

# **New Challenges in Capacity Building of Civil Servants in Public Administration in India**

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## **Abstract**

In India, National Training Policy was formed in 2012, replacing the old policy of 1996. This was needed two reasons, new areas of administration given in the reports of second administrative reforms commission setup in 2005 and changing environment in different spheres of governance and new challenges of administration being faced by the civil servants. The focus was to enhance competencies which encompass knowledge, skill and attitude/behaviour of civil servants for effective functioning. This was a very detailed exercise in which role of training institutions, states, ministries and departments were given in details. There was emphasis on work ethics and culture for inclusive development in the country. The new setup of Capacity Building Commission (CBC) in 2021 is for lifelong learning for all and with the mission to create optimal learning opportunities for each civil servant. Mission Karmayogi, a national programme for capacity building of civil servants is a unique digital portal providing opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skill online to perform better in their present role. The focus of CBC is to change the focus of training from rule based to role based training. In last few decades, many new areas have emerged as an important part of Public Administration. National development policies are focused on environmental management, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and sustainability.

Natural resource management for sustainable economic development or infrastructure development, sustainable agriculture, forestry, management of common property resources, culture and ethics are given priority in administration. Use of Science and Technology, GIS and remote sensing, e-governance, simulation and scientific modelling became essential and integral part of administration. Central and state training institutions are being equipped with new training modules on these subjects, state of the art infrastructure, and

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trained faculty to deliver adequate knowledge and skill of these subjects. There is need to develop new pedagogies and digital material for effective capacity building. International best practices and experiential learning are also important aspects of adult learning which are being used in induction and mid-career trainings by most of the training institutions in India.

## **Introduction**

In 2012, India implemented a significant reform in its civil service framework with the introduction of the National Training Policy, replacing the outdated policy of 1996. This reform was driven by a confluence of factors: the evolving landscape outlined in the reports of the Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC) established in 2005 and the dynamic challenges faced by civil servants in adapting to contemporary governance demands. The primary objective of the National Training Policy was to enhance the competencies of civil servants, focusing on knowledge, skills, and attitudes/behaviours essential for effective governance.

India's administrative framework has historically played a pivotal role in shaping the nation's development trajectory. The need for reform became apparent in the wake of recommendations put forth by the Second ARC, which highlighted the inadequacies of the existing administrative practices and the necessity for a more responsive and skilled civil service. Established under the chairmanship of Veerappa Moily, the ARC underscored the imperative for aligning administrative competencies with emerging challenges in governance, ranging from technological advancements to public service delivery enhancements.

The predecessor of the National Training Policy, formulated in 1996, laid the groundwork for training civil servants but was increasingly perceived as insufficient to address the complexities of modern governance. The 1996 policy primarily emphasized foundational training without fully integrating the evolving demands of governance, such as the rapid advancements in technology, changing public expectations, and the imperative for an accountable and transparent administration.

The decision to overhaul the training policy in 2012 stemmed from a recognition that civil servants needed to possess multifaceted competencies beyond traditional administrative skills. The dynamic nature of governance in India necessitated a paradigm shift towards competencies encompassing not only technical knowledge but also skills in leadership, decision-making, and emotional intelligence. This shift was vital to foster an administrative cadre capable of

navigating complexities and driving transformative change across various sectors of public administration.

The National Training Policy of 2012 articulated several key objectives to enhance civil servants' capabilities. Firstly, it sought to equip civil servants with contemporary knowledge relevant to their domains, ensuring they remained abreast of sector-specific developments and best practices. Secondly, the policy emphasised the development of practical skills essential for effective implementation, including project management, negotiation, and communication skills. Thirdly, and perhaps most crucially, it underscored the importance of fostering positive attitudes and behaviours among civil servants, promoting integrity, empathy, and responsiveness in their interactions with stakeholders and the public.

