Project Closure Report

Capacity building of Women Elected Representatives in Jharkhand
(Supported by UNICEF – Jharkhand)

Submitted by

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**Key Highlights**

- A Report on Capacity Gap Analysis of Women Elected Representatives of Jharkhand, based on National Capacity Building Framework, is developed.
- 10 cases based on functioning of WERs are documented.
- Training Module with focus on pedagogy (Participatory Adult Learning Processes) has been developed to address the capacity gap of WERs.
- State level programme was organise under the leadership of DG-SIRD (Jharkhand) to finalise the training module.
- 32 WERs have been capacitated during a three days’ training programme, with the help of drafted training module.
- Systematisation of project has done through inception and closure reports.
Background

UNICEF-Jharkhand in collaboration with State institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Jharkhand developed a strategy to build capacities of newly elected representatives, after the first round of elections of panchayati raj institutions, and promoted Jharkhand Women Panchayat Resource Centre (JWPRC). It was expected that the trained elected representatives of panchayati raj institutions (PRIs) will support to improve service delivery, realisation of rights of children and women in their respective panchayats after getting training from JWPRC. Later JWPRC, along with the department of Panchayati Raj & Rural development and with the support of UNICEF, organised several training programmes to develop the capacities of elected representatives of PRIs, especially of women elected representatives (WERs). This was also done to endorse the belief that PRIs participation is paramount for successful implementation of programmes and scheme of government of Jharkhand as well as government of India.

Currently, Gram Panchayats are getting resources on the basis of recommendation of 14th Central Finance Commission and other national flagship schemes like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), etc. In light of this it has been realised that there is need to develop capacities in a way where the elected representatives of PRIs could use different resource for local development. Keeping this in mind UNICEF has initiated a partnership with PRIA to understand the effectiveness of training imparted on women representatives, by SIRD and JWPRC during 2010-2015.

Key objectives of the project

The major objective of this project was to assess the impact of trainings in terms of -

a. Enhancement of capacities of WERs in terms of improved implementation of flagship schemes such as MGNREGS, SBM, SSA, NRHM etc. in their panchayats

b. Ensuring greater gender equality and improved programming at panchayat level

c. Capturing best practices adopted by the WERs who received trainings from SIRD and/or JWPRC during their last tenure in PRIs.

d. To document these best practices and reflect on topic, content, pedagogy, etc.
Key activities of the project

To achieve the objectives of the project following activities were planned under the project –

- Documenting change at panchayat level led by women elected representatives
- Conducting training and capacity gap analysis
- Developing modules with Pedagogy for specific training of WERs
- Conducting 3 days' training programme for selected panchayats
- Organize State level Dissemination Workshop to share the learning's and experiences of the project

Progress of Project

A. Beginning with Inception Report

The project started with drafting of an inception report in the month of December 2016. Objectives of the projects were detailed out in the inception report and accordingly activities were finalised, with their respective methodologies and time lines. Check list, to document the cases, were also shared in the inception report. The draft report was shared with representatives of UNICEF and State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) and Jharkhand Women Panchayat Resource centre (JWPRC) and finalised.

B. Documenting Cases in Light of Trainings Received by WERs

After finalisation of methodologies (through Inception Report) the activities started with documentation of cases from field. Two Gram Panchayats were selected from each of the 5 districts, selected under the project (Deoghar, Latehar, Ramgarh, Simdega and West Singhbhum) for the documentation purposes. The Gram Panchayats were finalized in consultation with the Block Development Officers and the representatives of Sakh Foundation.
(an organisation that is working at the local level). Overall Field work was done during January – February 2017.

Draft cases were again shared with UNICEF and after incorporating their valuable feedbacks they were finalized. In all, ten cases have been developed from the 10 Gram panchayats.

C. Capacity Gap Analysis
Assessing capacity gap among the Mukhiyas, especially women, and conducting capacity gap analysis (CGA) was one of the key outputs of the project. To conduct the CGA a framework was developed in line with the National Capacity Building Framework (NCBF), developed by Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR), Government of India. Four key components—Meetings and there Management, Development Planning & Decision Making, Gender Mainstreaming and Leadership— were identified to assess the capacities of WERs. On the basis of these key components and designed framework a check list was developed. Later Mukhiyas were contacted and discussions were organized with the help of the developed check list. This work was also done during January – February 2017.

Along with Mukhiyas, opinions of the government officials posted in these districts (viz. Block Development Officer, District Panchayati raj Officer, etc.) were also taken on various aspects related to functioning of elected representatives (ERs) and capacities that ERs require to perform their functions. Opinions of the representatives of the Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) that are closely working with the panchayats were also taken as they are connected with the community and their leaders.
Finally, the secondary data related to various training and capacity building programmes organized by the SIRD (including PTC, CTI, etc.) were collected and analysed.

