

WEST CHAMPARAN, DISTRICT LEVEL WORKSHOP

ON

INFORMATION, ENTITLEMENT & EMPOWERMENT

Nov 23th, 2015

VENUE:
RIDHI SIDHI HOTEL, BETTIAH,
WEST CHAMPARAN, BIHAR

Supported by



European Union

Co-organised by



Organised by



अन्वोदय लोक कार्यक्रम (आलोक)
Antyodaya Lok Karyakram (Alok)

ABOUT THE SEMINAR

Information is a tool that can help to eradicate the poverty and backwardness and improve the living conditions of women, schedule castes and tribes, minorities and other marginalised groups. Absence of appropriate mechanisms and limited resources at government level to disseminate important citizen related information has proved hurdle to access the information and derive benefits from public schemes in time. However, this situation can be improved through creating a systematic approach to deliver public schemes information to citizens and communities using both traditional and new methods supported by Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools and platforms. Further, this can be improved through capacity building of the stakeholders in a systematic manner over a period of time. These capacity building initiatives will also play a key role in promoting accountable and responsive panchayats and other government bodies to provision timely and relevant service delivery.

All relevant stakeholders including the local administration, the government agencies and departments, the NGOs and civil society organisations and other partners should step ahead and come forward to work in close coordination for improving accessibility of information about public schemes and successfully delivering their benefits to those who are most deserving. The bigger advantage of timely delivery and access of information services helps to stabilise our societies and communities and helps to address their various social, economic and educational needs. In the longer run, this promotes and strengthens our democracy through active citizen and communication participation and engagement.

WHY THE SEMINAR

The main goal of seminar is to build deep conceptual understanding of the public schemes, programme and process to avail the information or benefit. Stakeholder would get to know how the benefit can be reached to the last mile beneficiaries who are lagging behind in availing their rights which are actually meant for them. It would create opportunities to explore areas which are relevant for information dissemination and citizen entitlements, also share ideas in a way that will advance the thinking and actions of stakeholders in order to strengthen and develop capacities of local agencies to deliver services better.

OBJECTIVE

- To take stock, review the existing status of public schemes information dissemination in the district
- To understand and review the issues and challenges in citizen and community entitlements from public welfare schemes and programmes
- To understand and take stock of methods, ways and means to deliver public schemes information and provide final entitlements to citizens and communities.
- To explore new methods, ways and means to deliver public schemes information and provide entitlements through example sharing and exchange.
- To understand the status and scope for working together between the local administration, government agencies, NGOs and civil societies to improve the information dissemination environment.

OUTCOMES

- To have a better understanding of the public schemes information dissemination environment in the district
- To have a better understanding of the limitations of information dissemination and lack of citizen entitlements
- To map the existing methods and means to deliver information and entitlements
- To explore new ways and means to improve the delivery and access of information and entitlements in time
- To explore models of partnership and collaboration between the local administration, departments and agencies and the NGO and civil society organisation and other partners
- To work towards a better information democracy in the district and make the district a foremost district in best information dissemination and citizen entitlements in India



Participating NGOs displaying their product

GUEST PARTICIPANTS

The guests who shared the space with the participants are:

1. Shri. Madan Mohan Tiwari, MLA Bettiah, West Champaran.
2. Shri. Satyendra, District General Manager, Department of Industry.
3. Shri. Nagina Parasad Sinha , Ombudsman MGNREGA, Bettiah, West Champaran
4. Bharat jee Ram, District Employment Exchange, Bettiah
5. Dr Birendra Kumar, District Planning Coordinator, DHS West Champaran

SUMMARY

ALOK, a local non-profit organisation and Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF) collectively organised a district level workshop on 23rd November 2015 at Ridhi Sidhi Hotel in West Champaran, Bihar. Participants varied from elected members of gram panchayat, district/block officials, social activists, local influential NGOs, CBOs, self-help group workers etc., primary health centre officials, bank officials and beneficiaries.

The programme was inaugurated by Shri. Rameshwar Prasad, ALOK (local organising partner of workshop). He briefed about the objective of the workshop followed by introduction of the chief guests and informed the participants about the functioning of his organisation.

After the inaugural address, Dr. Syed Kazi, Deputy Director of DEF, briefly described about the work profile of Digital Empowerment Foundation and elaborated the objective of Soochna Seva programme.

Shri. Nagina, appointed as Lokpal for MNREGA, in his address stressed on the fact that in order to avail proper benefits, a citizen must follow the mandates properly so that a balance can be achieved. Like, an individual must deposit his amount in time for insurance related schemes so that they get the appropriate benefits later on.

Shri. Saratchandar, Officer in charge of Industrial Promotions explained about Pradhan Mantri Rozgar Yojana and urged people to generate jobs for others rather than search for jobs.

Since the main goal of the workshop was to build deep conceptual understanding of the public schemes, programme and process to avail the information and benefit, all the stakeholders has been solicited to share possible challenges in getting the benefit of any scheme/entitlement in groups. The group has been divided in such a way that each groups had one or two representatives from various department. For an instance, each group includes a member of ANM, ASHA, AWW, Local NGO, Kisan Mitra, SHG, famer, Soochna Sevak, Beneficiaries etc.

