

Chapter 8

Best Practices of PRIs

8.1. Recording best practices is an important instrument of understanding the outcomes of a particular process. A parametric analysis of a best practice within a well-defined context brings out the whole dynamics of its operational processes. Such an understanding helps in suitably adjusting / altering those processes while the practice is being replicated under a different context.

8.2. An extensive body of research and evaluation reports has documented to examine the relation between performance of PRIs and a host of outcomes, including physical and financial achievement, availability and quality of services, and overall performance and constraints of the PRIs.

8.3. It is on this basis, the Commission had attempted to document those practices which are adopted by the PRIs in the state and are unique, innovative and exemplary in nature. In this Chapter, few good practices of the PRIs have been examined and presented.

Best Practice in other State

8.4 Participatory Planning efforts- Kerala

The aim of the People's Planning Campaign in Kerala was to achieve a sustainable model of development; local empowerment and environmental protection through people's participation in the planning and implementation process, based on the belief that the people know best, what is good for them.

The first annual plan was the result of a year long planning process that comprised of six stages.

Stage One: Gram Sabha Meetings

The first stage was to hold local assemblies in each of Kerala's erstwhile 14,149 village wards and urban neighborhoods. In these assemblies, people's representatives and voluntary activists were provided training in organising gram sabhas and ward sabhas to discuss developmental issues by forming different sectoral groups. Practical and contextualized solutions often emerged out of these meetings.

Stage Two: Development Seminars

Once community members discussed their development related problems and solutions at Panchayat level for them, the local self-governments prepared detailed development reports that analyzed local development issues and resources available.

Stage Three: Task Forces

In this stage, task forces were created that consists of experts selected through the development seminars. The task forces were responsible for preparation of detailed project proposals for the annual plan.

Stage Four: Plan Document

The local self government institutions held their council meetings in which annual plan document for the local bodies were finalized by devolved from the state government and locally available resources.

Stage Five: Block and District Panchayat Plans

The block and district panchayat samitis finalized the annual plans by integrating and supplementing the project proposals from the grassroots.

Stage Six: District Planning Committees

The District Planning Committees are responsible for examining the plan proposals of each local body in the district, duly recommended by the technical expert groups in various sectors, and gave approval to the plans that fulfilled the guidelines. Funds for development of the projects were made available only after approval by the DPCs. The implementation of plan projects was also organized in different stages similar to the stages involved in the process of project planning. These included selection of beneficiaries in the gram sabha meetings, formation of local beneficiary committees for implementation and monitoring committees for supervision of the project. All of these measures were aimed at ensuring people's participation and transparency in the development process.

Impact

People's Plan represents the voices of common citizens who are dissatisfied and concerned with the quality of public service delivery. It gives people a chance to talk about health, education, irrigation, sanitation, drinking water supply and issues that are of urgent concern to people.

8.5 GPS-mobile based housing monitoring and fund release system- Karnataka

The Rajiv Gandhi Rural Housing Corporation Limited was created in the year 2000 as a special purpose vehicle "To provide housing for socially and economically weaker section of the society through effective implementation of Central and State housing schemes". The project aims at an ICT enabled housing scheme starting from allocation of sites to the selected beneficiaries, to release of fund through Direct Cash Transfer to the Beneficiary's account, at all the 5,628 Gram Panchayats.

The data obtained on houseless, site less and hut dwellers through online updating is presented at the Gram Sabha and an equal opportunity is given to all the families to comment and give their views on the generated list of beneficiaries. It has been made mandatory to seek the approval and views of the villagers before finalising any list. With the introduction of online facilities like Online fund transfer system, photo updating and SMS updation, the beneficiaries are the most benefited, this information updates them with the progress and status of their file and makes the entire system of house allocation and fund release user friendly and transparent. At every step of the scheme, several checks and validations are incorporated technically to ensure right usage of funds and actual creation of assets at the field. Around 13 lakhs houses have been completed successfully. Around 1,800 Crore of funds have been disbursed successfully, to almost 9 lakhs beneficiaries account without any delay, with a limited staff of 40 employees.

Best Practices in PRIs of Chhattisgarh

8.6. The PRIs in the state have taken up various steps for providing basic services, augmenting own revenues, improving their functions, managing natural resources like water bodies, common lands and forests and monitoring and controlling various social institutions in their jurisdiction.

8.7. In some cases like Rajnandagaon and Surguja, the GPs have applied various innovative methods like partnership with Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Community Based Organisations (CBOs) for collecting taxes and fees from various sources. These practices have resulted in increase the base of own revenue of the GPs in these districts.

