

Newsletter



# PRAGATI

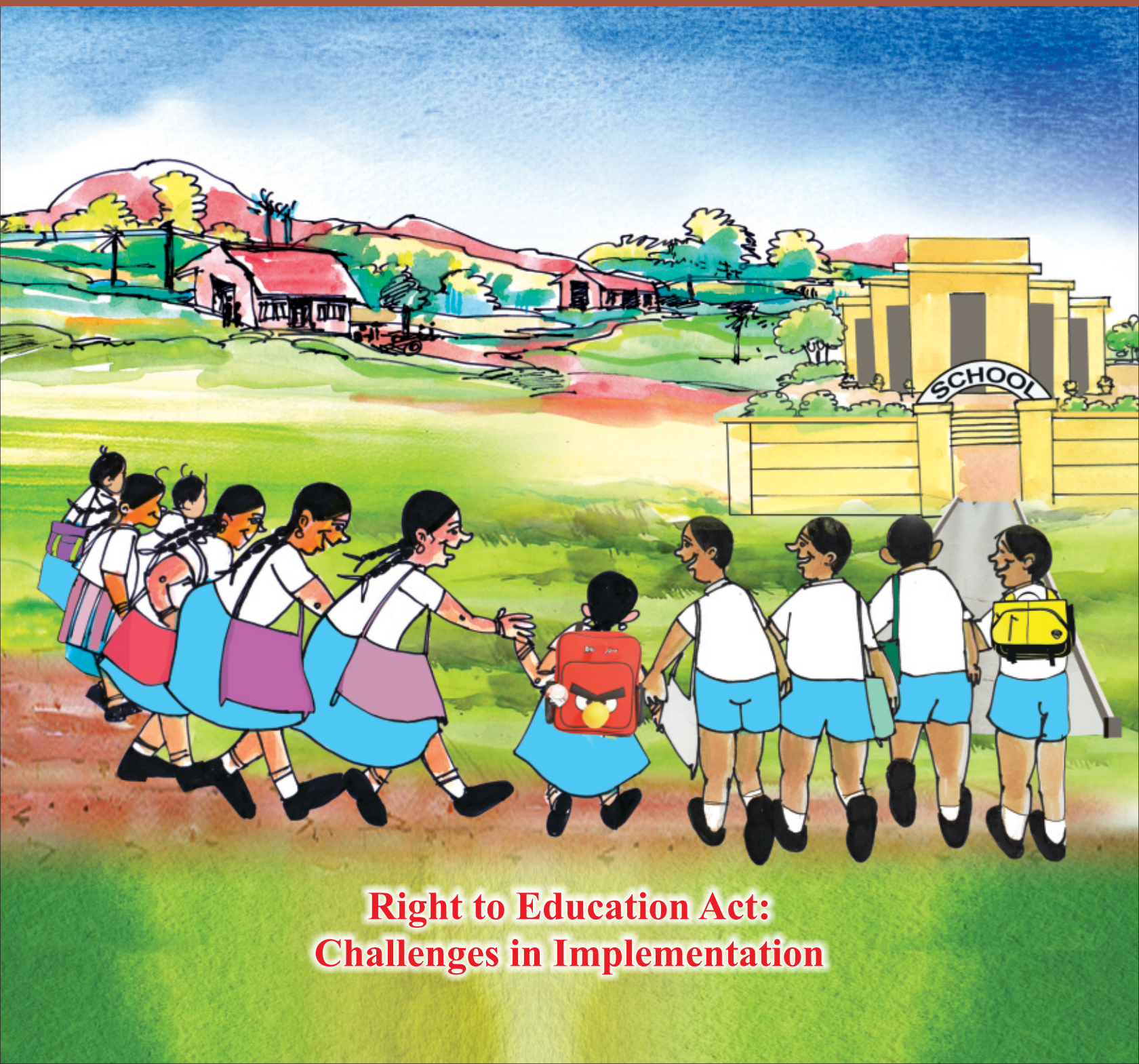


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**Right to Education Act:  
Challenges in Implementation**



