

ASSESSMENT OF STATE-LEVEL CAPACITIES
For the Implementation of the National Capacity Building Framework (NCBF)
and to Undertake District Planning

CAPACITY ASSESSMENT REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and the Municipalities/ Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) have been identified as the third tier of governance, particularly after the 73rd & the 74th Amendments. Of the 28 States and 7 Union Territories (UTs), three States are exempted from the provisions of these Amendments, and they have been allowed to continue with traditional arrangements of local bodies which are akin to the PRIs. There are, currently, about 2 lakh (1 lakh = 100,000) PRIs represented by over 28 lakh elected representatives (ERs) of whom over one-third are women. The functionaries working for/ under the PRIs number about 10 lakh.

PRIs are currently assigned two of the major programmes for rural development, namely the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) and the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF). In terms of the Constitutional intent, States have assigned many more schemes to the PRIs, though such assignments are not uniform across the States. It is expected that in the coming years, the PRIs would be implementing development schemes and programmes worth over Rs. 1.5 lakh crore (1 crore = 10,000,000 = 100 lakh). To perform such large scale responsibilities, the PRIs need to have adequate capacities, in terms of number as well quality of manpower.

Realizing the imperatives of strengthening capacities of PRI elected representatives and officials to effectively undertake their roles, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) has launched a National Capacity Building Framework (NCBF), which provides details of various training programmes aimed at PRIs. The MoPR is also implementing the Capacity Development for Local Governance (CDLG) project with support from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in the seven focus states (Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh) of the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). The CLDG is aligned with the goals and objectives of the NCBF, and aims to strengthen institutions and processes at various levels to bring about behavioural change through increased motivation, joint decision-making, the provision of resources (i.e. networks, resource persons/institutions, training courses/material, information, innovative solutions and methods) and personal empowerment. Key partner institutions are Training Institutions such as the State Institutes for Rural Development (SIRDs), the Panchayati Raj Training Institutes (PRTIs, existing in a few States) and the Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs), which have the mandate to train elected representatives and officials in Local Governance. It has been the experience that these institutions put together are unable to meet the responsibility of providing the required training to the ERs and officials of the PRIs.

In view of the crucial role the PRIs are expected to play in District Planning and the relevance of capacity development activities related to planning, the CDLG needs to be closely associated with the activities of a second GoI-UNDP project implemented by the Planning Commission. The Capacity Development for District Planning (CDDP) Project supports the Planning Commission's mandate on improved capacities in integrated inclusive district planning at the national, state and district levels.

It is in this context that a capacity assessment of state-wide capacities for implementing the NCBF and undertaking district planning was conducted upon the request of MoPR.

PART ONE

1. Panchayats and Local Governance

The 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act, 1992, established a three tier structure of local self governance in rural India and gave constitutional status to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The 74th CAA similarly created three types of institution for urban areas, and a combined representative and expert body for integrated district planning. The two Acts mandate the conduct of elections for all the three tiers once in every five years. The Acts provide for reservation of at least one-third seats for women (to be soon raised to 50 percent), and reservation of seats for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in proportion to population. Another important feature is the establishment of State Finance Commission to make recommendations as regards the financial powers of the Panchayats.

As per the 73rd CAA, PRIs have been endowed with such powers and authority as may be necessary to function as institutions of self government and contains provisions of devolution of powers and responsibilities upon Panchayats at the appropriate level with reference to (a) the preparation of plans for economic development and social justice; and (b) the implementation of such schemes for economic development and social justice as may be entrusted to them. The Act envisages devolution of functions pertaining to 29 functions as listed in Eleventh Schedule:

1. Agriculture, including agricultural extension.
2. Land improvement, implementation of land reforms, land consolidation and soil conservation.
3. Minor irrigation, water management and watershed development.
4. Animal husbandry, dairying and poultry.
5. Fisheries.
6. Social forestry and farm forestry.
7. Minor forest produce.
8. Small scale industries, including food processing industries.
9. Khadi, village and cottage industries.
10. Rural housing.
11. Drinking water.
12. Fuel and fodder.
13. Roads, culverts, bridges, ferries, waterways and other means of communication.
14. Rural electrification, including distribution of electricity.
15. Non-conventional energy sources.
16. Poverty alleviation programme.
17. Education, including primary and secondary schools.
18. Technical training and vocational education.
19. Adult and non-formal education.
20. Libraries.
21. Cultural activities.
22. Markets and fairs.
23. Health and sanitation, including hospitals, primary health centres and dispensaries.
24. Family welfare.
25. Women and child development.
26. Social welfare, including welfare of the handicapped and mentally retarded.

27. Welfare of the weaker sections, and in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
28. Public distribution system.
29. Maintenance of community assets.

It is thus evident that PRIs are responsible for wide ranging functions and their capacities need to be considerably augmented if they are to function as effective institutions of local self governance.

A 2007 study¹ commissioned by the UNDP the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) recalls that Article 243 (g) of the Constitution widely empowers the Panchayats through the devolution of powers and responsibilities with regard to (a) preparation of plans for economic development and social justice (b) implementation of schemes for the above relating to matters listed in the 11th Schedule. ASCI also deplores that the vested interests of the political and bureaucratic elites have distorted this constitutional mandate confining the role of Panchayats to that of field agencies of the state governments. An overemphasis is made on the role of Panchayats as implementing agencies of centrally sponsored schemes and little attention is paid to their constitutional role as governance institutions in charge of planning and resource allocation at the local level.

On the other hand the influence on the distribution of scheme funds as well as the role in the elaboration of District Plans has given the local elected representatives a role and responsibility that has benefited their standing and exposed them to planning and implementation monitoring functions. This may positively impact their ability to take on larger responsibilities and decision-making powers in future when required to handle un-tied funds.

As per ASCI's assessment, State Governments have been reluctant to devolve funds, functions and functionaries to the local bodies and have often cited the lack of capacity on the part of the latter as the reason for non-devolution of constitutionally mandated powers and responsibilities. In fact, the lack of capacity in local bodies is partially due to the fact decision makers at that level have been given little opportunity to learn by doing.

¹ Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) 2008: Strengthening of State Support Institutions in the Focus States: Capacity Assessment Report. Hyderabad

2. Strengthening the Panchayats: Current Practice

The issue of capacity building of local-governance institutions in urban and rural India is complex. Some of the challenges in capacity development for local self-governance institutions are:

- The challenge in numbers: with about 28 lakh (2.8 Million) local elected representatives, a majority of whom have been elected for the first time, the institutions tasked to train them are overwhelmed. PRI Elected Representatives hold office for five years and are likely to be replaced by a new set of representatives in the following election. The number of elected representatives which requires post-election training and orientation is therefore very large. Beyond basic post-election training and orientation, there is demand for continuous capacity development including that of the functionaries in the PRI administration.
- Most of the local representatives have a low level of formal education and their profiles reflect the societal divides existing in rural India. At present 36.87 % (over 1 million) PRI representatives are women. With the proposed Constitutional Amendment to increase the reservation for women to 50%, the number of elected women representatives is expected to rise to more than 1.4 million.
- Local self-governance is fully embedded in the system of parliamentary democracy. The governance challenges faced by the parliamentary system in India have a bearing on the performance of the institutions of local governance also. At the National and State level, Members of Parliament and Members of Legislative Assembly play only a limited role in legislation and policy-making and are mostly involved in executive affairs. Local elected representatives have few role models to emulate.
- The bureaucracy often relays a distorted message regarding the role of local self-governance relegating it to the level of a subordinate body of the government vs. an independent self-governance institution. The frequency of Village Assemblies (Gram Sabhas) differs dramatically from State to State as their positive effect on participatory democracy is understood and utilized by few elected representatives who may out of sheer necessity be focusing on their executive roles (i.e. non-integrated scheme implementation).
- The institutional capacities of the agencies responsible for capacity development of local governance institutions namely, the State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRDs), Extension Training Centers (ETCs) and Panchayat Training Centers (PTCs) are severely limited. Their geographic reach, available staff, training resources (i.e. modules, field level trainers and facilitators, training material, communication methods) is for the most part insufficient to produce the necessary numbers and desired quality outputs.
- Convergence at the national level between the Union Ministries of Rural Development and Panchayati Raj – now headed by the same Minister – is a challenge which reflects also at the district level where the administrative machinery of the State Governments remain largely departmentalized (see 15th Report of the Administrative Reforms Commission, 2005) and cross-sectoral capacity development strategies for elected representatives and officials of the local self-governments are largely absent.

The State of Panchayats Report 2007-08 highlights that the *raison d'être* for training and capacity development stems from the fact that the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment Acts, while

being revolutionary, are being implemented on extremely uneven grounds. The rationale for capacity development, according to the Report is to:

- bridge the gap in the existing social inequalities that exist, by developing capacities of women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes to enable their participation in the local governance processes with confidence;
- recontextualise the skills and experience of first time entrants and providing them relevant information;
- develop a cadre of local leadership that can be change agents for society; and
- reorient the government officials so that they can enable effective local government functioning.

The key determinants having a bearing on PRIs ability to function effectively can be summarized as follows:

1. Effective devolution of functions, funds and functionaries
2. Convergence / design of various schemes
3. Capacities of PRI elected representatives and functionaries

The first two issues relate to the enabling environment and the third to the individual and organizational capacity levels, explained in detail in the following chapter.

The 15th Report of the Administrative Reforms Commission states that it is a “well accepted principle that in order to make PRIs effective institutions of self governance, devolution of functions will have to be suitably matched by devolution of adequate funds and functionaries”². “The Commission is of the view that the local bodies (PRIs/ULBs) [...] will have to play a primary role in planning, development and service delivery functions pertaining to the subjects listed in the Eleventh and Twelfth Schedule of the Constitution. Though in many States, the subjects technically stand devolved to the local bodies, the administrative set-up has not been re-aligned appropriately to equip them for becoming effective self-governing institutions”³.

A key challenge to the effective functioning of the PRIs as local self-governments is (a) the design and (b) the non-convergent rules and procedures of various government schemes (i.e. State Government schemes and centrally-sponsored schemes (CSS). The XI Five Year Plan of the Government of India states that a “critical assessment of the performance of CSS reveals the following deficiencies:

- Most of them exist as silos planned and implemented as stand-alone schemes with little horizontal convergence or vertical integration, resulting in multiple sub-sectoral district plans, unrelated to each other. At times they are even mutually conflicting, prepared without any integrated vision or perspective of what is needed at the district level.
- The schemes are often too rigid and do not provide the flexibility needed for adaptation according to the different development needs at the local level. There is also too much micro management without any mechanism to understand the local situation and respond to it properly.
- There is no consistent approach in the design of delivery mechanisms. At times, independent structures are created for each scheme resulting in multiplicity of such structures at the local level with no interaction or coordination among them.

² Administrative Reforms Commission 2005: 15th Report: page 162. Available at <http://arc.gov.in/15threport.pdf> (accessed on 14-12-09).

³ Administrative Reforms Commission 2005: 15th Report: page 87. Available at <http://arc.gov.in/15threport.pdf> (accessed on 14-12-09).

- The extent of professional support to the design, implementation and monitoring of these schemes is quite weak at the national, State and local levels. Often, line departments with generalist approaches control the implementation process without having the necessary competence.
- In spite of stated objectives aiming at the quality of outputs and outcomes, there is not enough outcome based evaluation and the programmes are mostly monitored on an expenditure basis.”

The architecture of the continuing and new CSS will need to be radically altered and the instrumentality of implementation fundamentally changed. In this context, there are a number of arguments in favor of giving local governments a pivotal place in CSS in keeping with their constitutional mandate of economic development and social justice.

In regards to the development of capacities of individuals – be it Elected Representatives or functionaries – the State Institutes for Rural Development (SIRDs) have the primary mandate for conducting training. The State Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs) train functionaries (i.e. officers of the All India and State Civil Services) and sometimes also elected representatives and NGO functionaries. In addition to these two institutions which exist with variations (i.e. merged, separate) in all States, different line departments have their own training institutions that conduct training of PRI Elected Representatives and functionaries. In many cases the training institutions have facilities at the sub-State level (district and block level) at which training can be conducted.

Further, affiliations and associations of elected representatives and functionaries do exist in some States. Specific schemes provide funding to women and youth (e.g. Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan - PMEYSA) to establish formal associations and State Support Centers which can further specific agendas and provide backstopping support, thereby contributing to capacity development by strengthening the enabling environment for women and youth.

The State of Panchayat Report maps the institutions responsible for developing capacities of the elected representatives as well as civil society initiatives that are associated in this. It notes that though a number of institutions are active in the field of capacity development, they are working in a highly compartmentalized manner with little networking among them. Other aspects such as training modules, clientele, duration and other socio-cultural specificities may as well need to be looked into towards making capacity building process a more meaningful exercise. It notes the need for strengthening State Institutes for Rural Development (SIRDs) so that they are able to provide dynamic leadership. A curriculum designed in an integrated manner rather than focusing on sectoral needs is urgently required. There is total lack of mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the impact of training. This is required to provide feedback for ensuring that the process, content, methodology of capacity development efforts is suited and relevant to the context.

Given the imperatives of strengthening capacities of elected representatives, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj has launched a National Capacity Building Framework (NCBF) that aims at:

- enabling Panchayat elected representatives to upgrade their knowledge and skills to better perform their responsibilities;
- orienting key officials associated with the devolved functions to (a) better function as technical advisors and trainers and (b) respect, be more receptive and learn from the ground-level experience of elected Panchayat representatives;
- improving the Gram Sabha functioning;
- sensitising the media, political parties, representatives in the legislatures, civil society organizations and citizens.

A number of CSS with capacity development components exist within the lead Union Government Ministry – the Ministry of Panchayati Raj. This is over and above the allocations that other Union Ministries and the State Governments make for their scheme / sector specific capacity development (i.e. mainly training):

- The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) which was introduced by MoPR in 2006 for 250 districts in the country has 250 crore (2500 Million) INR allocated for capacity building activities. This comes to approximately 1 crore (10 Million) INR per district each year. Based on the NCBF, the suggested activities are: (1) building capacity in planning, implementation, monitoring, accounting and improving accountability, (2) strengthening physical infrastructure for capacity building, (3) Providing functional literacy courses, (4) IT enabling and connectivity for all Panchayats, (5) setting up of Helplines, Panchayati Raj TV channels and radio programmes, (6) setting up of Satellite centres for interactive satellite training, (7) Gram Sabha level campaigns and awareness generation.
- Under the Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Yojana (RGSY) scheme there are 30 crore (300 million) INR available for training and capacity building in the 342 districts which are not covered by the BRGF. Financial assistance is meant for actual training of PRIs and the construction of Satellite Training Studios. Proposals from NGOs that come with State Government recommendation receive 75% funding from the Union Government and 25% funding from the State Government.
- A targeted scheme called Panchayat Mahila Evam Yuva Shakti Abhiyan (PMEYSA) has a networking and empowerment component for Elected Women Representatives (Panchayat Mahila Shakti Abhiyan) and a sensitisation and awareness building component targeting youthful PRI members and youth club members (Panchayat Yuva Shakti Abhiyan).

A recent review⁴ of the Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) highlighted the following challenges:

- The Capacity Building Plans (CBP) are of varying qualities and in some states, they are formulated by SIRD without intensive involvement of the RD&PR departments. The NCBF does not require the States to conduct a capacity needs assessment for each district, which is a major flaw. The result is CBPs that are not customized to each PRI and Municipality and that are not periodically updated to address emerging capacity development needs arising from implementation experiences. It is also not possible to keep track on the development in PRI/ULB performance and impact of the CB support. There are a few cases of convergence, in most cases the BRGF capacity building activities are being implemented in solo. Overall the focus of capacity building activities on ULBs was dismal, often due to institutional issues and lack of clarity on responsibilities;
- Many of the states (Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan) do not have an effective overall coordination mechanism for CB delivery;
- Most of the CB support is targeting individuals and not institutional strengthening, such as support to establishment of stronger planning cells at the ZP and IP levels;
- There is inadequate monitoring and evaluation of CB at the various levels especially at output, outcome and impact levels;
- The training programs are largely supply driven and in a number of cases conducted in shorter periods than planned;

⁴ BRGF Review Mission conducted by The World Bank in cooperation with UNDP in 2009.

- The planned training of illiterate and semi-literate elected representatives is yet to be implemented;
- There is lack of incentives for the PRI/ULB bodies to utilize the CB support efficiently and improve their performance;

The findings and recommendations given by the Review Team, based on the identified challenges in the present system and the procedures for capacity building support under the BRGF, were:

- Refinement of the overall strategy for provision of CB: BRGF should focus on establishing links between (i) development fund, (ii) performance assessment and (iii) CB support (promote incentives to improve performance). This will require the use of a mix of supply driven approaches managed by the State to deliver mandatory courses for all local bodies; and demand driven approaches where districts and ULBs are given discretionary capacity building grants to address peculiar CB needs.
- Capacity building planning: Develop a holistic CD strategy, based on specific assessment of the PRIs capacity needs and establishing a strong link between the CB needs and the support rendered. Whilst allowing flexibility and innovation at State level, develop format/template and guidelines for Capacity Needs Assessment and CB planning. The CB plan should integrate CB activities with those implemented under programs of other agencies.
- Capacity building delivery: Combine the mandatory courses, with more demand driven approach to CB. Improve the CB content by developing self-learning and easy reference materials.
- Capacity Building for Urban Local Bodies (ULBs): Ensure that ULBs are properly covered by the CB support activities. There is need to have a different window for channelling CB funds for ULBs in order to address their peculiar CB needs. This necessitates a need to clarify the entire role of ULBs in the BRGF.
- Capacity building coordination: Strengthen the Panchayati Raj Department to effectively guide, coordinate and monitor CD support which is spread over a number of institutions. Entrenching the demand driven CB approach required the development of a human resource management/development function at the District level entrusted with the responsibility of coordinating all CB activities including but not limited to: capacity needs assessment, capacity building planning, organizing and/or procurement of capacity building providers; supervision the delivery of capacity building activities; monitoring and evaluating the impact of capacity building activities.

