

Governance for Advancing Development



Madurai Symposium 2013
Fostering Development Knowledge

September 11-16, 2013

Since its inception in 2003, Madurai Symposium has emerged as a unique development platform which brings together various stakeholders – people/community institutions, civil societies, Government, NGOs, Banks, donors, philanthropies and academia to share, learn from each others' experience and practices and throws opportunities for collaborative endeavours. The Symposium attracts over 15,000 participants and the one being organized in 2013 is the sixth edition. **The theme of the Symposium – 2013 is 'Governance for Advancing Development'.**

The process of development hinges, it is often argued, on the availability of adequate resources, financial, human, etc. Over the years there is an increasing realization that while resource is a most important necessary condition, it is not sufficient to ensure development process in a right and proper way. Sustainability of the development programmes and processes from holistic perspective of social, economic, political and financial has been engaging our attention for a long while now. Sustainability would not stem from mere availability of resources and it cannot be narrow-jacketed in a financial issue. This is where governance in its broader sense including leadership, husbanding the resources with equity, management culture, participatory process in management, etc assumes critical importance in development. In the same vein governance being a much larger and complex issue and qualitatively different, there is a need to put that in a context of various development programmes and identify and address those issues of governance relevant to each of the programmes. It is with this understanding from a broader and contextual perspective, this Symposium would focus on governance



of some of the topical and nationally important programmes such as poverty reduction, water, agriculture in small and marginal holdings particularly tank based and rainfed programmes, environment, microfinance, panchayats, digital divide, financial inclusion process, etc.

Governance for poverty reduction

Poverty reduction is not about charity but about sustainability of development process with dignity for the poor - not only they should be able to participate in the process but also to manage and set agenda for themselves. It is about people taking charge of their destiny and move towards self-management, self-reliance. All these call for participatory governance at the grassroots which promote and enhance ownership, accountability, transparency, ensuring long term sustainability of their programmes. The governance process for poverty reduction needs to look at the convergence of the demand stream of clients/people, supply stream of institutions providing services such as Banks, Insurance Companies, Governments, etc. and



also enabling stream of regulators, policy makers and Governments as each one has to complement, cooperate and collaborate to make their governance process effective. There are important issues of governance – ensuring equity, equality of opportunities in sharing fruits of growth and development, Madurai Symposium -2013 could show-case good practices, the issues and challenges of governance in various thematic programmes of poverty reduction – microfinance, water, environment, agriculture, interface panchayats with various development programmes.

Social, financial and economic inclusion

In the context of poverty reduction, social inclusion is a fundamental and structural issue to reach out all who have been excluded or deprived from participating in the development process. There has been effective demonstration by the self-help group and bank linkage programme which addressed the issues of inclusion not just social but financial and economic. The self-help group is essentially an enabling model of building people's institutions for reaching out to the poor by

their own institutions. What is more, enabling model has more development focus with broader perspectives of microfinance plus approach, whereby beyond financial services, it becomes a pivot for business and civic intermediation and more. Furthermore, beyond savings and credit, people need to have access to social security i.e. insurance, pension and remittance only then financial inclusion is meaningful. The challenge lies in enabling the poor and the downtrodden not only to participate but to take charge of the process of accessing financial services and organizing themselves either individually or collectively for larger economic inclusion by being part of inclusive growth process. How do we have better governance by which community leaders spearhead inclusion process not only horizontally on geographical plane but also deepen the services from savings to credit to insurance to remittances and pension? Good governance here involves enabling and supply stream ensuring that people are not exploited and the consumer protection is kept uppermost as part of the governance process.

Governance in tank based and water shed eco system

Some of the governance issues involve the following:

- Water commons in villages with the participatory governance by farmers in conservation, maintenance and utilization of water for agriculture and other economic purpose - The role of local governance being Panchayat in enabling and aiding this process holds the key.
- Managing the cropping pattern – Governance issues relate to management of available water with appropriate cropping pattern in a context,

environmental issues, preservation of traditional crop for biodiversity

- Equity in usufructs, role of water managers (neerkatti), ways of maximizing the economic returns for farmers and new system of farming, value chain, etc.

Rainfed farming

Rainfed farming continue to languish from lack of investments, infrastructure, technology applications and above all building the capacity of farmers in sustaining the rainfed farming from being a survival and subsistence farming to sustainable business venture. The vast multitude of small and marginal farmers constituting the majority of the eco system have been left out of agriculture development process which has made rapid strides in irrigated and horticulture based farming. The troubling question is how do we catch up with lost time and in ensuring that the small and marginal farmers in the rainfed eco system get the confidence and motivation to make the rainfed farming as agri business venture with high organizational capacity.

Promoting farmers' producer organizations in the rainfed eco system has been a key policy initiative of the Government and how do we – the three streams of demand, supply and enabling stream converge to make this happen? This poses a greater challenge in identifying the priority components and programmes to make the rainfed farming more viable. In this process how do we recapture the glory of millets as a key component of the food security?

Food and nutritional security

It is ironical that while the granaries are over-flowing, we are faced with the paradoxical situation of

malnutrition and under-nutrition having an impact on the human potential of the population and implications of health. The knowledge, attitude and practice relating to the issue have been a major concern as has been pointed out by many studies. The role of the three streams assumes crucial importance and enough has been made of lacunae of a centralised approach and the relevance of community led local solutions at the grassroots. It is a moot point as to what extent the community level solutions of food and nutritional security has received the policy priority. There is a need for local governance being the focal point to ensure sustainable food and nutritional security, in conjunction with State and Federal level interventions.