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## Cover Story

## Seven Years of Right to Education Act: Challenges in Implementation

Education is one of the primary agents of transformation towards development. It is an activity, or a series of activities, or a process which may either improve the immediate living conditions or increase the potential for future living. It plays an important role in bringing tangible benefits by developing the skills of the people. The emerging knowledge based economy and rapid technological changes have placed education systems all over the world under tremendous pressure. Economic and social progress in the coming years will depend on the quality of human resources and educated people. The education system in India also is in the midst of this situation and demands structural reforms. To make this a reality, a positive beginning was made by the Government of India and the Right to Education Act (RTE Act), was passed by the Indian Parliament on August 4, 2009. The Act describes the modalities having the provision for Free

and Compulsory Education for Children between the age of 6 to 14 years under Article 21A of the Indian Constitution. The basic theme of free education implies that the children of prescribed age-group shall be exempted from any fees, charges or expenses for pursuing elementary education. However, this free and compulsory elementary education is restricted to education from class first to eight only. The Act has 37 sections which are part of 7 chapters and one schedule.

Despite the enactment of the RTE Act, today, more than 7 million children who should be in the schools are still out of school and are sweating in and out in farms and factories as child labourers. Crores of students across India are out-of-school; they are being denied their Right to Education, but efforts to bring them into the fold seem half-hearted. Take for instance a day-long survey done on July 4, 2015 by the education department to identify children who were never







enrolled in school and those who dropped out later. Around 40,000 such children were found across the State of Maharashtra alone.

India has the second largest education system in the world after China. Indeed, over one-third of population is below 18 years of age, constituting 19% of the world's children reside in India. Every third illiterate person in the world is an Indian. The number of girls not attending schools in the 6 to 11 years age-group is high in number. This is even higher in tribal communities. There are problems relating to drop-out rate, low level of learning achievement and low participation of girls among Scheduled Tribes and other disadvantaged groups. This Act provides 25% reservation of seats in all schools for the poor children of disadvantaged and economically weaker sections of the society, including the private unaided schools in the neighbourhood. The problem is that there is no willpower to implement the Act. While the RTE Act states that it is the school's responsibility to ensure all children in their neighbourhood have access to education. The government is

not holding the schools accountable. To make enrolment drives successful, coordination between different departments, such as the labour, social welfare, tribal, and women and child development departments is necessary.

The experience however, shows that the RTE Act is not being implemented in all seriousness in letter and spirit. RTE Act puts emphasis on quality of education which has been considered as an integral part of Right to Education. Chapter V of the RTE Act enumerates some terms and norms under which the quality of elementary education is to be ensured, i.e. adequate teacher-pupil ratio (1:30 ratio specified in the Act), mother tongue should be

the medium of instruction as far as possible, development of various skills in child, good and effective infrastructure, qualified and competent teachers and advanced evaluation methods, etc.

The success of any legislation or Act lies in its implementation. The Act has been put in to implementation with effect from April 1, 2010 and the provisions that should be achieved before March 2013 are given below:

- Section 6 of the RTE Act states that the local authority and the appropriate government shall ensure that there is a school in every neighbourhood within a period of 3 years from the commencement of the Act
- Section 19 of the Act states that where a school, established before the commencement of the Act, does not fulfill the norms and standards specified in the schedule, it shall do so within a period of 3 years from the commencement of the Act



• Every school must fulfill the norms and standards specified in the schedule of the Act. These norms and standards include:

- Pupil-Teacher Ratio norms
- All weather-proof building
- At least one classroom for every teacher
- Barrier-free access
- Office-cum-Head Teacher's room
- Separate toilets for boys and girls
- Safe and adequate drinking water facility for all the children
- Arrangements for securing the school building by boundary wall or fencing
- Kitchen shed where mid-day meal is cooked in the school
- Library, providing newspaper, magazines and books on all subjects, including story books
- Teaching-learning equipments to be provided to every class, as required
- Play material, games and sports equipments to be provided to every class, as required

It has been clarified by the Union Government vide guideline dated October 26, 2012, that it is not necessary to have a playground within school premises. However, schools must provide alternative arrangements in the nearby parks for children to play outdoor games and other physical activities.

