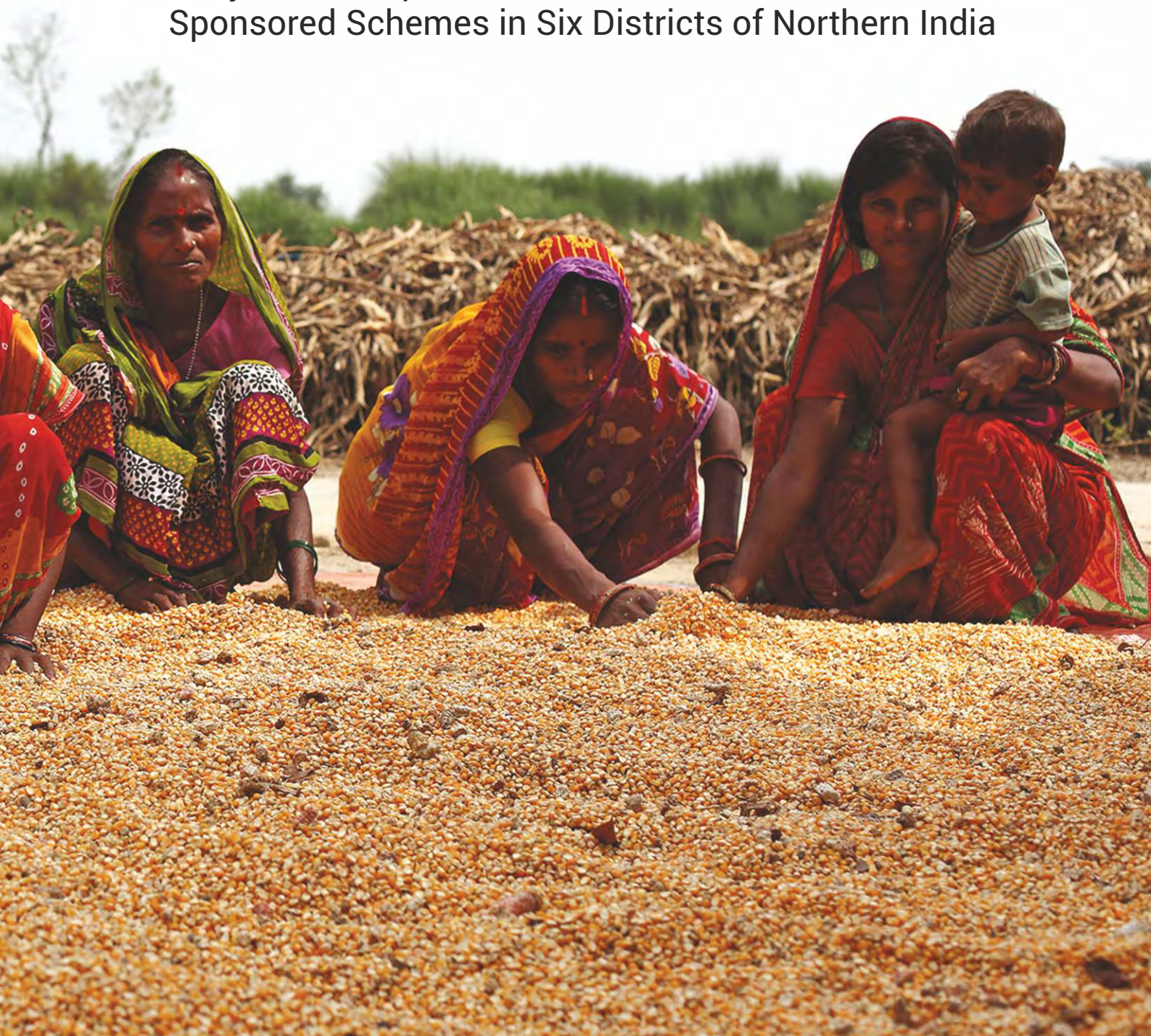


COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT OF ENTITLEMENT PROGRAMMES

A Study on the Implementation of Five Central Government
Sponsored Schemes in Six Districts of Northern India



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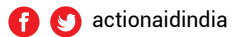
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FOREWORD

One of our strategic priorities is to ensure access by the poor and marginalized of public services through increasing the responsiveness of local administration and Panchayat Raj Institutions and by increasing capacity of the poor and marginalized to assert their rights and monitor the delivery of their entitlements.