8.8. In the case of Korea District, particularly in Sonhat Janpad Panchayat (JP), few GPs have created massive public awareness against open defecation which has motivated people. The GPs in this JP have also implemented drinking water supply programme in various villages.

Some personal innovative efforts specially in district Raigarh where "Swachhata Champion", young Monika Ijhardar led her "Noni Toli" (Children's Gang) in her journey of 107 villages for converting the negative mind set of defecating in open into using toilets.

8.9. Apart from the above mentioned specific case, the Third SFC had also found various other cases while visiting to the various parts of the state and interacting with a host of people including PRIs members and other stakeholders.

The overall spread of the practices shows that (i) in some specific cases, the PRIs have performed well and have achieved the desired result despite various limitations like lack of funds and functionaries and (ii) in some cases despite greater allocation of funds and sufficient provision of functionaries, the PRIs have failed to achieve the desired result.

8.10. The new initiatives in enhancing own revenues of the PRIs through mobilisation of local groups and organisations like CBOs and SHGs are prominently noticeable in the GPs where the (i) the leaders

(PRI Members) are proactive, (ii) better presence of CBOs and SHGs and (iii) effective interaction between people and representatives.

8.11. It was also observed that in the case of developed districts like Bilaspur and Janjgir-Champa the perception of people towards PRIs and their own revenues is different than the backward districts like Narayanpur, Surguja and Korea.

8.12. Jashpur Zila Panchayat-Practice in Mobilising Own Revenue

Jashpur ZP is located North-eastern part of Chhattisgarh. The ZP is divided in two parts as per the geographical point of views viz. (i) The hilly belt, (the northern part, running from Loroghat kastura, Narayanpur, Bagicha up to the Surguja district) and (ii) The plain belt (nich ghat) located in the southern part of the ZP. The north-south length of the ZP is about 150 Kms, and its east-west breadth is about 85 kms. Its total area is 6,205 sq.km. Under the ZP of Jashpur, there are 8 Janpad Panchayats (JPs) and 427 GPs. There are 6119 wards under the ZP.

The own revenues collection like Taxes, Fees, Tolls and Duties etc. of the GPs and the JPs under this ZP was a matter of concern till year 2015-16. Considering this scenario, the ZP during year 2015-16 and during year 2016-17 had taken effective measures for enhancing the own revenues of the GPs in the district. Such initiative has helped to many GPs like Kansabel to become self-dependent.

The Zila Panchayat was carried out training programme for PRI Members, Panchayat Secretaries and Taxation Officers on various issues of raising demand and collection of taxes by the GPs in the district. Further, a survey was conducted to identify and document the tax base in all the GPs of the district. The outcomes of this exercise helped to the GPs to document the actual potentials of the source of revenues and prepare action plan for collection of these revenues.

In this process, the Gram Sabhas were played a key role. In many villages special Gram Sabhas were organised to discuss about the issues of own revenues of the GPs and how to enhance it. The survey report and revised estimation of taxes were presented in the Gram Sabhas for informing people and creating awareness about taxation.

Appropriate monitoring mechanism was also devised by the ZP to monitor the entire process of tax collection. A district level team was formed to monitor the process. Many meetings were organised to review the process. A team was also formed to regular monitor the GP accounts.

Such initiative in many cases provided positive result in enhancing own revenues of the PRIs/GPs in the district. Data collected from the State Panchayat and Rural Development Department shows the steady rise of the own revenue of the GPs from Rs. 39.80 lakhs during year 2014-15 to Rs. 148.59 lakhs during year 2016-17 with an increase of 108.79 lakhs in two years. It is evident from the trend that the special initiative taken by the ZP has helped to the GPs to enhance

their own revenues during year 2014-15 to 2016-17. As per data provided by the ZP, 100 % tax recovery was done in 105 Gram Panchayat out of 427 Gram Panchayat in year 2016-17.

8.13. Surguja Zila Panchayat-Practice in Community Participation for Enhancing Own Revenues of the GPs

Surguja ZP is located in the northern part of Chhattisgarh. The ZP headquarter is located in Ambikapur. Under the Surguja ZP, there are 7 JPs and 163 GPs.

Nearly 90% of the population of Surguja is depended on agriculture and engaged in the cultivation of cereals, oil seeds, pulses, and fruits or vegetables. The district mainly produces rice. The tribal people are dependent on the various forest products like fruits, roots of various plants, lac and honey for their survival. They even collect tendu patta, char, amla, imli, and sal beej and sell it directly to various government and non-government organisations as well as in the open market.

The ZP during last three years, particularly since year 2013-14 has given much focus on strengthening the functioning of the PRIs through mobilising CBOs and SHGs in its jurisdiction. The objective of such initiative was (i) to strengthen the functional capacity of the PRIs and (ii) to strengthen the own revenues of the PRIs, in particular the GPs for effective implementation of development programmes and attaining self-sufficiency in finances.

