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Decentralization Community
Update 84
August 2014



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Dear Members,

We are happy to share the 84th Update on Decentralization Community of Practice!

In this update, we share news on: **award to Arunachal Pradesh under RGPSA** for delegating functions to the 3 tier panchayats; **Goa Panchayati Raj proposing direct elections of sarpanch**; action plan of **Odisha government to open bank branches in all gram panchayats** and implementation of **Food Security Act in Kerala from Oct 2nd** this year.

We also share: the Provisional **Results of Sixth Economic Census** released jointly by National Statistical Commission and Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India; an interesting article on **restructuring of Planning Commission** which talks about the importance of Philanthropic support for research in India and **KILA Journal of Local Governance** having articles on effective utilisation of funds and other resources at the gram panchayat level, role of youth and women participation in Panchayat Raj for vibrant local governance.

We also request members to: share their experiences on the ongoing **query on women land rights**; spread the word on **World Regional Governments Summit** and the vacancy announcements.

Hope you would find this edition interesting.

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

Community Activities

Ongoing Queries

➤ **Role of PRIs in supporting women's access to and control over land. Examples and experiences**

Panchayati Raj Institution can play an important role in furthering women's access to, and control of agricultural land rights, including those from households without agricultural land. With this background, the members are requested to share examples and experiences on:

- How have, and can, the Panchayati Raj Institutions play (ed) a role in promoting land rights of women from landless households, including Dalits and Adivasis and preventing land alienation?
- How have, and can, the Panchayati Raj Institutions play (ed) a role in supporting inheritance rights of women within the ambit of personal laws?

Read the full query [here](#)

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

Updates

News

From Resource Team

Arunachal gets award for devolution of power to panchayats

Arunachal Pradesh has been chosen for national award for devolution of powers to the three-tier panchayati raj system under the Rajiv Gandhi Panchayat Sashastikaran Abhiyan (RGPSA) for the years 2013 and 2014. The Union Ministry of Panchayat Raj, RGPSA division announced the award amounting to Rs 1 crore each for five states, namely Maharashtra (first), Kerala (second), Karnataka (third), Andhra Pradesh (fourth) and Arunachal (fifth). The process was initiated by Chief Minister Nabam Tuki in February 2013 by delegating functions of 25 of the 29 departments to the panchayats. Read more [here](#)

Goa Panchayati Raj (Amendment) Bill proposes direct election of a sarpanch

The State of Goa is set to move the Goa Panchayati Raj (Amendment) Bill in the current session of the Goa assembly. Among other provisions, the Act proposes direct election of the sarpanch and deputy sarpanch by the entire electorate of the village. Direct election of a sarpanch by the entire village is already being done in some states in the country. Goa intends to follow suit. The rationale behind this amendment is to put a stop to the instability, as sarpanches change often or resign so that another panch can assume the role of sarpanch. The government is also proposing other changes to ensure some semblance of stability at the grassroots level by making a law by which the elected sarpanch will have a term of at least two years and the government intends to introduce an amendment by which a no-trust motion cannot be moved against the sarpanch for the first two years. Read more [here](#)

Odisha government prepares action plan to open bank branches in all gram panchayats

In order to take banking to the door step, Odisha government has prepared an action plan and asked banks to provide services in all 4,597 unbanked gram panchayats (GPs) of the state. The state government has asked banks to use data of the Panchayati Raj (PR) department for opening bank accounts in the rural areas for ensuring financial inclusion across Odisha. The state government, sources said, has asked the banks to cover all the unbanked GPs within a period of five years ending March 31, 2019. Out of the total 4,597 brick and mortar branches to be opened by banks in the unbanked GPs, public sector banks will open their branches in as many as 3,048 panchayats while private banks will cover 861 unbanked gram panchayats, according to the action plan. Read more [here](#)

Government to expedite project to connect 50,000 gram panchayats this year

The government will expedite the National Optical Fibre Network (NOFN) project to connect 50,000 gram panchayats this year. Addressing the "i-bharat 2014" conference organised by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), IT and Tele-communications Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad said that "a big revolution waiting to occur in the field of digital connectivity and once the government is able to create an enabling atmosphere, I am sure retailers, service providers, content creators will come on their own." The NOFN aims at providing broadband connectivity to 2.5 lakh gram panchayats in India. Read more [here](#)

India's States see 10-fold jump in grants on Modi Devolution Promise

The Central Government intends to give State Governments more funds and power when it comes to implementation of central schemes. States in India, as we know, are diverse in many ways, and devolution of funds is necessary for development. While planning for development in India has been done by the Central Government since Independence, policymakers are now stressing for the process to be more decentralised. The allocation of more funds to the states under development heads is a step in this direction.