Time-slot of 30 minutes was provided to each group to discuss broadly on six thematic areas such as education, employment, financial inclusion, social security, and livelihood. After the discussions were over, one member of the group came forward and shared the inputs discussed.

WORKSHOP SESSIONS

GROUP SESSION I:

Public Schemes Information Dissemination, Entitlement Status in Guna District

Focal points for discussion:

- Status of public schemes available at district level for citizens & community benefit
- Status of Means & methods to information dissemination and delivery of entitlements
- Community engagement for information access and entitlement benefits including public grievance system
- Challenges in information dissemination & delivery of actual entitlements to the needy population
- Why there is urgency to disseminate public schemes information to the needy communities and deliver entitlement benefits?



Outputs of discussion:

Education

- Lack of education due to poverty
- Big difference in national level and state level curriculum
- Lack of information leads to poor quality education
- Financial issues of parents overshadow the importance of education
- Lack of good-teacher training programs hinders the growth of education level of students
- Lack of awareness among community and parents leads to unimportance towards education

Health

- Irregularities by ASHA, Anganwadi and ANM workers.
- No provisions of PHC during emergency in remote areas.
- Sub health centre is not active
- PHC is located far from village
- No lady doctor in PHC
- Non availability of medicine
- Non availability of doctors
- Ill treatment at PHC
- Lack of information outreach

Financial Inclusion

- Lack of communication material that would promote the scheme information
- Lack of single windows service.
- Procedure of availing the scheme is complicated
- Officials do not work properly and do not have a responsible behaviour
- Remote areas are not covered
- Lack of monitoring and transparency by government

Social Security

- Lack of transparency
- Anganwadis are not sensitive towards their work
- The process of availing the scheme takes a lot of time.
- Irregularities are maintained in the application process.

Employment and Livelihood

- Deficiency of information at the concerned department
- Lack of sensitivity among the officials
- The officials demand for bribery in order to carry out the work forward.
- Non-governmental organisations have certain limitations due to which they cannot operate for long time
- Lack of information centre
- No focus on agriculture
- No focus on small scale cottage industry

GROUP SESSION II:

Strengthening Public Schemes Information Dissemination, Entitlement Benefits in West Champaran District

Focal points for discussion:

- Innovative ways and means to improve last mile delivery and access of public schemes information and entitlement benefits for citizens
- Role of Information Communication Technology (ICT) or digital applications to improve delivery and access of public schemes information dissemination and citizen entitlements
- Whether and how Soochna Seva programme can improve delivery and access of public schemes information and citizen entitlements in Guna district?



Discussion in process

Outputs of discussion:

Education

- Raise awareness among parents and community for education.
- Encourage people's participation and take help of local leaders to improve education level
- By providing incentives like meals, text-books, etc. one can improve level of education.

Health

- Maintain register for the visits made by ASHA worker.
- Information outreach to be increased about Anganwadi
- There should be proper monitoring of ANM workers.
- Vaccination programme need attention and its information should be provided to large number of people
- Availability of Ambulance in village should be taken care as an urgent basis
- Recruit employees for the proper functioning of PHC and Sub-Centre
- Require more number of sub centre and PHC at remote villages
- Appointment of lady doctor in PHCs
- Availability of medicine at PHC should be taken on priority basis.

Financial Inclusion

- Information outreach should be increased
- Application process should be simplified
- Transparency should be maintained at all level.
- Training of the government officials to increase the awareness
- Need to open more single windows
- There should be constant monitoring to check the status of beneficiaries
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Social Security

- Government official should be sensitive about the issues of people and avoid their irresponsible behaviour.
- Need to spread more information on social security.
- Time taken for the processing of application should be cut short
- Validate the voter list so that more number of people can be covered under the scheme.

Employment and Livelihood

- Need to promote cottage industry
- More incentives should be provided for agricultural sector
- Need to increase the technical gadgets to spread information
- Collaboration between govt. and NGO
- Creation of new and innovative market places.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES:

Various NGOs participated in the event and displayed their products.



Participating NGO displaying their products



Participating NGO Aadhar Sanstha displaying their products

MEDIA RELEASE:

05 गुजफरपुर • मंगलवार • 24 नवम्बर 2015 हिन्दुस्तान आज का दिन 1986 में तामिल

भ्रष्टाचार उन्मूलन को ले सूचना के अधिकार को कारगर बनाने पर सेमिनार

'सूचना का अधिकार हो सशक्त'

भ्रष्टाचार का विरोध

बेतिया | बेतिया प्रतिनिधि

सूचना के अधिकार सेवा को और सशक्त बनाया जाएगा। समाज के अंतिम व्यक्ति को सूचना उपलब्ध करायी जाएगी। रकारी योजनाओं के लाभ की टिलताओं को दूर करने का प्रयास या जाएगा।

उक्त बातें बेतिया विधायक मदन न तिवारी ने कहीं। वे सोमवार को जटल इम्प्यारमेंट फाउंडेशन व पियन यूनियन के प्रयास से आलोक या द्वारा सूचना के अधिकार व क्तीकरण पर आयोजित कार्यशाला में उद्घाटन करते विधायक मदन मोहन तिवारी व अन्य

