



CAPACITY BUILDING OF PANCHAYATI RAJ INSTITUTION MEMBERS: EMBRACING NEW INITIATIVES IN TRAINING

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Abstract: The Panchayati Raj Institutions(PRIs) will play a significant role in India's decentralised governance through the community participation, decision making and grass roots development. They acts as vehicle in carrying back to the people the power that really belongs to them. The elected representatives ensure local governance effectively, when they are potential strengthening the skills and abilities of elected Panchayati Raj Institution members is crucial to make the full potential of the elected PRI members. There is dire need to enhance the competencies of elected PRI members. The paper examines how capacity building members can help in providing good governance for local development. The paper focus on different dimensions of capacity building programmes and its compact on functioning of elected representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions. In this paper an attempt is made the role of SIRDs to provide insights the required skills to enhance their abilities by in local governance by empowering them. By taking up capacity building programmes can enable PRI members to act efficiently and strengthen local governance which ultimately leads to engines of positive change at the grass root level.

Key Words: Governance, Capacity Building, Decentralization, Panchayati Raj, Empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

Governance is a multifaceted concept. It a generally refers to the systems and processes by which societies, organizations or groups are managed and decisions are made. It encompasses systems, strengthen, processes, procedures, practices, relationships and leadership behavior. Good governance reflects in administrative authority in running social, political, economic aspects the key aspects of governance, distribution of power, decision making, accountability, Transparency, participation and rule of law. Local governance refers to the system of managing and administrating affairs at the local level, such as villages, blocks, and districts. Local people and communities can participate in the process of development of local areas and work for providing basic amenities, and infrastructure and well being of people. Local bodies formulate plans and implement policies at the local level. Panchayati Raj institution which is a vibrant democratic institution at grass root level in India by way of participatory, accountable, responsive, transparent and citizen friendly local self governance. Consequent upon the constitutional status of Panchayati Raji through 73rd Amendment the grass root governments in India have started receiving new impetus.

IMPORTANCE OF PANCHAYATI RAJ SYSTEM

The Panchayati Raj system is a decentralized governance and make the people to participate in decision taking and development. The term "Panchayati Raj" translates to "rule by village committees" and signifies a system where local self governing bodies are entrusted with administrative and development responsibilities. The constitution of India defines Panchayats as institutions of local-self government in rural India with the three-tier Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI). These are: Gram(Village) Panchayats at village or cluster of villages levels, Block Panchayat at block level and the zilla parishads/District Panchayat at District level Gram Panchayat is responsible for local-level administration and development activities. The Panchayat Samiti Blocks monitor

development activities of village Panchayats in its jurisdiction. The Zilla parishad which is apex tier at district level formulate plans, for district and allocate the resources. The purpose of Panchayati Raj system is decentralization of powers and resources and empower the elected representatives at three levels viz, village panchayat, Blocks and District.

Panchayati Raj promotes the citizens to involve in discussion, and formulate policy decisions and implementation through participatory approach, PRIs are responsible to meet the necessities of the local area by formulating plans and its implementation. It also promote transparency and accountability in governance by involving local people in monitoring the development programmes and to utilize resources effectively. It is a bottom up approach to development in lieu of the top-down approach, where local needs are the top-priority in decision-making.

CAPACITY BUILDING IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

Capacity building helps improve the skills and abilities required for effective local governance by strengthening institutional and individual capabilities. Panchayats are physically most proximate institutions of government for people in their respective villages. They are responsible for local development. Since elected Panchayat representatives are accessible to people they expect a lot from them for the development of villages. Panchayat members have to respond to the demands of public. As the role in enhancing to address the problems and to promote sustainable development Panchayat members has to equip with the knowledge skills and tools well informed decision-making is at the core of effective governance capacity building provides Panchayat representations with analytical tools, data interpretation skills and critical thinking abilities. Training in areas such as decision making, conflict resolution, communication and public speaking enhances their ability to address local issues. Panchayat functionaries should be well aware about the intricacies of management and finance of Panchayats, including the procedures to conduct panchayat meetings, Gram sabha meetings other institutional mechanisms. They have to be aware about their roles and responsibilities and rights of institutions. These are the essential competencies including 73rd constitutional Amendment Act, the state Panchayat Raj Act, Participatory planning gender equalize social justice, practices of good governance and e-governance.

