Capacity Development for Local Governance

Millennium Development Goal: Since the project focuses on developing capacities for local governance, it relates to all the Millennium Development Goals

Targets: All targets

Relevant India Development Goal: All goals

Background

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts (1992) gave constitutional status to the third-tier of the government at sub-state level, thereby, creating legal conditions for panchayati raj or local self-rule. Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) play a pivotal role in improving service delivery in keeping with their constitutional mandate of economic development and social justice. Strong PRIs also help in enabling greater decentralization, increasing the involvement of communities in planning and implementing schemes, thereby, increasing accountability and achieving desired results. The 11th Five-Year Plan recognizes that a very large part of the Plan expenditure is now accounted for by development programmes and schemes in the realm of local government functions. The Plan also emphasizes the need for preparing a comprehensive capacity development strategy for locally elected representatives, accompanied by intense monitoring.

The project builds on UNDP’s prior support in this area, notably through two projects that empowered locally elected women leaders to participate in the political process more effectively. The first project, in partnership with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, piloted capacity development strategies for elected women panchayat leaders across 10 states in collaboration with civil society partners. The second, with support from the Orissa Panchayati Raj Department, strengthened capacities of the State Institute for Rural Development to further develop capacities of elected representatives.

Objectives

The project aims to strengthen strategies for capacity development of elected representatives through (a) strengthening institutions and mechanisms for capacity development (b) policy and research based advocacy, and (c) sharing of good practices.

Project Information

Area: Democratic Governance

Budget: US$ 5.5 million

Duration: 2008-2012

Implementing Partner: Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Other Partner(s): State governments and state training institutions

Location(s): Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh
Results so far

- As the Outcome Evaluation of UNDP India’s Democratic Governance Programme in 2011 noted, UNDP support has enabled a significant increase in the number of elected representatives that have received training, which in turn, has facilitated better local governance. For example, between 2008 and 2010-11, the number of elected representatives that received training in Madhya Pradesh increased from 16 percent to 91 percent, in Odisha from five percent to 54 percent, in Rajasthan from 42 percent to 80 percent, and in Uttar Pradesh from three percent to 32 percent.

- Policy support provided to the Government of India in the form of contributions to the working group on rural governance established for the 12th Five-Year Plan. In addition, findings from evaluation of schemes for capacity development such as the Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) and the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana (RGSY) are being used for revising the schemes.

- State-specific strategies for capacity development of elected representatives prepared for the seven UN focus states based on in-depth capacity assessments. The recommendations have been accepted by the state governments towards undertaking holistic capacity development of elected representatives.

- State governments supported in preparing action plans for training; fostering partnership with NGOs for increasing outreach of training programmes; preparing training resources; developing a cadre of trainers and developing a comprehensive database of basic statistics on training of elected representatives.

- Policy and research support provided to the Ministry on a range of subjects such as studying the feasibility of establishing a National Institute for Panchayati Raj and developing a guidebook for outsourcing of training programmes. Effective knowledge management and sharing of resources undertaken through development of a comprehensive online training repository (http://www.pri-resources.in/)

Looking to the Future

- Review of the National Capability Building Framework
- Develop a guidebook for conducting training needs assessment
- Develop a guidebook for monitoring and evaluating the impact of training programmes
- Support training of elected representatives in Jharkhand and Odisha and refresher training in other states

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