The idea behind *Community Assessment of Entitlement Programmes: A study on the implementation of five central sponsored schemes in six districts of Northern India* was to understand how public services related to food security, social security and housing are being provided in six of the most backward districts of India. This study prepared by the Democratization Knowledge Activist Hub of ActionAid, is based on field surveys. The surveys were designed with an action-oriented edge to understand how change can be affected through bottom-up processes. This report has been prepared to share the learnings of the surveys to influence policy and help activists working with vulnerable communities.

The study found that under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) programme, there has been an increase in the number of anganwadis during the last 3 years, both as a response to Supreme Court orders as well as to community demands. However 27% respondents said that there still are habitations without Anganwadis – especially small hamlets where poor communities reside. Also the ICDS programme has still to achieve the aim of “universalization with quality”.

The accessibility of the Public Distribution System (PDS) is generally quite remarkable. Improvement has also been testified to in the distribution of ration. Most families in rural areas of surveyed districts enjoy a well-functioning PDS that supplies essential articles at low prices. The process of conducting the field surveys reminded us again of the importance of PDS for poor people. 74.4% of respondents reported getting good quality grain at the time of their last purchase, however 20.1% of the respondents complained that their quota was pending and 11.1% of households said that their quota had been diverted to the open market at least once in the past six months.

The benefits of India's school meal programme are now well established from a series of studies. Aside from improving school attendance, child nutrition and even pupil achievements, collateral benefits include the employment provided to the more than two million rural women who serve as cooks and helpers. Most of them are adivasis, Dalits, widows or other disadvantaged women with few opportunities for dignified employment. The survey showed that midday meal programmes are in place almost everywhere. Even in the most backward and remote villages of Bihar, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, parents confirmed that their children were getting a cooked meal in the local school. Further, their view of the midday meal programme was generally positive – 60.8% were “satisfied” with the quality of the food being served, 90% schools have drinking water facilities, 88% schools have a kitchen, a cook and basic equipment.

While State governments have been able to ensure wide coverage of widow pension, there are still some hurdles in the effective implementation of widow pension – 85% of respondents reported that they had not received pensions regularly, 95.8% said they had not received their pension on the fixed date. 48% claimed they had to make more than one trip to collect their pensions, for a variety of reasons they were asked to return on a later date. Also it was revealed that 30% of the applications for widow pension were rejected on the grounds of inadequate supporting documents or discrepancies in the documents, but often the reasons for rejection were not communicated to the applicant.

The field surveys revealed that although performance of Indira Awaas Yojana has improved since its inception, a great deal remains to be done. There is a lack of awareness amongst the communities and even some of the officials of the District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) of the components of the scheme and the responsibilities of duty bearers in implementing the scheme. The survey shows that there is hope in improving conditions of the poor and marginalized by ensuring more effective delivery of public services by providing adequate resources, ensuring political support and encouraging people's participation.

This report would not have been possible but for the commitment of a host of activists, allied organizations and colleagues of ActionAid India. I express my heartfelt gratitude to our allied organizations – Vikas Sahyog Kendra in Latehar district, Jharkhand, Samajhik Sodh Evam Vikas Kendra in East Champaran district, Bihar, Vasudha Vikas Kendra in Jhabua district, Madhya Pradesh, Samvad Samijik Sansthan in Pratapgarh and Barabanki districts, Uttar Pradesh and Sankalp in Chamba district, Himachal Pradesh and all colleagues working with them and who participated enthusiastically in the survey. I thank ActionAid India's Democratization Knowledge Activist Hub for having initiated this important study and for highlighting the challenges faced and indicating the way forward to ensuring vulnerable communities have access to public services. My colleague Sion Kongari of the Hub conceptualized and designed the survey and anchored the whole process. I am also grateful to my colleagues in ActionAid Regional Offices looking after our work Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and Himachal Pradesh for their support to the study.

