

## **Capacity Building for Access to Information (CBAI) Project**

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### ***Introduction: The Felt Need – Issue(s) Sought to be Addressed***

Citizens' access to public information – held by or under the control of the government or of a government-supported organisation – had been recognised as a key governance reform. In order to bring this reform into reality, the Government of India (GoI) enacted the 'Right to Information (RTI) Act, 2005'.

Implementation – over time – of the 'RTI Act, 2005' has amply demonstrated that RTI is a powerful, cross-cutting tool with a potential to address a host of developmental issues – the most significant being:

- petty and grand corruption;
- lack of transparency and accountability in public service delivery;
- violation of rights and entitlements;
- wastage of societal resources; and
- inefficiencies in government and public administration.

No sooner was the 'RTI Act, 2005' enacted, than it was realized that the success of the resultant implementation regime would depend – to a large extent – on building capacities, both, on the supply- and the demand-side. It would depend also on reinforcing these capacities – from time to time – in view of the challenges faced by this regime. It was to address this felt need that the 'CBAI Project' came to be designed as a significant intervention toward comprehensive multi-stakeholder capacity building.

The Project commenced in December 2005 under the aegis of the 'Department of Personnel and Training' (DoPT), 'Ministry of Personnel and Public Grievances', 'Government of India' (GoI). The Project has been funded by the 'United Nations Development Programme' (UNDP), whereas the 'Centre for Good Governance' (CGG), Hyderabad (Andhra Pradesh) and the 'Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration' (YASHADA), Pune (Maharashtra) together constitute the 'National Implementing Agency' (NIA) for its implementation in 28 States in the country.

### ***Background: Situation Preceding the Project***

It was for the first time that a 'Right to Information' legislation had come into force at the national level. An earlier legislation – the 'Freedom of Information' Act, though passed by the Indian Parliament, had remained inoperative because the date from which that Act could come into force was not notified in the Official Gazette.

Several States (Tamil Nadu; Goa; Karnataka; Maharashtra) had enacted 'Freedom of Information' / RTI legislations earlier. Evidently, however, almost all these State legislations suffered from several deficiencies, which caused difficulties in their effective implementation. Specifically, these regimes lacked a scheme of

disincentives to preempt or penalize non-compliance even as they did not institute a clearly laid out, autonomous mechanism for the enforcement of the respective laws.

These issues spurred an ever-increasing support and demand for a broad-based and national-level legislation to recognize and reinforce people's right to information. The Central Government was quick to respond and the 'RTI Act, 2005' was enacted. The new country-wide RTI legislation necessitated manifold and sustained capacity building for all stakeholders – that would be in keeping with the 'Practical regime' envisaged under this Act.

Not surprisingly, the earlier capacity building activities were largely limited, merely, to basic sensitization / training of public officials and that too in those States having some RTI-related law. There had hardly been any efforts on the part of the Government(s) [Central or State], for instance, toward facilitating networking among various individual and institutional stakeholders and instituting fora for regular interactions among the many individual and institutional stakeholders.

Efforts for mass awareness were also, understandably, limited in scale. It became obvious, thus, that the new country-wide regime required a much more rounded approach to comprehensive capacity building of all the stakeholders.

### ***Project Approach & Methodology***

The CBAI project adopted a broad-based approach even as it sought to build on the earlier initiatives in this area supported by UNDP and several State Governments, thus bringing together the complementary elements of previous efforts and addressing the continuing challenges and capacity gaps of the government officials as information providers and of the citizens as information seekers.

The Project's approach and implementation methodology have attempted to incorporate strengthening and institutionalisation of mechanisms in a way that the government-citizen interface can be improved through a consultative process and through research; documentation and advocacy efforts.

