

## 1. Soochana Kendras establishing the relevance for the poor.

At Gram Panchayat Khachrod Public assistance and information Centre known as *Soochana kendra* has been opened since the past six months covering five Panchayats. This is 67 kilometers away from Sehore district headquarter where communities face problem in commutation. At Panchayat level a person has been identified named *Soochna mitra* as information friend.

At Bapcha panchayat of the same district Soochna Mitra- Santosh kumar provides information and guides any needy person without any social prejudices. He is only high school pass but is intensively and regularly in contact with the community. The Soochana Mitra facilitates receiving of information by the community either provided directly by him or community people reaching information Centre for getting a solution to their problem.

At panchayat level the *Soochana Mitra* met Rozgar Sahayak so the names of children Arun aged one year and Ayush aged three year could be added in Samagra Portal .This would facilitate availability of food grains for these children. Currently 5 kgs additional food grain(wheat) is being received by this family through the Public distribution system.In future it would also facilitate availability of various government schemes meant for scheduled caste community and education scholarships meant for these children.

Bhuri bai aged fifty years who is a Scheduled tribe and Mamta bai aged thirty two from scheduled caste were linked with Widow Pension due to lack of document viz missing death certificate of their respective husband. Samarthan organization team member facilitated the process of preparation of death certificate and an application was presented in front of the Secretary of the Panchayat and it was prepared.



Similarly Aditya a five year old boy who is differently abled has started getting his Disability Pension of rupees five hundred per month. The Samarthan team members facilitated the process of getting a certificate from officials stating the correct disability percentage otherwise earlier it was stated less hindering the availability of disability pension.

Now people approach the *Soochna Mitra* directly for getting information rather than wandering here and there in dismay. This process is facilitating free flow of information and acting as an catalyst in the confidence building of the community as well.

Such is a case of Astha development block of district Sehore of MadhyaPradesh,where the community is striving hard daily to earn their livelihood. Government schemes are meant for all individuals but it doesn't reach equally to all communities specifically the marginalized and deprived communities due to lack of information. It's like the difference between defacto and dejure rights. The social realities act as an impediment in accessing these rights.

This process has been initiated four months back only in states of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh in four places-Sehore and Panna in MP, Kanker and Rajnangaon in Chhattisgarh. Ten villages of each of the four districts based on its dialogue with the community and various problem faced by them. Around 40 Panchayats of Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh are being benefitted from this process.

This initiative was done seeing the social realities where Online information made available by the government through website and MP Online kiosks has its limited outcome. Sadly these initiatives by the government has not changed totally the situation of the rural area at the Panchayat level.

This is attributed due to various reasons such as nonworking of internet due to power shortage specifically at district places. Online shops charging arbitrary rates and there is no certainty that on the work would be done due to various reasons. Websites of government donot have adequate information such as there is updated material in English and not in Hindi. Information culling out through website sometimes being a tedious process due to the information not being placed in proper section, font problem etc. All pertinent schemes and desired documents are not available online. If we talk about the loksewa guarantee offices as well, travelling to these offices are also a constraint as they are situated at district or block level only.

*Soochana kendras* have met the information gap of the poor needy and deprived communities specifically scheduled caste and scheduled tribe community people as they are being linked to various social security schemes.*Soochna mitras* are providing a handholding support to the community in access of information at various levels and preparing the community to fight for their rights. They are easily available and have a good rapport with the community as well.

Story of change written by Manohar(sehore team member) –Translated and edited by Sudeepa

## **2. Preparation of Aadhaar card ensured availability of various entitlements to a tribal family.**

62 years old Hemrai Meshrams's of pension was reinstated with the preparation of ration card. Due to the lack of ration card pension was stopped, he had gone to village and Janpad panchayat for preparation of ration card but no support was received. He is a resident of village aamgaon block kechuria of rajnandgaon district of Chhattisgarh hailing from a tribal community. Finally he was helped by his own village *Soochana mitra* kumari dhaleshwari of Kumarda information kiosk Centre.