This process was initiated through organising special awareness camps through Gram Sabhas in all the villages and GPs of the district. Further it was aimed to create awareness among the commons about the importance of tax revenue of the PRIs. In some cases, special initiatives had taken up to collect taxes. These are (i) discussing the problems in Gram Sabhas, and (ii) partnering with CBOs, SHGs for tax collection

In some cases the PRIs have utilised common lands for maximising own revenue. Market complex have developed and leased out to various categories of entrepreneurs like individuals and groups (SHGs) for business purpose. Fish ponds have developed by using MGNREGA fund which has helped to the GPs for enhancing own revenue. These initiatives have created positive impact on revenue generation of the PRIs.

8.14. "Kar Utsav" in District Raigarh to enhance revenue.

Zila Panchayat Raigarh had taken a new initiative named as "Kar Utsav" in various Gram Panchayats of 09 Janpad Panchayats to enhance the revenue of PRIs. Under this initiative two days i.e. Saturday and Tuesday are marked as festival day to collect the arrears of tax revenue. The intensive publicity through Pamphlets and mikes created a positive atmosphere for tax collection in PRIs and resulted as follows.

Tax collection in Raigarh District

Sl. No.	Financial Year	Amount Collected (Rs. in crore)
1	2016-17	1.887
2	2017-18	2.410

Practices in Gram Panchayats

8.15. Bademarenga Gram Panchayat- Safe Drinking Water, enhancing own revenue, Swachha Bharat Mission

Bademarenga GP is 20k.m. away from Jagdalpur, the district headquarter town of Bastar. The GP is part of Tokapal JP with having 3 villages, and 772 Households. Many households are from tribal communities like Muriya, Gond and Sethia.

The GP has implemented a number of development programmes among which providing drinking water facility under *Nal-Jal Yojana* has become a major programme. The GP has installed its own motor pump which is being managed by the GP. All the 772 houses are being provided drinking water either through household supply or through installing common points. There are also 57 Hand pumps that have installed under this programme.

Apart from this, individual House Hold Toilets have also been constructed under Swachha Bharat Mission in various villages. The GP has declared as Open Defecation Free Gram Panchayat.

Gram Panchayat has taken various initiatives for enhancing own revenue of the Panchayat. The following taxes are being imposed and collected by the GP e.g. Housing Tax, Water Tax, Fees from issuing various certificates such as birth, death etc., Fees from Market Complex, Annual auction from Kanji House and Fees through auctioning Fish Ponds.

8.16. Belargaon Gram Panchayat-Practice in Promoting Self-Governance

The self-initiative taken up by the Belargaon Gram Panchayat in Nagari Janpad Panchayat of Dhamtari Zila Panchayat. In the year 2009 the GP started to give more attention on strengthening local governance through maintaining transparency and accountability in local governance system.

The GP with the support of CBOs conducted awareness programmes. Gram Sabha was used as venue to achieve the goal. Elected representatives of the Panchayat in consultation with Gram Sabha had taken various decisions regarding programmes/schemes to be planned and implemented in the villages. The Panchayat had also organised special Gram Sabhas for formulating Village and GP level plans.

The GP hired six staff members to monitor and implement various programmes like looking after cattle (*Awara Maveshi*), *Nal-Jal Yojana*, and other development programmes, revenue mobilisation through Tax Collection was also given focus.

The functioning of Panchayat has improved in many cases. The Panchayat has helped in constructing house to left out BPL families. It has provided educational support to children with disability, 100% enrolment of eligible children in schools, the condition of housing and drainage improved. People now have sustained income sources because of well managed weekly markets, by the GP. The village has a well-equipped and functional Public Health Centre which is being monitored by the GP.

As GP has become financially self-sufficient through enhancing their own resources, it has no larger dependency on external funds and forces for implementing development programmes. This has become possible because of the factors like positive leadership, community ownership and financial independence.

Suggestions of the Third SFC

Effective Documentation

8.17. The State needs to consider the effective documentation of the innovative practices that have taken up by the PRIs and successful replication of these practices to the other areas in the state. For this purpose the professional assistance of the faculties/trainers of SIRD, Chhattisgarh can be taken up.

Establishing Monitoring Cell

8.18. The state should consider the possibility of establishing a monitoring Cell at the State P&RD department, which would track, monitor and actively support the innovative practices of the PRIs in the state. The Cell may consist of experts in all basic functional domains of PRIs including the training and finance. The Cell should continuously monitor the existing and new initiatives of the PRIs. The PRIs who have taken innovative practices should be incentivised.
