Urban Water Institutions: Myth of Decentralisation and Devolution

Democratisation of Water Management – The paradigm Shift

Dr. V. Suresh

Centre for Law, Policy and Human Rights Studies (CLPHRS)

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After 2 decades of Water Sector Reforms we are still faced with Issues of

• Unreached Communities
• Inequitous sharing
• Sustainability –
  » Ecological
  » Financial
  » Resource

Challenges in addressing Discrimination

Individuals > Attitudes
Institutions > Perspectives
Practices > Cultures
Drinking Water to Water Resources

A Democratisation Journey from 2003 impacting 20 million people (DW) and 9 River Basins

Shifts
• Promoting Citizenship
• Changing Notions or Resource use
• Ensuring Right to Water in Practice –
  » Seeking the unreached
  » Inclusive decision making
  » Gender, Caste, Community Sensitivity
Urban Water Management – A minefield!

DIFFERENT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES based on whether Metropolis, Cities, Towns; Multiplicities of institutional players.

Silo Mentality! Turf protection.

Unwillingness to devolve power and authority

Technocratic and Bureaucratic Mind set – Mai Baap Mentality.

Insufficiency of Capability & Competency

Pressures from IFIs to change – PPP + NGOisation models pushed.
Strategies to deal with Water crisis

- Prevalent Perspective on reform
  - Strategies
    - Higher Technology
    - Increased Investment
    - Organisational Restructuring
    - Community Participation
    - Privatisation, NGOisation
    - Decentralisation

- Persistent Shortcomings
  - Unreached Communities
  - Inequitous sharing
  - Unsustainable Practices
  - Uninvolved Technocracy
Paradigm Shift

- **Missing Core**
  - Social Dimension of Exclusion
  - Sustainable Service Delivery
  - Institutional Culture & Practice

- **Triggers for Change**
  - Social Movement
  - Political Pressure
  - Internal Thrust
The Transformation path

Self Critical and open process of exploring...

- Attitudinal Transformation
- Perspective Change
- Institutional Reorientation

Along with shifts in

- Roles
  - Relationships
- Values
- People;
  - Practice;
  - Culture;
  - Systems
Democracy & The Koodam

**Koodam** - A traditional cultural & social space within which all persons are *treated equal*

Where members relate without distinction based on ...

- Age
- Status
- Hierarchy

In which sharing is ...

- Transparent
- Experiential
- Self Critical

With Values of ...

- Democracy
- Consensual decision making
- Collective ownership
Responsive Governance

Retrieving Centrality

Economy

Inclusion

Sustainability

Ecology

Values

Institutional Culture

Inclusion

- Reaching the Unreached
- Equity
- Social Justice

Sustainability

- Resource
- Financial
- Human

Institutional Culture

- Organisation Efficiency
  - Performance
  - Priority
- Institutional Effectiveness
  - Quality of Relationship
  - Valued Behavior
The Shifts that are required!!

• Shift from passive to critical and constructive participation
• Shift to reexamination of the meaning of people’s participation
• Shift from conceptual understanding to learning by doing.
Shifts in ..... 

- Shift to greater clarity of expanding roles
- Shift to a growing need to systematize work
- Shift from compartmentalization to build interrelatedness – amongst technical people, citizens, stakeholders groups..
- Shift in growing experience of personal power and purposefulness in collective action
- Shift to a improving sense of responsibility
- Shift to a greater revitalization of idealism
The churning process of the Workshops threw up a fresh perspective which came to be adopted as ...

The Maraimalainagar Declaration

We the TWAD engineers after extensive deliberations unanimously declare that:

Before taking up any new schemes

• We will evaluate the existing schemes and ensure that the schemes are put into optimal use first.

• Revival & Rehabilitation of traditional sources will be undertaken wherever possible.

We will also aim at 10% higher coverage within the same budget.
Democratisation of Water Management Project

Outcomes

- **Contribution**: Rs.1.42 crores (US $ 0.3 million) by 50,896 Households

- **Investment cost**: Reduction by 40 - 50%, SR Capacity 143 to 76.3 lt./HH (Project - Rs. 1827/- per HH, Standard Rs.4580/-)

- **Low cost options**: 50% of schemes are Rehab., EPL, additional source

- **Savings**: Savings between 8% to 33% achieved over the regular budget. O&M expenditure reduced to Rs.18.6 / HH.

- **Last Mile Targeting**: 65% of schemes were for groups where majority were Below Poverty Line including Scheduled Castes

- **Sustainability**: Conservation, 70 GWR, 150 revived water bodies, self management
Change in Official’s Attitudes & Actions

Village visits:
- Regular, meets & interacts with Dalit and women’s groups

Behavior:
- Behaves as a community member, provides Dalits & women space to talk, listens more, etc.

Action:
- Consults Dalits and women to identify problems, choose & implement solutions

Women Control Settlements
- 78%
- 80%
- 84%

Dalit
- 75%
- 25%
- 8%

Water Democratisation

SURESH
A glimpse of Outcomes

• Contribution by 1,00,000 Households
• Choice of low cost technology – 40% drop in investment cost
• Equity – 65 % of schemes were exclusively for poor excluded habitations
• New Rice Cultivation (SRI) – Adopted by 35,000 farmers : 30% water saving
• Conservation – 90% of Households undertake Rain Water Harvesting & 150 traditional Water Bodies Revived
Our Dream, Our Vision ....

Secure Water for all, for ever”

- Conservation of nature as a guarantee for future water
- Vibrant, revived and recharged water bodies
- Assured, equitable and sustainable water for all
- Successful community managed water supply system through active participation of all especially women and poor
- Safe disposal of solid and liquid waste for clean and healthy environment
- Cost effective technology options to ensure local sustainable management
- Formation of Common Water Regulatory Authority for judicious use of water for all sectors
When there is true democratisation and the State truly partners with Communities . . .

Then *duty to provide* transcends into *responsibility to ensure* Secure Water.

**Everyday Responsibility of All**

- Consumption
  - Conservation
  - Collaboration ..

To ensure

Equity, Sustainability & Democracy!