The implementation of the National Training Policy was structured to be comprehensive and inclusive, involving multiple stakeholders such as central and state administrative training institutes, specialised academies, and international partnerships for knowledge exchange. Training modules were designed to be adaptive and responsive to emerging challenges, leveraging case studies, simulations, and interactive sessions to enhance practical learning outcomes. Moreover, the policy encouraged continuous learning through refresher courses, workshops, and exposure visits, aimed at sustaining and reinforcing the competencies acquired through initial training.

Since its inception, the National Training Policy has undergone periodic evaluations to assess its efficacy in meeting the evolving needs of India's administrative apparatus. Evaluations have highlighted positive outcomes, including enhanced service delivery, improved policy formulation, and increased stakeholder satisfaction. However, challenges remain, particularly in ensuring uniform implementation across diverse administrative units and effectively integrating new learnings into everyday administrative practices.

Following the implementation of the National Training Policy in 2012, a concerted effort was made to enhance the role and efficacy of training institutions, states, ministries, and departments in fostering the professional development of civil servants. This comprehensive initiative aimed to address the diverse training needs across various administrative levels, ensuring alignment with sector-specific requirements and emerging challenges in governance.

The National Training Policy in its vision, training for all, recognises that the training for the frontline public personnel across all sectors was rarely imparted. It further added that rigorous efforts must be made to build capacities of the

frontline public personnel to make them more responsive and accountable to citizens needs with a special emphasis on the poor.<sup>2</sup>

Some of the barriers identified in the implementation of the stated vision which comprises-absence of training policy at national, state and local levels for lower level civil servants, lack of training infrastructure, lack of trainers, and training modules. However, the task of developing and implementing a robust model of training for all was not that much simple.<sup>3</sup>

The total numbers of personnel to be trained, keeping in view the heterogeneity of the jobs or activities they perform, make the designing and implementing of a suitable training programme for frontline service delivery personnel an extremely complex venture.

Moreover, in the complex and challenging environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the civil servants must perform efficiently and effectively for delivering goods and services to meet the needs of the citizens, who are more demanding and educated than ever before. For this, besides developing a science of work, the development and training of scientifically selected workers is essential.<sup>4</sup> Without proper training and development of civil servants, Ministry/Department/Agency Organisations mission and major goals cannot be achieved. To make civil servants effective in delivering goods and services, they should be imparted with a required set of knowledge, skills, behaviour, and attitude through a well-designed training programme. The main objective of the NTP was to develop a professional, impartial and efficient civil service that is responsible to the needs of the citizens as well as for ensuring that they possess requisite knowledge, skills and attitude to make them able to perform the functions they are entrusted with. The purpose of the training under NTP was to bring improvement in the actual performance of the civil servants at all levels through capacity building.

Training institutions, including the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), State Institutes of Public Administration and Rural Development (SIPARDs), and specialised academies for sectors such as finance, defence, and law enforcement, were tasked with developing customized training

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<sup>2</sup> National Training Policy, Training Division, DoPT, MoPPG & P, Govt. of India, 2012

<sup>3</sup> slam Mohammad, and Sengupta Sudipto, "*Massification of Training: A Significant Enabler in Reaching Public Services to the Poor*" in ARPN International Journal of Science and Technology, Vol.2, No. 10, Nov 2012, ISSN 2225-7217. (Link: [http://www.ejournalofscience.org/Download\\_Nov\\_pdf\\_6.php](http://www.ejournalofscience.org/Download_Nov_pdf_6.php)).

<sup>4</sup> Taylor, Fredrick Winslow, Principles and Methods of Scientific Management, New York, Harper Collins, 1911.

modules. These modules not only imparted essential technical knowledge but also focused on instilling ethical values and promoting a culture of inclusive development among civil servants.

States and union territories played a pivotal role in decentralizing training initiatives, tailoring programs to regional needs and facilitating knowledge exchange among administrative units. Ministries and departments collaborated closely with training institutions to integrate policy objectives into training curricula, ensuring that civil servants were equipped to address sector-specific challenges and contribute effectively to national development agendas.

