FESTIVAL OF LEARNING

Report on the Workshop on “Learning to do Community Based Research: Perspectives, Opportunities & Ways forward”

Centre for Economic & Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad

Prepared by:

UNESCO Chair in Community Based Research & Social Responsibility in Higher Education
This report is a product of the workshop which was organized by PRIA, as part of its UNESCO Chair program, in collaboration with the Centre for Economic & Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad, on April 18, 2016. Titled as 'Learning to do Community Based Research (CBR): Perspectives, Opportunities & Ways Forward', this was one of the events under the week long ‘Festival of Learning’, which the Chair had organized from April 18-23, 2016, at various places, and in partnership with several higher education institutions. In addition to the Hyderabad workshop, the Chair also organized a capacity building workshop for students (in Community Based Participatory Research), at Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla University, Raipur, from April 20-23. Its report can be accessed at: [http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/pdf/resource/Workshop_Report_Raipur.pdf](http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/pdf/resource/Workshop_Report_Raipur.pdf). The Chair also contributed to All India Media Educators Conference, held in Jaipur, on April 22, 2016. More on this can be found at: [http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/knowledge-democracy-and-ethics-implications-for-media-professionals-and-educators-all-india-media-educators-conference-april-2016/](http://unescochair-cbrsr.org/knowledge-democracy-and-ethics-implications-for-media-professionals-and-educators-all-india-media-educators-conference-april-2016/).

The ‘Festival of Learning’ marked the culmination of the project that the chair has been undertaking since the last two years on Training the next generation of community based researchers (NextGen Project). The Chair used this festival and the events planned under it to promote learning and training in CBR. Carrying forward this idea, this workshop at CESS in Hyderabad was aimed at building an atmosphere conducive for providing and promoting such training in academia. In accordance with this line of thought, the Hyderabad workshop brought together various stakeholders such as the government, civil society and academia to brainstorm on what is a ‘crucial issue in today’s times’. The deliberations focused on the ways and means to integrate CBR in the regular academic curriculum, challenges in doing the same, and the ways forward. The workshop also witnessed sharing of experiences by sectoral experts such as the UNESCO Co-Chairs; Dr Budd Hall & Dr Rajesh Tandon; Dr Darlene Clover, Professor, University of Victoria, senior academics, governmental representatives, among others.

Another objective that the workshop aimed to achieve was to integrate the core ideas of CBR with the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM), in operation in the state. In the second session, the workshop brought together various experts under this area, who deliberated on the key issues related to sanitation in the state, and how CBR can contribute towards this field of work for achieving mutual benefits and the much desired objective of ‘Sanitation for All’. Sharing ideas in the session were experts from CSOs, academia, governmental domain, etc. This session brought to the fore, certain key issues in sanitation, including its impact on economics, the governmental policies on the same, efforts made by various CSOs; and also deliberated on how stakeholder partnerships (including the academia), can play a big role in the process. Further, the discussion also came up with concrete suggestions on what can be the prospective research ideas which can be taken up, which thence can contribute towards SBM.

This report outlines the key discussion points of the workshop, and is an attempt towards carrying forward the ideas that emerged from Hyderabad with respect to CBR & its contribution towards SBM.
DR RAJESH TANDON, Founder President, PRIA, UNESCO Co-Chair

“The most important challenge in today’s times is how we can bring community perspective in the curriculum and pedagogy used in all fields of study.”

“Although students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) are temporary, the lives in communities are permanent. Further, while disciplines in higher education are narrowly defined, it is important to understand that the lives of the people are an integrated whole.”

“The very difference between the nature of HEIs and CSOs brings value to the partnership between them”

DR BUDD HALL, Professor, University of Victoria, UNESCO Co-Chair

“Our communities, our globe, today, needs us in a new way, an engaged way”

“Today, the students are looking for learning from the real world. Many young scholars are pursuing this kind of work, as it is close to their values, and because they want to have no difference between their identities as an academic, and as one who makes a difference to the society.”

DR DARLENE CLOVER, Professor, University of Victoria

“We need to take responsibility for the roles we play in CBR”

“Even in the most progressive research approaches, gender continues to be a pressing issue, while sexism is far from being eliminated in the contemporary times”

“We cannot make CBR equal, but we can work towards making it equitable”

“We need to put ‘power’ back in empowerment and must intend to achieve such change, which can question the nature of change we are meaning to make”.