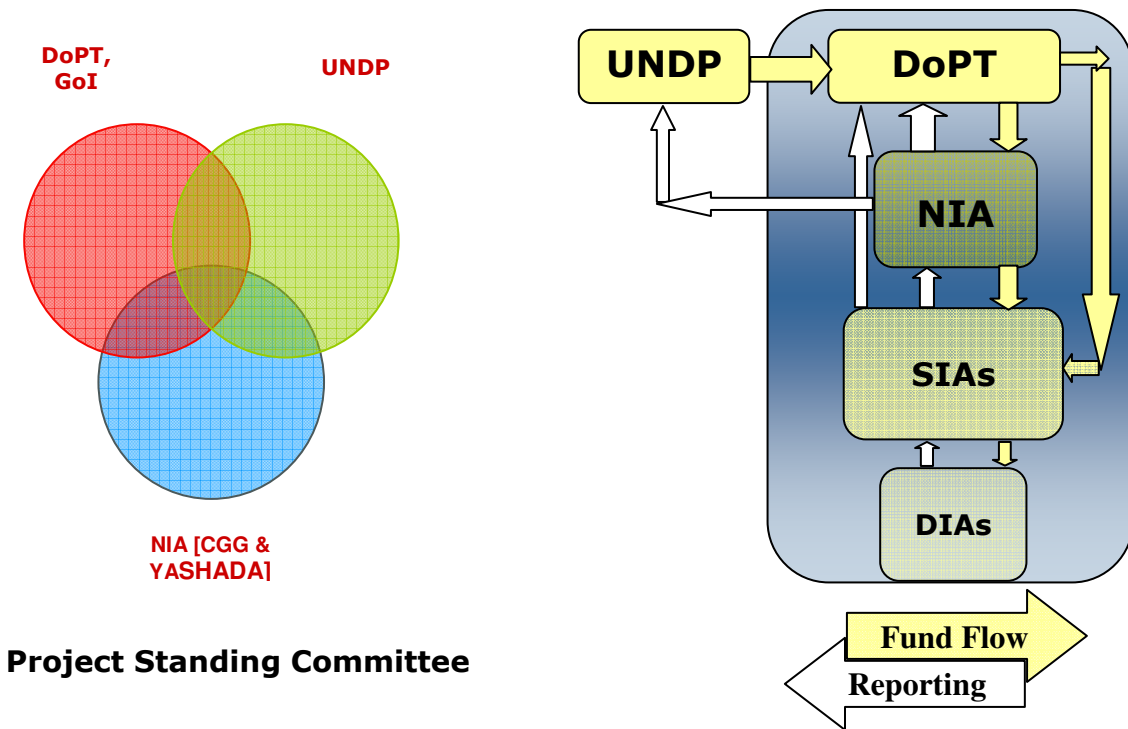
As a pilot (in the 1<sup>st</sup> phase), the project was launched in 12 States. These were the States, who had communicated to DoPT their willingness to play a key role under the proposed project. The respective State Administrative Training Institutes (ATIs) in these States were partnered with as State-level Implementing Agencies (SIA).

In addition to being implemented at the State level through the interventions of the State ATIs, the project has been implemented in 2 districts per State. Selection of these districts was, of course, the prerogative of the State governments concerned. However, it was suggested that at least one of these districts be the district which has also been identified for implementation of the then-just-launched 'National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme' (NREGS). District Collectorates of the Project districts became implementing partners and were designated as 'District Implementing Agencies' (DIAs [under the Project]).

The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Project was launched about mid-way the first phase wherein the Project was extended to 16 other States including Delhi, thereby, covering all the States (except Jammu & Kashmir) in the country, where the 'RTI

Act, 2005' is in force. The same model of partnering with State ATIs and District Collectorates continued into the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase. Thus, 32 additional districts came to be covered in this phase.

The various activities to be carried out under the Project were worked out in detail – year-wise and component- / sub-component-wise. That said, enough flexibility has been built into the Project to ensure that a '**Cafeteria Approach**' could be instituted whereby the 'State and District Implementing Agencies' have had the freedom and flexibility to decide upon their priorities and use the project funds for carrying out activities in keeping with their felt needs and their specific contexts.



**Figure 1:** Illustrations of the 'Project Standing Committee' and the Fund Flow and Reporting Mechanisms of the CBAI Project

### **Project Objectives**

The key objectives of the Project are:

- Building capacities of government officials to met citizens' information needs for improved service delivery;
- Developing capacities of citizens and civil society to demand information that they need and create awareness for the same;
- Establishing institutional mechanisms at the national level for improved citizen-State interface; and

- Facilitating research; documentation; communications and advocacy along with sharing national and global good practices through networking of various practitioners.