### **Capacity Building Commission**

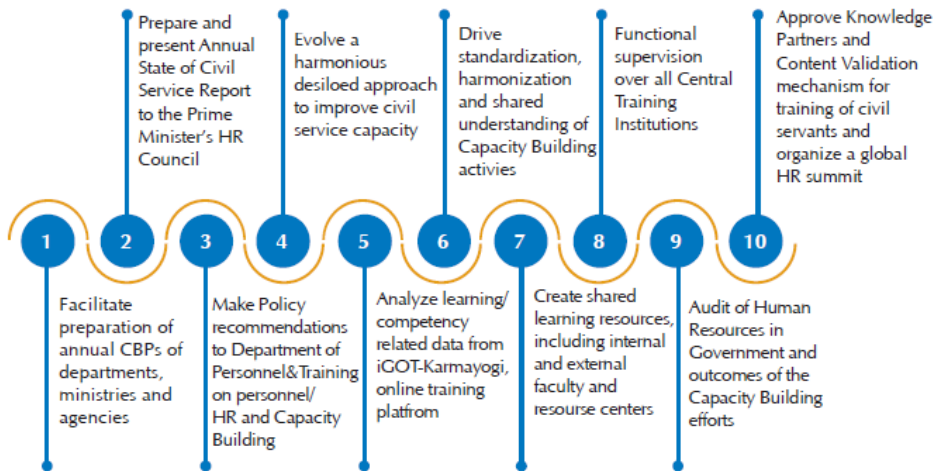
To oversee the planning and implementation of the NPCSCB, the Capacity Building Commission (CBC) was established in April 2021, as a landmark initiative aimed at revolutionising the training paradigm for civil servants. Endowed with the mandate to promote lifelong learning, CBC signifies a shift from traditional, rule-based training approaches to role-based learning frameworks. By emphasizing the alignment of training outcomes with professional roles and responsibilities, CBC seeks to enhance administrative efficiency, foster innovation, and promote inclusive governance practices.

The establishment of CBC reflects a strategic commitment to optimising learning opportunities for civil servants through targeted interventions, including the adoption of cutting-edge technologies and digital platforms. This initiative underscores India's proactive stance in embracing digital transformation to augment the skills and competencies of its administrative cadre.

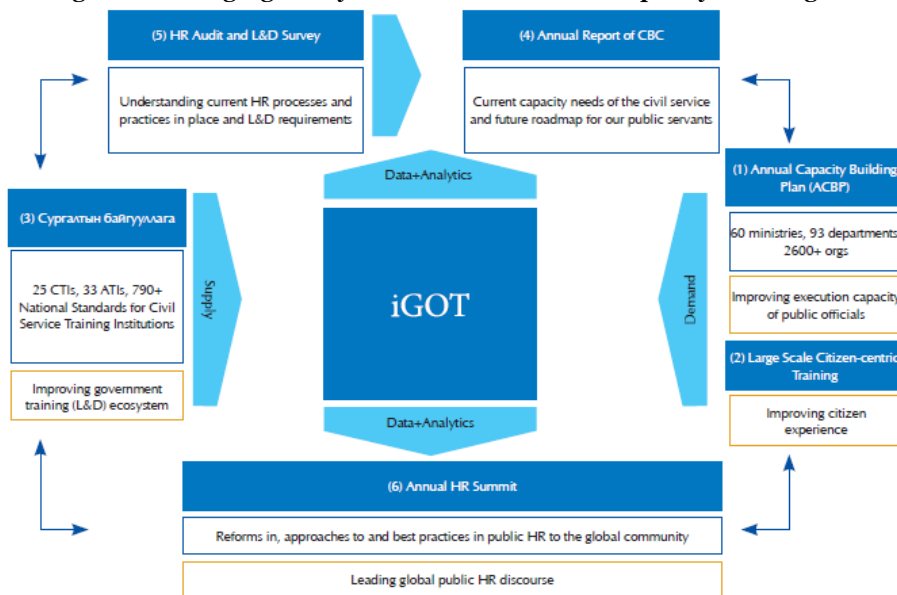
The Commission plays a pivotal role in leading Mission Karmayogi and designs its interventions through three lenses: first, aligning departmental goals with national priorities; second, ensuring citizen-centric service delivery; and third, enhancing the capacity of civil servants in emerging technologies.

