitution. Of course, all schemes and plans require gram sabha's approval. Most States mandate it as 3 – 4 gram sabhas be convened in a year, but the feedback we get and results of many studies have pointed that gram sabhas are not very live

institutions i.e., participation is very low; discussion is much limited; and maybe, some powerful interests dominate. So, strengthening gram sabha should be a top priority because that is also a condition for strengthening panchayats. Without strong gram sabha we cannot expect a strong panchayat. Unfortunately, even the gram panchayat functionaries are not keen on strengthening gram sabhas.

Q: Strengthening Gram Sabha.... How to do that?

A: One, the SHG partnership can strengthen. In large parts of India, sooner or later, about 60 per cent of the families will be under SHG. SHGs are social organisations. They discuss development. They discuss problems and issues, internally. They are an informed group. They are a confident group, unlike individuals who are afraid due to caste or feudal reasons. SHGs being part of the people gives a lot of confidence and they take up issues. There is an excellent concept called: 'Community Resource Persons' identified from among the SHGs. There could be a Community Resource Person for strengthening panchayati raj or at least to strengthen the gram sabhas. The poor can attend gram sabhas, especially; informed SHGs can attend the gram sabha. That is one way of strengthening gram sabha. There are other ways too; one can train somebody as a facilitator. The gram sabha facilitator could be given the task of convening the gram sabha - more importantly, conducting the business of gram sabha. Of course, the sarpanch or a ward member shall chair, depending on the State. They have the right to chair, but facilitation means somebody helping to conduct the meeting, guiding the discussions, recording them and so on. They should volunteer; they should not be paid and a good number of them can come from SHGs.

These are some of the measures – rather than punitive measures. Punitive measures may not work. Participation cannot be imposed by punishment. Taking photographs, uploading a video while the activities are on, could serve as checks and balances, but such measures cannot ensure and sustain real interest

or motivate someone to participate and involve in discussions. People should feel that there is something in the gram sabha. Another thing that the States have to do is, ensure that all the service delivery institutions even if they are not under the gram panchayat should come to gram sabha. This would make gram sabha a live institution, where we can discuss PDS, functioning of schools and other institutions; they can discuss public service delivery in general.

Another area being discussed by a lot of activists is: 'Right to Hearing'. In such instances, people come on their own because they have an issue to highlight. The facilitator should summon everyone on a single day, and discuss queries, individually. This becomes a kind of gram sabha where real issues that affect people's lives are discussed. So, there are several ways to strengthen gram sabha.

Q: What do you think stands in the way of gram panchayats preparing a vision-oriented GPDP in convergence mode? Is it the lack of capacity of panchayats or the unwillingness of the official machinery to part with power? What is it? Aren't enough facts produced in the whole saying?

A: It's too early to come to a judgement. GPDP started in the year 2015. The first year was spent in trying to convince States to start GPDP. The States issued guidelines and started capacity building and it's hardly three years since we started the whole exercise. Planning is a very complex activity. It would require much more capacity building and technical support, but if we allow GPDP to progress as it is done now, it may not be enough. They will write down some five or six schemes and call it GPDP. So, it needs a push to ensure it is participatory. NIRD&PR has taken up an interesting exercise in this regard. NIRD&PR is going to take up 100 clusters. I guess there might be about 500 panchayats in 100 clusters. If 500 panchayats are developed properly with guidance for collective action, they can become 'Schools of Practice'. Others can learn from these schools. Once the neighbouring panchayats start learning from them, the effort of reaching out becomes easier in all the States. This can happen simultaneously, I mean we need

not wait for the school to get ready after 3 years. It might require a little bit of structuring.

The next thing needed is pro-active provision of data. Now, the 2020-21 Census is in the offing. Here, with a little tweaking, you can get gram panchayat data. It will give you an idea of how many houseless, landless, aged, etc., are there in each gram panchayat. Data is very critical. The MoPR has published guidelines as 'PRA Techniques for Local Level Planning'. PRA techniques can bring the people and panchayats closer which is another way of strengthening GPDP. So, first comes the capacity; then using data; and third is the different participatory methods.

Q: One of my personal observations is that in States where we have left it to the ingenuity of the ERs to manage the affairs of GPs (of course, with the support of a part time secretary), the ERs seem to be groping in dark, perhaps not knowing the official procedures, etc. On the contrary, States where the GPs are guided by full-time government officials like PDO, and a team in every GP, we find the ERs getting sidelined, and the officials take over completely. I am unable to unravel this riddle.

A: Lot of money is spent for administrative costs of Centrally-sponsored schemes. For MGNREGS, it is about 5 – 6 per cent; for PMAY it is close to 4 per cent; for NSAP it is roughly 3 per cent. All schemes have certain percentage as administrative costs. If you put all these small percentages together, it's a good amount. You can give a qualified secretary to a gram panchayat. All panchayats require a secretary – preferably a graduate and a technical assistant - depending on the size of the panchayat. In bigger panchayats, you might need an 'overseer', though not an engineer. These two positions are mandatory plus some outsourced staff for cleaning and housekeeping. Works such as data entry and computers can be given to SHGs.

A lot of departments have excess staff. So, you can transfer some of the staff – full-time or part-time-to the gram panchayat. This requires a political

decision. So, you strengthen the own staff of gram panchayat and then transfer some staff to the gram panchayats. When Kerala implemented decentralisation, the government put to use a very simple, but very powerful concept: 'Work and Worker will go together'. In government, somebody is doing work and when that work goes to the panchayat, the person doing that work will also go to the panchayat. S/he can still be paid for by the government, he can get transferred by government, and s/he is eligible to get all their usual entitlements, etc., but s/he has to work under the direction and control of the panchayat. This is a half-way solution.

Most people do not want to work under the panchayat. People who are transferred should be assured that all the benefits as a government employee, including pay commission benefits shall remain. That is possible, like an IAS officer working for the State government.

Regarding your question on dominance by officials, we need some legal changes saying that the executive authority/Head shall not be the official, but the elected panchayat committee. I am not pointing that the panchayat President shall decide, rather it should be the committee. This has to be clarified. The official is only a secretary in the panchayat. In India, secretary is well-understood. The minister makes all the decisions, the secretary only suggests and offers ideas when required. A secretary can advise and if they take a wrong decision, s/ he can point out. The secretary may have some powers, but all the powers are delegated to them by the respective minister. You need to have manuals guiding decision-making.

