Decentralization Community
Update 91
March 2015

Community Activities | **Updates** | **Announcements**

Dear Members,

We are happy to share the 91st Update on Decentralization Community of Practice!

With this update we share news on: launch of PRAGATI by Prime Minister to address the common man's grievances and monitor important programmes and projects; panchayats to get additional funds after recommendations of 14th Finance Commission; launch of e-panchayat programme in Telangana; taxation powers to panchayats in Bihar; Social Audit in UP villages; expansion of Common Service Centres to panchayats under Digital India Program; introduction of online tax payments in panchayats; small farm outlets in Kerala panchayats and audit of social sector schemes by CAG.

We also share some readings, web links and articles on: Immigrants and Immigration in India; Trends of GDP growth and the sector-wise break up; Glimpses of partnership between UNDP and Government of India; Making the make in India brand; Analysis of Corporate Social Responsibility expenditure in India; Budget affecting the social security schemes; Co-operative federalism and decentralization and human development reports.

We request Members to participate in the upcoming events of their interest and also share the details with relevant stakeholders. Members are also requested to spread the vacancy announcements and contribute to the ongoing query on: Role of PRIs in improving the health and nutritional services at village level.

The link to the online membership is now active and new members can submit their request for joining the community online through the following link http://www.solutionexchange-un.net.in/signup

We express our thankfulness to all those who contributed towards this edition and invite suggestions to improve upon.

We hope members would find this edition informative and useful.

Regards,
Naveen Das,
Resource Person,
Decentralization CoP, Solution Exchange

Community Activities

Ongoing Query

> **QUERY: Role of PRIs in improving the health and nutritional services at village level. Experiences and Advice**

Most of the Central and State Government programmes are supposed to be implemented through panchayats at the village level. Since the upper castes are socially, culturally and economically powerful, they hold key positions in the village, which gives them the power to take decisions or influence the selection of beneficiaries under the government programmes. This prevents the selection of beneficiaries from SC and ST community for most of the beneficiary oriented schemes and also does not allow them from assessing the services, though most of the development

programmes are meant for them.

Members of the decentralization community are requested to share their experience and examples on:

- What role can PRIs /Village Health, Sanitation & Nutrition Committees play in bridging the gap between the existing healthcare providers and the people in need of services particularly the excluded groups during Village Health, Sanitation & Nutrition (VHSN) days ?

- What are the parameters that need to be included while assessing the quality of the Health & Nutritional services of a village?

- What are the ways to assess/ investigate the access of services (Information, Physical, Financial and Social Capital) by the excluded community in a village

Please send your responses to se.decn.solutionexchange@un.net

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> **Drafting Public Interest Litigation for Effective Devolution of Powers to Panchayats. Advice and Examples**

Panchayats are meant to be autonomous institutions of self-government however they are treated as subordinate authorities at present. There is a wide variation in the devolution of powers to the panchayats across states. Further power, authority and responsibilities of Panchayats as envisaged in the Article 243G could not be exercised, as the State Governments were unable to empower them to collect taxes under Article 243H and Finance Commissions were formed under Article 243-I to initiate measures to improve financial position of Panchayats. Hence panchayats are not in a position to undertake the responsibilities in respect of items stated in Schedule XI of the Constitution. Also various Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS), which are under the purview of Panchayats, are being directly implemented in a mission mode approach. There is a need for reviewing CSS to enable State Governments to devolve power and functions to PRIs. Such review can be enforced through Public Interest Litigation (PIL) to the Supreme Court highlighting the above issues. Members are requested to comment and share their insights on:

- Whether it is necessary to seek time bound directions from Supreme Court to the State Governments to implement the 73rd Constitutional amendment?

- What are the administrative advantages /disadvantages of implementing CSS through Societies instead of departments of state governments or through Panchayats?

- How many states have constituted Finance Commissions under article 243I? Are the findings of the State Finance Commissions constituted so far, available in the public domain under article-4 of RTI Act?

Read the full query here.
Read the responses here.

Please send your responses to se.decn.solutionexchange@un.net

Simple systems of effective participative planning for cities: Experiences and Referral From Arun Maira, Chief Mentor, India Backbone Implementation Network (IbIn) and Former Member, Planning Commission, Government of India. Issued on 20 March 2015. Download **PDF** (Size 368 KB).
Seeks examples and referrals on simple systems of participative planning which have proven effective, especially in urban areas.

