

NIRD RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS - 2008-2009

Sl.No	Title of the Study	Project Team
1	An Evaluation Study on Functioning of Extension Training Centres (ETCs)	K. Suman Chandra Pattabi Ram Reddy P. Janardhan Rao
2	Case Study of a Select Special Economic Zone (SEZ) with Reference to Employment Opportunities for Women	A. Rizwana C. Dheeraja P. S. Geethakutty
3	Effectiveness of Watershed Development on Environment Conservation: A Case Study in Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh	S. S. P. Sharma U. Hemanth Kumar
4	Impact Assessment of Virtual Agriculture Extension in East and West Godavari Districts of Andhra Pradesh	V. Suresh Babu
5	Livelihood Aspects in Watershed Approach: A Case Study	S N Rao
6	Strategies Adopted in Implementation of Mid-Day-Meal Scheme: A Comparative Analysis of Andhra Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and west Bengal	P.C. Sikligar
7	HRD Climate at District Rural Development Agencies (DRDAs) in India	C. S. Singhal B. U. K. Reddy
8	A Case Study of Subicsha Project	N.V. Madhuri
9	Livelihood Security to the Poor: A Study of Selected Livelihood Interventions	N.V. Madhuri
10	Abolition of Child Labour and Universalisation of Primary Education through Gram Panchayat - Case Studies	C. S. Singhal S. Vijaya Kumar
11	Panchayati Raj Institutions and the Management of Universalisation of Elementary Education - A Comparative Study of AP, MP and UP	E. Venkatesu
12	A Study on Interventions of Livelihood Options for HIV and AIDs Affected People in the Rural Areas	R. Chinnadurai
13	Status of Land Allotted to Poor under Land Distribution Programmes - An Evaluation in Selected States	Radhika Rani D. V. L. N. V. Prasada Rao
14	Gender Sensitivity Analysis of NREGS	C. Dheeraja A. V. Yadappanavar N. Leelavathy
15	Crisis in Handloom Industry: A Study in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu	Y. Gangi Reddy P. Siva Ram

1. An Evaluation Study on Functioning of Extension Training Centres (ETCs)

K. Suman Chandra

Pattabi Ram Reddy

P. Janardhan Rao

Introduction

Training is a crucial input for the success of any planned development intervention. It is more so in the case of multi-sectoral and multi dimensional rural development programmes. Since rural development involves deeper level of public contacts, cultivation of right attitude and understanding of complex ground situations on the part of development functionaries are necessary requirements for successful implementation. It demands greater coordination and integration of efforts by a number of agencies like sectoral departments, financial institutions, Panchayati Raj bodies and non-governmental voluntary organisations. Moreover, there has been a lot of restructuring of rural development programmes and several new programmes have also been introduced recently. All this calls for constant reorientation and upgrading of skills of development functionaries to equip them to adopt and respond to the fast changing situations and to the new demands placed on their competence. Enhancing the capacities of development functionaries to perform at higher levels is the job of training institutions. In recognition of this important function, the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India took the initiative to establish and strengthen rural development training institutions in the country. Under this scheme, each state has an apex level State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) along with a string of sub-state level, Extension Training Centers (ETCs) to cater to the training needs of rural development functionaries at all levels. This evaluation study has been taken-up by NIRD at the instance of the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India.

Objectives

- * Study the organisational structure and relationship between SIRDs and ETCs.
- * Evaluate ETCs performance in terms of their training and other related activities.
- * Assess the existing status of faculty and training infrastructure of ETCs.
- * Study the adequacy or the gap in training infrastructure needed vis-à-vis the training load.
- * Suggest the mechanisms for developing effective networking and partnership between SIRDs and ETCs.

Methodology

After reviewing the available data at desk level, a comprehensive Data Capture Format (DCF) was worked out. This was pre-tested by administering in two nearby ETCs. Canvassed the questionnaire using conventional (by post) as well as modern methods such as e-mail etc. Organised Regional Workshops to interact with the training managers (qualitative information) of these institutions regarding the status and reflections on the functioning of these ETCs.