Q: Suppose I ask you to give action-points to be able to build fully empowered gram panchayats - in the real sense of the term. [I have no idea if this is to be built from ground above or from top-down]. Where do we begin, and how do we do this?

A: First, whatever powers granted to the panchayats, there should be absolute clarity about them. For example, if you say a gram panchayat shall supervise anganwadi, what is meant by

supervision? Can they inspect? Can they summon an anganwadi worker? Can they punish? Can they call for a report? Similarly, if you say panchayats shall support PDS, what is meant by support? If the rationed items are not supplied on time, can a GP make a complaint? Can they summon a PDS staff to explain? So, we need clarity on powers and functions of a gram panchayat. The other side of the coin is people must know that they can go to gram panchayat for grievance redressal. As of now, they think only of BDO or the Collector. If people know that it is within the powers of the gram panchayat to do certain things, people will start pressurising them for carrying out the functions. Clarity on panchayat functioning is required.

Second is own resource mobilisation. Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Haryana, etc., do annually raise tax revenue at the gram panchayat level. Ideally, property tax is good for gram panchayats, also some kind of professional tax. Most panchayats will collect because they need

money. You can incentivise collection. For poorer gram panchayats you need a different formula.

Third is the capacity of panchayats. The panchayats must look for local human resources such as from among the SHG woman, who can write accounts much better than in panchayats. Now, elections are in the offing and we could pressurise the political formations to take panchayati raj as an item in their manifestos. After GST, the States have, in fact, given away their revenue generating powers for common good. This was unimaginable a few years ago. Panchayati raj is far simpler now. If pushed by the government in power with the Prime Minister's support and with a good panchayati raj minister, and a national council to spell out what-and-what could be done by panchayats, we can work out a road map for panchayati raj. This is not an easy thing to do, but if political will is there, it can be done much more easily.

Here again, why it should be done? It is not because we are very sentimental

about panchayats. There is no developed country in the world without an elected local government. Even a not-so-democratic country like China has very powerful local governments. I would say it is a discovery of mankind that you need elected local government for service delivery at the cutting edge level. If you appoint a very senior officer there, they cannot deliver. Certain functions can be done only by elected representatives such as local welfare, local economic development, civic functions, some regulatory functions, etc. That's a lesson from history. Our economic reforms that started in the 90s are incomplete without governance reforms. In the governance reform, the most critical is what happens at the point of service delivery. If you see where most of our schemes fail, they fail at the cutting edge level only; also all our services are failing at the point of delivery. Panchayat faces people's anger; and people's criticism and so on, which is why Panchayati Raj System must be strengthened.

WASH Conclave commitments for sustaining the momentum



The inaugural ceremony of 5th WASH Conclave held at NIRD&PR on July 26, 2018

As part of the 5th Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) Conclave, held during 26-28 July, 2018, participants representing Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Telangana have committed to the following in 'Sustaining the Momentum' for achieving Clean India.

Drinking Water

It is estimated that around 37.7 million Indians are affected by water-borne diseases annually. In 2015, it is estimated that 117,000 under-five children died of diarrhea alone (this is 13 per cent of all deaths per year in under-

five children in India, and 22 per cent of the global burden) and 73 million working days are lost due to water-borne disease each year, resulting in an economic burden of \$600 million a year.

Regionally, all three States made substantial progress in terms of providing

access to drinking water at villages, even in areas with predominantly scheduled caste and tribal group population. However, only 34 per cent households in Andhra Pradesh, 43 per cent households in Karnataka and 33 per cent households in Telangana have access to piped water supply within premises. States have established Water Quality Monitoring and Surveillance System and have adequate number of water quality testing laboratories at district and sub-district levels with essential equipments and Human Resources.

The critical challenge now is to reduce high levels of microbial contamination in drinking water in rural areas. Similarly, chemical contamination of drinking water prevalent in some districts needs to be addressed.

We have committed to

- Incorporate Water Safety Planning (WSP) in the State Drinking Water Guidelines.
- Create Pool of Resources Persons on WSP at State and districts.
- Develop at least 5 Models on WSP in each State for learning and replication across the States.

Sanitation

States have made significant strides in creating momentum for achieving Open Defecation Free Gram Panchayats on scale especially after the launch of Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin) in October 2014. As against revised baseline data of 2015, the States are able to construct households in targeted households with Andhra Pradesh at 100 per cent, Karnataka at 93 per cent and Telangana at 88 per cent. Similarly, several GPs have been declared as Open Defecation Free (ODF) in each State. However, it has been observed that States and districts are giving low priority to behaviour change campaigns. This may have serious implications on sustaining sanitation outcomes (usage of toilets, adoption of hygiene practices, elimination of open defecation, etc.). Similarly, States are yet to develop

State-specific operational guidelines for sustaining ODF status.

We have committed to

- Develop ODF sustainability and post-ODF implementation plans focusing on staff, capacity building, behaviour change interventions and monitoring at all levels.
- Engage Swachhagrahis (Sadikaramitrain AP) with attractive incentives (financial and non-financial) with clear ToR and capacity building plan in line with modified Gol Swachhagrahi guidelines.
- Establish appropriate institutional mechanisms for capacity building of grassroots functionaries and budgets for retrofitting, new toilets and operation and maintenance of household toilets.
- Mobilise private sector and volunteers for sustaining clean India movement.

Hygiene

Inadequate hygiene behaviour is a contributor to neo-natal mortality which is currently 24 per 1000 live births (India), and to increased drop-out rates which stands at 4.34 per cent in primary schools and 17.86 per cent at the secondary level.

The simple act of washing hands with soap will have considerable reduction in diarrhea risk and respiratory tract infection. Though, large populations understand the importance of washing hand with soap, very small percentage of population practise this behaviour. Similarly, many mothers or caretakers still feel child faeces are harmless hence dispose it unhygienically. Further, States do not have established monitoring system to track hygiene behaviour of communities.

We have committed to

- Develop Social Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) implementation plan with capacitated resource pool and adequate budgetary allocation at all levels with clear timelines.

- Establish user-friendly monitoring system at State, district and mandal/ taluk to track WASH behaviours among rural households.
- Establish technical advisory team to support districts on development of action plans, capacity building and monitoring of MHM programme in line with National MHM guidelines.

Wash in Institutions (Schools, Anganwadis and Health Centres)

Improved WASH facilities, services and improved hygiene behaviours in institutions (Schools, Anganwadis and Health Centres) will have ripple effect for generations in addition to reduced incidence of morbidity, mortality and stunting among children. Though the Government of India had issued several guidelines and allocated reasonable budgets for improving WASH facilities and services in anganwadis, schools and health centres, still the progress is not that encouraging. The Operation and Maintenance of WASH facilities on a sustainable basis in schools, anganwadis and health centres is a big challenge due to limited budget and capacities of relevant functionaries across all States.

