



'SOOCHNAPRENEUR' TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOP

Venue: Makkah Marriage Hall, Itki, Ranchi, Jharkhand

Date: 9th – 10th December 2016

ABOUT THE TRAINING WORKSHOP

The main goal of the workshop is to build deep conceptual understanding of SoochnaPreneurs on public schemes, programmes and processes to avail the information and benefits of various services & entitlements. In this workshop, SoochnaPreneurs learnt how benefits can be reached to the last mile beneficiaries who are lagging behind in availing their rights and entitlements. The workshop created opportunities to explore areas, which are relevant for information dissemination and citizen entitlements, and 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.

The training covered seven main themes identified for the workshop:

- The Rural Information and Knowledge Society
- The Rural Economy; Content Market
- The Rural Information Consumer Base
- Scope & Role of Rural Information Entrepreneurs (SoochnaPreneurs)
- Digital Tools, Applications and Platforms to Serve Rural Information, Content & Services
- Delivery Structure of Information, Content, Services
- Sustaining the Rural Information, Content and Service Business

Objectives

- To improve the basic knowledge and understanding of SoochnaPreneurs about rural information market, content, service needs and its access at various level
- To make them understand the qualities, skills and importance of a rural information entrepreneur
- To make SoochnaPreneurs more comfortable in using ICT & digital devices
- To demonstrate the functionality of a mobile application called 'Mera App' that has been designed to deliver government entitlement-related information, content and services in the users' palm

Expected Outputs

- Better understanding of the programme and its objectives, mission and goal
- Coherent capacity building of SoochnaPreneuers
- Better utilisation of resources
- Enhanced management and monitoring of the programme

Day-1 (09/12/2016)

The training started at 9.30am with a brief introduction of participants from Ranchi (Jharkhand), West Champaran (Bihar), Bargarh (Odisha) and other resource persons. The participants had come to gain information on entrepreneurship, rural market, content, scheme entitlements, digital services, ICT, partnerships with service providers, etc. Bring a completely new model, SoochnaPreneurs (SPs) were enthusiastic and had come with a great expectations. The workshop was divided into various sessions that looked at addressing the queries and resolving the problems associated with delivering information, content and services at the grassroots level.

Session 1: Information & its importance

Facilitator: Shishir Purohit, State Coordinator, Rajasthan, DEF

In the first session, Shishir Purohit highlighted the importance of information in people's life and how it can be utilised by SoochnaPreneurs in their work. He kicked off the workshop with the screening of a popular television show called Satyamev Jayate that discusses various social evils of the Indian society. During the discussion, Purohit asked the participants how many of them pay regular taxes. In response to his question, only two or three participants raised their hands. Purohit then showed them a video that showed how every Indian citizen pays taxes. Each one of us is paying indirect taxes when we buy things like biscuits, chips, soap, water bottle, etc. The aim of this particular discussion was to make people aware of what it means to miss out on information. The session went on to elaborate on the importance of information in our lives and how it can make a positive impact on people's lives, if disseminated correctly and timely. A second video was screened that narrated the story of a person who works with his community members to make them aware of the MGNREGA related-information. In a fun activity later, participants wrote down on a piece of paper what information would they want to look for. Organisers received an interesting much of responses, including a person who mentioned he's like to look up some recipes on Google Search and another who wanted information to deal with the emergent needs of his family.

Session 2: Who is a SoochnaPreneur?

Facilitator: Vahid

The speaker described that the word 'preneurship' has been derived from entrepreneurship, which means business. Information + preneurship = entrepreneurship. However, SoochnaPreneur will deal with information for claiming entitlements of rural citizens in their respective geographical areas. There is a huge deficiency of valid information in rural areas, which forces people to live marginalised and deprived lives. So as an information entrepreneur, we need to keep information lantern in our hand always in order to get rid of darkness.

The discussion was started with the understanding of the audience on SoochnaPreneur. However, a few of them described the meaning, and a large number of people didn't have any clue on info-preneurship. As discussions escalated, SoochnaPreneurs' roles for providing public scheme information, entitlements, rights and other digital services were discussed.

A major requirement for a successful SoochnaPreneur (SP) is to be from the community because she/he would know and understand the ground realities better. A SP will also collect information from the government and provide it to the community. She/he will work as bridge between the government and the beneficiaries; and will provide them with handy services at their doorstep to bring people out of information darkness. During the sessions, queries of the audiences were resolved and concrete solutions were provided to address their problems.