### Implementation of RTE in India

The status of implementation of RTE across India in its 7 years of existence reveals that majority of the States have notified the rules and other legislations related to academic authority, no detention, no corporal punishment, no board examination and minimum working days and instructional hours. However, in many States, the constitution of SCPCER and REPA has not taken place.

### Children Enrolment

Enrolment levels are high, but the children who are not in school belong to marginalised and disadvantaged groups. This includes nomadic, tribal and differently-abled students. We cannot afford to ignore them saying a majority of the kids are already in school. The initiatives taken so far to identify out-of-school kids have been conducted in a haphazard manner.

### Quality Concern

The quality of education in schools is another concern. Experts opined that because of poor training, several schools misunderstood initiatives that can improve the quality of education, such as the no-detention policy (in which the students are promoted till Class 8 irrespective of their grades) and the Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), which focuses on the all-round development of the children.

“The CCE was a big change over the 150-year-old tradition of rote-learning and exam-oriented assessment. But teachers were not trained to understand how it works,”

What's more shocking is that the concept of CCE is not even part of the syllabus in the courses aspiring teachers take, such as the Diploma in Education and Bachelors in Education (B.Ed.).

When CCE forms such an important part of the new evaluation style under the RTE Act, teachers more than anyone else need to be proficient with its working.

“Merely holding training programmes for teachers in service is not enough; we need to ensure that the new recruits are also aware of how it works”.

### Teacher Preparation

There is a need for pre-service and in-service training on the job. Teachers must be given incentives to go and get training and continuous education. Unfortunately, right now, training is not given as much importance as it deserves. Unless teachers grasp the spirit of the RTE Act and the policies started under it, they won't be able to do justice to the reforms. It is important to ensure that teachers share the same vision as the Act.



## Challenges in Implementing the RTE Act

A major obstacle behind the implementation of RTE Act, as put forward by the States, is paucity of funds. The Centre estimated an annual budget of ₹ 231 crore for implementation of the RTE Act. The Expenditure Finance Committee gave it a go-ahead, with Centre-State contribution ratio of 68:32. For States providing 32% of the budget for education is quite heavy and also a burden. Education is a big sector with a number of departments - School Education, Adult Education, Social Welfare, and Child Welfare, dealing with issues relating to children and addresses many more issues like child labour, out-of-school children, deprived children, migrant children, etc.

RTE made it compulsory for all aided and unaided private schools to reserve 25% seats of the total elementary education for disadvantaged and economically weaker section children at the entry level. All the four southern States have notified the 25% admission provision in private and unaided schools at entry level but mostly it is not followed.

The Act already made it compulsory for all schools to maintain a Pupil-Teacher Ratio of 30:1 but the statistics indicate the maintenance of this ratio and many schools are running with just a single teacher. Many positions for teachers are vacant and maintaining the prescribed PTR uniformly across the schools is a challenge. Effectiveness of a teacher depends on accountability and performance and is directly related to delivery of quality education. Attaining the quality in terms of learning levels of the children, retention and improving the transition rate of children from primary to upper primary levels is quite challenging. To improve the teacher effectiveness and motivation of teachers is very important. Institutionalisation of pre-service and in-service training and institutional building is the major challenge and it should be addressed with all seriousness. Involvement of NGOs and community in implementing RTE Act for improving the quality of education is essential in the present situation. Apart from the above, the State governments' apathy and their poor economic conditions is another challenge which seriously affects the implementation of RTE Act.

**- Dr. T Vijaya Kumar, Associate Professor,  
Centre for Human Resource Development**

## Training

# Regional Training Programme on Gender Sensitisation and Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace

## Introduction

Sexual harassment is a form of discriminatory conduct at the workplace that hampers women's constitutional rights to equality and dignity. It violates the fundamental right of women to equality under articles 14 and 15 of the Constitution of India and her right to life and to live with dignity under article 21 of the Constitution. Rural women are more vulnerable, because of lack of awareness and less power to negotiate and stand up for their rights.