Findings & Recommendations

- There is no common line of control for the ETCs across the States. While in some States, the ETCs are functioning under academic control of SIRDs, in some cases the ETCs are functioning under the administrative control of SIRDs. In some States, the ETCs are functioning under the control of the State Government with- out having any linkages with SIRDs.
- ETCs which are having clear cut line of control and academic linkages with SIRDs are performing better. eg AP, Chhattisgarh, MP, UP and Assam to mention a few.
- Majority of the ETCs are not well equipped in terms of faculty strength and modern teaching aids, which are crucial and facilitate for effective training delivery. Hence, it was observed that ETCs are not able to attract its clientele groups and organise training optimally.
- Some of the ETCs have got large campus area with huge open land but the infrastructure is old with dilapidated buildings, training halls and hostel facilities. These require immediate repairs / new constructions as good infrastructure is essential for any Training Institution for imparting training to RD and PR functionaries effectively.
- The status and rank of the Principals of the ETCs, in majority of the States, are found to be low, apart from meagre administrative powers for superintendence and financial control. This factor is found to be badly affecting the training function of the ETCs and at times the trainees too tend to take undue advantage.
- The data relating to the training performance indicated that the ETCs are not concentrating on the MoRD flagship programmes, rather bogged down with conduct of general programmes (such as "foundation courses for Jr. Assts/Typists", "on the job training for clerks and head clerks" etc)
- Funds are not released on time to the ETCs and also budgetary support for the State Government is found to be very meagre.
- Some of the ETCs are surviving only on the Central grant i.e., Rs. 10 lakh, being released by MoRD on GOI's share of Recurring Grant every year.
- Senior officials from the State government including the Director, SIRDs seldom visit ETCs though there are exceptions.
- There is need to adopt a common nomenclature for all ETCs and adoption of standard training curriculum and design for conduct of the programmes.
- There is a need to give adequate funding support to the ETCs, on the lines similar to that of SIRDs. In the absence of MoRD's support, the growth rate of SIRDs would not have been at the present level, especially with low or meagre funding support from State Governments for infrastructure development.
- While considering the demands of the ETCs towards non-recurring items such as physical infrastructure, teaching aids, office equipment/furniture, etc., the principle of prioritisation needs to be adopted.
- It was found that some of the Principals of ETCs were recruited either on contract basis or the Core Faculty of SIRDs were deployed on ad-hoc basis which is adversely affecting the training function.
- One of the strong recommendations emerged from interface with the Heads of ETCs was that, not only the strength and level of faculty members be increased but also steps be taken for their capacity building by way of conduct of TOTs at frequent intervals.
- The ETCs put forth a demand for consideration of MoRD for providing funding support on 100% basis for placement of at least three faculty members, on the similar funding pattern adopted by MoRD in case of SIRDs.
- Since the quality of training depends upon adoption of the right type of training modules, it was represented by ETCs that they too need to be involved in the process of development of training modules as relevant to the different clientele groups, under the overall control of SIRDs.
- It was suggested by the ETCs that the respective SIRDs should involve ETCs by which the faculty get exposed to the new methods and methodologies of the training, which in turn improve the training delivery and quality.
- ETCs are usually organising foundation, refresher and orientation courses, though the ETCs are supposed to organise more number of flagship programmes of MoRD viz. SGSY, NREGP, IAY, Watershed, etc., since larger portion of funding support being received by ETCs is from MoRD.
- Agencies such as DRDAs, Banks, State Departments and other development agencies should be urged to support the ETCs through sponsorship of the training programmes.
- The above arrangement would help ETCs to build a corpus fund as also to engage resource persons, to augment the faculty strength, which will ultimately increase the reach and coverage of training and also help in improving the

'quality'.