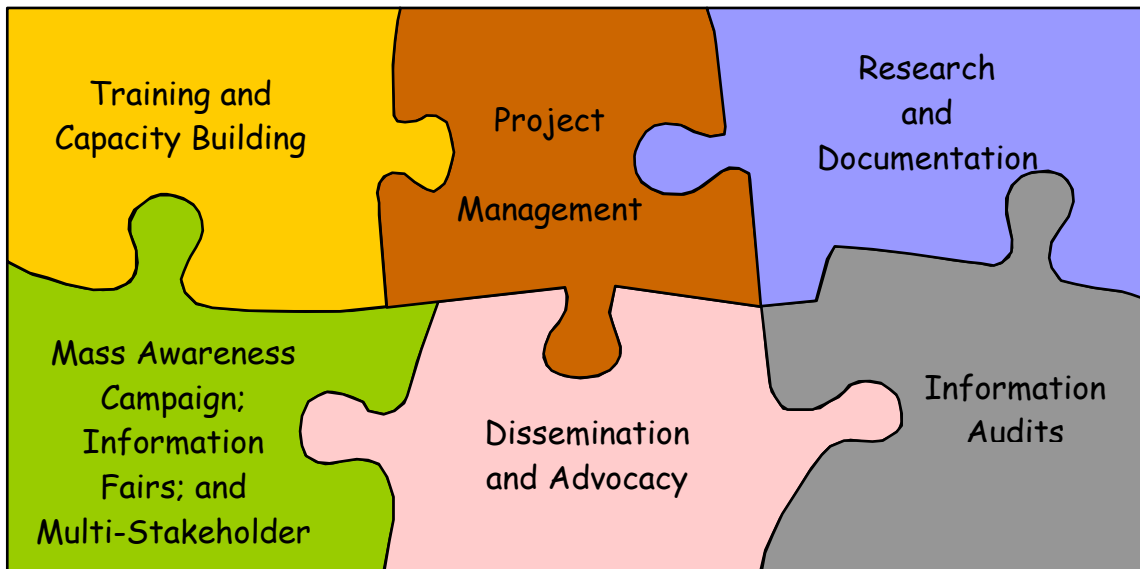
### **Project Strategy**

The elements of a multi-pronged strategy devised for this project are as follows:

- Strengthening existing institutional capacity at the National, State and District level to service the right to information regime and monitor and enforce its implementation;
- Undertaking sensitisation and rigorous training for public officials at all levels focusing on curriculum development; practicing innovative training techniques; developing a network of researchers and practitioners for sharing ideas and 'best practices';
- Reviewing and reengineering business processes and information management systems of public authorities to facilitate sharing of information;
- Providing a platform for deliberations on the rules and procedures with a view to reinforcing and improving them;
- Launching media campaigns to create and sustain awareness amongst the general public and augment their capacities as information seekers; and
- Providing a mechanism for receiving regular feedback from citizens and civil society organisations and channeling the inputs into the decision-making for bringing about improvements in the RTI implementation regime.

### **Project Components**

The broad components of the Project may be illustrated thus:



**Figure 2:** An illustration of the CBAI Project Components

**Project Coverage**

As mentioned earlier, the Project commenced in 12 States and in its second phase was extended to 16 other States. The table that follows lists out these 28 States as well as the respective project districts.

<b>Phase – I</b>			
<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Sl. No.</b>	<b>Districts</b>
1	Andhra Pradesh	1a	Anantapur
		1b	Ranga Reddy
2	Assam	2a	Karbi Anglong
		2b	North Lakhimpur
3	Chhattisgarh	3a	Bilaspur
		3b	Rajnandgaon
4	Gujarat	4a	Narmada
		4b	Panchmahal
5	Karnataka	5a	Bidar
		5b	Chitradurga
6	Kerala	6a	Palakkad
		6b	Waynad
7	Madhya Pradesh	7a	Khargone
		7b	Mandla
8	Maharashtra	8a	Chandrapur
		8a	Nandurbar
9	Rajasthan	9a	Jodhpur
		9b	Udaipur
10	Tamil Nadu	10a	Cuddalore
		10b	Nagapattinam
11	Uttarakhand	11a	Champawat
		11b	Tehri Garhwal
12	West Bengal	12a	Malda
		12b	West Midnapore
<b>Phase – II</b>			
1	Arunachal Pradesh	1a	Lohit
		1b	West Kameng
2	Bihar	2a	Patna
		2b	Purnea
3	Delhi	3a	Delhi South
		3b	Delhi West
4	Goa	4a	North Goa
		4b	South Goa
5	Haryana	5a	Gurgaon
		5b	Jhajjar
6	Himachal Pradesh	6a	Hamirpur

