

17th National Technical Advisory Group Meeting Minutes

Over call conference

Date: 3rd July, 2008
Time: 12 noon to 1.30 p.m.

Members Present:

- 1) *Mr.Ramesh Ramanathan*
- 2) *Ms Sheela Patel*
- 3) *Prof.O.P.Mathur*

TAG Coordination Cell/Secretariat:

- 1) *Ms. Nitika Arora*
- 2) *Ms Sonali Guha*

Discussion.

This TAG meeting took place over the call conference. Mr.Ramanathan welcomed both TAG members Ms Sheela Patel & Prof.O.P.Mathur along with TAG coordination cell team, followed by initiating discussion on the Raipur CTAG formation experience & learnings form that.

Raipur CTAG formation- Learnings from that event

Mr.Ramanathan in context of the recently held CTAG formation event by TAG & anchor NGO PRIA in Raipur shared that Chhattisgarh's Municipality Act just like that of Madhya Pradesh has a directly elected mayor for five years. As a result the mayor in Raipur is politically empowered & he's leading the charge in trying to get more allocations. He further added that the bureaucracy in Raipur was more forthcoming about the urban issues & the Principal Secretary Mr.Khaitan also understands what JnNURM is all about. TAG's meeting there went fairly well; PRIA did a good job organizing it he added. They've kicked off their working groups involving a cross section of people from grassroots, academia, local NGOs, architect associations etc.They are still a little open ended on how they'll do their role & how they'll interact with the Municipal Corporation but that will get filled up overtime with the support of the Anchor NGO which in this case is PRIA.

Ms Patel giving her opinion on the CTAG-CVTC formation process said that the insight that one got out of the Raipur experience is, that if CVTC (City Volunteer Technical Corp) was created first, with different groups identified in which the concerned people would want to be & then say a coordinating CTAG constituted which would take care of energizing this. In that case it might have been a structure that would have facilitated more people to participate.

Mr.Ramanathan trying to give Prof.Mathur a context, said that the CTAG membership is quite limited i.e. only about 10 to 12 people whereas one has 60 to 70 people who get invited to the event. Each of these persons has done something because of which they have been called.

Prof.Mathur asked who took the decision with respect to the CTAG membership in Raipur. Ms Patel informed him that it was a joint decision of the State government; Mayor & PRIA.

Ms Patel further suggested that just like in Ahmedabad just before the city consultation by TAG, a one hour session was organized with the civil society/corporators who were invited for the city administration to make a presentation on what JnNURM programme is all about and what is the city government planning to do under it. A similar process should be followed now onwards wherever CTAG-CVTC are setup.

Similarly she said that the role of CTAG should be defined to the corporators clearly & in advance because this seems to be the area of maximum concern & confrontation, and in states where civil society role is not comfortably understood this is actually going to be more difficult than in other places. Ways also have to be explored by which CVTC can be formed before the CTAG.

Mr.Ramanathan said that it's a good idea and infact DHAN foundation too followed a similar process in Coimbatore. So 45-50 people are given a role in the entire scheme of things and towards the programme end a separate discussion can also be held with the CTAG members. This process he said can surely address the inclusion-exclusion issue well.Ms Patel remarked that the sense one gets from PRIA is that this business of understanding what the TAG will do doesn't come as easily & therefore something which is much more open ended is needed and that can be tried out in Patna in July.

Ms Nitika asked for confirmation of dates for the Ahmedabad CTAG-CVTC event, Mr.Ramanathan confirmed for the 21st of August. He said that he'll be there an evening before the main event wherein an informal dinner can be organized with the civil society & corporators to break the ice.

Collaboration with (Water & Sanitation Programme, South Asia, World Bank).

Ms Patel talking in relation to her note on Water & Sanitation Programme's (WSP) proposal, that was circulated in advance said that WSP basically wants to work in all the backward states and small & medium towns. She said the kind of networks that are being created for CTAG can be used & facilitated to work with WSP in smaller towns and one can find some synergy in that but if one tries to link it to the 63 cities then there is no synergy. She said that earlier when PRIA & others had said that they would like to work in smaller towns & cities, TAG said that it cannot do it because it was not its remit.

