

The Indian School of Business (ISB) with campuses at Mohali and Hyderabad Campus organised the National Roundtable on State-Level Government Performance Management on May 18, 2015 and announced the formation of the Learning Alliance of States (LAS).

No civilized society can function effectively without an effective government. All countries use government as a mechanism to provide services that benefit all citizens: police, judicial services, national defense, and municipal services. Government also serves as a means of making some of the most important collective decisions: nature of the health system, education system, water and sewage system, roads and highways system. Given this pervasive nature of government, its performance has a direct bearing on the welfare of citizens.

Enhanced government effectiveness not only affects the welfare of citizens in the short run but also in the long-run. In the increasingly globalized world, government effectiveness is the key determinant of a country's competitive advantage. Even within a country, experts agree that in the long run, race among States will be won or lost not on the basis of comparative advantage arising from resource endowment, but by the competitive advantage created by effective governments.

This State-level Roundtable on Government Performance Management is inspired by our belief that returns from improving effectiveness of the government are immense, especially at State level since this is where the action happens! Globally, State governments are under increasing pressure to provide results that matter to the public, often within severe resource constraints. At the same time, government officials and managers are challenged to overcome the public's lack of trust in government at all levels. Thus, this is the time for governmental leaders to ensure that the organizations they lead are taking responsibility for achieving results that matter to the public – by implementing effective Government Performance Management Systems. Thus, keeping this in view the formation of Learning Alliance of States was mooted at the National Roundtable primarily to bring together public policy experts and practitioners from around the globe, including educational institutes working in the area

Purpose

The main purpose for organizing the National Roundtable was to take stock of the State-level best practices in Government Performance Management, highlight some of the key challenges that the States are facing, try to generate solutions to the issues by knowledge and experience sharing, thus improve the State-level implementation of the GPM system. This initiative is also linked to Bharti Institute's vision towards formation of the Learning Alliance of States (LAS) that would bring the States together, on a common platform, designed exclusively for them to raise and address their concerns and issues. Through LAS, Bharti Institute aims to improve the efficiency of its member states through mutual support and the sharing of good practices. The inspiration for forming the network is seeded in the practices of many other countries like USA, UK, and Korea where technology is being used to break physical and geographical barriers, bringing local governments, experts, senior policy makers, etc. closer and encouraging knowledge and experience sharing among them.

About Learning Alliance of States (LAS)

The LAS will be set up in association with the Bharti Institute of Public Policy at the ISB's Mohali campus. Among other things it will focus on:

- Peer-to-peer exchange of best practices and techniques to devise solutions
- Develop a shared repertoire of public policy related resources among states
- Promote collaboration leading to enhanced government performance management in states
- Creation of communities of practices on areas of public policies relevant for states
- Undertake research on public policy issues identified by states

LAS will comprise a Leadership team, an Advisory Group and a Secretariat. Members will include the state nominated 'Knowledge Officers', public policy experts and practitioners from around the globe, leading educational institutes working in the area of public policy world-wide as its members.

Participation

The National Roundtable was attended by 20 senior government officials from 15 States active in implementing Government Performance Management and 45 participants consisting of former Secretaries to the Government of India, former Chief Secretaries of States, former chiefs of PSUs, and distinguished academics. In addition, Mr. Chencho Tshering, Head, Government Performance Management, Royal Government of Bhutan and Mr. Ali Ismail Manik, Permanent Secretary Finance, from Government of Maldives, participated in the Roundtable. The Roundtable was inaugurated by Dr. Bibek Debroy, Member, Niti Ayog and in his inaugural address, Dr. Debroy commented, "we not only need to pay attention to G to B, but also focus on G to G transactions." He went to emphasize the need for further devolution of power and the critical role of District magistrates can play in the development process." The proposed Learning Alliance of States will focus on these and other issues to help Niti Aayog achieve its new vision.

Making the announcement, Prof. Prajapati Trivedi, Senior Fellow (Governance), Bharti Institute & Adjunct Professor of Public Policy, ISB, said, "The Bharti Institute at ISB is proud to lead the initiative of Learning Alliance of States (LAS) which has been established to bring state and local governments, experts, senior policy makers, closer to encourage knowledge and experience sharing to improve policy making and in turn make a bigger impact on the lives of people with the same resources."

Mr. Pradeep Singh, Deputy Dean, said that ISB has the competitive and comparative advantage to create and nurture the Learning Alliance of States. He went to say that this is an idea whose time has come and such an Alliance will be in keeping with the Federal structure of our system of governance.”

Outstanding presentations highlighting the GPM practices in their respective States were made by Mr. Srikant Baldi, Principal Secretary, Government of Himachal Pradesh, Mr. G. Srinivas, Principal Secretary, Government of Odisha, and Mr. Prem Kirpal, Senior Joint Director, Government of Kerala. Ms. Rajwant Sandhu, Former Chief Secretary of Himachal Pradesh and Mr. Rajan Kashyap, Former Chief Secretary, Punjab shared their insights from a leadership perspective. The presentation on Bhutan clearly demonstrated the enormous progress Bhutan has made in implementing an effective Government Performance Management System.

Some of the best practices in GPM shared by the states were:

- Government of Himachal Pradesh has linked the performance agreements (called Results Framework Document) to the planning and budgeting system. They also attributed the success of implementing this system in their State to political buy-in by the ministers early on.
- Government of Kerala has been declaring the results based in the performance agreements (called Results Framework Document) for the past 2 years.
- Government of Punjab has taken the performance agreements (called Results Framework Document) to the district level. They have also modified the structure of the performance agreements a little but retained the main essence of it.

Outcome

The main outcome of the National Roundtable on State-Level Government Performance Management was the mooted Learning Alliance of States to bring state and local governments, experts, senior policy makers, closer to encourage knowledge and experience sharing to improve policy making and in turn make a bigger impact on the lives of people with the same resources. It was evident from the interactions that the States are way ahead in implementing the GPM system as compared to the Centre. Also, the National Roundtable gave the States an opportunity to share some of the best practices in the areas of GPM.