		6b	<i>Mandi</i>
7	<i>Jharkhand</i>	7a	<i>Ranchi</i>
		7b	<i>Singbhum East</i>
8	<i>Manipur</i>	8a	<i>Imphal East</i>
		8a	<i>Imphal West</i>
9	<i>Meghalaya</i>	9a	<i>Jaintia Hills</i>
		9b	<i>West Garo Hills</i>
10	<i>Mizoram</i>	10a	<i>Serchhip</i>
		10b	<i>Kolasib</i>
11	<i>Nagaland</i>	11a	<i>Dimapur</i>
		11b	<i>Mokokchang</i>
12	<i>Orissa</i>	12a	<i>Ganjam</i>
		12b	<i>Mayurbhanj</i>
13	<i>Punjab</i>	13a	<i>Nawanshahar</i>
		13b	<i>Patiala</i>
14	<i>Sikkim</i>	14a	South District
		14b	West District
15	<i>Tripura</i>	15a	<i>Dhalai</i>
		15b	<i>West Tripura</i>
16	<i>Uttar Pradesh</i>	16a	<i>Bareilly</i>
		16b	<i>Jaunpur</i>

### **Project Achievements**

To achieve the aforesaid objectives, the Project has been delivered the following outputs:

- Action research for preparation of reference material (guides / handbooks / manuals) for almost all kinds of stakeholders from trainers to information officers to first appeal officers to other officials to citizens to representatives of Civil Society (including media organisations);
- A cadre of resource persons and trainers at the national, state and district levels;
- Training / Reference material in local language (and updating it from time-to-time) and organizing / conducting training and sensitisation of official and non-official stakeholders on generic as well as Department / service delivery-specific issues pertaining to implementation of the 'RTI Act, 2005';
- Directories of Public Authorities at the State & District levels;
- Assessment of the 'Proactive Disclosures' of select key public authorities at the State & District level;
- Various for a for and facilitating networking – from time to time – among the many stakeholders of the RTI regime.

Some key statistics pertaining to Project achievements follow – :

<b>Training &amp; Capacity Building<sup>1</sup></b>			
as on 31.01.2009	TOTAL	SIA level	DIA level
<b>Resource Persons trained by NIA (YASHADA)</b>	<b>1,473</b> (Target: 1,425)	<b>1,143</b>	<b>330</b>
<b>Resource Persons trained by SIAs<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>6,771</b>	<b>5,279</b>	<b>1,492</b>
<b>PIOs / APIOs / FAOs &amp; Other Officials trained</b>	<b>56,534</b>	<b>22,302</b>	<b>34,232</b>
<b>Representatives of NGOs / Media Organisations trained</b>	<b>32,769</b>	<b>4,697</b>	<b>28,072</b>
Total	<b>97,547</b>	<b>33,421</b>	<b>64,126</b>

<b>Training &amp; Capacity Building</b>						
Compared with the figures available 6 months and 1 year ago	TOTAL		SIA level		DIA level	
	Nov. 07	Jun. 08	Nov. 07	Jun. 08	Nov. 07	Jun. 08
<b>Resource Persons trained by NIA (YASHADA)</b>	<b>961</b>	<b>1,303</b>	<b>723</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Resource Persons trained by SIAs</b>	<b>2,778</b>	<b>4,978</b>	<b>1,926</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>852</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>PIOs / APIOs / FAOs trained &amp; other Officials trained</b>	<b>21,438</b>	<b>43,732</b>	<b>7,613</b>	<b>16,386</b>	<b>13,825</b>	<b>27,346</b>
<b>Representatives of NGOs / Media Organisations trained</b>	<b>10,797</b>	<b>31,175</b>	<b>1,642</b>	<b>4,017</b>	<b>9,155</b>	<b>27,158</b>
Total	<b>35,974</b>	<b>81,188</b>	<b>11,904</b>	<b>25,209</b>	<b>24,070</b>	<b>55,979</b>

<sup>1</sup> An evaluation of the 'Training & Capacity Building' initiatives is currently underway. UNDP has engaged a New Delhi-based Organisation – 'Santek Consultants Private Limited' – for the same.

