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research report

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Decentralization in Sikkim: Prospects and Challenges

This note summarizes the key findings and suggestions of the review of Panchayati Raj Institutions in Sikkim initiated by ISPS.

Background

The decentralization of government from central to local levels is crucial for democratization, the promotion of equity and people's participation in development. Systematic efforts for decentralized governance in Sikkim begun in 1950 - 1960's. The Panchayat Act of 1965, 1982 are major legislative provisions which guided the decentralization process. During this period (1960-1990) a number of areas relating to policy and operational aspects of decentralization emerged. As a result, decentralization process being in operation with centralized guidance. The main issues were role and functions of local bodies.

73rd – 74th Constitution Amendment Act

Some of the features of local Government structure as a result of 73rd Constitutional Amendment in 1992 are as follows:

Four tiers stern of local governance in ascending order, the Gram Sabha, Gram Panchayat (GP), Panchayat Samity (PS) and the Zilla Parishad (ZP)

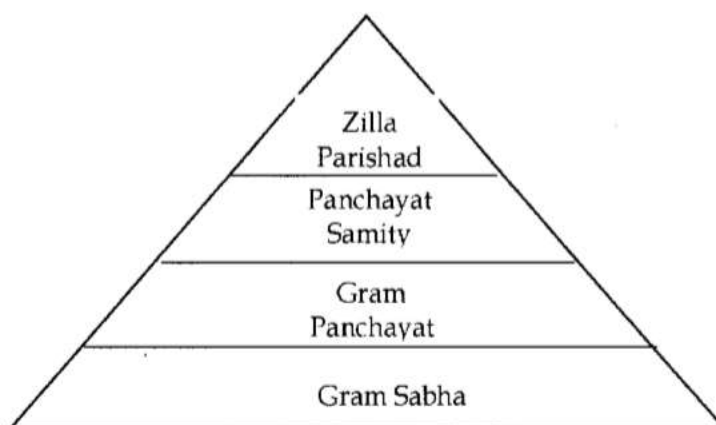


Figure – 2

[Being a small state (having less than two million population) Sikkim has only three tier-GS, GP and ZP.]

- ❖ One-third membership is reserved for women at all levels - GP, ZP/GS
- ❖ There is also reservation of scheduled tribes, scheduled caste at all levels.
- ❖ Tenure of all panchayat office holders is five years.
- ❖ District planning committee to set up in each district.
- ❖ Establishment of State finance commissions in every five years and follow-up its recommendations.
- ❖ Gram Sabha should be organized at least twice in a year to discuss the report and plan.
- ❖ Panchayat to make social and economic development plan in their respective areas.
- ❖ Establishment of State Election Commission to conduct Panchayat Election in the State.

The Panchayat is a State subject (provincial) in our Constitution. Therefore, besides the above provisions (which are called mandatory provisions) all other things are left to the State Government.

The Government of Sikkim conducting regular Panchayat election (1992, 1997, 2002). Seats are reserved for women, SC and ST, set up State Finance Commission in 1998 which also submitted their recommendation in 1999. State Election Commission (SEC) conducting elections.

However, Gram Sabhas are not held regularly, social and economic plans are not being prepared by GS, GP, ZP, District Planning Committee not functional.

Main Provisions of Sikkim Panchayat Act, 1993

- ❖ Gram Sabha shall meet at least twice in a year. Quorum for the meeting of a Gram Sabha is one-tenth of the total members of the Gram Sabha. If GP fails to convene GS, State Government to convene GS. The following matter to be considered in the GS:
 - Annual Statement Account of the GP.
 - The report is respect of development programmes proposed to be undertaken during the current year.
 - Identification of beneficiaries for various schemes.
- ❖ Gram Panchayat "an institution of self-government:" shall hold a meeting for transaction of its business at least twice in a month at the office of the Gram Panchayat or at such place within the local limits of the Gram Panchayat.
- ❖ Power and duties of Sabhapati:
 - Conduct GP meeting
 - Responsible for the maintenance of records and registers of the GP
 - Operate jointly with Sachiva the account of the GP.
- ❖ Some of the obligatory duties of GP are as follows:
 - ❖ Sanitation, conservancy and drainage
 - ❖ Supply of drinking water
 - ❖ Maintenance and repair of village roads o Management of common places
 - ❖ Supply of information to DC, ODO, DPO, etc. and ZP.
 - ❖ Organizing voluntary labour for community work and works for the upliftment of the area.

There are some other duties assign to GP e.g.:

- Primary, technical, vocational education
- Rural dispensaries, health centres
- Minor irrigation
- Care of the infirm and destitute.
- ❖ Gram Panchayat Fund: Each GP should have a GP fund which constitutes:

Contributions and grants made by the central or the state government

- Contributions and grants made by ZP and others
- Loans, if any .
- ❖ GP can levy of taxes, rates, fees, etc.: Subject to the rates which may be fixed by the state government, a Gram Panchayat may levy the following taxes:
 - Tax on fairs, hats, entertainments
 - Sanitation tax
 - Water rate
 - Fee for grazing cattle.