We have committed to

- Develop State-specific standard operation procedures to effectively address issues related to construction, repairs, operation and maintenance of WASH facilities in schools, anganwadis and health centres including budget and HR.
- Strengthen relevant community structures such as Mother's Committee in Anganwadis, School Management Committee in Schools and, Village Health, Sanitation and Nutrition Committee for Health Centres to manage Operation and Maintenance of WASH facilities.
- Establish user-friendly monitoring system at State, district and mandal/ taluk to track functionality of WASH facilities and adoption of hygiene behaviours in anganwadis, schools and health centres.



How should we treat children with special needs?



Dr. T Vijaya Kumar, Associate Professor, CHRD giving a lecture during the Library Talks conducted on September 10, 2018

What is the definition given by society for the children with special needs? Are we giving them a fair treatment? Can we treat them on par with normal kids? Do they require any special attention? What are the constraints faced by them in day-to-day life?

Parents, teachers and students who come across such children at least once in their life might have hundreds of such questions lingering in their minds. The Library Talk held on September 10, 2018 at Dr. B R Ambedkar Block focused on clarifying many of the above-mentioned queries.

Welcoming the guests and audience comprising faculty members, staff and teachers of Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan's Vidyasharam situated on the Institute premises, Dr. Akanksha Shukla, Head, CDC, elaborated the objectives for choosing the topic for discussion.

"Children with special needs are a silent community we have often neglected because they are not voters. As teachers, parents and citizens of this country, we have to understand them," she said and introduced Dr. T Vijaya Kumar, Associate Professor, CHRD, NIRD&PR, the key speaker on the occasion.

Dr. T Vijaya Kumar started his lecture by underlining his involvement in four

significant flagship programmes of this country.

"As a monitoring officer, I have been associated with Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan which was later renamed as Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan, Saakshar Bharat Mission, and Mid-day Meal Scheme. As part of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, there is a big intervention known as inclusive education. Under that umbrella, the persons with special needs and children with special needs are covered largely for the inclusion into the education. Based on this experience as well as the monitoring reports presented by NIRD&PR, the Central government and many State governments introduced this as a paper for teacher training courses particularly for Andhra Pradesh. The Diploma in Education Programme has a paper called inclusive education. Introduced in the year 2010, it instructs teachers on how to handle children with special needs in a regular classroom to make an inclusive classroom," he said.

Dr. Vijaya Kumar further shared his observations about children with special needs on the basis of school-based research.

"Who are the children with special needs? Most people used to put

handicapped and disabled children in this bracket. Earlier, it was restricted to physically, visually and speech impaired children and children with other impairments. Under the Persons with Disabilities Act, 1995, they were categorised into seven groups. Recently, it was replaced with Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016 by including 21 disabilities. So, comprehensive coverage has been given to this area by adding three blood disorders: Thalassemia, Haemophilia and Sickle Cell disease for the first time," he noted.

"Children with special needs have a single or a combination of disabilities. Sometimes, it may be one; sometimes it may be a combination, for example, mental retardation with cerebral palsy, physical disabilities with visual impairment, which makes learning a difficult process. As far as education is concerned, accommodating such children in regular classrooms becomes a daunting task," Dr. T Vijaya Kumar said.

"They can have speech and language impairment, physical disability, vision problem, cerebral palsy and other conditions, attention disorders, attention deficit, children with hypertension, emotional disorders, etc.," he added.



Braille sign board for visually impaired children

“Why we should learn about these children is an important question. Every kid has a potential and if you are able to nurture and unlock his potential, he/she becomes an asset to the country. With attention and proper care, each child can reach his full potential. We have to help each individual to attend his or her full potential. The more a parent understands about the growth of his/her children, the better prepared they will be to recognise the special needs and seek help accordingly. That’s why, we should know children with special needs - every friend, parent, teacher and community member should know about them,” he said.

“Of the many barriers faced by such kids, the first one is attitudinal. Parents, teachers, fellow students and community members are having a negative attitude towards them. As a friend, parent or teacher, one needs to address these issues. Based on programmes such as World Programme of Action for Youth and Asian and Pacific Decade of Persons with Disabilities, 2013-2022, many developed countries have made interventions for the mainstreaming and educate such children. In India, while the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has established separate schools which are managed by the NGOs, Ministry of Human Resource Development developed inclusive education model,” Dr. T Vijaya Kumar said.

“Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan brings concerns about children with special

needs under the inclusive education adopting zero rejection policy. If a child who wants to learn approaches school, he/she should be provided space for education. So we must adopt a zero rejection policy across the country. No child should be left out of the education system. Then only we will be able to achieve universalisation of elementary education. Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan, 2018 has multi-action mode of education delivery. Across the country, uniform policy was introduced under this umbrella to create access. Vocational skills, need-based skills, functional literacy skills, activities of daily life were included in the curriculum for mainstreaming children with special needs,” he said.

“Mainstreaming of children with special needs should be done through regular schools, not special schools. MHRD has directed that they should be mixed with normal children. Then only it will be called inclusive education. Without inclusive education, you cannot achieve inclusive development,” he pointed out.

“Home-based education is another beauty of Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. These kids are categorised into mild, moderate and severe. There is provision called home-based education for kids in severe category and teachers visit their home. In 2015, the Prime Minister has come out with a new campaign called Accessible India campaign. The goal was to make all government institutions located in

the national capital and State capitals disabled-friendly by July, 2018,” he said.

“People are talking about only physical access but not the attitudinal access. This is a major hurdle and there should be an attitudinal shift and attitudinal reinforcement. Poor infrastructure and unscientific construction are posing a big challenge. The infrastructure has to be redesigned to cater to the needs of disabled. Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan has earmarked ₹ 15,000 for each school across the country to create ramps. However field reality is entirely different. Some schools did not have ramps while some did not have hand rails. How can you expect a physically impaired kid to use a general toilet? Limited access to toilet results in high dropout rate and low attendance rate,” he warned.

Most often, we speak about physical access but what about psychological access and attitudinal access? Are we treating them as a fellow human being? Are we respecting them? Are we respecting their rights? A lot of discrimination - most often hidden discrimination - is prevailing. As a result, people are denied access. The quality will enhance only if access to the classroom transaction, teaching, learning material assisted teaching and learning process is ensured.