<sup>2</sup> Individuals from various categories of stakeholders were identified – by SIAs – to be trained as Resource Persons / Trainers who in turn trained persons from the stakeholder categories on the subject. These Resource persons were either trained at YASHADA or by resource persons from YASHADA who visited several ATIs. At present 'Regional Debriefing Workshops' of these 'Resource Persons' are underway

<b>Mass Awareness Activities</b>			
as on 31.01.2009	TOTAL	SIA level	DIA level
Distribution of Pamphlets; Brochures & Posters	31,11,291	21,74,074	9,37,217
Radio Programmes aired	283	254	29
T.V. + Print Advertisements	19,590	3,891	15,709
Folk Theatre; Road Shows; <i>Kalajathas</i> etc.	1,194	249	945
<b>Seminars / Talk Shows etc.</b>	12,100	11,171	929
<b>Translation in local language: 'RTI Act, 2005'; &amp; Related Guides / Manuals.</b>	Carried out by 22 and 18 SIAs respectively		--
<b>Distribution of 'RTI Act, 2005' copies</b>	1,83,490	1,30,629	52,861

<b>Mass Awareness Activities</b>						
Compared with the figures available 6 months and 1 year ago	TOTAL		SIA level		DIA level	
	Nov. 07	Jun. 08	Nov. 07	Jun 08	Nov. 07	Jun. 08
Distribution of Pamphlets; Brochures & Posters	6,70,000	22,53,783	--	14,59,329	--	7,94,454
Radio Programmes aired	117	267	--	240	--	27
T.V. + Print Advertisements	893	1,927 + 17,100	--	1,233 + 2,214	--	694 + 14,886
Folk Theatre; Road Shows; <i>Kalajathas</i> etc.	259	873	--	248	--	625
<b>Seminars / Talk Shows etc.</b>	11,000	12,023	--	11,158	--	865
<b>Translation of 'RTI Act, 2005' Translation of related guides / manuals in local language</b>	12 States had done it	22 & 16 States had done this respectively	--	--	--	--

**Other Key Activities** (as on 31.01.2009)

- 23 SIAs to have compiled 'Directory of PIOs and APIOs'
- 18 DIAs to have compiled 'Directory of PIOs and APIOs'

- 'Audit of Proactive Disclosure' carried out for 14 PAs at the state level and 12 PAs at the district level
- Documentation / Compilation of 'Case Studies' & 'Good Practices' – State level: 16; District level: 13
- 359 'Information Fairs' have been conducted (67) by 13 SIAs & (292) in 15 Districts
- 258 'Multi-stakeholder Workshops' have been conducted (106) by 23 SIAs (152) in 19 Districts
- "Seminars / Talk Shows" organised in 13 States and 15 Districts are 106 and 152 respectively

**Note:** These numbers are expected to be more. Some IAs are yet to report latest figures

### **Key Deliverables of NIA**

#### Knowledge Bank

One of the significant activities carried out earlier on under the CBAI Project

- Guide for Public Authorities; Information Officers; & Appellate Authorities
- Annual Report of Information Commissions – A Guide
- Guide for Civil Society
- Guide for Media
- Trainer's Handbook
- Citizens' Guide
- Guide for Urban Local Bodies
- Audit of Proactive Disclosure – A Toolkit

#### Knowledge and Networking Portal on RTI

One of the earliest e-Interventions under this project has been the launch of a 'Networking Portal' (by CGG, Hyderabad), which makes various CBAI-generated as well as other national and international resources accessible to various stakeholders on one platform. The portal is designed as a repository of information for all stakeholders of the RTI regime in the country. As such it facilitates augmentation and dissemination of knowledge on reinforcing the implementation of 'RTI Act, 2005' in India.