She informed that the aadhaar card would be prepared in the Kumarda kiosk easily. This information was provided in front of *Rozgaar Sahayak*. On 29<sup>th</sup> June 2016 both Hemrai and his



daughter inlaw Budhi mitra meshram reached kiosk to do work related to preparation of aadhaar card his wife's aadhaar card related editing was

done.

After one month of doing the Aadhaar application the card was received and by getting the aadhaar card no this information was provided in the panchayat office and his bank account was linked to aadhaar card at the panchayat office itself.

Due to lack of aadhaar card Budhi mitra meshrams's job card and ration card was not being prepared online. With getting edit of ration card done availability of ration was ensured and jobcard was prepared so that job could be availed in MGNREGS. Currently Hemrai is getting Rs.350 per month as a old age pension in a smooth manner.

Story of change prepared by Mr.Rajesh Sahu –team member Rajnandgaon chhatisgarh translated in English by Sudeepa

### 3. Employment scheme(MNREGA) accessed by a tribal Madhoram –Documents availed by Soochana Kendra

Madhoram is a scheduled tribe from village HalamKodo of Rajnandgaon district (Chhattisgarh). He visited Gram Panchayat to avail the benefits of getting a job in his village itself under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee act as he is a Below Poverty Line card holder and such beneficiaries are given priority in accessing the benefits of the scheme. There are 9 members in his family and the main occupational source is labour.

He was told that he will require to produce Bhu-Naksha to apply for cattle-shed yojna(MGNREGA). To get the Naksha Madhoram had to visit tehsil office which is at the distance of 22 km from his place and it was not possible to get the Naksha on the particular date itself as Panchayat had informed him that he will have to submit the documents immediately.

During the process, Soochna Mitra of the village guided Madhoram that he can get the Bhu-Naksha Online in hand from information centre at Chilhati which is only 3 km away only. As per guided by the Soochna Mitra, Madhoram visited information centre on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2016 and was able to get his Bhu-Naksha with no difficulty. After receiving Bhu-Naksha, Madhoram submitted the documents and Naksha in gram Panchayat. Presently, the process is under its way as the application has been submitted in Janpad Panchayat office for further consideration.

Case study originally Written in Hindi by Mr.Rajesh Sahu –Rajnandgaon Chhatisgarh. Translated and developed by Sudeepa

### 4. Soochana Kendra facilitating government scheme to a Widow

34 years old Mamta, a resident of Bapcha village in Sehore district, Madhya Pradesh was shocked when her husband, the only breadwinner in the family died after a brief illness. The family had incurred huge expenditure in the treatment and was wrecked not only emotionally but

also financially. Santosh, the Soochna Mitra met Mamta in one of the Mohalla meetings when Mamta narrated her unfortunate tale to him.

Santosh promptly suggested that she qualifies for the 'Family benefit scheme' and she should try to access the scheme. The scheme supports the poor BPL households where the sole breadwinner dies suddenly. The family gets one time grant of Rs. 25000 under the scheme. It is important to have BPL no. ( Below Poverty Line) and death certificate of the 'dead' to apply for the scheme.

Information volunteer informed Mamta that she should first apply for a death certificate of her husband from the Panchayat, as Panchayats are authorised to make birth/Death Certificate, and then apply for 'Family benefit scheme. The Panchayat promptly made the Death certificate of Mamta's husband. Mamta also needed a Bank account to apply for the scheme as the benefit is transferred directly in the bank accounts. The opening of bank account needed 'Aadhar card'. The Kiosks helped her to first apply for Adhar and then make an on-line application for a bank account.

Once Mamta had an Adhar card she applied for online bank account and soon had one. Mamta was again facilitated by the information volunteer to make on-line application for 'family benefit scheme'. The on-line registration of the scheme was facilitated by the Information-kiosks as well as information volunteer of the village. The application was forwarded to the Block office by the kiosk manager. A little follow up was undertaken at the block level.

Though it took three months in following up, the Family was sanctioned the benefits under the scheme. A much needed support of Rs. 25000 has been transferred to families account under the scheme only yesterday.