Local governance is dynamic influenced by evolving social, economic and technological changes, capacity building develops self-confidence, leadership qualities among the local leaders and face the emerging challenges and opportunities. It helps the local leaders identifying targets to be achieved and proper planning, develop action plans, allocate resources judiciously and monitoring implementation of projects. Capacity building empowers local leaders with environmental social and economic knowledge, promoting a holistic approach to sustainable development that benefits the community and its environment in the long-term.

PANCHAYAT RAJ INSTITUTION MEMBERS – CAPACITY BUILDING

The capacity building and training of Panchayats involve huge numbers with extreme diversity in knowledge backgrounds and interests of those to be trained. At Present 2,68,000 village Panchayats, 6612 Blocks Panchayats and 666 Zilla parishads are in functional in the country ever since the amendment of 73rd constitutional Amendment Act 1993. A total of about 3 millions representatives for being elected under the three-tier structure. Out of these more than 1.2 million representatives are women. Around one million representatives are being elected from scheduled castes, scheduled tribes and backward castes. All these marginalised section getting elected to Panchayats first time and does not have any experience in discharging public places. They have to perform many tasks and exercise powers and authorities evolved to Panchayats. These elected representatives are also responsible in implementing central and state government programmes in the Panchayats. As a head of panchayats they have to play a significant role may require specific skills and knowledge to manage affairs. They required skills and knowledge can be attained through specific training and capacities.

It became quiet challenge to train the functionaries and capacity building of Panchayat functionaries in terms of the sheer number of trainees as well as trainee directing and varying contextual situations. Besides elected representatives there are lakhs of employees of Panchayat Raj in different cadres. To Panchayat secretary at Gram Panchayat level upto chief executive officer, Zilla parishad including Technical staff. All these Panchayats Raj functionaries need to understand the role of the Panchayat Raj system and their roles in it. They need to be oriented, sensitized and trained.

APPROACHES TO CAPACITY BUILDING

The ministry of Panchayat Raj, Government of India prepared a National capability building frame work in 2014 to provide guide lines to states for training centers, types of trainers and modes of training. It proposed the engagement of various training institutions of central and state governments, accredited NGOS, academic institutions. In this aspects the state Institution of Rural Development (SIRDs) have been at the forefront for providing Institutions based trainings. Every state has their own SIRDs which are supported by the Minsitry of Rural Development, Ministry of Panchayati Raj and respective state governments. The National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj(NIRD & PR) as a national noted institute for all SIRDs.

The initiatives of capacity building for Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI) members to enhance their skills, knowledge and capabilities in order to perform their roles in local governance effectively. Workshops should be conducted on various aspects such as local governance, financial management, participating planning, social development and legal aspects can provide PRI members with practical knowledge and skills. In order to effective functioning of PRI leadership development plays crucial role by enhancing leadership skills communication, decision making conflict resolution and team in budgeting, accounting and fund management and financial reporting which facilitates to manage resources effectively. PRI members can be trained in promoting

gender equity and social inclusion ensuring that. The needs and perspectives of all community members are considered in decision-making process. Good communication is essential to convey the information and to seek support from community. Training in communication teaching can make the PRI members to effectively represent and advocacy strategies for the development. In the digital era imparting knowledge of fundamental technical knowledge can help PRI members in data-driven, decision making transparency and efficient record – keeping. Training and visit to model PRIs in other areas or states can provide insights and innovative ideas for effective governance by understanding. They way in which policies and programmes are being implemented. Training in monitoring and evaluation techniques helps PRI members assess the effectiveness of their initiatives. To build up good relations capacity building address soft skills like empathy, and listening. All these initiatives can be designed to impart training to all the elected representatives of Panchayat Raj Institutions and its functionaries through different agencies more particularly through the state Institute of Rural Development. Which have been planning a vital role in capacity building up the members of Panchayati Raj institutions.