In order to generate awareness and equip the rural development officials on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013, 2013 and its provisions, Centre for Gender Studies and

Development, NIRD&PR, organised a Regional-level Training Programme on 'Gender Sensitisation and Prevention of Sexual Harassment at Workplace' at SIRD&PR, Odisha from May 15 to 17, 2017.

The objectives of the training programme were to:

- Sensitise the participants on gender issues at the workplaces
- Create awareness on sexual harassment at the workplace including types of harassment and impart a nuanced understanding of the various provisions of the Sexual Harassment at Workplace (Prohibition, Prevention and Redressal) Act, 2013



A total of 38 participants, mainly middle level officials from different districts and from different departments such as Department of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj, Odisha Livelihood Mission, MGNREGA and Elected Representatives of PRIs attended the three-day training course.

The three-day programme was spread over several sessions in order to fulfill the objectives of the programme. The inaugural session was addressed by Director, SIRD&PR Odisha, where, the emphasis was laid on strategies to build an enabling environment for preventing violence of any kind towards girl child and women. Besides NIRD&PR faculty, eminent resource persons with subject specialisation shared their expertise and experiences with the participants.

The programme began with a comprehensive discussion on gender concepts, gender roles and gender violence by Ms. Nilima Biswal, gender specialist and freelancer, having more than 15 years of experience of working on gender issues in tribal areas of Odisha. The participants were engaged in role play and group exercises to develop a nuanced understanding of the concepts of masculinity and femininity, gendered roles and female discrimination in our day-to-day family life and in the public space.

This was followed by giving a vivid description of gender based violence and types of harassment faced by women at the workplace and strategies to address them. This session included participatory exercises and role play to give a comprehensive understanding of gender issues at the workplace.

On the second day, Dr Amrita Patel, Consultant, State Resource Centre for Women, WCD, Odisha, took a session on the sexual harassment at workplace: legal provisions and status in Odisha. This was followed by an interactive discussion on One Stop Help Desk by Ms. Namita Palo from State Resource Centre for Women, Women and Child Development Department, Government of Odisha. This session dealt with the various State-specific schemes for prevention of violence against women and methods to combat it.

### Concluding Day

Ms. Lalita Missal, State Coordinator, National Alliance of Women Organisation (NAWO) Odisha, and Ms. Sneha Mishra



from Aaina, a voluntary organisation in Odisha that works for disabled people, women and children and other socially excluded groups addressed the participants on the third and final day of the training course. Ms. Mishra engaged the participants by discussing on several case studies on sexual harassment and ways to handle it. This session involved a lot of participation and enthusiasm from the participants.

This was followed by a session on managing workplace stress and interpersonal relationships by Ms. Madhumita Das, State ECCE Consultant, Women and Child Development Department, Government of Odisha. Group exercises and games were part of the entire training course. A documentary film titled “Ab Khamoshi Kyon” was screened to give a nuanced understanding about sexual harassment at workplace and ways to prevent it. The film evoked a lot of interest among the participants.

Towards the end, a session on role of elected representatives as a way forward in sensitisation on sexual harassment and its prevention helped the participants in creating a workable policy for prevention of sexual harassment at their respective workplaces.

The programme was well received by the participants and there was a need felt to impart such training to generate awareness about the SHWPACT, 2013 at the district and block levels. Participants also felt that men working on gender issues should also be invited as resource persons for such training programmes.

The programme was coordinated by Dr. Sucharita Pujari, Assistant Professor, NIRD&PR along with Ms. Amita Patra, Assistant Director, SIRD&PR, Odisha.



## Training Programme on 'ICT Applications and e-Governance'

The Centre for Information and Communication Technology (CICT) organised a training programme on 'ICT Applications and e-Governance' from May 15 to 19, 2017 at NIRD&PR, Hyderabad. A total of 43 officials including 12 women, majority representing Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, Zilla Parishad/Zilla Panchayat (ZP)s, DRDAs, SIRDs/ETCs, Rural Housing, Forest and Environment, Health Missions (NHM/NRHM), Soil and Water Conservation, Rural Water Supply and Sanitation, and Academicians coming from 16 States across the country namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Lakshadweep, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Punjab, Odisha, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttarakhand and West Bengal have participated in this programme.

