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Decentralization Community Update 67 March 2013



Community Activities | Updates | Announcements/Opportunities

Dear Members,

We present the 67th Update on Decentralization Community of Practice!

We thank all the members for participating in the **e-activities** under the **Run up to the 20 years of Decentralization in India**. We encourage more and more members to contribute by responding to the e-discussion; taking the survey and sending us stories of change.

We share in this edition, efforts like Expert Committee on Leveraging Panchayati Raj and Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan to strengthen decentralization in India and Result-based Framework Development by the Cabinet Secretariat which is expected to strengthen administrative efficiency. We have seen efforts being made by donors and policy makers to use on-line platforms and social media to reach out and converse with the urban middle class. Recent events like the Google Hangout of the Planning Commission and the upcoming Hackathon along with World Bank's Finances Mobile App. are a few examples.

Wishing you a very Happy **HOLI** and **EASTER**!

Swati Dogra and Aditi Malhotra,
Resource Team

Community Activities

1. Ongoing Queries

Relevance of decentralization in India and ways to strengthen Panchayats; e-discussion; from Anshuman Karol, PRIA, Delhi - Provides a space for members to share experiences, successes, failures, look at opportunities and talk about the roadblocks vis-à-vis decentralization. This e-discussion is a space for Members to "say it out". Open till 15th April 2013. [Read the discussion and join](#)

2. Closed Queries

Partnership between SHGs and Local Government for Disaster Risk Reduction; Experiences, Advice; from P. Chandran, Swayam Shikshan Prayog - Seeks success stories for creating partnership with elected representatives as well as government functionaries for building community resilience. Closed on 22nd Feb 2013

Linking Grassroots Practitioners in Knowledge Sharing Processes; Experiences, Examples; from Prema Gera, UNDP India - Seeks inputs on various innovative mechanisms and technologies that facilitate to and fro process of knowledge sharing for grassroots practitioners. Invites suggestions on cultural, technological and linguistic shifts that need to be made in order to take knowledge sharing to the grassroots. Closed on 11th Jan 2013.

3. Consolidated Replies Issued

Recommending Role for Local Governments in Addressing VAW; Experiences, Advice; From Kanta Singh, UNDP India. For PDF version of Consolidated Reply, please [click here](#); Issued on 13 March 2013. The query aims to bring out the concerns of women living in rural areas (particularly Dalit, Adivasi and elected Panchayat representatives) in the current discourse on violence against women and access to support and justice. Seeks suggestions of how local governments can be made gender friendly and responsive

Managing Commons under the Forest Rights Act; Experiences, Advice; From Amit Anand, UNDP India. For PDF version of Consolidated Reply, please [click here](#); Issued on 25 March 2013. The query seeks experiences and lessons on collective management of Commons in order to aid the implementation of Forest Rights Act in the light of revised Rules and issuance of guidelines.



Run up to the 20 years of Decentralization in India

[Tell us the Story of your Panchayat](#)

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[Take the survey](#)

We invite all members of the decentralization community to join activities as we approach 20th year of the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment, a milestone in the history of decentralization and local governance in India. It is time to ask - What has changes since then? Where have we reached so far? Where are the gaps? Where are the opportunities? What are the success stories?

- ❖ Send us a short story titled **"THE STORY OF MY PANCHAYAT"- Shoot/Compile/Write**
 - A video (send us through CD or email them to se.decn.solutionexchange@gmail.com) **OR**;
 - A photo essay which includes photographs with a 100 word write up **OR**;
 - A story of approximately 250-300 words (click [here](#) for format)
- ❖ To take the survey, click here- <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NMWC7PP>

Some stories of Change



A Space for Women's Voices: Unique Gram Sabhas in Madhya Pradesh Empower Women

UNDP's partnership with the Ministry of Panchayati Raj is developing capacities of elected women representatives in Umari district, Madhya Pradesh in local governance; generating awareness of both men and women on gender issues, helping communities secure access to entitlements and improving information on agricultural practices and sanitation facilities in the district. One such story from Umari, Madhya Pradesh can be seen here: <http://bcove.me/tasldrhx>

