

# Community Capacity Building – WASMO’s DETERMINATION

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## **Introduction**

Capacity building is recognized as an essential strategy to strengthen the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities and underpins much of the work of government and non government agencies. It is the process by which individuals and organization obtain, improve and retain the skills to do their jobs competently or to a greater capacity.

Capacity building often refers to strengthening the skills, competencies and abilities of people and communities in small business or local grassroots movements so they can achieve their goals and potentially overcome the issues. It is a conceptual approach to social, behavioral change and leads to infrastructure development. It simultaneously focus on understanding the obstacles that inhibit people, governments, international organization and non-government organization from realizing their goals and enhancing the abilities that will allow them to achieve measurable and sustainable results. In a nut shell, it is a continuous process to create a sustainable knowledge pool among the community for sustenance and dissemination of the tools and skills to the next generation.

## **The Usefulness**

Capacity building is the least understood yet most important aspects of development work. A well planned framework for its implementation certainly helps in project success. Effective capacity building benefits the organization, individual and local community by generating inclusive processes that strengthen trust and build commitment and good relationships. It is to state that, Capacity building through trainings at various dimensions and level helps in spreading right message repeatedly, which potentially percolates towards knowledge sharing among the mass.

## **WASMO’s Context:**

Water and Sanitation Management Organisation(WASMO) is an autonomous body under Water Supply Department, Government of Gujarat who facilitates the implementation of National Rural Drinking Water Programme in Gujarat in context of in-village community managed decentralized water supply scheme through intensive IEC activities and rigorous efforts in capacity building. Being one of the first community managed programmes taken up by WASMO, capacity building of the users was accorded top-most priority in its tenure of more than one and half decade. Sustainable management of drinking water sources and systems by the communities in rural areas in order to ensure drinking water security is WASMO’s objective. This can be made possible only if human resources at difference levels are developed simultaneously.

Capacity building is therefore a continuous process wherein the emphasis is on upgrading the existing skills and knowledge of all the stakeholders’ i.e. VWSC, rural community, partner organization and WASMO personnel – to meet the present and future requirement of the programme. Creating an environment of learning and all the stakeholders working together helped tremendously to build capacities of each of them.

## **Building Capable Communities :**

Developing community capacity enables members of a community to draw on the skills and resources they need to take control and improve their lives. It increases the access of the communities to skills, information, resources, knowledge, technology and linkages. In the community managed approach, the entire responsibility

from identifying the needs and planning to the physical implementation of the scheme lies on the Village Water and Sanitation Committee and the community at large. As WASMO facilitates the efforts of the community, capacity building and developing local leaderships are therefore prime objective of WASMO.

WASMO has focused on each and every aspects of the scheme planning, implementation and management of the village water supply scheme for preparedness of Pani Samiti(VWSC). The training part has been designed so gracefully with multi dimensional approach and three tier dissemination process for community namely District Level,Block Level and Village level using range of methods by covering trainings in following manners.

- i. Basic Training for VWSC (Plan, Monitor, Management of PWSS)
- ii. Block Level Trainings
- iii. District Level Trainings
- iv. Workshops
- v. Exposure Visits
- vi. PRI Level Member Trainings
- vii. Grassroots work training (like Mason, operator)
- viii. Capacity building of the staff

The phase wise training cycle, matches the programme cycle, and helps to gradually build up capacities of people, instead of overloading them with too much information at one go. WASMO has developed trainers on different themes from among its personnel, who carry out the various training programmes. External resource persons are involved in the training for specific themes.

The trainings are being organized for Pani Samitis depending on the stage of the programme cycle each village is at and the specific areas where support is needed. With continuous support to community and interaction with them, WASMO has developed an open atmosphere and ease of access to information which helped WASMO is gaining the trust and respect of the community. At village level, where the community capacity building plays a major role in acceptance of the programme and create conducive ambiance for taking up of any project; WASMO's training modules have focused on issued like knowledge up-gradation, skill development, techno-economic issues, gender sensitization, participation and equity.

As a matter of fact, the round the year training programmes have helped WASMO to identify the people in community who could lead from the front and could be an agent for change. Several volunteers have come forward and based on their individual talent and skill has taken up certain tasks related to programme implementation. The end result of the capacity building is that the rural community has been able to demonstrate improved managerial performance in spite of the diversity in the group.

#### **Capacity Building of Individual (WASMO Personnel)**

WASMO derives its key strength from enterprising youth drawn from the open market, trained in the diverse field of social work, civil engineering, project management, finance and accounting and documentation. Grooming the new personnel and regular training on work related issues is a policy of WASMO which helps people understand their professional role and responsibilities, improves inter-personal and inter-group relations and reinforces organizational goals.

New entrants into WASMO go through a comprehensive orientation programme which makes them aware of the water and sanitation sector, participatory development, WASMO's realm of work, processes followed at the village level, the social and technical aspects of the programme, their own roles and responsibilities, WASMO's work culture etc. Some of these trainings are conducted in-house, while few are also conducted through concerned institutions.

For personnel development and enhancement in managerial skills, WASMO also shares mutual partnership with the national level renowned organizations like Institute of Rural Management, Anand (IRMA), National Institute of Rural Development (NIRD), Hyderabad and Key Resource Centre, Nainital.

Following data shows WASMO's intense efforts towards the capacity building of the community and its own staff in **last four years**.

S. No	Name of Training	Number of Trainings	No. of Participants
1	Basic Training (Planning, Monitoring, Management)	14,877	1,97,011
2	Block Level Trainings	686	45,452
3	District Level Trainings	189	19,211
4	Workshops	1,037	82,862
5	Exposure Visit	589	13,829
6	PRI Level Member Training	1,650	27,385
7	Grassroot Workers	734	6,722
8	Individual (Staff)	89	2,225
	Total	19,851	3,94,967

It is very certain to state that the trust of community gained through effective capacity building and communication with mass, the model of community managed decentralized in-village water supply system has sustained so far and won many accolades from national and international level.

Being one of the first community managed programmes taken up by WASMO, capacity building of the users was accorded top-most priority. As the works had been progressed, WASMO has put more efforts on the capacity building and the same has given tremendous results in return. Continuous efforts for developing the community capacities and skills was the cornerstone of the programme and has been one of the contributory factors for the sustainability of the programme. In many villages, trained community members have leveraged on the skills developed through the work and opted for better livelihood opportunities. This in turn meant that WASMO has to carry out more trainings, but it also meant that more training people would be available to contribute towards the infrastructure development in general.