The Commission is mandated to perform the following; functions:

**Figure 1. Functions of Capacity Building Commission**



**Figure 2. Emerging Ecosystem of Civil Services Capacity Building**



*The figure illustrates the Emerging Ecosystem of Civil Services Capacity Building as envisioned by the CBC. The demand for capacity building will be driven by the creation and implementation of ACBPs across all MDOs. These ACBPs will provide a detailed analysis of both individual and collective organizational needs for each MDO, based on which interventions will be designed, implemented, and monitored. Specific citizen-*

*centric behavioral training will aim to improve citizens' experiences when engaging with the State.*

*On the supply side, the focus will be on enhancing the government learning and development ecosystem. The CBC has developed the National Standards for Civil Services Training Institutes (NSCTI) as a benchmark to measure the existing capacity of government Training Institutes. Targeted interventions in areas such as faculty development, training needs assessment, and operations & governance will guide the transformation of these institutes into Centers of Excellence.*

*HR Audits and Learning & Development Surveys will help understand current HR processes and practices, as well as future L&D requirements. This understanding will inform recommendations for improvement, which will be documented in the Annual Report of the CBC.*

*Insights generated from analyzing data from the iGoT Karmayogi platform will also inform the CBC's Annual Report, HR Audits, and the global discourse on public sector HR and capacity building. India will lead this global discourse by organizing an annual HR Summit."*

### ***Annual Capacity Building Plan***

A key mandate of the Commission is to facilitate the creation of an Annual Capacity Building Plan (ACBP) for each MDO of the government. The CBC views capacity building as a marathon, not a sprint. Through the ACBP exercise, it aims to expand public sector capacity building beyond mere training. Thus, while the ACBP exercise identifies MDO-specific training interventions to enhance individual capacity, it also considers organisational interventions that can build the capacity of an MDO as a whole or be scaled up to strengthen capacity across the entire government.

The ACBP of an MDO is a document detailing all the interventions required to develop and enhance the competencies of individual officials within that MDO, as well as the collective capacity of the MDO. Given the nature of the required change, the ACBP may start with a few simple focus areas and gradually evolve into a comprehensive work plan. The creation of the ACBP will focus on identifying the demand for capacity through a Capacity Needs Analysis (CNA). The implementation phase will then focus on the supply side of the process.

**Table 1. Demand and supply side to ACBP**

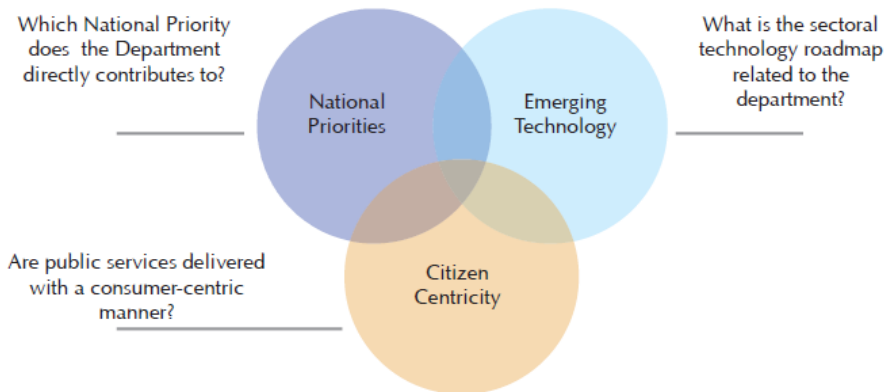
Demand	Supply
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visioning Exercise</li> <li>• Capacity Needs Analysis</li> <li>• Individual competency gaps</li> <li>• Organisational capacity needs</li> <li>• Consultations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training institutes associated with respective ministries</li> <li>• Other government training institutes</li> <li>• iGoT <i>Karmayogi</i> platform</li> <li>• Partner training institutes outside of India and foreign universities</li> <li>• MDOs implementing interventions that are pan government</li> <li>• Private sector organisations from and outside India</li> <li>• Central and State Public Sector Undertakings/ Enterprises</li> </ul>