Story of change written in Hindi by Manohar-Sehore team member translated and developed by Shrdha Kumar in English

### **5. Information Kiosk of Jamunahia of Panna district as a blessing for Rahuniya Panchayat members of Panna district Madhya Pradesh**

Rahuniya Panchayat that comes under Jamunhai centre is one example where since last 3 years Gram Sabhas have not taken place in an appropriate manner. Also, the Panchayat Office remains closed for more than 4 days in a week. Due to the Kiosk centre in Jamunhai which is around 6-7 kms from Rahuniya, it is easy for people to access the services related to the social security schemes. The centre has also led to awareness among people about the online services like opening the accounts, e-adhaar card, pension related queries that can be solved through Samagra Portal and a lot more.

*Samarthan, Centre for Development Support* has established a Kiosk Centre in village Jamunhai, Panna. The objective behind this is to provide information and technical support to the rural poor, especially women and disadvantaged (SC and ST families) of the nearby villages in ensuring them access to social security benefits through the digital MP portal and on-line information system. From Samagra Portal and Sanitation to MNREGAs Portal and Banking services to Rail Reservation and Job Vacancies, all applications for these services are done online. Therefore, the work gets completed without delay and corruption.



Jamunhai kiosk centre is located at a distance of 30 kms from the Zila Panchayat. Every Friday, people from nearby villages come to Jamunhai for local market (bazaar), therefore they also visit the centre for various queries. Mr. Sameer Majumdar, Kiosk Manager is a B.Com graduate who is well aware about online services and easily tackles all the queries. Also, 5 soochna mitras have been selected from 5 nearby panchayats. They act as a link between their village and the kiosk centre, in order to encourage the people to go to the centre for any

document/ schemes related queries, rather than running after the Secretaries of their panchayat who are not so cooperative.



### Major Services

The major services that people avail from the centre are:

- **BANKING**: Opening Accounts, Money Transfer, Deposit and Withdrawal, Withdrawal of Pension from their accounts, Pan Card Applications.
- **SAMAGRA Portal** : Information about their Individual and Family Samagra ID, BPL Card Applications, Indira Gandhi Pension Yojana Applications, Death Certificate Applications,
- **ADHAAR CARD**: E-Adhaar Card, Linking their Adhaar card numbers with the bank accounts.
- **MNREGA** : Job Card Applications, Shramik (Mazdoor ) Card Applications, Queries regarding MIS data
- **RESERVATION**: Rail e-tickets, Bus ticket booking.
- **EDUCATION**: Online Admit cards, Examination Online Results, University Admission Online Applications.
- Offline Gas Connections, Online Bill payments, DTH Recharge.

Story of change prepared by Amarpreet-Panna edited by Sudeepa

### **6. Lallabai a 75 years old women got the happiness of using LPG gas as a medium of cooking through Ujjawala Scheme**

Lallabai a 75 years old women from Barachh village of Panna district finally got the gas connection in her name through the help of Soochana Mitra(Bhupendra) and Information Kiosk incharge(Neeraj). Otherwise her mornings started with walking for at least 12 kms to fetch a heavy load of firewood, which she carried on her head back to home. This smokeless source of cooking was a respite from her degrading health condition as she used to suffer from minor breathing issues whose causes can be seen in the continued inhaling of smoke emitted by firewood combustion.

Bhupendra , Soचना Mitra and Neeraj, Kiosk Centre Manager of Barachh helped her come out of this harmful trap by communicating to her about the Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana under which the government provides LPG connections to the BPL families, issued on the name of women of the households. Since, the scheme was at initial stage, Lallabai got the LPG connection for free and very easily. The kiosk manager helped in filling her form that came by her name , thereafter within 2 months of sending her application form to the gas agency, Lallabai got a connection and LPG gas cylinder in her house.

But, merely getting a gas connection was not enough as she also had to be aware of the methodology and know-how of using the gas cylinder. Therefore, Soचना mitra explained her the right technique of using a LPG gas cylinder and other details like- how to switch it on, when to switch it off, using a lighter and also the do's an don'ts were respectively explained.