- It is recommended that the States / SIRDs may take steps for having an organised networking between SIRDs and ETCs for proper functioning of the latter and to improve the quality of training, apart from identifying the potential organisations / institutions dealing with training both under government and non-governmental sectors, especially at district and below levels, so as to organise more number of training programmes for larger coverage of RD and PR functionaries.
- Need for establishment of the training centres at District level for sharing the training workload of RD and PR functionaries was highlighted. It was suggested that the cost of the proposed training centres at district level can be realised from out of the one per cent of the funds flowing to the district from MoRD under different programme heads and that the investment in the establishment of such training centres can be recovered in terms of gains in capital intensity of output.
- The RD training institutions at the National, State and Sub-state level have to play a greater role for imparting training to RD and PR officials, functionaries, including the elected representatives of PRIs, in a more systematic and time-bound manner. The NIRD, the SIRDs and the ETCs are expected to play a major role in this massive effort with active funding support from the MoRD.
- It is recommended that there is need to redefine the name, the structure and the functioning of ETCs, which are sub-state level institutions and required to impart training to a larger number of RD and PR functionaries, including elected representatives of PRIs. The MoRD may duly consider the recommendation and think in terms of supporting the proposed District Training Centres.
- It is well accepted at the Government of India level that a minimum of 1 per cent of the budgetary allocations should be spent on training. A number of committees at the national level or otherwise have stressed the necessity of strengthening and streamlining the training courses. The one percent norm for investment in training at the current levels of the budgets of the MoRD implies an allocation of Rs.400 crore annually. It was resolved to draw the attention of the Government of India to this need and request that taking training from one level to another will call for greater application of resources.
- The MoRD to consider enforcing and setting apart one percent programme funds in respect of the Central Government Schemes for meeting the training cost involved in conduct of the training programmes by RD training institutions.
- The State Governments too should consider to enforcing the above one percent norms on the lines of the decisions taken by the State Government of Sikkim.

Suggestions for Formation of Annual Training Action Plans

- Every ETC shall prepare Annual Training Action Plan for the next financial year in the month of February along with the training budget as per the norms fixed. The main objective of the Annual Training Action Plan is to provide a definite direction to the training programmes of ETC, and also to ensure monthly and quarterly monitoring of physical and financial targets.
- The training action plan should be prepared in such a way that the hostel accommodation and classrooms are utilised optimally and continuously during the year.
- Every year focused target group shall be identified. Training Action Plans shall be prepared as package to cover the target group as per Training Needs Analysis (TNA). The total target group should be covered as far as possible within one training calendar in order to assess the impact of training on the performance of the functionary or the concerned PRIs.
- District Officials concerned shall be involved in preparation of training action plan and involve them in discussions in order to ensure that they should own it up.
- The Annual Training Action Plan shall be printed by the ETC as far as possible and communicated to all officers concerned for taking the necessary advanced action on relief of participants.

Organisation of Training Programmes

- The Course Coordinator shall structure and design the training programme on the basis of standard module prepared or

approved by the concerned SIRDs. The Course Coordinator shall invariably go through the reports and feedback received on the training programmes conducted on the same subject in the past and suggest changes, if required. Efforts shall be made to improve each successive programme on the same subject.

- The resource persons for training course shall be drawn from among the faculty members and outside experts wherever needed. The list of resource persons should be made available with the Course Coordinator.
- As far as possible, the ETC should identify the Facilitators/Resource Person who can spare their entire time in a day on fixed honorarium to facilitate the entire training programme and be available to the participants round the clock.
- As far as possible the services of the guest faculty may be used to a limited extent and major topics in training programmes are to be handled by the faculty of ETC.