DR SRIKANTA NATHA REDDY, Government of Andhra Pradesh

“CBR, as a form of research is of much interest to people like us, who frame policies in the state”

“It is unfortunate to see the repetitive nature of university research and its low citation index”
“My experience of PRA exercise as a forester, tells me that whenever the views of the community are integrated in preparing micro plans for a particular place, all activities were successful and the entire area benefitted”

“It is important to consider the societal impact of whatever activity you engage in”

“If policies are based on research done with the community, every penny that the government spends on development programs/schemes, will be meaningful”

“The Government is ready to partner with institutions that can help us understand our community better, as it will like to make policies which are community oriented and people centric”

MR. SUDHAKAR, WaterAid

“We have to brainstorm on questions like: How do we engage with students and communities in a sustained manner; how universities/NGOs can come together to continue such engagement, etc.”

DR SAKSHI SAINI, Assistant Program Manager, PRIA

“The idea is to go to the community where there are successful examples, document those examples and you can replicate them. This is what RALU is”.

Mr. MANOJ RAI, Director, PRIA

“These questions are waiting for your engagement to provide answers. You have a set of research questions coming to you in relation to sanitation from and you also have opportunity in the form of RALU as an institution where if you undertake a research, it will go back to the people”

Dr. INDRAKANT, RBI Professor, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad.

“Investment in sanitation will strengthen other investments; for eg. Expenditure on education will have more effect if there is an expenditure on sanitation. Sanitation in schools will improve attendance of children; reduce health issues, learning capacity will increase and so on...”
The workshop on ‘Learning to do Community Based Research: Perspectives, Opportunities & Ways Forward’ was organized by PRIA, as part of its UNESCO Chair program on April 18, 2016, in collaboration with Centre for Economic & Social Studies (CESS), Hyderabad. The welcome address for the workshop was given by Professor Revathi, from CESS, who welcomed the speakers and the participants and re-confirmed CESS’s commitment of continued support to such initiatives. Thereafter, the broad context of the workshop was given by Mr Manoj Rai Director, PRIA, who also welcomed the guests and the participants and expressed his gratitude towards CESS and others for organizing the event.

**SPEAKER’S NOTES**

**Dr Rajesh Tandon**

Dr Tandon began his speech by sharing reflections from the history of Participatory Research (PR). He underlined the three main principles with which the network of participatory research began in the 1970s and the 1980s. These principles were:

(i) Valuing indigenous local knowledge  
(ii) New knowledge can only be built on the basis of valuing local knowledge, and  
(iii) Need to engage and deliberate on this knowledge

However, he shared that despite of this, what he found was the disengagement between academia and the field of participatory research.

Moving further, he shared that ‘the language of PR entered into development discourse and discussions through the larger international development network. This was the time when eminent scholars like Dr Robert Chambers marketed the concept of PR, through the lens of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), as it became the method of data collation and analysis, especially in the rural areas’. It was at this time when PR also began to be taught in the departments of sociology, gender studies etc. Further, it was in the 1990s when PRIA began to interact with academic institutions to promote PR methodology and also used this opportunity to give practical learning to the students.

Sharing PRIA’s experience in this context, Dr Tandon shared that, ‘PRIA began to convene regional consultations on ‘Citizenship & Governance’ involving academics and practitioners in different parts of India. Workshops were held in cities like Varanasi, Jaipur, Siliguri, Hyderabad etc. for a period of over 5 years.’ In these consultations, practitioners, CSOs, local government officials would come together on the same platform with academics to present joint views on how ‘governance can become a people centric effort’.
He further shared about Global University Network for Innovation (GUNi) (which he discovered in 2007), a baby of UNESCO, which has over 5000 universities as members from all across the world. GUNi, every two years, produces a report on a particular aspect of higher education. He mentioned that he and Dr Budd Hall were invited to participate in the production of the report, which focused on ‘Contribution of Civil Society in Human & Social Development, in 2008. It was here that they found that ‘in most of the development issues such as gender, exclusion of dalits, water pollution, soil pollution, etc; the First Information Report (FIR) came from the world of practice, and not from research or academia.’

Therefore, when he and Dr Hall participated in the 2009 UNESCO Conference on Higher Education in Paris, they spoke about valuing local knowledge/indigenous knowledge. They also mentioned about the disconnect between the world of practice and research, and the importance of bringing the core functions of research and teaching in sync with real world issues. It was after this conversation, that they were invited to be the UNESCO Chairs in CBR & Social Responsibility in Higher Education. Finally, the Chair was set up in the summer of 2012.