This initiative not only was good in terms of reducing her drudgery of work and improving her health condition but also adding value to her life as she had lost her husband at an age of 60, after which she managed all her house expenditures and responsibilities on her own. Today, after settling her son and daughters into their married lives, she feels her duties are done and now she lives alone in the minimum conditions sufficient for her living.

Lallabai says *“Earlier, it took me hours to light fire and to make food as well. Most times, it also led to the pain in my lungs as I am old now and do not have much energy left to fetch wood every time I have to cook. Therefore, with LPG gas connection and right technique of using LPG cylinder, now I can easily cook food and also manage to save some time to spend time with my village friends in the evening.”*

Today, Lallabai is really happy using the LPG gas cylinder not only because she don't have to walk miles to the forest to fetch firewood anymore but also because this has made her life much easier. The smoke of the firewood combustion is no more present in her life to harm her health as she can easily make food in less time now.

This is not only the story of Lallabai but, of every woman living in the village households trying to build light fire through the firewood. Some of her friends like Archana Bai , Geeta Bai, Chanda Bai have also been benefited with the LPG gas connection in their households. Kallu Bai, who has to make bricks for building her house can spend more time out in fields making bricks, as LPG gas cylinder has made her life easier by reducing the time spent in cooking.

Untill now, applications of 42 women of the village have received LPG gas connections and the respective know-how of using it through the Kiosk centre. 448 more applications are on their way to be passed. Pradhna Mnatri Ujjwala Yojana has been able to make the lives of women better with the support of Kiosk centres' outreach and regular communication with these women of Barachh village.

**Story of change sent by Amarpreet(Intern) and edited by Sudeepa**

### **7.Old Age Pension of a couple as the only source of sustenance reinitiated through Soचना mitras initiatives**

This is about village Khachrod, which comes under Aastha block of Sehore District of Madhya Pradesh, where a couple Kailash bai and badriprasad's old age pension was reinitiated after a period

of around seven to eight months. The pension was stopped for not having a separate account as the couple had a joint account.

This restarting of pension was necessary as their two sons didn't used to take the responsibility of their parents. Their son used to live separate with their own family and didn't used to take care of their parents to the extent that they didn't bother whether their parents where alive or not. Pension was their only source of sustenance. The couple had made initiatives at their individual level to go to Panchayat and even Janpad panchayat to get their pensions but all efforts were futile.



Finally the change was facilitated by Samarthan's *Soochna Mitra* of the same village Abhishek Maheshwari. He went to the Secretary and Sarpanch of Gram Panchayat and talked to them and found out the reason for this stopping of Pension. Opening of separate accounts was an issue as the couple had joint account. Opening of separate account was an issue as the couple didn't had necessary documents

to do so. Getting of Samagra ID was an issue. This was solved through online assistance by the Information Centre incharge by online getting the Samagra ID no.

**Story of change presented by Abhishek Maheshwari Soochana Mitra-Prepared by Manohar in Hindi and translated in English by Sudeepa and Alark(intern).**

### **8.Problem Solving Camp organized by Soochana Mitras**

It is said that there has been done a lot of work done in the case of Social Security Plans, that the eligible people are getting the benefits of the Plans. But it is not true. It can be seen by going in the midst of those people, for example in Rafikganj Panchayat, which comes under Nasrullahganj District Panchayat. On 29<sup>th</sup> November 2016 a problem solving camp was organized knows as *Samasya Nivaran Camp*.

During this Problem Solving Camp, Samarthan's Soochana Mitra, Parishram gave the information about the Camp going from Household to Household and with the help of the Gram Panchayat and Sarpanch had made a Public Announcement as well. Due to these Announcements, a lot of people



came up with their problems to the Camp. All that happened was that the relevant Authority opened his Register and started writing those problems. Many Pensioners came with the problem that their Pension stopped and no one knew the reason why some Beneficiaries had made Toilets but had not got the money that was reserved for making them.