To read more about the partnership/strategies and results, click [here](#)

Women and a nervous regime, Down to Earth, 31st March

The article speaks of an increased political participation of women, more than it ever was and attributes them to embolden by SHG movement (focusing on village development), reservation in panchayats (voters and public platform). Available to read at: <http://www.downtoearth.org.in/content/women-and-nervous-regime>

Updates

News

Parliament passes Criminal Amendment Laws Bill 2013

Both Houses of Parliament approved the [Criminal Amendment Laws Bill 2013](#) which provides for stringent punishment to offenders of sexual violence. The bill, for the first time, provides for death penalty in rape cases, where the victim is left in a permanent vegetative state and also for repeat offenders. The bill, also makes it mandatory for hospitals, government or private, to provide first-aid and free-of-cost treatment for victims of sexual assault and acid attacks. While welcoming the bill, women's and progressive groups have raised concerns for raising the age of consent from 16 to 18 and not penalizing marital rape.

The Electronic Delivery of Services Bill

The Bill aims to provide access to all central and state government services electronically. The passage of this bill will provide access to all central and state government services, such as passport, ration card and driving licenses electronically within eight years. To read an analysis of the bill and other documents, click [here](#)

Expert Committee on Leveraging Panchayati Raj

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj established a six member expert committee to examine how panchayats can be leveraged for more efficient delivery of public goods and services under the chairmanship of Shri. Mani Shankar Aiyar. The terms of reference of the panel include reviewing the existing policy and guidelines of relevant Central sector/Centrally-sponsored schemes dealing with social sector/anti-poverty programmes, and give specific recommendations for the role and responsibility of panchayats, strengthening their capacity to deliver services and making them accountable to gram sabhas. The Committee is set to submit its report in a month's time. Further information about the Committee and its functions: <http://pib.nic.in/newsite/erelease.aspx?relid=91298>)

Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA)

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) launched the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashaktikaran Abhiyan with an objective to strengthen the Panchayati Raj system across the country and address critical gaps that constrain it. RGPSA seeks to enhance and strengthen capacities and create Panchayats and the Gram Sabhas to promote effectiveness, participation, transparency and accountability. The scheme also has a component for untied funds for local governments. The Draft Guidelines are available [here](#)

Events

Post 2015: the world we want

As part of the Post 2015 dialogue on Millennium Development Goals, an interactive platform called **The World We Want** has been developed to gather the priorities of people from every corner of the world. This will help build a collective vision that will be used directly by the United Nations and World Leaders to plan a new development agenda launching in 2015, one that is based on the aspirations of all citizens! **You can join the conversation by registering here:** www.worldwewant2015.org the portal also gives information on the various thematic consultations that are being planned or have been organized as part of the post 2015 dialogue on MDGS across the world. To join the India conversation, click here www.worldwewant2015.org/india2015



12th Five Year Plan Hackathon

The Planning Commission and the National Innovation Council are organizing the first [ever Hackathon on the 12th Five Year Plan \(2012-17\)](#) on 6th – 7th April 2013. The Hackathon will invite citizens to innovatively communicate the Plan through creative visualizations and software applications. For more information and participation visit: <http://data.gov.in/hackathon>.

Past Events

Global Community of Practice on Participatory Local Democracy (From John Coonrod, Hunger Project, Washington)

The Hunger Project and UN Democracy Fund have launched a two-year initiative to cultivate a global community of practice, and produce an annual "State of Participatory Democracy" Report based on a globally-aligned Participatory Democracy Index (PDI). Consultations on the initiative have been held in New Delhi, Mexico City, Washington, Dhaka and New York, and will shortly be held in Rome and Cape Town. Members of the Decentralization Solutions Exchange are invited to comment on the dimensions of the index, which is posted on <http://localdemocracy.net> and to subscribe to the sites free weekly update emails.