तक पहुंचाता है। यह प्रशासनिक बचे व लक्षित परिवारों के मध्य एक कड़ी का कार्य करेगा। हमें नकारात्मक सूचना से बचना चाहिए।

सूचना के अधिकार का प्रयोग इमानदारी पूर्वक हो इसका पहल होनी चाहिए। वेयर फड कॉलेज राजस्थान के

सूचना के अधिकार की ताकत और उसके नफे मुकसान पर गंभीरता से प्रकाश डाला। संचालनकर्ता आलोक संस्था के समन्वयक रामेश्वर प्रसाद ने कहा कि समाज के वंचित समुदायों में सूचना की जागरूकता का अभाव

पहल

- सरकारी योजनाओं की जटिलताओं को बनाया जाए सुलभ
- सूचना का अधिकार भ्रष्टाचार उन्मूलन में सहायक
- सूचना सेवा के माध्यम से गरीबों को मिलेगी योजनाओं की जानकारी

अंतर को कम करने के लिए ही सूचना सेवा योजना बनाई गई है। जिसे विभिन्न साधनों से क्रियान्वित किया जाएगा। इसका मुख्य लक्ष्य जिला स्तर पर सार्वजनिक सूचनाओं को पहुंचाना व पसार पणाली को सहद बनाना

Inaugral lamp lit by guest

SOCIAL MEDIA

Soochna Seva
Published by Vahid Choudhary [?] · 23 November 2015 ·

This group has discussed the issues in details on financial inclusion related schemes/services and they are presenting the points with some examples.



280 people reached Boost Post

4 Likes 1 Share

Like Comment Share

Facebook Post



SoochnaSeva @SoochnaSeva · 22 Nov 2015

Group Discussions on financial inclusion,education,livelihood,health and social security at district level workshop.



🔙 1 ❤️ ⋮

Twitter



SoochnaSeva @SoochnaSeva · 22 Nov 2015

Dr. Syed Kazi,described the concept & work of @soochnaseva and #DEF in district level workshop #Bihar #WestChamparan



🔙 1 ❤️ 1 ⋮

Twitter

WORKSHOP PHOTOGRAPHS



Guests of honour



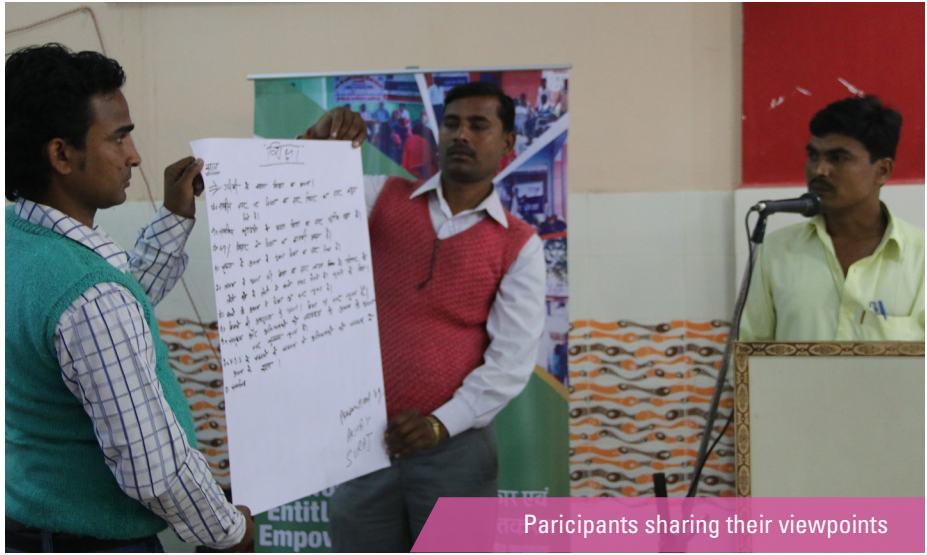
Guests of honour sharing their viewpoints



Guests of honour



Group discussion in process



Participants sharing their viewpoints

CONCLUSION

The main aim of this report is to provide essence of the workshop that took place at West Champaran district. It was organised to give space for exploring the areas which are relevant for information dissemination and citizen entitlements; also, share ideas that would develop the capacities of local agencies, in order to deliver citizen services better. A different approach was utilised in order to build a conceptual understanding about public schemes, programmes and process to avail information or benefit. The workshop gave platform for various stakeholders to interact, engage and debate under one roof about the challenges faced by citizens and communities, methods to deliver information about public schemes and working status of local bodies such as government agencies, NGOs and civil societies, towards improvement of the information dissemination environment.

The efforts were fruitful as the participants unravelled the grave issues that were hidden under the rubble of ignorance and suppression. Limitations of information dissemination and lack of citizen entitlement were broadly discussed. There were recommendations about redefining the delivery and access of relevant information so that it could effectively reach the last mile beneficiary.

Shortcomings of the government delivery framework were identified and recommendations were made to improve partnership and collaborations between government agencies, NGOs and civil societies so that they acknowledge information dissemination as their collective responsibility.



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