The main focus of the programme was to sensitise functionaries of Rural Development, Panchayati Raj, ZPs, DRDAs, SIRDs/ETCs and line departments such as Agriculture, Forest and Environment, Health Missions, etc., to the potential of ICT and its applications, especially in Rural Development, Agriculture, Health, e-Governance, Geo-Informatics for governance, Digital India and providing skills in development of information systems.

The Director General of NIRD&PR, Dr. W. R. Reddy, IAS, who was present in the programme, interacted with the



participants. During interaction, the DG emphasised that the ultimate goal should be to utilise ICTs and e-Governance in such a way that they improve the service delivery to the rural poor and should be citizen-centric in nature. New ways and means of solving issues, taking appropriate support of technology infusion and other techniques to bring smiles on the faces of citizens, more particularly the rural poor should be explored. The DG opined that there is need to harness the immense potential in every individual and one should develop passion to make the job perfect and deliver the services with love that result in less tiresomeness and enhanced productivity.

To provide better insights into the potential of ICTs and e-Governance, in addition to topics relating to information systems development, e-Governance, G-Governance, Digital India, etc., ICT applications in health such as Telemedicine by Care Foundation Hyderabad, Role Internet of Things (IOT)



and Wireless Sensor Networks (WSN) in agriculture were also discussed as part of the programme.

A visit to National Informatics Centre, Hyderabad was arranged as part of the programme to provide insights into various applications of ICTs in Panchayats such as Panchayat Enterprise Suite, Digital Panchayats and Government Services Delivery. The participants also attended the Art of Living module organised in consultation with Swamiji. The participants thanked the Director General, NIRD&PR and Swamiji for providing this rare opportunity. Prof. Gyanmudra,

Head, CHRD interacted with the participants on soft skills and distributed certificates to the participants.

All the participants actively took part and made the sessions lively. The programme was well received and the participants expressed that there is a need for organising many such programmes. The programme was coordinated by Shri G V Satya Narayana, Senior Assistant Professor of Centre for Information and Communication Technology (CICT).

## Second Management Development Programme on Rural Development Leadership

National Level Training Programme on 'Management Development Programme on Rural Development Leadership' for the prospective District Collectors/District Magistrates was organised by the Centre for Human Resource Development from May 22 to 26, 2017 at NIRD&PR.

This programme was organised by realising the importance of District Collector/District Magistrate's role in

spearheading various Rural Development programmes/initiatives/ innovative interventions for addressing the poverty, sanitation, unemployment, women empowerment, etc., in addition to their magisterial work. It is also believed that those 2 to 3 years of posting in the district as District Collector/Magistrate is very crucial for the officers and his/her effective functioning to realise his/her full potential in various sectors.







In view of the above background and the role of rural development in transforming rural India and to achieve Sustainable Development Goals, NIRD&PR offered a National Level Training Programme on ‘Management Development Programme on Rural Development Leadership’ for the prospective District Collectors/District Magistrates.

The main objective of the programme was to sharpen the fundamental competencies of officers such as knowledge, attitudes, values, skills and other personal characteristics that are needed to drive performance in rural development sector. To make the participants recognise their potentials in the early phase of the career by addressing various social sector issues prevailing in the districts, and also to equip the participants with various supportive Institutions like NIRD&PR and other similar agencies to get quick solutions for their district specific problems.

There was an excellent response. A total of 30 participants working as Sub-divisional Magistrate/Deputy Collector/ Additional Deputy Commissioner/Project Officer/ Sub-Divisional Officer/ District Collector from 13 States participated in the programme.

Dr. W. R. Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR welcomed the participants and stressed upon the importance and opportunity to work as a District Collector/District Magistrate for rural development in his inaugural speech. Prof. Amitava Mukherjee, Senior Adviser, Government of India, Ministry of Rural Development, NRLM, New Delhi,

made a presentation on Transforming India through Rural Development Programmes and he emphasised the crucial role of District Collector and District Magistrate in implementation of rural development programmes.