- ❖ Budget of Gram Panchayat: Every Gram Panchayat shall prepare each year a budget of its estimated receipts and disbursements for the following year and shall submit the budget to the state government for approval through ZP.
- ❖ Zilla Panchayat Meeting: Shall be held once in every three months.
- ❖ Power and duties of President (Adhyaksher):
 - Conduct the ZP meeting
 - Responsible for maintenance of record and registers of the ZP
 - Exercise supervision on the ZP members and officers Operate ZP account jointly with Sachiva.
- ❖ Obligating duties of Zilla Panchayat:
 - Regulating melas, haats
 - Construction & maintenance Panchayat Chars, etc.
 - Construction, repair and maintenance of small irrigation projects
 - Regulating supply of drinking water, irrigating water supply and its maintenance.
 - Establishing health centres and maternity and child welfare centres
 - Establishing and maintaining primary schools and organizing adult education centres
 - Establishment and maintenance of Library and reading rooms
 - The promotion of opportunity of employment through community forming by organizing model agriculture or dairy forms and small scale industries
 - Organizing clubs and maintenance of places for recreation and games.
- ❖ Zilla Panchayat Fund Comprises the following:
 - Contribution and grants from the Central and state government and other authority
 - Loans from the central and state government
 - Proceeds of schemes, projects undertaken by ZP
 - Rates, taxes, fees.
- ❖ Imposition of taxes, rates and fees: Subject to the maximum rates which may be fixed by the State Government, ZP can levy following taxes, rates and fees:
 - A tax on fairs, melas and other entertainments o General sanitation tax
 - Water rates, etc.
- ❖ Budget of ZP: Every ZP shall prepare in each year a budget of its estimated receipts and expenditure for the next financial year and submit to the state government for approval.
- ❖ The Act says the state government by notification place at the disposal of Gram Panchayat or Zilla Panchayat the services of government staff.
- ❖ The Act also says the Constitution of District Planning Committee (DPC) comprises Adhakshya of ZP, three other ZP members, members of legislative Assembly (MLAs) from the district Adhakshya and one member of Nagar Panchayat.

The above legislative framework is quite comprehensive. It provides wider authority to the local bodies for planning, local governance, development (service delivery) and revenue generation. It provides a framework for the implementation of decentralization and local self-governance in the state.

Findings of the Consultation

During December 2002 to February 2003, the consultant along with ISPS team visited 10 GPs and 4 Z.P. and interacted with the members (present and old), community, officials, staff related to GP, ZPs. The details are provided in the Annexure 1.

The last panchayat election held on October 9, 2002. In most of the places members took oath during the second week of December 2002. Therefore, the period we visited the GP's, ZPs was the transitional period. Many new members came in, some earlier members also re-elected, their position

changed. Though election (contest) held in 1/3 of the seats. Nearly 2/3 seats are fill up as unopposed. However, a large majority is new in the Panchayat. Hence, we tried to meet and talk with the earlier members also. The broad findings and suggestions are as follows:

A. At the Gram Sabha Level:

- Gram Sabha (GS) meetings are not held regularly. Even when it is held the district officials to discuss the details of guide it sanctioned schemes, how to implement who will be the beneficiaries. Even that too with Rural Development Departments (RDD) schemes and programmes only.
- No Gram Sabha based comprehensive planning processes initiated. Though in many places people, G.P. members have excellent ideas about how to solve their problems of irrigation, drinking water, improve the agriculture, develop horticulture etc. to maintenance of local infrastructure etc. but these are not part of the G.S. based planning.
- The attendance (when G.S. held) is very poor. Only in few places when annual planning took place (listing of activists only) same 30-35 people attended. More often required quorum are not filled up in the first meeting.
- Most of the places documents related to G.S. meetings are not available. Some said it is with the earlier Sachiva, with president, it is with RDA, submitted to ODO, available in the Panchayat Ghar. The reality may be these are not prepared thoroughly and whatever prepared submitted to the higher authorities or since these were inadequately prepared the concerned people not like to share the same.

Suggestions:

- PRI's should not be the third tier (after central and state) development administration.
- Emphasizes should be an active participation in decision making by women (and other weaker sections) with a view to enhancing their role, status and leadership in local governance. In the GP structure 3-4 women, SC, ST can participate whereas GS 30-40 women, SC, ST can participate. Their basis of participation will be to discuss their problems, local problems and how to address that, what will be the roles of GP, community, state? They will participate to discuss, contribute in the discussion and part of the decision making process and involve in its follow up.
- Distance is a factor for ! attendance in the G.S. Therefore, these can be ward level/ cluster of ward level G.S. planned. Accessibility is the criteria for convening GS.
- It is also important to consider the management of G.S. Meeting. On average G.S. members in a G.P. are nearly 800-1000. Therefore, 10% means 80 or 100. It is difficult to co-ordinate; conduct the meeting with participation of people. Therefore, ward level/ cluster of ward level meeting should be considered so that higher attendance could be ensured. So that manageability is the criteria for convening Gram Sabha
- According to the Act Sabhapati to convene and preside the G.S. However, in many G.Ps they are not very competent (capacity to convene, coordinate, follow-up). Therefore, we suggest involving youth (to run around, in farm people, organize the meetings), elders (to provide ideas, inform others to come) educated, retired govt. staff residing in the village (to help in preparing the minutes, report, follow up notes in the form of letters, petitions, etc.) in the process.
- It would be useful a particular fortnight declared as period of organizing G.S. concerned govt. staff from the district as well as all local officials (from different departments) should be instructed to participate in the G.S. The official's role will be to provide new information and response to questions. They should not dictate and control the deliberations.
- All the decisions taken at G.S., minutes responses from the higher authorities etc. Should be put in the notice board of GP. Ghar and one prominent place in each ward. Concerned ward

member along with local volunteers could do this. Documents also be kept at the panchayat ghar.