Please send your responses to se.decn.solutionexchange@un.net

News

PM launches grievance redressal platform PRAGATI (by [Sumeeta Banerji](#), UNDP, New Delhi)
Prime Minister has launched an ambitious multi-purpose and multi-modal platform named PRAGATI (Platform for Pro-Active Governance And Timely Implementation). It aims to address the common man's grievances and monitor important programmes and projects. PRAGATI is a step towards ensuring more efficient and responsive governance in India.
Read more [here](#)

From [Resource Person](#)

14th Finance Commission: Panchayats get Rs 2 lakh crore gift
The 14th Finance Commission has asked for assigning over Rs. 2 lakh crore between 2015 and 2020 to Panchayats to provide basic services. Finance Commission has recommended distribution of grants to states for local bodies using 2011 population data with weight of 90% and area with weight of 10%. The grants to States will be divided into two on the basis of rural and urban population, a grant to duly constituted Gram Panchayats and a grant to duly constituted Municipal bodies.
Read more [here](#)

e-Panchayats programme to be launched in Nizamabad
The e-panchayat programme of Telangana government is going to be launched at Domakonda mandal headquarters village in Nizamabad district. It aims to provide citizen's services in villages. The programme will be initially extended to 150 mandals and later to rest of the state in a phased manner. These will also serve as one-stop shops for payments related not only to consumer services but also many taxes.
Read more [here](#)

Bihar government advocates taxation powers to panchayats in the state
In order to strengthen panchayats in Bihar, state government advocate taxation powers to panchayats. It says that panchayats should get the right to impose taxes and also to distribute assistance money during accidents.
Read more [here](#)

Five panchayats set to generate own electricity in Uttrakhand
Five panchayats in Purkul village in Dehradun will start groundwork for setting up a mini hydro-power plant of their own in the village. These panchayats have been picked up for an ambitious project of the Uttarakhand Renewable Energy Development Agency (UREDA). Under this, micro-mini hydro power plants will be set up in these villages.
Read more [here](#)

UP orders social audit of 52,000 village panchayats
To ensure transparency and proper redressal of issues related to the functioning of government departments, the Uttar Pradesh government has ordered a social audit of all 52,000 village panchayats in the state. Necessary directives have been issued on government websites.
Read more [here](#)

Government to expand service centres to 2.5 lakh panchayat
Under Digital India Program Government of India has decided to expand Common Service Centers from about 1.5 lakh at present to 2.5 lakh in rural areas. The Common Service Centers will provide public services to the rural community and are seen as an important vehicle for the progress of country including empowering women entrepreneurs, as more and more CSCs are being run by women across the country.
Read more [here](#)

Online tax payment in panchayats

The Kerala State Government is going to introduce online collection of property tax at the gram panchayats from 1 April 2015. The certificates of births, deaths, and marriages registered from 1970 in local self-government institutions will also be issued online by the gram panchayats. Digitised documentation of the assets created in the annual Plan would be introduced to avoid duplication of identical schemes by different agencies and effective targeting of scarce budgetary funds.

Read more here

Farm Markets in 800 Panchayats

Kerala State Government has taken a decision to start smaller outlets to sell and market farm produce in around 800 panchayats across the state. Through this, government aims to collect, process and distribute farm produces. To address the problems in hiring farm labour which had distanced people from farming, the government is going to start the 'Karshika Karma Sena'.

Read more here

Audit of social sector schemes a must: CAG

Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) emphasized on the need for mandatory social audit of social sector schemes to improve transparency and accountability. The expenditure of Central and State governments that directly impacts socio-economic development was estimated to be Rs. 17 lakh crore in 2013-2014, which means an average of Rs. 2,656 crore is incurred as 'development expenditure' per district. Focus is more on the vigilance by local bodies as large portion of above expenditure is being executed through panchayati raj institutions and urban local bodies.

Read more here

NDMC approves 3D mapping for smart city

Aimed at facilitating urban planning and ensuring better civic services, New Delhi Municipal Council will soon start three-dimensional mapping of its areas as part of its smart city project. The project will help in accurately identify our services, infrastructure and green areas. This information will be used while planning new development projects.