One of the main achievements of the Chair as an institution has been the contribution of the Co-Chairs as guest editors in the 5th GUNi Report on Higher Education, titled “Knowledge, Engagement and Higher Education: Contributing to Social Change”. It is an exclusive book as it contains stories/examples of community university engagement and its role in social change from numerous countries all across the world.
Coming to the Indian context, Dr Tandon shared that during the preparation of the 12th Five Year Plan, a sub-committee on "Strengthening Community Engagement in Higher Education" was set up. Here, it emerged that the general conception of community engagement was being understood as merely a sub-set of activities which fell under the NSS domain. The argument put against this conception was that true community engagement was not something that can be ghettoized in the NSS domain, and that it needs to be integrated in the core functions of Higher Education, along with research (production of new knowledge), teaching (training the next generation researchers). At the state level, efforts need to be directed towards incorporating the principle of social responsibility in our respective domains (adapted to the local contexts), and move it forward.

**Dr Budd Hall**

Dr Hall began his reflections by mentioning about the ‘wicked’ and ‘persistent’ problems of today's times (such as climate change, health disparities, economic insecurity etc.), and the solutions to which are not easily available. It is here that knowledge has a critical role to play in addressing these challenges and for providing sustainable solutions. A combination of knowledge coming from the private sector, communities and the academia is the way forward for us.

He shared that ‘today, students and academics are slowly but surely calling for new relationships, and a decolonized higher education system’. He mentioned that ‘during discourses, we often hear about terms like knowledge economy and knowledge society. However, these knowledge systems are exclusive of value based or social justice based influences. In contrast, knowledge democracy is an aspect which acknowledges the existence of multiple knowledge systems’. He mentioned that there are as many knowledge systems in the world, as there is multi-disciplinarity of biodiversity. However, one of the biggest challenges in this respect is our dependence on the 450-500 year old colonial knowledge system. Further, in addition to the multiple forms of knowledge, there are also several different ways of representing knowledge such as theatrical, dramatic forms etc. These are primarily the ways in which knowledge is shared in the society.

Continuing further, Dr Hall emphasized the importance of ‘co-construction of knowledge’, as he cited the UNESCO Chair’s project on ‘Mainstreaming Community University Research Partnerships’, as a step forward in this direction. He showcased the project’s open-sources publications (book and manual), as being as being an excellent example of this idea, from where numerous leads can be taken and the good work be taken forward. He also shared that it is essential that we move towards open access knowledge systems, and urged academics to put their knowledge into forms which are free and accessible to everyone.

Dr Hall shared about how this purpose was being achieved in different parts of the world. While ‘new structures are being created in universities (Such as the office of community based research at the University of Victoria), some are incorporating the language involving the term ‘community university engagement’ into their strategic visions and missions’. Rise of regional and global networks are further pushing forward the idea of community engagement as envisaging the triple concepts of
research, teaching and learning, and service and outreach. Dr Hall, however, pointed to the challenge that ‘many universities still continue to favor knowledge production that adorns journals or that which can attract research funding. Therefore, it was of utmost importance that community university engagement is not only acknowledged in the academic arena, but also incentivized and given due credit.’

Pointing to other challenges, he shared that eminent among them were the ‘reduction in funding towards these efforts, the difference in the knowledge cultures of academia and civil society organizations/local governments etc.’ This difference is evident from the examples that while the communities use and mobilize knowledge to find solutions to pressing issues, the same knowledge in the academic world remains limited to publication journals, whose societal relevance is nil. Further, the imperialistic domination of English Language contributes to alienation and exclusion, thus hampering the achievement of ‘knowledge democracy’.

However, he shared that as while are faced with challenges, the opportunities are in plenty as well. Today, we have a number of ‘excellent professional literature on the topic (GUNi’s Higher Education Report), innovations (such as the creation of the UNESCO Chair on this aspect), and a lot more efforts from the European Union (EU), knowledge democracy movement and international networks.’

