

Tour Programme of Smt. Nisha Singh IAS (Chairperson Capacity Building Commission) Himachal Pradesh:

1. A visit to National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj Hyderabad, was undertaken by me as Chairperson (Capacity Building Commission) Himachal Pradesh 22 August to 25 August, 2023. During the visit, I was accompanied by one officer from the Department of Rural Development.

2. **Objective of the Visit:** The main objective of the visit was to study the functioning of the National Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (NIRD & PR), hold discussions with Director General NIRD & PR and other important departmental heads from NIRD & PR to explore various aspects of various capacity building exercises which can be undertaken in the State for the elected representatives of the Panchayati Raj Institutions, Officers and Officials from the Department of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj, members from the Community Based Organizations (CBOs) such as Self Help Groups (SHGs)/ Mahila Mandals (MMs) etc, especial training on Nine-thematic areas as identified by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj under Sustainable Development Goals besides capacity building of State Institute of Rural Development & Panchayati Raj (SIRD & PR) in Himachal Pradesh.

3. Key Highlights:

Discussions with the DG NIRD &PR:

- a. The visit began with an introductory session with the NIRD & PR team which was lead by the Director General NIRD & PR. During the discussions DG NIRD & PR outlined the institute's objectives focusing

on the institute's role in rural development and the challenges faced in the context of Panchayati Raj institutions, its achievements, initiatives taken and proposed for the future and the support it could offer to the state institutes in various capacity building exercises.

- b. During the discussions DG NIRD & PR stated that the institute has developed for itself special niche in the field of Rural Livelihood & Infrastructure, Sustainable development, Public Policy & Good Governance, Local Governance, Science Technology & Accountability & Transparency and has established one Rural Technology Park (RTP) for supporting the various states and SIRD & PRs in these fields.
- c. It was further brought out that the NIRD & PR has tie up with Centre for the Building Research for the promotion of Low Cost Rural Housing Technology with focus on use of local materials besides it has also been declared as a **Key Resource Centre (KRC)** for training and research on water & sanitation (WASH), **National Resource Centre** for Social Audit. In addition to this NIRD & PR will also play a pivotal role in the recently announced Vishwakarma Yojana of MSME.
- d. Subsequent discussions with DG NIRD &PR also revolved around the proposed restructuring of State Institutes of Rural Development (SIRD) in Himachal Pradesh to enhance its effectiveness in contributing to rural development in the State.

Discussions with Core Team Members of NIRD & PR:

- e. This session was the most productive session as it involved detailed discussions with Core Team members from the NIRD & PR dealing with Natural Resource Management (NRM), Water & Sanitation (WASH), Equity & Social Development, Centre for Excellence in Panchayati Raj, Social Audit & Internal Audit including MGNREGS & Entrepreneurship

Development and Financial inclusion who offered to support the State in the aforementioned field both through trainings at various NIRD & PR centers and also in hand holding the state with onsite trainings/ capacity building exercises for PRI members, Officers/ Officials from Department of RD & PR and also other stakeholder departments within Himachal Pradesh.

- f. During the discussions with the Core Team Members from the NIRD & PR issues w.r.t. the training programs related to the nine-thematic areas identified by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj under the Sustainable Development Goals were thoroughly discussed. In these discussions emphasis was placed on aligning these programs with the broader goals of sustainable development and rural empowerment in the State.

Field Visit:

- g. The field visit involved first-hand understanding of the impact of NIRD&PR's work at the grassroots level and practical insights into the implementation of rural development projects and initiatives. The Key highlight of the field visit was the Rural Technology Park (RTP) which provided glimpses of how local technology can support the rural communities not only to increase employment potential in rural areas but also explore ways its smart use in dealing with the issues of housing, sanitation, natural resource management, disaster preparedness & pest management.

4. Key Takeaways:

- a. NIRD&PR can a pivotal role in rural development and capacity-building of various stakeholders including PRI Members in Himachal Pradesh through its diverse programs and initiatives. The collaborative efforts

between NIRD & PR and HPSIRD & PR, Department of RD & PR, could include:

i. Support under NRM activities:

1. Trainings on disaster mitigation for the PRIs at Panchayat/ Village level with focus on convergence of different flagship programmes for sustainable management of Climate Change. At the regional level NIRD & PR can also support the HPSIRD & PR / Rural Development & PR Department in tie up with GB Pant Institute of Himalayan Environment Almora and NIRD & PR's regional institute in Assam for trainings and sharing of success stories on disaster management.
2. Development and management of spring sheds for meeting water scarcity in rural areas.
3. Training of the PRIs for inclusion of disaster management in Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP).

ii. Support for Water & Sanitation:

1. Since integration of Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) & Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) with GPDP is key to success of both the above programmes NIRD & PR can hand hold the state in training the PRIs in integration of JJM & SBM in the GPDP besides taking up O & M of JJM schemes.
2. NIRD & PR being a KRC on WASH issues can support the state in taking up Grey & Black Water management issues in its rural areas. Besides this it can also provide assistance in formulation of bylaws for the waste management in rural areas.

