UNDERSTANDING EFFECTIVENESS OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Lessons from
Sanitation Capacity Building Platform (SCBP)

Part 1: Journey of Urban Sanitation Capacity Development in India

Part II : Sanitation Capacity Building Platform: Understanding the Process and Effectiveness

Part III : Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder (CDEL) Framework

National Institute of Urban Affairs

SCBP
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Part 1: Journey of Urban Sanitation Capacity Development in India

This is the first of a 3 part series on Understanding Effectiveness of Capacity Development.
The Paper draws on the experience of Sanitation Capacity Building Platform(SCBP) work and other national capacity development initiatives in India in the last two decades.
A Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder Framework is proposed in the last part of the series.

SCBP is anchored by National Institute of Urban Affairs(NIUA). It is part of the NFSSM alliance that has more than 28 members. SCBP is supported by Gates Foundation.

JOURNEY OF URBAN SANITATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

India is one of the fastest urbanizing countries of the work. There has been much interest in understanding how urban development and specially urban sanitation, has evolved in the last two decades in terms of government programs and priorities, and the evolution of capacity development initiatives during this period.

Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission **(JNNURM)** was launched in 2005. Launched for a seven year period(extended to 2014) and a dedicated funding for 65 cities for two sub missions, one on urban infrastructure and governance and the other on basic services for urban poor.[1]

> *Mission statement: "the aim is to encourage reforms and fast track planned development of identified cities. Focus is to be on efficiency in urban infrastructure and service delivery mechanisms, community participation, and accountability of ULBs/ Parastatal agencies towards citizens."*

In 2012, the World Bank supported a Capacity Building for Urban Development **(CBUD)** loan in support of JNNURM that got extended into other MoHUA programs from 2014-15. "The Mission targeted ULBs that could access funds for investment and capacity building in return for a commitment to adopt the obligatory reforms over a period of seven years.[2]" The CBUD investment of the World Bank materialized when the JNNURM program was ending, and the initial proposal was revised to match the new programs of MoHUA. CBUD had capacity building as its first objective that matched the sector reform agenda of JNNURM[3].

> *"This was a technical assistance (TA) project that included a range of capacity building activities in financial management, urban planning, service delivery, and governance that were expected to improve systems and skills of select ULBs in urban management and urban poverty reduction, as well as implementation various urban policy and institutional reforms. The original theory of change was premised on the notion that the above capacity building activities and support in implementation would lead to 20 ULBs having implemented (i) at least two urban management reforms; and (ii) urban poverty reduction strategies."(World Bank Independent Completion report)"*

The World Bank's completion report of CBUD mentions "A Training Needs Assessment was conducted and

an 'Integrated Capacity Building Framework' was prepared by the MoUD. The framework detailed training in four key municipal areas: (a) Finance and Revenue, (b) Engineering and Public Health, (c) Town Planning, and (d) Administration. The ministry short-listed 6 institutes across states to conduct training in these areas."

There was a substantial engagement of CBUD with urban sanitation. "Reports were prepared for the following areas: (a) non-revenue water studies were completed for a total of 67 cities under the project in response to the demand; (b) city sanitation in 16 cities; (c) city wide drainage in one city; and solid waste management in 9 cities. Overall, 93 ULBs had prepared plans for service delivery- water and sanitation/drainage; this was significantly higher than the targeted 20 ULBs."

Despite the substantial engagement in urban sanitation capacity development under CBUD, **no Program or Sector specific capacity development Perspective or Vision/Strategy (for Water and Sanitation or Transport & Mobility, Housing, Planning, Finance etc.)** was either identified as a priority or initiated by CBUD.

In 2014-15 a series of new urban initiatives were undertaken by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs(MoHUA). Swachh Bharat Mission(SBM), Heritage Development (HRIDAY) and Urban Infrastructure(AMRUT) missions** were launched. These programs had an in-built capacity building component, usually as a percentage of the total budget outlay of the program.

The **Peer Exchange and Reflective Learning (PEARL)** capacity development initiative of NIUA was developed during the JNNURM (2005-14) in a network mode. It was launched by the Ministry of Urban Development, Government of India in January 2007 under JNNURM. The project "aimed to create manageable networks for knowledge sharing and cross-learning among JNNURM cities and make them more livable, economically vibrant and environmentally sustainable. The Cities Alliance (CA) Knowledge Support for PEARL Program under JNNURM was initiated in 2010."[4]

Under **AMRUT,** capacity building was prioritized through national nodal training institutes for the large and medium sized 500 Urban Local Bodies(ULBs). It was to be delivered by an empaneled list of 35 national nodal training institutes. Based on a capacity Needs assessment by NIUA, a two phase capacity building initiative was organized.

[1] http://mohua.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/1Mission%20Overview%20English(1).pdf
[2] https://documents.worldbank.org/en/publication/documents-reports/documentdetail/233511555421348699/india-in-cbldg-for-urban-development
[3] Ibid page 6
[4] http://pearl.niua.org/pearl

"Capacity Building Plan consists of two strategic interventions - Individual Capacity Building and Institutional Capacity Building. Institutional capacity of ULBs by using Consulting Firms and other entities. The purpose of individual training is to enhance the functional knowledge, improve the job related skills and change the attitude of municipal functionaries. The one-year training will be imparted to municipal functionaries in training institutes (classroom) followed by its application at their work place. Additionally, they will be mentored and provided coaching services at their work place during the one-year training period. The aim of Institutional Capacity Building is to improve institutional outcomes, as set out in the AMRUT Reform Agenda.

- Individual Capacity Building: Based on the Training Needs Analysis (TNA) the focus will be on the following four departments in ULBs.
- Finance & Revenue: Financial Planning and Management, Revenue Mobilization.
- Engineering and Public Health: Water and Sanitation, Drainage and Solid Waste Management.
- Town Planning: Urban Planning including pro-poor planning approaches.
- Administration: e-Governance, Computer and Soft Skills.[5]*"

Swachh Sarvekshan was initiated in 2016-17 by the Ministry of Urban Development(MoUD). For motivating cities to improve their systems and outcomes for solid and liquid waste management, through a competitive national ranking process.

In December 2017, using the last tranche of funding from CBUD, MoHUA came out with a one year long **Integrated Capacity Building Program (ICBP)** covering all the Missions of MoHUA (SBM, Smart Cities Mission, PMAY, NULM, AMRUT and HRIDAY). ICBP not only covered the staff of Urban Local Bodies, but also elected representatives.

The SMARTNET portal[7] engaged in **creating an online repository of knowledge and a platform for engagement for** practitioners and officials. Here they could find relevant contract documents, bid formats and a repository of other standardized content. Launched as a platform by NIUA to support all the six new Urban Missions announced in 2015-16 (Smart City Mission, HRIDAY, Swachh Bharat, AMRUT, NULM, Housing). SMARTNET enabled city officials, independent experts and private sector professionals to access an online repository knowledge material : formal government mission guidelines, reports, tender documents, case studies, and online learning/training modules. It also allowed portal users to contribute to the portal with their work and documentation, to create and deepen the repository of knowledge.

National Policy on Faecal Sludge and Septage Management(FSSM) 2017, paved the way for the creation of septage management infrastructure and systems, including a thrust on capacity development for FSSM. **The Sanitation Capacity Building Platform(SCBP)**, a capacity development program for FSSM anchored by NIUA, developed a national capacity development framework for FSSM, developing original learning content and training modules as well as a broader capacity development mandate(developing technology guidance, research and policy advocacy). Resulting in an effective capacity development outreach at national and international level.

Integrated Capacity Building Program(ICBP) 2018[6]

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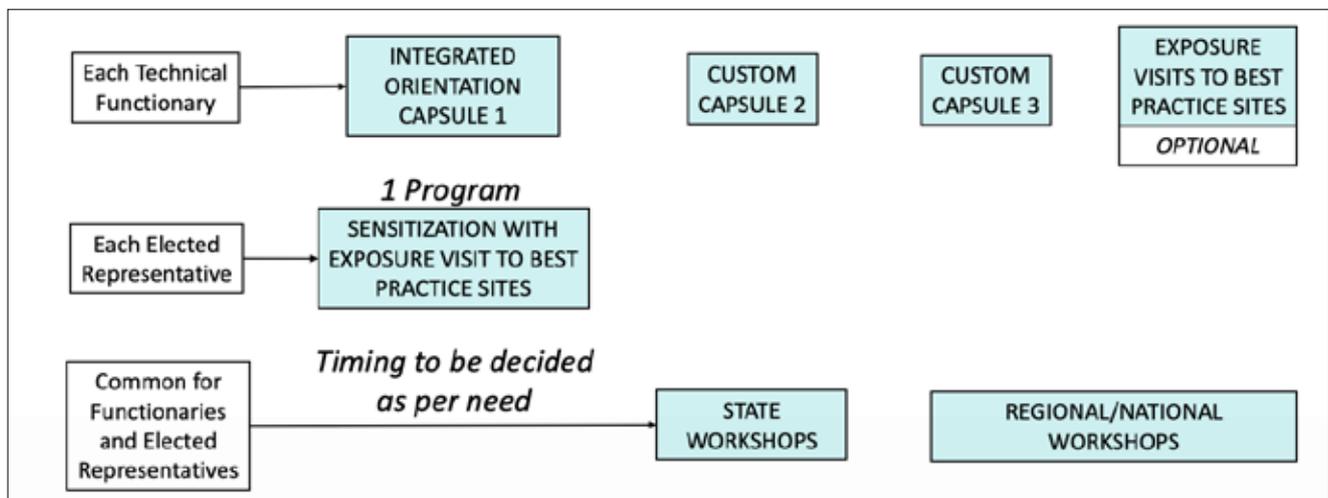
[5]http://amrut.gov.in/content/innerpage/capacity-building.php
[6]http://www.mohua.gov.in/upload/uploadfiles/files/Operational_Guidelines_29 December2017_Final(2).pdf
[7]http://pearl.niua.org/pearl

The City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain (CITTIS) program[8] had a direct link with the Smart Cities Mission. Sponsored by European Union and AFD France, anchored by NIUA, it had at its core a nine month long "**Maturation Phase[9]**", that is a framework for capacity building of cities, to help cities prepare themselves better for planning and implementation work.