“Also research about such children is less. Some institutions are doing research, there is no database of this research. For the mainstreaming of children/persons with special needs, the broader objectives are: providing them access in all forms, equal opportunities for development on par with normal children or normal person, instruction for education so that independently they can leave and participate in various activities,” Dr. Vijaya Kumar concluded.

Further, Dr. Praneetha, Associate Professor, Sweekar Multi Speciality Rehabilitation Centre, Hyderabad gave an overview of the activities carried out by the Institute for attending to learning disorders.

The programme ended with the vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Akanksha Shukla.



International Training Programme on Management of Rural Financing Institutions of Cooperatives for Rural Development

Dr. W. R. Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR (5th from left) and Dr. M Srikanth, Associate Professor & Head of CFIE (6th from left) along with the participants

A five-day international training programme on 'Management of Rural Financing Institutions of Cooperatives for Rural Development' was conducted in collaboration with CICTAB, Pune during September 17-21, 2018 at NIRD&PR, Hyderabad. Dr. W R Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR inaugurated the programme and gave a brief account on how the NIRD&PR has been working to alleviate poverty in India through its innovative initiatives of training, research and consultancy channels which form the fulcrum of rural development. He emphasised that effective translation is needed to transform rural India by: (i) providing right-based employment to the rural poor through MGNREGA scheme, (ii) creating sustainable rural livelihoods through NRLM scheme, (iii) skilling the rural youth through DDU-GKY scheme, (iv) building rural infrastructure in respect of sanitation, drinking water, roads, education, etc. and (v) launching special programmes like Swachh Bharat Mission, Ayushman Bharat to build a healthy India. He also touched upon other important initiatives of the Government of India such as Direct Benefit Transfers through 'JAM Trinity', BharatNet, building up of social safety nets through Atal Pension Yojana, etc., in the rural development sphere.

Later, Dr. M Srikanth, Associate Professor & Head of CFIE briefed the participants about the programme,

spelt out its objectives, and undertook a self-introductory session. A total number of 23 participants attended the programme from three countries viz., Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. The participants are mainly from cooperative banks, cooperative organisations, government and public administration. The programme was coordinated by Dr. M Srikanth, Shri G.U. Pillai, Consultant and Dr. K. Ramakrishna, Consultant, CFIE.

The programme covered various aspects of rural financial institutions in India including challenges and opportunities, innovations in agricultural finance, Farmers Producers Organisations (FPOs), strengthening of rural credit cooperatives through SHGs, financial inclusion, governance in cooperative sector, skilling of youth and rural livelihoods, GIS applications for rural development, soft skills and effective communication skills, etc.

Resource Persons/Faculty

CFIE and NIRDPR's in-house faculty members and select guest faculty as subject matter specialists-cum-practitioners in the areas of rural finance, rural credit cooperatives, microfinance, livelihood promotion, etc. contributed to success of the programme.

A wide range of training methodologies, as mentioned below, was used during the programme in consonance with the objectives, duration

and expectations of the participants.

- Lectures and interactive sessions (through PPTs)
- Video clips, short films and discussions
- Field visit/exposure to RTP, Mulkanoor Cooperative Rural Bank and Marketing Society Ltd. (MCRBMS), and Mulkanoor Women's Cooperative Diary, Warangal (Urban)

Besides, the participants made presentations on the practices followed in their respective countries related to rural finance and cooperatives.

1. Feedback and Evaluation

Participants' feedback, which is very important to evaluate the programme and initiate suitable steps thereby to improve the training process, was captured using the online training portal.

Field Exposure to RTP, MCRBMS and MWCD

To impart practical knowledge and reinforce the learning made in the classroom, field visits were conducted on the second and fourth day of the programme to the following places:

- Rural Technology Park (RTP), NIRD&PR: With the help of PPTs, video clips, and unit visits, RTP activities were explained. The participants had exposure to various models of rural technologies showcased in respect of

rural housing, renewable energy and natural resource management and skill development and promotion of entrepreneurship; the participants appreciated RTP's guiding principles such as use of local resources, cost-effectiveness, eco-friendly and indigenous technologies.

(b) The Mulkanoor Cooperative Rural Bank and Marketing Society Ltd., (MCRBMS) located in Mulkanoor village of Warangal (Urban) district. The society was built on the principles of cooperation and service to the farmers who are mainly cultivating rice and cotton. It was started by late Shri Viswanath Reddy in the year 1956, covering 14 villages and 373 members. It had initial share capital of ₹ 2300/- and only one employee. Now it has 7324 (farmer) members who are served by 136 employees. The society has transformed the livelihoods of the villagers by providing solutions from 'farm to

the fork' thereby witnessing growth in all agrarian aspects including linking of credit with marketing, supply of inputs at reasonable prices, efficient management of the operations, life insurance linked with member crop loan, insurance coverage to milch animals, sheep, tractors and harvesters, etc. During the visit, the participants focussed on understanding the objectives of the organisation, membership eligibility criteria, privileges available to the members, opportunities and challenges while managing rural finance and microfinance enterprises and rural credit cooperatives.

(c) The Mulkanoor Women's Cooperative Dairy (MWCD) located in Mulkanoor village of Warangal (Urban) district. It came into existence on August 17, 2002. It is a cooperative dairy union under which there are 159 primary Women Cooperative Dairies

(WDCs) spread across Karim Nagar and Warangal districts. Mulkanoor women started exploring ways of investment which benefit a large section of the poor. They promoted dairy on cooperative basis by receiving technical support from National Dairy Development Board (NDDB) and handholding support from MCRBMS. Various success stories were shared with the visitors vis-à-vis the services rendered by the MWCD to the women community to help them have dignified living and social status.

The participants were cooperative and punctual in attending the training sessions. The programme was a success, as per the verbal feedback received from the participants. All participants felt that the serene training ambience, clean and hygienic surroundings, the infrastructure facilities and the systematic facilitation process had led to the success of the training programme.



CASE STUDY



Involvement of Women under MGNREGA in East-Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya

Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) has sustainably improved the living condition of rural people through an increase in their income and access to social goods by providing employment opportunities. Meghalaya is

a tribal dominant State of North-Eastern region. It is the homeland of three major tribal communities i.e., the Khasi, Jaintia and the Garo with their numerous divisions into clans. All the three major communities of the State are matrilineal,

wherein the youngest daughter inherits the land.

MGNREGA was launched during the 2006-07 in three districts of Meghalaya and further has extended to three more districts in the financial year 2007-08.