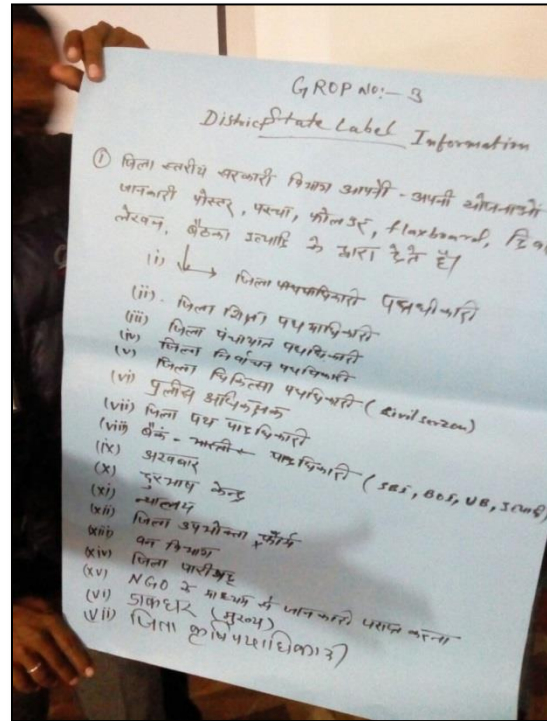
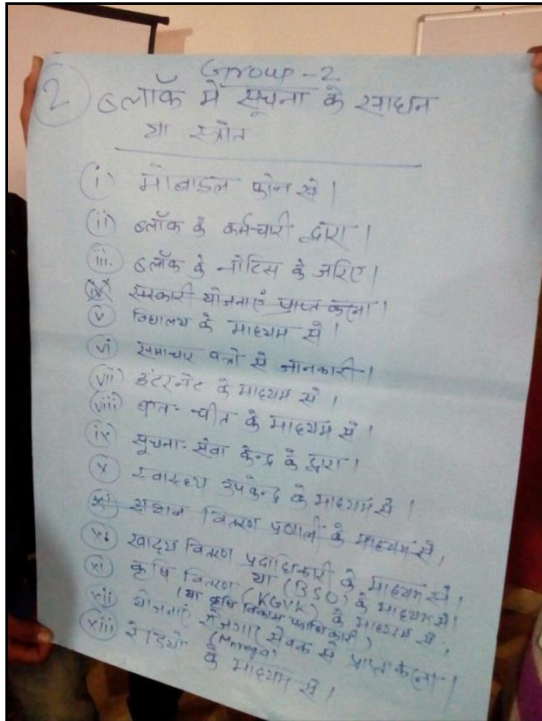


Session 3: Information market, clients and how to approach them

Facilitator: Vahid

It is very important for each SoochnaPreneur to understand the rural information market, content and services. Taking this into consideration, three major relevant markets and their clients (village/panchayat, block & district) were discussed in groups. Participants were divided into six major groups (two groups per subject) in order to receive the common consensus of the participants. Once they were through with the activity, they were called for presentations.

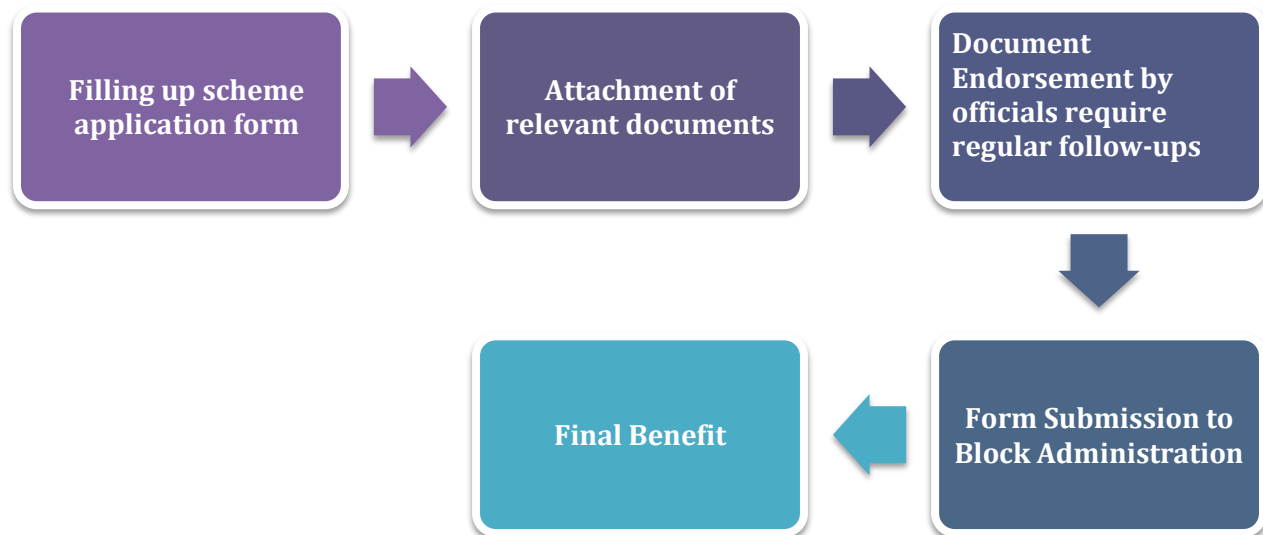
These groups had been defined the market/clients based on their practical experiences in the field. All groups had been defined their subject well and during the presentations, some value additions were also received from the larger group.