![Pic 2: Dr Budd Hall, sharing his experiences as UNESCO Co-Chair](image)

**OPEN DISCUSSIONS**

Dr Mazhar Hussain, COVA

- There is a need to get the universities and students interested in taking up field based research.
Motivating and encouraging organizations working at the grassroots to establish linkages with the academic world

Dr Nilanjana Ray, TISS, Hyderabad

- Need to establish linkages between academia and institutions working at the grassroots level.
- When organizations who work in CBR, give preference to project management skills at the time of recruitment, this serves as a huge disincentive for students and faculty alike.

Prof Reddy

- Structural changes taking place in the state higher education framework, means that there is an increased population of students from socially disadvantaged groups entering higher education.
- There is an increasing gap between the faculty and the changing student composition. Therefore, it is essential that the ‘lived experience/knowledge’ of such students is integrated into the curriculum.
- It needs to be ensured that the learning takes place from different disciplines and is not kept in silos’

Dr Rajesh Tandon

- Students should be given credit for community engagement. Unless this is done, community engagement cannot become a systemic activity.
- Engagement should be university wide and not ghettoized into social sciences alone. An ideal example in this case is the Science Shops in Europe, which actually began the process of
community engagement with natural sciences like metallurgy, chemical engineering etc. This model, not only provided students with due credits for engagement, but also recognized the faculty engaged in this work, in their annual performance reviews.

- Massive expansion in post secondary education is resulting in increasing number of first generation students having access to higher education. These students, who come from a very different socio-cultural and economic context, feel disconnected with the age long curriculum being followed in universities. Therefore, unless we pay attention to curriculum and pedagogy, we will do injustice to this new generation of students.

**TECHNICAL SESSION-I: COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH**

**Mr. Walter Lepore**

Mr. Lepore shared that the goal of the UNESCO Chair was to promote the practice of CBR and increase access to training and resources in this field. One major effort in this direction was the study on 'Strengthening Community University Research Partnerships', which came up with the finding that 'although there is a large appetite for training and capacity building in CBR, but there is a lack of information on how to train the researchers or where such training is being provided'. This was the research idea behind the current project on 'Training the Next Generation of Community Based Researchers (NextGen)'.

*Pica 5: Mr. Walter Lepore sharing the findings of the NextGen project*
Further, he shared about the precise research design for the subject and the selection of thematic reviews, research instruments such as the global survey and the case studies. While the thematic reviews focused on analyzing pedagogy, resources, best practices in CBR training, the survey aimed to collate statistical data on global CBR training. From the survey, it emerged that although most of the respondents have had previous experience in CBR, they did not receive any formal training in the same, and also expressed interest in getting trained in the same. Further, the case studies outlined the best practices in this field giving detailed information on various aspects of CBR training followed by institutions across the world.

He further shared that as next steps to the project; the Chair intends to create an ‘International Consortium on CBR training’, which will bring together experts and institutions interested in working in this area of work, and carrying it forward.

**Dr Darlene Clover**

Dr Darlene Clover outlined key principles of gender justice which need to be incorporated in all forms of research including CBR. The principles were:

- *Any gender/feminist focused research must be linked to the larger struggle for women’s equality and equity.*

- *The research findings must be used to promote gender justice.*

- *There was a need to create a synergy between the epistemologies of research, and explore the linkages of research to women issues.*

- *All languages of research need to be decoded.*

- *Painful and distressing questions on women, with respect to safety, violence, homelessness, poverty etc. needs to be addressed.*

Further, Dr Clover drew broad conclusions on research perspectives and their link with gender issues. They are:

- *Research is about asking questions. However, we need to work on, ‘how do we ask questions, role of questioning’, ‘who has the right to question’ etc.*

- *It is important to consider ways and means for adjusting to the mobility of women in and out the research project. Considering their responsibility in reproductive work, we need to find ways such that whenever they re-enter a research project, they don’t feel disconnected.*

- *It is essential to re-consider the venues where we host the programmers such as workshops, seminars etc. This is because the entire effort can prove futile if people cannot reach these spaces and make use of it.*
• The researchers are often trained to analyze volumes of quantitative and statistical data, but it is also important to consider that, 'how we analyze data in the form of commentaries, visuals, plays etc.

• Collective process of analysis is one of the most important aspects of research. Therefore, efforts should be aimed at collating individual stories, especially those coming from women, into collective stories.

Pica 6: Dr Darlene Clover sharing her reflections on 'Gender perspectives in research & training'

Dr Krishna Reddy, Osmania University

In his statement, Prof Reddy shared some of his reflections with respect to community engagement and community based research. Some of them are:

• There are tremendous obstacles that the communities within universities face with respect to CBR, such as the rigidity of curriculum, issues of marginality/exclusion etc.