Mobilisation of Resources

- Prior to the preparation of the Annual Training Action Plans, the Principal shall meet the heads of the respective departments and enlighten the facilities and faculty expertise available in the ETC and mobilise the resources from other rural development organisations/agencies like DRDA, DWMA, AIDS Control Society, Youth Welfare Department, Tribal Welfare Department (ITDA), other Corporations and prepare the training calendar.
- Ministry of Rural Development, Government of India is releasing recurring grant every year @Rs.10 lakh for each Extension Training Centre. UCs and fresh proposals should be submitted within the stipulated time.
- In order to generate more funds, ETCs can give classrooms and hostel accommodation to other departments or training institutions on hire basis, if there are no training programmes of ETC.
- As far as possible, contribution from the PRIs shall be utilised for the development of physical infrastructure in ETCs. Simultaneously, the ETC shall prepare ETC specific physical and training infrastructure development proposal under Non-Recurring Grant and submit it to the Ministry of Rural Development through SIRD and NIRD. Mere submission of proposals or addressing the concerned is not sufficient. Persuasion with the concerned is the most critical factor in mobilisation of resources. The performance of the Principal shall be assessed on this count.
- Pool of Resource Persons to supplement the existing faculty: The Principal should develop pool of resource persons from retired government servants, NGOs, elected representatives etc. All selected resource persons should be trained in the SIRDs on training skills to utilise their services whenever needed.

General Observations

- Training is a very important and indispensable component or input to ensure better output in the delivery mechanism of Rural Development Programmes.
- Inevitably, the role and stature of ETCs has grown into bigger magnitude in ensuring sustainable development through its capacity building strategies for the RD functionaries and PRIs. They are not mere Extension Training Centres; but responsible institutions to impart not only information but also to instill new hope and confidence in the minds of implementing functionaries. They have greater role in evolving committed and capable personnel with right attitude and values to carry out the various RD programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty.
- To achieve this noble objective, there is need to strengthen the faculty and improve the existing facilities.
- The faculty strength of the ETCs should be increased to match the increase in volume of work. There should be at least one core faculty drawn from RD Department.
- The faculty may be drawn from the cadre of Asst. Directors so that their experience can be made use of and the Principal may be in the cadre of Joint Directors / Dy. Commissioners.
- A panel of interested officers can be prepared with proper attitude after due process. A minimum of five years service in various departments can be made mandatory for serving as faculty in ETC.
- Interface and Exposure Visits is essential to enrich the faculty experience so that the unique features of ETs can be shared.
- To attract the best talents among the RD functionaries and also to improve respectability of the faculty incentive can be provided on par with the Sixth Pay Commission i.e. 30 percent of the basic pay.
- In most of the ETCs, Administrative Buildings are very old and beyond major repair. Already constructed administrative

buildings in ETCs need extension of space and area. The existing furniture, fittings and equipments are very old and need to cope up with new office automation as in some. Budget allocation by state governments is almost nil. Therefore, regular allocation of non-recurring grant by GoI to ETCs every year is required.

- In most of the ETCs, Hostel accommodation is a major problem. Due to inadequate hostel accommodation, sometimes, trainees are made to stay together in more numbers. Comprehensive planning is required for construction of hostels with modern dining hall and kitchen in ETCs. GoI may release non-recurring grant based on the need of each ETC.
- Inadequate classrooms and inadequate standard space for classrooms is also a concern for most of the ETCs. Classroom's capacity and hostel accommodation should coincide. Each ETC should have at least a minimum of five classrooms.
- Uninterrupted electricity and water supply should be ensured in all ETCs and each ETC should have 25000 litre overhead water tank to facilitate the same. Generator facility should also be provided to all ETCs.
- Inadequate recreation facilities and playgrounds are also a major concern in ETCs. Non-recurring grant has to be provided for this.
- Modern training aids and equipments have to be provided to all ETCs and a minimum standard may be prescribed for this.
- In most of the ETCs, libraries are only namesake. The cupboards are empty or the library itself is empty. A well-furnished library with adequate books should be provided to all ETCs and it requires non-recurring grant from GoI.
- Most of the ETCs do not have staff quarters and the existing staff quarters in ETCs are in dilapidated condition or require major repairs.
- Finally, a periodical conference of Principals may be convened every year to discuss the present scenario of ETCs and their requirements and based on the deliberations GoI release funds accordingly.

More Details Please Contact : anil@nird.gov.in