

IC week 2002

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DRP

Development Research & Planning

Local Governance and Decentralisation in India

2 Swiss Collaborations:

CapDeck Kerala (SDC) 1999

PRISMO Rajasthan (IC/SDC) 2002

Contents

Context: Decentralisation in India

Swiss Collaborations: Guiding principles and
starting points

Kerala and CapDeck

Rajasthan and PRISMO

Main Conclusions

Context: Decentralisation in India

- Initiated through amendments to Union constitution in 1993
- 3 lines of devolution: administrative, financial and planning powers to local institutions
- Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI)
 - 3 constitutional tiers: District, Block and Gram Panchayats
 - Grama Sabhas as voter assemblies
 - Reserved seats for women, SC/ST
 - 29 subjects to be devolved from line ministries to panchayats

Swiss Collaborations

- Justification: democratic decentralisation process has potentially large development leverage when compared with ,standard‘ collaborations
- Vision: contribute to develop functioning and effective PRIs
 - People decide local development priorities and become more confident
 - Operations of PRIs are transparent and their elected leaders accountable

Starting Points

- Givens
 - Focus on capacity building
 - Focus on NRM
- Different approach due to fundamentally different situations:
 - Kerala
 - Based on explicit request from GoK
 - Rurbanisation, high level of education, specific socio-economic structures
 - Rajasthan
 - SDC/IC follow-up to IC-NGO Programme
 - Town-countryside dichotomy, low education, prevailing feudal traditions, weak position of ST/SC and women

Decentralisation in Kerala

- 1996 to 2001: Peoples' Planning Campaign by LDF
 - Kick-started through mass campaign led by KSPB
 - Elaborate planning process from Gram Sabhas to District Plans
 - Training (or rather exposures) to lacs of people
 - 40 % of plan funds devolved to PRIs
 - Local line department officers under control of Panchayats
- Current Assessment
 - Kerala as model state in Indian context
 - Process lost steam after UDF came to power but is here to stay
 - Performance: 20% ,good'; 40% ,average'; 40% ,bad'
 - Beneficiary groups vs. 'middle class' participation
 - Resistance from bureaucracy, many standard projects
 - Politicians discovered new field

CapDeck

Project on Capacity Building for Decentralisation in Kerala

- From campaign mode to institutionalised training system
- Training of elected members, officials and line dept. officers
- Partner: Kerala Institute of Local Administration/KILA
 - OD process
 - Capacity building concept and programme
 - Standardised training modules
- Large number of training supported, modules developed
- OD process started but stalled after political interference
- Phase 2 (2003 onwards)
 - Expand from exclusive KILA focus to other actors
 - Performance oriented contracts

Decentralisation in Rajasthan

- 1994 PRI State act, 1996 rules, but start of activities only 2000
 - Basic legislative and administrative procedures in place
 - Proposal to devolve 16 subjects and 20% of State Plan funds
 - Training system and modules developed but no funds
- Current Assessment
 - Progress on paper is offset by serious deficits in practice
 - Grama Sabhas seen as beneficiary/BPL assemblies, low to very low attendance, low awareness of power of assemblies among people
 - No real exposure or training for elected members and officials > very low levels of knowledge on duties, powers, rules, etc.
 - No un-tied funds > low credibility of Gram/Ward Sabhas
 - Traditional structures and vested interests prevail, resistance from line department officers

PRISMO

Panchayati Raj Institutions' Support and Mobilisation Programme
Rajasthan

4 Lines of Collaboration

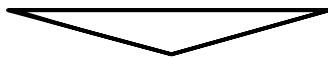
- (1) Process related: increase pressure from below by mobilising Gram and Ward Sabhas
- (2) Funds related: make available un-tied funds to experiment with local level project planning and implementation
- (3) Knowledge related: performance oriented support to training of elected members and officials through designated agency/NGOs
- (4) Networking, advocacy and coordination: state-level and regional platforms

Panchayati Raj Institutions'
Support and Mobilisation Programme Rajasthan
PRISMO

SUB-PROJECT 1: PRIs and NGOs

COMPONENT 1

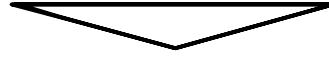
**Mobilisation of
Ward Sabhas and
Gram Sabhas**



Issue-based mobilisation to create awareness on GS/WS rights and procedures.

COMPONENT 2

**Un-tied Funds to
Gram Panchayats**



Experimental fund for implementation of local level initiated projects.

SUB-PROJECT 2: IGPRS

COMPONENT 3

**Co-financing of
Capacity Building for
Gram Panchayats**



Implementation of existing GP level training and development of new training modules.



Regional and Programme Platforms

COMPONENT 4

- **Interface for Programme Coordination**
- **Networking and Advocacy**
- on policy and strategy level
- with ZP/BP and District administration

Main Conclusions

- Decentralisation, if initiated from above, takes time to take strong roots at local level
- Widespread ownership of process at local level is essential if aim is **democratic** decentralisation rather than bureaucratic decentralisation
- Devolution of power implies that certain actor groups loose power and are bound to resist (bureaucracy, local vested interests, NGOs)
- Collaborations need to be planned location- and situation-specific and inclusion of disadvantaged segments has to be addressed specifically