• There needs to be a revision of course curriculum and pedagogy in universities. However, considering the rigid structure of universities, change in syllabi continues to be an uphill task. Therefore, one suggestion on this front can be submitting a proposal to the UGC on 'how to visualize universities in the present context, and especially in relation to CBR'.

• The collapse of dialogue between the teaching university, students and administration is leading more fragmentation between stakeholders.
• At present, the research agenda in universities is badly shaped. There was a need for bringing in new perspectives and multi-disciplinarily in research.

• Need for designing special training modules for training students/researchers in CBR.

• It is important to have channels connecting universities and the communities. Herein, research organizations like PRIA can play an important role.

Dr Reddy, Retired Professor, IIM-Kolkata

Dr Reddy shared his personal study on the drop in Child Sex Ratio in India, and the gradual increase in daughter deficit in India over time. He called for examining data on government schemes like ‘Beti Bachao, Beti padhao’ and addressing the challenge in an effective manner.

OPEN DISCUSSIONS

Dr Rajesh Tandon

Carrying forward the point mentioned by Professor Reddy, Dr Tandon said that secondary data helps us identify the problem at hand, while it is our job to find out what can be done about it. He made the following comments:
• Statistical analysis can help us understand the problem, but not the causality.

• It is essential to build trust with the community, if we want to engage with it in a sensible manner.

• We need to enable the communities in a manner that they can find solutions to their problems ‘themselves’.

• It is also important to understand that CBR does not intend to displace macro-analytical research, but only helps in identifying the contextually relevant picture.

Mr. Sudhakar, WaterAid

• WaterAid, as an advocacy organization takes research (real time/community based/action oriented) as an important means of designing our programs.

Dr Ipsita Sapra, TISS Hyderabad

• Taking her own efforts of partnering with universities, CSOs, and Government of AP, as an example, she shared that, ‘Although permanent systematization of relationships can be a challenge, preliminary interfaces with stakeholders and trust building can play a key role in enabling institutionalization of community engagement in the academia’.

• We might be producers of knowledge, but we are ‘yet to learn how to systematize our existing knowledge in a way that it is accessible to one and all, and also benefits them in the long run’.

Kiran, Hyderabad Central University (HCU)

• Stating resource limitations as one of the major challenges in achieving meaningful community engagement, she said that we need to find ways and means to sustain and also incentivize this kind of work.

Arifa Sultan, PhD scholar, CESS

• We can think of the possibility of linking project work, which are a part of the UG/PG curriculum with the ideas of community based research; and further try to link universities and NGOs/CSOs.

• The partnership with CSOs/NGOs entails a very important aspect of ‘who decides the research question’. So, even if we manage to strike a partnership and still, it is the university scholars to play the lead role, it is but natural that the NGOs will lose their enthusiasm. Therefore, it is essential that responsibilities are shared for co-creation of new knowledge.
Dr Mazhar Hussain, COVA

- Absence of representation of individuals in research, automatically reduced their participation in shaping research policies.
- It is also important to consider that research may not be associated with any institution in particular, but can still contribute towards knowledge generation.

Dr Rajesh Tandon

- We need partnerships (between community based organizations, local governments, universities, trade unions, banks etc.) which are built on trust, have longevity and are not semester bound.
- If such relationships of trust are created all across Hyderabad, there will be enough local actors who will be able to draw value out of this, and can be involved in such initiatives.

Comments from the Chair: Mr SriKanta Natha Reddy, Joint Secretary, Higher Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh

Mr Reddy, representing the Government of Andhra Pradesh, outlined the government’s concern about CBR and re-iterated that when people are involved in the framing up the policies which are meant for them, their success rate is very high. He also spoke about his experience of Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA), as a forester, back in 2000s, where he was asked to involve the community in preparing micro plans for Van Sanrakshan Samiti. He shared that whenever the communities
played an active part in the planning process, all activities were successful and the entire area benefitted.