Read more [here](#)

Food Security Act to be implemented in Kerala from October 2

Following the passing of National Food Security Act, Kerala government has decided to implement the National Food Security Act in the state from October 2. The project will be implemented by including the present list of ration card holders in BPL and Antyodaya Anna Yojana category.

Read more [here](#)

Provisional Results of Sixth Economic Census

National Statistical Commission and Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India jointly released the provisional results of Sixth Economic Census in New Delhi. Economic Census provides detailed information on operational and economic variables, activity wise, of the establishments of the country including their distribution at all-India, State, district and village/ward levels for comprehensive analysis of the structure of the economy and for benchmark purposes.

Read more [here](#)

Delhi Ranked 111th in Global Liveability Study

Under this survey each city is assigned a score for over 30 qualitative and quantitative factors across five broad categories of stability, healthcare, culture and environment, education, and infrastructure. Based on this Delhi has been ranked a dismal 111th out of 140 world cities in a latest global liveability study, pointing to the lack of urban planning across India's polluted and chaotic cities.

Read more [here](#)

Readings/Web links/Repositories

From Resource Team

Restructuring of Planning Commission

While talking about the recent decision of government to restructure planning commission, the article talks about the integral function of policy making by the central and state governments backed by think tank that supports high-quality independent research. It also lays importance of Philanthropic support for research in India by linking it with the CSR activities.

Read more [here](#)

Lebanon's Decentralization Draft Law Anchors Political Accountability at the Core of development

In April of this year, the president of Lebanon launched a draft bill for administrative decentralization. Sami Atallah of the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies analyzes the content of the draft law: "Lebanon's decentralization draft law has attempted to create a system which compels officials to provide effective and transparent services. For this to work, accountability must be exercised both internally i.e. within the Qada (administrative district) council, and externally from the central government and CSOs. The draft law may not be perfect but it has the potential to bring about positive change in the way our regional administrations work at the local level."

Read more [here](#)

From Sharmili Basu (Samarthan- Centre for Development Support, Bhopal Madhya Pradesh)

BRGF planning in Health and Sanitation

Samarthan shares an interesting analysis of health budget in the BRGF plan for Dantewada, Sukma and Kanker districts of Chhattisgarh approved by the District Planning Committees. They have also shared a success story on how a technical resource agency supporting the planning process under BRGF in Charama Nagar Panchayat in Kanker district facilitated the identification of root cause of drainage problem in the ward in discussion with Elected Representatives. Read more at ftp://ftp.solutionexchange.net.in/public/decn/comm_update/BRGF_Health_Planining_Samarthan.pdf and

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

From J B Rajan (Kerala Institute of Local Administration, Thrissur, Kerala)

KILA Journal of Local Governance (Vol.1 - No.2)

Effective functioning of the Local Self Governments is crucial for local economic development and social justice. With the advanced and timely information systems, the transparency and accountability system are also in place. At the same time democratic decentralization has always been mistreated and distorted. The trust in the system is yet to be improved for the better utilisation of spaces. This will have implications in the effective utilisation of funds and other resources. Some of the articles in this issue are dealing with these in particular. Areas such as Role of Youth in Panchayat Raj, women participation etc. which are also vital for vibrant local governance covered in this issue.

Read more [here](#)

Events

From [Resource Team](#)

Register for the 2014 World Regional Governments Summit

The Organization of Regions United/Forum of Regional Governments and Global Associations of Regions (ORU/FOGAR) is an international organization that promotes the voice of sub-national governments about global governance on the world stage. The General Assembly of ORU/FOGAR meets at an annual Summit to set strategies for the future and deliver a cohesive message on behalf of regional governments. This year, the VI World Regional Governments Summit will be held from **September 1 – 3** in Cartagena de Indias, Colombia. The Summit will address three themes: (1) The role of regional governments in the Post-2015 Agenda; (2) Current challenges of decentralization and regional autonomy; and (3) Integral regional development.

Read more [here](#)

Announcements/Opportunities

From [Resource Team](#)

Senior Consultant – Sustainable Agriculture, National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), For Indian Nationals Only	5-September-2014	Hyderabad (with visits to different states and Delhi)
Social Media Consultant for UN and UNDP India Social Media Platform (For Indian Nationals Only)	7-September-2014	New Delhi
Project Officer – Mainstreaming & Partnerships III, Increasing Access to HIV/AIDS Prevention and Care for Vulnerable People (Open to Indian Nationals only)	7-September-2014	Mainstreaming Unit, Department of AIDS Control, New Delhi
Individual Consultant – Technical Support to Chhattisgarh, National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), For Indian Nationals Only.	10-September-2014	Raipur (with visits to field and Delhi)

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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