#### Benefits

- Provides a one-stop source for a variety of RTI-related information
- Provides a forum for various demand- & supply-side stakeholders to network & to share ideas / experiences
- Facilitates reporting under the CBAI Project

The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'Knowledge & Networking Portal on Right to Information'. The header features the RTI network logo and the portal title. A navigation menu includes Home, Knowledge Hub, Discussion Forum, Case Law Directory (NEW), Newsletter, Events, and Related Links. A secondary menu lists CBAI21 Project, News, Requisition/Appeal Forms, Post-it & Share, Join RTInet, Site Map, and Project Monitoring. The main content area is divided into several sections: a left sidebar with links to Colloquium, Handbooks, Presentations, Articles (NEW), RTI footprints (NEW), Newsletter, Application Forms, FAQs, Awareness Campaign, Guest Book, Photo Gallery, and Contact Us; a central 'knowledge hub' section with a red question mark icon and text about the RTInet initiative; a 'discussion forum' section with a grey speech bubble icon and text about bringing stakeholders together; a 'caselaw directory' section with a purple star icon and text about downloading tools and guides; an 'Articles & Presentations' section with a black and white image of a person and text about articles and PowerPoints; and a 'Work Shop' section with a blue chair icon and text about seminars and meetings. At the bottom left, there is a logo for 'RTI eLearning Module' and 'RTI Act'.

It provides

- Freely downloadable soft copies of all Project publications
- Case Law Directory and FAQs
- Daily RTI news from various sources received through RSS feeds
- Articles and Presentations on various aspects of 'RTI Act, 2005'
- Notes on Events organised in this Project
- [Online Discussion Forum](#)
- [e-Learning Module](#)
- [Online Project Monitoring System](#)

### Online Discussion Forum

It helps the stakeholders:

- Engage in online discussions about specific topics
- Exchange information and ideas
- Share their concerns and doubts
- Request help from each other
- Upload and share documents
- Access archived discussions

### e-learning Module

CGG, Hyderabad has recently developed the 'e-Learning Module' as part of a series of awareness generation initiatives designed to help understand and apply the Right to Information Act 2005. The aim of this e-Learning Module is to sensitize Public Information Officers about various provisions of the RTI Act and address the needs of various decision-makers under the Act for effective implementation of the Act.

Public Information Officers can now access the lessons and materials that make up the e-Learning Module through the web-enabled portal [www.rti.org.in](http://www.rti.org.in), any where and any time. Anyone with internet access may register online free of charge to access the contents of the Module.

If someone is to have any difficulty with online access, he / she can request a Module on CD-ROM.

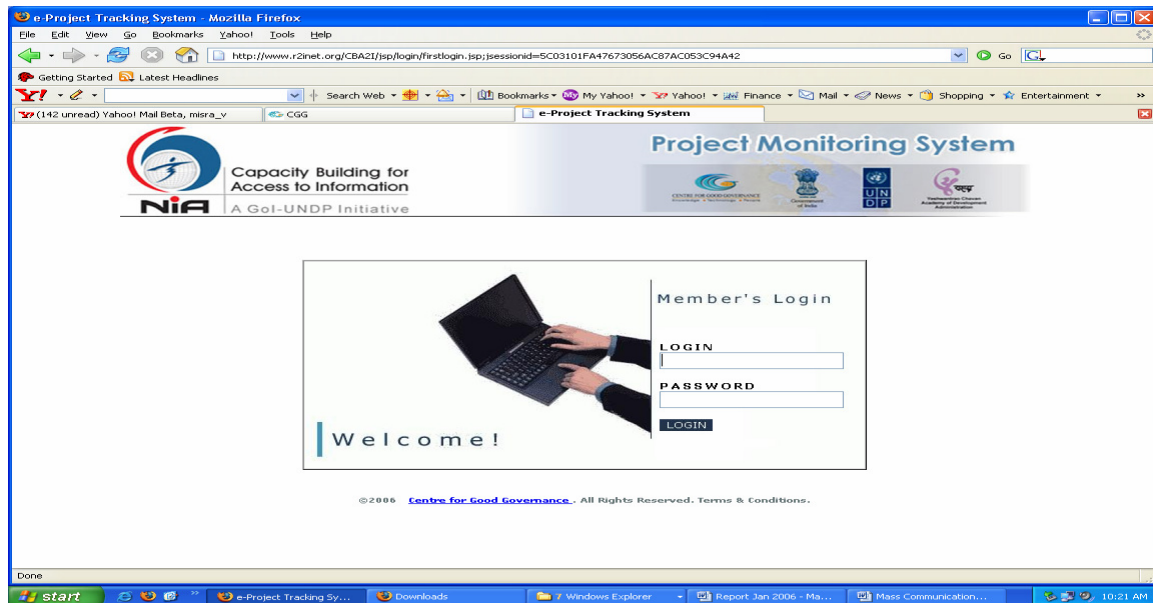
### Salient Features

- An interactive environment for self-paced learning.
- Quality study material at a click of the mouse.
- The e-Learning Module is more economical and time saving than other two modules - oral and postal learning modules.