In addition to it some people who were poor but did not have the BPL(Below Poverty Line) Ration Card. The Information Mitra Parishram asked for a list of those people with their problems so as to take them to the relevant Departments. The present official accepted to his request and gave permission. It was followed by a discussion about the other strategies and an effort was made to connect the eligible people to those strategies.

The main information that was given out in this Camp was related to the Laborers' Security Plan Card(mazdoor suraksha card),not only that, but the Information Volunteer called eligible people from their homes to fill out application forms for the Laborers' Security Plan Card, where out of 50

application forms, 40 were of people from the Scheduled Tribes and gave them to the Village Secretary.

The Village Secretary said that those Applications would be processed and would be posted online in the Village Help and Information Centre. Due to our intensive Efforts, some help is being given to



some people. So this story of change is an unique experience where offline and online activities can create magic where soochana mitra, kiosk incharge ,panchayat representatives and government officials all stakeholders come at a common point and solve problems of villagers in a synchronized manner rather than being a part of redtapism and getting into unnecessary delays.

**Story of change originally written in Hindi by Manohar-Team member Sehore. Translated in English by Alark(intern) and developed by Sudeepa**

## 9जन सहायता केन्द्र ने जगाया स्वच्छता की लौ...

जन सहायता एवं सूचना केन्द्र, लाडकुई : यह केन्द्र सीहोर जिले के नसरुल्लागंज विकासखण्ड में आता है। जिला मुख्यालय से इस केन्द्र की दूरी लगभग 71 किमी व विकासखण्ड मुख्यालय से दूरी 16 किमी के आसपास है। CAF एवं ORACLE द्वारा सहायतित परियोजना के अन्तर्गत, समर्थन संस्था द्वारा यह जन सहायता एवं सूचना केन्द्र स्थापित किया गया है। इस केन्द्र का उद्देश्य समाज के गरीब एवं वंचित समुदाय के लोगों को विभिन्न शासकीय योजनाओं से लाभ प्राप्त करने में सहायता प्रदान करना है। केन्द्र पर सूचना एवं प्रौद्योगिकी के साधनों का उपयोग करते हुये अनुसूचित जाति एवं जनजाति तथा वंचित समुदाय के लोगों को उनकी पात्रता के आधार पर शासकीय योजनाओं से जोड़ा जाता है।

वर्तमान में पुरे देश में स्वच्छ भारत मिशन (ग्रामीण) के अन्तर्गत व्यक्तिगत शौचालय निर्माण का कार्य जोरो पर है। इस दिशा में समर्थन द्वारा जिला प्रशासन के साथ मिलकर पुरे सीहोर जिले को खुले में शौचमुक्त बनाने का प्रयास किया जा रहा है। संस्था द्वारा लाडकुई एवं इसके आसपास के ग्रामों से स्वभाविक नेताओं एवं सूचना मित्रों का चयन कर उन्हें स्वच्छ भारत मिशन (ग्रामीण) एवं अन्य शासकीय योजनाओं पर प्रशिक्षण प्रदान किया गया। इसके पश्चात उन्हें जनपद पंचायत कार्यालय, नसरुल्लागंज ले जाया गया, जहां उन्होने स्वच्छ भारत मिशन (ग्रामीण) की समीक्षा बैठक में भाग लिया। इस दौरान जनपद पंचायत के मुख्य कार्यपालन अधिकारी ने सभी सूचना मित्रों से आग्रह किया कि वे अपने-अपने ग्राम पंचायत से स्वच्छ भारत मिशन (ग्रामीण) के अन्तर्गत पात्र हितग्राहियों की सूची प्राप्त करें एवं शौचालय विहिन परिवारों को व्यक्तिगत शौचालय बनाने के लिए प्रेरित करें।