There was an enormous challenge during the previous years to entrust the responsibilities of implementation to the functionaries of Village Employment Councils and Area Employment Councils. As per this provision and more specifically as per section 4 of this Act, the State government framed a scheme known as Meghalaya Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MREGS). During the II phase (2007-08) the scheme was implemented in the East-Khasi Hills district. The State is governed by the provision of Sixth Schedule. In the absence of Panchayati Raj institution, the local traditional body of government has been responsible for the implementation of MREGS.

Institutional Arrangement for the Implementation of MGNREGA in East Khasi Hills District:

This scheme stipulated the formation of four non-profit voluntary bodies i.e., Village Employment Council (VEC), Area Employment Council (AEC), Block Employment Council (BEC) and District Employment Council (DEC) at four levels for the operationalisation of the MREGS.

The programme officer issuing work commencement letter to the VEC/AEC or other line departments, strictly following the priority indicated in the administrative sanction proceedings issued by the District Programme Coordinator. Further, AEC/VEC maintains a register of works for which work commencement letters are received for the financial year and VECs make payments for implementation of the scheme in the village and AECs make payments for works executed at its level. The programme officer is responsible for issuing of order for payment of wages to the workers and send cheque/ draft directly to the bank account of VEC which is operated as a joint account of two designated signatories from the programme executive committee of VEC, i.e., secretary and one woman member.

The traditional headman of the village known as Nokma has been made automatically president of the VEC, and the other two representatives are selected by consensus, with the condition that at least one of them should be a woman. Like the Gram Sabha in other States,

the VEC consists of all adult members of the village, male and female, and has to meet every month to collectively plan the works to be undertaken under MGNREGA. Most of the MGNREGA work includes land development, plantation, road connectivity and irrigation in the East-Khasi Hills district.

Work Status of MGNREGA in East-Khasi- Hill District:

There are eight community development blocks in the East-Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya viz. Khadarshnong-Laitkroh, Mawphlang, Myllem, Mawryngkneng, Pynursla, Mawkynrew, Mawsynram and Shella Bholagng. During the year 2012-13, across Meghalaya 3,00,297 lakh households had job card under MGNREGA and the percentage of person-days of women is 56.37. The total person-days of women at East-Khasi Hills district accounts for 59.93 in the financial year 2012-13. During the financial year 2017-18, total 17415 households have worked for hundred days and 1741624 person-days generated in East Khasi Hills district.

Table 1: Year-wise workers employed under MGNREGA in East-Khasi Hills district

Financial Year	Workers Employed		Person-days [in Lakh]		Amount earned during current financial year (In Lakhs)	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
2016-17	46351	25056	15.25966	8.1802	2578.88206	1382.4538
2017-18	22273	10735	4.50862	2.07966	816.06022	376.41846

In the East-Khasi Hills district women have started to appear more actively in the rural public sphere. MGNREGA has given power to the rural women to fight for their right to receive the wages. Moreover, women have been getting opportunity to come out from their house for paid work and also convenience of work close to their home. Women workers unanimously affirmed that the benefits from MGNREGA employment were high and that they would like to get more days of work in a year. The aggregate wage rate par day in East-Khasi Hills district is 175 rupees, with effect from April,

2017. Wages have been progressively increasing over the years. The scheme has encouraged non-working women, widows and the elderly to participate. Women workers agreed that MGNREGA has given them additional income. By working under MGNREGA, the women workers have been able to contribute for their family income. Most of the women beneficiaries reported that MGNREGA helps them to ensure regular food and also allows them to fulfil their daily needs.

It has been noticed that MGNREGA is providing a better source of income during the non-agricultural season.

According to the Act, projects are selected in the Gram Sabha meeting by the demand of local community. Gram Sabha plays a crucial role for conducting social audits of MGNREGA work. From the field, it is understood that large number of women participated in the Gram Sabha meeting. Generally, women workers were not allowed to taking part in the Darbar (Gram Sabha), however after implementation of MGREGA they have achieved the opportunity to attend the Gram Sabha meetings. Women reported that this is the only scheme where they can raise their voice. Women's

participation in decision making process has increased after the introduction of MGNREGS, mainly due to their economic independence.

The participation of women is quite effective in the East-Khasi Hills district which has improved the socio-economic status of women and enhanced their decision-making power slightly in

households. Apart from the lesser socio-economic constraints, non-availability of the male workers due to their significant migration to plains could be the basic reason for the larger participation of women under the scheme. However, the overall impact of MGNREGA on socio-economic lives of women is quite positive in many ways, whether it is by

enhancing their economic independence and self-confidence or contributing to food security, helping to reduce distress migration of minimum wages.

Dr. Rimki Patgiri
Research Associate
Centre for Panchayati Raj

Workshop on social and behavioural communication to promote positive alternatives to child marriage



Dr. Gyanmudra, Professor & Head, CHRD addressing participants of workshop

A sensitisation of families and empowering adolescent girls, promotion of education and career guidance, and converging the efforts of various line departments were among the many useful insights that came up during the two-day workshop on “Social and behaviour change communication to promote positive alternatives to child marriage”, held at NIRD&PR, Hyderabad, during September 27 -28, 2018.

The workshop, organised under the guidance of Dr. Gyanmudra, Professor & Head, CHRD by the Communication Resource Unit (CRU) of NIRD& PR in collaboration with UNICEF, saw a total of 30 participants working on child rights’ issues from Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.

In realising with the multiple objectives set out for the workshop, various facets like identification of drivers leading to child marriages, behavioural and normative factors behind those drivers, reviewing and consolidating

inputs for communication materials were discussed at length by participants. The drivers, contributing to child marriages, were broadly categorised as individual, family, community, and systemic. This workshop identified adolescent girls and their families, Self-Help Group (SHG) women, youth networks to reach boys and residential schools as the critical platforms for sensitisation and empowerment on prevention of child marriages.

Speaking on the occasion, Special Secretary and Financial Advisor to the Ministry of Rural Development, Jaideep Govind exhorted the participants not to highlight the child marriage issue, despite the dipping numbers across the country. “Child marriage is still a reality. Let’s not turn a blind eye to it. Education is the key in ending this social evil,” he observed. He urged participants to make practical application of innovative ways that emerged out of the two-day deliberations in countering the regressive practice.

Director General of NIRD&PR, Dr. W R Reddy impressed upon the attendees to develop the ability to spot the child marriages at the earliest to preempt them. “Instead of waiting for things to happen, it is much better to work at the pre-marriage level, identifying in advance where there is a likelihood of child marriage – family, community,” he added.