From [Resource Team](#), Decentralization Community, Solution Exchange, UNDP India

"Good Rural Governance and Citizen Participation", 1st -2nd March, IRRAD Gurgaon

Institute of Rural Research and Development (IRRAD) organized a two day conference on Good Rural Governance and Citizen Participation on the theme of Accountability at Grassroots- Experiences and Learning". The conference aimed to promote engagement among different stakeholders for strengthening policies on accountability at grassroots. The first day of the conference practitioners working on accountability mechanisms at the grassroots made presentations. These mechanisms included initiatives to make public institutions accountable like Right to Public Services Act, Social Audit in MNREGA and other ways to strengthen accountability and grievance redressal.

National Seminar on 'Development Experience of Kerala in a Comparative Perspective', 16th March, India International Centre, New Delhi

Kerala Development Society (KDS) in the National Seminar, highlighted the good practices successful in furthering the development of Kerala, while at the same time pointed to increasing environment degradation, urban waste, alcoholism, unemployment for skilled labour as problems gripping the state. At the conference, KDS announced the launch of a [Database of Network of Resource Persons for Local Government \(NRLG\)](#) in facilitating inputs for Ministry of Panchayati Raj from those working in the field of PRIs.

World Bank Finances Mobile Application – Live Chat with Onno Ruhl, Country Director, World Bank India on 6th March



As part of its Open Data Initiative, World Bank launched a new Finances Mobile Application in India, WB organized a contest people were invited to use the app, give their suggestions and also be part of an one-off opportunity to live chat with the WB Country Director, Onno Ruhl.

The **Mobile Application** provides an up-to-date financial snapshot of the World Bank's

activities around the globe and in the community in a social, interactive and visually compelling format. The app can also be accessed through a laptop or computer at <http://financesapp.worldbank.org/>

National Consultation on Community Forest Rights, 16th-17th March 2013, New Delhi

Vasundhara and Kalpavriksh, in collaboration with Oxfam, organized this consultation as part of the Community Forest Rights (CFR) Learning and Advocacy Process initiated since December 2011. Participants included civil society organizations engaged in CFR analysis, implementation and conservation, independent researchers, community representatives and officials from MoTA. Participants from various states shared experiences in implementation and key issues (both at the level of policy and implementation) that are obstructing effective implementation of the CFR provision; follow up actions for the next year were decided. The key concerns and recommendations were shared with Secretary, MoTA Ms. Vibha Puri Das.

Planning Commission hosts Google+ hang out, 15th March 2013, 5 PM

The Planning Commission, along with the National Innovation Council hosted an hour long session to discuss the draft 12th FYP and seek public opinion. News anchor Vikram Chandra moderated the interaction, taking questions from the Twitter followers of the plan panel. Participants included Planning Commission deputy chairman Montek Singh Ahluwalia, planning minister Rajeev Shukla, members and the secretary of the plan panel along with Sam Pitroda, chairman of the National Innovation Council. Invitees to the event were chairman and managing director of Bangalore-based biotechnology company Biocon, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw; the *sarpanch* of Kanpura village in Rajasthan's Ajmer district, Jagdish Bairwa; Orissa MP Baijayant Jay Panda; and executive director of the National Foundation for India, Amitabh Behar. The Hangout saw more than 800 participants who welcomed the initiative, while demanding better accountability and policy proposals for different sectors in the 12th plan period.