- Intensive/regular orientation to be given to the GP members and 'active' community members on how to organize G.S. (Planning, conduct and follow-up)
- Similarly camps should be organized for support participatory ward /G. P. level planning.
- Training module to be prepared on how to conduct GS and how to prepare participatory, comprehensive GP based plan.

B. At the Gram Panchayat Level:

- The G.P. meetings are not held regularly earlier situation as well as in the newly elected body.
- Documentation related G.P. level meeting are mostly not available.
- Earlier documents/register etc. not yet handover to the newly elected members (though two months period after taking oath). The women Sabhapati of Shumbuk GP not yet received the documents from earlier President who is a member in the new panchayat. The earlier Sahil of Lingi G.P. who keeps the documents feels that there is no need to transfer the earlier registers, documents to the newly elected Sachiva/president.
- Whatever documents available at various places, locations with people are not adequate.
- Gram panchayat ghars are not being use as G.P. office, meeting. Though most of the GPs have G.P Ghar it is mostly lying empty or used for other (useful) purposes e.g. Community Information Centre (CIC), Guest House, Accommodation of staff etc. We did not find any documents (read a single paper) in the Panchayat Ghar. Almirahs are broken a lying empty. Books are not in the Panchayat Char members are functioning from their home of elsewhere.
- There is a tendency to show GP Char as 'damaged'. But in reality 'damage' is not much. It can be used.
- Panchayat members are new (over 50 percent) inexperienced.
- Panchayat have no staff. The RDAs are supposed to 'assist' the Panchayats. However, most of them are not simply available. No RDA sits in the Panchayat Char. They function (?) from the residences. We cannot find the real reason behind this. Every month, each RDA gets an coverage Rs. 7p0Qi- as salary. They are not properly oriented, their task are not clear. There are confusion about their roles between the ROD and RDAs.
- In absence of any direct support from the Government staff, Panchayat are functioning in an ineffective way.
- The training, orientation of members (1997 - 2002 period) is limited. Members got only one 7 days (in reality five days) training on panchayat related issues and that too during 1997 - 98 i.e. immediately after the election. Training organized at SIRD. Some of the members even not received any orientation/ trainings during their five-year tenure. Members are suggesting that training should be organized near to their habitat like cluster of GP level, direct level, etc.
- Allocation to GP is very limited. Only RDD provides some money.
- Understanding/perspective, etc. on Local Self-Governance (1.SG) are very limited among the members. Though majority of the first time members are young, comparatively educated, active but their energy should be properly directed.
- No tax, levy, etc. imposed, therefore no internal resource generation.
- No plan (long term) prepared at the GP level.
- There is confusion, conflict about the selection/identification of Schemes, beneficiaries among the GP (GS) and other levels e.g. local MLA and Ministers often become the final deciding authority. This at times frustrates the members.
- At times ward level committee and ward members are in conflicting view.
- Now-a-days GP members are called in different meetings. However, their support mechanism is almost non-existent. Their remuneration are very less, travel allowances are limited. Their leadership, articulation skills are limited. Many places they are used as 'support base' of MLAs, Ministers, party.

Suggestions

- Panchayat should function from the Panchayat Ghar. Panchayat Char should become a Centre of activity. All documents should be kept at the Panchayat Char. Notice Board should be used for sharing information. It should not become an ornament to the building. Nice, big costly board at the Panchayat Char is lying empty. Panchayat Char in Sikkim is quite well built compare to other states.
- Role, task, functions of RDAs should be spelt out clearly and explained to them. They should set-up their office at GP. Char and really 'assist' the GP and act as "ears and eyes of ROD". Their role as 'assist to GP', ears and eyes of RDD should be explained and provide orientation, support for that role then monitoring their performance. They are ineffective (inefficient) in the present job. Staff placed at the district level to be more around the Panchayats and provide onsite guidance to RDAs as well as elected body.
- Elected members require orientation - information, understanding on the local self-governance as well as on how to perform their role. In addition to class room lecture based trainings at SIRD, their orientation should be at the local level in the form of discussion, dialogue with the officials and other members. Exposure visit should be planned. All their CAPACITY BUILDING inputs should relate to learning for Action, more improved practice. Some simple documents should be prepared about the policy, acts, roles, how to play the role, documentation process, participatory planning, Gram Sabha etc. to be prepared, shared among the members as well as among the community.
- GP should plan in a participatory way the management of local resources (natural and physical), human resources and developmental resources available from the State and the Central government. As shown in finding, only RDD programmes are routed through the GP which is roughly 20-30 percent of the development resource. There is a need to involve other departments with the panchayats. The proposal submitted by cabinet committee on decentralization about the 10 standing committees should be formed, strengthened and make functional. However, we feel there may five standing committees at the GP level. The composition of these standing committees is members and the concerned representative from the departments. In this way individualistic work approach of various departments could be eliminated e.g. Watershed Committee, Education Committee, etc. and also provide the opportunity of other members in GP to participate in the GP functioning process, build closer link among the departments and GP. This also promotes partnership among the government and PRI means to say other departments. So far Panchayat is linked with RDD.
- Panchayat should also involve local institutions, clubs, SHGs, NGOs in the local development planning to avoid duplication of work, to support each other.