Read more here

Readings/Web links/Repositories

Union Budget 2015-16: Exclusive analysis through the lens of environment and development

The articles provides an overview of the union budget with respect to various developmental aspects including renewable energy, climate action, rural development, healthcare, agriculture, coal, power generation, smart cities, cleaning of rivers, insurance, more funds to states for development etc.

Read more here

Immigrants and Immigration in India: A Fresh Approach (an EPW article by Binod Khadria and Perveen Kumar)

The article provides a detailed discussion of the problems and concerns of cross-border migrants and India's policy stance in dealing with immigration. It argues that India needs to differentiate between the stocks and the flows of its immigrant population. Also it would be in the larger interests of the country to control the unabated flows of migrants from across the borders.

Read more here

Smart Transport for Smart Cities (an EPW article by Ashwani Kumar)

The article suggest that smart cities need a people-centric, proactive transport planning with public transport as the hub and non-motorized transport as spokes. It is high time we redefine public transport as the transport required by the public and not just publicly-funded transport. Development of efficient mass transport (transit) and promotion of non-motorized transport (NMT) modes, like walking and cycling, are widely suggested as solutions to improve the situation.

Read more here

GDP Sectoral Growth Rates: What Is Driving Growth? (an EPW article by J Dennis Rajakumar and Anita B Shetty)
The article is an analysis of the new 2011-12 series of National Accounts Statistics to understand the trends of GDP growth and the sector-wise break-up. For this, data up to the advance estimates for 2014-15 are explored. The service sector continues to lead growth, manufacturing shows a revival, while agriculture has once again slowed down.
Read more here

From Resource Person

Planting Seeds of Change: The UNDP and India Partnership
This book provides glimpses of an evolving partnership between UNDP and the Government of India since the early 1950's. It shows how seeds of development within collaborative projects and programmes have been nurtured by the people of India to achieve transformative results and catalyze growth and human development.
Read more here

Making the "Make in India" Brand (by Nilanjan Banik for Market Express)
The article analyses the ecosystem and attributes that is required to make 'Make in India' brand effective. Pointing out to the Doing Business Report-2014, the World Bank placed India in the 134th position out of a sample of 189 countries, which is worse than China (96th), Sri Lanka (85th), Bangladesh (130th), or Pakistan (110th) when it comes to the convenience of doing business. The article suggests that to have world class infrastructure, government will require funding from the private sector.
Read more here

An Analysis of Corporate Social Responsibility Expenditure in India (an EPW article by Shachi Rai and Sangeeta Bansal)
The article analyses the trend of corporate social responsibility expenditure by firms in India, especially in the wake of the new Companies Act, 2013. It emphasizes the relationship between CSR expenditure and profits of the firm and highlights how the firm size positively affects this relationship.
Read more here

How the Budget short-changed states' social security schemes
The 2015-16 budgets seem to have broken the contract between the Centre and the States on sharing the economic burden for delivering social security. The Centre's assistance to the states for social sector schemes has come down from a budgeted Rs 3.56 lakh crore in FY-2015 to Rs 2.20 lakh crore in FY-2016. The states will now have to use their funds to keep their social sector schemes going the way it is.
Read more here

Report: Social Inclusion of Internal Migrants in India
Approximately 3 out of every 10 Indians are internal migrants, yet it has been accorded very low priority in the existing policies. There is an urgent need to develop a dedicated system of institutions, legal frameworks and practices to support internal migration and protect migrants. The publication identifies challenges and suggests key areas and principles for better inclusion of migrants.
Read more here

Europe's e-government opportunity (an article by Julian Kirchherr, Julia Klier and Sebastian Stern)
The article analyses the potential of investing in e-government - the digital channels, apps, and websites that link citizens to the public sector. A McKinsey analysis suggests that capturing the full potential of government digitization could free up to $1 trillion annually in economic value worldwide, through improved cost and operational performance. The article also suggests that investments in e-governance can produce equally important economic rewards as that can be reaped by traditional investments like roads, power grids, and other physical infrastructure.
Read more here

Co-Operative Federalism is the Way Forward (by Mr. Yashwant Sinha, Member of Parliament and Chairman, Parliamentary Standing Committee on Finance)
This paper discusses Co-Operative Federalism and Decentralization. It explains that Federalism is the coming together of equal partners who come with a common goal and share powers and jurisdictions. However in the case of decentralisation, it is one superior entity which is partly decentralising its powers to the units below and there is a spirit of condescension.
Read more here