At the national level apex training and resource institutions are involved indirectly as they provide backup support and guidance to the abovementioned institutions:

National Institute for Rural Development (NIRD)
Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA)
Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA)
Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA)
State Training Institutions of repute. Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kerala Institute for Local Administration (KILA), ▪ Yeshwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration (YASHADA), ▪ State Institute of Panchayats & Rural Development, West Bengal ▪ Abdul Nazeer Sab State Institute of Rural Development (ANSSIRD), ▪ Indira Gandhi Panchayati Raj & Gramin Vikas Sansthan (IGPR & GVS) SIRD, Rajasthan
Academic Institutions (higher & distance education)
Research Institutions
NGOs working at National level (e.g. Society for Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), Sahbhagi

Shikshan Kendra (SSK), Samarthan, etc.)

On the other hand, the State-level institutions directly involved in the capacity development of Elected Representatives and functionaries of the PRIs are:

Rural Development Department (in some cases "Pachayati Raj and Rural Development Department")	State Institutes for Rural Development (SIRDs), Extension Training Centres (ETCs), Panchayat Training Centres (PTCs)
Department of Personnel and Training	Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs)
Other departments	Sectoral Training Institutes and Resource Centres
Others	NGOs and alternative service providers
	Academic institutions (higher & distance education)

The Capacity Assessment of State Training Institutions (ATIs and SIRDs) in the UNDAF States conducted in 2008 by the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) noted that the ATIs as centres for training of civil servants can only play a limited role by sensitizing and reorienting civil servants to the ground realities of participatory democracy. In a study conducted by the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy for Administration on the availability of gender expertise in select Administrative Training Institutes, noted that there is a lack of well qualified resource persons, lack of training literature and resource material, particularly on gender based violence, and lack of budgetary provisions for the conduct of training.

In regards to SIRDs, the ASCI study found an inability to play an effective role in capacity development of elected local representatives and functionaries stemming from a lack of strategic focus and convergence, which emanates from the concerned Central Ministries and is reflected in all levels of public administration. The assessment of the existing infrastructure of the SIRDs points to the need for strengthening regional, district and sub-district level presence for effective outreach.

The study emphasized the importance of staffing these institutions with well-qualified and well-paid teams of professionals and identifies a need to develop systems, which foster creativity and initiative. Putting in place such systems will enable these institutions to design and develop curriculum based on the felt needs of their clientele and deliver it using the appropriate methodology. The study also underlines the fact that capacity building initiatives will yield adequate results only when they are accompanied by investments in mobilization of civil society and policy level advocacy in favour of decentralized governance.

3. Capacity Development Approach

UNDP’s capacity development (CD) approach provides a holistic understanding of, and appreciation for, the multi-faceted nature of development, and the need to address capacities beyond the usual activities anchored at individual capacities such as training and other skills development activities. The approach emphasizes the need to put equally strong support to organizational and enabling environment capacities, which are often not addressed in traditional capacity development approaches. The CD approach likewise promotes a more rigorous capacity assessment methodology, to systematically analyse existing capacities and identify what future capacities are needed and at what level and quality, to achieve a certain development outcome. This process identifies the “capacity gaps” across three capacity levels – enabling environment/policy, organizational, and individual (**Figure 1**) -- and enables the government and donors to target their support more directly to address these gaps. This process for assessing capacities is essential to ensuring that capacity development needs are effectively identified and prioritised, and provides a systematic alternative to the often ad hoc, training-focused capacity development orientation in previous development programmes.

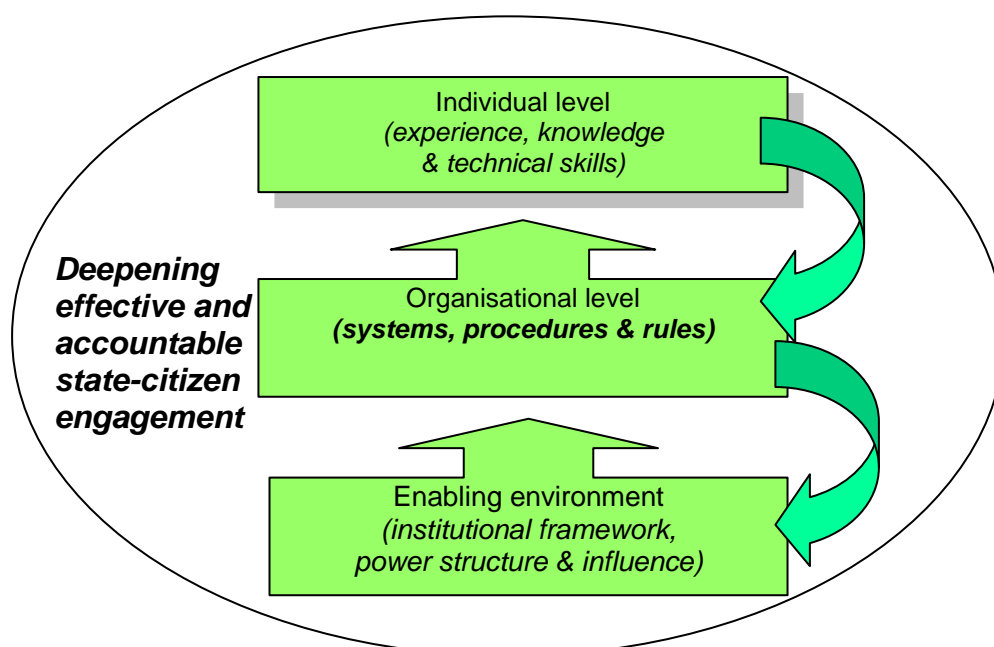


Figure 1. The three layers of capacity development

The capacity assessment for state-level capacities was conducted 17-28 August 2000, upon the request of MoPR. The UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok (RCB) provided technical support in adapting the CA framework according to the objectives of the CA, the local context, and the identified issues confronting MoPR. The overall objectives of the mission were to:

- Assess the capacity of a given State (i.e., Chhattisgarh) to implement the NCBF and for capacity development of PRI elected representatives and officials for district planning using UNDP’s CA methodology adapted to India; and
- Develop a pool of experts (CA Master Trainers and CA Resource Persons) equipped with skills to undertake similar assessment independently by conducting a two-days training workshop

The CA process was conducted under the leadership of MoPR and followed a four-pronged approach, as illustrated in the capacity assessment workplan (**Annex A**). For developing and piloting the CA framework in the context of a state in India, the state of Chhattisgarh was selected by MoPR given that it is a pilot state under BRGF, and is one of the states with high poverty incidence in India. The piloting of the CD approach was intended to generate as well a grounded understanding of the appropriateness and applicability of the capacity assessment tool for selected states in India particularly in the context of the NCBF, and generate information on possible adjustments in future capacity assessment rollouts. The pilot capacity assessment applied the following approach.

One, relevant documents and project reports were provided by MoPR and UNDP India prior to the CA mission, to provide background information and context for the mission. Additional documents were collected and reviewed during the mission as well.

Two, a training of trainers was conducted involving nine master-trainers/capacity assessment resource persons identified by MoPR (see **Annex B**). The master trainers are expected to provide technical support in conducting similar capacity assessments in other focus states in the country.

Three, a series of focus group discussions organizations/institutions providing capacity development support to PRIs were conducted. These included the following:

- A multistakeholder consultation workshop held on 19 August 2009 to discuss issues and challenges in the provision of capacity development services in Chhattisgarh. Participants during this consultation included more than 10 government departments/agencies (e.g., Department of Panchayati Raj, Department of Rural Development, Department of Forest, Department of Health, Department of Women and Children, School Education Department, State Planning and Urban Development Board, etc.), training institutions (e.g., State Institute for Rural Development, Administrative Training Institute, ETC/PTCs), and ten non-government institutions providing training services to communities. The consultation provided a set of key challenges and concerns which provided critical information in designing the capacity assessment framework for Chhattisgarh.
- Field visits to selected districts to consult demand side actors at the GP, JP, ZP and ULB levels;
- Self-Assessment consultation sessions with selected agencies (i.e., RDD, DPR, ATI, SHRC, ICDS and SIRD) which provided the opportunity for officials and staff members from these institutions to rate their institutions' capacities using a five-point rating scale, based on capacity development parameters designed by the capacity assessment team.

And four, a self-assessment process (as indicated in the bullet above) where officers/staff members of the selected agencies "rated" their capacity levels individually, to provide an understanding of the prevailing capacity development status of the agencies, and a prioritization of their capacity development needs.

4. Capacity Assessment Pilot

UNDP's Capacity Assessment Methodology was adapted for the State of Chhattisgarh to assess state-level capacities to implement the NCBF, and to undertake district planning. The methodology was used to assess the capacities of the Department of the Panchayat Raj (DPR), the Rural Development Department (RDD), the State Institute for Rural Development (SIRD), the Administrative Training Institute (ATI), the State Health Resource Center (SHRC), and the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Training Institute. The UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok (RCB) provided technical support in adapting the CA framework according to the objectives of the CA, the local context, and the identified issues confronting PRIs and the training institutions in particular, and the development, implementation and monitoring of NCBF and district planning.

Specifically, the objectives of the CA were to:

- identify the existing capacities and capacity gaps in areas that are of priority to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and selected training institutions
- raise awareness among PRIs and training institutions about the need for systematic capacity analysis (by introducing the UNDP approach)
- reach consensus of opinion among PRIs and training institutions about the main capacity needs of PRIs and state level capacities
- identify appropriate capacity development responses that could address the capacity constraints and be supported by UNDP

Following a review of documents and initial consultation and discussion with the organisations/institutions as well as discussions during the TOT for the CA Master Trainers, the following core development challenges or issues were identified. **Table 1** presents which of these challenges were identified by the respective agencies as directly relevant to them.

- **Policies, Institutional Development, and Institutional Arrangements.** Conceptualizing and formulating development policies, strategies, and programmes for Panchayati Raj institutions require analyzing a range of national and state-level policies and institutional arrangements that could contribute to, or constrain, effective and efficient delivery of services, including knowledge and capacity development services. The consultations revealed dichotomized approaches to service delivery, duplication and sometimes conflicting functions among state agencies, and lack of coherence with regard to overall direction and common strategy for addressing the needs of PRIs. This has likewise unearthed serious implications in the context of converging efforts and resources for and among PRIs, which are intended to serve as the first line of service delivery on the ground.
- **Human Resources.** Human resource capacities are at the heart of enhancing human development. In the case of training institutions and planning agencies in Chhattisgarh, there is an evident weakness in the quality and quantity of technical support staff even among training institutions which are expected to provide the knowledge and expertise for PRIs to perform their functions. Staff skills and expertise are likewise constrained by inadequacies in organizational capacities, such as lack of appropriate facilities and equipment, outdated training modules and training approaches, lack of incentives for posting and deployment in Chhattisgarh, among others.
- **Leadership.** Internally, the leadership creates and sets the dynamics within the organization, influences organizational culture, affects team and staff performance, and plays a critical role in setting a unified vision and direction for the organization. The 73rd and

74th amendments created new tiers of leadership in India, without whose active role and performance the desired goals of active decentralization and local empowerment would not materialize. On the other hand, long-established leaders in other line ministries and departments at the state level need to recognize, accept, and interact with, these new sets of leaders towards more harmonized approaches to service delivery on the ground.

- **Knowledge.** This pertains to training institutions' capacities to tap available information and expertise to analyze the existing needs of, and demands from PRIs, and develop and/or introduce existing and/or new knowledge and expertise to respond to such demands. It also refers to training institutions' capacities to anticipate capacity development needs of PRIs based on existing and/or new legislations and global developments, and adjust modules, training approaches, and map out existing technical resources, in anticipation of such needs. In the case of the assessed institutions, there seems to be a prevalence of supply-driven training and knowledge building activities, with little attention to grounding them on the actual capacity needs of PRIs. It also revealed the need for stronger capacities for planning, coordination, and monitoring and evaluation of training and capacity development programmes among the assessed institutions.
- **Accountability.** This core issue refers to practices and mechanisms that hold training institutions and government agencies accountable for performing their functions in responding to the needs of their clientele, and in providing suitable rewards for good organizational and individual performance. It also looks at mechanisms that would allow PRIs and other stakeholders to provide feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of training institutions and government agencies at the state level, as well as on the long-term impact and utility of the various training programmes and development activities introduced by state institutions.
- **Physical Resources and infrastructure.** Physical resources as defined in this report consist primarily of material resources and infrastructure, including facilities and equipment, and include not only their procurement but also their management and maintenance, to contribute to more efficient delivery of training services.

The relevance of these core issues or challenges to each focus institution in Chhattisgarh was analyzed according to the information generated during consultation meetings. **Table 1** shows that there is a common concern with regard to policies and institutional arrangements at the local level, given non-alignment in government programming and support activities, and weak coordination and communication among agencies that are mandated to support PRIs. Knowledge management also emerged as a strong concern. These core issues or challenges were then related to particular functional capacities that were contributing to the prevalence and persistence of these challenges in Chhattisgarh, and therefore provides the potentials for addressing these challenges through responding to the capacity gaps that contribute to these issues. These functional capacities are presented below:

- **Capacity for Stakeholder Engagement.** This capacity relates to the organizations' capacity to engage and build consensus among all stakeholders, including forging agreements on the priority capacity development needs of PRIs; mobilization of support and creating partnerships and networks among relevant capacity development providers to respond to such needs; providing an enabling environment that engages civil society and the private sector in the provision of such responses; managing large group processes and open dialogues; and mediating divergent interests.

- **Analysis of the Capacity Needs of PRIs.** This pertains to the organizations’ abilities to effectively access, gather, analyze, synthesize and manage available data, information, and trends, towards ensuring a holistic understanding of the capacity needs of PRIs. It also looks at capacities to provide appropriate analytical tools, hardware and software, as well as relevant skills for faculty and/or technical staff members to provide capacity development initiatives and programmes for PRIs.
- **Formulating Long-term Strategy.** This looks at the organization’s capacity to set a common vision for the organization, and formulate long-term strategies and workplans to ensure that it fully carries out its mandated functions, based on careful analysis of its own capacity needs as well as the capacity needs of PRIs.
- **Budgeting and Implementing Strategies.** This pertains to the organizations’ abilities to effectively budget and implement strategies to respond to the capacity needs of PRIs. It also looks at capacities to budget for and provide appropriate tools, hardware and software, engage external experts, as well as relevant skills for faculty and/or staff members to provide capacity development trainings and other initiatives for PRIs.
- **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Reporting.** This pertains to the organizations’ capacities for monitoring progress, measuring of results and codification of lessons, and receiving and learning from stakeholders’ feedback, among others. It also covers results-based management and monitoring and evaluation systems, particularly for training and other capacity development programmes that have been or are being introduced to PRIs.

Table 1. Core issues or challenges faced by relevant PRI capacity development institutions in Chhattisgarh.

Capacity Assessment Pilot Institutions in Chhattisgarh	Core Issues								
	Institutional Arrangements/ Development; Convergence	Human Resources	Leadership	Knowledge	Accountability	Physical Resources/ Infrastructure	Planning	Participation	Monitoring and Evaluation
Administrative Training Institution	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
State Institution for Rural Development	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
State Health Resource Centre	✓		✓	✓	✓				
Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Training Institute	✓			✓			✓	✓	✓
Rural Development Department	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				
Department of Panchayati Raj	✓	✓				✓			

Based on these identified core issues and functional capacities, capacity assessment frameworks (see **Annex C**) containing capacity development parameters were formulated in close consultation with UNDP India, the CA Master Trainers, and all organisations/institutions, which served as the basis for the self-assessment process. These frameworks were then translated into “capacity assessment worksheets”, which served as the tool for the capacity self-assessment processes. These frameworks could serve as starting points for the rollout of capacity assessments in other states.

In addition to qualitative information on their strengths and weaknesses, the capacity assessment worksheets provided an evidence-based rating system of 1 (very low capacity) to 5 (very high capacity), allowing all organisations/institutions and Unit officials/staff members to assess their present capacity levels for specific capacity development parameters, as well as indicate their desired capacity levels in the future. Specifically, the ratings of 1-5 were defined as follows:

- | | | |
|---|-----------|--|
| 1 | Very Low | <u>No evidence</u> or only anecdotal evidence of capacity/strategy/plan |
| 2 | Low | Capacity/strategy/plan <u>exists or has been developed</u> (but not implemented) |
| 3 | Medium | Capacity/strategy/plan is <u>planned and implemented</u> |
| 4 | High | Capacity/strategy/plan is <u>planned, implemented and reviewed</u> on the basis of benchmarking data and adjusted accordingly |
| 5 | Very High | Capacity/strategy/plan is <u>planned, implemented, reviewed on the basis of benchmarking data, adjusted and fully integrated into the organisation</u> |

Consolidated ratings were then calculated and analyzed by the CD Team and presented to MoPR along with recommendations.