C. At the Zila Panchayat Level:

- ZP is not a self-governance institution at the district level
- There is a wide gap between the President, Vice-President status, role and other members
- There are roles of GP specified in the Act

Suggestions

- There is a need to strengthen Z.P. Just giving Minister of state status does not mean devolution at the district level.
- Formation of standing committees as proposed by the cabinet sub-committee on Decentralization should be operationalised. Standing committee should comprise district level departments officials, members. This will provide coordination's between the ZP and departments and also provide work and responsibility to the various ZP. Members.

- ZP should be the body where all the activities of the districts should be decided there implemented by various other departments. Even part of the allocation can go directly to the departments at the district level but the planning should be done in consultation with the ZP.
 - A senior level full time staff should look after the affairs of ZP and act as a secretary. The role of DC should be separated from the ZP.
 - Meeting of ZP should be organized regularly. The ZP building should have office room for standing committee members.
 - Linkages among the tiers should be clear, more frequent interactions are necessary ZP. President and Vice President should spend more time at the G.P. level.
- Repositioning State Institute of Rural Development

Repositioning State Institute of Rural Development

Background

The Institute State Institute of Rural Development (SIRD) was set up in November 14, 1991 under the Department of Rural Development at Karfactor. The Institute became autonomous in 1993. Before 1991 the same Institute was functioning as a composite training Institute, apex training Institution of Agriculture Department. The main purpose of this Institute is to organize various training activities pertaining to different organizations in addition to that of Agriculture Department.

Governance

A Board of Governors functions under the Rural Development Department (ROD) for the management of the affairs of the Sikkim State Institute of Rural Development. The head office of the Board is located at Rural Development Department, Gangtok. The memorandum says the Board shall be responsible for the administrative as well as financial matters of the Institute and would delegate such powers to the official (Director) of the Institute as would be required from time to time.

The Board comprised the following officials:

- Secretary, Rural Development Department Government, Govt. of Sikkim- Chairperson
- Secretary, Agriculture Department (GOS) - Member
- Secretary, Animal Husbandry (GOS)- Member
- PCCF cum Secretary, Forest Department (GOS)- Member
- Secretary, Department of Education (GOS) - Member
- Secretary, Health and Family welfare (GOS), Member
- Director, SIRD - Member Secretary

According to Memorandum of the Institute the above members shall be appointed by the government and specified by the government.

The Board shall meet at least once in a year in a meeting called annual meeting, and such Annual Meeting for any year shall be held before the expiry of three months from the end of preceding academic session of the Institute. The procedure for holding such meeting shall be such, as may be prescribed.

At an Annual Meeting, the Board shall consider the Annual Report presented to it by the Member Secretary, including the audited accounts and auditor's report relating to the immediately preceding year and pass the same without modification or pass the same with observation for consideration of the Member Secretary. In addition to an Annual Meeting, the Board may meet as often as is necessary (such as meeting being called "special meeting").

Power and Functions of the Board:

- The Board shall be legal owner of the Institute and all its properties and the employer of all employees of the Institute its Director.
- The chairman shall be the appointing authority of all employees of the Institute including its Director. The Board's prior sanction shall be obtained (in an Annual Meeting or Special Meeting) by the Member Secretary before any immovable properties are acquired by outright purchase or disposed off by way of sale or otherwise, and such acquisitions and disposable shall be made in the same of the Board.
- The Board shall, in its Annual Meeting, appoint an Auditor (which term includes a firm of Auditors) who is qualified to audit Company Accounts, to audit the accounts of the Institutions

for the year in which the Annual Meeting is held. Provided that the same auditor shall not be appointed for more than three consecutive years.

- The Director (Member Secretary of the Board) is the Chief Executive officer of the Institute his powers and functions are as follows.
- Board will review and advise in the proper care, upkeep and administration of the Institute, its staff, finances, land, building, furniture and equipment and maintenance of necessary records and accounts.
- Every appointment, termination of service, dismissal, retirement, extension of service or re-employment of any of the employees of the Institute other than its Director, and every case of the disciplinary action against any such employee, where, according to the relevant service rules, the maximum punishment involves dismissal or compulsory retirement, shall be considered and decision by a Sub-Committee to be taken.
- The Director, in the capacity as Member Secretary, has to convene meetings of the Board, to record their proceedings, to circulate the minutes and to keep records of the Boards. He shall be an overall charge of the Institute as the Principal Executive Officer of the Institute, exercising immediate control and supervision of all staffs, and all powers not specifically reserved for the Board elsewhere in this Constitution he shall exercise on behalf of the Board.
- In Particular, Director shall be, subject to the powers and functions delegated to him by the chairman, responsible for the planning and
- execution of the academic and co-curricular activities of the Institute and discipline among staffs and students.
- The Director shall have power to incur expenditure up to such extent (Rs.
- 50000/- at present) as may be determined by the chairman from time to
- time. He shall be assisted by the Deputy Director or an Accounts Officer as the case may be
- Director shall conduct official correspondence on behalf of the Institute.
- Director shall prepare and submit the budget estimates to the Board.
- Provided that with the commencement of the Sikkim Institute of Rural Development (Amendment Act 1991), the Director shall carry on the functions of the authorities in the name of the Chairman.

Staff

At present Institute has over 50 staff. This number comprises full time and staff under MR. Most of the staff are on deputation from the various government departments. Very few staff stay in the campus and majority of them is commuting from Jorethang (2 km), Namchi (15 KM.) and other places. At present there are seven faculty members in the Institute (five are on deputation from various departments and two are appointed by the Institute). The details are provided in the Annexure -1.