Mission Karmayogi and iGoT platform is the most recent and most ambitious initiative of Government of India that is aimed at creating a digital learning and decision making platform to transform the Human Resources development for the entire bureaucracy of India. *"An entirely new state-of-the-art digital platform, iGOT-Karmayogi platform will be created by a Government of India owned SPV. The platform will bring together civil servants and curated training content generated by best-in-class institutions, start-ups and individuals.[10]"*

The digital iGoT platform is conceptualized as a comprehensive set serving competency, career development, learning, discussion and networking requirements. It is aimed at providing an opportunity for the government staff to demand the best capacity development support available in the market and a mechanism for competency assessment that links it with their long term skills and knowledge requirements.

USAID funded FIRE-D project (1994-2011) was a long term project that has transcended urban reforms and WASH sub sector engagement. *"It partnered with India's central, state, and city governments to develop sustainable urban environmental services and to ensure the poor have access to those services. FIRE-D provided varied technical assistance at the national level and in 16 states across India. It worked to expand WatSan access to the poor in particular by integrating their perspectives into project planning processes.[11]"*

Performance Assessment System(PAS)[12] (2008 till date) of Centre for Water and Sanitation(CWAS) at CEPT University has spanned across the timeline of sector wide and sanitation specific interventions as a mix of scaled up performance assessment, performance monitoring, planning and capacity building interventions for urban sanitation in India.

Summary

Urban sector capacity development initiatives in India, can be summed us as follows :
- Urban sector-wide capacity development initiatives. A combination of urban reforms(financial and administrative) and sector wise capacity development, linked with the National Urban Sanitation Policy and the JNNURM since 2005
  - PEARL
  - CBUD

- **Program Specific** capacity development initiatives linked with the SBM, AMRUT, Smart Cities and NULM from 2015
  - SMARTNET – linked to SMART Cities Program
  - Integrated Capacity Development Program(ICBP) – linked to AMRUT and later to all the national programs
  - CITTIS program

- **Sanitation Specific** capacity development initiatives linked with specific sanitation initiatives like the FSSM and the National FSSM Policy 2017
  - Sanitation Capacity Building Platform(SCBP) – a Capacity Development Normative Framework(of process and training modules) and implementation for non sewered sanitation systems.

- **Scaled up urban sector wide digital capacity-competency** initiatives using digital platforms since 2020
  - National Urban Learning Platform(NULP)
  - Mission Karamyogi and iGoT Platform

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[8]*https://citiis.niua.org/content/our-approach*
[9]*Maturation Framework : https://citiis.niua.org/maturation-framework*
[10]*https://hcindiatz.gov.in/pdf/Mission%20Karmayogi.pdf*
[11]*Evaluation Report. https://www.globalwaters.org/sites/default/files/FIRE-D%20Final%20Evaluation%20Report-508%20Compliant,%202018.pdf*
[12]*https://pas.org.in/web/ceptpas/home?p_p_id=HomePage_WAR_Portal&p_p_lifecycle=1&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=col-umn-1&p_p_col_pos=1&p_p_col_count=3&actionVal=Retrieve&SkipAccessChecking=false*

Capacity Development : Emerging Trends and Concerns

A. Capacity development as a temporary/ complimentary requirement, for national programs and missions.

Various capacity development interventions that have happened, have been as a response to national programs and missions, and are dependent on a few donors and bilateral agencies support (USAID, EU, GIZ, World Bank, BMGF, ADB, AFD, etc.). These have been discontinued as the Missions/Programs have ended in 2020. There is a weak linkage of capacity development for a medium to long term urban planning/vision and policy for a the country, state or town planning.

There is no long term financial commitment to support for urban sanitation capacity development from the central or state government level, leave alone from Urban Local Bodies budgets(that are unable to meet their operating expenses).

The focus of current trainings is excessively on program implementation(essentially infrastructure and CAPEX investments), preparing DPRs for new projects and schemes. Measurement and monitoring requirements are also a priority, but not developing new perspectives, or learning and re-learning core concepts and their creative applications to different contexts and requirements.

While importance of training government officials for meeting program and project delivery requirements is self evident, restricting it to immediate priorities and specific projects will be shortsighted. Given that sanitation systems thinking and technology solutions change rapidly nowadays, having core conceptual knowledge of the subject(water, solid waste and waste water management) and an empowered logical thinking mind to figure out appropriate local solutions, in addition to program and project level implementation skills trainings is required.

B. Absence of formal institutionalized learning and knowledge leadership : case for academia-research-citizens engagement

Urban water and sanitation is not just a technical challenge. It is a governance challenge for most developing countries, it requires political will to invest in development and maintenance of a mix of centralized and decentralized water and sanitation infrastructure, composting and reuse of solid waste and treated waste water. The content, thrust and approach of capacity development has to be long term and institutional.

Developing a long term learning agenda, original learning content(not just PPT based trainings), development of innovative and appropriate learning material, exercises, evaluation, effectively delivery – are key to all learning and capacity development work in any field.

So far the focus has been on strengthening institutional management of capacity development – of intermediary capacity development and training institutions in India including the national nodal training institutes or National Institute of Urban Affairs(NIUA) and some regional institutes(ASCI, CWAS-CRDF, RCUES, ATIs, etc.). The evaluation of the FIRE-D project of USAID in 2018 also recommended the same. "USAID could explore ways to strengthen the National Institute of Urban Affairs or other institutions' capabilities and roles in nationwide training."[13]

In our federal structure, water and sanitation are state subjects. There is no independent statutory institutional capacity development mechanism at the national level or in any state, that has experts from academia and research institutes, to define the agenda of urban sanitation research and development and to advise the national and state governments.

Most of our urban sanitation manuals and guidelines use European and US standards of treatment of waste water and solid waste. Committees are usually formed for developing or updating manuals and technical guidelines. There is a multiplicity of central government institutions ranging from CPHEEO[14] and Pollution Control Boards, that deal with complimentary aspects of water and waste water standards. However these bodies are not empowered to undertake independent research and capacity building. Courts intervene from time to time, asking our IITs and other academic institutes to make assessments and recommendations on critical matters.

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[13]*Evaluation Report – WASH Ex-post evaluation page xii.*
https://www.globalwaters.org/sites/default/files/FIRE-D%20Final%20Evaluation%20Report-508%20Compliant,%202018.pdf
[14]*http://cpheeo.gov.in/cms/about-cpheeo.php*

Indian universities and academia need to be engaged in capacity building as well as in developing standards relevant to Indian context and re use of treated waste water and solids. Old pedagogy and teaching centralized water and sanitation systems borrowed from the last century European and US context, remain the mainstay of our technical universities education system as well as the re-training programs of government officials.

C. Opportunities and limitations of a digital capacity development approach

It is true that online and digital learning platforms reduce the cost of delivery and save the trainee, time and money, in terms of undertaking a training at their convenience. Yet not all type of learning or capacity development, specially deeper level knowledge and learning courses, can be delivered easily on digital mediums. Most online digital content has become an overloaded PPT based presentations that pack facts and information more than learning and teaching. The experience of SCBP in identifying and developing digital learning content and format relevant to priority stakeholders, will be share in the next part of this series.

The challenge of digital online learning is not just the difficulty in explaining complex things online or undertaking exercises and project work. Even the best of digital platforms are dependent on technology, internet connectivity and the orientation and time of a trainee. At a more fundamental level, digital learning is constrained by an absence of a physical learning environment where body language, interjections and questions, open ended discussion and debates, are hampered by the medium itself. The core aspect of learning and teaching as a two way process where the teacher and trainee both learn from an active direct exchange – is constrained in the digital platform.

Can learning and capacity development be left to a digital platform? Digital dissemination is just a medium of delivery of capacity development. Developing pedagogy, undertaking research and developing capacity of teachers and trainers – can this be left to individual organizations or consultancy firms who will sub contract out the learning agenda?

Knowledge portals were earlier seen as repositories of knowledge and information, to be used by individuals and organizations for their learning needs. What is wrong in visualizing digital online portals as open free market transaction platforms, where buyers and sellers of capacity development can engage like an Ola Uber experience? It certainly has the advantage of bringing together different stakeholders – but surely there is more to learning and capacity development, than just market transaction for delivering training. Who will conceptualize learning requirements for a medium and long term, develop learning agenda and content, develop a pool of trainers, undertake quality assurance?

Strengthening a robust, well funded institutional academia-research-citizens engagement mechanism, should be a capacity development priority for India as we urbanize at a rapid pace in the 21st century. Digital platforms can certainly be useful if matched with this investment in institutional capacity development. Despite huge investment in urban sanitation, our mountains of solid waste dump sites and untreated sewage and septage flowing into our rivers and ground water, is a testimony that time is short.

In Part 2 of this series we will look at the experience of Sanitation Capacity Building Platform(SCBP) work and lessons therefrom. Leading to a development of a Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder(CDEL) and concluding remarks in the third and final part of this series.

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UNDERSTANDING EFFECTIVENESS OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT:

Lessons from Sanitation Capacity Building Platform

Part II : Sanitation Capacity Building Platform: Understanding the Process and Effectiveness

In this second part of the 3 series paper, the SCBP program experience in terms of its approach and strategy are presented as a live case study to assess the effectiveness of a capacity development intervention/program can be critiqued, from the process adopted, choices made and learning outputs and outcomes achieved. If there a better and more effective capacity development engagement possible, is left for the readers to judge and critique.

SCBP lessons are used to develop a Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder(CDEL) framework, that is presented in the third and final part of this series.

Sanitation Capacity Building Platform (https://www.niua.org/scbp/) is a program funded by Gates Foundation and anchored by National Institute of Urban Affairs(NIUA). The aim of the program is capacity development for Faecal Sludge and Septage Management (FSSM), primarily for government functionaries. However training collaterals and learning content have been prepared keeping in mind the learning priorities of private sector professionals and consultants as well.

In operation since 2015-16, the program is conceptualized as collaborative platform of credible national institutes and experts, to produce original and high value learning content and training collaterals for promoting Faecal Sludge and Septage Management solutions in India.

SCBP program timeline

SCBP evolved from a few towns(6 towns) capacity development intervention in 2016, to a national level FSSM Capacity Development intervention reaching out to several states, urban local bodies, national and state level institutes. Producing a wide range of leaning collaterals/training modules, technical studies and reports, policy guidance and research.