5. Insights and Recommendations on the CA Process: The Chhattisgarh Experience

The capacity assessment pilot in Chhattisgarh surfaced some good practices and provided insights in further improving the approach towards more comprehensive capacity assessment rollouts in other states.

- Top level engagement is critical prior to and during the capacity assessment. The commitment of senior state and department officials to the process, and their articulation and demonstration of the same to their staff members, generates a strong sense of ownership of the capacity assessment process and results, and encourages other officials and staff members to likewise commit their time and energy to the process. Senior officials must be fully informed of the process and their roles in the capacity assessment and in the formulation of the capacity development strategies.
- Given the size and extent of state institutions in India, sufficient time needs to be allocated to adequately engage key stakeholders in scoping core issues and designing the CA framework. The Chhattisgarh consultation allowed key agencies to come together in one consultation, but for succeeding rollouts it will be helpful to schedule individual half-day consultation meetings with each agency as well to enable more officials and staff members from these agencies to participate more substantively in the identification of issues and in the design of the capacity assessment framework.
- The capacity self-assessment process entails the use of clear, simple language to allow respondents to adequately complete the assessment worksheets and provide appropriate ratings and qualitative information. This may entail translating the worksheets from English into other local languages or dialects, particularly in districts and/or offices where English is not commonly used. The Chhattisgarh experience revealed that even in offices where English was expected to be a familiar language, some respondents still had difficulty understanding some words and terminologies.
- The participation of agency representatives as part of the Capacity Assessment team is crucial and non-negotiable to further strengthen ownership of the capacity assessment process and the capacity development strategies, and to facilitate logistical and technical support from the agencies. These representatives need to be officially nominated by the agencies' senior officials, to ensure that their participation in the team is fully supported by the agency, and avoid potential conflicts in work assignments. The master trainers who had been trained as part of the Chhattisgarh pilot could serve as team leaders, who could nurture and guide the agency representatives throughout the process.
- For future capacity assessments, it may be useful to segregate the ratings of respondents according to staff position and/or seniority, to analyze (potential) discrepancies in perceptions of the capacity development needs and priorities of the agencies. Significant differences between ratings across staff positions could indicate weaknesses in coordination, communication, and internal capacity development within the organization, which needs to be addressed as well.

- The strength of the UNDP capacity development and capacity assessment methodology is in its participatory processes and the engagement with a broad intersection of officials and staff members in and across agencies. This naturally needs a good strategy in terms of timing, to avoid rushing the process which could potentially create information gaps. Particularly in dealing with huge organizations or departments, adequate time should be provided in the capacity assessment process.
- For future capacity assessments in other states, the possibility of inviting external stakeholders (e.g. partner organizations) to rate the agency using the same parameters as for the self-assessment may be explored. This could provide an external validation of the overall capacity development priorities of the organization. This however has to consider the sensitive nature of capacity assessments, and therefore such external agency validation should be clearly discussed and agreed upon at the design phase of the capacity assessment.

PART TWO

1. Assessing State-Level Capacities in Chhattisgarh⁵

Chhattisgarh came into being on 1 November 2000, when Madhya Pradesh was divided into two states. According to the 2001 census, the total population of Chhattisgarh is almost 2.1 crore, with approximately 20,378 villages, 96 tehsils, 146 blocks and 16 districts. Importantly, in accordance with sections 78 and 79 of the Madhya Pradesh Reorganisation Act, any law already in force in the State of Madhya Pradesh when Chhattisgarh was created remained applicable in the new state of Chhattisgarh. Accordingly, the Panchayati Raj legislation in force in Madhya Pradesh at the time the State was divided became applicable to Chhattisgarh. It is that law – now called the Chhattisgarh Panchayat Raj Adhiniyam, 1993, which forms the basis of the current panchayat system in place in Chhattisgarh.

Chhattisgarh operates a three-tier panchayat system, which is intended to bring government closer to the people. Chhattisgarh has approximately 9,820 Gram Panchayats at the village level, 146 Janpad Panchayat at the intermediate (block) level and 16 Zila Panchayat at the district level. Additionally, there is the Gram Sabha, which is the basic unit in the Panchayati Raj mechanism. The first panchayat elections were held in Chhattisgarh in January 2005.

Chhattisgarh has a large tribal population – 33% of the entire population. As such, a large proportion of the State has been declared as “Schedule V Areas” under the Constitution, which have special rights. Seven districts of Chhattisgarh are fully covered under Schedule V, namely, Surguja, Koriya, Jashpur, Kanker, Bastar, Dantewada and Korba. Another six districts are partially covered under Schedule V, namely Raigarh, Bilaspur, Durg, Rajnandgaon, Raipur and Dhamtari.

The Gram Panchayat

Gram Panchayats are the smallest unit of elected local-self governance, situated at the village level. Each Gram Panchayat area is divided into not less than ten and not more than twenty wards and each ward elects one Panch. The Gram Panchayat consists of the elected Panchs plus a Sarpanch, who is the head of the Gram Panchayat. An Up-Sarpanch is also elected, who acts as the Sarpanch’s deputy. Each Gram Panchayat also has a Secretary, who may service one or more Gram Panchayats. The Gram Sabha is a general body of electors, whereas the Gram Panchayat is an executive, elected body. The executive has to perform its duties as per directions given by the general body.

The Gram Sabha

There is a Gram Sabha for every village. The Gram Sabha consists of all the people who are registered in the list of voters of a village. The basic philosophy that underlies the concept of the Gram Sabha is that of participatory democracy. Gram Sabhas provide a local platform for people to meet and discuss local development problems and analyse the development and administrative actions of their elected representatives, thus ensuring transparency and accountability. Most importantly, a Gram Sabha provides an opportunity for the participation of all sections of the village – women, dalits, tribals and other marginalised groups – in planning and implementation of local development programmes.

⁵ This section is taken largely from “Paul, Sohini. 2006. The Right to Information and Panchayati Raj Institutions: Chhattisgarh as a Case Study. Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative.”
www.humanrightsinitiative.org

The Chhattisgarh PR Act 1993 gives special powers to the Gram Sabha. The Gram Sabha can monitor and question the functioning of the Gram Panchayat. The Act also provides that Gram Sabhas can make annual plans for the villages, to be passed onto higher levels of PRIs for integration. A Gram Sabha can also implement its own decisions (without depending on the Gram Panchayat) for projects valued up to Rs 3 lakhs. In Schedule V Areas, Gram Sabhas are constituted for each “community” which manages its affairs in accordance with the traditions and customs. Gram Sabhas can therefore be constituted for villages, hamlets or even a habitation. At least one meeting of the Gram Sabha must be held every three months in tribal-dominated panchayats. These meetings must be presided over by any member of the Scheduled Tribe of the Gram Sabha – not the Sarpanch or Up-Sarpanch – who is elected for this purpose by majority of members present in that meeting.

The Janpad Panchayat

Each district is divided into blocks, 19 which are a collection of villages. A Janpad Panchayat is constituted for each block. Every Janpad Panchayat consists of:

- Members who are elected by the voters in the block. Each block is divided into voting constituencies, usually between 10-25, and each constituency elects a member;
- All members of the State Legislative Assembly returned from the constituencies which wholly or partly fall within the block; and
- One-fifth of the Gram Panchayat Sarpanches in the territorial area of the block on a rotational basis for a period of one year. The Sarpanchs are selected by drawing lots.

Each Janpad Panchayat is headed by a President and Vice-President, who are elected by and from the elected members. Each Janpad Panchayat also has a Chief Executive Officer.

The Zila Panchayat

A Zila Panchayat is constituted for each district. The Zila Panchayat comprises:

- Members who are elected by the voters in the district. Each district is divided into voting constituencies, usually between 10-35, and each constituency elects a member;
- Members of Lok Sabha, Rajya Sabha and State Legislative Assembly returned from the district; and
- All Presidents of Janpad Panchayats in the district.

Each Zila Panchayat is headed by a President and Vice-President who are elected by and from among the elected members. Each Zila Panchayat has a Chief Executive Officer.

1.2 The Pilot Capacity Assessment in Chhattisgarh

A pilot capacity assessment was conducted in Chhattisgarh from 17-28 August 2009, focusing on key institutions that provide capacity development (mostly training) support to PRIs in the state. The specific objectives of the pilot capacity assessment were: 1) identifying existing capacities and capacity gaps in areas that are of priority to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) and the selected training institutions; 2) raising awareness among PRIs and training institutions about the need for systematic capacity analysis (by introducing the UNDP approach); 3) reaching consensus of opinion among PRIs and training institutions about the main capacity needs of PRIs and state level capacities; and 4) identifying appropriate capacity development responses that could address the capacity constraints and be supported by UNDP. The capacity assessment identified a number of core issues and challenges faced by the training institutions as well as planning board, which served as the

framework for identifying and assessing capacity gaps in each and across the focus institutions in Chhattisgarh. These institutions, henceforth referred to as capacity assessment focus institutions, include the following:

- The Department of Panchayati Raj (DPR)
- The Rural Development Department (RDD)
- The Administrative Training Institute (ATI)
- The State Institute for Rural Development (SIRD)
- The State Health Resource Centre and Health Department (SHRC)
- The Integrated Child Development Services Training Institute (ICDS TI)

In addition to the above institutions, other institutions were involved in the initial consultation workshops to determine the development issues and challenges in Chhattisgarh. These institutions included:

- The Planning Department and Planning Board
- Education Department
- Non-Government Organizations
- Panchayat Training Centres
- Extension Training Centres

The capacity assessment for state-level capacities was conducted 17-28 August 2000, upon the request of MoPR. The UNDP Regional Centre in Bangkok (RCB) and UNDP India provided technical support in adapting the CA framework according to the objectives of the CA, the local context, and the identified issues confronting MoPR. The overall objectives of the mission were to:

- Assess the capacity of a given State (i.e., Chhattisgarh) to implement the NCBF and for capacity development of PRI elected representatives and officials for district planning using UNDP's CA methodology adapted to India; and
- Develop a pool of experts (CA Master Trainers and CA Resource Persons) equipped with skills to undertake similar assessment independently by conducting a two-days training workshop

The CA process was conducted under the leadership of MoPR and followed a four-pronged approach, as illustrated in the capacity assessment workplan (see **Annex A**). For developing and piloting the CA framework in the context of a state in India, the state of Chhattisgarh was selected by MoPR given that it is a pilot state under BRGF, and is one of the states with high poverty incidence in India. The piloting of the CD approach was intended to generate as well a grounded understanding of the appropriateness and applicability of the capacity assessment tool for selected states in India particularly in the context of the NCBF, and generate information on possible adjustments in future capacity assessment rollouts. The pilot capacity assessment applied the following approach.

One, relevant documents and project reports were provided by MoPR and UNDP India prior to the CA mission, to provide background information and context for the mission. Additional documents were collected and reviewed during the mission as well.

Two, a training of trainers was conducted involving nine master-trainers/capacity assessment resource persons identified by MoPR (see **Annex B**). The master trainers are expected to provide technical support in conducting similar capacity assessments in other focus states in the country.

Three, a series of focus group discussions organizations/institutions providing capacity development support to PRIs were conducted. These included the following:

- A multistakeholder consultation workshop held on 19 August 2009 to discuss issues and challenges in the provision of capacity development services in Chhattisgarh. Participants during this consultation included more than 10 government departments/agencies (e.g., Department of Panchayati Raj, Department of Rural Development, Department of Forest, Department of Health, Department of Women and Children, School Education Department, State Planning and Urban Development Board, etc.), training institutions (e.g., State Institute for Rural Development, Administrative Training Institute, ETC/PTCs), and ten non-government institutions providing training services to communities. The consultation provided a set of key challenges and concerns which provided critical information in designing the capacity assessment framework for Chhattisgarh.
- Field visits to selected districts to consult demand side actors at the GP, JP, ZP and ULB levels;
- Self-Assessment consultation sessions with selected agencies (i.e., RDD, DPR, ATI, SHRC, ICDS and SIRD) which provided the opportunity for officials and staff members from these institutions to rate their institutions' capacities using a five-point rating scale, based on capacity development parameters designed by the capacity assessment team. The capacity self-assessment processes allowed representatives from each institution to provide qualitative information on their strengths and weaknesses, as well as quantitative scores for their capacities, using an evidence-based rating system of from 1 (very low capacity) to 5 (very high capacity). This allowed each agency to assess its present capacity levels for specific capacity development parameters, as well as indicate its desired capacity levels in three year's time, i.e., by the year 2012. Consolidated ratings⁶ were then calculated and analyzed by the CD Team and presented to MoPR along with recommendations.

⁶ Please see Part 1, Chapter 4 (page 18) for the specifics on the rating system.

2. Capacity Assessment Results

This section discusses the emerging capacity development needs among the focus agencies in Chhattisgarh. Overall, six major development issues or challenges were identified during the initial consultations, which served as the basis for designing the pilot capacity assessment framework. These core issues have been identified in Chapter 4 (part 1, page 15) of the report and are repeated below for easy reference, followed by discussions on the specific capacity assessment results for each focus agency.

- **PRI Policy Support and Institutional Arrangements.** Conceptualizing and formulating development policies, strategies, and programmes for Pachayati Raj institutions require analyzing a range of national and state-level policies and institutional arrangements that could contribute to, or constrain, effective and efficient delivery of services, including knowledge and capacity development services. The consultations revealed dichotomized approaches to service delivery, duplication and sometimes conflicting functions among state agencies, and lack of coherence with regard to overall direction and common strategy for addressing the needs of PRIs. This has likewise unearthed serious implications in the context of converging efforts and resources for and among PRIs, which are intended to serve as the first line of service delivery on the ground. On the other hand, the diversity of functions devolved to PRIs has not been fully matched by fiscal autonomy and authority, PRIs still largely dependent on line ministries for development funding.

DPR is considered as the primary institution at the state level responsible for supporting and strengthening the capacities and development needs of PRIs. DPR however, is not alone in this mandate as the provision of technical and development support to PRIs and communities are also part of the functional mandates of other departments. There is however, no commonly agreed framework or strategy for a streamlined approach to developing the capacities of PRIs, such that most agencies tend to have separate planning and implementation of their respective initiatives, with little coordination with completed and/or on-going relevant activities by other departments or agencies. PRIs have expressed fatigue over numerous, uncoordinated, and many times very similar training programmes offered by numerous agencies.

- **Human Resources.** Human resource capacities are at the heart of enhancing human development. In the case of training institutions and planning agencies in Chhattisgarh, there is an evident weakness in the quality and quantity of technical support staff even among training institutions which are supposed to provide the knowledge and expertise of PRIs in performing their functions. Staff skills and expertise are likewise constrained by inadequacies in organizational capacities, such as lack of appropriate facilities and equipment, outdated training modules and training approaches, lack of incentives for posting and deployment in Chhattisgarh, among others. While the training institutions engaged in this capacity assessment have very good quality technical faculty and staff members, there remains a need to develop and engage external trainers and resource persons who could provide the expertise that PRIs need beyond the resources currently available in these training institutions.
- **Leadership.** The 73rd and 74th amendments created new tiers of leadership in India, without whose active role and performance the desired goals of active decentralization and local empowerment would not materialize. On the other hand, long-established leaders in other line ministries and departments at the state level need to recognize, accept, and interact

with, these new sets of leaders towards more harmonized approaches to service delivery on the ground. Internally, the leadership creates and sets the dynamics within the organization, influences organizational culture, affects team and staff performance, and plays a critical role in setting a unified vision and direction for the organization. The role of Principal Secretaries in charge of PRIs, for instance, in leading and bringing together other agencies and forging a common direction and alignment of support that would build on successful initiatives and practices, minimize unnecessary duplications, and optimize complementarities, would be critical in this regard. The frequent rotation of senior leaders in various departments have created vacuums and discontinuity in the implementation of programmes, and strengthening seconds in command or junior leaders will be very helpful in reducing dependency on individual leaders.

- **Knowledge.** Despite the immense experience in the state (and in the entire country for that matter) in the provision of knowledge, skills, and capacities for development planning, programming and delivery of services, there is an increasing recognition of the need for more demand-responsive skills and knowledge development programmes given the strong expectations from PRIs. This therefore also refers to training institutions' challenges in tapping available information and expertise to analyze the existing needs of, and demands from PRIs, and develop and/or introduce existing and/or new knowledge and expertise to respond to such demands. There has been no substantive mapping of the priority capacity development needs for PRIs, which could range from administrative, legislative, financial management, and planning, implementation, and monitoring of local services delivery. Further there are currently no common standards or quality control for training modules and training provisions, such that the materials, process, and substance of many training programmes usually depended on the individual resource persons, with little consistency. Further, there remains no common depository of available modules, materials, and information on various thematic needs and applications, whether electronic or printed copies, that PRIs and the general public could readily access.
- **Accountability.** This core issue refers to practices and mechanisms that hold training institutions and government agencies accountable for performing their functions in responding to the needs of their clientele, and in providing suitable rewards for good organizational and individual performance. It also looks at mechanisms that would allow PRIs to provide feedback on the effectiveness and efficiency of training institutions and government agencies at the state level, as well as on the long-term impact and utility of the various training programmes and development activities introduced by state institutions. Currently there is no systematic feedback mechanism, nor accountability frameworks, that would officially inform state and national governments on the effectiveness of training institutions in providing their mandated services, nor of the utility of the various training programmes that they are rolling out.
- **Physical Resources and infrastructure.** Physical resources as defined in this report consist primarily of material resources and infrastructure, including facilities and equipment, and include not only their procurement but also their management and maintenance, to contribute to more efficient delivery of services. For instance, there is an urgent need for upgrading accommodation facilities for in-house training to ensure full participation of invited PRI representatives, as well as improving toilet and training facilities to recognize gender concerns.