Session 4: Understanding the market

Facilitator: Praveen Panwar

Participants were described the possible engagements of services and how SoochnaPreneurs can expand their service basket. They were explained the various services they can offer, starting from registration of beneficiaries and filing scheme entitlement forms to endorsement from panchayat administration and submitting he application form to the block office. The session also focused on the branding of SoochnaPreneur within the community to build trust so that community members feel comfortable in reaching out to them.



Since Praveen has been a Soochna Seva fellow and has been dealing with community members, their rights and entitlements for the last three years in Tehri Garhwal, Uttarakhand, he was aware of various challenges that SoochnaPreneurs might face. He also told them how these challenges can be overcome.

Session 5: Sustainability

Facilitator: Azad Sohail, Project Officer, DEF

A session on sustainability was conducted by Azad Sohail. The session was interactive and participants eagerly contributed in the discussion. Other topics that were discussed during the session included 'What is Entrepreneurship and importance of entrepreneur', 'How a person can bring the positive changes for his village and community', 'How internet and digital tools can help in bringing sustainability', 'Benefits of being sustainable as a Soochnapreneur' and 'How information can help in achieving sustainability'.

During the first day of workshop, a video was shared with the participants narrating the story of a person in Muzaffarpur, Bihar, who brought meaningful changes in the lives of community member through information, computer and the Internet. With the help of the video, the facilitator tried to develop the understanding that through such digital tools one can earn both respect and a livelihood.

As rural and remote regions face several infrastructural issues, the trainees were made to understand how they develop their own social enterprise slowly with the limited resources. The role of middlemen in pocketing beneficiaries' money was also highlighted; and SoochnaPreneurs were told how they can bring relief in the lives of villagers from

these exploitative middlemen. The session was concluded with the hope that all Soochnapreneurs will work under the supervision of Digital Empowerment Foundation to make their dreams become a reality under the umbrella of Soochnapreneurship.

Session 6: Collaboration with stakeholders and outreach

Facilitator: Rajaram Dhakad, Soochna Seva Fellow

Rajaram, a passionate fellow of Soochna Seva, gave an overview of how to approach a community as an information provider. What should be our right approach, right time, right strategy, right movement and right way to adopt this — questions like these were addressed. He gave some examples from the ground of activities related to community mobilisation, outreach and liaising with community stakeholders. He also screened two videos related to social security assistance for women. Rajaram frequently attends government programmes; so he had imbibed a lot of knowledge from these events which he imparted to the participants. He also emphasised on the need for SoochnaPreneurs to have a strong attachment with the community; and good collaborations with the panchayat, anganwadi and block office.

Session 7: Ideal Establishment for Soochnapreneur

Facilitator: Balaji Madiq, District Coordinator, SS Project (DEF), West Champaran, Bihar

At the onset of the session, the facilitator explained the need for this kind of an establishment. In a group activity, participants were asked to list materials one would need to make a wall organiser. The participants listed several equipment and raw material including wood, hammer, nail, etc. Drawing from this list, the facilitator stated that as one requires certain things to build a wall organiser, one needs a few resources to build an ideal establishment as well. The participants were then divided into six groups and asked to list the resources which will help them lay the foundation for an ideal establishment. After a brief recap of what a SoochnaPreneur is required to do, the groups came up with the following list.

Below are the six presentations					
Group I	Group II	Group III	Group IV	Group V	Group VI
Computer	Computer	Computer	Computer	Computer	Computer
Net	Electricity	Wifi	Photocopy machine	Mobile phone	Net

Printer	Mobile phone	-	-	Stationery	Stationery
Furniture	Electricity	Net	Inverter	Photocopy machine	Almirah
Photocopy machine	Photocopy machine	Electricity	Furniture	Net	Inverter
Mobile phone	Net	-	Mobile phone	Furniture	Mobile phone
Electricity	-	Photocopy machine	Net	Photo printer	Electricity
Good Behavior	-	Knowledge	Drinking water	-	-

From the above compilation the facilitator then drew a list of the essentials, which included computer, Internet/Wifi, Photocopy machine and printer, Electricity connection, Knowledge and Good behaviour.