Mr.Ramanathan said that can this be an activity that can be done as a triangular relationship between the WSP-TAG & the NIUA with the WSP financing it. Prof.Mathur said that Prof.Chetan Vaidya should be O.K. with that. Mr.Ramanathan added that it's a

little beyond the edge of TAG's remit but not completely out of it thus it can enable it though can't lead it. But if everybody agrees with the idea of a triangular relationship then one can design something around it.

Ms Patel shared that she had a meeting at NIUA with USAID & DFID and both of them are working in different states. One of the role of TAG as per her is to create some synergy between what these bodies are doing. She said that with DFID working in almost 140 towns in West Bengal & 15 towns in Madhya Pradesh, this methodology can be developed & then they can be involved in rolling it out since they are working on the same issues, with TAG playing a convening role in this.

Mr.Ramanathan here added that TAG can ask WSP that while taking it up in the backward states it must take it up in the JnNURM cities of those states. For example there is no question that one can do a strategy for Chhattisgarh without factoring in Raipur. Since by any definition Raipur will qualify, especially if one looks at the infrastructure of this city it definitely isn't like a big city at all. Concluding his remarks he said that inclusion of NURM cities in backward states must be done, especially in the northern states where one needs to cultivate a conversation between the civil society-administration & the politicians.

Prof Mathur said that the overall climate to work is good in Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh & Bihar. One will find a lot of synergy in working in similar states which are backward & governed by the same culture. At this juncture Prof.Mathur also shared with others his observations with regards to the World Development Report 2009, which he said will be focusing on the difference between the leading & the backward regions of the world. This is the theme that World Bank has picked up he added, he said that their message is that efficiency must prevail. It also says that World Bank would support migration on a large scale from backward regions to forward ones.Prof.Mathur said that one has to be cautious about dealing with WSP on one particular issue (i.e. are they carrying the same baggage that the World Bank is trying to project in its 2009 report or is it for reasons that these states are backward that they should be supported. If it is the later then TAG should join them but if WSP is carrying the WB agenda with a very strong normative position that there should be large scale migration then it's a dangerous game).

Ms Patel said that based on her interactions with Mr.Sanjay Gupta of WSP she would write a letter to both Mr.Ramanathan & Prof.Mathur as well as to Mr.Gupta.She requested Prof.Mathur to take this forward with Ms Cathy of WSP & Mr.Chetan of NIUA since he knows both of them very well. Just for information sake she shared with both the TAG members that why WSP is insisting on working in the backward states is because its donor community that gives it money, insists on them to work only in such states.

Meeting on the issue of Rajasthan's status with regards to compliance with the reforms agenda under JnNURM.

Prof.Mathur informed the TAG members that there have been large scale transfers of officials of Urban Development in Rajasthan few days back.Mr.Ramanathan added that

Mr.D.B.Gupta has taken over as the new Principal Secretary & with his background in finance & urban sector he is likely to be sympathetic about the cause that Prof. Mathur as a TAG member will raise in the meeting in Rajasthan about the to the non-compliance of the Rajasthan Government with some of the items of the reforms agenda under JnNURM.

Prof.Mathur said that he's working on a note for this meeting that will be co-anchored by PRIA wherein the civil society & polity can be made aware of what their state & NURM cities committed in the MoA but are not living up to their promises.

Mr.Ramanathan advised that first TAG should have a conversation with the Principal Secretary & have some ideas from him on the issue before proceeding further.

As far as Delhi with respect to the Mission is concerned Prof.Mathur said that he'll be meeting the Commissioner of Delhi, although the role of Commissioner is very small in the NURM mission. He told that Mr. Srivastava (Mission Director, JnNURM)has suggested him to meet the NDMC president as well, to gauge how the two bodies felt about their role in the overall scheme of things. He said that he'll share with TAG the details of this meeting through email.

Signature



(Ramesh Ramanathan)

**(Chairperson, National Technical Advisory Group
JnNURM)**