Table 2 and **Figure 2**, which present a consolidated summary of current and desired capacity ratings across core issues and target agencies, show the extent and divergence of development issues faced by capacity development institutions in Chhattisgarh. Overall capacity rating across all institutions was 2.50, which indicates that there is a good overall capacity for formulating workplans, policies and targets, but generally weak capacities for implementation much less monitoring and evaluation. This is consistent with the fact that despite financial resources allocated by the national government to the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) and other institutions amounting to 300 crore through the National Capacity Building Framework (NCBF) which targets training of 10 lakh Panchyats, overall accomplishments have been relatively low at around 30% trained Panchayats, with spending only up to 60% of the total funding allocation. Furthermore, the quality of trainings provided to those who had undergone the courses, as well as the quality of absorption of the modules, are difficult to ascertain. These thus point to a possible gap in the absorptive capacity of state institutions and training centres to respond not only to government targets but to PRI's own needs as well. Understanding these capacity gaps is crucial to introducing capacity development strategies that would strengthen both service providers (duty bearers) and potential beneficiaries (claim holders), towards getting to the overall desired capacity rating of 4.24, which indicates an overwhelming desire across the departments and training institutions to be able to monitor and evaluate the impacts of their training and capacity development programmes effectively. This also entails looking beyond the traditional capacity developers, and introducing innovations to service provision, including identifying potential sectors or institutions that could provide qualified human resources and knowledge to support PRIs while building on and complementing the work of state agencies and training institutions.

Among the six target institutions, the State Health Resource Centre (SHRC) of the Health Department received the highest rating (3.47 current rating, and desired rating of 4.52), which indicates that SHRC has been able to implement most of its programmes effectively. On the other hand, the Department of Panchayati Raj (DPR) received the lowest (1.91, with a desired rating of 3.55), which indicates that DPR staff members acknowledge that it has weak capacities for planning and formulating state policies and strategies including formulation and identification of training programmes, as well as in implementing such. The desired rating of 3.55 indicates as well that DPR realizes the challenges that it faces, and that its desire in the next three years is to focus on its planning and implementation capacities. Interestingly, the Rural Development Department (RDD), which has had a longer history and experience in the province, had received a capacity rating below 2.0 as well, which indicates that its current capacity is not too far behind DPR.

Among the other recognized training institutions in the state, the State Institution for Rural Development (SIRD) and ICDS received an almost similar rating, i.e., 2.55 and 2.56 respectively, while ATI received a lower rating of 2.34. These ratings indicate that among these three institutions, SIRD and ICDS perceived themselves to have better capacities for implementing its programmes. More detailed capacity assessment results are presented in the succeeding pages.

Table 2. Consolidated capacity ratings across capacity assessment focus institutions in Chhattisgarh, 2009.

Core Issue	Summary of Current/Desired Capacity Ratings						Overall Average
	DPR	RDD	SIRD	ATI	SHRC	ICDS	
Institutional Arrangement/Development	1.55/3.41	2.19/3.92			3.24/4.33		2.33/3.89
Human Resources	1.68/3.53	1.94/3.79	2.60/4.50	2.35/3.37			2.14/3.80
Physical Resources	2.50/3.70		2.98/4.52				2.74/4.11
Leadership		1.89/3.71		2.60/3.56	3.89/4.59		2.79/3.95
Knowledge		2.00/3.67	2.66/3.95	1.90/3.05	3.52/4.55	2.68/4.69	2.55/3.98
Mutual Accountability		1.85/3.75	1.96/3.79	2.50/3.92	3.23/4.60		2.38/4.02
Convergence						2.45/4.68	2.45/4.68
Participation						2.74/4.66	2.74/4.66
Planning						2.63/4.68	2.63/4.68
Monitoring and Evaluation						2.28/4.68	2.28/4.68
Overall Average	1.91/3.55	1.97/3.77	2.55/4.19	2.34/3.48	3.47/4.52	2.56/4.68	2.50/4.24

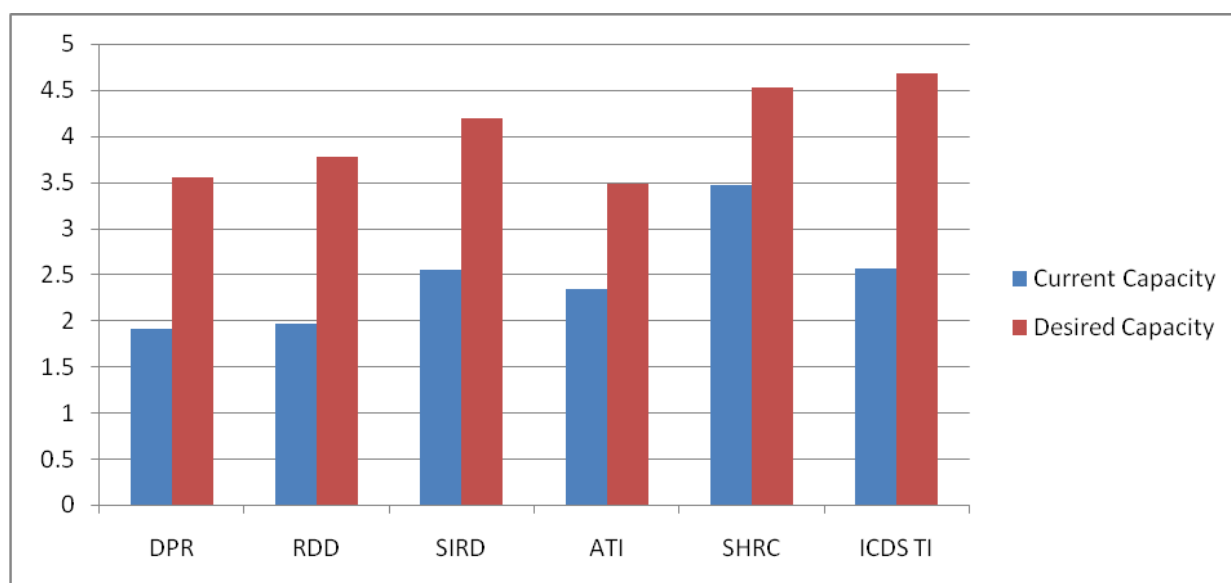


Figure 2. Consolidated capacity assessment results in Chhattisgarh, 2009.

2.1 The Department of Panchayati Raj (DPR)

Among the focus institutions in Chhattisgarh for the pilot capacity assessment, DPR was the most recently established. These teething challenges are quite evident in its overall rating of 1.91, and in the issues that its officials and staff members identified. Of the three major issues or challenges confronting the organization, institutional arrangements/development issues received the lowest ratings (1.55), while human resource issues were a close second with a rating of 1.68 (see **Figure 3**). The capacity parameters that received the lowest ratings (see **Table 3**) likewise consisted mostly of institutional development and human resource capacity needs – strong indications that DPR officials and staff members are finding it challenging to perform their functions given existing organizational structures, staffing, and staff competencies.

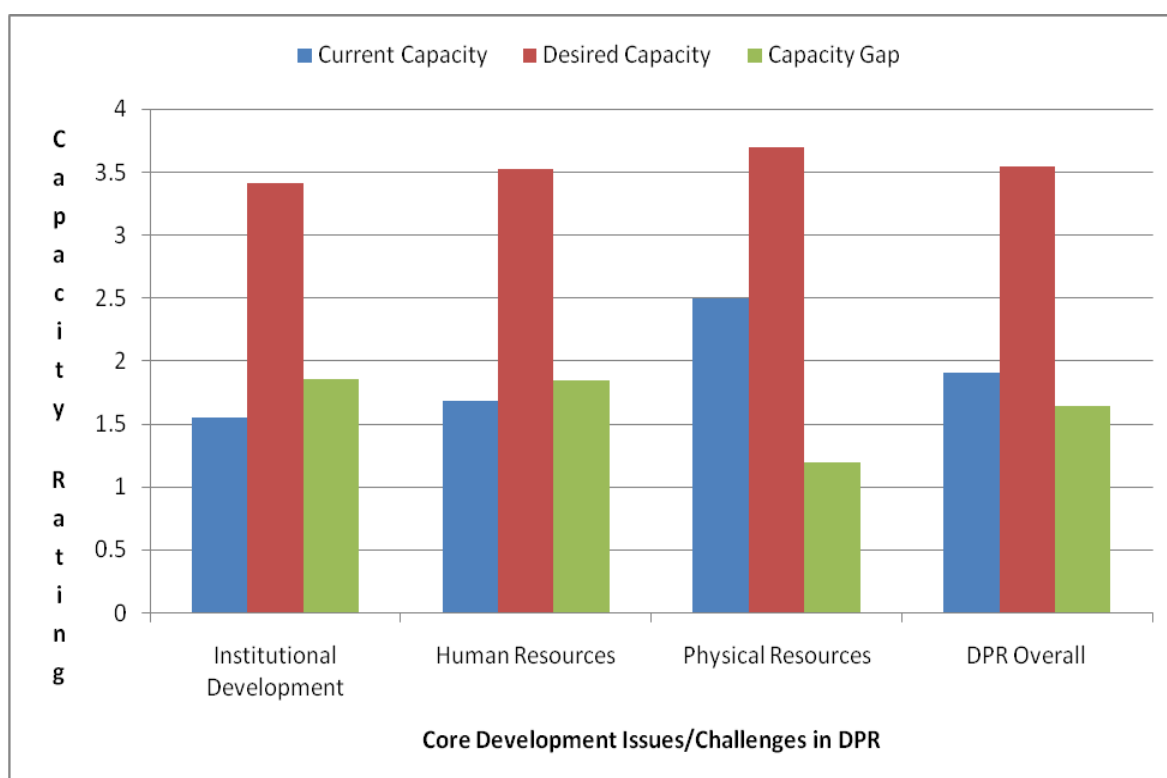


Figure 3. Capacity assessment results for DPR (Chhattisgarh), 2009.

There is an evident need for introducing and institutionalizing systems within DPR, particularly with regard to strengthening coordination of capacity development and training activities for PRIs. Foremost among its self-identified challenges is on the tracking, monitoring, and follow-up of training programmes introduced by various agencies for PRIs, to ensure complementarity among various initiatives and avoid unnecessary duplication. Presently, there is no coherent system for a coordinated training programme for all PRIs, and there has been no systematic assessment of the skills and knowledge needs of PRIs. A State Perspective Training Plan (SPTP) as an overall framework would significantly contribute to an enhanced training provision in the state and its development highly recommended.

Most training programmes are offered largely on a supply-driven basis, i.e. agencies and training institutes generally offer a package of training programmes for PRIs which based on this capacity

assessment, many PRIs find unattractive as these programmes do not support their real needs. Most training programmes are likewise largely information drives or seminars on national and/or state policies, guidelines, and programmes, but with little skills development provision. Chhattisgarh lacks a common repository of information (i.e. database and public website) on the various training programmes offered and delivered by agencies and training institutions, making it difficult to capture the extent of support currently offered/provided to the PRIs, and how to measure and monitor impact.

DPR is the primary agency responsible for supporting the development of PRIs. However it has not been able to leverage on its strong national mandate to effect more comprehensive development support to PRIs, given inadequate financial and human resources capacities. For instance, there seems to be an inadequate understanding among other agencies/departments of the functions and programmes of DPR, and the type of support that it could offer to PRIs. The NCBF, which provides an excellent opportunity for convergence in strengthening PRIs, is perceived as still an initiative of MoPR/DPR, with little ownership by other agencies/organizations. There is therefore a need to strengthen MoPR and DPR's advocacy on its functions and initiatives, not only among other agencies but particularly among PRIs.

Critical at this point is the need to strengthen DPR's coordination functions, which should be one of its strengths. It must have the authority, and capacity, to genuinely lead and facilitate development support for PRIs, by serving as the focal agency for assessing, monitoring, documenting, and quality control over training and development programmes for PRIs.

Table 3. Capacity development parameters receiving the lowest scores, DPR, Chhattisgarh

Core Issue	Capacity Development Parameter	Capacity Rating
Institutional Development	DPR capacity to introduce and implement a system for monitoring and evaluating progress of training action plans	1.0
Institutional Development	DPR capacity to follow-up the outcomes/impacts of PRI training activities	1.0
Institutional Development	DPR capacity to introduce and implement an MIS to track number and quality of trained PRIs	1.0
Human Resources	DPR staff members' capacity to analyze lessons learned from various PRI training programs and improve training policies for the state	1.22
Institutional Development	DPR capacity to mobilize additional resources to implementing the training action plans	1.25
Institutional Development	DPR capacity to design and introduce a mentoring programme for PRIs	1.29
Human Resources	DPR leadership capacity to allocate sufficient budget for training of DPR staff members	1.40
Institutional Development	DPR capacity to advocate for NCBF, as the convergence policy, for capacity development across training institution and line departments	1.40
Human Resources	DPR staff members' capacity to establish a mechanism for monitoring progress of training programmes for PRIs	1.44
Institutional Development	DPR capacity to engage women, SC and ST PRIs in preparing a training perspective plans	1.50
Institutional Development	DPR capacity to adequately finance annual and perspective training action plans	1.50

2.2 The State Institute for Rural Development (SIRD)

The Chhattisgarh SIRD provides training, research and consultancy to support the development needs of the rural sector; its long term plan is to ensure the development of capacities of Gram Panchayats. Supported and managed by the Ministry of Rural Development and the Department of Rural Development – Chhattisgarh, SIRD as an autonomous knowledge provider to PRIs is challenged by a number of capacity gaps, including inadequate financial resources and human resources. The self-assessments yielded an average current capacity rating of 2.55 for SIRD and a desired rating of 4.19, which indicates the need for strengthening the agency’s implementation, monitoring and evaluation capacities.

Among all the identified core issues faced by SIRD, its physical resources and facilities received higher (and therefore more favorable) ratings, while its knowledge base and human resource issues fared equally well (see **Table 4 and Figure 4**). On the other hand, mutual accountability issues, such as the organization’s capacity to reward and hold staff members and consultants accountable based on their performance, measuring the impact of training programmes, and making available broadly its budgetary and spending figures, among others, received an average rating of 1.96, indicating that there are at present insufficient guidelines and strategies for increasing accountability within the organization. The SIRD capacity development parameters that received the lowest ratings involved budget and financial capacities (**Table 4**), particularly with regard to allocating seed funds to support research activities of faculty members, and in improving its training facilities.

Performance-based rewards and accountability systems within SIRD follow the standard performance appraisal system of the government, which is not adequate nor fully appropriate for SIRD particularly its academic faculty, leading to failures in performance-based appraisals. Among its training beneficiaries, SIRD likewise has inadequate systems for tracking its ‘success rates’, i.e., how have the lessons from its trainings actually benefited its trainees, and how many trainees have fully integrated the lessons from the trainings into their respective functions and authorities. This issue is compounded by the lack of sufficient baselines, given that SIRD does not often conduct training needs assessments (TNA) particularly for trainings focusing on dissemination of information on new laws, policies, and guidelines. It is apparent as well that SIRD has so far treated its clients as a homogeneous group, rather than designing training courses according to different typologies and levels of clients. This has resulted to some challenges as well, such as few women participating in training courses, lack of adequate understanding and absorption of the modules, and continued emphasis on quantity (i.e., number of training courses and number of training graduates) rather than quality of training delivery, training participants, and application of lessons/information from the trainings.

