

UNDP - GOI PROJECT

ON

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR

ACCESS TO INFORMATION
(CBAI)

PRESENTATION

22-23 JANUARY, 2009

HCM Rajasthan Institute of Public Administration,
JAIPUR

- Good morning to all of you and wish a Happy & Prosperous NEW YEAR.

- Respected Chairman and distinguished scholars and administrators.

- At the outset, I would like to say a few words about Chhattisgarh Academy of Administration in order to appreciate the implementation of the CBAI Project in the State.

- As you are aware of the fact that Chhatisgarh Academy of Administration is a new Institution, established in the year 2004, and it is in its formative stage.
- The Academy is working with two faculty members without any supportive staff and research personnel. Even it is still not able to find a fully - fledged Director General and the Director. Both the officials have other duties in the Government but not related with ATI.

- Being a new ATI, it is also deprived of well established rules, regulations, procedure of work and precedents.
- Still the ATI is busy with imparting training to multi-stakeholders on multi-ferrous subjects like Human Rights, Gender, State specific rule based training programmes and DoPT assigned training programme under the training for all programme.

- Besides imparting training, ATI is also engaged with implementation of number of projects, notable amongst them are :-

- GOI - DFID Project on CBPR

- European Commission - State Partnership Programme

- GOI - Planning Commission - UNDP Programme on Gender Budgeting / Gender and human development.

- Recently assigned centrally sponsored plan scheme on RTI

Now I would like to highlight some Achievements under the Project.

Despite of all these limitations ATI has been able to achieve the considerable success as following figures shows :

1. Training Programmes organized -
105

It includes training programmes organized for officials, mainly PIOs / APIOs and AAs of various

departments, representatives of PRIs,
municipal bodies and NGOs & CSOs.

2. Multi-stakeholders trained /
sensitized - 3800 approx.

3. Directories of APIOs / PIOs / AAs -
225

4. Total number of mass awareness
programmes -150

5. Total number of puppet shows / Kalajathas / road shows / dance drama - 115

6. Distribution of pamphlets / brochures - 2,70,000

These materials were distributed mainly during mass awareness programmes with the help of NGOs.

7. Distribution of RTI Act and user guides - 42,000

These booklets were distributed during training courses / sensitization programmes.

In this regard, it is worth while to mention that 10,000 copies of the 'Suchana Ka Adhikar - Saral Bhasha main' were distributed throught out the state with the help of 'Satat Shiksha Mishan' and read out by a villager (motivator) in front of the gathering of local folk at 'Satat Shiksha Kenders' on world literacy day i.e. 8th September, 2007. By this

way a message has gone to hundred of thousands people throughout the state.

8. Total number of villages / places covered under the Chetana Rath / Suchana Rath - 455

9. Total number of wall writings - 9,100

10. Innovative measures :

Here, I would like to draw your attention that perhaps Chhattisgarh is the only state where, 'Suchana

Samitiyas' has been constituted at district and block levels in both the districts covered under the Project. District level committee has been headed by the district collector while block level committees have been headed by the CEO Janpad Panchayat. In all the committees officials and non-officials are nominated as members.

These committees are constituted with twin purposes, firstly to oversee the implementation of RTI in their

respective jurisdiction and secondly to act as facilitator to both the information providers and information seekers by way of providing explanations, guidance and counseling. ATI is trying to get some sort of legitimacy from the State Govt. for these bodies.

It is notable that SIC has also suggested for constitution of this sort of committees at district level in its second Annual Report.

In an attempt of facilitate information seekers - ATI has provided enquiry on mobile phone. The mobile number of the Nodal Officer of the Project has been broadcasted by AIR published by local news papers.

Now I would like to talk about the **challenges** faced by the ATI in implementation the Project:

1. Problem faced on account of paucity of resources in term of personnel and infrastructure.
2. Inexperienced Project Management Team at ATI & DIAs level. The Nodal Officer, who was only the faculty member at the launching of the Project being teacher, had no idea of this type of work. Other members of the Project team were more or less in same position, except the chairperson of the steering committee, who had been worked

with UNICEF earlier. On this occasion I wish to acknowledge with thanks the support extended by the NIA & DoPT and particularly by Respected Shri Ajay Swanhey, Shri Vineet Pandey, Shri Vivek Mishra, Shri Vardhman and Shri Kiran Kulkarni of 'YASHADA'

3. Over emphasis on codal formalities and resultant delay in decision making.

4. Bureaucratic mindset - reluctant to involve NGOs / CSOs - Many activities like mass awareness campaign, training and sensitization programmes at grass root level require active participation of these organizations.

5. Frequent change of nodal officers of DIAs, has also hampered the speedy progress of the Project.

6. Shortage of committed and trained resource persons both at ATI and district / block levels.

7. Non-availability of quality and updated training material, particularly in Hindi in the beginning of the Project.

8. Language problem at DIAs level as all of the communication, format and literature received from the NIA and DoPT were in English and it was

difficult for DIAs level officials to grasp them thoroughly.

9. Lack of clarity in componentwise grouping of activities e.g. it was not easy to differentiate activities of mass awareness and dissemination and advocacy. It posed problems in compiling DIAs activities and their expenditure.

SUGGESTIVE MEASURES FOR **EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION**

1. To overcome the problem of shortage of manpower, outsourcing of services / personnel may be an ideal solution. For this purpose DoPT should take initiative by indicating the activities / personnel to be outsourced and commensurate suggestive quality and remuneration.

2. To accelerate implementation a senior official from DoPT should visit the ATI, at least once a year and if possible should attend the project co-ordination / steering committee once in the project period.

3. Training material, format, communication from the NIA and DoPT should be in Hindi & English for convenience of grassroots functionaries.

4. It would be better for phase II states to have a Assistant Nodal Officer belonging to non-regulatory functionaries to assist the Nodal Officers, if they happen to be revenue officers at DIA level.

5. Before preparing terminal report of the Project, a joint meeting of nodal officers of both the districts and ATI should be convened for sake of clarity and uniformity in reporting.

6. Documentation from day one may
some the authorities from lot of
problems at the time of reporting and
preparation of report.