Some of the other reflections shared by Mr Reddy are as follows:

- **The increasing GER is resulting in a huge number of first generation students entering the Higher Education Institutions. It is important to understand the demands of this cadre of students.**

- **We need to have higher education systems which can address community needs. However, we need to be careful to limit our outreach to positive engagement, and not trespass their personal space.**

- **Role of NGOs in CBR is important, because if we are able to understand the thought process of people (with whom the NGOs work), the purpose of reaching out to them will be served.**

- **The pressing need in today’s times is to transform university syllabi from irrelevance to relevance; however, resistance for this, which comes from the academic system itself, is a major challenge.**

- **Change is required to bring in quality research based on the inputs from the grassroots/community.**

*Pic 10: Mr Reddy, sharing the governmental perspective on CBR*
The post lunch session of the workshop focused on **Community Centric Research in WASH**. This session was chaired by Mr. Manoj Rai, Director PRIA and the other panelists included Dr. Sakshi Saini, PRIA, Dr. Jayalakshmi, HOD, Centre for Policy Research, NIRD and Prof. Indrakant, RBI Chair Professor, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad.

**Introduction: Mr. Manoj Rai, Director, PRIA.**

Mr. Manoj Rai began the session by summing up the pre-lunch session as and set up the agenda for the post-lunch session. Summing up the pre-lunch session, he said that ‘most of the people who spoke indicated the need for Community Based Research (CBR).’ Talking about research opportunities, Mr. Rai said, ‘Whether it is an academic, NGO worker or a freelancer, there are plenty of opportunities, and in this session, we will try to provide glimpses from the field of sanitation and the various opportunities it provides with respect to CBR’.

**SPEAKER’S NOTES**

**Dr. Sakshi Saini, Assistant Program Manager, PRIA**

Dr. Sakshi began by looking back into the historical roots of sanitation. She said that “Mahatma Gandhi believed that sanitation is more important than political independence”.

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*Pic 11: Dr Sakshi Saini, presenting an overview of sanitation issues in Andhra Pradesh*
Further, she stated that although sanitation was part of the planning process in India (dating back to the first five year plan), India has still not been able to achieve the goal of sanitation for all. Emphasizing the importance of sanitation, she highlighted the importance accorded to it under both, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the most recent Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Commenting on the status of sanitation in Andhra Pradesh she said that, ‘Out of 29 states in India, Andhra Pradesh stands at 24th position, and the goal of sanitation sounds very distant, as not even 1/3rd of the Gram Panchayats are Open Defecation Free (ODF)’.

‘However, there are also positive experiences wherein remote tribal villages, who despite not being participants of these policies and programmes; have achieved the goal of sanitation for all’.

‘There is definitely something for us to learn from this and Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM) opens a sea of opportunities, as it has a component of Rapid Action Learning Unit (RALU), where the process of learning has been given much importance’.

Highlighting the challenges, Dr. Sakshi indicated the following issues, which can be taken up as research topics:

- Lack of people’s participation and lack of information on the issue.
- Challenging social myths through a well thought out strategy.
- Systematic analysis of data with respect to sanitation status in the state.
- Detailed analysis on the financial capacities of the people.
- Study on whether the incentives meant for the people, is actually reaching out to them, and whether it is timely or delayed.

“These are a few questions arising in the field. We need to find out solutions” said Dr. Sakshi.

Commenting on the issues that SBM is facing currently, she added that:

- Mismatch of data in identifying beneficiaries emerges as a major roadblock.
- There is a need to address various superstitions, and keep a check on the information reaching out to the community.
- Demystification of technical knowledge was the need of the hour.
- Understanding the link between sanitation and access to water. Is sanitation stand alone or is it linked with water? If yes, do we have a common policy or programme?

Dr. Saini ended the presentation by opening the floor for discussion.

Mr. Rai stated that ‘RALU can play the intermediary role of linking community and researchers, as most of the questions that emerged came from the community and not RALU or PRIA or SBM or others’.
Mr. Mahender, Consultant at SBM Andhra Pradesh.

Adding to what Dr. Saini highlighted, Mr. Mahender shared the following issues with respect to the objective of achieving ‘sanitation for all’:

- There is still no clarity that the finances provided by the government under SBM are an incentive and not a subsidy.
- There needs to be ownership of the community on the toilets which are constructed.

Comments from the audience

“Technological quick-fixes do not work too well unless they touch upon people’s own interest”, says Dr. Ipsita from Tata Institute of Social Sciences. She added that we need to move beyond technological solutions and non monetary incentives can be considered, in the place of monetary incentives, as “money gets spent but recognition remains”, she emphasized.