The program evolved organically, developing learning collaterals at pace with national and state level requirement, contextualizing them and providing a quality assurance oversight for maximum impact. A learning strategy for effective capacity development, evolved from a practical engagement in a few states of India, including academia engagement and dissemination partnerships. The program has now matured for scale up at the national level through a combination of face to face teaching training modules as well as through the digital medium.

About Sanitation Capacity Building Platform

Program Timeline

2016 — Platform Building, Advocacy
- Program Timeline
- CB Needs Assessment
- State Engagement: UP

2017 — Getting hands dirty : Scaling Up
- Content Development
- AMRUT institutes
- State: Rajasthan

2018 — State Normative CB Framework & SCBP Portal as Knowledge Hub
- TMRC operationalized
- Academia Engagement
- State: Uttarakhand

2019-20 — Digital Dissemination Strategy & Innovative CB Formats
- TMRC 2.0
- State: Uttarakhand
- Digital CB

2021-22 — Center for Urban Sanitation at NIUA
- Institution arrangements
- Knowledge Hub
- iGoT, NULP, LMS

Content	Training	Partnerships	Impact
17 training modules, 12 research studies, 13 technical reports 21–Set Digital Content	5000+ government officials (ULB/State) trained on FSSM	Partnership with 30+ NFSSMA partners forged	Paradigm Shift for FSSM
150+ documents uploaded online; 100,000+ downloads	50 NIUA trainings; 17 nodal institutes trainings; 11 exposure visits	Engaged with 13 AMRUT nodal institutes for FSSM	Partners & Nodal training institutes using NIUA developed training content
3,00,000+ website hits / 5000+ registered users	250+ students; 30+ faculties trained / 20+ gamification, e-courses and online trainings	MoU with 9 Academic Institutes / Int'l partners: EAWAG, SuSanA, IRC	91 towns supported in Uttarakhand / FSSM funds UP: 640 Cr; Raj: 400 Cr

Capacity Development Outputs and Outcomes of SCBP

SCBP has ensured that a range of learning outputs of high quality have been produced and curated in an open learning and knowledge platform – scbp,niua.org.

The program in its first phase(2015-19), contributed to development of original learning and training content to reach out to more than 5000 government officials, and strengthening institutional partnerships and delivery and outreach.

The program contributed to the National FSSM Alliance advocacy push, for a national level paradigm change away from centralized sanitation systems, to an integrated city wide inclusive sanitation systems with priorities of gender and social inclusion. SCBP contributed to developing state level policy guidance and the first demonstration Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants(FSTPs) in 3 states and one Union Territory and unlocking of state funding for the same. During the Covid 19 pandemic, the program contributed to the national response by producing a Resource Book for Covid 19. Comprising of all government advisories, learning material and budget template for procurement of PPE kits by towns. Another study of 24 cities sanitation response using a Resilient Urban Sanitation Response Framework was also undertaken to document the work done. The contribution of SCBP to the national level and international capacity development discourse and urban sanitation, is explained in detail in later sections.

In the second phase of SCBP starting 2020, the program has an FSSM learning aim at the national level, with development of learning collaterals including digital and innovative formats as a priority.

SCBP consists of a small team of 15 professionals based in NIUA Delhi and in Dehradun. There is a capacity development team, a technical team, a state level team and supporting teams of IT, Design and GIS.

Team Structure of SCBP Phase 2

SCBP Team Structure

- Capacity Development Team
- Technology Team
- State Engagement Team
- IT, Design & GIS Support Teams
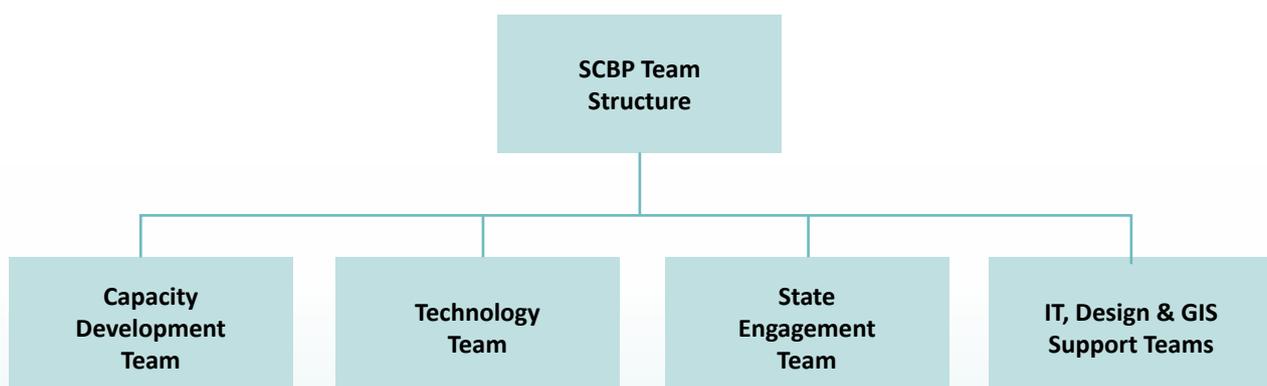
SCBP Capacity Development Experience: Understanding the Process and Effectiveness

Capacity development in the international development discourse, has been defined as learning and capabilities development at individual level, strengthening institutional systems and enabling and policy environment, to achieve desired outcomes.

Capacity development as a learning objective, is a creative process of identifying priorities and opportunities for developing appropriate learning collaterals and institutional and policy level strengthening. Outcomes beyond the capacity development engagement, may be difficult to measure. What can be assessed is the effectiveness of the inputs and outputs and the process.

The process followed under SCBP for capacity development, the critical areas of engagement and related outputs and outcomes, are presented in this section. Several large capacity development interventions, as mentioned in the first part of this paper series – have left behind very little in terms of a documentation of the capacity development process and strategy, and lessons.

We hope to remedy this shortcoming by presenting the lessons learnt in SCBP and also propose a Framework to assess the effectiveness of capacity development as a learning priority, based on the SCBP lessons, in the third part of this paper series.

1. Scaling up capacity development imperative

Capacity development as a learning initiative, by its very nature, is extensive and not limited. It has to have a certain scale of learning outreach, to be effective in its outcome and impact. What is critical is having the credibility for scaling up a capacity development intervention, that comes with the confidence of producing high value original learning collaterals and partnerships.

SCBP started off as a capacity development platform by bringing credible national organizations to work together for FSSM but was focused on ground level engagement in only 6 towns. The theory of change then was that relevant capacity development content and a capacity development strategy will emerge from this limited engagement.

Small towns in India do not have the political standing to challenge the dominant centralized sanitation systems thinking at the state level. Their municipalities are inadequately staffed and their officers transferred at a high frequency. Thus as a capacity development strategy working upwards from small towns will never work. It can just be an entry point into the mainstream urban sanitation system.

In 2015, FSSM was a new area of work in urban sanitation, for which neither ready made training modules/learning content existed, nor trained professionals. Scaling up capacity development therefore had to wait till we had something in hand to scale up.

A scaled up capacity development initiative covering the majority number of town officials and also the para state technical agency staff, starting with an advocacy push at the highest decision making level, was required. But this had to wait till we built an appetite for FSSM at the highest level through advocacy.

2. Advocacy the first capacity development priority

Advocacy for FSSM, was a priority in the initial years of the program(2015-17) and continues to be so today.

The initial capacity development work was however primarily an advocacy push with the National FSSM Alliance- to mainstream FSSM into the urban sanitation landscape as a credible and viable alternative.

Capacity development through advocacy meant extended one to one meetings with officials, followed by exposure visits to on ground examples of septage management. The SCBP program used the entry point of working in 6 towns, to initiate meetings with senior officials and policy makers. Informing and sharing whatever we knew about decentralized sanitation systems and the urgency of septage management for India. We began by reaching out at the highest level of decision makers in a state(Urban Development Secretary and Special Secretaries), to convince them of the urgency to address septage management as a priority and not wait for sewerage systems. They in turn wanted technical assistance in the form of Detailed Project Reports(DPRs) for constructing septage treatment plants.

Available technology options for decentralized level non sewered sanitation systems were an eye opener for senior administrative officials, but they needed some demonstration plants in operation to get convinced. Exposure visits to Faceal Sludge treatment Plants(FSTPs) in Karnataka(Devanhalli town) and in Malaysia were very effective in getting their buy in. Such exposure visits were organized for senior officials for atleast 10 large states of India. Followed by visits for middle level officials.

Some important FSSM advocacy milestones:

- First National FSSM Workshop(April, 2016) organized by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs(then called Ministry of Urban Development), with the partnership of NFSSM Alliance, gave a major advocacy push for FSSM in India.

- National FSSM Policy and FSM 5 Conference in Chennai(Feb 2017) galvanized several state governments either adopted this national policy or enacted their own state policies. NFSSM Alliance played a leading role in organizing both events.
- Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants pilot projects as demonstration and advocacy collaterals. NFSSM Alliance partners had set up Technical Support Units in the states of Maharashtra, Odisha and Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh and initiated work there since 2015.
- National FSSM Workshop held in Leh in August 2017(CDD Society and BORDA) with the first treatment plant coming up there.
- Third National FSSM Conference in Odisha in 2018, where the Odisha state government not only made a firm commitment to prioritize FSSM as a state wide strategy replacing sewerage systems, but also inaugurated 6 FSTPs in one go. To signal the taking off of FSSM in India.
- NFSSM Alliance brought together all its knowledge resources to produce the first advocacy pitch presentation on FSSM in 2016

Several state governments started adopting the National FSSM Policy or coming out with their own policy and guidelines. This included UP and Rajasthan(with support from SCBP and IPE). FSSM advocacy thrust therefore paved the way for cashing on the potential for the states to look seriously at decentralized and non sewered sanitation systems as viable options to centralized sewerage systems(that had been the mainstay of the institutional thinking).

3. Developing original and relevant training modules content

Capacity development for FSSM in India was a **new frontier** in 2016 when SCBP initiated work. Very little learning content existed on decentralized sanitation systems or integrated sanitation systems for addressing urban sanitation. Even though decentralized sanitation systems were realized as the ideal solution for Indian cities in the work done for the 11th Five Year Plan working group in 2011-12, septage management as a challenge facing India, remained to be addressed. The Central Pollution Control Board Report(2015) of only 37% sewage being treated by existing STPs and the 2010 Census showing only 33% households with sewerage connection, notwithstanding.

