

NEED FOR CAPACITY BUILDING IN ROAD SECTOR

Road Transport is very important sector for any country. Transportation sector provides services to millions of users and plays an important role in the development of a successful society. As per present assessment in India, the road carries 65 percent of freight traffic and 80 percent of passenger traffic. The highway sector in our country is poised for fast development. In order to take up mega road projects in the country for faster development the government has shifted its role from provider to enabler and facilitator. This however, can be accomplished with corresponding growth and innovation in the field of organizational structure, processes and practices.

As per available indicators, there is a huge gap between target and achievement for construction and maintenance of roads. The overall Indian construction industry, of which the road construction industry is a subset, requires re-organization. There is an urgent need to build the capabilities and enhance the skills of the contractors, consultants and workers.

The scarcity of human resources is clearly visible in the road sector from the inadequacy of the personals, both in quality and in quantity, working on site. In order to meet large increase in the demand, the number of civil engineering graduates and diploma holders joining the highway engineering profession should be increased by at least 2-3 times. This can be achieved only by making the civil engineering profession more attractive and by substantial enhancement of the present level of market compensation at the entry

level. In addition, appropriate training arrangements are required to be made for increasing the number of Highway Engineers and other professionals. It is also essential to update the highway engineers regarding the technological developments happening world over. A focus on post-secondary education is another important way to leverage capacity-building resources. Partnerships with universities can help to train university researchers – who often work with directly with local agencies – as well as students who will become the next generation of local staff and consultants.

In recent years, the Government has made substantial efforts to tackle the shortcoming of road sector and to reform its transport institutions. Study of growth of highway sector in India since early twentieth century to present day, highlights the fact that Indian highways have evolved and grown with increasing complexities. These complexities are in the area of institutional management, in the field of technologies and their application, growing multiplicity of stakeholders and in the multiplicity of areas of professional expertise. Road Transport Capacity Building can be achieved by augmenting management capacity, equipment capacity, materials capacity, human resource capacity, technology capacity alongwith regulation and involvement all the stakeholders involved in road activities.

Capacity building is also currently one of the leading issues in the developing countries. Each region will have different needs depending upon the specific types of projects or programs being considered,

existing local knowledge, fiscal and institutional capacity and other factors. Capacity-building efforts focused on regions should begin with an assessment of the most critical local needs. Road transport related institutional capacity building refers to investment in people, institutions and practices that will enable developing countries and countries with economies in transition, to achieve their road transport development objectives.

The organisation development improves the ability of any country to make better use of its available resources. The World Bank started early initiative for road sector institutional reforms in developed and developing countries around 1990. Sweden has also supported various in-house road safety projects at national level with a focus on capacity development of key organisation.


The critical review of capability and capacity of different organisations and agencies in our country reveal the hard fact that the capacity building is urgently required. This can be achieved by re-structuring at the organisational level and enhancing professional capability and skills of individual working in the highway sector. It is, therefore, necessary that capabilities of human resources are enhanced, so that challenges ahead can be faced with full preparedness. It is to be realized that any organisation finally depends for its growth and sustenance on those who make up the organization. All the development partners –Concessionaries, Financial Institutions, Manufacturers of materials and equipment, contractors and consultants need to enhance their capacity to be able to undertake the planned road infrastructure projects.

There are a wide variety of ways in which capacity-building can be accomplished. It is impossible to

generalize as to which types of capacity-building activities are most needed or useful. General tools – such as calculation methods, checklists, decision support tools, and best practice case studies – that can be adapted to local situations are helpful. At the same time, these tools will be most effective when combined with hands-on, in-person assistance to train local practitioners in their use.

The need for human resources development is very essential and development of new institutional arrangements are often underestimated and also the importance of the social and cultural context. Human resource is the backbone of any organisation. Only through well trained, multi-skilled and highly motivated work force can an organisation exist and excel. Rapid technological innovations impacting the work place have made it essential for the employees to constantly update their knowledge and skills through training, exposure visits, interactions, experience sharing, etc. These activities form an integral part of any organisation, fosters motivation and productivity making the job challenging and interesting and also results in retention and career advancement of employee.

Capacity building in the road sector thus leaves a lot to be desired and it is now posing one of the formidable challenges to meet the needs of several ambitious programs announced by the Government. It is, therefore, imperative that the Central, State Governments and all other stakeholder attach high priority to the need for regular training at all and also building the capacity in their respective oragnisation.


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