Agro bio-diversity and climate change

Over the years, we have been witnessing erosion in the bio-diversity owing to the mono culture as a result of Green Revolution and not paying attention to preserve the existing bio-diversity. Lately, we have realised and there is a growing global concern that unless this process is reversed, the long term sustainability of farming would be at risk, which is compounded by the climate change. As a part of our strategy to address the challenges of climate change, we need to develop cropping pattern to cope up with droughts and floods. In this respect, how the public policies encourage greater local governance of the bio-diversity with farmers' participation complemented by the Government and civil societies' actions. The experiences and lessons learnt so far need to be looked at for the future.

Governance for health

The Constitution of India is quite lofty in its social impact of healthcare by mandating the nutritional

adequacy and the improvement of public health as the prime role of the State. Yet, the health indicators of India are among the lowest in the world which reflects on the inadequate healthcare system and in particular, primary healthcare. Healthcare has become a major contributing factor for poverty with poor segments of the population not having access to affordable primary healthcare. This dismal scenario is further compounded by excessive focus on cure rather than prevention of maladies and promotion of health. This is where the importance of larger governance with respect to priorities and at the local level the community governance and their participation in promoting holistic healthcare system which combines promotion, prevention and care/cure assumes greater relevance. There is a need to share learnings from the successful experiences in some communities about the effective health governance.

Local Governance – Panchayat Raj Institutions

Unlike in the advanced countries India has seen a systematic and gradual erosion of local communities being part of the governance. Nothing can be more unfair than local communities not having a say in the governance process and in the development of local eco systems be it agriculture, industry, services, infrastructure, etc. How do we transform this into truly participatory democratic process, poses a major challenge in governance for advancing development.

Panchayats are the focal points for development and the lack of community participation and leadership has robbed the Panchayats of the legitimacy and purpose. The demand stream needs to take charge of the governance and Panchayats with leadership role. How do we ensure convergence and synergy of enabling

stream with the aspirations of demand stream of people at the Panchayat level?

Governance and Micro Justice

The poor particularly women are unable to access justice and lack legal awareness and support to address their domestic problems due to illiteracy, ignorance and economic conditions. The major challenges faced by the disadvantaged groups are availability, affordability and adequacy of legal aid. The government and non-government organizations have to play a critical role to ensure access to legal aid and awareness. Micro justice that provide basic legal services to the poorest people around the world for getting justice against domestic violence, dispute relating to property, labour and against social issues. It aims to get the justice near to their living places on timely for getting sustainable improvement in socio-economic condition of the poor women and to facilitate grassroots democracy in all places. It aims to bring peace and fairness in local relationship. There are a lot of initiatives going on in the country which need to be shared through knowledge building process for further reaching out.

Conferences, Seminars and Workshops



Development stakeholders have been confronted with issues of governance at the local and larger level which make or mar development processes in different contexts. Understanding the issues of Governance, relevant to the contemporary programmes of poverty reduction would go a long way in advancing the development. The issues of governance related to each of the themes in different contexts would be the focuses of the several conferences/ seminars/workshops. These conferences/seminars/workshops would provide a platform to facilitate cross learning through case studies, success stories, research findings, etc.

People Conventions

The success of any intervention lies in the greater participation and involvement of the target community in the development projects/programmes. The community organizations are promoted by NGOs and Government in different social capital forms such as federations, associations etc. In order to create long lasting impact, the vibrancy of governance (community leadership) and local management built through enabling and empowerment approach is very crucial.



The experiences of such development processes need to be shared and greater learning has to be taken out of those experiences for achieving the development through good governance practices. The people conventions would facilitate such learning and knowledge building process among the communities and across the stakeholders around the theme of governance for advancing development. Madurai Symposium 2013 would take stock of practical experiences in enabling good governance for achieving and advancing development and act as a knowledge sharing platform which would lead to new initiatives.

Events for the Public

Cultural evenings:

Reviving and preserving traditional folk and arts is need of the hour which is still relevant to present context. The



Symposium would create an opportunity for the folk and traditional artists to perform variety of cultural programmes to exhibit their talents. This would facilitate the development stakeholders to find a way for promoting and preserving the traditional folks and arts which are the symbols of ancient Indian culture.



Exhibition: The awareness of the public about the development sector and its contribution for the country's growth and development is very less. The Symposium 2013 would attract the public from the city to get exposed to the talents and creativity of the poor people/communities through exhibition of crafts and wares made by them. The exhibition would also include focus on food security and nutritional security through small millets consumption.



Development Films: Screening development films for the development stakeholders including the public is one of the conventions in the Symposium. Exciting experiences of different development interventions in building governance would be displayed through this

event to sensitize the stakeholders, communities and common public on various initiatives and interventions on building good governance. The best films would be recognized and suitably awarded.



Rallies: The members of micro finance groups, farmers associations, communities representing panchayat institutions would organize rallies to create awareness and sensitize the public in Madurai City about the need for and roles and responsibilities of governance at different levels – government, non government, market and community and achievements of different stakeholders.

Venue: Thamukkam Ground, Madurai, Tamil Nadu, India

Dates: September 11-16, 2013

Nominations for Events

The Facilitation Committee of the 2013 Madurai Symposium invites NGOs, academic and research institutions, Government Organizations, industries, banks, donor organizations, entrepreneurs, producer companies and cooperatives to host conventions, seminars, workshops and conferences on topics relevant to the theme of the Symposium. The Committee would facilitate logistics and other needed support for the events organized by the host organizations.



Facilitation Committee
Madurai Symposium 2013

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