Infrastructure

The Institute having reasonably good Infrastructure - Trainings Hall, Hostel, Library, Audio Visual equipment (details in Annexure - 2). There are two Class - I staff quarters, huge human resource (50+ staff seven Faculty members). Computers are available to the faculty members and office management. Community Information Centre is also located in the campus. Upgradation of Hotel facilities is going on. Annexure - 3 provides the details.

Programme Activities

The Institute conducts trainings for the newly appointed VLWs (Sponsored by the Agriculture Department). Institute also conducts trainings for Panchayat members and rural development functionaries. The Institute also provides the facilities to other departments to conduct their programme. The Annexure - 4 provides the details of trainings conducted in the last six years. The

data shows that during 2001-2002, 22 programmes were conducted and 660 people were trained. Similarly, by 2002-2003 (till recently) 12 programmes had been conducted and 423 people were trained. However, majority of the programmes is planned and organized by outsiders (other institutions, organizations). This is evident from the training calendar of 2002-2003(Annexure -5).

Budget, Finance of the Institute

Though the SIRD is an autonomous Institution, it is also an extension centre of National Institute of Rural Development (NIRO), Hyderabad. Therefore, it receives grant from NIRD (via MORD, GOI) and also from the State government. The Annexure - 6 provides the details of expenditure during 2001-2002 and estimated expenditure of 2002-2003. Of these expenditure about 50 percent comes from the state government and rest from the central government. The Figures - 3, 4 and 5 show that the allocation for Training and Research are limited which are the core function of the Institute salary and other maintenance cost are quite high. Nearly Rs. 15000 are spent on one trainee and average training days per programme are 4. Therefore, in a rough estimate per day per trainee cost comes to Rs. 3,750. Though these estimates are vague. Since most of the programmes are conducted by the outsiders. Hence per trainer expenditure of SIRD's own programme will be quite high.

In addition, Institute receives grants from NIRO (MORD) for infrastructure. During the last few years Institute received over Rs. 100 lakhs for this purpose. The details are as follows:

1999-2000	Rs. 58 lakhs Rs.4.99lakhs Rs. 14.00 lakhs	Unutilized (for constitution of Hotel it is fixed deposit till mid 2002)
2000-2001	Rs 12.00 lakhs	
2001-2002	?	
2002-2003	?	

Findings of the Consultation

During December, January and February we had series of discussion with the faculty members on various aspects of the Institute. Annexure - 7 provides the details of our visit.

Major findings are as follows:

- I. No documents are available on the purpose, strategy, and activities of the Institute. Each Institution, Organization more so of Private/ Autonomous Institute should have same documented purpose, activities of the Institute, its structure, its value, systems etc., For example clarity on the following area are missing.
- II. Every staff needs to understand organizations Mission, evolution of Mission, Institutional goal, Role of Mission in shaping the organizations, it purposes and direction.

Without the clarity on this how we discuss how effective is the Institute in moving towards the fulfillment of its mission, e.g. the effectiveness of training programmes, major achievements, increase in the levels of understanding, effectiveness in meeting functional coverage? We use the following three aspects to assess STRD'S work.

External environment of the Institute Determining the Institutional capacity Examining Institutional motivation capacity

1 Environment

- Administrative
- Political
- Social/ cultural
- Economic
- Stake holder

2 Institutional Motivation

- History
- Mission
- Culture
- Incentive/rewards

3 Institutional Capacity

- Strategies leadership
- Structure
- Human Resources
- Financial management, allocation
- Infrastructure
- Programme management
- Process management
- Inter Institutional linkages

All these three aspects contribute to the Institute's performance which means effectiveness, efficiency, Relevance, economic stability etc.

