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Decentralization Community
Update 82
June 2014



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Dear Members,

We are happy to share the 82nd Update on Decentralization Community of Practice!

In this update, we share highlights on: village panchayats being empowered to manage protected forests under the Gram Van Scheme in Maharashtra; Village Panchayats in Tamil Nadu joining hands in conserving Vultures and inauguration of E-Panchayats in Hoshangabad district of Madhya Pradesh.

Besides resources and events, we also share news about the decision of Ministry of corporate affairs to include slum-redevelopment, road safety awareness and consumer protection services under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities.

Hope you would find this edition interesting.

Regards,
Naveen Das and Aditi Malhotra,
Resource Team
Decentralization CoP, Solution Exchange

Community Activities

Ongoing Queries

➤ **Capacity Building and Training material on Natural Resource Management for PRIs. Experiences and Examples. Reply by 15th June 2014**

Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) is presently running a project titled "Strengthening Capacities of Panchayati Raj Institutions" (PRIs) in partnership with United Nations Development Program (UNDP). An important focus of the project is developing capacities of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) for Natural Resource Management (NRM). To develop learning material on NRM, MoPR is seeking feedback on:

- Who are the potential stakeholders (institutions, consultants, NGOs, thematic experts etc) to share good practices by Panchayats on NRM?
- What should be the content (sub-topics) and structure of resource material for capacity building and training of PRIs on the subjects of NRM?
- Please share links and references to the already developed resource material on the subject.

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

Updates

News

Village panchayats get empowered to manage forests

On June 5, World Environment day, at least 50 panchayats in Maharashtra with a track record of managing forests were bestowed more powers under the 'Gram Van' scheme. The Forest Department has issued a new set of rules under the Indian Forests (Maharashtra) Regulation of Assignment, Management and Cancellation of Village Forests Rules-2014, applicable to forest reserves to empower panchayats to manage protected forests.

The gram sabha will elect a forest committee to prepare a detailed management plan with technical support from the forest department. Apart from harvest of major and minor forest produce, the committee will be empowered to levy fines on those who fell trees or encroach forest land. Until now, forests were managed by Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) in territorial forest areas and eco-development committees (EDCs) in wildlife areas. JFMCs included forest officials and villagers. Based on how effectively villages manage forests, the state will hand over areas to panchayats.

Read more:

<http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/pune/village-panchayats-get-more-teeth-to-manage-forests/>

Panchayats join hands to conserve vultures in Tamil Nadu

Vulture conservation in the Tamil Nadu is gaining momentum with more than 200 village panchayats in Coimbatore district passing a resolution to protect this endangered species from extinction. Thanks to the efforts of Arulagam, a Coimbatore-based vulture conservation organisation which conducted awareness programme among villagers for protecting this forest scavenger. Jayasree Nagarajan, president of A. Mettupalayam Panchayat in Coimbatore district, said that unlike other wildlife, the vultures do not kill animals; rather they clear the carcass of dead animals. If the dead animals were not cleared, they would spread disease among people. "So we felt that it is important to conserve this species and passed a resolution to protect them," she said.

Read more: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/tamil-nadu/vulture-conservation-gaining-momentum-in-tamil-nadu/article6075922.ece>

Panchayat polls end peacefully in Uttarakhand

The three-phased panchayat elections concluded peacefully in Uttarakhand with over 60 per cent of the electorate casting votes in the final round. The fate of 7,633 gram pradhans, 3,054 members of kshetra panchayats, 389 members of zila panchayats and 34,395 gram panchayat members were sealed in the ballot boxes. Panchayat polls, which began on June 18, were spread over 89 development blocks in 12 districts. Over 69 per cent casted their votes in the first round, 70 in the second and more than 60 in the third, an official release in Dehradun said.

Read more: <http://ibnlive.in.com/news/panchayat-polls-end-peacefully-in-uttarakhand/481630-3-243.html>

E-village Panchayats in Madhya Pradesh

'Regional capacity augmentation centre' and 'e-village panchayats' under national e-governance project were inaugurated in the Hoshangabad district on June 4 2014. Collector is the Secretary of district e-governance committee, Hoshangabad, and the Vidhan Sabha speaker Dr Sitasharan Sharma was the chief guest on the occasion.

Read here: <http://freepressjournal.in/e-village-panchayats-will-be-inaugurated-tomorrow/>

Telangana plans new Human Development index

The Telangana government is coming out with a new Human Development Index that will include the pattern of development on several fronts taken up district wise. The indicators in the new HDI include life expectancy, poverty alleviation, education and infant mortality.