Table 4. Capacity development parameters receiving the lowest scores, SIRD, Chhattisgarh

Core Issue	Capacity Development Parameter	Capacity Rating
Knowledge	SIRD capacity to allocate an annual budget/seed fund for faculty’s research activities	1.58
Accountability	SIRD capacity to make public and available online its institutional budget and spendings	1.69
Physical Resources	SIRD capacity to introduce and apply a Management Information System (MIS)	1.73
Knowledge	SIRD capacity to allocate sufficient budget for training facilities (e.g., library, internet connectivity, etc.)	2.12
Human Resources	SIRD capacity to develop long-term financial plans	2.04

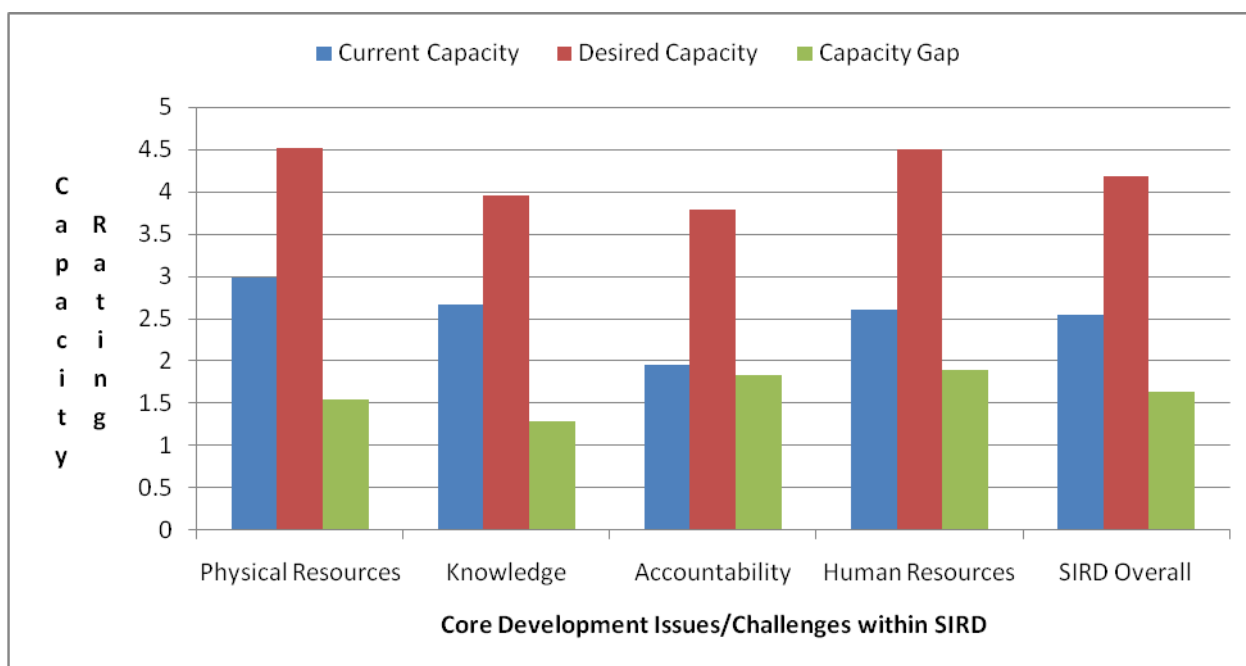


Figure 4. Capacity assessment results for SIRD (Chhattisgarh), 2009.

2.3 The Administrative Training Institute (ATI)

The Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs) are the apex training bodies for civil servants including PRIs at the state level, with courses offered on public administration and management, financial management, seminars on national and state policies and programmes, women and children’s development, among others. In Chhattisgarh, the ATI self-assessment results provided a current capacity rating of 2.34 and a desired rating of 3.48, which indicates relatively good capacities for formulating action plans and strategies, but relatively weak implementation capacities. The capacity assessment likewise revealed a number of specific challenges that constrain ATI’s effective performance, particularly with regard to facilities and resources required to modernize its modules, extent of delivery of training courses, as well as in ensuring effective follow up to its training programmes. There also seems to be a prevailing perception among stakeholders that ATI is an information provider, i.e., it disseminates information and guidelines on national and state policies and legislations, and while it provides trainings, some PRIs have indicated that ATI needs to improve the delivery of its training courses by making them attractive and interactive, responsive to the skills and training needs of PRIs, and gender sensitive.

Table 5 and Figure 5 both show the recognition within ATI of the need to strengthen its current knowledge complement and human resource competencies to allow it to perform its functions more effectively. These include the need for faculty and staff members to be exposed to the state-of-the-art on adult learning methodologies, access to various relevant training modules and case studies, and institutionalizing a learning culture within the organization, to allow lessons learned from previous trainings as well as M&E reports to strengthen knowledge and competencies within the organization.

Table 5. Capacity development parameters receiving the lowest scores, ATI, Chhattisgarh

Core Issue	Capacity Development Parameter	Capacity Rating
Knowledge	Capacity to provide on-line access of its training modules to training participants	1.00
Human Resources	Faculty’s capacity to integrate M&E modules in its training programs	1.18
Human Resources	Capacity to introduce in-service training, exposure trips or consultancy as part of its long term strategy for the development of its staff members	1.64
Human Resources	Capacity to design effective tools for training needs assessments	1.73
Knowledge	Faculty capacity to widely disseminate training M&E reports	1.73
Accountability	Capacity to implement recommendations from audit or M&E reports	1.79
Knowledge	Faculty capacity to document lessons learned from its training programs	1.93
Human Resources	Capacity to recruit competent faculty	2.00

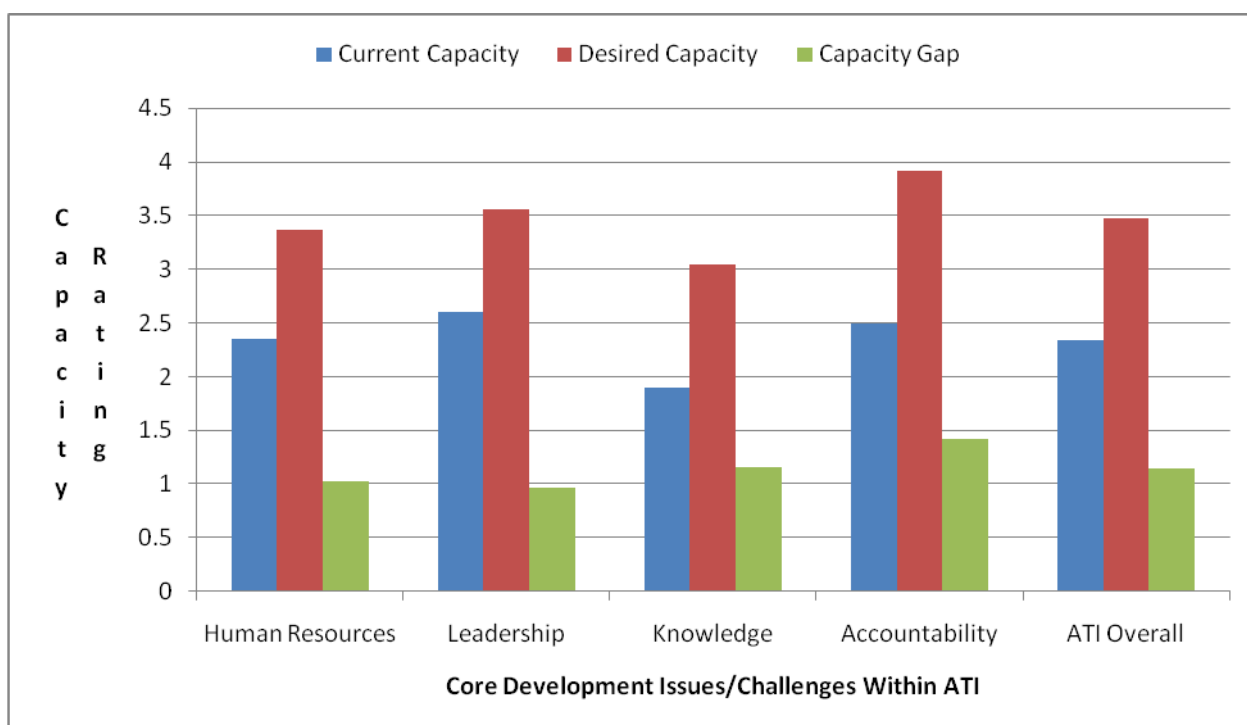


Figure 5. Capacity assessment results for ATI (Chhattisgarh), 2009.

2.4 The State Health Resource Center (SHRC)

Compared to the other assessed institutions, the Chhattisgarh State Health Resource Center (SHRC) fared comparatively well, receiving the highest current capacity rating (3.47) and a desired rating of 4.52 (or a gap of 1.05), reflecting the organization’s desire to move from good implementation to effective monitoring and evaluation of its functions and results. SHRC in fact is currently looking more closely into the monitoring and evaluation aspects of its programs through strengthening their social audit components, towards strengthening community capacities as well. This strong rating for its implementation capacity was consistent with the focused approach of SHRC to improving community health, particularly women and children.

Table 6 indicates SHRC’s capacities that received the lowest ratings, most of which involved broader institutional development challenges, such as partnering and engaging with other stakeholders, including PRIs. The first three lowest capacity development parameters indicated in **Table 6**, for instance, reflect SHRC’s expressed capacity constraints in broadening its target audiences, particularly in providing regular technical support to PRIs. Currently, SHRC’s mandate and activities do not specifically focus on strengthening PRIs per se – such alignment would need more dedicated resources than SHRC currently possesses. There remains a gap in leveraging on the strengths of SHRC, including its successful training modules and programmes, the trust of and engagement with communities, and facilitation and training skills of its community development workers, to benefit the PRIs more broadly in the state. The continuity and sustainability of SHRC’s initiatives could be threatened by its institutional weaknesses, including a salary structure that is not conducive to attracting more qualified personnel into the organization. Existing civil service systems likewise constrain timely recruitment of personnel into the organization, which has a large number of vacant positions with many staff members holding contractual posts.

With a number of personnel and volunteers on the ground, the SHRC is witness to a number of challenges that PRIs face, which are compounded by the often duplicating and uncoordinated working arrangements among many government departments and agencies. In addition, weak leadership capacities among many community leaders have constrained strategic planning and effective development prioritization, with health issues usually given very low priority by local leaders who were reportedly more concerned with infrastructure projects (e.g., roads).

Table 6. Capacity development parameters receiving the lowest scores, SHRC, Chhattisgarh

Core Issue	Capacity Development Parameter	Capacity Rating
Institutional Development	SHRC capacity to identify and work with relevant stake holders like PRIs	2.90
Institutional Development	SHRC capacity to provide technical expertise to other training institutions on a continuous and regular basis	2.90
Institutional Development	SHRC capacity to tap into available and existing physical resources to use as training facilities (state-wide)	2.90
Accountability	SHRC capacity to put in place an effective system for staff appraisal	2.90
Institutional Development	SHRC capacity to assess training needs of women PRIs on health issues	3.10
Institutional Development	SHRC capacity to monitor CD programmes taken up for PRIs	3.10

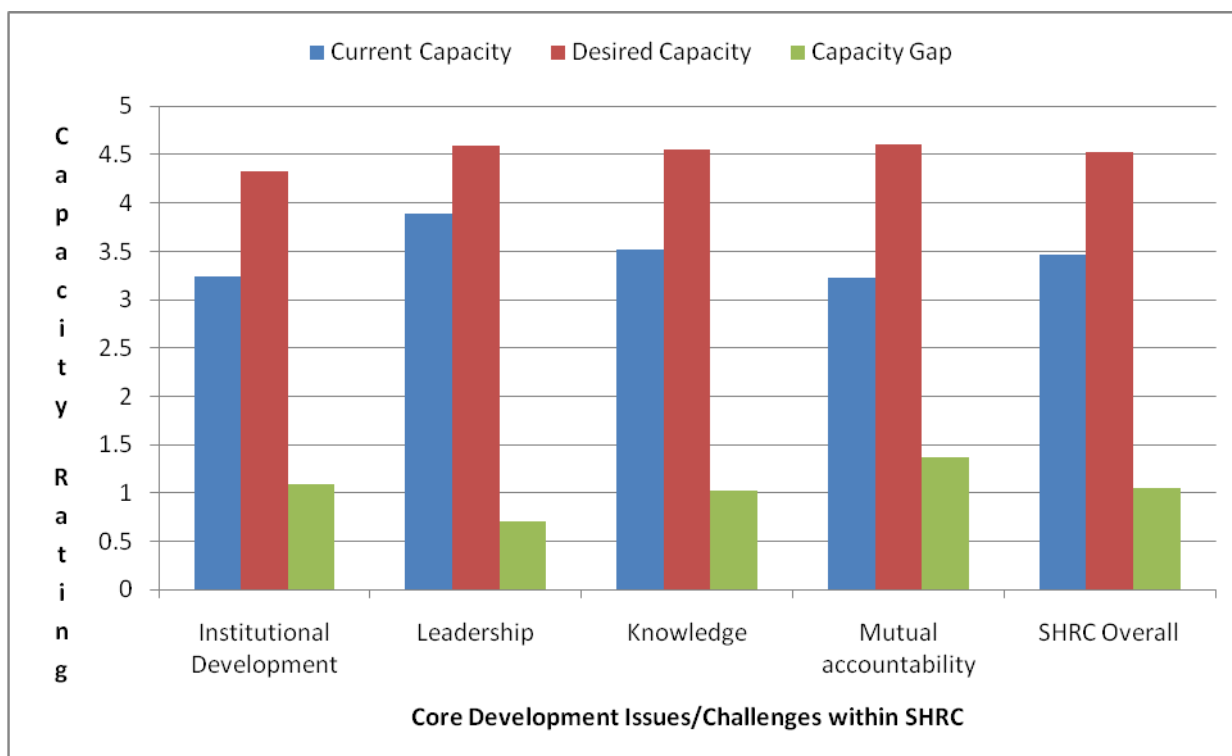


Figure 6. Capacity assessment results for SHRC (Chhattisgarh), 2009.

2.5 The Integrated Child Development Services Training Institute (ICDS TI)

Similar to SHRC, the mandate and initiatives of the Integrated Child Development Services Training Institute (ICDS TI) currently does not focus on supporting the needs of PRIs per se, but rather of children, women and youth in their target communities. ICDS TI's overall capacity rating was 2.56, which indicates that it has adequate capacities for target setting, workplanning, and policy and strategy formulation, but still has weaknesses in fully implementing its targets and programmes, particularly given the scope and magnitude of the development needs of women and children in the state. **Figure 7** shows that the issues of convergence and monitoring and evaluation were among the key challenges faced by the organization, further substantiated by the parameters receiving the lowest ratings as shown in Table 7. ICDS TI staff members had indicated from the assessment that coordination of training programmes, working with PRIs to monitor the impact of programmes, mainstreaming gender and children's concerns in sectoral ministries'/departments' programmes, and instituting an effective monitoring and evaluation framework for such development initiatives, are among the key capacity needs of the organization.

Table 7. Capacity development parameters receiving the lowest scores, ICDS-TI, Chhattisgarh

Core Issue	Capacity Development Parameter	Capacity Rating
Monitoring and Evaluation	ICDS TI capacity to develop a policy for creating an updated pool of resource persons	1.71
Planning	ICDS TI capacity to put in place a monitoring and evaluation framework on its human resource development policy	1.78
Convergence	CDS TI capacity to coordinate training programmes with relevant institutions such as SIRD and SHRC	1.80
Convergence	ICDS TI capacity to actively involve and work with PRIs in monitoring the impact of its training programmes	1.80
Knowledge	ICDS TI capacity to include engagement and coordination plans with PRIs, including women, SC and ST PRIs, in its Perspective Plan	1.80
Convergence	ICDS TI capacity to influence ministries/ agencies to include and mainstream gender and children in PRI training programmes	1.89
Knowledge	ICDS TI capacity to evaluate the quality of its CD materials	1.90
Participation	ICDS TI capacity to modify and adapt its CD programmes based on the feedback from PRIs and other programme participants	1.90
Knowledge	ICDS TI capacity to make readily available updated documentation on best practices and case studies	2.00
Knowledge	ICDS TI capacity to put in place a common reporting system	2.00
Monitoring and Evaluation	ICDS TI capacity to assess the competency of trainers to handle needs of women, SC and ST PRIs	2.00

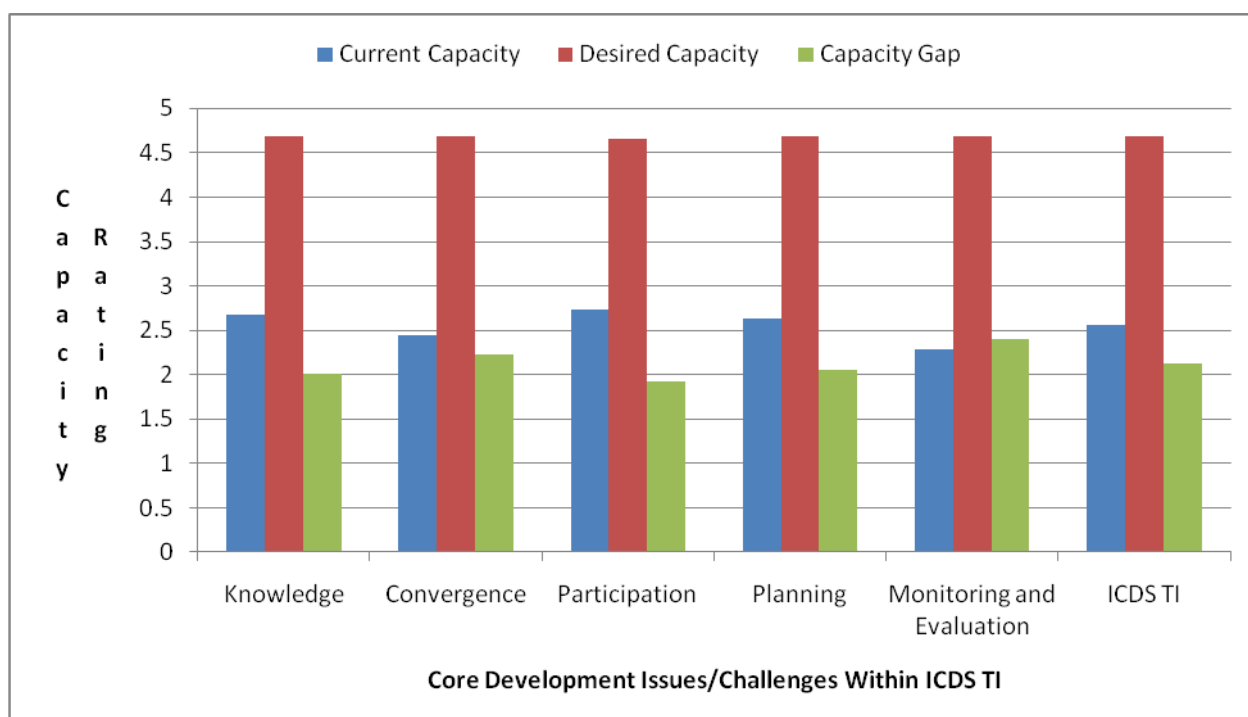


Figure 7. Capacity assessment results for ICDS TI (Chhattisgarh), 2009.