State Institute of Rural Development - Sikkim

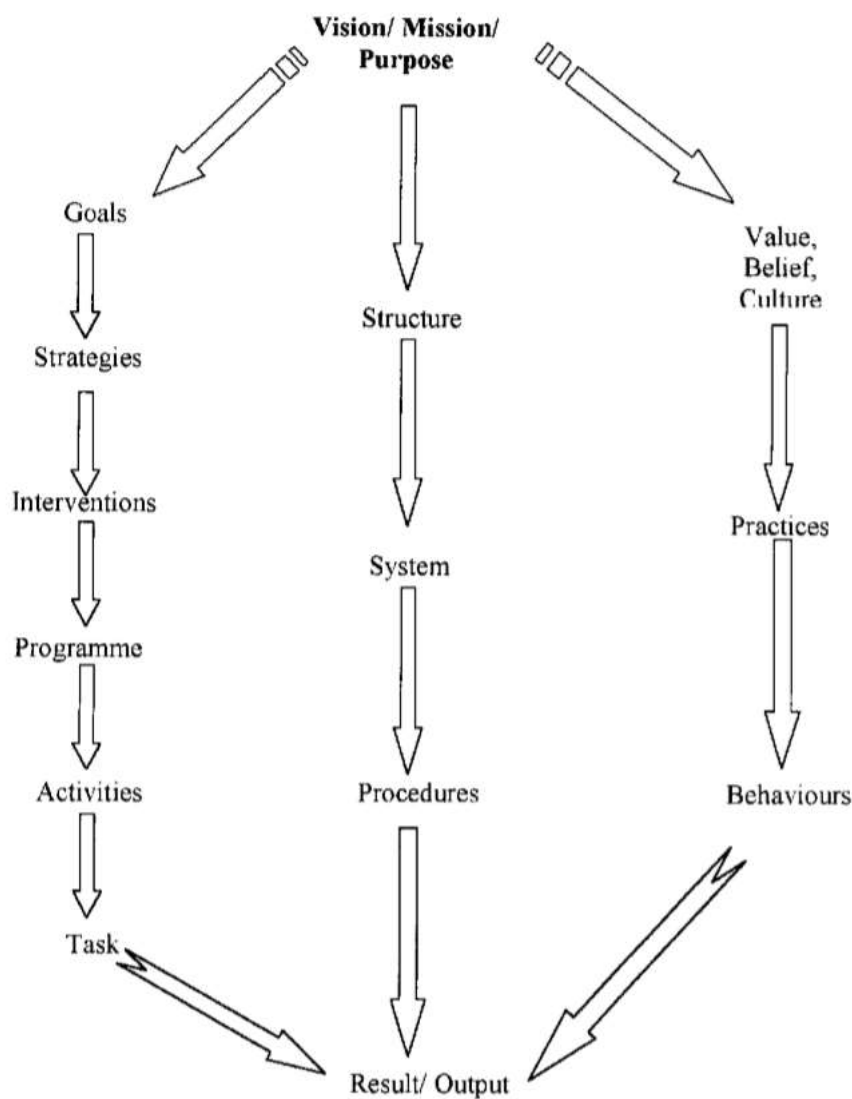


Figure-3

III. Institutional Capacity is the ability of the Institution to use its resources to perform (link with the goal). An examination of the systems and management practices associated with human, financial and infrastructure resources help provide insight into the use of Institute's resources. The leader (CEO/Director) is to provide direction of the Institute, programme management (means ability to carry out its Institutional role), process management - the way institute manages its human resources, work related interactions. The structure of the Institution identifies the links between the Institute and its governance and its mission, the role of its staff in the day-to-day activities.

Recommendation

- There is a need to develop the above in the form of a document and also to develop a common shared understanding among the staff and further Clarity about its operational aspects. The institute should prepare a brochure highlighting all these.

IV. Institutional Requirements:

- Clear Institutional Objectives
- Clear Institutional Strategies
- Accounts Job Descriptions
- Clear Level/Standard of Performance
- An Organizational Culture that values learning.

V. The governance: There are some measurable signs that affect the Institute work. Some of these are follows:

- Low training programme budget
- Much down ward communication
- Poor time keeping (level of absenteeism vs. discretion)
- Status level consciousness vs. teamwork
- Little peer communication
- Unachieved goals
- Goals set at unchallengedly low levels
- High level of unskilled workers/staff.

All these are due to lack of governance mechanism. Last G.B. meeting convened in June 1999. In the existence of SIRD only six or seven G. B. meetings were held. No C. B. members visited the Institute in the last 3 years.

Recommendation

• There is a need for regular G. S. meetings that provides the directions to the Director of the Institute for day to day functioning. The SIRD is linked with NIRD (MORD-GOI) and state government. To keep regular, effective linkage with NIRD-GOI it is necessary for higher-level intervention. For effective linkage with RDD-GOI it is also necessary for higher-level intervention. State government is going for further devolution. Therefore, it is necessary to involve other departments. The G.B. structure provides that linkage. Now it should be operational.



Figure - 4

VI. Management Style to Change: In the Memorandum. There are number of roles specified for the Director-including convening G. B. meeting, procurement of materials for the library, Inter- Institutional linkage. However, there was no governing body meeting convened in the last three and half years. Huge amount spent for procurement of Books for the library. However few books on relevant subjects (Panchayati Raj) are available. Very few journals are being procured. Even NIRD reports, journals, government of India (MORED Reports), are not being procured. While in each years couple of trips made to NIRD by the faculty members. SIRD have Institutional link with NIRD. Similarly link with other Institutions are limited.

Excellent infrastructure provided to the Institute such as PCs, emails, CIC, email connections, website. Technically competent person is available in the Institute to provide support for this electronic information, documentation system. No publication (printed) prepared in the last few years. No useful, comprehensive report prepared. No annual report being prepared over the years. Director is support to prepare an annual report.

Recommendations of Faculty Development

- Work norms
- Identification of core competencies (e.g. variety of training requirements), road map for futuristic vision for self-development for every faculty member to be prepared. Effort should be made for enhancement of existing competencies
- Monthly plan, Job chart, reporting for each
- MIS (have necessary infrastructure and human resource) to monitor, review the plan.

• **Staff Development**: There is over 50 support staff in the Institute. Each one should have some common level of understanding about the purpose of the Institute their job, how- it relates, important for the overall purpose/work of the Institute Therefore focus should be

- CB of staff members with in the context of organizational needs and with regard to individual job descriptions
- Development a system for the regular work planning, supervision, review of and guidance to the staff.

Training on Process Management

- To develop need based integrated training calendar after interacting with the potential trainees, concerned government official/ departments. The expected role of the trainees etc. (e.g. panchayat members and that too there are variations)
- To ensure timelines in the planning.
- To discuss the purpose, design, content etc. of each training programme.
- Values or perspectives in training.
- Allocation of training course/session according to trainers' experience, competencies, and preparation of rigorous training modules.

CB should be organized both in home as well as outside as far as possible comfortable environment of the participants. This is particularly true for the training of elected members, more for women members. One-day orientation/discussion in a Panchayat Ghar or at the district level is more effective and efficient for cost-point of view.

• **Conduct Follow-up and Supervision of Panchayat**: Monthly information system on the needs, support to each member. ROD prepared the database for each member. This may be the starting the database based on the various interventions and actions.