Making a passionate appeal to various functionaries to work in tandem to achieve the envisaged goal, he emphasised that eradicating child marriage is very much possible. “Let’s make 100 per cent child marriage-free villages a priority and involve local elected representatives and plan a project centered on it in Gram Panchayat Development Programme,” he said.

UNICEF officers, consultants, representatives from CESS, NGO Representatives and child protection officers, CDPOs from WCD of AP and Telangana participated in the workshop.

ToT programme on Strategies for Dovetailing Agricultural Development Programmes with Panchayati Raj System



Dr. Nithya V G, Assistant Professor, Centre for Agrarian Studies, Dr. Ch Radhika Rani, Associate Professor & Head, Centre for Agrarian Studies and Dr. C. Kathiresan, Associate Professor, Centre for Panchayati Raj (1st row third to fifth (L-R)) with participants of training programme

Substantial public investments are being made for the strengthening of the rural economy and the livelihood base of the poor, notably for the marginalised groups like women, schedules castes, and scheduled tribes. To adequately address the issue of poverty alleviation, there is a need to enhance efforts through inter-sectoral approaches. The convergence of different programmes and schemes of agriculture and allied sectors, with Rural Development and Panchayat Raj system, is the need of the hour, as Panchayats are considered to be the key driving force in ensuring the reach-out of scheme related benefits to the targeted community. This convergence will bring in synergies between different government programmes/schemes regarding planning, process and implementation. Besides, the dovetailing of programmes/schemes will enable better planning and productive investments in rural areas through the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), considered to be the fulcrum of rural development. This will also facilitate sustainable development, for instance, the convergence of funds from other sources can help in the creation of durable assets. For example, funds available from Central or State departments through different sponsored schemes/programmes can be dovetailed with other agriculture or rural

development funds for the construction of durable community assets. Therefore, key functionaries from agriculture and allied sectors, rural development and panchayati raj need to be exposed to various schemes of the line departments and dovetailing the existing schemes and programmes, which in turn facilitate the functionaries to assist the gram panchayats to develop the effective and holistic GPDP.

In this context, a five-day Training of Trainers (ToT) programme on Strategies for Dovetailing Agricultural Development Programmes with Panchayati Raj System was jointly conducted by Centre for Agrarian Studies (CAS) and Centre for Panchayati Raj (CPR), during 24th to 28th September 2018 at NIRD&PR, Hyderabad. The programme was attended by fifteen officials of district/block level functionaries of agriculture, animal husbandry, fisheries, rural development and panchayati raj departments from different States. The main objective of the programme was:

- To enable the participants know existing schemes/programmes of line departments for collective planning and implementation.
- To sensitise the participants about the potentiality of convergence and planning at the grassroots level

- To familiarise the participants about the GPDP planning process and integrating agricultural development programmes in the planning.

The programme started with the inaugural and ice-breaking sessions. Dr.Nithya V.G, Course Director and Assistant Professor, initiated the session by explaining the background of the training and its significance in the present scenario. Dr. Radhika Rani, Associate Professor and Head, CAS briefed the importance of the convergence of existing schemes at the grassroots level. Dr. C. Kathiresan, Associate Professor, CPR gave an overview of the one week training programme and handled a session on convergence of agriculture developmental programmes with panchayati raj system. He also briefed the 'People's Plan Campaign' for GPDP preparation. Further, to give an in-depth understanding of Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), Shri Dilip Kumar Pal, one of the experts on GPDP in the country took a session on integrating developmental programmes in the GPDP planning process. The other topics covered in this training programme are: agriculture-nutrition linkages and role of PRIs for better nutritional outcomes, convergence of MGNREGA

with agriculture schemes/programmes, agro-tourism: an alternate livelihood opportunity for rural India, watershed based cluster development approach, role of grassroots level institutions in building sustainable value chains, role of NRLM in connecting agri-developmental activities with GPs and final session of the training was on group presentation and discussion on best practices and case studies on agri developmental programmes and GPDP.

A one-day exposure visit was organised to Gundareddypalli, Siddipet district to understand the preparation of GPDP process, formation, functioning

and services of various community Institutions and convergence of various government schemes. The participants had interactions with the sarpanch, GP members, various committee leaders, agriculture officers and MGNREGA project staff. They were also taken to Rural Technology Park (RTP) to introduce innovative and sustainable rural technologies.

The participants were divided into three groups and these groups were made to prepare and present the GPDP best practice they have observed. A compilation of all their presentations helped them to come out with a report

on the action plan, specific to their State, which they submitted at the end of the programme. The programme concluded with the feedback from participants, they mentioned that they have really upgraded the knowledge of GPDP preparation process and the idea of convergence of various schemes in the planning process. The participants were assured that they will involve in the people's campaign programme, taking part in the gram sabha and help the gram panchayats in the preparation of GPDP.

The training programme was organised by Dr. Nithya VG, Assistant Professor, CAS and Dr. C. Kathiresan, Associate Professor (CPR).



NIRD&PR celebrates Hindi Pakhwada

The winners of competitions with Dr. Akanksha Shukla, Associate Professor & Head (CDC) (1st from left), Dr. W.R. Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR (3rd from left) and Radhika Rastogi, IAS, Deputy Director General, NIRD&PR (1st from right)

As per the directions of Rajbhasha Vibhag, Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi, NIRD&PR celebrated Hindi Pakhwada during 14 – 28 September, 2018. Several programmes were conducted during this period. Hasya Kavi Sammelan was organised for the staff of the Institute. Renowned poets (Kavi) from twin cities recited poems. The programme was chaired by Smt. Radhika Rastogi, IAS, Deputy Director General. Artists from Song & Drama Division, Hyderabad, performed during the cultural programme which included skits, Kuchipudi and Bharatnatyam dance, etc. Dr. W R Reddy, IAS, Director General, Smt. Radhika Rastogi, IAS, Dy. Director General, Dr. Akanksha Shukla, Associate Professor & Head (CDC) along

with the staff of NIRD&PR were present during the cultural programme. On another occasion, Dr. Ghanate delivered a talk on 'Godan' (famous novel by Shri Munshi Premchand). It was attended by Smt. Radhika Rastogi, IAS, Dy. Director General, Dr. Akanksha Shukla, Associate Professor & Head (CDC) & staff of the institute. A debate competition was also arranged for P.G. Diploma students of the institute. Dr. W.R. Reddy, Director General,

awarded cash prizes to the winners.