Professor V.N. Reddy spoke about how the work of SBM should begin in the early stages in the life of an individual, and Anganwadi Centres and schools, can be a good starting point.

There were questions from the audience about:

- The technical innovations and functions of toilets, posed by students of Indian Institute of Public Health.
- Issues related to the link between open drainage systems and health, as shared by a student from Osmania university.

Mr. Mahendra from SBM answered the questions and suggested that the audience should refer to the SBM website which provided detailed information.

Mr. Muneswara Rao, a Sarpanch, shared his experience of making his village free of Open Defecation Free (ODF). He expressed his willingness to incorporate any suggestion that the members present in the workshop could give him so as to ensure sanitation for all.

Comments from the Panelists:

Dr. Indrakant, RBI Professor, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad.

Dr. Indrakant shared findings from various studies on economics of sanitation and re-iterated the need for establishing linkages between communities and academic institutions. Some of the facts he shared with the audience were:

- Investment of Rs. 1 on sanitation will give a return of about Rs. 5 to Rs. 6
- A healthy individual is more productive and therefore will contribute more to the national output
• Absence of toilets leads to contamination of drinking water, thus resulting in health problems for the community

He shared that as per a study conducted in 2006, ‘Due of inadequate sanitation, India is losing out on 6.4% of its GDP, which amounts to about 2000 billion rupees. Further, in per-capita terms, each person is losing out on more than Rs. 2000’.

He also shared that owning to various cultural myths and superstitions, people are still not very motivated to construct toilets.

Elaborating on what Dr. Indrakanth said, Mr. Rai re-emphasized the impact of CBR by sharing his experiences in Chhattisgarh. He shared as to how, ‘CBR was helpful in bringing about behavioral change in the community’.

![Image](Image)

*Pic 12: Professor Indrakant, sharing his ideas on ‘Economics in Sanitation’*

**Dr. Jayalakshmi, HOD, Centre for Policy Research, NIRD.**

Dr. Jayalakshmi spoke about various structures of the Government, which were involved in providing sanitation and briefly spoke about previous projects undertaken in the same area.

Some of the other ideas she shared are:

• **Adoption of liquid waste management techniques in a district in Telangana.**
• **Involving bare-foot engineers to support the process of toilet construction.**
• **Establishing linkages with Gram Panchayat Development Plans for achieving sanitation for all.**
• Adapting from the success story of sanitary marts in Tamil Nadu.

Pic 13: Dr Jayalakshmi, deliberating on ‘Research issues in engaging Panchayats in Sanitation’

Mr. Sudhakar, WaterAid

Sharing about the activities of WaterAid, Mr Sudhakar said that ‘All of us at WaterAid agree that working for WASH is a non negotiable’.

Appreciating the pointers made by Prof Indrakant on the impact of WASH on economics, he further added that ‘Apart from the direct costs, there are also indirect costs involved, such as the negative impacts on daily wages as a result of falling sick’.

Further, indicating the various reasons whereby which girls lose out on their education and career, he shared that, ‘If my girl doesn’t have the facility of changing pads in school, she drops out at the adolescent age and as a result, discontinues her education’. He therefore re-iterated the need to step beyond macro perspectives like governmental policies, and focus on micro-issues such as operations and maintenance of toilets in schools. He added that, ‘It is the lack of sanitation facilities, which restrains people from using utilities like public toilets’.

Comments from audience

Mr. K. Ramesh, a Sarpanch from Abburu Gram Panchayat detailed out the process he and his Gram Panchayat members undertook, to ensure sanitation for all in their Gram Panchayat (GP). He added that they utilized all the existing schemes and bulk construction processes to achieve sanitation in their village.
‘There is an evidence based centre in the UK, which tries to document what works and what doesn’t. If there is no academic collaboration so far, we will be happy to collaborate and establish a centre like that for achieving the objectives of attaining full sanitation’, assured Dr. Ipsita from TISS.

Comments from Dr. Budd Hall

Dr. Budd Hall recalled an experience where someone told him ‘If you can make a difference in India, you can make a difference anywhere in the world’.

‘We need your voices, your ideas. We need defy the belief, which attributes authoritative research to the experts who come from the global North’. He added that tripartite linkages between the government, civil society and the academia are a great starting point, and that we should all make efforts to contribute towards it.