इस पर अनुसरण करते हुये सूचना मित्रों ने पंचायत स्तर पर सरपंच, सचिव व रोजगार सहायक से सम्पर्क कर शौचालय विहिन पात्र परिवारों की सूची प्राप्त की एवं उन्हें व्यक्तिगत शौचालय निर्माण के लिये प्रेरित किया। उन्होंने हितग्राहियों को बताया कि स्वच्छ भारत मिशन (ग्रामीण) के अन्तर्गत 12000 रु. की प्रोत्साहन राशि का लाभ लेने के लिए उन्हें सर्वप्रथम शौचालय निर्माण हेतु आवेदन करना होगा। इसके लिए हितग्राही चाहे तो ग्राम पंचायत में जाकर लिखित आवेदन कर सकते है या वे जन सहायता एवं सूचना केन्द्र पर आकर कियोस्क प्रबंधक की सहायता से निःशुल्क ऑनलाईन आवेदन भी कर सकते है। उन्होंने हितग्राहियों को यह भी बताया कि यदि वे ऑनलाईन आवेदन करते है तो इससे उन्हें आगामी 15 कार्यदिवसों के भीतर शासन द्वारा प्रोत्साहन राशि का लाभ दिया जायेगा।

परिणामस्वरूप बड़ी संख्या में हितग्राहियों ने कियोस्क केन्द्र पर आकर व्यक्तिगत शौचालय निर्माण के लिये आवेदन किया। केन्द्र के संचालक श्री सतीष वर्मा ने मध्यप्रदेश शासन की वेबसाईट <http://www.swachh.mp.gov.in/> पर जाकर टीकामोड़ के 60, रफीकगंज के 26, सिंहपुर के 6 एवं भिलाई के 5 पात्र हितग्राहियों का ऑनलाईन आवेदन किया। इनमें से 80 प्रतिषत हितग्राहियों द्वारा शौचालय निर्माण का कार्य पूर्ण कर लिया गया है एवं उन्हें शासन की ओर से प्रोत्साहन राशि भी प्राप्त हो चुकी है। हितग्राहियों का कहना है कि लाड़कुई में जन सहायता एवं सूचना केन्द्र के खुलने से उन्हें सेवाओं का लाभ लेने में सुविधा हो रही है क्योंकि यहां उन्हें योजनाओं की पुरी जानकारी दिये जाने के साथ-साथ आवेदन करने में भी सहायता की जाती है एवं इस बाबत् कोई शुल्क भी नहीं लिया जाता है। आज सूचना मित्र एवं कियोस्क प्रबंधक द्वारा पंचायत पतिनिधि एवं प्रशासन के साथ मिलकर किये जा रहे प्रयासों के परिणामस्वरूप सिंहपुर पंचायत पूर्णतः खुले में शौचमुक्त हो चुका है एवं अन्य चार पंचायतें भी तेजी से इस राह पर बढ़ रहीं है।

लाड़कुई एवं इसके आसपास के ग्राम अनुसूचित जनजाति बाहुल्य है। इस क्षेत्र में घरों की बसाहट काफी दूर-दूर है एवं लोगों में जागरूकता की भी कमी है। शासकीय विभागों तक इनकी पहुँच बहुत ही सिमित है। काम की कमी होने के कारण लोग अपनी रोजी-रोटी की तलाष में मजदूरी के लिए परिवार के साथ पलायन करते है एवं इस कारण वे बहुत सी परियोजनाओं का लाभ लेने से भी वंचित रह जाते है। कियोस्क संचालक श्री सतीष वर्मा द्वारा समर्थन के साथ मिलकर यह तय किया कि केन्द्र के माध्यम से लोगों को योजनाओं के बारे में जानकारी दी जाएगी व उन्हें विभिन्न शासकीय योजनाओं का लाभ दिलवाया जाएगा। आज सतीष बड़ी ही कुषलता से इस कार्य को आगे बढ़ा रहे है। उनका कहना है कि, संस्था के सहयोग से मुझे जनसेवा करने का एक मौका मिला है और मैं अपनी ओर से संस्था के उद्देश्यों को पूर्ण करने की लगातार कोषिष करता रहूँगा।



**Story of change prepared by Manohar and edited by Debasish Biswas**