The Module offers a series of lessons on RTI which introduce and describe basic concepts. The lessons include relevant resources and key Decisions pronounced by Information Commissions which are valued because of the guidance they provide on future similar cases. The e-Learning Module has Various Units on the RTI Act including:

- Key Decisions of Information Commissions
- Case Studies
- Quizzes
- FAQs

The 'Online Project Monitoring System' developed and maintained by CGG, Hyderabad facilitates reporting by and viewing & collation of reports from all IAs.



### Website of the Andhra Pradesh Information Commission

One of the significant sub-components in the 'Annual Work Plans' for the Project "Support to the Andhra Pradesh Information Commission". CGG, Hyderabad has designed the website of the Andhra Pradesh Information Commission (APIC). CGG has also been assigned the responsibility of hosting and maintaining this Website.



## Features

- 'RTI Act, 2005' – Telugu; Hindi; & English versions & User Guides
- Information about the powers & functions of APIC and its activities
- Profile of & work distribution among all 'Information Commissioners'
- Information disclosure pertaining to 'Public Authorities' (PAs) in AP
- 'Annual Reporting System'
- Links to key RTI resources on the web

## Benefits

- 'RTI Act' copies and 'User Guides' are downloadable even as access to rules and regulations facilitating RTI in AP is provided
- Dedicated e-platform for 'Proactive Disclosure' by APIC. Single window for accessing contact information of thousands of PAs
- Facility for the citizens to know the status of disposal of their complaint / appeal using SMS
- Uploading ICs decisions within 48 hours of their pronouncement
- Facility for 'Heads of Departments' (HoDs) and 'District Officers' to report – from time-to-time – the status of their implementation of the 'RTI Act'

## Internal Tracking System

### Features

- Online Registration of appeals / complaints and updation of their disposal status
- Automatic generation of 'Cause Lists'
- e-Enabled 'Management Information System' for generation of reports:

- Month- / year-wise
- 'Information Commissioner'-wise

#### Benefits

- Allocates 'Unique Identification number' to each appeal / complaint
- Facility for identification & grouping of repeated appeals / complaints by the same person on the same issue
- Builds a centralised repository of all appeals / complaints
- Provides, instantly, the disposal status of an appeal or a complaint

#### Annual Reporting System

##### Features

- Online registers for Public Information Officers (PIOs) & First Appeal Officers (FAOs) as also for 'District Officers'
- 'Annual MIS Reports'

##### Benefits

- Provides facility quarterly submission of PA / PIO specific information for stocktaking of their performance
- Provides facility for updation lists of PA / PIO and their contact information in the 'Online Directory'
- Report generation can be detailed throughout the hierarchy – from PIO-PA – District – HoD – to – the – State Department – level

#### SMS Status Check

##### Features

- Availability of appeal- / complaint-disposal-status on the APIC Website
- Delivery of appeal- / complaint-disposal-status on the mobile phone

##### Benefits

- Citizen's ability to track the disposal status of an appeal / a complaint
- 24 X 7 convenience through the use of mobile phone
- Remote and real-time access to disposal-related information

The Workshops & Seminars (held on various themes and topics relevant and related to the implementation regime of the 'RTI Act, 2005') are as follows:

- National Workshop at 'Yashwantrao Chavan Academy of Development Administration' (YASHADA), Pune, Maharashtra
- District Collectors' Workshop on RTI & CBAI at 'Uttarakhand Academy of Administration' (UAA), Nainital, Uttarakhand
- Zonal Workshops at 'Sardar Patel Institute of Public Administration' (SPIPA), Ahmedabad, Gujarat and 'Assam Administrative Staff College' (AASC), Guwahati, Assam

- 2 Workshops of RTI Researchers & Practitioners at 'Centre for Good Governance', Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh.
- National Review and Experience Sharing Workshop at 'Rajasthan State Institute of Public Administration' (RSIPA) Jaipur, Rajasthan.
- Debriefing Workshops of 'State Resource Persons' Trained under the 'CBAI Project' – 'Uttar Pradesh Academy of Administration and Management', Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh and at 'RCVP Noronha Academy of Administration', Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh [February 2009]. {A third "Debriefing Workshop" would be }

### Mass Awareness

In addition to the various awareness-generation activities (at various levels) stated above, a 'Mass Awareness Campaign' was piloted in Andhra Pradesh in association with a network comprising more than 40 NGOs and led by the eminent RTI activist in the country – Shri Sandeep Pandey.