• **Library, Documentations, Information Services**: The library need to select, acquire and preserve useful material for trainers, faculty members, staff and trainers coming to the Institute so that they are equipped with the latest knowledge in their fields. It would be useful to develop mission statement of the library. To start a full time/ assigned library staff to be appointed.

• **Quality Information System**: First to use the existing infrastructure for this CB are required. Then feeding procures systematize the relevant information.

• **Infrastructure and Administration:** Maintenance of physical infrastructure and its proper supervision and use cutting the administration cost and maintenance. We felt that the existing infrastructure is quite sufficient. However, its proper use is an issue. SIRD-Sikkim is giving their facilities to other organization. Even faculty members are to look after their food, accommodation. This is a sheer wastage of time. SIRD-Sikkim should charge sufficiently for the services they rendered.

VII. Image of SIRD: Most of the faculty members feel and experience that the outside image of the SIRD is bad. We tried to understand why is so? While we put the question before them "do you feel that your posting is punishment posting?" they all replied 'no' except one (who doesn't like the job at SIRD), rest all said they were happy here. The fact lies elsewhere. There is no post of higher level like Joint Director in the SIRD. Therefore, when a senior person posted the outsider people feel that this posting is a punishment posting. At SIRD pertaining facilities like official car, accommodation, etc are not available for all. There is also some undercurrent frustration among the faculty. Moreover, sometimes salary is not available in time.

The issue is not complicated also. All transfers are routed through the Department of Personnel. Without consultation with the Director or the ROD Secretary, some said this Institute is being treated as a Halting Station/Transit for another posting. Therefore, the question comes how autonomous is this Institute. How sensitive the government is to treat this training Institute? The faculty who will be responsible for training should be carefully chosen.

High level of absenteeism, lack of tasks, non-performance, easygoing should be eliminated.

Believe in continuous improvement. Don't have false belief "our positions is third in the North east!".

VIII. Faculty's Orientation:

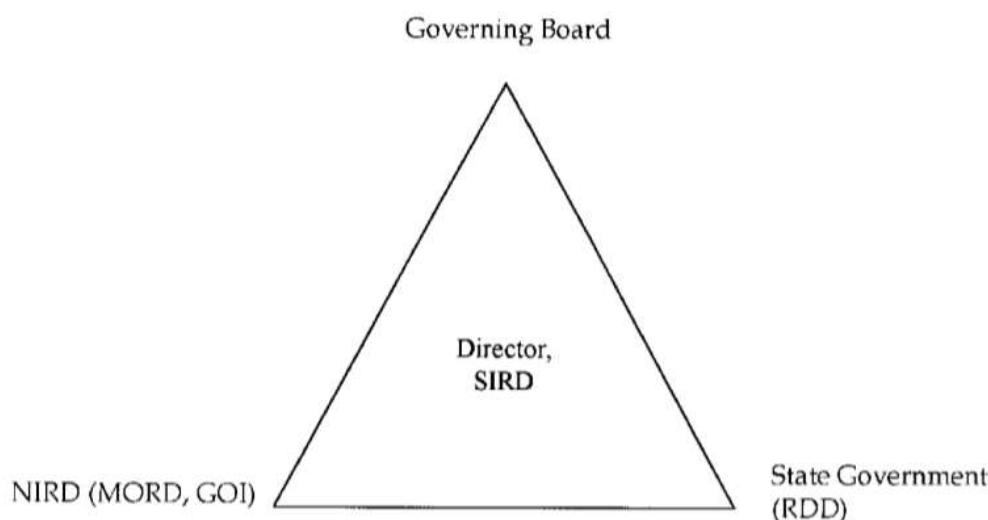
- Reading: To develop information, knowledge base competencies need to develop. Potential faculty person is to be identified and brought.
- Development of the culture of learning institutions.
- Faculty and other staff should be trained/ oriented and practice the same.
- Most of the faculty should stay in the campus.
- Administration should ensure follow up of interaction with other institutions.
- Field exposure (Sikkim first, then outside) with clear focus; use the visit for follow up.
- Write up, preparation of designs, materials.
- Use of computer, website, etc., use computer beyond typewriter.
- Promote teamwork.

Suggestions for improvement

- The higher authorities should address all the problems. The necessary section should be given to recruit three more permanent faculty member supported by MORD, GOI.
- SIRD should establish link with the district level officials to design the programme, joint planning, visits, study, etc.
- SIRD Faculty should travel to the field and interact with the PRI members, local government staff. SIRD faculty (three) who visited some Gram Panchayat and participated in the interaction with us find their interaction useful.
- SIRD have to perform even at the minimum level (no annual report prepared, no research/ studies undertaken, very few training programme planned conducted, library is not being managed properly, no worthwhile training material prepared). Faculty members are being used to supervise outsiders' programmes.
- SIRD faculties travel extensively in the outside e.g. Guwahati, Hyderabad and other places. In fact they are more traveled and exposed persons than the Deputy Secretary level staff at RDD. They

attend over dozen outside programme in a year. They learnt a lot. However, where is the back home use? These should be addressed and action should be taken.

IX. Administration and Coordination Problems: There are three bodies are involve with the SIRD. They are as follows:



- Lack of coordination among them
- Ineffective, non-performance governing board
- Ability to influence are limited
- Directors are unclear.

The reality is that huge amounts are being spent to upkeep the physical infrastructure and human resources without any (substantial) contributions.