Prior to take initiatives for capacity building of members of PRIs need to develop comprehensive curriculum and training modules. A detailed assessment is required to pin point the specific training needs of PRI members at various levels taking into consideration their roles, responsibilities, challenges and knowledge and skill, deficit by developing modules. Each training modules structured content outline must include key topics concepts and practical examples relevant to PRI members. To foster engagement and active learning methods like case studies group discussion, role play and similar interactive approaches will be used and keep participants engaged to apply the knowledge practically. Live examples with case studies should be explained for the application of concepts in PRI setting. Collaborative activities that encourage participation critical thinking and skill development including group discussion problem solving exercises and role plays should be included. This module will empower PRI members with knowledge and skills to contribute to local governance and development.

ADVERSITIES IN CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building for members of Panchayat Raj Institutions faces numerous challenges that affect training initiatives. To ensure successful capacity building of PRI members need to identify these issue and evolve appropriate initiatives.

In adequate training infrastructure and qualified personnel hinders the capacity building of Panchayat Raj members. SIRDs and similar training institutes face a shortage of trainers with of diverse disciplinary backgrounds and expertise. Qualitative training is also hampered by the lack of appropriate technologies training activities and equipment. Attending trainings is different due to time constrain for Panchayati Raj members because their governance responsibilities. Further, financial constrain is also one of the major problem to organise training programmes. Rural areas often have poor infrastructure and limited access to training venues and it becomes difficult to organize and attend training programmes. PRI members some times show little interest in training programmes because the content does not adequately address they local issues making it seem irrelevant.

SIRDs ROLE IN CAPACITY OF BUILDING

To address these issues, state institutes of Rural Development can play an pro-active role in building of capacities of members of Panchayat Raj. The States Institutes of Rural Development have to take new initiatives and be in forefront for providing institution-based trainings. SIRDs develop need based training modules based on identifying needs. It should focus on powers, delegated from Panchayati Raj Act, functions and responsibilities of PRIs and their members. It also focus on Rural Development Programmes and Schemes and also planning and implementation of local development plans. Further, it also focus on financial management and accounting and for social justice and inclusion and use of technology in e-governance. SIRD's should implement training of trainers programmes to create cadre of resource persons at the district and block level by arranging lecturers and workshops and group discussions. SIRDs should also arrange field visits and taken up participatory Rural Appraisal. SIRDs has to develop training materials, and should provide in the form of hand books on various issues related to rural development and local governance.

SIRDs should conduct studies to understand the training needs of PRI members and identify groups in their capacity building. SIRD should collaborate with NIRDPR and NGOs involved of Panchayati Raj.

SIRD's should formulate a year long an action plan to develop training to all members through physical session train-the-trainer initiatives and WhatsApp based online learning. It should ensure to provide quality and relevance of in their local governance. SIRDs should motivate the members for active participation in training programmes for this non-monetary incentives may be given to the members.

CONCLUSION

Capacity building for Panachayati Raj Institution (PRI) members is essential to empower the representatives for good governance and development. In the changing scenario in the policies, laws, and technological development capacity building enriches the PRI members with latest knowledge and information. In this aspect state Institute of Rural Development which is playing a prominent role in building up capacities to the members is PRI should come up with new initiatives in to translate policies into actions that directly impact the rural people. In order to effectively build the PRI members capacities SIRDs must be equipped with a full-pledged faculty drawn from various disciplines viz. bureaucratic, academics, finance management, law, and Technology by creating good training facilities. To achieve the goal of nurturing the capacities of PRI members necessitates sustained financial support from both the central and state Governments, will serve as a foundation stone, fostering a dynamic leadership, informed decision making and effective governance and local inclusive development.

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