The first FSSM Orientation trainings for government officials under SCBP in 2016 for UP state officials, were session wise PPT presentations by NFSSM Alliance members, covering a range of different aspects. We realized that the presentations delivered by different people, had overlapping content and were lacking a focal message and clarity for the trainees. PPT based trainings do not provide sufficient learning collaterals either.

The first FSSM Orientation Training Module(2017) was developed by SCBP as a Training of Trainers module with CEPT-CWAS. The one day module was structured as an India specific original FSSM orientation module. It combined a conceptual understanding of waste water, basic information on technology aspects but most importantly, had an exercise demonstrating the feasibility and cost implication of scheduled desludging for a small size Indian city.
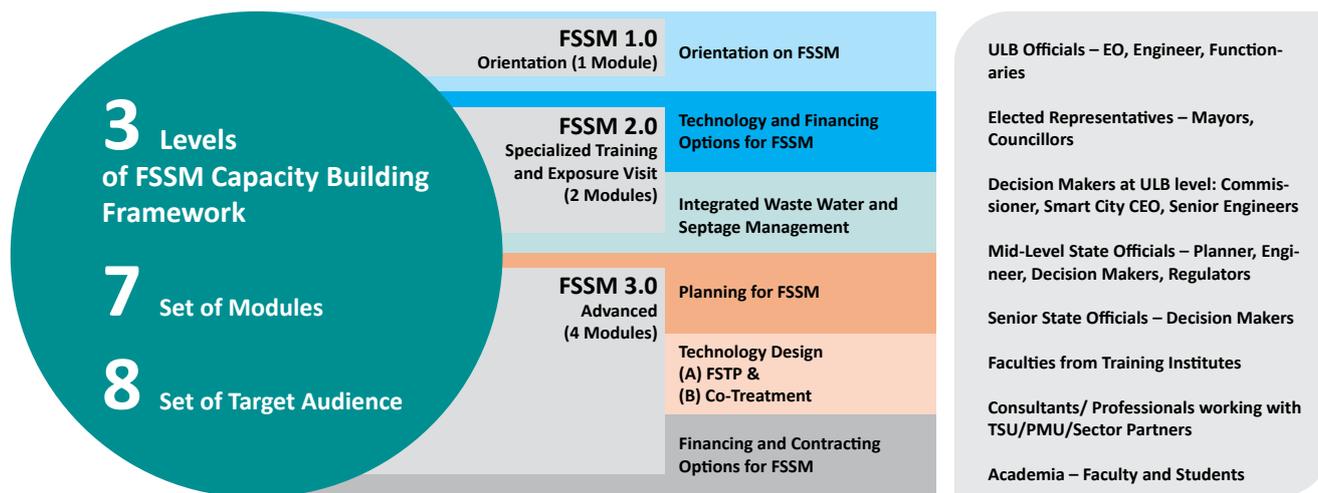
The module provided a learning value for government officials that transcended both conceptual understanding and practical considerations of septage management. This FSSM Orientation Module was then improved for its national uptake, curated by SCBP into a three set format (consisting of PPT, Learning Notes and References). This format ensured quality and credibility of FSSM modules, that till then were mostly PPT based handouts.

Developing original learning content is core of any capacity development initiative.

- The NFSSM Alliance partners got together and Centre for Policy Research anchored the preparation of **a city FSSM Costing Template** in 2017. For quantification of sludge generation and its budget, for the states to put up proposals for setting up Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants(FSTPs) under the national program for sanitation(AMRUT). Using a proxy estimation of per kilo liter of sludge treatment cost, both OPEX and CAPEX were arrived at by a simple filling of the template for number of households and septic tank connections in each city.
- **Integrated waste water and septage management** was identified as a base urban sanitation and FSSM training priority by 2018, on the lines of City Sanitation Plans. Jumping straight to septage management amounted to missing the larger city level understanding of waste water. The uptake of this training module was good as it allowed the trainees to visualize the entire town water supply and waste water disposal challenge, then move towards identifying a decentralized location and appropriate treatment technology selection.
- **Presenting a menu of treatment technology options**. DEWATS systems(given that these have low O&M cost), formed the priority FSSM technology training content in the initial years. Mechanised technology treatment systems were considered off the shelf procurement options not requiring training.

However, with experience, we started combining a conceptual understanding of treatment

Levels and Typologies of Training Modules

3 Levels of FSSM Capacity Building Framework

7 Set of Modules

8 Set of Target Audience

FSSM 1.0 Orientation (1 Module) — Orientation on FSSM

FSSM 2.0 Specialized Training and Exposure Visit (2 Modules) — Technology and Financing Options for FSSM / Integrated Waste Water and Septage Management

FSSM 3.0 Advanced (4 Modules) — Planning for FSSM / Technology Design (A) FSTP & (B) Co-Treatment / Financing and Contracting Options for FSSM

- ULB Officials – EO, Engineer, Functionaries
- Elected Representatives – Mayors, Councillors
- Decision Makers at ULB level: Commissioner, Smart City CEO, Senior Engineers
- Mid-Level State Officials – Planner, Engineer, Decision Makers, Regulators
- Senior State Officials – Decision Makers
- Faculties from Training Institutes
- Consultants/ Professionals working with TSU/PMU/Sector Partners
- Academia – Faculty and Students

technologies with criteria of selection based on different town typologies, costing, land requirement and geographical contexts. A combination of mechanical dewatering and DEWATS treatment for waste water, emerged as good hybrid technology solution for Indian context. High tech pyrolysis treatment options are also tried out in a few states.

- **Identifying a curriculum for waste water technology training modules.** In 2018 a baseline of all the FSSM training modules was done by SCBP. It was found that very few advanced FSSM technology trainings were undertaken for city officials. A large majority of training modules were orientation modules. Whereas the emerging needs were for more technology training, operations and financing related topics. But how many and what type of technology training modules to develop was a challenge.

One large Technology Training module was therefore divided into two modules - Planning Module and Designing Module(2019). The Planning Module was later updated for state and city level FSSM Planning(2020). A Septage-Sewage Co-Treatment Module was added(2021).

FSSM is a paradigm changing urban sanitation system where non sewered sanitation systems are seen as an integral component of city wide inclusive sanitation systems. Centralized sanitation systems dominated the thinking and urban sanitation discourse among engineers and institutions. You had to pitch FSSM against that system and show its relevance.

As a result, in the initial years, FSTPs were pitched as stand alone sanitation systems for Indian towns. To demonstrate its effectiveness in addressing the full value chain from containment, transport, treatment and disposal/re use specially for small and medium towns of India that did not have sewerage systems.

Hence the first set of FSSM training modules were about making non sewered sanitation systems implementable for a small and medium town of India. Later by 2019 we were able to promote an understanding of Integrated Wastewater and Septage Management, alongwith and models of centralized and decentralized sanitation and non sewered systems solutions for Indian cities.

Levels and Typologies of Training Modules
A set of training modules that are economical and effective in reaching out to priority stakeholders, is critical for success of and effectiveness of a capacity development intervention.

SCBP identified a set of seven priority FSSM thematic training module content, organized into 3 Levels of Training targeting 8 trainee typologies.

4. Partnerships for effective capacity development and outreach
Knowledge is created through a collective process of integrating past and present knowledge and experience. Capacity development collaterals evolve over time, with improvement in understanding, feedback and input from the implementers and a deeper theoretical conceptual engagement.

SCBP experience of FSSM capacity development, evolved and matured over time. The initial priority was advocacy and developing learning collaterals and training modules based on existing knowledge of FSSM. As India progressed from the national FSSM Policy 2017, to the first two to four septage treatment plants in a few states, there emerged a demand for capacity development trainings from a large number of states and cities in India.

SCBP engagement from 2016-19, was at all levels of FSSM development. This included state level policy and national level FSSM integration; the development of training modules and development
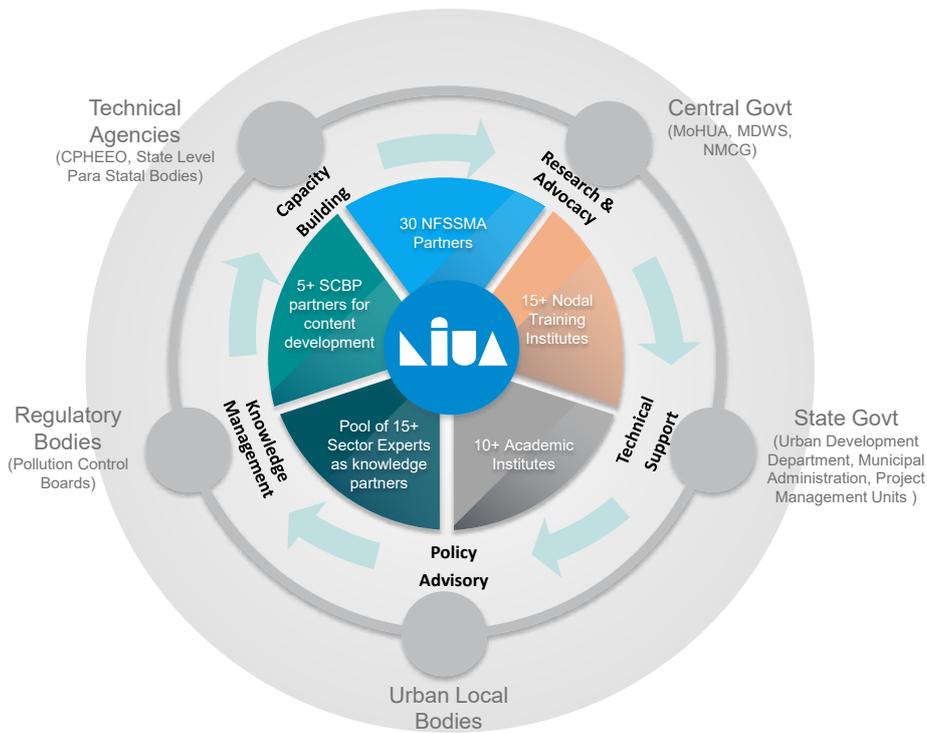
of capacity of national nodal training institutes and experts, technical assistance for para state agencies and towns in the states of Bihar, UP, Uttarakhand and Rajasthan; engagement with Academia and Researchers, Experts, practitioners and town officials and elected representatives. This involved an extensive partnership engagement on all fronts.