2.6 The Rural Development Department (RDD)

The self-assessment of the Rural Development Department (RDD) yielded an overall rating of 1.97, which indicates that it has relatively good capacities for setting and formulating policies and strategies, but remains challenged with regard to fully implementing its strategies and workplans. Among all the major development issues that it faces, accountability, leadership and human resources emerged as the priority issues (**Table 8** and **Figure 8**) within the department, with ratings of 1.85, 1.89, and 1.94 respectively, while institutional arrangements had received a higher rating of 2.19. These ratings indicate that, while RDD has traditionally been the main avenue for development support on the ground, the department itself has been facing serious development and capacity constraints in performing the tasks and functions that have been assigned of them.

Table 8 further shows that budgetary constraints, as well as strategic planning, active engagement with stakeholders for more effective rural development planning and programming, strengthening skills and competencies of RDD officials and staff members, and strengthening transparency and public accountability over RDD programmes, need stronger attention within the department.

Table 8. Capacity development parameters receiving the lowest scores, Rural Development Department, Chhattisgarh

Core Issue	Capacity Development Parameter	Capacity Rating
Accountability	RDD capacity to provide adequate information to stakeholders to allow their effective engagement in RDD planning	1.40
Human Resources	RDD staff capacity and competency to develop partnerships with other departments to support the relevant needs of PRIs	1.60
Leadership	RDD capacity and autonomy to assign staff members to specific thematic areas based on competencies and needs of the organization	1.60
Leadership	RDD leadership capacity to allocate sufficient budget for training of RDD staff members	1.60
Leadership	RDD leadership capacity to allocate sufficient budget to recruit competent officials and staff members	1.60
Knowledge	RDD capacity to introduce participatory planning process to guide its long term strategy	1.75
Institutional Development	RDD capacity to introduce and implement an MIS to track number and quality of its trained PRIs.	1.80
Leadership	RDD leadership autonomy and capacity to recruit competent officials and staff members	1.80
Human Resources	RDD capacity to introduce rewards and accountability systems based on performance appraisal results	1.80
Accountability	RDD capacity to introduce accountability mechanisms (i.e., who is responsible and accountable for which targets) in its long term strategies	1.80
Accountability	RDD capacity to make relevant information publicly (transparently) available	1.80

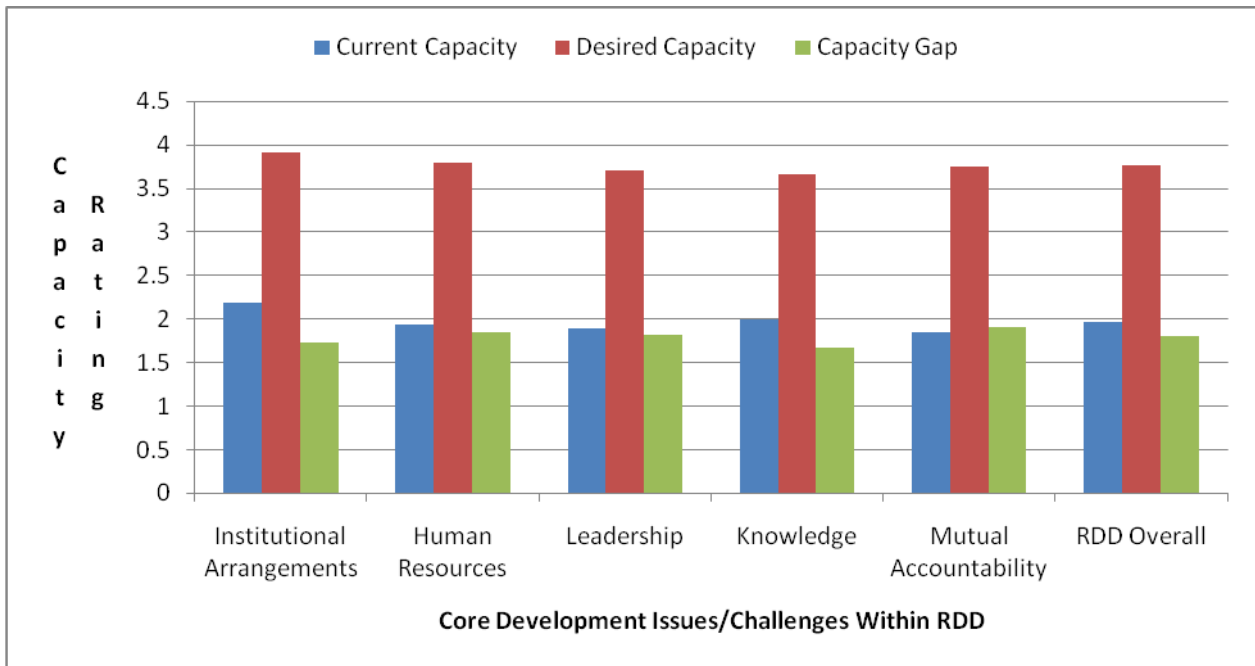


Figure 8. Capacity assessment results for RDD (Chhattisgarh), 2009.

3. Capacity Development Response: Some Recommendations

Based on the capacity assessment results, the capacity development response will be geared towards improving current capacities in Chhattisgarh from a rating of 2.50 (i.e., adequate capacities for policy and strategy planning and formulation) to a rating of 4.24 (i.e., adequate capacities for full implementation, monitoring and evaluation) by 2012, bridging a capacity gap of 2.26 within a span of three years. While this might be a tall order to accomplish within three years, the workplan presented in this section consists of capacity development strategies that are categorized as quick impact (i.e., should be implemented within one year), medium-term (i.e., within two to three years), and long-term strategies, which could take three to five years or longer).

The proposed capacity development response for Chhattisgarh is anchored on four major components (**Figure 9**), which respond to the identified challenges and the priority capacity development needs of focus institutions as emerging from the pilot capacity assessment. Together, the four components are expected to contribute towards strengthening capacities of these institutions which are then expected to contribute to the development of PRIs in the state for good governance towards more effective delivery of basic services. The sections below discuss the key provisions of the capacity development response, and are divided into strategies that are cross-cutting or applicable to all the focus institutions, followed by strategies that are specific to these institutions. **Annex D** on the other hand presents a summary of the phased plan for implementing the said strategies.

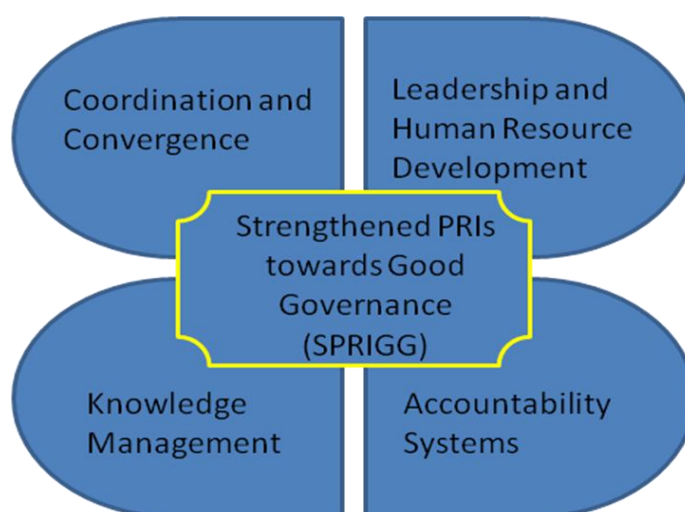


Figure 9. Proposed Capacity Development Framework for strengthening training institutions and PRIs in Chhattisgarh

3.1 Policy and Cross-Cutting Recommendations

PRIs have their distinct development and capacity needs which no single institution could support and satisfy by itself. Developing the capacities of the huge number of PRIs in Chhattisgarh is a daunting task that entails convergence around: one, a common set of capacity development targets among all capacity providers covering various PRIs, i.e., a state capacity development perspective plan; and two, institutions that could lead the provision of specific knowledge and/or skills on specific themes or development needs of PRIs. The capacity assessment revealed that existing training institutions in Chhattisgarh are ill-equipped to fully support the provisions of the NCBF, much less respond to the capacity development demands of PRIs. While some overall recommendations would relate to management practices (e.g. a shift from activity-based planning to results-based management (RBM) approaches), the focus of the recommendations below is on specific strategies for strengthening synergy and cooperation among “capacity providers”, as well as recommendations for strengthening the capacities of the PRIs themselves (i.e. as beneficiaries), based on information drawn from the capacity assessment.

3.1.1 Establish a State-level Standing Committee for Capacity Development of Panchayati Raj Institutions (SC CDPRI)

The BRGF notes the need to establish five-year State Capacity Building Perspective Plans as part of the NCBF, with nodal agencies to be established to lead the preparation of such. The formulation of such a state level perspective plan provides an opportunity for various departments to come together, sharing their knowledge and experience in formulating the state plan, while identifying their potential roles and contributions in its implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The establishment of a **State Standing Committee⁷ for Capacity Development of Panchayati Raj Institutions (SC CDPRI)**, with membership from key sectoral departments and training institutions, both public and private, and non-government organizations, as the venue for discussing and recommending policy changes which could improve the enabling environment for PRIs, options for strengthening the key institutions in the state, formulating the capacity building perspective plan and discussing capacity development options, is therefore expected to serve as a venue for dialogue and promotion of local ownership of such plan. The Department of Panchayati Raj (DPR) would play a catalytic and strategic role in coordinating the preparation of the perspective plan, and is proposed as Chair of the SC CDPRI given that the plan ideally should cover not only trainings but organizational and institutional systems and mechanisms as well. The capacities of the DPR itself would need to be strengthened to effectively lead the SC CDPRI and it is suggested that administrative support be provided so that the committee can work efficiently.

⁷ At national level a Standing Committee for Strengthening Institutions engaged with the Capacity Development of the PRIs was constituted on 27-05-09 at NIRD, Hyderabad. Members of the Standing Committee are from the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Urban-Development, Department of Personnel and Training as well as the Planning Commission. The MoPR has requested States to set up a similar committee at State level; a view may be taken to encourage membership of additional or different institutions/departments as the Capacity Assessment had identified other bodies as potential capacity developers (e.g. SHRC).

3.1.2 Leadership Development

Leadership development will be crucial to the effective functioning of PRIs in Chhattisgarh, particularly for newly elected representatives/assigned officials who had not previously held public positions. Other than basic information on national and state policies, legislations, guidelines, and procedures, the capacity assessment revealed the need for enhancing more fundamental aspects of leadership, not only among the assessed institutions, but with PRIs as well. Senior and junior (or second- in-command) officials from the assessed institutions, as well as key senior/junior officials from sectoral ministries providing direct, major development support to PRIs, as well as PRI officials, are recommended to take part in training courses and exposure missions at the block, district, state, national and/or international level, distance and self-learning courses, on-the-job training, and immersion programmes on the following subjects:

- Visioning, Systems Thinking and Strategic Planning, particularly engaging stakeholders in policy formulation;
- Leadership Styles and Institutional Development
- Results-Based Management
- Change Management, particularly with regard to building coalitions, alliances, and champions
- Conflict Resolution and Transition/Transformation
- Negotiation and Consensus Building
- Team Building and Communications
- Best Practices in Local Governance and Local Services Delivery (through exposure to actual practices in relevant countries in the region)
- Mentoring and Coaching

The level of exposure would need to be determined for each individual as appropriate. As a practice, it is important for the senior leadership to nurture the potential and skills of more junior officials and/or staff members in their respective organizations, to institutionalize knowledge, learning, and team building, particularly in the light of frequent turnover of officials. Internal learning mechanisms therefore should be instituted given their cost efficiency. In addition, officials should provide appropriate guidance and encouragement to staff members to avail of learning opportunities, whether through circulating useful documents, case studies, or research papers; or through allowing staff members to participate in various learning opportunities in and outside of the country.

3.1.3 Launching of “Panchayat Champion” Awards

The lack of appropriate and effective incentive systems has challenged the sustainability of good practices and initiatives, and likewise has failed to give encouragement to high performing individuals and organizations in the state. The Panchayat Champion awards will recognize individuals and organizations who have initiated innovations in local governance and service delivery that have created positive impact to communities whether at the district, block or village panchayat levels. The Panchayat Champion Awards will be given annually with full media coverage, with the awards handed out by very senior National and State Government officials, e.g. the Minister and/or Senior State Officials to give the awards sufficient prominence that would generate social, political, and media interest. A team of eminent personalities from Chhattisgarh with strong credibility and widely respected by all sectors, will comprise the Panchayat Champion Awards Steering Committee (PCASC) which will set the criteria for the

awards, define nomination guidelines and procedures, and review the nomination short-list. Short-listing would be done by a nodal Capacity Development institution (possibly CGSIRD).

Each Panchayat Champion will be awarded a plaque (or a sculpture/symbol representing the Panchayats) which will state the innovations and contributions of the recipient to Panchayat development, with a token financial reward of a maximum of 50,000 INR if funds are available. The main attraction for the award should not be its monetary reward, but rather the personal and/or institutional recognition as handed out by senior government officials in the State/country.

3.1.4 Improvement and Sharing of Training Facilities

Part of the human resource development challenge in Chhattisgarh is the inadequacy of training facilities, in particular accommodation for in-house training programmes. Both SIRD and ATI have limited accommodation facilities, such that a number of training programmes have had to start at 9 am and finish at 3 pm, to allow travel time for participants from and to their respective home locations. This short window for training (maximum of five hours, allowing for one hour lunch and tea) does not augur well for effective absorption of the modules, considering as well the fatigue of participants in traveling to the training venue. Women likewise raised the issue of toilet facilities, which in many government training venues are not adequate for women's needs. Poor training facilities could certainly undermine training programmes.

To address this challenge, a two-pronged approach is being proposed. One, improve available accommodations at ATI and SIRD, by upgrading existing infrastructure or building dormitory-type structures that will accommodate sizable number of training participants. Such facilities should be made available to and open to all training courses designed and intended for PRIs, on a first come first served basis, with priority to ATI and SIRD training programmes. Two, expand and strengthen block/district level training centres (i.e. ETCs and PTCs), which will serve as local venues for training programmes. This will allow trainings to be conducted at the community level, rather than requiring community members to travel to training venues. This will ensure more community participation in meetings, allow the resource persons to visit and experience the community, and provide a local venue for other dialogues and consultations. Such training facility should be managed and maintained by DPR, with minimal maintenance fees to be set by the SC CDPRI, and paid by organizations/agencies sponsoring trainings in the said venue.

3.2 Agency-Specific Recommendations

These capacity development recommendations are made on the basis of priority capacity development needs as resulting from the assessment scores and the consultation process. These are not meant to discount other existing capacity development needs of these agencies, but are rather aimed at providing strategic responses that could contribute to the long-term development of these agencies.

3.2.1 Capacity Development Response for DPR

DPR is a new entity, and thus still faces a number of teething issues that all new structures face. The capacity assessment revealed two areas of emphasis for DPR's capacity development, i.e., institutional development, and human resource development. Thus for DPR, the capacity development strategy will focus on how to develop its competency and competitive advantage, and the results that it has to produce in the short- and long-term, towards enhancing its credibility and reputation as an organization.

3.2.1.1 Human Resource Development

As the premier support organization responsible for PRIs, DPR officials and staff members are expected to have basic information and knowledge of key national policies and guidelines relating to Pachayats, in particular the Constitutional provisions, the 73rd Amendment Act, and relevant policy issuances and guidance from MoPR on operationalizing these constitutional provisions (e.g., formulating, managing and monitoring implementation of state level Pachayat Raj Act), providing technical and administrative guidance on to PRIs on their specific roles and responsibilities, and assisting in coordinating PR-level initiatives. In this regard, DPR officials and staff members should be provided adequate technical knowledge and skills on the following topics:

- Local Governance and Decentralization Approaches and Tools
- Strategic Planning and Results-Based Management
- Programme Management and Coordination
- Fiscal decentralization and financial systems management, monitoring and reporting
- Leadership Development
- Monitoring and Evaluation Systems and Tools
- Stakeholder Engagement Tools and Methodologies

For all trainings that will be recommended here and/or to be introduced as part of the capacity development programme, it is strongly suggested that the following be incorporated in training packages, to ensure absorption and institutionalisation.