Day 2 (10/12/2016)



Day 2 began with a presentation on Mera App, an Android-based mobile application designed to disseminate information on public schemes, entitlements, rights and programs. First, the purpose of the app for service delivery was explained to the trainees. The resource persons highlighted the app's functionalities and reach through a hands-on training session. The exercise helped trainees to improve their ability to run the application and understand its

features. Taking in consideration people who are not literate to use a tablet or a computer usage, a special two-group session was held for them to make them comfortable in using a tablet.

Session: Mera app household demo application in Kundi Village**Facilitator:** Saurabh Srivastava**Objective:** To demonstrate the field functionality of Mera App, Saurabh visited demo consumers and households in Kundi village.**Team Leaders:** Shishir Purohit, Rajaram Dhakad, Azad Sohail, Praveen Panwar, Vahid, Saurabh, Anzar Raza, Rehan Kausar and Adil Faraz

The second-half of the day was spent in a field-based practical where trainees got a chance to reinforce their workshop knowledge to field situations. Nine groups were formed, each headed by a mentor. The field-activity was planned to give trainees an opportunity to fit into SoochnaPreneur shoes and interact with community members. SPs got an opportunity to see the villagers not just as a task but as an actual target population. The mentors were supposed to navigate SoochnaPreneurs and villagers' discussion and ensure it provides valuable perspective to the former. The field tour amplified the hands-on-training learning for SPs. Post field-work, the session continued at the same venue where all the mentors along with the team members shared their experiences from the day and contributed in identifying the technical glitches in Mera App. Non-technical issues in rural India such as low-connectivity, middle-man menace, irregular pensions, etc.,s were also highlighted.



Recommendations for Mera App:

- Jharkhand, Bihar & Odisha schemes should come instead of Madhya Pradesh
- Beneficiary mobile number option.
- Fix drop down for 'Marital Status' box.
- Create an option of contact in case of emergency in ground.
- Refine category window.
- Make it more users friendly.
- Add more schemes in data bank.
- Full disclosure of every scheme benefits and eligibility criteria.
- Fix the existing scheme landing page in App.
- Fix Application form.
- Drop down takes lot of time to download.
- In Relationship table, 'son' option is missing.
- Like primary profile there should be an option of secondary profile to store more contact number or email id.

ENCLOSURES

Plan of Action for 1 SoochnaPreneur

Timeline	Task	Target	Support
December 19- 31st, 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Registration of beneficiaries/community Meetings 2. Registration through 'Mera App' 3. Collect information related to current services 4. Collect scheme related forms 5. Promotional strategies for Soochna Kendra 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 100 beneficiaries & 20 meetings 2. 100 beneficiaries 3. 50 beneficiaries 4. 20 schemes 5. Centre set-up 	Soochna Seva team
January 1 st to 14 th 2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. District level training 2. MIS/Reporting 3. Scheme collection online & offline 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. One per district 2. 100 entries 3. 20 schemes 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DEF central team 2. SSK team 3. SSK team
January 16 th to 28, 2017	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide schemes/services to the citizens 2. Promotion/visibility 3. Revenue 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 50 scheme benefits 2. Centre set-up 3. Rs. 2000/- 	
February 1 st 2017	Next plan of action		

Plan of action for one District (20 SoochnaPreneurs)

Timeline	Task	Target	Support
December 19- 31st, 2016	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Registration of beneficiaries/community Meetings 2. Registration through 'Mera App' 3. Collect information related to current services 4. Collect scheme related forms 5. Promotional strategies for Soochna Kendra 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2000 beneficiaries & 400 meetings 2. 2000 beneficiaries 3. 1000 beneficiaries 4. 5. 100 schemes 6. Centre set-up 	Soochna Seva team

January 1 st to 14 th 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. District level training 5. MIS/Reporting 6. Scheme collection online & offline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. One per district 5. 2000 entries 6. 400 schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. DEF central team 5. SSK team 6. SSK team
January 16 th to 28, 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Provide schemes/services to the citizens 5. Promotion/visibility 6. Revenue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7. 1000 scheme benefits 8. Centre set-up 9. Rs. 40,000/- 	
February 1 st 2017	Next plan of action		