SCBP Partnerships encompassed a full circle of knowledge creation, delivery and uptake for FSSM at national and state level.

- Partnerships for content development and its review were forged one to one and also under a Training Modules Review Committee(TMRC) that was formed out of the NFSSM Alliance, in 2018. It provided a platform for joint development and review of learning collaterals, to bring in standardization of content to the extent possible, quality assurance and quality control.

- Research and academia partnerships strengthened the depth and new knowledge creation. They also contributed to a larger outreach of FSSM at the national level(through research outputs) and mainstreaming formal education curriculum and scale up(academia partnerships).

- National Nodal Training Institutes, National and State government engagement, and Urban Local Bodies partnerships were critical for implementing trainings and policy uptake.

The initial starting phase of SCBP was difficult in terms of getting partners to listen to each other and

collaborate. NIUA as a host organization for FSSM capacity development, had to establish its own credibility to be able to anchor this initiative and contribute to learning agenda.

Shared ownership and a process of knowledge creation and learning, of experimenting, is an integral requirement for creating new learning content. A shared collaborative process of developing learning content also needs leadership. Not just anchoring the process, but to also ensure last mile completion of training modules takes place, for quality assurance and quality control. It requires a certain level of understanding of thematic content of urban sanitation and training modules development. SCBP could anchor this process with support of NFSSM Alliance members, to produce a set of technical training modules with original and relevant content for Indian context.

Development of original learning content requires recognition of contribution by a lead partner and due acknowledgement. Preventing plagiarism is critical or else no one will share their intellectual learning content for an open source capacity development program.

5. Developing a Learning Strategy
Capacity development strategies should have a learning strategy, that should be core to the capacity development work. The learning strategy should be aligned to a larger learning outcome, should clearly define what learning content needs to be produced, for whom and in what form. This is not easy to define. Capacity needs assessments done at the start of any capacity development intervention, are unsuitable for developing a learning strategy. The needs assessment

studies at best identify gaps in existing knowledge and skills, not what is needed to be done.

A learning strategy will emerge from experience of understanding the capacity needs through some intensive engagement with stakeholders, including undertaking the first set of trainings.

SCBP learning strategy was initiated in 2018, two years after the program started. A review was undertaken of all the FSSM training modules developed by all NFSSM Alliance partners. The review highlighted inconsistency and duplication of content, most of the training modules were only PPT presentations. This was followed by a stakeholder mapping and then to identify a set of priority training modules. This process included the active participation of more than 20 National FSSM Alliance members and very effective facilitation by Gates Foundation.

A matrix of priority training modules covering priority stakeholders were identified under this collaborative process and a Training Modules Review Committee(TMRC) was constituted in early 2019 for ensuring standardization of content to the extent possible, develop original high value content relevant for Indian context, provide Quality Assurance and Quality Control.

A Normative Framework for State Level FSSM capacity development emerged as the FSSM capacity development strategy, based on the practical experience of SCBP delivering a scaled up state level FSSM capacity development engagement in UP and Rajasthan. A four stage capacity development approach tested by NIUA for all the 190 Urban Local Bodies (Town) officials of Rajsthan in 2017-18.

The Normative Framework included recommended steps for any new partner, to initiate FSSM capacity development engagement in a state in India. A set of recommended training modules that TMRC/SCBP were presented. Three such training modules secured the formal endorsement of Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs endorsement in 2019.

Digital training content and dissemination strategy, Once good quality original and relevant training content and modules serving a set of strategic stakeholders was identified in the first phase of SCBP work, its adaptation for digital dissemination was tried out in the second phase. Covid 19 pandemic gave a good opportunity to test out different formats of development and delivery of digital learning content for different set of stakeholders.

From self learning to teaching training, from short duration to long duration, from e courses to gamification apps – a range of digital FSSM training modules were tried and tested out with national nodal

training institutes and by NIUA on its own platform. A digital dissemination strategy for FSSM capacity development was thus developed by SCBP in 2020.

6. Visioning change, designing urban sanitation solutions, as proof of concept of capacity development work

When we started capacity development work in 2015-16, introducing the concept of Faecal Sludge and Septage Management was challenging, given the dominance of centralized sanitation systems thinking. Setting up just one Faecal Sludge Treatment plant in a city, became the defacto vision of change to address the untreated septage issue. The viability of septage treatment solutions, the viability of operations and management including cost implications of septic tank emptying and its recovery from taxes or payments by households – became capacity development priority for town officials, to encourage them commit to this alternative.

Examples of on ground running treatment plants – the first FSTP in Devanhalli town of Karnataka and some other state level FSSM initiatives in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, were considered ideal solutions.

Visualizing FSSM as part of decentralized sanitation systems solution, a mix of non sewered systems and sewered systems – came later when a certain minimum threshold of acceptance of FSSM as city wide inclusive sanitation system(coined as CWIS) was getting endorsed internationally by The World Bank, ADB and also experts and universities.

A real life conceptualization in the Indian, of this integrated city wide sanitation solution, was critical for moving to the higher level of understanding of FSSM as more than just one non sewered waste water treatment facility.

Situating city wide urban inclusive sanitation system in the Indian context. As a culmination of our first phase capacity development work by NIUA in 2019, we were able to come up with recommendation for a combination of centralized and decentralized sanitation systems and a non sewered sanitation system plan for Port Blair town. This was a result of our engagement with the Port Blair administration for a Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant for the town in 2018, under a Court order(NGT directive) to ensure no untreated waste water was discharged in the sea.

Port Blair authority had invited SCBP/NIUA to review a Rs.300-400 crores DPR for a centralized sanitation system proposed by WAPCOS for the island town and to suggest an alternative option. NIUA prepared and submitted recommendations for a mix of centralized and decentralized sanitation system plus non sewered

sanitation system that would cover 100% of town population. This solution would have a significantly lower O&M cost, on account of reduced electricity charge(on account of decentralized smaller scale STPs) for the island town where electricity cost was a high Rs. 28/unit in 2019.

Port Blair urban sanitation plan, a mix of sewered(centralized and decentralized) and non sewered sanitation systems, provides an excellent capacity development and conceptual understanding model for appropriate urban sanitation systems.

IIHS anchored TNUSSP initiative in Tamil Nadu demonstrated the need for visualizing a state wide investment plan for urban sanitation, based on a categorization and clustering of towns with a phased plan for FSSM as an integral part of the solution. NIUA's Uttarakhand FSSM strategy and engagement is on similar lines. FSSM is explored for different options : towns with existing STPs to have co treatment of septage with sewage at STPs, cluster level Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants(FSTPs) for medium and small sized towns and more basic solutions for very small high altitude hilly towns that don't generate large quantities of septage.

7. Institutional capacity development and policy outcomes

Capacity development is not just about developing and delivering training programs. For any capacity development intervention to succeed, investing time in engaging with state level institutions for FSSM adoption, to understand the local context, to clear doubts, to build the issues within your capacity development priorities, requires time and effort.

Institutional development and enabling FSSM policies at state level, engagement with decision makers, was essential for promoting FSSM. Under SCBP this was done for the states of UP and Rajasthan for developing their state FSSM Guidelines. For Uttarakhand SCBP contributed to rolling out a state FSSM protocol.

8. Contribution to learning outcomes other than the program

Capacity development as a learning engagement, must leave a footprint beyond its own program remit. This is a mark of its effectiveness at the highest level.

SCBP contribution to the urban sanitation sector in India, beyond capacity development was in the following outputs and outcomes :

- Ministry(MoHUA) endorsement for a set of three FSSM Training Modules(2019)
- Policy Framework and Workbook for Water and Wastewater Management(2018)
- Contributed a chapter on capacity development

for urban sanitation, for the draft National Urban Sanitation Policy 2.0
- Academia and universities integrating FSSM in their core course curriculum
- Input to ADB for restructuring their urban sanitation portfolio to include FSSM and Co Treatment for city wide inclusive sanitation

SCBP contribution to the larger capacity development discourse :

At the national level

- SCBP portal (https://www.niua.org/scbp/) is recognized as a knowledge center on FSSM not just for India but also internationally. The portal serves as a repository of information, knowledge resources.
- Training modules produced by SCBP are valued in South Asia and are also reaching Africa.
- Learning Strategy by SCBP, the FSSM Normative Framework for state level capacity development & the Digital Dissemination strategy are useful for any sector, not just sanitation. Since they deal with the challenges of training government officials.
- Covid 19 Resource Book of all Government Advisories, learning collaterals and budget template for preparing PPE budgets by municipalities, was useful and timely intervention to support Indian cities.

At the international level, SCBP made some major contributions to the larger understanding of capacity development and the capacity development discourse:

- A Resilient Urban Sanitation Response(RUSR) Framework, has been applied to study and document the Covid 19 urban sanitation response by 24 Indian cities. This framework can be applied to sanitation emergency response globally to understand the timeliness, appropriateness and effectiveness. The critical parameters that are most ignored.
- Contributing a chapter to an upcoming international publication – Journey of Urban Sanitation by EAWAG. SCBP anchored the inputs from not just India by also Nepal, Pakistan and Bangladesh. To highlight critical trends and priorities for urban sanitation for South Asia and the international development agencies capacity development priorities.
- Presenting the SCBP Learning Strategy to a global audience at the IRC Conference(2018), the FSM6(2019).
- Re drafting of the global Capacity Development

Factsheet(2020) by Susana. To highlight the real world understanding of capacity development of SCBP in a developing country context.

- Representation in an International Task Force on re structuring of Susana Network. Contributing to the developing of its Vision, Goals and Strategy.
- Contributing the Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder(CDEL) Framework, to reclaim the learning priority of capacity development.

Conclusion

In the first part of this three series paper, we identified the shortcoming of several well funded bilateral and donor funded capacity development interventions that were essentially privatization and sector reform or re-structuring technical assistance, never left behind learning footprints or contribution for their sector or for the larger capacity development discourse. We saw this in the first part of the series of this Paper, how long term well funded capacity development interventions like FIRE-D and CBUD ended without a significant trail of learning collaterals, strategy and contribution to the global capacity development discourse.

Even the ones with a learning priority are often poorly documented, usually end without any documentation or analysis of the work done and contribution to the larger learning and capacity development discourse. Besides a Training Needs Assessment and some reports of training programs and workshops, very little survives.