3. The institute has in collaboration with one partner developed technology for the disposal of Household Organic Waste which includes **Household level Bio Gas plant, & Composter Gardens** feasibility of the same can be assessed in the context of Himachal Pradesh.

iii. Support for enhancing the scope of Rural Employment:

1. Being a center for Wage Employment and Livelihoods NIRD & PR can support the state in the field of convergence of NRLM with various other programmes of the State & Central Government like Viswakarma Yojna, Gatti Shakti etc. by offering trainings & capacity building exercises including hand holding to Block and Panchayat level officials.
2. In the field of rural development NIRD & PR can provide trainings & support in the field of NRM activities, Watershed Development, Climate Change & Resilience, Convergence of Water shed with MGNREGS, Software for Estimate Calculation Using Rural rates (SECURE), Social Audit, GIS mapping through Yuktdhara software (SOP on Yuktdhara developed by NIRD & PR), Cluster Facilitation Project (CFP), NRLM and its convergence with other developmental schemes and for the improving the potential of technical staff.
3. In the field of entrepreneurial development NIRD & PR can offer trainings to rural masons, develop rural technologies for use by the MGNREGS workers or SHG members, trainings on rural tourism (Home stay) through specially designed trainings at their Guwahati Centre, profitable use of WASH

technologies, renewable technologies and other small units to be run by women SHG member.

- a. **NIRD has developed a special module for the hill states for training of SHGs, MMs & other rural youth at their Guwahati Centre who could be trained in the field of tourism especially Rural Tourism & Hospitality (Home Stay Operations) which can be adopted by the HPSRLM, WCD & Tourism Department.**
4. Similarly the technologies developed by the NIRD & PR in its RTP like **Compressed Earth Block (CEB)** by use of local material, construction for the **low cost rural housing units & Handmade Paper making** can not only provide employment to the rural SHG members but also has a scope of integration of MGNREGS with HPSRLM.
- a. **Compressed Earth Block (CEB) Technology: Also known as a Pressed Earth Block or a Compressed Soil Block (with use of Red soil, Cement & Sand), is a building material made primarily from damp soil compressed at high pressure to form blocks. The blocks, stabilized with a chemical binder such as cement are called compressed stabilized earth block (CSEB) or stabilized earth block (SEB).The CSEB or Mud Block can be a sustainable housing option, reducing ecological foot print.**
 - b. **RTP-NIRDPR has constructed a single bed room model house in an area of 342 sq. feet, (including a**

hall, bedroom, kitchen, toilet and bathroom), by adopting low-cost sustainable housing technologies which includes:

- i. Filler slab roofing.
 - ii. Mud plastering inside the house.
 - iii. Painting of outside walls using Prakritik paint.
 - iv. Frameless windows and doors.
 - v. Rat-trap bond technology for walling with fly-ash bricks.
 - vi. Flooring using local tandoor stones
 - vii. Random Rubble stone masonry for foundation.
- c. Handmade papermaking unit offers training on production of recycled handmade paper from the waste of plant species like banana, jute, mulberry, manila and hemp, and other waste like paper, cardboards, cotton fabrics, etc. which can be used for making finished handmade paper boards into office stationery, file cover, folder, visiting cards, photo frame, carry bags, jewellery/gift boxes, etc.

iv. Support for Panchayati Raj Institutions.

1. NIRD & PR being a Centre for Panchayati Raj, Decentralised Planning and Social Service Delivery has developed various trainings on Nine-thematic areas as identified by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj under Sustainable Development Goals which can support the state in the proper implementation of 73rd Amendment of the Indian Constitution and decentralization planning.

2. NIRD & PR lays special focus on the training of PRIs and can support Himachal Pradesh through on and off campus trainings on GPDP in different subjects especially related to **Introduction to various schemes of GoI & State Government which deals with the development of rural areas, Sustainable Development Goals, implementation of 73rd Amendment and decentralization planning.**
3. Besides this theme based trainings on WASH, integration of JJM & SBM in GPDP, Social Audit, exposure visits to study the best practices of different PRIs can be supported by the institute.

5. Recommendations: On account of discussions and deliberations with the Director General, Core Faculty members, field visits, I have following recommendations to make;

- a. That the Himachal Pradesh **can focus on training its PRIs** in the field of Climate Change, Implementation Of 73rd Amendment, WASH activities, Employment Generation, Use of local technologies etc. for which the NIRD & PR can support the State. In this regards the selected PRIs, Official from the RD & PR Department can be sponsored for the various training courses being run by the institute. Such nominations can be dine in large numbers during the winter months or during the lean period.
- b. Low cost **technologies as developed by the NIRD & PR could be studied in detail for their integration to the climatic conditions of Himachal Pradesh** for which some selected technical personnel (Master trainers) could be sent to NIRD & PR for special trainings which NIRD & PR could offer to the state. In addition to such trainings NIRD & PR

could also be asked to organize special field visits to the likewise states where such technologies have worked.

- c. Special work done by the NIRD & PR in the field of entrepreneurial development specially for the SHGs can be replicated by the HPSRLM for which the institute offered its support to the state.

6. Conclusion: The visit to NIRD&PR provided a valuable insight into the institute's functioning, its contributions to rural development, and its engagement with various stakeholders and Himachal Pradesh can benefit itself by seeking its active cooperation and support.