Draft CGA report was shared with UNICEF and SIRD. Director General of SIRD gave some specific comments on the report (to increase the sample size). Later the CGA report was finalised by adding all the observations shared by the officials of SIRD and UNICEF.

D. Training Module for WERs

On the basis of the trends of CGA and field experiences a training module was drafted. This module was developed to build the capacities of WERs so that they could learn various aspects related to governance and development and effectively function in their respective panchayats. It was realized that several training modules have already been developed by various agencies who have been engaged in capacity building process of ERs in Jharkhand. However, it was also realized that the pedagogy is an area that needs further inputs.

Keeping this fact in mind the training module was drafted in March 2017. Following key topics have been incorporated in the training module –

- Learning Objectives
- Suggestive Training Design
- Session’s Plan
- Perspective on Participatory Training
- Participatory Training and Adult Learning
- Importance of building a learning environment in participatory training
Following thematic topics were also covered in the training module to develop the functional issues related to governance and planning –

- Decentralisation in India
- Local Development and National Flagship Programmes
- Participatory Planning and Social Inclusion
- Gender Mainstreaming
- Gender Budgeting
- Role of PRIs in Promotion of Social Accountability

**E. Three Days’ Capacity Building and Training Programme for WERs**

To test the training module and its contents a three days training was organised during 27-29 March, 2017. The training programme was organised at Vishweshvaraiya Institute of Sanitation and Water Academy (VISWA), Ranchi. 21 Mukhiya and Up-Mukhiya from 8 districts of Jharkhand participated in this training programme. Ms. Mridula Sinha (Director General, State Institute of Rural Development, Jharkhand), Ms. Vandana Dadel (Secretary-Department of Panchayati Raj and Rural Development, Government of Jharkhand), Mr. Onkar Nath Tripathy (Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Officer – UNICEF, Jharkhand), and consultants of the Department of Rural development and Panchayati Raj (GoJ) Mr. Sajjad Mazid, Mr. Gagan Mehta were also present in this training programme.

Various training tools (educational games, case studies, ted-talk, role play, etc.) were used during the training programme to build the capacities of the WERs on Meetings Management, Development Planning & Decision Making, Gender Mainstreaming and Leadership.
On the basis of learning drew form the training programme a chapter on ‘Frequently Asked Questions’ were added in the training module. Along with that some other exercises have been added and the module was finalized.

**F. State Level Sharing**

As a final activity of the project a state level programme was organised to share the overall progress of the project. This programme was organised at SIRD under the chairpersonship of DG–SIRD and in collaboration with JWPRC on 7th June 2017. During the programme 16 participants were present. The Member Secretary of National Commission for Women, Government of India was also present in the programme.

During the programme a presentation was made to show the objectives of the programme viz-a-viz achievements made under various components. During the discussion participants also shared their observations on the content of training module. Some of the valuable observations were further added in the module, appropriately.
**Key Learnings**

Overall the project gave good experience to the team members. The variety of stakeholders, contacted during the limited period of project, provided valuable inputs for the strengthening of panchayati raj in Jharkhand, especially at the gram panchayat level.

Some of the major learning that have been realised by the project team, or for that matter by PRIA could be seen as follows –

1. WERs in Jharkhand are keen to bring change but the challenge is that they need handholding support to do that.
2. The State Government is ready to provide support to ERs/panchayats but the challenge remains when ERs or the local voice is not able to reach the state level authorities.
3. Though the WERs have completed two years of current term, the awareness level of elected representatives, on management (meeting of Gram Panchayat, functioning of Standing Committees, etc.) and planning (Participatory planning, Gram Panchayat Development Plan, etc.) are still very low.
4. Dependency of WERs on their family or husband is a challenging factor.
5. Pedagogy of training is an important factor as the Mukhiyas come from different educational backgrounds. The theoretical training given to Mukhiyas are too much for them to understand at a go.
6. Be it lack of appropriate knowledge about schemes or communication gap, Mukhiyas do not have a say in approving required schemes in the panchayat.
7. Ability to do documentation work is very low at the Gram Panchayat level.
8. Media (print and electronic) should be utilised to show case the positive exemplars, coming from panchayats.
Ways Forward

In light of the experience received during the project some of the ways forward could be visualised as follows –

- There is a great need to extend the project with a deeper intervention to provide handholding support to the WERs
- Standing Committees need to be properly formed and nurtured so that they could support the Gram Panchayats to work in a more comprehensive manner.
- There is a great need to link blocks and districts more effectively, with Gram Panchayats
- Capacity of Gram Panchayats on aspects related to management and planning should be enhanced
- There is also a need to increase accountability of the gram panchayats by building capacities of their elected representatives.