NIRD&PR observed Hindi Pakhwada under the guidance of Dr. W.R. Reddy, IAS, Director General, Smt. Radhika Rastogi, IAS, Deputy Director General and Dr. Akanksha Shukla, Associate Professor and Head (CDC), NIRD&PR. Smt. Anita Pandey, Assistant Director (OL) and entire team of OL Section coordinated all the programmes.



Impact Evaluation Research Methods Workshop



Dr. W.R. Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR inaugurating the workshop on Impact Evaluation Research Methods

As part of the capacity building programme for its faculty members, NIRD&PR in collaboration with IDinsight organised a workshop on Impact Evaluation Research Methods on 14th September, 2018 to familiarise the participants with rigorous methodologies and designs. The objectives of the workshop were to understand the relevance and importance of conducting impact evaluations; understanding of when different methods can be used; familiarity with the types of methods and their respective applicability in different contexts and familiarity challenges and limitations in designing.

The following members from ID insight conducted sessions for the workshop:

1. Daniel Stein, Chief Economist, based in San Francisco
2. Divya Nair, Associate Director, based in Delhi
3. Bence Kocsis, Associate, based in Delhi

4. Rupika Singh, Manager, based in Delhi

5. Marc Shortland, Director, Technical Team, based in San Francisco

The workshop was inaugurated by the Director General, Dr. W.R. Reddy where he spoke about the importance of 'Impact Evaluations', as most of the research work done in the Institute relates to it.

Dr. Gyanmudra, Professor & Head, CRTCN (Research) welcomed the guests and the session started with introducing

the participants to common fallacies associated with pre-post designs and other basic designs. They were also introduced to experimental designs and other quasi-experimental designs. Later the sessions included explaining the sample size calculations. The participants were divided into groups and each group had to identify a topic of research and present some of their basic questions and develop evaluation design for selected research questions.



Off-campus Training Programme on Methodology and Techniques of Social Science Research



The Centre for Human Resource Development, NIRD&PR has organised an off-campus training programme on Methodology and Techniques of Social Science Research at Deen Dayal Upadhyaya State Institute of Rural Development, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh during 29-31 August, 2018. This programme was designed and developed on the demand from SIRD, Lucknow. This programme was conducted because all the government institutions who are working in the area of rural development felt the need to conduct training programmes for capacity building of government officials of rural development, panchayati raj and allied sectors on important rural development issues. However, to conduct effective training programmes on any rural subject, the faculty/researcher must carry out scientific research on the subject prior to designing of the training and to carry out scientific research, the knowledge and understanding of research methods and statistics is very essential. Keeping in view the above, this training programme was conceived and is proposed to build the capacities of the faculty, who are working in the institutes of rural development. The objectives of the training programme were (1) To orient the participants on fundamentals of social sciences research and its relevance in rural development,

(2) To equip the participants to develop the skills on preparation of research design, and (3) To help the participants to learn statistical methods and their application in data analysis. To achieve the set objectives of the programmes, the content and its sessions were structured in such a way that it has covered the basic concepts of social science research methodology.

The contents of the programme covered the concept of social science research, participatory research methodology, research design, sampling methodology, interview schedule preparation, descriptive and inferential statistics, hands-on experience on how to use SPSS for data analysis. Four groups were also formed and were asked to make a presentation on research proposal of their interest. The inputs were provided by the course team. Training methodologies used for training were in accordance with the contents of the programme, mostly participant-oriented such as lecture-cum-discussion, group exercises, presentations by participants, and hands-on experience, made the programme more effective.

Total 31 participants working as Deputy Directors, Assistant Director, and Research Associate of DDUSIRD, Lucknow; District Training Officers and Senior Instructors from District

Institute of Rural Development; Principals, Extension Training officers, Demonstrators, Senior Instructors and Publicity Assistant of Regional Institute of Rural Development located in different districts have attended this programme. Out of the total 31 participants, 4 were female participants and the remaining 27 were male participants. In addition to the faculty from NIRD&PR, a few of eminent resource persons such as Dr. Vardani, former Additional Director, SIRD, Lucknow was invited for taking sessions on PRA methods, The Director of Giri Institute of Development Studies, Lucknow, Prof B K Bajpai was invited to take session on concepts of social science research. The programme started with small film on NIRD&PR.

At the end of the programme, the course team invited Dr. O P Pandey, Additional Director and Local Coordinator of this programme to interact with participants about the course and the learnings from it. The programme was well received by the participants and they demanded many more programmes on this subject in near future. The evaluation of the programme was done and it is evident from the evaluation report that improvement in knowledge, skill enhancement and change in the attitude after attending this programme was reported by 94, 88, and 92 per cent

of the participants, respectively. While interacting with participants during the training period it was observed that majority of the participants expressed that they are not productively involved in the training and research work. The course team has encouraged all the participants to utilise the research fund

of NIRD&PR which is especially kept for the faculty of ETCs/DIRDs/RIRDs to carry out small scale research work. The course team has also come forward to extend help to the faculty in preparing research proposals. Many of the participants have shown their interest to develop research proposals.

The programme was coordinated by Dr. Lakhan Singh, Assistant Professor, Dr. T Vijaya Kumar, Associate Professor and Dr. Gyanmudra, Professor & Head, Centre for Human Resource Development, NIRD&PR. Dr. O P Pandey, Additional Director, was the local coordinator from DDUSIRD, Lucknow.



International Training Programme on Planning and Management of Rural Development Programmes

As a part of ITEC sponsored training programmes for the year 2018-19, NIRD&PR conducted an International Training Programme on Planning and Management of Rural Development Programmes during 24 September to 21 October, 2018. A total of 25 participants representing 18 countries of Africa, Asia and South American continents attended the programme. Shri Jaideep Govind, Special Secretary and Financial Advisor, Ministry of Rural Development was the chief guest in the inauguration led by Dr. W R Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR. The programme aimed at providing an overview of the policies and programmes being implemented in developing countries and also to examine the possibility of their replication with a focus on basic understanding about the concepts, methods and approaches in planning and formulation of projects, skills and knowledge on implementation and management of projects for effective delivery and achieving the intended results, and tools and techniques for application in monitoring and evaluation of rural development projects.

After the initial two days of interaction on the country presentations by the participants, the participants were exposed to PME tools such as logical framework analysis, sustainable livelihoods and results-based management. The presentations on planning and management of different rural development programmes being implemented in India have given ample opportunities not only to understand the innovations with regard to rural issues, but also provided space for cross country interactions to the participants. The groups formed for undertaking classroom exercises had given hands on experience for execution in their country context.