Comments from Dr. Rajesh Tandon

Dr. Tandon spoke about two major takeaways from the workshop. He suggested that, ‘we should all make an effort to share the findings of our research with the very people, who were a part of our data collection processes’. He added that, ‘We need to find a way to share our findings locally, at the mandal level, at the district level, as well at the national level’.

He concluded by asserting that ‘if we want to make a change, it is the community is where we should begin with’.
CITIES > HYDERABAD

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‘Community-based participatory research need of the hour’

- Special Correspondent

A day-long consultation on ‘learning to do community-based research (CBR): perspectives, opportunities and ways forward’ saw experts in rural development and other fields underscoring the need for taking the community along in research activity so as to make it practical.

The focussed meeting had about three dozen participants, including students and research scholars, and was touted as a ‘festival of learning’. It was said to be the culmination of a two-year-long project on ‘training the next generation of community-based researchers’ that the UNESCO chair had taken up.

The workshop was organised by the UNESCO Chair in Community-based Research and Social Responsibility, together with the city-based Centre for Economic and Social Studies (CESS) and the New Delhi-based Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA).

As the study identified existential gaps in training for CBR and came out with the best practice models and recommendations, the UNESCO chair intended to use the festival and the events planned as a part of it, to promote learning and training in CBR, said UNESCO co-chairs Rajesh Tandon (global-south representing the Asia Pacific largely) and Prof. Budd Hall from the University of Victoria in Canada (global-north).

Earlier, Manoj Rai of PRIA welcomed the gathering and outlined the objectives of the day-long consultation.

Dr. Tandon, who is credited with academic and research works spanning over four decades, took the participants on an educative, enlightening journey, narrating his experience. He outlined how in the 1980s people were dismissive of participatory research and would not take local, indigenous knowledge seriously. “In the 90s though, Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) became a methodology that was accepted globally,” he said.

The focussed meeting touting as a ‘festival of learning’
ANNEXURE: PROGRAM AGENDA

10:00 AM – 10:20 AM: Registration

INAUGURAL SESSION: 10:30 AM – 11 AM

10:20 AM – 10:30 AM: Prof E Revathi, Professor, CESS, Hyderabad
10:30 AM – 10:40 AM: Dr Rajesh Tandon, UNESCO Chair Co-Chair & Founder-President, PRIA
10:40 AM – 10:50 AM: Prof Budd Hall, UNESCO Co-Chair & Professor, University of Victoria
10:50 AM – 11:00 AM: Prof S. Galab, Director, CESS, Hyderabad

TECHNICAL SESSION I [COMMUNITY BASED RESEARCH]

Chair: Shri Kantha Natha Reddy, Joint Secretary, Higher Education, Government of Andhra Pradesh

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM: Key findings from the project on ‘Training the Next Generation of Community Based Researchers; Mr. Walter Lepore, University of Victoria, Canada
11:30 AM – 11:40 AM: Gender perspectives in research and training; Dr Darlene Clover, University of Victoria, Canada
11:40 AM – 11:50 AM: Incentivizing CBR in India; Prof. G. Krishna Reddy, Department of Political Science, Osmania University
11:50 AM – 12:00 PM: Role of Academia in CBR; Prof. V.N. Reddy (Retd Professor, IIM, Kolkata)
12:00 PM – 12:45 PM: Open discussions
12:45 PM – 1:00 PM: Comments from the chair
1:00 PM – 2:00 PM: Lunch
TECHNICAL SESSION II [COMMUNITY CENTRIC RESEARCH IN WASH]

Chair: Mr Manoj Rai, Director, PRIA

2:00 PM – 2:30 PM: An overview of issues in Sanitation in Andhra Pradesh; Dr Sakshi Saini & Mr. Manoj Rai, PRIA

2:30 PM – 2:45 PM: Work done in SBM so far; Mr. Mahendra, State IEC Consultant, SBM-AP

2:45 PM – 3:00 PM: Economics of Sanitation; Prof. S.Indrakant, RBI Chair, Professor, Council for Social Development, Hyderabad

3:00PM – 3:15PM: Research Issues in Engaging Panchayat in Sanitation; Dr K Jayalakshmi, Head of Department, Centre for Policy Research, National Institute of Rural Development

3:15 PM- 4:00 PM: Open discussions

4:00 PM – 4:15 PM: Comments from the Chair

CLOSING SESSION

4: 15 PM – 4: 45 PM: Discussants:

- Dr Rajesh Tandon
- Dr Budd Hall
- Prof S. Galab