Human Development Reports- UNDP India
Human Development Reports introduces the state profile with rich information from the district reports prepared in the state. It also presents an overview of the progress made by the state on human development indicators; provides a description of the history of the state and its initiation in the development process; opportunities foreseen by the state including the development potential.
Read more here

Prodder Directory
Prodder is the most comprehensive directory of NGOs and development organizations in South Africa.
Read more here

Past Events

Workshop on Resource Mobilization by gram panchayats in West Bengal (by Institute of Social Sciences, West Bengal)
Institute of Social Sciences has concluded a study on resource mobilization by gram panchayats in West Bengal. To discuss the study and the recommendations made in the report, a one-day workshop was organized in Kolkata. The workshop was attended by about 50 persons from Institute of Social Sciences, ISGPP project of Government of West Bengal, civil servants from the districts, senior officials of Panchayats and Rural Development Department and members of State Finance Commission.

Seminar to discuss Panchayat Raj system in Karnataka
The Udupi Zilla Panchayat organized a seminar on Karnataka Panchayat Raj Amendment Bill 2015 at the District Offices Complex Hall. The members discussed the recommendations of the Ramesh Kumar Committee, set up by the State government for strengthening the three-tier Panchayat Raj system in Karnataka. The objective of the seminar was to discuss the proposed Bill thoroughly and given any suggestions to the government.
Read more here

International workshop on "How to use smart phones for Visual, Interactive and Strategic Communication –print and web"
A two day workshop on how to work with photographs and videos for strategic communication and influence was conducted on March 29-30, 2015 at Centre for Science and Environment, Tughlakabad Institutional Area, New Delhi
More details available at http://www.cseindia.org/node/4634/

Upcoming Events

National Symposium on Excellence in Training (NSET)
DoPT and UNDP are organizing a 2-day National Symposium on Excellence in Training on April 11-12, 2015 in New Delhi. This symposium is being organized in the backdrop of recommendations of the National Training Policy 2012, which stipulates that the training institutions should keep track of latest international trends in training and constantly upgrade the skills of trainers/faculty members in new and emerging training techniques/methodologies.
Read more here

Management Development Programme (MDP) on 20-22 April 2015 at IRMA, Anand, Gujarat (From Oliver Macwan, Institute of Rural Management Anand -IRMA)

This MDP is designed specifically for employees and training of trainers, individuals and teams who aspire for enhancing their skills on Social Innovation. Request the interested members to kindly join the MDP. Brochure, nomination / application form for the programmes can be downloaded from: http://solutionexchange-un.net.in/ftp/decn/comm_update/MDPs%20March.pdf

Training of Trainers (TOT) on Gender and Self-Empowerment by Jagori from 21-25 April 2015 at Sanskriti Kendra, Anandagram, Delhi (from Praveena, Gagori, New Delhi)
Jagori is organizing a Training of Trainers (TOT) in Hindi for professionals dealing in gender issues. The objective of the workshop is to build the capacity of the participants to: use the learnings to bring social changes and self-empowerment; design any session, field meetings and discussions and; identify and raise gender issues pertaining to the field of work.
Read more here

Announcements/Opportunities

From Resource Person

UNDP

Job Title	Deadline	Location
Research Officer, GoI-UNDP, Strengthening Human Resource Management of Civil Service (SHRM) Project	5 April 2015	Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT), Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pension, New Delhi
Individual Consultant - Conduct Assessment of the Project on the International Centre For Human Development - (Open to Indian Nationals Only)	5 April 2015	New Delhi
Individual Consultant (Feasibility Assessment Job Support – Job Coaching Centers) - (Open to Indian Nationals Only.	10 April 2015	New Delhi with travel as per assignment

UN Information Centre for India and Bhutan in New Delhi.

Job Title	Deadline	Location
Public Information Assistant	28 April 2015	New Delhi

ADB

Job Title	Deadline	Location
Sr. Project Officer (Natural Resource and Agriculture)	9 April 2015	India Resident Mission

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Many thanks to all who contributed to this issue!

If you have items to feature in the Updates, please send it to Solution Exchange for the Decentralization Community at
se-decn@solutionexchange-un.net.in

the item's recommender, if relevant, and must share any derivative work with the Solution Exchange Community.

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