

Role of CMAs in monitoring of Social Schemes

Dr. S K Gupta

*M.Com(Gold Med), FCMA, FCS, Ph.D, Head Group Internal Audit
Spentex Industries Limited, New Delhi E-Mail : cbst.sk Gupta@gmail.com*

Perspective

Social welfare has emerged as a key concern in the current policy discourse in India. This is hardly surprising in the context of the development experience of the country where fast paced economic growth has not created enough employment opportunities to absorb the unemployed and expanding labor force. Social protection plays an important role in providing income support and services, redistribution of income and promoting inclusive growth in countries across the world.

The concept of Social welfare and security is related to the tenets of human dignity and social justice. It is the responsibility of the state to provide the required support through the provision of various social schemes to its citizens, particularly the weaker ones, so that they can lead a normal and reasonably respectable life even under given adverse societal circumstances.

Efforts have, of course, been made by the Government over the years since Independence in India to secure and ensure basic needs for the disadvantaged and under privileged sections of the ever increasing population of the country. These efforts include development plans with a special focus on sectors that could generate income for the poor, and a variety of specially targeted social schemes and welfare programs. However presently India is ranked at 135 out of 187 countries on the Human Development Index signifying that India is yet far away from achieving the cherished goal of providing a reasonably acceptable level of quality of life to its people.

Directive Principles of State Policy of the Constitution of India (contained in Part IV, Articles 36 to 50) guide the policies of various wings of the Government and act as an overriding philosophical basis. These require a national effort in education, childhood care, health,

unemployment and old age, and for minimizing inequalities in income and building an equitable social structure.

Indian Government announces Welfare Schemes for a cross section of the society from time to time. These schemes could be either Central, State specific or a joint collaboration between the Centre and the States. Social schemes launched by Central and various State Government leverage various instruments of income redistribution which include cash transfers, in-kind transfers, public works programs, tax and fiscal tools. Within these broad categories, Social policies and programs vary along multiple dimensions. If we consider cash transfers alone, these may be universal, targeted, categorical, conditional or contingency-based

In Indian federal structure of governance the responsibilities of various layers of government are clearly delineated. However, in the areas requiring national effort, the Centre intervenes catalytically to infuse greater dynamism. Government of India tries to do this through various Social welfare programs and policies in the areas that are identified as national priority like health, education, agriculture, skill development, employment, urban development, rural infrastructure etc. Several of these sectors fall in the sphere of activity of States.

The successful implementation of social sector schemes requires a great deal of commitment and administrative coordination. Moreover, a good deal of time and energy is currently spent in village and block level data collection, which is only useful if all the information is properly analyzed, presented in a format useful for a meaningful performance and cost benefit analysis, and this knowledge is disseminated to officials in time to allow for remedial action.

The working of different schemes reflects that proper monitoring of physical and financial performance on a periodical basis is the key for ensuring that the scheme delivers expected outcomes. Information regarding unit costs, service delivery costs, standards of service, supervision and co-ordination is woefully lacking in the present structure and system of monitoring of Social schemes.

A tendency on the part of the Government to introduce too many different schemes with marginal outlays has been noticed with the result that no appreciable impact was noticed at the ground level. The success of all social schemes ultimately depends upon sound political will, active participation of people, regular follow up and monitoring, and strict control and regulation.

States should have flexibility in the matter of implementation of schemes to enable them to achieve the objectives in a cost effective manner keeping in view the special conditions and circumstances of each State. There should be no mid-plan introduction of schemes. In other words, all the schemes to be implemented in a given Plan period should be included in the Five Year Plan. In exceptional cases, new schemes may be introduced to meet any emergent circumstances.

According to Mr. Vinod Rai Ex-Comptroller and Auditor General of India the various social schemes launched by the Government have done well at the grass roots and "more or less delivered the objectives for which these were created" but **"an over sighting mechanism of totally independent, apolitical and experienced people is a must for the success of such schemes when so much of public money is involved"**. He further said that the credentials of people at the top level implementing the scheme should be above board. "For oversight, we can have a people's body which is apolitical. We don't necessarily need to have NGOs (non-governmental organizations), but persons with some experience of having worked in such projects and who can give independent reports. These people should not have any allegiance to anybody. The MPs (members of Parliament), professors, retired bureaucrats, social workers can be involved. They should conduct surprise inspections."