Capacity development with a learning and knowledge generation priority was the focus of international development in the 1970-90s, that led to the production of some of the best learning collaterals by national experts working in partnership with international agencies. International agencies engaged in capacity development must re prioritise the learning objective of their interventions, instead of restructuring and institutional reforms.

Generating high value learning content and partnerships, should be a priority.

Within a learning priority, the terms of reference must prioritise a core conceptual learning priority in addition to immediate practical skills and information.

Focus needs to shift to understanding the importance of and improving the effectiveness of capacity development interventions.

Measuring effectiveness rather than outcomes of capacity development is important, specially for large funded multi year initiatives where some physical infrastructure outcomes are envisaged. It may be difficult to see translation of capacity development into demand and immediate allocation of funding by national, state and town administrations for urban sanitation. If there is a failure in the infrastructure outcomes, that too then would have to be linked to capacity development, when this may not be right.

It is therefore better to measure effectiveness of capacity development. A ladder of effectiveness is therefore proposed as a measure of analysis and assessment of a capacity development intervention. Building on quality of learning/training content developed, partnerships, strategy for outreach, demonstrating proof of concept and solutions and contribution of national and international contribution to development of discourse and understanding of capacity development. A capacity development effectiveness ladder framework, emerging from the experience of SCBP work, in presented in the third part of this paper.

UNDERSTANDING EFFECTIVENESS OF CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT:

Lessons from Sanitation Capacity Building Platform

Part III : Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder (CDEL) Framework

The Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder (CDEL) Framework identifies critical steps against which practitioners and evaluators may want to assess the effectiveness of their capacity development intervention. The CDEL framework restores the primacy of learning as the core of capacity development, and identifies steps/measure of monitoring its effectiveness.

The CDEL Framework is based on Sanitation Capacity Building Platform(SCBP) work, of leading a national level capacity development initiative, and a critique of international capacity development frameworks and approaches. SCBP is anchored by National Institute of Urban Affairs(NIUA). It is part of the NFSSM Alliance and is supported by the Gates Foundation.

Summary

Understanding effectiveness of capacity development as a learning and knowledge priority is critical for reclaiming the legitimacy of capacity development itself.

By definition, capacity development is an all encompassing process of learning and capability development, including organisation development and enabling policy environment. Unfortunately, capacity development is increasingly seen as a component of Technical Assistance (TA), packaged into large multilateral and bilateral international programs and projects. Majority of which are for privatization of public sector utilities in infrastructure or even social development sector(education and health) reforms. Capacity development is reduced to a "Transaction Advisory support", for institutional transformation of large government departments and utilities, essentially for fixing a new legal quasi government or private entity/institution. Technical training is at best a limited add on learning focus, accompanied by workshops and exposure visits for senior officials and policy makers. With very little outputs and outcomes of knowledge generation, learning in terms of content and approaches.
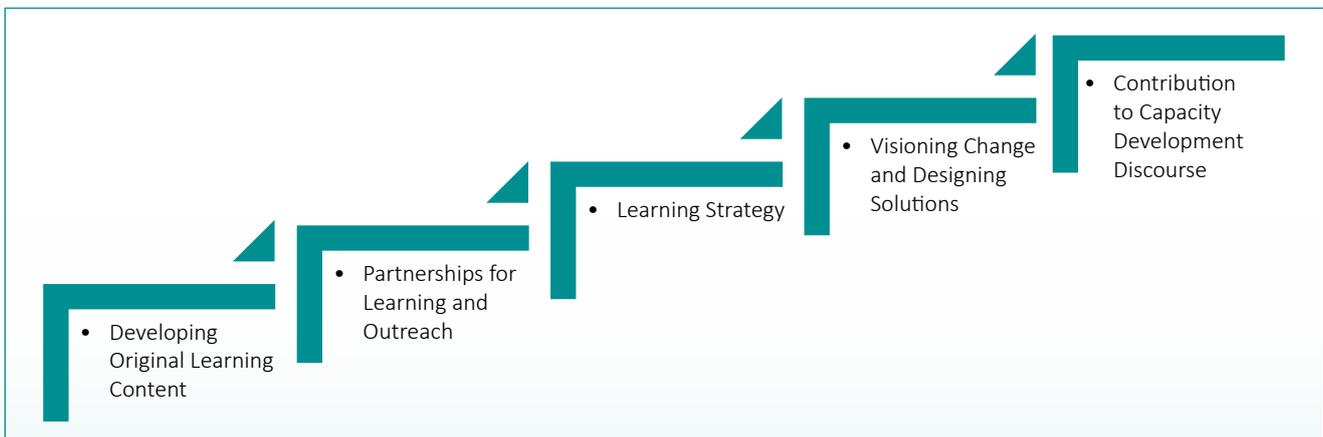
The Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder (CDEL) Framework highlights five critical steps/stages of an effective capacity development intervention that has learning as its focus: did the learning content generated by the intervention add any original learning value, were the partnerships appropriate in ensuring content development and dissemination, was there a learning strategy that was developed and implemented, was there a concrete visioning of solution(s) that connected learning to practice, did the capacity development intervention contribute to the national and international discourse and learning on capacity development.

This paper does not attempt to redefine capacity development. The Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder Framework is a modest contribution to re prioritising learning as the core of capacity development work, defines some critical stages/steps that define effectiveness of a learning initiative, and provides a caution against seeing capacity development as a formalistic process and set of activities.

Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder (CDEL) Framework

Capacity development has been much written about and debated. Seen as an extension of learning, capabilities and knowledge development, capacity

Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder(CDEL)

- Developing Original Learning Content
- Partnerships for Learning and Outreach
- Learning Strategy
- Visioning Change and Designing Solutions
- Contribution to Capacity Development Discourse

development has been the focus of large international development programs and budgets.
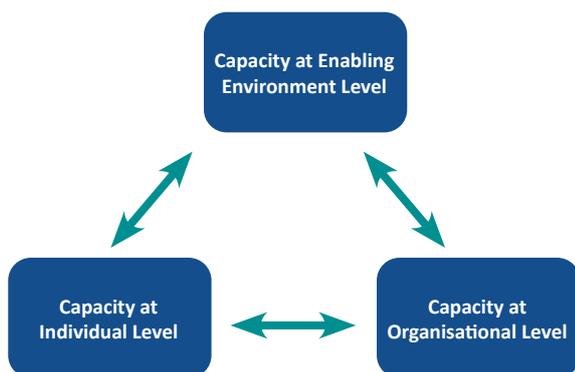
Capacity development, has been defined as:

"the process through which individuals, organizations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time. Simply put, if capacity is the means to plan and achieve, then capacity development describes the ways to those means.

But what exactly do we mean by capacity development? Confusion around the term seems to have grown along with its popularity. For some, capacity development can be any effort to teach someone to do something, or to do it better. For others, it may be about creating new institutions or strengthening old ones. Some see capacity development as a focus on education and training, while others take a broad view of it as improving individual rights, access or freedoms."[1]

Capacity development has come to be defined in a framework comprising three interconnected levels of capacity

Several international development agencies and UN systems define capacity development in the above framework. These three levels influence each other in a fluid way – the strength of each depends on, and determines, the strength of the others Some experts add two more components : accountability and sustainability.

Three interconnected levels/pillars of capacity development : UNDAF framework[2]

As a framework, this seems logical. To define the larger mandate of capacity development as more than just training programs. Seen this way, a capacity

development intervention is then expected to contribute to outcomes at the institutional and policy level. But there are some issues we need to consider.

Capacity Development for Organisation Development/Re-structuring : Limitations

A World bank Independent Evaluation Group report defines effectiveness of capacity building as : "How well institutional rules of the game(for example relating to tax and spending regimes) are linked with sustained performance of both organizational entities(such as Ministries and Departments) as well as individuals responsible for delivering results(the staff)".[3] Why should an organizational re-structuring be considered a capacity development aim/outcome? **It is an Organisation Development objective in its own right.**

"Sustained performance" can be there in a limited way, having nothing to do with any learning achievement. Under re-structuring an institution, the roles of staff can be reduced to managing contracts and consultants only, then de skilling of sectoral expertise rather than skilling and learning, with some some contract management skills and templates, is all we get.

Developing capacity at organizational level unfortunately, often implies a "Transaction Advisory" support in the form of designing the legal institutional structure, norms, procurement, hiring, etc. For its transition including legal registration, defining operating norms, procurement, change in roles of existing staff, lay off and hiring of new staff, protocols of decision making, revenue & costing, etc. Training or a learning agenda, is then a limited add on component that manifests itself in the form of workshops, conferences, exposure visits and some class room trainings using PPTs. Capacity and capacity development then is defined essentially as managerial competence to manage the institutional transition/change, with little learning or knowledge generation outputs and outcomes.

Once the change management has happened, the capacity development intervention ends, leaving behind nothing in terms of empowered staff and institutions, a learning strategy, learning content and training modules, strengthened partnerships and institutions of learning.

It is for this reason that capacity development is maligned :

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[1] *UNDP Capacity Development Primer; https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/capacity-building/capacity-development-a-undp-primer.html*

[2] *Capacity Development UNDAF Companion Guidance; https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/UNDG-UNDAF-Companion-Pieces-8-Capacity-Development.pdf*

[3] *Vinod Thomas, DG IEG World Bank; https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/9585/389150Capacity0D1Brief11901PUBLIC1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y*

"According to one early observer looking at the state of the field, 'capacity building' is simply being used as a 'buzz word' by international agencies for whatever they wish to do, with or without any accountability or logic (Enemark, 2003). The current state of the field among the major donors is such that it appears to have already reached a theatre of the absurd.

A World Bank review noted that 'examples abound' in which these initiatives 'severely undermine public management in recipient countries and unwittingly block rather than promote progress in public sector reform and institution-building.'[4]

Effectiveness of Capacity Development – a creative learning endeavour

International capacity development frameworks adopt an instrumentalist approach in defining the process of capacity building, that marginalizes the value of learning and knowledge creation. As a primarily learning agenda, capacity development is a creative process that should be focused on the learning outputs, the process for generating learning, its outreach and its institutional sustainability. With the expectation that capacity developed will be put to use if not sooner than later.