In addition to the visit to Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS), which provided knowledge on application of satellite technology, a five-day study tour was organised to Chennai under the coordination of Rajiv Gandhi National Institute of Youth Development (RGNIYD), covering various aspects of rural development interventions

focusing on the context of rural and semi-urban India in plain and coastal areas. Apart from various activities for youth development by RGNIYD, interactions with communities and SHGs, youth, NGOs, elected representatives, etc., were arranged which facilitated the trainees to witness actual implementation of various rural development activities discussed in classroom. Visit to Rural Technology Business Incubator (RTBI), IIT Madras Research Park has provided ample opportunity on recent developments taken up for start ups in India. The visit to Panchayat Academy, Kuttumbakkam village and SHG activities of Mudichur village signified the efforts and role of people's participation in self-rule and strengthening rural economy. NGOs like Society for Education and Action (SEA) at Mammalapuram and Hand and Hand at Vadambakkam village were also met. The trainees had an opportunity to interact with NGOs and to know about their functioning with regard to different challenges. CPME team led by Dr. G Venkata Raju, Prof. & Head, CPME, coordinated the programme.

Training Programme on Orientation on Rural Local Governance and Participatory Planning



A four-day training programme on Orientation on Rural Local Governance and Participatory Planning was organised during 4-7 September, 2018 at NIRD&PR, Hyderabad. Thirty-seven rural development officials of Reliance Foundation from 12 different States attended the training programme. Important sessions on Panchayati Raj Institution & Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) were conducted. Dr. W. R. Reddy, Director General, NIRD&PR has addressed the participants in inaugural session and emphasised the importance of the programme in the preparation of participatory and inclusive gram panchayat development plan. The rural development officials of Reliance Foundation shared their field level experience of village social transformation in the first session. The sessions were followed by a pre and post-training assessment activity which was organised for the participants to know their understanding about the local self-governance and participatory planning.

Ms. Bhakti Sharma, Sarpanch, Barkhedhi Abdullah Gram Panchayat, Madhya Pradesh took a session on importance of GPDP and shared the

field level challenges faced by her Gram Panchayat during her first term as a Sarpanch. She also shared various steps taken by her Gram Panchayat to achieve the objectives of Gram Panchayat Development Plan. Shri Bhaskar Pere Patil, Sarpanch, Patoda Gram Panchayat, Maharashtra took a session on focus areas of GPDP. Shri Bhaskar highlighted the various facilities available i.e. free flour mill, CCTV facility and supply of RO drinking water that are being provided to all the inhabitants of Patoda Gram Panchayat. He also shared various innovative steps adopted by his Gram Panchayat for implementing the GPDP.

A field visit to Veerlapalle Gram Panchayat, Kothur mandal of Mahabubnagar district was organised for an interaction with the functionaries of Veerlapalle Gram Panchayat. Shri Narendra Reddy, Panchayat Secretary emphasised that there have been several constructive changes in the Gram Panchayat due to GPDP. Gram Panchayat has been declared open-defecation free, safe drinking water is being provided to all households and there is focus on quality education. A session was jointly handled by Mrs. Sumita Dawra, IAS and Dr. Sri Krishna, UNICEF on Women

and Child-friendly Gram Panchayat Plan. A video titled "Nurturing Mothers, Nourishing Wombs" in Araku valley, the tribal belt of Andhra Pradesh was also shown to participants to emphasise on Early Childhood Development (ECD). Smt. Radhika Rastogi, Deputy Director General, NIRD&PR addressed the participants in the valedictory session and highlighted that the input of the training programme would facilitate the officials in preparation of GPDP in the respective States. The programme was coordinated by Dr. Pratyusna Patnaik and Mr. Md. Taquiuddin, Centre for Panchayati Raj.





International training programme on Natural Resource Management for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods

Natural resources such as land, air, water, forest, minerals, flora and fauna all together make different landscapes and ecosystems. The quality of human life also totally depends on the health of the ecosystems. Because, humans always have been depending and getting both public good and consumptive services from their surroundings and local ecosystems. But, gradually the pressure on natural resources is increasing due to various reasons such as over-exploitation, unplanned usage, over-population and climate change. Mainly this is affecting the quality of human life of those who are living in underdeveloped and developing areas. Under this circumstance, providing sustainable life for humans is posing biggest challenge in regional, national level and international levels. Now there is a need for building prosperity for the present population in addition to meeting the needs of future generation. For this there is a need for strengthening the practices for management of natural resources in sustainable manner.

For achieving the goals of sustainable management and to train the different stakeholders, the Centre for Natural Resource Management organised an international training programme on Natural Resource Management for Sustainable Rural Livelihoods at NIRD&PR,

Hyderabad from August 27 to September 23, 2018. A total of 21 participants from countries such as Afghanistan, Algeria, Botswana, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guyana, Iraq, Malawi, Mexico, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe participated in this training programme. The programme was sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs of Government of India. Dr. Ravindra S. Gavali, Dr. K. Krishna Reddy, Dr V. Suresh Babu and team from the Centre for Natural Resource Management and Centre from Climate Change and Disaster Management coordinated the programme.

The main objective of the training programme is to give an overview of natural resources; concept of sustainable management; strategies for management of natural resources (in both traditional and modern approach); and hands on experience on natural resource management for the participants from various departments viz. agriculture, forestry, biodiversity, environment and civil engineers, etc.

The programme had four modules viz., 1) concept and scope of natural resource management, 2) sustainable development for sustainable livelihoods, 3) strategies and approaches of stakeholders for sustainable management

of natural resources and 4) natural resource management for sustainable rural livelihoods. Various eminent speakers from different organisations viz. JNU- Delhi, ISEC Bangalore and faculty of NIRD&PR addressed and shared their knowledge to the participants. Apart from classroom sessions, the participants had visited various institutions viz., IIRR, NFDB, RTP-NIRD&PR, Directorate of Poultry, IIOR, Centre for Good Governance, JNTU, EPTRI, Biodiversity Park-PJTSU and LaCONES to understand their functions and roles in practical manner. Besides this, the participants had a study tour to neighbouring State Karnataka. There they visited three districts, namely Chikkaballapura, Tumkur and Mysore where they got ground truth information by interacting with various stakeholders on different aspects (agriculture, forestry, watershed and NRM). A visit to Pochampally was also organised, where the participants had an interaction with skill development activities and weavers.

At the end, participants presented and submitted their report on observations, their ideas and an action plan which they want to implement in their own country.



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