The next section outlines the conceptual framework of ACBP. It is followed by detailed recommendations for the creation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation of the ACBP by a Ministry.

### ***A Conceptual Framework for Development of Annual Capacity Building Plan***

The Content of an ACBP will be based on the following two aspects:

- Three Lenses: Focus areas for capacity building exercise
- Three Pillars: Scope of capacity building exercise

**Figure 3. Three Lenses of Capacity Building**

The three lenses of ACBP are National Priorities, Emerging Technologies, and Citizen Centricity. Additionally, the three pillars of ACBP are individual, organisational, and institutional capacity building. Each of these elements is detailed in the section below:



### ***Three Lenses: Focus areas for capacity building exercise***

Capacity building is a goal-oriented exercise. Each Ministry is expected to establish its own capacity building goals. To support this process, the CBC has identified three key focus areas: contribution to National Priorities, ability to assess Emerging Technologies, and Citizen Centricity.

Three Pillars: Scope of Capacity Building Exercise Capacity is developed across three levels: individual, organisational, and institutional (as illustrated in the figure below). These levels are known as the three pillars of capacity building.

**Figure 4. Three Pillars of Capacity Building**



### **Mission Karmayogi**

Central to the CBCs mandate is *Mission Karmayogi*, a pioneering national program designed to revolutionise capacity building through a state-of-the-art digital platform. Launched as a comprehensive portal, *Mission Karmayogi* integrates advanced learning technologies to offer civil servants seamless access to a diverse array of training modules, resources, and interactive tools. This digital ecosystem enables civil servants to enhance their knowledge, skills, and competencies online, thereby empowering them to perform optimally in their respective roles.

The key innovation of *Mission Karmayogi* lies in its adaptive learning architecture, which tailors content based on individual learning preferences and professional requirements. This personalised approach not only enhances learning efficacy but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement and professional growth among civil servants. Moreover, the platform facilitates peer learning, collaboration, and knowledge sharing across administrative boundaries, promoting a cohesive and responsive administrative framework.

A fundamental tenet of the CBCs strategy is the transition from traditional, rule-based training paradigms to dynamic, role-based learning frameworks. Historically, civil service training in India has been characterized by rigid adherence to procedural guidelines and administrative protocols. However, the evolving complexities of governance necessitate a paradigm shift towards equipping civil servants with competencies aligned with their roles and responsibilities.

Role-based training emphasises the acquisition of multidimensional skills, including strategic thinking, leadership, decision-making, and stakeholder engagement. By contextualising learning objectives within the specific demands of professional roles, this approach empowers civil servants to navigate diverse challenges with agility and efficacy. Furthermore, role-based training cultivates a results-oriented mindset, encouraging civil servants to proactively innovate and adapt to dynamic governance landscapes.

Government officials are critical to the delivery of a range of public services and core governance related functions. Throughout their career, officials contribute to the process of policy formulation, implementation, monitoring, and analysis, thus driving all government work.

The unparalleled contribution of government officials to the proper functioning of government makes it essential that they be equipped with the right attitudes, skills, and knowledge aligned to the vision of a new India. *Mission Karmayogi* refocuses emphasis on India's civil service capacity building landscape, envisioning a citizen-centric and future-ready civil service including laying out a roadmap to achieve the desired results.