Mainstream approach prescribed for capacity development, unfortunately consists of a set of managerial linear process of steps[5]:

Experience of capacity development by SCBP, shows that capacity development even in the constrained context of short term programs and projects, is a creative process, that is not linear. Many parallel actions or back and forth steps may be required, depending on the scale and depth of a capacity development engagement. In SCBP we did the engagement, the assessment and the development of capacity development content and programs and their monitoring and analysis, simultaneously, one feeding into the other. A learning strategy consisting of priority capacity development training modules for a target audience, emerged as an outcome of this experience, much later.

From experience of SCBP and from the critique of existing capacity development frameworks, we have defined effectiveness of capacity development as an outcome of a creative approach(not a linear process) with KEY STEPS and higher level outputs and outcomes in a step wise ladder - the Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder framework.

Components of CDEL Framework

The Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder Framework is a modest contribution to re prioritising learning as the core of capacity development work, defines some critical stages/steps that define effectiveness of a learning initiative, and provides a caution against seeing capacity development as a formalistic process and set of activities.

The Framework highlights concrete steps that define the inputs, outputs and outcomes of a capacity development intervention that has learning as its focus.

Five steps of effective capacity development :

- What was the value add to learning? The learning collaterals produced – the training modules, research, technical assistance, policy guidance – was there any value add or original work produced for the sector?
- What was strategic and effective in terms of partnerships and stakeholder engagement? Were these appropriate and effective in ensuring development of high value learning content, its quality assurance, and its dissemination for the widest reach and most relevant stakeholders?
- Did the capacity development program evolve into or produce a learning strategy? Did it develop

[4] David Lempert; https://ruc.udc.es/dspace/bitstream/handle/2183/23397/EJGE_2015_4_2_5.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y
[5]Capacity Development UNDAF Companion Guidance; https://unsdg.un.org/sites/default/files/UNDG-UNDAF-Companion-Pieces-8-Capacity-Development.pdf

as a creative and organic process of engagement and not as a formalistic one? Was it effective in achieving the aims of generating appropriate and high value learning and its dissemination?

- Did the capacity development intervention mature towards integrating learning with practice, did it achieve a higher level of meta narrative and understanding of change? Was there any concrete visioning of solution(s) that was implemented, or even defined and detailed as proof of concept of the learning aim?
- What was the larger, beyond the program, contribution of capacity development? What legacy did it leave? Did the capacity development intervention contribute to the national and international capacity development discourse?

Any ambitious long term capacity development intervention should leave a mark on all the five steps of the ladder over its life cycle, to justify its effectiveness. Less ambitious initiatives may achieve one or more steps of this ladder.

First Step : Developing original learning content

Developing original learning content, ensuring its relevance and quality and its uptake, requires a creative application of available resources and a strategy. The phrase "content is king" is widely used in the marketing world, it can refer to the capacity building as well.

Learning content can be very basic, off the shelf learning content, from existing sources and culled into desired modules. Most short term capacity development initiatives, end at this first step, with PPT based training content not backed by any learning notes or practical exercises and workbooks. Learning content, including training modules should have a form and content, and a quality assurance that justifies investment of effort and ensures its longevity. This is the first test of its effectiveness.

Unlike educational institutes that have a long gestation period for pedagogy and course development for a new course, development of learning content for a capacity development intervention is often constrained for time and is usually catching up with the program interventions on the ground. An effective capacity development program is one that can play this catching up game and come up with original learning content and training modules in quick time, test and deliver it as well.

Did the capacity development intervention create original learning content that added value to the sector? This is critical to assessing the effectiveness of the intervention, as a first step. Capacity development collaterals including training modules, should be able to synthesise and prioritise existing knowledge resources into suitable format of training modules, suitable for the purpose of the intervention.

From experience of SCBP we can say that engagement of academia, researchers, experts and practitioners working together, can create the basis for new and original learning content and training modules. Training Modules should have a combination of sound conceptual understanding backed with addressing critical bottlenecks for implementing the desired change. The number of training modules and scope should be tight and well defined to constitute a learning strategy.

Validation of quality(of training modules and content) and effectiveness, is possible through feedback received in a training program from trainees, from a formal critical peer review process and open source sharing.

Under SCBP, all the modules were whetted through trial runs, followed by a Training Modules Review Committee(TMRC) that provided this quality control and assurance oversight. All the training modules, research and technical assistance, were put up on an open source knowledge portal of SCBP.

Second Step : Partnerships for Learning and Outreach

Partnerships are important not just for developing learning content but also for dissemination. The effectiveness of a capacity development intervention will depend on the range and quality of partnerships developed and sustained.

Under SCBP we developed four types of partnerships, in order to achieve maximum quality and impact.
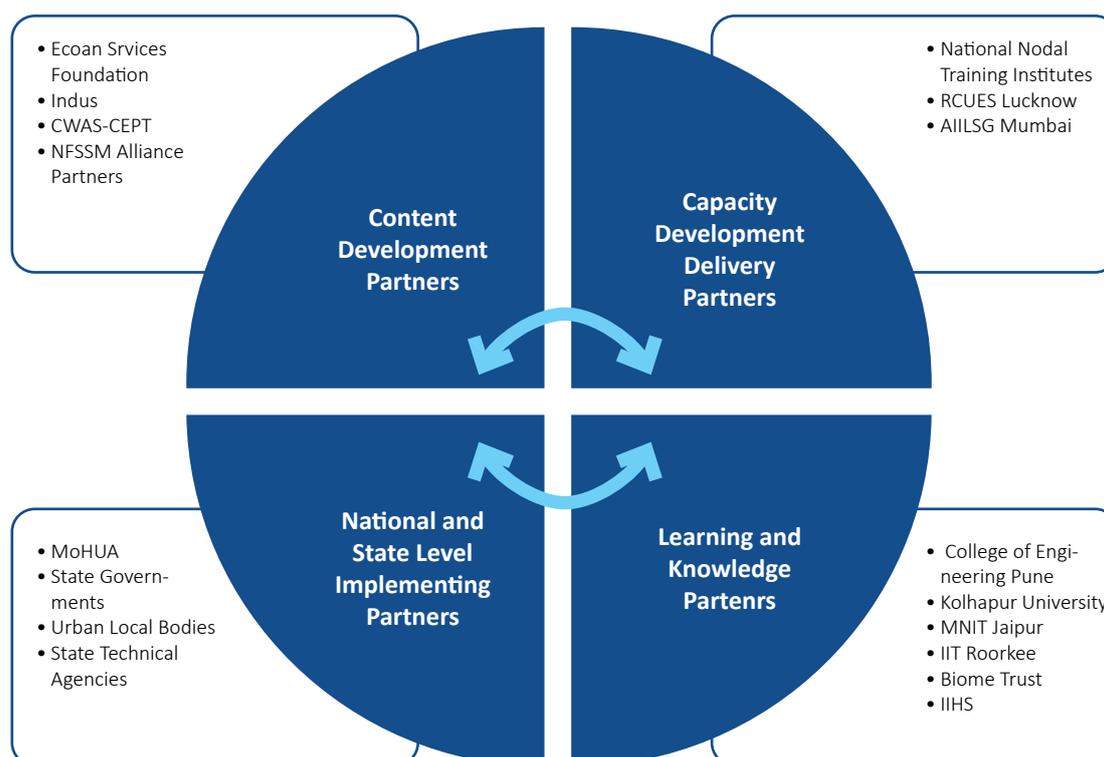
Partnerships for learning have to have a high level of mutual give and take and cannot be sub contracted consultancy work.

Partnerships for developing original and high value learning content and training modules, mature over time. Based on trial and error, from implementation of initial set of modules.

There are different and important roles that partners play in developing content and its quality assurance and quality control.

From SCBP experience we can say that developing original learning content requires a careful partnership strategy. A group of partners and experts, can be effective only as a sounding board for a collaborative engagement. One lead technical partner must anchor the development of a module and conducting the pilot trainings. Finding this lead partner who is capable and can

SCBP Partnerships in Phase 2

- Ecoan Srvices Foundation
- Indus
- CWAS-CEPT
- NFSSM Alliance Partners

Content Development Partners

- National Nodal Training Institutes
- RCUES Lucknow
- AIILSG Mumbai

Capacity Development Delivery Partners

- MoHUA
- State Governments
- Urban Local Bodies
- State Technical Agencies

National and State Level Implementing Partners

Learning and Knowledge Partenrs

- College of Engineering Pune
- Kolhapur University
- MNIT Jaipur
- IIT Roorkee
- Biome Trust
- IIHS

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be entrusted with completing the job under strict timelines, is critical for capacity development engagement. A professional training expert, who is also has subject matter understanding, works with the lead partner in finalising the training module – anchoring content editing, engage in the pilot testing and final proof reading. This process is run through a consultative quality assurance and quality control mechanism that is anchored by a lead that was NIUA (for the SCBP program).

Academia partnership is important for capacity development. In the first part of this three series paper we had concluded with the importance of institutionalising capacity development with the engagement of academia and citizen groups involvement, as an independent formal process. The universities and research institutes can not only mainstream the learning content in their courses, but also contribute to higher level learning and content development including standards and norms, something that is missing in India and several developing countries.

What is important to note is that learning partnerships evolve, with conscious effort and mutual respect and understanding. In development work where short term contracts are a norm, this requires special effort on part of all to forge meaningful learning partnerships. Only then can you develop and deliver high quality content and training modules.

Third Step : Learning strategy

A capacity development strategy should be a "Learning Strategy" with clarity on what learning outputs and what process is put in place.

Development programs and capacity development initiatives don't have the luxury of long duration planning and pedagogy development. Most capacity development interventions rely on very basic trainings delivery strategy of 2 or 3 phase trainings. Where existing knowledge and experts come together, compile what already exists in PPT formats and videos, deliver a set of trainings for priority trainee stakeholders and create a networking and learning space for peer exchange and learning events.

International development and training organizations parachuting in, may not be able to develop learning content and strategy that is contextualised to national and sub national context. A generic strategy of capacity development may end up becoming a formalistic roll out of training programs. Unfortunately very few large bilateral and other capacity development interventions are assessed for a learning strategy developed and employed effectively.

Under SCBP we were able to develop both a Normative Framework[6] for Capacity Development as well as its Digital Dissemination Strategy[7]. The training modules were categorised in 3 sets of modules for the government officials and private sector.

It is imperative therefore to develop a learning strategy based on an organic and creative policy and program engagement. With a focus on content development and roll out of a best fit set of training modules for priority stakeholders. The process followed is therefore as important as the outputs of training modules, technical assistance, research and policy guidance.

