

BACKGROUND AND NEED

The increasing global debate on functioning of the local self-governments has attracted many scholars of the world to explore on the various aspects of functioning-particularly with regard to promoting local development plan and implementing development programmes. It is widely believed that in the contemporary era of development the local self-governing institutions have been playing a prominent role while contributing immensely towards formulating local development plan and implementing development programmes for the people. As per the provision of the 73rd Amendment Act of the Indian Constitution, mandatory powers and functions have been vested to the *Gram Sabhas (Village Assembly)* to promote local development plans and to identify beneficiaries under different schemes and programmes. In decentralised planning, people are considered as an important and inseparable part of the planning process. Thus decentralised planning is believed to create opportunities for effective people's participation in the planning process. In India, the decentralised planning mainly relies on four important reasons.

First, it is difficult for macro-level planning to effectively utilise the locally available resources and scattered region specific economic activities to be done at small level at household and village levels.

Second, uniting and coordinating the locationally dispersed, culturally diverged, socially disadvantaged, educationally and economically backward within the mainstream economic process for identification, delivery, plan and implement the development programmes.

Third, given the likely slow pace of the rehabilitation of these groups and the frequent periods of stress through which they pass, stable and dependable arrangements are required for providing relief and supplying for basic needs.

Fourth, it is important to have participatory mechanisms in the planning for resources and requirements, with a view to promoting among the people motivation, habits of self-help, local-level leadership and active role in strategic and planning decisions.

In this context, decentralization is the linking factor for sector interventions with convergence approaches for sustainable development especially in the rural areas. Therefore identifying and understanding the actual status of decentralised planning, status of devolution, mechanism created for planning, implementation and monitoring, issues & problems faced by different stakeholders in decentralised process, capacity interventions, level & nature of people participation are essential to make future course of action. It is also important to know the effects and impacts of decentralisation process in the delivery of basic minimum needs as well as on the livelihoods of the rural poor. Therefore this seminar has been planned to organise to analyse the effectiveness of the past two decades of experiences of decentralization on the success and challenges, for making policy change interventions.

OBJECTIVES

The present seminar is basically aimed to mobilise papers from the experts and discuss on the following objectives

1. To discuss and compile the successful practices of decentralized planning carried out by a number of PRI institutions in India.
2. To discuss and analyze the factors contributed for the successful developing and implementation of participatory planning
3. To discuss the opportunities created by the decentralised planning process for the local people to develop their life in terms of better access to the basic amenities provided by the gram panchayats.
4. To understand the status of powers, functions and resources devolved to the GPs by various states and their effective utilization.
5. To understand the problems and challenges faced by the GPs in social mobilization, resource mobilization, preparation of plans, budgeting and other related aspects in implementation of the plans.
6. To explore on the policy changes and strategies for strengthening the decentralized democracy at the grass root level.

Themes for the Discussion

- Best practices in the participatory process in planning and implementation
- Best model panchayats – interventions, strategies and outcomes
- Peoples' Participation in Planning and Decision Making
- Institutional Governance and Inclusive Public Services
- State wise functional status of decentralised planning,
- State wise status of devolution Powers, Finance and Functions to the panchayats
- Mechanism created for planning, implementation and monitoring at the Gram Panchayat level
- Issues & problems faced by different stakeholders in decentralised process
- Capacity building interventions created and their functional efficiency
- Effective strategies for people participation in the decentralised governance
- Effects and impacts of decentralisation process in the delivery of basic minimum needs
- Gender Responsive and Participatory Planning
- Fiscal Management and Investment Planning
- Potential of GIS based Planning
- Solutions for enabling interdepartmental collaboration in planning
- Impact of decentralisation on the livelihoods of the rural poor.
- Policy changes and strategies for strengthening the decentralized democracy
- Problems and challenges faced by the GPs in social mobilization, resource mobilization, preparation of plans, budgeting

Outcome

This seminar will be a platform to review the performance of local bodies, discuss and workout the procedures and strategies for mid-course correction. The workshop recommendations may be sent to the state and central governments for further strengthening the decentralised planning process at the grassroots. The

selected papers presented in the seminar will be published as an edited book. The observations related to the success of the decentralisation will be used as inputs in the NIRDPR training programmes.

PARTICIPANTS LEVEL

In view of the above background NIRD-PR proposes to have two-day national seminar on the above theme. Papers are invited from lead authors, academicians, subject experts, policy practitioners, Department functionaries and representatives of NGOs working in Rural Development sector.

Prescribed Format

The paper should be submitted in 'Times New Roman', font size 12, 1.5 spaced with margin 1 ½ " on the left side and 1" on the other three sides which will be screened by review committee. Abstract /paper (Max 500/3000 words) may be submitted electronically to duraichinna1967@gmail.com and hard copy to Seminar Coordinator.

LOGISTICS

The contributors of the papers will be provided free board and lodging in NIRD&PR Guest House. Select paper contributors would be considered for payment of TA, maximum up to 2nd AC (Train) on production of tickets as per NIRD&PR norms.

NO REGISTRATION FEE

IMPORTANT DATES

Last date for submission of abstracts: 5th January, 2017

Acceptance notification: 10th January, 2017

Last date for receipt of papers: 20th January, 2017.

VENUE: NIRD & PR, Hyderabad

About NIRD&PR:

The National Institute of Rural Development & Panchyati Raj is an apex organization under the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India for training, Research and consultancy in Rural Development. It is the Think tank of MoRD, GOI on issues pertaining to Rural Development. The Institute serves as forum for discussion and debate on issues of common concerned, attracts academics and developmental practitioners from all over the country and abroad. NIRD trains more than 4000 senior level administrators, planners and Rural Development functionaries every year. The Institute has well-organized and full computerized library with a collection of over 90,000 volumes. To meet the growing organizational and research needs the institute has a fully equipped computer lab with the state-of-the art technology.

Seminar Coordinators:

Dr R. Chinnadurai, Associate Professor (CDP)

Dr.Y.Bhaskar Rao, Prof & Head, CDP

Dr.R.Aruna Jayamani, Assistant Professor

ADDRESS FOR COMMUNICATION

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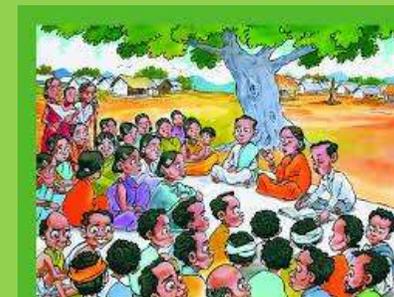
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National Seminar on Participatory Decentralized Planning at the Grassroots: Problems, Challenges and Opportunities

**09-10, February 2017
Venue - NIRD&PR, Hyderabad**



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