- A clear criteria for the selection of participants to each training course
- A pre-training evaluation to be completed at least two weeks prior to the training to inform the curriculum and the facilitators/resource persons of the background of and expectations from the participants
- A post-training evaluation to be completed by the participants immediately after the training to gauge what they had learned from the training and their potential application to the functions of the MoPR and their respective divisions

- A re-entry plan to be completed by each officer/staff member participating in the training. A re-entry plan describes how they plan to apply, with specific activities, timelines and resources, within their own offices or work, the skills and knowledge that they learned from the training.
- Mandatory “re-echo” or presentation of the lessons/skills learned from the training to all officers/staff members within two weeks of return to office

3.2.1.2 Introducing a Coordination and Monitoring System (CMS) within DPR

Presently, there remains no consistent mechanisms to consolidate, coordinate and monitor all the capacity development and sectoral support programmes that are being provided for PRIs in Chhattisgarh. Within DPR, the capacity assessment likewise revealed a need to strengthen internal monitoring and evaluation systems, linked to external support programmes organized for PRIs. For DPR therefore, it is critical to establish a dedicated Coordination and Monitoring unit, which will be responsible for the following:

- Spearhead the formulation of a results-based, integrated monitoring and evaluation plan for DPR in collaboration with other DPR divisions, including designing M&E indicators, data collection methodologies, and database management options;
- Establish coordination mechanisms with relevant line ministries/departments in Chhattisgarh to establish a database of development programmes and training activities that are completed, on-going, and planned, for the state;
- Lead the conduct of a high-level semi-annual progress review meeting to present and discuss the status of progress of development programmes in Chhattisgarh;
- Lead the planning and conduct of M&E training activities for relevant DPR officials and staff members, as well as other line ministries/departments and PRIs (on demand);
- Prepare an annual report presenting a summary of the various development and capacity building activities in Chhattisgarh for PRIs, their respective progress and accomplishments, an analysis of lessons learned, and recommendations for improving programming and capacity development in the State.

3.2.1.3 Introducing a Roster of PR Mentors and Coaches within DPR

Within DPR, it is crucial to establish a team of Mentors and Coaches, who could provide quality, consistent advice to PRIs particularly with regard to relevant policies and development programming. These Mentors and Coaches would also serve as in-house experts and advocates, and as much as possible should represent key divisions/units within DPR. They will be given full training support on PRI policies and guidelines, and mentoring and coaching skills, and therefore should be selected on the basis of the following: (1) should be tenured with DPR for at least the next three years, (2) have at least five years’ experience working with PR institutions in the field, and (3) have good communication and facilitation skills. Designated PR Mentors/Coaches will serve as in-house experts and trainers, and will serve as DPR’s first line of technical support to PRIs based on demand.

3.2.2 Capacity Development Response for Rural Development Department (RDD)

For RDD, the challenge is to strengthen its capacities towards stronger implementation of development programmes, policies and projects, as evidenced from the capacity assessment. The recommendations presented therefore specifically build on RDD's current strengths and expertise, towards generating a stronger approach to the capacity development of the organization as well as PRIs - one of their primary clients.

3.2.2.1 Strengthening Accountability Systems through Results Based Management

RDD staff members have tremendous experience on the ground. Several critical aspects of human resources development however, are further identified in the assessment to benefit RDD. One, the agency needs to institute a more rigorous accountability system with the organization, particularly with regard to linking performance appraisal to incentive systems, i.e., rewarding good performers and holding non-performers accountable for weak performance. The capacity assessment likewise indicated that the distribution of workload within the agency could be further improved, by further reviewing key functions and target results of each division within the department.

It will therefore be useful for RDD to move from activity-based planning approaches to results-based planning and monitoring of development impacts. This will allow the agency to focus on the key results that they would like to focus on and achieve annually, and allow as well a more systematic approach to adjusting activities (if necessary) according to budget limitations of the government by concentrating on critical or desired results in the short- and medium-term. To introduce such a results based management (RBM) approach, it may be useful to engage a short-term consultant who will assist the agency in, among others, mapping out the programmes and results that it has achieved so far in recent years, reviewing and improving the planning and monitoring processes of the organization, train key officials and staff members of the department on RBM, and initiate a work planning process based on RBM principles.

3.2.2.2 Communications and Information Dissemination

RDD's capacity for showcasing and demonstrating its results could be further improved, through enhancing (or developing) its external communications strategy. Results of RDD programmes need to be reviewed and packaged in easily 'digestible' forms, which could be distributed to policy makers at the State and national levels to inform legal frameworks, policy guidelines and decisions, as well as to PRIs and project beneficiaries to allow them to learn from the lessons of these programmes, including potential replication of good practices and avoiding failures and weaknesses, if any, from others. This will also allow RDD to enhance its internal reporting and transparency mechanisms, and allow the agency to identify opportunities for partnership with other government agencies and development agencies in the Chhattisgarh.

3.2.2.3 Human Resources Development

Similar to other agencies, a number of skills and knowledge development opportunities were identified for RDD as part of the capacity assessment. These include the following:

- Results Based Management and Strategic Planning
- Leadership Development
- Monitoring and Evaluation Systems and Tools

- Coordination and Partnership Building
- Team Building and Networking
- Stakeholder Engagement Tools and Processes
- Communications and Advocacy
- Proposal Development, Technical Writing and Research Methodologies

The assessment likewise indicated budget limitations within the agency with regard to allocating funds for officials' and staff members' training needs. This is further constrained by the lack of a rigorous training needs assessment and career development plan for the organization. The assessment revealed that the first three items indicated above, if provided adequate resources by RDD or by its donor partners, could potentially provide significant and strategic long-term benefits to the organization and its beneficiaries/clientele, and should therefore be given priority in funding. Similar to the recommendation for DPR, the following should also be incorporated in training packages, to ensure absorption and institutionalization of the lessons learned from any skills or knowledge development programmes that will be introduced to RDD.

- A clear criteria for the selection of participants to each training course
- A pre-training evaluation to be completed at least two weeks prior to the training to inform the curriculum and the facilitators/resource persons of the background of and expectations from the participants
- A post-training evaluation to be completed by the participants immediately after the training to gauge what they had learned from the training and their potential application to the functions of the MoPR and their respective divisions
- A re-entry plan to be completed by each officer/staff member participating in the training. A re-entry plan describes how they plan to apply, with specific activities, timelines and resources, within their own offices or work, the skills and knowledge that they learned from the training.
- Mandatory "re-echo" or presentation of the lessons/skills learned from the training to all officers/staff members within two weeks of return to office

3.2.3 Capacity Development Response for Training Institutions

Even capacity developers need capacity development. This section describes the identified capacity development needs for SIRD, ATI, SHRC and ICDS TI, beginning with some key, general recommendations that are applicable to all institutions, followed by agency-specific recommendations, to allow them to respond more effectively to the provisions of the NCBF and the respective capacity gaps of PRIs. It is imperative for the Ministry of Panchayati Raj and the State Panchayati Raj Department to provide the enabling environment, adequate budgetary resources, as well as learning opportunities for these organizations' officials and staff members to be exposed to new and emerging tools, knowledge, mechanisms, and practices in local governance and local service delivery, which can be provided through participation in trainings, workshops, seminars, conferences, coaching and mentoring, and learning missions.

The extent of the training requirements, in addition to the training courses identified under the NCBF, provides an imperative for creativity and broader engagement of training institutes, including local academic institutions, the private sector, and non-government organizations, towards enhancing efficiency and effectiveness of training delivery. This will provide a more contextualized, broad-based, integrated and cost-effective approach to learning. In case the relevant knowledge and expertise for designing the above-mentioned curricula are not available

in Chhattisgarh, MoPR may broker partnerships or twinning arrangements with training/academic institutions in other states and/or countries. Such cooperation is expected to enhance the sustainability of learning programmes for local governance and local services delivery in Chhattisgarh in particular and in India in general.

The institutions assessed as part of this Pilot Assessment are potential partners which could be engaged further in rolling out the Chhattisgarh Capacity Development Perspective Plan. However there are other partners and institutions which should be considered and included. An engagement with academic institutions and the private sector could significantly improve the capacity of the State to respond to training needs.

A dedicated partnership with academic institutions would be mutually beneficial for the state training institutions, the PRIs and the academic institutions as it would foster knowledge sharing, knowledge generation and documentation as well as practice-oriented education through exposure to real-life scenarios. It would be advisable to formalize the partnership, to design a work plan that incorporates the various interests of the participating institutions and allocates risks. Once a promising work plan is developed, funding could be provided to enable the development and administration of the work plan. Depending on the type of institution activities could include technical workshops involving skilled professionals from academia and practitioners (e.g. on innovative drinking water supply systems), research partnerships with PRIs and training institutions (e.g. development economics, sociology, nursing, environmental engineering), the assignment of National Service Scheme⁸ volunteers to work at the PRI level or programmes that would engage students in development issues in a given locality over a larger period of time (i.e. “adopt a village”, “serving my home village” or “model villages” where a group of students would assist the PRI in working on integrated projects).

Training Approaches

The capacity assessment revealed PRI’s hesitation (even aversion) to attending trainings and seminars organized by many training institutions in the state for two major reasons: 1) PRIs feel that the trainings had not really responded to their needs; and 2) the classroom approach to training (i.e. lecture type trainings) applied by most training institutions is not attractive nor conducive for adult learning. As a matter of principle, training programmes should impart specific skills to participants, and build confidence among PRIs on the importance and value addition of their respective functions.

To strengthen synergy, trainings and capacity development activities intended for PRIs should support a common framework (e.g. the NCBF), agreed and endorsed by the SC CDPRI. This is to ensure that all training programmes complement each other, unnecessary duplications are avoided, and that they all contribute to a common set of capacity development goals and targets.

As earlier noted, for all trainings that will be recommended here and/or to be introduced as part of the capacity development programme, it is strongly suggested that the following be incorporated in training packages, to ensure absorption and institutionalisation.

- A clear criteria for the selection of participants to each training course
- A pre-training evaluation to be completed at least two weeks prior to the training to inform the curriculum and the facilitators/resource persons of the background of and expectations from the participants

⁸ See the National Service Scheme (NSS) website for details: www.nss.nic.in

- A post-training evaluation to be completed by the participants immediately after the training to gauge what they had learned from the training and their potential application to the functions of the MoPR and their respective divisions
- A re-entry plan to be completed by each officer/staff member participating in the training. A re-entry plan describes how they plan to apply, with specific activities, timelines and resources, within their own offices or work, the skills and knowledge that they learned from the training.
- Mandatory “re-echo” or presentation of the lessons/skills learned from the training to all officers/staff members within two weeks of return to office

Implementing the abovementioned suggestions requires a sound system design and workable arrangements down to the village level which are easy to apply. The ongoing GoI-UNDP Capacity Development for Local Governance (CDLG) project intends to support efforts made at the state level to improve monitoring and evaluation of capacity development interventions; the CDLG support could be leveraged to set up the system (incl. a pilot test).

Delivery of Training Programmes

Faculty members of ATI, SIRD, ICDSTI, and SHRC need continuous learning on adult learning methodologies and approaches. While it is recognized that these institutions have competent faculty and senior officials, it was also apparent from the consultation meetings and the self-assessments that faculty members’ respective facility and knowledge of teaching and adult learning methodologies varied, and usually dependent on the teaching style of the faculty member. There were likewise reports of poor quality external resource persons invited by the training institutions to deliver the modules, to the detriment of the training programme which undermines the credibility of the training institution itself. There is therefore a need to agree on and institutionalize a standard approach (or sets of approaches) for delivering training programmes for each institution (if not for all), which will guide faculty members and resource persons on the best options and flexible methodologies to deliver specific training modules.

Learning and training programmes could be delivered through numerous mechanisms, depending on the subject of the training, the background of the training participants, and available resources. Adult learning methodologies require interactive, didactic tools that would generate participants’ interest, allow them to share their knowledge and experience, ask questions and challenge ideas and positions within a safe environment, and generate a sense of collegiality and feeling of belonging during and after a training programme. The role of the training facilitators is therefore very crucial in shaping the training design, approach, and outputs, and its follow-up activities.

While classroom style training is the usual delivery mechanism, it needs to be made more attractive and interactive through appropriate learning tools and modules. Other equally (or more) effective mechanisms for learning include the following:

- On-the-job trainings (OJT) or immersion programmes, which will allow officials and staff members to learn new skills and procedures hands on, i.e., by doing it themselves in a genuine work setting. For PRIs, OJTs could be conducted by mapping PRIs and matching ‘developing’ or ‘weaker’ PRIs with relatively developed or stronger PRIs, and supporting the OJT of officials/staff from the former to the latter.
- Exposure or learning missions, which will allow officials and staff members to be oriented on or exposed to “best” practices and/or innovations in other parts of the state, other states or even other countries for possible adaptation and adaption in their

respective areas. The main objective is to expose the participants to new thinking that works and have achieved some successes, and learn from the implementers' own experiences.

- Mentoring and coaching, which brings an 'expert' into the organization for a specific period of time to mentor or coach its officials and staff members on specific skills, tools, processes, or procedures.

Awareness Raising / Campaign Mode Training Approaches

As the mobile phone continues its success story in India and the networks are expanded into remote areas of rural India the state may consider tying up with the mobile phone operators for delivering PRI knowledge and news through text messages or voice messages. PRI functionaries and Elected Representatives would be able to receive updates timely, easily and cost-effectively through their mobile phones. It is important to note that this system would only serve as a complementary system to other distribution channels such as TV and Radio which are mentioned in the NCBF.

The NCBF also mentions Gram Sabha level campaigns which have shown success in other states and have been found useful when mission mode capacity building campaigns undertaken to inform/orient the public about new schemes, regulations or elections. They have taken the form of Panchayat Yatras that tour from village to village, satellite-based training with multiple screening centres, large gatherings at block level, and more. Increased public awareness about the roles and responsibilities of the Panchayats and their accountability to the public is essential for the success of the PRI system as effectiveness and efficiency will only improve when the public holds the office bearers accountable for their actions. Raising the awareness of citizens who are not part of the PRI system is best done through mass awareness campaigns and campaign mode trainings in which the media and the civil society have an important role to play.

The Role of Master Trainers/Mentors

Given the immense challenge in reaching out to and developing the capacities of PRIs in time, there is an urgent need to further expand the number of master trainers (around 30 master trainers per state), to foster home grown, endogenous expertise and provide facilitated access to such resource thereby minimizing overdependence on national institutions or expertise resident in other states. A minimum of 30 master trainers is expected to provide the catalytic support to line ministries and training institutions in enhancing their respective support to PRIs.

The State of Chhattisgarh needs to foster its pool of PRI Master Trainers which would then further train those who are engaged directly in the development of PRI capacities, without necessarily adding permanent staff members in the rosters of the training institutions, given budget limitations. This requires a strategic engagement of seasoned practitioners and experts who are ready to commit their time and energy to training trainers and to making themselves available for special training events as resource persons. This could potentially include retirees who are many times eager to share their experience with younger practitioners and are often looking for opportunities to do so. However, the level of success will depend on the institutional capacity to manage and efficiently maintain a high-quality roster of Master Trainers.

PRI Master Trainers are expected to have demonstrated quality knowledge and expertise in teaching/training, research and in working with PRIs and communities. They must be familiar with adult learning methodologies, coaching and mentoring, gender-sensitive approaches and stakeholder engagement processes. Their substantive knowledge of the challenges and issues

faced by PRIs in Chhattisgarh, especially with regard to local development, service delivery and the Panchayat Extension to Scheduled Areas (PESA) Act is essential.

Potential PRI Master Trainers will be trained on capacity development concepts, methods and tools, including process facilitation, stakeholder consultations and institutional development, following which they would be accredited by the nodal training institution of the State and receive official certificates that certify them as PRI Master Trainers. This accreditation will be the basis for the PRI Master Trainers' engagement in within the state and serves as an incentive for participation. This effort should also be undertaken at the National level where MoPR and the DoPT⁹ could take the lead in certifying National Master Resource Persons who could then be engaged at state level.

As part of the pilot capacity assessment eleven (11) potential master resource persons were oriented and trained on the process and mechanics of UNDP's capacity development and capacity assessment approach. These trained master resource persons are expected to lead further trainings on capacity assessments in other states, and serve as resource persons in the capacity development of PRIs in those states. The MoPR is engaging them in assisting other States in the development of their capacity development perspective plans.

3.2.3.1 The State Institute for Rural Development (SIRD)

The capacity development response for SIRD focuses on strengthening its implementation, monitoring and evaluation capacities, particularly with regard to enhancing the organization's accountability mechanisms and human resources, based on the results of the capacity assessment. It is also worth noting that in terms of SIRD's own governance structure, it seems appropriate for SIRD to be managed directly under DPR, given its mandate and potential roles in developing the knowledge, skills and capacities of PRIs. This is a policy decision however, that needs to be thoroughly considered.

- **PRI Capacity Development Management Information System**

At the state level, it will be useful to establish a capacity development management information system (CD-MIS) with four major records: (1) an inventory of training and capacity development institutions/agencies in Chhattisgarh, including public, private, and NGOs; (2) an inventory of master trainers and resource persons on thematic issues relevant to PRIs; (3) a database of state-specific training modules and materials available in different institutions which is linked with the national training repository (see www.pri-resources.in); and (4) a database of training programmes attended by all PRI officials and staff members. The CD-MIS should be managed by SIRD but owned by the state government, with its contents to be populated by SC CDPRI members, i.e., all CDC members should be able to access and enter data into the system on any of the four identified major records systems. It should therefore feature the logos of all CDC members, should be user friendly and should be available online through the DPR website to facilitate data entry, access and reporting.

At block and district level, it may be useful to make hard copies of training modules and materials available, given the currently limited access of Panchayats to computers and the

⁹ The Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) already has a Master Trainer programme in place which has been providing direct training and training design courses to trainers at various Administrative Training Institutes across the country. A collaboration between MoPR and DoPT has been discussed as part of the GoI-UNDP Project Capacity Development for Local Governance.

internet. This could be done through Panchayat Resource Centres (PRCs), Citizen Facilitation Centers (CFCs) or other local agents/agencies/institutions.

