Background

UNICEF Jharkhand in collaboration with State institute of Rural Development (SIRD) and Jharkhand Women Panchayat Resource Centre (JWPRC) developed a strategy to train elected representatives of panchayati raj institutions (PRIs) so that they can improve service delivery, realisation of rights of children and women in Jharkhand. Later SIRD and JWPRC, 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 Finance Commission and other national flagship schemes like Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), National Rural Livelihood Mission (NRLM), Swachchh 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. Again, the capacities of members of PRIs should be developed such that they could utilize the legal frameworks for promotion of better delivery of services and for transparency and accountability of the institutions.

UNICEF initiated a partnership with PRIA to understand the effectiveness of training imparted on women representatives, by SIRD and JWPRC during 2010-2015, in terms of

a. Enhancement of their capacity 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. To capture best practices adopted by the EWRs 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.

Capacity gap analysis (CGA) is one of the major deliverable under the current partnership. It is visualized that the CGA would be able to highlight key challenges that are being faced by the elected representatives of PRIs in their day to day function and will also try to understand the causes behind those challenges. On the basis of those challenges and their causes capacity gaps would be identified and strategies, including training modules and training pedagogies, would be developed to cater the needs of the elected representatives of PRIs.
A consultation programme was organized by Gender Cell of State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD), Ranchi on 7th June 2017 at SIRD. The purpose of the consultation was to finalize the training module (with focus on pedagogy) developed by Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) with support of UNICEF (Jharkhand). A Capacity Gap Analysis was conducted by PRIA before developing this training module. The module was also used during a three day long training programme at Ranchi in March 2017.

The programme was organized under the guidance of Mridula Sinha (Director General – SIRD, Ranchi). Presence of Member Secretary of National Commission for Women (NCW), Government of India Dr. Satbir Silas Bedi was also graced the programme. Along with them representatives Panchayati Raj & Rural Development Department (Government of Jharkhand), faculty members of SIRD and other training institutions, civil society organizations (CSOs) were also present in the programme.

Mr. Onkar Nath Tripathy (Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Officer- UNICEF, Jharkhand) started the programme with opening remarks on situational analysis of Women Elected Representatives of the state. He added that, UNICEF supported SIRD with Jharkhand Panchayat Women Resource Centre (JPWRC), since past 4 years to increase the co-operation, participation and to main stream the women in development initiatives. The idea of formation of JPWRC was also to support the women elected representatives in decision making too. Initiatives to increase the capacities of women elected representatives was taken by SIRD with a view that as 50% of Mukhiya in the state are female and if their capacities would be enhanced then they will, in turn, further lead towards the development of the state. During the last couple of years many trainings were organized by SIRD and JWPRC in which a large number of women elected representatives participated. Mr. Onkar added that to assess the outcome of the trainings UNICEF consulted Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA) to do a Capacity Gap Analysis. Based on this study and finding a training pedagogy has also been developed. We are also trying to develop a final training module which would be submitted to Department of Panchayati Raj, added Mr. Onkar.

On behalf of PRIA a presentation was made in which the key finding of Capacity Gap Analysis was shared and the pedagogy related to proposed training programme was discussed by Dr. Alok Pandey. He added that capacity of elected women mukhiyas has been assessed on the basis of National Capacity Building Framework by taking different subjects (viz. how to conduct meetings, how to decide agenda of the meeting, how to manage meetings, how to write proceedings, how to develop a participatory plan, softwares to upload the plan, accessibility of software to women mukhiyas, etc.)
Issues like decision making related to different National Flagship programmes such as PMGSY, MNREGA, ICDS, PMAY etc. have also been covered in the analysis. Along with that soft issues like Leadership and Gender Mainstreaming have also added in the analysis, added Dr. Alok.

Some other issues those were highlighted during the presentation could be seen as follows -

1. Rate of participation in training is higher amongst the women representatives but the biggest challenge is to retain their participation.
2. Lack of understanding on accounts and financial management tools is low. There is no availability of any financial document for the elected representatives to read and build their understanding.
3. The Gram Sabha is conducted only when notice is received from Block Office.
4. There is lack of knowledge among the representatives that form where the funds are coming.
5. Pertaining to above points we incorporated the following appreciative inquiry point to build a better understanding amongst the representatives regarding their roles:
   I. Who we are?
   II. What do we do?
   III. How do we do?
6. Key points for the trainer are also added in training module.

The following feedbacks given by the participants after the presentation -

- The questionnaire used for collection of primary data should be added into the Capacity Gap Analysis report.
- There are little bit mismatch, content wise, between Capacity Gap Analysis report and the training module.
- The flow of the content should be more consistent.

DG-SIRD and Member Secretary congratulated the team for presentation. DG–SIRD also advised to incorporate the valuable suggestions given by the participants.
Annexure – 1

List of Participants

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*Notes:*
- Gender: M - Male, F - Female
- Grade: A - Advanced, B - Basic, C - Comprehensive
- Division: 1 - Science, 2 - Commerce, 3 - Arts