The training programme focused on the following subjects:

- Transforming India through RD Programmes
- Understanding the role of DC
- Enhancing the emotional intelligence for higher productivity
- e-Governance for policy support and in the context of Digital India programmes
- Innovations and improvisation in administration
- Skills and rural empowerment
- Decentralised governance and role of panchayats
- A 360 degree feedback and performance management
- Inclusive finance
- Doubling of farmers' income
- Agrarian Crisis: Role of District Collector and District Vision Document - Action Plan by Participants

For each session, a well-known academician and senior bureaucrats were invited as a subject expert. Some of the experts include Prof. Amitava Mukherjee, Prof. Gyanmudra, Mr. Sanjay Dubey, Mr. Somesh Kumar, Mr. S. M. Vijayanand, Prof. T. V. Rao, Mr. V Bhaskar, Mr. RCM Reddy, Dr. W.R.Reddy, Dr. Bhaskar Reddy, Prof. Sriram and Shri P. Sainath (Raman Magsaysay award winner).

The content of training programme was delivered through mix training methods such as lecture-cum-discussion, debate, exposure visits, group exercise, sharing of individual experiences by village presidents (success stories) and presentation by participants.

As a part of field training an exposure visit was organised for the participants to Hajipalle Village to provide them hands on experience on innovative development practices. Participants were also exposed to live demonstration/



dissemination of cost-effective, local resource based and environment-friendly technologies of different sectors of Rural Development located at Rural Technology Park at NIRD&PR.

The programme was well received by the participants and they expressed that this programme has come at very right time

and it's a value addition to their competencies. They also felt that it will help them in performing job activities better.

Dr. Gyanmudra, Prof. & Head, Dr. T Vijaya Kumar, Associate Professor and Dr. Lakhan Singh, Assistant Professor of Centre for Human Resource Development organised this programme.

## International Training

# International Training Programme on Service Delivery and Accountability Initiatives in Local Governance

The School of Local Governance (SLG) organised an International Training Programme on 'Service Delivery and Accountability Initiatives in Local Governance' from March 22 to April 18, 2017 for officials from Afghanistan. This programme was sponsored by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. There were 27 participants from various organisations like Integrated Directorate of Local Governance, Afghanistan Civil Service Commission, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Home Affairs and also Women's Development Department.

Dr. W R Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR, interacted with the participants and shared his thoughts on service delivery aspects being initiated in India.

The programme content included four modules,:

- Local governance initiatives
- Organisational behaviour
- Social accountability tools and
- GIS tools for planning



In addition to this, a field visit was also organised to Model Gram Panchayats in Siddipet and Nalgonda districts. The participants were taken to Bengaluru and Mysuru for their field visit, which included interactions with elected representatives. The valedictory address was given by Dr. K Prathap Reddy.

The programme was coordinated by Dr. K Jayalakhmi, Professor & Head, Centre for Panchayati Raj, Dr. Y Bhaskar Rao, Professor & Head, Centre for Decentralised Planning and Dr. C Dheeraja, Professor & Head, Centre for Social Audit.



## Meeting

## NIRD&PR Research Advisory Committee Meeting

Research forms an important component of the perspective of NIRD&PR. The Institute undertakes aid, promotes and coordinates research on its own and/or collaborates with State, National and International development agencies. The Institute conducts several research studies aimed at studying policy implications and identification of alternative strategies for improving effectiveness of various programmes and schemes.



The NIRD&PR also undertakes research activities on various dimensions of rural development with a view to understanding issues emerging from time to time and to come up with analytical insights/ suggestions and policy perspectives. Besides addressing contemporary problems, research also aims to focus on current best practices in the area of rural development.

To provide appropriate direction to the research activities of the Institute, Research Advisory Group (RAG) has been constituted with senior faculty members of the Institute. The RAG is entrusted with the responsibility paving direction, monitoring and providing guidance to the faculty members.

To suggest ways of improving research quality in the Institute, the Research Advisory Committee (RAC) has been constituted with experts of various organisations.