- **Standardize Training, Learning, Assessment and Evaluation Modules for PRI**

The capacity assessment revealed the evident lack of standard training modules for various thematic subjects for public sector institutions in Chhattisgarh. Resource persons who were engaged in delivering training courses often had to develop their own modules, and take the same back with them at the end of the course; in many cases actual modules were not developed, but rather powerpoint presentations which are inadequate for the training institutions or subsequent resource persons to use.

Given its experience, pool of experts and academic network, SIRD is in a position to compile, consolidate and standardize training modules that will be delivered for PRIs. To do so, it will need a team of experts, led by the SIRD Director or designated faculty member (or a national consultant), and with participation from ATI, SHRC, and ICDS-TI, and who will be responsible for gathering, reviewing and consolidating available training modules that are aimed at PRI knowledge building. These modules should include some of the proposed training modules under NCBF, as well as other modules that are critical to PRI's governance functions, to include the following:

- Foundation Course: Overview of Panchayati Raj
- Basic Functional Course (Internal Housekeeping, understanding of accounts, social audit, Right to Information, Panchayat revenues, etc.)
- Local service delivery and public-private partnerships
- Basic computer skills and software training
- Decentralization and Local Governance Concepts and Principles
- Leadership development
- Human Rights Based Approach to Development
- Accountability, Ethics and Transparency
- Budgeting and Financial Management
- Strategic Planning and Development Monitoring and Evaluation
- Policy Formulation and Legislative Procedures

Relevant to this is the need as well to standardize training needs assessment and training evaluation tools and mechanisms. Such practices need to be institutionalized, to ensure that trainings that are being rolled out for PRIs are responsive to needs, and are continuously improved based on lessons from on-going and completed training programmes. This will also provide DPR and RDD, as well as SIRD and other training institutions, to engage donors and development partners more systematically on a longer-term and more demand-driven capacity development support for PRIs and for their respective institutions. Faculty members and officials from SIRD, as well as ATI, SHRC and ICDS-TI, should therefore be provided training on various tools and methodologies for training needs assessment and training evaluations.

- **Introduce a Dedicated PRI Research and Innovations Fund**

As an academic institution, SIRD needs to build its capacity not only in training and education but in research as well. Chhattisgarh, being one of the poorest states in the country, offers research and development opportunities particularly in the nexus of poverty development, (local) governance, and climate change, particularly given the state's

dependence on the mining and exploitation of mineral resources. It will therefore be useful to establish a dedicated “Panchayat Research and Innovations Fund” (PRIF), to be managed by SIRD, which will provide small research grants (e.g. 1 lakh INR) not only to SIRD faculty but to other academic and non-government institutions in Chhattisgarh, that will explore policy implications of, and innovative approaches to, local governance/development towards poverty alleviation and climate change adaptation/mitigation mechanisms in the state. The PRIF, which could have an initial fund of 25 lakh INR, will be managed by SIRD, will have a steering committee/board from DPR, RDD and the State Government who will guide the use of the research grant, and approve grant recipients based on a criteria that will include, among others: direct relevance to the needs of PRIs in Chhattisgarh, direct relevance to priority sectoral (e.g. environment, health, education) needs in the state, research methodology, and policy implications, among others. Grant releases, expenditures and reports will be made publicly available in the SIRD, DPR and RDD websites, to ensure transparency in decision making and reporting.

A number of similar innovations funds exist in Indonesia and the Philippines. It will be useful therefore for MoPR, DPR, RDD and SIRD officials to be exposed to such practices and their impact on the ground.

- **Human Resource Development**

Strengthening SIRD’s technical capacity, through recruitment of additional, permanent faculty members is an ideal scenario that needs to be explored. SIRD’s current faculty complement is not sufficient to respond to the needs of their clients, particularly given the hesitation of consultants based in Delhi and other more developed states/cities to come to Chhattisgarh given the relatively low professional rates and allowances allowed by the government. While master-trainers (or consultant) could provide back-up support to SIRD and other training institutions, their participation and engagement may likewise be constrained by their availability, available budget to cover their transportation and subsistence costs, and their knowledge of the local context particularly if they are coming from outside of Chhattisgarh. A functional review of SIRD could therefore be further undertaken to identify additional faculty members that need to be recruited for SIRD.

- **Develop a PRI Local Governance Capacity Index**

Given the huge number of PRIs in Chhattisgarh (and in the entire country), the lead CD institution tasked by the Chhattisgarh government to strengthen capacities of the PRIs may consider developing an on-line self-assessment tool for PRIs that would provide information on the indicative capacity strengths and assets of each PRI and would inform a demand-driven offer of CD Support. This tool would allow each PRI to generate a rating for various capacity development parameters through a simple online questionnaire (starting with those developed in this capacity assessment) which provides a rough analysis of the PRI’s priority capacity needs and would be responded to by the responsible CD institution with feedback and suggestions for CD follow-up. The tool could focus initially on the following core issues: policies and institutional arrangements, human resources, knowledge, accountability, and physical resources and infrastructure.

If institutionalized (e.g. integrating the tool into the standard training needs assessments, making it standard practice of trainers to have a pre-training discussion with the PRIs using the tool, etc.) it would allow the generation of a comparative analysis of PRIs and would enable a targeted and demand-driven approach to CD as interventions could be prioritized

and tailored. Once successful, other States may wish to adopt the same system that could then serve as basis for partnerships and peer-to-peer mentoring.

3.2.3.2 Administrative Training Institute (ATI)

The capacity assessment revealed the perception among stakeholders that ATI programmes largely provide venues for conducting seminars and sharing information on national and state policies, guidelines and regulations. Its roles however in following up on the impact of these orientation seminars¹⁰, including providing more substantive, demand-driven support to PRIs, need to be further improved.

- **PRI Competency Enhancement Kit (PRICE-Kit)**

The capacity assessment revealed that there are very few institutionalized training modules for PRIs. Many training programmes are based on modules prepared by individual resource persons, which are often a set of powerpoint slides, copies of which were not usually distributed to the participants nor to the institution hosting the training. Thus the same training if handled by three different resource persons, would essentially have three different modules, and the level of exposure and understanding of their respective training participants would be quite varied as well.

It is therefore important to map existing and available training modules on the various training courses noted under the NCBF as well as in section 2.2.1 of this report. Such a mapping exercise would include a review of training material from other states. The objective is to have a standard set of modules for each topic, agree on the minimum standard information that should be contained in each training module, and the recommended approach for delivering such training module. The main output of mapping, consolidation and formulation of the training modules, is a set of standard materials for PRI (a PRI Competency Enhancement Kit, or PRICE-KIT) that any capacity development provider could refer to in planning and implementing their respective training programmes on the ground. The PRICE-Kit will also be very useful in guiding future resource persons, and more importantly allow PRIs across states and districts, to receive the same set of information and guidance on specific themes and topics that are directly relevant to their functions. The PRICE-Kit should be designed and written using popular, user-friendly format (e.g., graphical illustrations, CD-Rom with audio visual material), uses local languages, features indigenous designs, and should not be bulky to facilitate dissemination and distribution. The PRICE-kit would come in volumes targeting specific recipient groups (e.g. Panchayat Secretaries, Sarpanches, Members, Standing Committee Chairpersons, etc.).

ATI, in partnership with SIRD and DPR, should take the lead in this mapping, particularly in reaching out to and collecting available modules from academic and training institutions, resource persons, and consultants, with SIRD and ATI providing critical technical support in the consolidation and standardization of the training modules. A regular review and updation would be required to sustain this effort.

¹⁰ For the purpose of this report and the overall capacity development strategy, dissemination of information on government policies, procedures, laws and legislations will be referred to as “orientation or orientation seminars” while activities that specifically impart skills, tools, “best” practices, methodologies, among others, will be referred to as “trainings”.

- **Human Resource Development**

ATI faculty and trainers will benefit from trainings on new approaches and methodologies for adult learning, to energize its training methodologies and generate more interest among PRIs on its training programmes. A number of different approaches to adult learning have already been developed by non-government organizations and development agencies, some even specific to sectoral applications, which could be potentially applicable to ATI's own programmes. It will therefore benefit ATI Faculty and staff members to undergo a training of trainers (TOT) on adult learning methodologies, to strengthen their engagement with PRIs and other clientele. This will include training training needs assessment, and on developing and packaging training modules and curricula, to ensure that the training design and materials are user-friendly, and adapted to the needs of the training participants.

- **Improve ATI's training facilities**

A conducive training environment is critical to participation and absorption of knowledge and information among training participants. ATI's training facilities therefore needs to be improved, particularly its in-house accommodation facilities which currently present limitations especially with regard to accommodating women participants. Such limited facilities also constrain ATI to time seminars and trainings accordingly, i.e., start seminars late in the morning and end early in the afternoon in consideration of participants' travel time to and from the venue, which limits engagement time with, and absorption of information by, the participants.

- **Enhance Monitoring and Evaluation of ATI Training Programmes**

ATI could further improve its training and information dissemination programmes through integrating more rigorous pre- and post-training evaluation tools, to understand the effectiveness and impact of its learning programmes. In collaboration with SIRD and in relation to the SIRD recommendation above, ATI faculty and officials should likewise be exposed to trainings on available tools and methodologies that could be potentially applied by the agency in undertaking training needs assessments and evaluation of training programmes. This will also contribute to standardization of tools across training institutions in Chhattisgarh.

It will also be useful for ATI to establish and regularly convene an in-house review team, which will be tasked to look at its seminar and training modules, review feedback from participants post-training, and recommend enhancements to existing modules. This will allow ATI to constantly upgrade its modules, and identify as well in a more systematic and demand-driven manner other potential areas of learning that participants could benefit from based on participants' feedback.

- **Enhancing ATI's Public Website and Information Portal**

ATI should further develop its public website to further enhance access to information on ATI's training programmes, as well as policy and administrative guidelines and regulations, to allow its training participants continuous access to such data and information even post-training – a critical time when participants begin attempting to apply what they have learned from the training. Such post-training support is critical, and information from ATI's website, which should include contact persons and contact numbers for further technical assistance,

will be immensely useful for PRIs. Critical to this is the establishment of a database of training programmes that it has already conducted, which will facilitate ATI's seminar/training inventory and reporting processes. Current paper-based information management system in the agency could be further improved by introducing a simple electronic database system which could be managed and operated by existing units/staff members in the agency, who need to be trained on such database management systems.

3.2.3.3 State Health Resource Center (SHRC)

SHRC emerged from the capacity assessment as having the highest capacity in terms of its current functions, with a strong focus on women and children. To further expand its target audience, it may be necessary to consider adding to SHRC's mandate the support to PRIs as one of its main clientele, to allow PRIs to benefit from SHRC's expertise. On the other hand, current human resource and budget limitations could constrain SHRC from accepting, or supporting equally well, a mandate to cover PRIs as well. This could be a long-term strategy that could be explored for Chhattisgarh.

- **Introduce Mentoring and Coaching Skills and Mechanisms**

It will benefit SHRC to introduce mentoring and coaching skills among its key trainers and officials, to allow them to guide other training institutions, e.g., ATI, SIRD, with regard to facilitating and delivering training programmes and forging trust and strong engagement with communities. SHRC's network of volunteers could also be trained and tapped by DPR and RDD, as well as SIRD and ATI, to function as their outreach resource, by equipping them with adequate knowledge and information on relevant PRI policies, guidelines, and programmes. This will allow closer integration of SHRC programmes with PRI support as well. SHRC volunteers however, need clear terms of reference and incentives (monetary or non-monetary) to be able to perform this additional function for other 'sponsoring' agencies. This TOR should reflect the responsibilities and accountability of the 'sponsor' agencies, as well as those of SHRC and the volunteers.

- **Introduce a Joint PRI Health-Sector Learning Programme with SIRD, ATI and ICDS-TI**

SHRC currently does not have adequate facilities to serve its training programmes. SIRD and ATI, on the other hand, have some available training facilities but require resource persons who could assist in the development of training modules and delivery of some of its seminars and training programmes. This provides the opportunity for engagement between these institutions, with SHRC helping in the design of health-sector training programmes for PRIs together with SIRD and ATI, which will then make their facilities available for such training programmes and for relevant activities that SHRC may be supporting. As part of this initiative, it will be useful to convene an initial brainstorming and planning meeting to bring together key officials from these institutions, as well as from MoPR and the State Government, to discuss and agree on a joint framework for action, including key responsibilities and accountability of each agency in rolling out the joint programme.

- **Enhance Monitoring and Evaluation of SHRC Programmes**

Similar to SIRD and ATI, SHRC needs stronger capacities for monitoring and evaluating the impacts of its own training programmes. While it has been effective in understanding the skills and training needs of its clients and delivering and implementing training programmes, the next level of support – to gauge the impact of its capacity building efforts, needs to be improved further. SHRC would therefore likewise benefit from learning programmes on potential tools and mechanisms for evaluating quality and effectiveness of training programmes.

3.2.3.4 Integrated Child Development Services Training Institute (ICDS TI)

ICDS TI, like SHRC, has a very focused clientele (i.e. children, women and youth). However, based on the capacity assessment, it currently does not possess the same breadth and depth of experience and expertise that SHRC has. The capacity development strategy for ICDS TI will therefore include the following:

- **Establishing a Roster of Experts/Resource Persons**

Similar to other institutions, ICDS TI has difficulties inviting resource persons and experts from other cities/states to assist in its training programmes given budget limitations and existing remuneration guidelines for resource persons. It will therefore be useful for ICDS TI to establish a roster of child/women/youth development experts who are based in Chhattisgarh, as well as those based in other areas, to allow the agency flexibility in tapping needed expertise for its training and related initiatives. This roster could also be tapped by other agencies, such as SIRD, RDD and DPR, in its various research, development and training programmes in the state. Such Expert Roster could be made available online to allow experts to register themselves and keep a dynamic list; experts who want to be part of the roster have to be vetted by agencies that they have rendered services for, to ensure quality control. Such a system exists within UNDP and its adaptation could be further explored for ICDS TI initially, and then expanded to other sectors and/or agencies according to the progress of its implementation and use within ICDS TI.

- **Human Resource Development**

The capacity assessment identified a number of capacity building areas for ICDS TI's officials and staff members. These include the following:

Gender mainstreaming. ICDS TI already has strong gender expertise; however it needs capacities for mainstreaming such gender knowledge and skills in other sector-based development programmes for PRIs (e.g. health, environment, education). Such mainstreaming of gender concerns is critical in the context of Chhattisgarh, and DPR and RDD could benefit from ICDS TI's skills and knowledge on this topic. ICDS TI officials/staff who will undergo training on gender mainstreaming could then serve as resource persons for RDD and DPR for its development programmes and capacity building activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Training Programmes. Similar to SHRC, ICDS TI needs to be equipped with monitoring and evaluation tools and skills to be able to gauge the impact, quality and effectiveness of its training programmes among its target beneficiaries. This also involves developing a standard reporting template/system for its training programmes, to ensure that key results from the activities are properly identified and analyzed, and facilitate consolidation and analysis of various ICDS TI programmes.

Data Analysis and Policy/Strategy Formulation. While ICDS is primarily a training provider, it also has to conduct research and analytical studies to ensure that its training programmes are responsive to the needs of its clientele, and that it supports the overall development targets of the state and the national government. Such analytical and policy-oriented knowledge and skills need to be further enhanced within ICDS TI, to ensure that its accomplishments and the lessons learned from its programmes are upscaled and replicated.

Advocacy and Communications. Related to the bullet above, ICDS TI needs to develop an advocacy and communications strategy towards enhancing gender mainstreaming in Chhattisgarh's development programmes. ICDS TI will therefore benefit from a training-workshop on advocacy and communications, to dissect the lessons learned from its various programmes, and produce key messages to promote gender mainstreaming through various formats and media available in the state.

- **Introduce a Joint PRI Gender and Development Learning Programme with SIRD, ATI and SHRC**

Similar to SHRC, ICDS TI could jointly develop a learning programme with SIRD, AIT, and SHRC for mutual sharing of expertise and resources on gender and development. It will also allow ICDS TI to be oriented on the other agencies' gender-related programmes, and vice versa, and allow a mutually-beneficial collaboration for supporting PRI's needs on gender. It is therefore likewise recommended to convene an initial brainstorming and planning meeting between ICDS TI, SHRC, SIRD and ATI, with participation from MoPR and the State Government, to discuss and agree on a joint framework for action, including key responsibilities and accountability of each agency in rolling out a collaborative programme.

- **Coordination of Training Programmes**

To enhance quality control and coordination of its training programmes, ICDS TI may need to establish a Training Coordination Team (TCT) which will be responsible for, among others: 1) ensuring coherence and consistency in the approach of its training programmes; 2) review the quality of the modules that are developed and/or delivered by the agency, including review of participants' feedback after the training; 3) review the qualifications and competency of trainers who will be involved in particular training activities; and 4) identify and recommend opportunities for new training programmes and for upscaling/replicating existing ones. The TCT may be composed of officials and technical staff from ICDS TI, as well as ex-officio members from relevant agencies such as RDD, DPR, and SIRD, who could provide technical information and advice to ICDS TI in its programmes and operations.