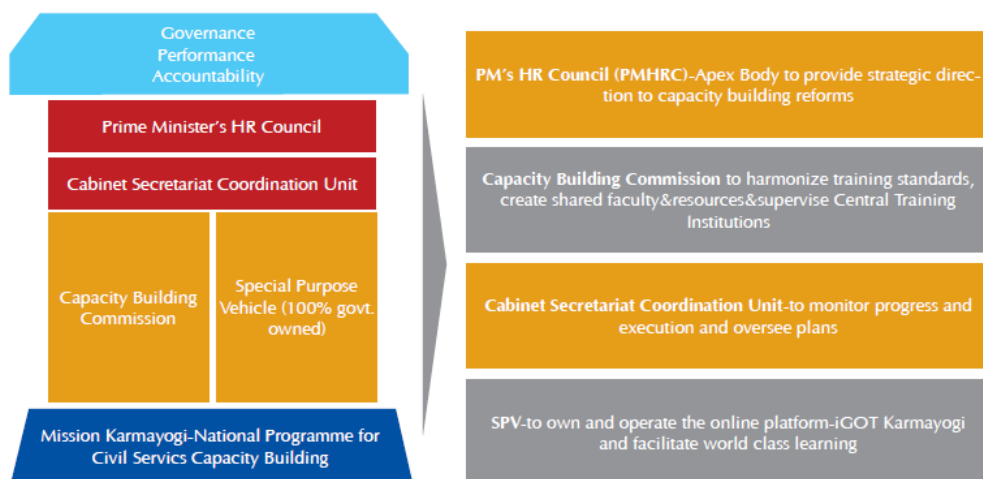
***India's current civil service capacity building landscape has following challenges:***

- 1. Siloed nature of government:** Government officials currently work in geographical, departmental, and sectoral silos instead of adhering to a larger unified vision aligned to national priorities.
- 2. Training based on seniority:** Current training interventions are generally based on factors such as the tenure of officials, their seniority, the availability of funding, the availability of courses, and so on. Thus, they are not targeted to the specific needs of positions, government priorities, the national vision, technological developments, future requirements, and so on.

3. **Unstructured training:** Existing training interventions are sporadic and unstructured. Thus, there is a lack of opportunities for continuous learning across various stages of an official's career.
4. **Restricted access to learning opportunities:** Currently training opportunities are available to only a limited number of officials based on factors such as seniority and grade.
5. **Sub-optimal learning ecosystem:** Officials do not have access to an ecosystem that emphasizes learning in a holistic manner as well as the one that is in sync with adult learning principles.
6. **Lack of future-readiness:** Officials do not have access to capacity building measures that equip them for the future.

In addition to augmenting the executive capacity of the State, *Mission Karmayogi* also aims to equip government officials for the future. The government of the future is expected to be, among other things, agile, data- driven, tech enabled and citizen- centric. Each of these collective attributes will enable governments to deliver on long-term national goals while being prepared to face unforeseen challenges.

Figure 5. Institutional structure of *Mission Karmayogi*



The following institutions have been created to operationalise the Mission:

1. PMs HR Council (PMHRC): Apex Body that provides strategic direction to the Mission

2. Cabinet Secretariat Coordination Unit: Monitors progress and oversees all capacity building interventions.
3. Capacity Building Commission (CBC): Key implementing agency of Mission Karmayogi, suggests policy interventions related to HR practices, puts forth recommendations on standardization of training and capacity building, supervises all central training institutions.
4. Special Purpose Vehicle: Owns and operates the online platform – iGoT Karmayogi - facilitating world class learning.