Read more at: <http://bit.ly/TBNLu6>

Ministry of corporate affairs to include Slum redevelopment as a CSR activity

Slum-redevelopment, road safety awareness and consumer protection services will be treated as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities, according to clarifications issued by the ministry of corporate affairs in response to queries from stakeholders. Read more at <http://bit.ly/1pQBjcZ>

Indian government's initiative 'Mobile Seva' wins UN award

'Mobile Seva', a nationwide initiative conceptualised, funded and implemented by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY), is among the second place winners of the 2014 UN Public Service Awards. The vision of Mobile Seva is to mainstream mobile governance in India as a new paradigm for e-delivery of public services through mobile devices. It leverages the massive penetration of mobile phones in India to substantially enhance access to electronic services, especially in the rural areas. Read more at <http://bit.ly/1omUFyJ>

State ready with two schemes for urban poverty alleviation

The State will witness the launch of two programmes on urban poverty alleviation, from providing identity cards and social security to street vendors to the launch of certified courses in skills development for the urban poor. The centrally sponsored 'National Urban Livelihood Mission' (NULM) will be launched in 35 cities in the State with a population of more than one lakh. The NULM in 35 cities will be funded by grants under the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JnNURM). A major component of the two schemes would be providing certified skill based courses to improve the employability of the urban poor.

Read more at <http://bit.ly/1qwUJLo>

Readings/Web links/Repositories

From Resource Team

Changing Structure of Governance in Non-Metropolitan Cities: A Study in Andhra Pradesh by N. Purendra Prasad, Economic and Political Weekly

This study conducted in two non-metropolitan cities in Andhra Pradesh indicates that the state has promoted public-private partnerships, outsourcing and contracting-out in a way that serves private interests rather than social interests. The disparities between poor and non-poor residents have broadened and caste plays an increased role in decision-making bodies, through a so-called inclusive participatory approach.

Available at:

ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/Changing_Structure_of_Governance_in_NonMetropolitan_Cities.pdf

Deepening Democracy and Local Governance Challenges before Kerala by MA Oomen, Economic and Political Weekly

This article explores how far local governance in Kerala has deepened democratic practice and argues that the local governance system in the state needs to be reformed and redefined. Kerala's decentralized experience has demonstrated that democracy is more than just balloting. But deepening democracy is a continuous quest for justice and freedom. While participatory democracy has powerful theoretical arguments, its empirical basis continues to be weak.

Available at:

http://www.epw.in/system/files/pdf/2014_49/25/Deepening_Democracy_and_Local_Governance.pdf

Events

From Shibabrata Kar, UNDP-MoPR, New Delhi

National Workshop on Development of Manual for Gram Panchayats on 'Panchayat Functioning and Processes', 19-20th June, New Delhi.

A national workshop for development of a Manual on Panchayat Functions and Processes was organized during 19-20 June 2014 at New Delhi. The consultative meeting was organized for developing the manual for elected representatives of Gram Panchayats (especially the Sarpanchs/ Gram Panchayat Pradhans) as well as the functionaries. This manual will be referred by the states as a reference model for developing state specific manuals in the respective local dialects. Officials from 11 states namely Andhra Pradesh, Assam, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan and West Bengal participated in the meeting. There were four facilitators from Samarthan-Madhya Pradesh, Sahabhagi Sikshyan Kendra- U.P. and Unnati- Gujarat.

From Oliver Macwan, Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA)

Management Development Programme (MDP) on 'Financial Decisions (Strengthening Tools): June 24-27, 2014 at IRMA, Anand, Gujarat

This MDP is designed specifically for managers and executives working with manufacturing organizations, service based organizations, supply chain & logistics, agriculture input companies, and procurement companies. Request the interested members to kindly join this MDP. The completed nomination form along with the requisite programme fee in the form of a demand draft/multi-city cheque/bank transfer in favour of the *Institute of Rural Management Anand*, payable in Anand should be sent to the undersigned before the closing date.

Announcements/Opportunities

From [Resource Team](#)

UNV Voluntary Repatriation Facilitator (This is a UNV position for Indian Nationals Only)	8-July-2014	Chennai
UNV Outreach and Monitoring Associate (This is a UNV position for Indian Nationals Only)	10-July-2014	Mumbai
UNV Administrative and Management Associate (This is a UNV Position for Indian Nationals Only)	10-July-2014	Mumbai
UNV Human Resource Assistant (This is a UNV position for Indian Nationals Only)	11-July-2014	New Delhi
Project Associate (Technical), Two Positions, UNDP-Project, Upscaling Energy Efficient Production In Small Scale Steel Industry in India (Open to Indian Nationals only)	15-July-2014	New Delhi (Project Management Unit at Tughlakabad Institutional Area)

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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