To view the live chat, click here:

http://www.innovationcouncil.gov.in/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=276:google-hangout-on-the-12thplan&catid=13:event&Itemid=58

Readings/Web links/Repositories

Blogposts: Exploring Development (From Debraj Bhattacharya, Institute of Social Sciences, Kolkata)

Institute of Social Sciences, Kolkata, has started a new initiative - a blog that hopes to explore current development practices. Some latest blog-posts on are by Ash Narain Roy writes on [Hugo Chavez](#) who passed away recently, calling him a symbol of new power in Latin America; another pos is by Anit N Mukherjee who analyses the [2013 Budget 2013 from a Development Perspective](#)

Resources on Legal aid and Rural Governance (From Jane Schukose, IRRAD, Gurgaon)

- Achieving Socially Relevant Legal Education by:
[ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/Achieving Socially Relevant Legal Education March2013.pdf](ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/Achieving_Socially_Relevant_Legal_Education_March2013.pdf)
- Enhancing Good Governance In India: Law Schools and Community-University Engagement by Jane Schukoske and Roopali Adlakha, is available to read at:
[ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/Schukoske and Adlakha, Enhancing Good Governance in India 2012.pdf](ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/Schukoske_and_Adlakha,_Enhancing_Good_Governance_in_India_2012.pdf)
- Some more articles related to clinical legal education are available free to download at:
<http://ssrn.com/author=646814>

From [Democratic Governance Unit](#), UNDP, New Delhi

Performance Management Division (PMD), Cabinet Secretariat, was established by the Government with a mandate to roll out the Performance Monitoring and Evaluation System (PMES). The PMES in its first Phase covered 59 Departments in 2009-10. In its fifth year of implementation in 2013-14, the system presently includes the 72 Departments/Ministries and some 800 Responsibility Centres under them. During the past four years of implementation, PMES has established itself as a system that takes a comprehensive and unified view of each Department's / Ministry's overall performance. For more details, click here: www.performance.gov.in

Human Development Report 2013 - The Rise of the South: Human Progress in a Diverse World

The Human Development Reports of 2013 were released on March 14. The focus of this year's report is on the rising South and its implications for human development and global politics and economy. In its conclusion, "the report calls for far better representation of the South in global governance systems and points to potential new sources of financing within the South for essential public goods."

The reports are available to download in Hindi and English from:

<http://www.in.undp.org/content/india/en/home/knowledge-and-solutions/human-development-products/GHDR2013/>



Global Database on Quotas for Women

[Global Database of Quotas for Women](#) contains information on the use of electoral quotas for women. In this project, electoral quotas are defined as mandatory or targeted percentages of women candidates for public elections. This website includes an interactive tool for viewing electoral quotas by country. It also explores pros and cons of quota systems.

Same Millennium, New Goals: Why Peace, Security, Good Governance and the Rule of Law Must Be Included in the New MDGs by Mary Robinson, Kevin Rudd and Judy Cheng-Hopkins, Huffington Post

The article makes a case for democratic governance, peace and security, and the rule of law, including protection of human rights, as being critical to sustainable development and being relevant with the MDGs.

The article can be read [here](#)

Announcements/Opportunities

Senior Research Associate (From Mandira Moddie, The Hindu Centre, Chennai)

The Hindu Centre invites applications in the form of a covering letter, detailed CV and samples of research work may be emailed with the subject line "Senior Research Associate" to: thc@thehinducentre.com. To read more about the vacancy, [click here](#)

Request for Application: READ Alliance (From Balaka Dey, USAID, Apply by 15 April 2013)

The READ Alliance is a platform that focuses on early literacy and will bring together non-profit organizations, corporations, donors, researchers, think tanks, and others dedicated to improving the reading skills of India's children. The Request for Application is available at: <http://www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?jsessionid=dm3nR07K3cMpJy59pPQdDF24fvK8PQjWZrbLW7RDcqHrhryLrmQ4l76571900?oppId=223833&mode=VIEW>

Senior Consultant for Access to Justice for Marginalized People (From [Kanta Singh](#), Democratic Governance Unit, UNDP, Apply by 26th March 2013)

Assist the Secretary and the concerned Joint Secretaries, Department of Justice and the Project Team in planning, documenting and implementing initiatives under the A2J Project. Organize and participate in the meetings and discussions related to designing and implementing the Project. To apply, [click here](#)

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



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