



Decentralization Community



Workshop on Local Governance & Decentralization Community Regional Forum Pune, 26-28 May 2009

Kerala Institute of Local Administration (KILA) is jointly with the Decentralization Community organizing a workshop on "Local Governance in India and the Way Forward" at *Yashwantarao Chavan Academy of Development Administration* (YASHADA), Pune, Maharashtra. We are happy to announce that the Decentralization Community Regional Forum will be hosted on the third day of this Workshop (**28 February 2009**).

The present Workshop is part of a series of four Regional Workshops being organized by KILA in Pune, Patna, Assam and Tamil Nadu (conducted in February 2009). The prime objective of this workshop is to share the experiences and status of decentralization in Kerala, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Goa, and Chhattisgarh and for gaining clarity on policy supportive actions required for strengthening decentralization and local governance. We are also arranging a field visit to Ralegaon Siddhi, Ahmednagar District on the second day.

On **28th May 2009** Regional Forum of the Decentralization Community will be held. The National Centre for Advocacy Studies will co-host the proceedings for this day. As the first step towards taking the *Community towards broader aspects of Governance and to mainstream issues of Access to Justice*, it is proposed to hold a panel discussion on "**Gram Nyayalay and Local Governance: Access to Justice.**"

Gram Nyayalayas Act, 2008 (Act No. 4 of 2009) provides for the establishment of Gram Nyayalayas at the grassroots level for the purposes of providing access to justice to the citizens at their doorsteps and to ensure that opportunities for securing justice not denied to any citizens by reason of social, economic or other matters connected therewith. The State Governments are authorized, after consultation with the concerned High Court, by notification to establish one or more Gram Nyayalayas for every Panchayat. Gram Nyayalaya will be presided over by a Nyayadhikari who is empowered to hold mobile courts and conduct proceedings in villages. Government of India has also earmarked funds for the capital expenditure.

Since this has wide ramification in the realm of access to justice and local governance, and since it is yet to be discussed and brought to the notice of the various stakeholders, the Decentralization Community is initiating this panel discussion. The panel will have speakers from the judiciary, government, civil society and academics. Justice Kolse Patil (Mumbai), Mr. Subhash Mendhapurkar and Mr. Gagan Sethi (Indian Institute of Para Legal Studies) have so far agreed to be the panelists.

The participants consist of practitioners of Local Governments, National/ State level policy makers, academicians, social activists and resource persons.

Interested members are requested to send an email for registration to se-decn@solutionexchange-un.net.in.