### ***Guiding Principles of Mission Karmayogi***

*Mission Karmayogi* is guided by certain core principles that are applicable to all capacity building interventions under the program. These include:

1. *Shift from rule to role-based capacity building:* *Mission Karmayogi* focuses on enhancing the attitudes, skills, and knowledge of government officials through role-based interventions. This means a shift from rule-based, supply-driven training to more role-based, demand-driven capacity building. As such, it is targeted to the individual officials needs, wants and aspirations and would be achieved through role-specific, just-in-time, lifelong training for government officials.
2. *Move to a competency-driven approach:* A competency-driven capacity-building approach focuses on developing competencies critical for public officials to effectively undertake various roles. In line with the National Training Policy of 2012, *Mission Karmayogi* introduces a competency framework for the capacity building of the civil services. This framework will govern training, capacity building, and Human Resource (HR) management, including promotions and postings of government officials. Competencies can be defined as a combination of Attitudes, Skills, and Knowledge (ASK) that enable an individual to successfully perform a task or activity in a given job.
3. *Democratize and enable continuous, lifelong learning opportunities:* Currently, the civil services capacity building eco-system does not provide a continuous learning environment for government officials. Additionally, such efforts cater mostly to a specific group of officials. Thus, *Mission Karmayogi* aims to change this situation by making opportunities available to all government officials, across hierarchies and geographies. This includes the opportunity to continuously build and strengthen the competencies required for fulfilling their respective roles. It will also provide equitable access to learning material across different levels of the

government thereby making world-class capacity building initiatives available to all sections of the civil service.

4. *Move beyond silos in the Government:* Mission Karmayogi aims to break silos across the various ministries/departments, to encourage collaborative effort in achieving shared national goals and priorities.
5. *Shift to the 70-20-10 model:* Mission Karmayogi proposes designing learning opportunities based on the 70-20-10 model of life-long learning. The 70-20-10 model is constructed on the following principle.
  - a. Experiential learning - 70 per cent of learning comes from on-the-job experiences and reflections
  - b. Relational learning - 20 per cent of learning is derived from working with others
  - c. Informational learning - 10 per cent of learning comes from formal instructor-led activities
6. *Link goal setting, planning and achievements:* Mission Karmayogi aims to align learning and capacity building with organisational goals and the career goals of individual officials. This would also include performance measurement.
7. *Establish unbiased systems of evaluation:* Under Mission Karmayogi, there will be objective, fair, and independent assessments to determine performance.
8. *Shift the mind set of public officials toward training and capacity building:* The goal is to shift the mindset of public officials from pursuing or delivering training due to compliance, to pursuing it due to a love for learning and teaching.

### ***iGoT-Karmayogi***

iGoT-Karmayogi is an online learning platform being developed under Mission Karmayogi for the capacity building of approximately 2 crore civil servants. The content can be curated by individual government ministries, either in-house or through knowledge partners. Training modules will feature carefully crafted and vetted content from top-tier government and non-government institutions, universities, private content providers, and individual resources.

## **New Approaches in Public Administration**

The evolution of public administration in India, particularly focusing on emerging areas, technological integration, and the evolution of training methodologies, we delve deeper into the incorporation of new subjects and practices within the administrative framework.

### ***Emerging Areas in Public Administration***

Over the past few decades, Indias public administration landscape has witnessed a significant evolution, marked by the emergence of diverse and critical areas essential for national development. This evolution reflects a proactive response to global trends and local imperatives, encompassing policies centred on environmental management, disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation, and sustainability. These priorities underscore Indias commitment to balancing economic growth with ecological integrity and societal well-being.

Environmental management has assumed paramount importance in policy formulation, aiming to safeguard natural resources and mitigate environmental degradation. Policies addressing sustainable agriculture, forestry, and the management of common property resources are integral to fostering ecological resilience and promoting inclusive growth. Furthermore, initiatives promoting cultural preservation and ethical governance underscore Indias commitment to preserving its rich cultural heritage while ensuring equitable and transparent administrative practices.