Thanks to this initiative, there was a significant rise in the RTI applications made to various public authorities at various levels across the State. The entire process has been elaborately documented and provides a template – of sorts – for carrying out similar large scale awareness activities involving a wide network of CSOs.

A set of IEC material has also been developed under this project including Folk Art templates; Radio jingles; T V Programmes and an Animation film.

CGG, Hyderabad has also developed a chapter on RTI (in, both, Telugu and English) to be included in the 'Environment Studies Text Book' Similar initiatives have been taken up in other States. Chhattisgarh ATI, for example, was also instrumental in developing a text book chapter for the school syllabus in that State.

### **Key Issues in Implementation**

- Most IAs faced problems due to frequent transfers of the 'Nodal Persons' for the Project
- There were times when certain situations disturbed the work plans at the district level. These were, usually, disaster situations of flood or drought. At times elections (or by-elections) to the in relevant constituencies also put brakes on the project-related work for obvious reasons.

Though, the ATIs were not directly involved in the related activities, project-related work was adversely affected due to rescheduling of dates and / or due to a significant drop in the rate of participation (especially of officials). Some ATIs were more successful in getting around these disruptions of project-related, while others could not for several understandable reasons.

- Not all IAs could communicate all their activities to NIA regularly. Several IAs faced the problem of paucity of funds and of human resources for It has been pointed out that the budget earmarked under
- Some IAs could not report regularly through the 'Online Project Monitoring System'
- Some DIAs have been less cooperative with the respective SIAs in reporting their activities

- Some IAs started rather late. Some of these were able to catch up, while others took some more time in carrying out their proposed activities. Some IAs could not keep up the momentum with which they had started, yet were largely successful in meeting their targets and using the project funds productively;
- Sharing between various IAs could have been more – though not necessarily through NIA. This was discussed extensively in the last 'Review & Experience Sharing Workshop'

### **Key Takeouts**

#### Gains

In addition to the project achievements elaborated above, it may be stated that some other significant gains of this project are:

- Significant strengthening of supply & demand side capacities
- Facilitation of strong research; documentation; and dissemination efforts to complement core Project activities which can, not only be sustained, but built upon in future to serve the cause of strengthening and improving the implementation regime.
- Creation of mechanisms for sustainable partnerships & networking among various stakeholders

### **Activities Proposed in the Near Future**

In the last year of the project, some of the key activities proposed in the 'Annual Work Plan 2009' are as follows. These activities are aimed at bringing in some continuity between this project and future initiatives to be taken up at the national and state level even as UNDP funding comes to an end in 2009.

- Preparing Consolidated Project Completion Reports for Phase-I & Phase-II
- Inter-State Study on RTI & Service Delivery
- Assessing Training Needs for key GoI Departments
- Auditing Proactive Disclosure of key Central PAs
- Creating a dynamic Online Database for APIC
- Consultation (among eminent national and other-country protagonists of the RTI movement) on RTI Acts / Procedures / Institutional Arrangements
- Full and judicious use of remaining financial resources
- Putting a greater thrust on taking RTI to the grassroots through mass awareness activities
- Emphasising the need to take focus at the level of Districts and below
- Working toward ensuring greater involvement of civil society organisations at the local level
- Identifying issues and needs for broad-based capacity building of those who have not been covered under any relevant programmes / projects so far
- Identifying areas of customised design of tools and applications for enhancing the reach of RTI in various sections of the society

- Striving – as far as possible – toward bringing in more uniformity in the rules relating to the citizen-centric aspects of the RTI Act – like payment of fees; designation of PIOs and APIOs at appropriate levels; strict compliance of S. 4(1)(b) and going beyond the 16 points to make it more pro-information-seeker
- Undertaking joint initiatives to sustain the existing networks developed under the CBAI Project and creating new ones.

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