For the year 2017-18, 17 research proposals were received from the faculty members of the Institute. All these 17 proposals were scrutinised by the RAG. The revised proposals were placed before the Research Advisory Committee Meeting which was held on May 8, 2017 at NIRD&PR to scrutinise and offer the suggestions. The following members were present in the meeting:

- Prof. S. Mahendra Dev, Director, Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai
- Prof. Ravi Srivastava, Professor, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
- Prof. T. J. Rao, renounced Statistician, Visakhapatnam
- Prof. R. Siva Prasad, Professor, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad



- Dr. W. R. Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR and
- Dr. Gyanmudra, Professor & Head (Research), NIRD&PR.

Dr. Gyanmudra welcomed the RAC group members and presented the status of research studies undertaken in NIRD&PR. Dr. W. R. Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR initiated the proceedings and emphasised the focus

on the improvement of the quality of NIRD&PR research and the initiatives/steps to be taken in this direction.

The Principal Investigator along with team members presented their proposals before RAC. The members of RAC have thoroughly discussed the research proposals and offered their critical observations/suggestions to be incorporated for further improvement. The meeting ended with a vote of thanks by Dr. Gyanmudra.

## NIRD&PR Events

### NIRD&PR Wins National Habitat Purashkaram - 2017

The Habitat Technology Group organised a four-day festival at Poojapura in Thiruvananthapuram from May 11 to May 14, 2017, as a part of the celebrations for its completion of 30 years of service to the nation in general and to the community at large. This was organised with specific purpose of emphasising the importance of natural existence, promoting humane architecture and appropriate and alternative technologies.

As a part of the celebrations, an exhibition was organised at the Poojapura grounds and the organisation invited NIRD&PR to participate in the exhibition. Accordingly, NIRD&PR displayed different technologies of RTP in two stalls in the exhibition. Dr. Y Gangi Reddy, Prof & Head, CIAT and B N Mani, Project Engineer, CIAT attended the celebrations.

During the four-day celebrations, different seminars and discussions were organised as per the programme. On first day, a panel discussion on Developing Trivandrum as a Green Heritage City was inaugurated. On the second day, Rural Technology Cafe was inaugurated. On the same day, a panel discussion was also organised, in which Dr. Y Gangi Reddy spoke and informed about the importance of the Rural Technologies and how



NIRD&PR is making efforts to make them available to the common man's needs. Later, Shri B N Mani made a presentation on the different alternative housing technologies that are available and the importance of taking up of the same in the present day.

On the third day, a programme on the Laurie Baker Legacy was inaugurated by Dr. W R Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR. Addressing the gathering, the Director General appreciated the Laurie Baker's concept of housing technologies. He also highlighted the need for promoting sustainable housing technologies as a mark of respect for Laurie Baker and the efforts made by NIRD&PR through RTP in popularising the technologies. Shri T Chandradutt from Cost Ford, Shri L Radha Krishnan, IAS and Shri A B Sajan of Cost Ford, were present on the occasion and spoke about the present day architecture.

On the fourth day, the closing function was held, where the National Habitat Purashkarams 2017 awards were presented to the different dignitaries based on the contributions made with regard to the promotion of the technologies. The Chief Minister of Kerala Shri Pinarayi Vijayan graced the occasion and awarded the mementoes.

Dr. W R Reddy, IAS, Director General, NIRD&PR, was awarded with the National Habitat Purashkaram 2017 based on the efforts and contributions made in this regard. Apart from the other dignitaries, the following were present on the occasion.

1. Dr. Shasi Tharoor, MP, Thiruvananthapuram
2. Ms. Sugatha Kumari
3. Ms. Manju Warriar (Actress)

Various cultural programmes were also organised as part of the programme.







**Senior Journalist Shri P. Sainath, delivering a lecture on 'Agrarian Crisis' as part of the Management Development Programme on Rural Development Leadership for IAS officers at NIRD&PR**



**Exposure Visit of Members of Transgender Community**





### Update for JRD

- The Journal of Rural Development, a quarterly journal published by NIRD&PR has gone online with regard to the submission of papers. Henceforth, the contributors are requested to follow the procedure given in Online Journal Management System (OJMS). One can access the OJMS site on the link <http://nirdprojms.in>.

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