X. Training: A process to provide development competence to meet requirements of staff. A planned and systematic process to develop or modify the ability to perform defined tasks or functions effectively in order to enhance the achievement of organizational goals. The main purpose of SIRD-Sikkim is to train the elected Panchayat members, Panchayat officials and Rural Development Personnel.

The Participants will value SIRD's commitment to its human resources and its strategy to improve this competence of its staff.

Therefore, personnel at all levels should be trained to meet the SIRD's purpose.

Venue Of Training: Training should be decentralized.

- SIRD
- District's H.Q.
- Panchayat Char
- On-site Discussion.

SIRD-Sikkim should "to build the capacity of the Panchayats in the following Areas":

- Micro Planning
- Project Formulation
- Project Monitoring and Evaluation
- Impact Assessment especially on environment
- Local Government and Leadership

- Values
- People to People Contact and Participatory Approaches, Gram Sabha
- Working with Partners and other NGOs
- Interfacing with other Governmental Institutions /Departments
- How to translate the slogan "Janata Raj Ma Janata Raja" into reality
- How to conduct meeting
- How to deal with Secretary, others.

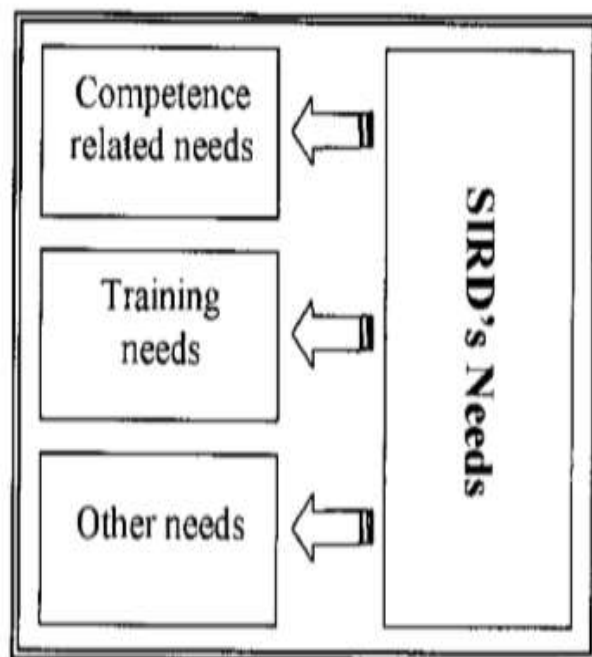
XI. Upgrade the SIRD-Sikkim: The staff strength of government of Sikkim is over 26000 (the real number may be more). Though Sikkim is smallest among the all states but the number of line departments is quite over 40. Out of these all the development department are functioning in the state. There are few thousand of development functionaries.

The respective departments staff got same training (mostly technical training) from their department. However, there is a need for orientation on development issues, participatory development, and people's participation issues. The administrative and accounts training institute is providing only accounts related training. Therefore, we suggest upgrading the facilities and orienting the facilities and orienting the staff of other departments also. Now with devolution there is a need for further orientation of all the staff involvement in Rural Development. The SIRD can be named as State institute of Development and Administration. There are some states that have this type of combined institute and keeping the relationship with MORD and DOPT of Government of India.

XII. Strengthen the Governing Board: The fact is that SIRD is controlled and managed by ROD. Secretary, ROD is the chairperson of the G.B. At times this creates problems "the SIRD belong to RDD only" type of image has developed. It would be useful to consider making G. B. more powerful. Being a small state chief secretary like person can also be the chairperson. We also suggest that G.B. should have representative form NIRD, academia and NGOs. Academia and NGOs could also be involved through Academic Committee, Advisory Committee, etc.

XIII. Needs for Improvements

- Clarity about the purpose
- Strategies
- Good administration, management
- Clarity of tasks
- Strong ability to perform
- Efficient use of Infrastructure
- Organization based training
- Training for job task
- Develop human capacity by assisting people to acquire knowledge, skills, tools, and decision making to carry out their responsibilities, effectively and efficiently.
- Collection of information, ability to use information, ability to plan, ability to prepare materials, document, report; ability (mindset) to learn from others, from the field.



Training Materials

- Detailed design, materials, and session-wise details to be prepared use of aids objectives of learning.

- Trainers Team should spend time in designing the programme, preparation for delivery? Review regularly.
- Some common materials to be prepared, printed
- Why information? How to use the information? How to keep the information? Make the same available with people.
- Conceptual understanding of local self-governance, provide experiences of other states .

Annexure-1

FACULTY POSITION OF SIRD, SIKKIM

1. Shri N. H. Ansari: Jt. Director & Faculty - Deputation
2. Shri S. Pradhan: Jt. Director & Faculty - Deputation
3. Mrs. S. L. Dorjee: Dy. Director & Faculty - Deputation
4. Shri P. P. Gutam: Asstt. Director & Faculty - Deputation
5. Shri N. K. Pradhan: Lecturer & Faculty, Agriculture - Deputation
6. Shri Bishal Rai: Lecturer & Faculty, Agri Engg. & - Full Time SIRD Staff.

Economics

7. Shri Kaushik Sinha : Faculty of financial Management &- - Full Time SIRD Computer Application. Staff

Note :- Three most SIRD full time faculty positions are vacant since last four years. Since last four years. Government of India sanctioned full salary support for these posts.

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Participatory Research in Asia
42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area, New Delhi-110062
Ph:+91-011-29960931/32/33
Web: www.pria.org