SCBP aimed to achieve a combination of immediate skills and conceptual level learning outputs and outcomes. To anchor the Training Modules Review Committee(TMRC) for development of learning content, its assessment and re development to meet the changed needs – packaged in appropriate formats and modules.

The contribution of the Gates Foundation India WASH program lead in enabling this strategy to evolve as a collaborative process along with the NFSSM Alliance partners contribution, is duly acknowledged.

Fourth Step : Visioning change and designing solutions

Most often capacity development is limited to information and skills trainings, good in parts, but unable to communicate and convince any paradigm level change or improvement in existing practice. In the first phase of capacity development work by SCBP, we were focussed on providing a one off septage treatment plant for a city, as the solution for urban sanitation challenge(of setting up a Faecal Sludge Treatment Plant).

Capacity development should be able to **visualize the desired change at a higher level**, in all its complexity of technology, financing and management. This higher level change should then be differentiated into parts and translated into content of training modules. Finally integrating all the parts to make a higher level learning outcome or goal for the trainees.

To have a live example of this vision or change, developed through conceptual understanding and a practical engagement, is an important milestone in development of an effective capacity development intervention. It requires the lead capacity development organization developing its own capacity, to be able to conceptualise and provide concrete real life solutions that are also of highest conceptual understanding. Several NFSSM Alliance partners have used the learnings from pilot projects on Faecal Sludge and Septage Management(FSSM) in India that they implemented, for capacity development

and training. The SCBP program, since it was not implementing pilot projects, could synthesise and present solutions by amalgamating the best of what was on offer.

Defining a larger vision, more than one successful project, is important. City wide inclusive sanitation (CWIS) is one such conceptual visualisation that implores practitioners to aim for urban sanitation solutions from an inclusive and scaled up lens.

For SCBP capacity development work, the desired change was a paradigm shift in the national sanitation systems thinking and priority – from a centralized sanitation system to a combination of centralized and decentralized sanitation systems including non sewered sanitation systems. Conceptualisation of this change, as a city wide solution in combination with other solutions, was made possible when the administration of the city of Port Blair, an island township of India, sought a technical review of a mega budget centralized sanitation system proposal that was presented by a central government agency, for Port Blair town. SCBP employed its knowledge and resources to assess and propose a plan for the town that was a combination of decentralized and centralized sanitation solutions, as well as non sewered sanitation. The plan would save the Port Blair Municipality not only a significant amount of CAPEX and OPEX cost, but would also an appropriate city wide inclusive sanitation solution.

Technical assistance provided by SCBP for the integrated waste water management for the city of Port Blair, became a proof of concept of its training modules, and an important, live training resource for the SCBP capacity development work.

Any capacity development engagement should therefore be able to visualize what change is ideal in the given context, develop it, and use it for its training and learning content. Relying exclusively on solutions and case studies from the west will not be convincing for the national context. Having developed live examples or even case studies, and integrating them in capacity development work, is a proof of the effectiveness of the intervention.

Fifth Step : Contribution to Capacity Development Discourse

Organizations implementing capacity development interventions, specially those with well endowed budgets and longer timeframes, should be expected to demonstrate what contribution they have made to the

[6]*SCBP Normative Framework for State level Capacity Development; https://www.niua.org/scbp/?q=learning-material/non-sewered-sanitation-systems-india-state-level-normative-framework-capacity*
[7]*SCBP Digital Dissemination Strategy ; https://www.niua.org/scbp/?q=learning-material/digital-strategy-capacity-development*

capacity development discourse or atleast the sectoral understanding, at national and international levels. At the highest ladder of the capacity development effectiveness.

SCBP contribution on this count has been through its Normative Capacity Development Framework and Digital Strategy that can be applied to other sectoral capacity development interventions, the Water and Waste Water Policy Framework and Workbook[8] for the Ministry, the Resilient Urban Sanitation Response Framework[9] as a sanitation emergency response framework. At the international level SCBP has contributed to the Susana International Network Capacity Development Factsheet, and its restructuring as Susana 2.0. A chapter on South Asia Urban Sanitation Journey is included in an upcoming publication by EAWAG.

All Frameworks, Training Modules and Analytics, Research and Policy Briefs, that we develop as capacity development professional interventions – are in effect "**Deflected Actions**" (a term coined by Prof. Piers Blaikie[10]). Prof Blaikie coined it in his seminal work of in late 1980s, while addressing soil erosion in developing countries from a political economy lens and what learning and knowledge can contribute.

"Unfortunately soil conservation policies do not usually serve powerful economic interests, for example, land reform movements. In the latter case, land reform in many countries of Latin America and South Asia was a platform for a newly rising agriculture capitalist class to oust the backward feudal landlords who blocked their demands. Appeals to reason, to moral duty of conserve nature or to help the poor peasants and pastoralists through conservation simply have little to offer those who would carry out these policies. In these circumstances, there appear two ways forward – rhetoric, and what we may call 'deflected actions'. Both solutions call for a prodigious output in the form of seminars, conferences, reports and even financial commitments from foreign aid donors. The term 'deflected actions' refers to peripheral and support action instead of the real business of implementing soil conservation."

Prof Blaikie reference to 'deflected action' covers not only programs and projects but also training and capacity development of institutions and individuals engaged in soil conservation, and all associated activities of mapping, monitoring, research, testing, GIS applications, etc. This learning and knowledge

generation work is important in itself, in developing a deeper understanding of the problem and what needs to be done. But this work alone may not lead to any solution of the problems. Yet it is all that can be done and must be done. For problems that are deep seated, having a political economic dimensions like soil erosion in Africa and the inability to treat waste water and solid waste in South Asia.

Whether trained staff and trained institutions change their approach and goals, whether the system is able to overcome its political economic fix to change, will not depend only on the quality and effectiveness of capacity development intervention.

Capacity Development – what we need to remember and re consider

Capacity development should be an integral part of routine working of organizations. This is possible when junior professional staff are mentored by seniors, and all professionals at all levels in an organisation are provided opportunities for learning and growth. Capacity development best happens on the job and in a learning organization culture. This is how most of us grew up in the 1980-90s when capacity development was not an external input but a way of working, with organisation systems fostering learning on the job through cross assignments, mentoring by seniors, improving analytical and writing skills. Unfortunately, a consultancy culture abounds today in most organizations, that has corrupted learning and reduced professionals to petty task managers. Emphasis has shifted to optics of presentations, not on content. Organizations that prioritize learning opportunities for their staff, also have a culture of openness to critique, disagreement and valuing dissent. With a fall in learning priority and standards, a fall in organizational culture is also evident.

When external capacity development is programmed, then it is important to link it with some ongoing program implementation work. In a government capacity development initiative, it is critical to have an enabling policy and program funding to translate capacity development input into program and infrastructure outputs.

Perspective of capacity development is important. No doubt getting an understanding and practical know how for problem solving or implementing projects and programs is helpful. But can capacity development be reduced to **just skilling and training of professionals** and government officials? A deeper conceptual understanding and perspective to a thematic work, is important. In WASH – one needs

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[8] *Policy Framework; https://www.niua.org/scbp/?q=content/urban-water-supply-and-waste-water-policy-framework*
[9] *RUSR Framework; https://www.niua.org/scbp/?q=training-modules/response-indian-cities-covid19-resource-book*
[10] *Piers Blaikie; Political Economy of Soil Erosion in Developing Countries; 1985*

to understand why water and sanitation systems underperform, why operations and maintenance is not a priority. The ecological, economic and social context to improving water supply, service levels and investments. Can, Behaviour Change Communication without understanding deeper individual and social self perception barriers, work to improve sanitation and hygiene behaviours?

Capacity development seen as only skilling – is fraught with the risk of redundancy of skills learnt for immediate needs. We are living in times when technology and system changes happen sooner than these skills are absorbed by professionals. Worse still, it does not enable people to think rationally and become decision makers in future when they will have to decide what strategic choices need to be made in the short and long term.

Education in its real sense implies developing a rational thinking perspective, of using logical frameworks of analysis, research on understanding why things are the way they are. That allows the trainee/student to think and imagine new directions and solutions. **Higher education at the university level is essentially a "passage into adulthood"**. Implying that higher education is not meant for imparting technical skills alone but developing a critical logical thinking individuals who know how to find solutions to the problems they will encounter. Capacity development should also be seen as continuing higher education of professionals. The crucial difference between producing task managers skilled for their role/tasks vs. leaders of the future who can think independently, plan and implement what is best for their context.

The Capacity Development Effectiveness Ladder (CDEL) Framework identifies critical steps against which practitioners and evaluators may want to assess the effectiveness of their capacity development intervention. The CDEL framework restores the primacy of learning as the core of capacity development, and identifies steps/measure of monitoring its effectiveness. The CDEL framework steers clear of Organization Development and Organisation restructuring/reform agendas, that are important in themselves but should not be seen as primary capacity development objectives. The CDEL framework is an integration of theory and practice, based on the experience of the Sanitation Capacity Building Platform work. The framework can be applied to all capacity development interventions.

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About NIUA

NIUA is a premier national institute for research, capacity building and dissemination of knowledge in the urban sector, including sanitation. Established in 1976, it is the apex research body for the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), Government of India. NIUA is also the strategic partner of the MoHUA in capacity building for providing single window services to the MoHUA/states/ULBs. The Institute includes amongst its present and former clients Housing and Urban Development Corporation, Niti Ayog, City and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra, USAID, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, GIZ, UNICEF, UNEP, UNOPS, Cities Alliance, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, Global Green Growth

About SCBP

Sanitation Capacity Building Platform (SCBP) is an initiative of the National Institute of Urban Affairs(NIUA) for addressing urban sanitation challenges in India. The 3 year programme(starting 2016) is supported by a Gates Foundation grant. It is aimed at promoting decentralised urban sanitation solutions for septage and waste water management. The Platform is an organic and growing collaboration of universities, training centres, resource centres, non-governmental organizations, consultants and experts. The Platform currently has on board CEPT University, CDD Society and BORDA, ASCI, AIILSG, UMC, ESF, CSE, WaterAid, CPR, iDECK, CSTEP and WASHi. The Platform works in close collaboration with the National Faecal Sludge and Septage Management Alliance(NFSSMA).

NIUA

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