### ***New Approaches Integration of Science, Technology, and Digital Governance***

The integration of science, technology, and digital governance has revolutionised Indias administrative landscape, enhancing efficiency, transparency, and citizen engagement. Technologies such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and remote sensing have facilitated spatial data analysis and informed decision-making in areas ranging from urban planning to disaster management. E-governance initiatives have streamlined service delivery, enabling seamless interaction between citizens and government entities.

Scientific modeling and simulation have emerged as indispensable tools in policy formulation and implementation, enabling predictive analysis and scenario planning to address complex socio-economic challenges. The adoption of advanced technologies has empowered civil servants to leverage data-driven insights and innovative solutions, thereby optimising resource allocation and enhancing administrative effectiveness.

### ***Enhancement of Training Infrastructure and Methodologies***

Recognising the evolving demands of public administration, central and state training institutions have undergone significant transformation to incorporate new training modules and state-of-the-art infrastructure. These institutions have augmented their capabilities to impart specialised knowledge and skills in emerging areas such as environmental sustainability, disaster management, and digital governance. Trained faculty members equipped with domain expertise play a pivotal role in delivering cutting-edge training programs tailored to meet sector-specific challenges. The development of new pedagogies and digital learning materials has revolutionised capacity building, catering to diverse learning styles and preferences among civil servants. Interactive and experiential learning approaches have gained prominence, facilitating hands-on training and knowledge application in real-world scenarios. International best practices and cross-border collaborations have enriched induction and mid-career training programs, enabling civil servants to glean insights from global experiences and adapt innovative practices to local contexts.

### ***Case Studies and Experiential Learning in Adult Education***

The adoption of case studies and experiential learning methodologies in adult education underscores India's commitment to enhancing learning outcomes and professional competencies among civil servants. Case studies offer practical insights into complex administrative challenges, encouraging critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Experiential learning initiatives provide opportunities for civil servants to engage in immersive learning experiences, fostering a deeper understanding of policy dynamics and governance principles. Moreover, international collaborations in adult education have facilitated knowledge exchange and capacity enhancement, enabling civil servants to benchmark against global standards and adopt best practices. These collaborations not only enrich training programs but also promote cultural diversity and mutual understanding among administrative professionals.

## **Conclusion**

The evolution of India's National Training Policy, from its 1996 version to the comprehensive 2012 policy, marks a significant milestone in enhancing civil service competencies. This reform, driven by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission's recommendations and the changing governance landscape, emphasizes the need for civil servants to blend knowledge, skills, and appropriate attitudes. This holistic approach not only addresses immediate administrative

requirements but also fosters a culture of continuous learning and ethical governance.

Key initiatives, such as the establishment of the Capacity Building Commission (CBC) in 2021 and the launch of *Mission Karmayogi*, have institutionalised lifelong learning for civil servants. By shifting from rule-based to role-based training, these initiatives enhance the effectiveness and responsiveness of civil services. The integration of digital platforms democratizes access to training, ensuring civil servants remain equipped to tackle contemporary challenges.

Efforts by the Department of Personnel and Training (DoPT) to improve public service delivery through scalable, cost-effective, and transferable training models are commendable. These models, developed for frontline service delivery personnel, are designed to be adaptable across the country. Decentralising training efforts brings these opportunities closer to public personnel, *Panchayati Raj* Institution (PRIs) leaders, and user groups, significantly enhancing public service delivery systems. Encouraging field reports from externally funded training projects and Intensive Training Programs (ITPs) further support these initiatives' success.

As public administration expands to include critical areas like environmental management, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development, training institutions are adapting by incorporating modern technologies such as GIS, remote sensing, and e-governance into their curricula. The emphasis on international best practices and experiential learning enriches training programs, making them more relevant and impactful.

In conclusion, the ongoing efforts to refine and enhance civil servant training in India are crucial for ensuring a competent and ethical administrative framework. By prioritising continuous capacity building, adopting innovative pedagogies, and leveraging technology, India is poised to develop a civil service that is efficient, effective, and adaptable to the evolving needs of governance and development.

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