Role of CMAs in monitoring of Social Schemes

Cost and Management Accountants possess expertise in performance evaluation, cost-benefit analysis, variance analysis, Management reporting, Social audit and benchmarking. The CMAs can play a very proactive role in monitoring and evaluation of various social schemes launched and implemented by the Central and State Governments through strategic and analytical interventions encompassing critical evaluation of inter-alia :

- funds allocation, disbursement and its linkage with the desired and targeted outcome
- whether funds were released by the Government as per planned schedule or not
- the mode and manner of release of funds allocated for various social schemes
- format and periodicity of records maintained at the grass root level for capturing the operation and implementation of social schemes
- Physical and Financial Budget Vs. Performance analysis
- The benefits accruing to the intended beneficiaries and the cost thereof
- Impact of the social scheme in terms of strengthening of the social fabric of the country
- The mechanism and formats of management reporting being currently followed and its effectiveness in appropriate monitoring of the social schemes
- The process by which the expenditure and performance variances are highlighted
- The process by which the leakages are identified and their recurrence is prevented
- The process by which the schemes are implemented at the grass root level with a view to assessing whether there is need for process restructuring for more effective implementation of the social schemes

Conclusion

It is necessary that the impact of the Social schemes and programs is appropriately assessed and evaluated from time to time so that these can be appropriately

modified wherever needed to make them more effective for implementation, otherwise phased out if their utility is rationally acceptable.

The professional evaluation of the whole gamut of aspects relating to the social schemes by CMA would enable identification of vulnerabilities and deficiencies in the process of roll out and implementation of various social schemes. The suggestions and recommendations of the CMA post evaluation would enable the Government to strengthen the monitoring and control process and improve effectiveness of delivery and utilization of funds allocated for social schemes. This will help in preventing sub optimal utilization of public funds and also lend credibility to the efforts of the Government to deliver the desired level of social support to the needy people of the country.

References

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- Hanlon, James; Barrientos, Amanda and Hulme, Peter, 2010, Just Give Money to the Poor: The Development Revolution from the Global South, Denver, Co: Kumarian Press.
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- Atkinson, A.B., Incomes and the Welfare State: Essays on Britain and Europe. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1995.



ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROGRAMS

Date	Place	Day	Time		NIRC- Upcoming Programmes	Speaker
			From	To	Topic	
14.10.2015	NIRC	Wednesday	4:00 Pm	7.00 Pm with Dinner	Total Cost Management by CMAs	Anwar hasan
17.10.2015	Jodhpur	Saturday	11.00 Am	4.00 Pm with Lunch	Total Cost Management by CMAs	
17.10.2015	Bareilly	Saturday	11.00 Am	4.00 Pm with Lunch	Cost Management by CMAs in Education & Health Care	CMA S.K.Bhatt, CMA Ravi Sahni
18.10.2015	Lucknow	Sunday	10.30 Am	1.30 Pm	Cost Auditing Standards & Cost Accounting Standards	CMA J.K. Budhiraja
			2.15 Pm	4.00 Pm with Lunch	Special Excise Audit Case Study	CMA Ravi Sahni
25.10.2015	Kanpur	Sunday	11.00 Am	4.00 Pm with Lunch	Cost Auditing Standards & Cost Accounting Standards, Important landmarks in Service Tax	CMA Manoj Kulshreshta, Other - Will be notified
1.11.2015	Kota/Jaipur	Sunday	11:00 Am	3:00 Pm with Lunch	Cost Management in Education & Health care Sector	Will Be notified
22.11.2015	Jammu	Sunday	11:00 Am	3:00 Pm with Lunch	GST & Internal Audit by CMAs	Will Be notified
18.12.2015 To 20.12.2015	Manesar	Saturday	12.00 Pm	4.00 Pm	Make in India- Role of CMAs- Residential Regional Conference with three technical sessions - With family - Cultural evening, water park...etc	CMA Pankaj Gupta, CMA J.K. Budhiraja, CMA S.K. Gupta etc.