I look forward to carrying these conversations further with you dear readers and hence I look forward to receiving your comments and feedback on this report.

Sandeep Chachra

Executive Director
ActionAid India

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Several community-based groups and social organisations from various states have contributed to this report. Without these solidarities this report would not have been possible. We take the opportunity to thank all of them for their valuable support and contribution.

Community Assessment of Entitlement Programmes: A study on the implementation of five central sponsored schemes in six districts of Northern India covers five states namely Bihar, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

We acknowledge and thank Vikas Sahyog Kendra in Latehar district, Jharkhand, Samajhik Sodh Evam Vikas Kendra in East Champaran district, Bihar, Vasudha Vikas Kendra in Jhabua district, Madhya Pradesh, Samvad Samijik Sansthan in Pratapgarh and Barabanki districts, Uttar Pradesh and Sankalp in Chamba district, Himachal Pradesh and all colleagues working with them and who participated enthusiastically in the survey.

We also acknowledge and thank ActionAid India Regional Offices looking after Uttar Pradesh & Uttarakhand, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar & Jharkhand and North regions, the Programme Unit and the Institutional Partner Donors Unit especially Aqeel Ahmed, Ashfaq Mohammed, Jayant Lakra, Nisha Singh, Pankaj Shwetabh and Prem Ranjan who steered this study with immensely valuable engagement of social organisations and individuals in their respective states areas of operation.

We also acknowledge European Commission for their support to publish this report and to the Communications Unit for supporting us in bringing out this publication.

Sion Kongari
National Co-ordinator
ActionAid Association

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ABBREVIATIONS

APL	Above Poverty Line
AWC	Anganwadi Centers
AWW	Anganwadi Worker
BDO	Block Development Officer
BPL	Below Poverty Line
DRDA	District Rural Development Agency
FCI	Food Corporation of India
FPS	Fair Price Shop
Gol	Government of India
GP	Gram panchayat
GPS	Ground Positioning System
IA	Implementing Authority
IAY	Indira Awaas Yojana
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Services
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IGNWPS	Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme
IRCs	Information Resource Centres
MDM	Mid Day Meal
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MGNREGA	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MoRD	Ministry of Rural Development
NGOs	Non Government Organisations
NSAP	National Social Assistance
NBA	Nirmal Bharat Abhiyaan
SBM	Swacch Bharat Mission
SC	Scheduled Caste
SECC	Socio-Economic Caste Census
SFC	State Financial Corporation
SHG	Self Help Group
SMC	School Management Committee
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
ST	Scheduled Tribe
THR	Take Home Ration
TPDS	Targeted Public Distribution System
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institution
UP	Uttar Pradesh

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

STUDY BACKGROUND

Three years have gone by since the passing of the National Food Security Act, yet its implementation is very unsatisfactory. Some states are yet to bring their Public Distribution System in line with the Act. The quality of nutrition programmes like Mid-day meal and Integrated Child Development Programme for children also leaves much to be desired in most states. The main weakness of the current system is that it is restricted to certain categories of households and that there are large exclusion errors. Until recently, the PDS was targeted mainly at BPL households in most states. In many states, increasing dissatisfaction with this approach has led to a move towards a more inclusive, if not a universal, system.

In recent years, poverty among the widowed and other disadvantaged but relatively less visible groups have taken centre stage in debates around social protection policies and programmes. Non-contributory public funded social security pensions have emerged as one of the effective strategies to manage and reduce individual as well as household poverty. The benefits of such social-assistance programmes have been much lauded. With regard to pension benefits, evidence shows that the Widow Pension Scheme is reaching the intended beneficiaries. While the amounts are small, they are crucial in supplementing the resources to allow them to afford medicines, food and other necessities. But it is crucial to note that vast shortages in implementation can be observed. One of the main problems is that the management of the schemes is mostly poor, with much planning and implementation left to lower level bureaucracy. They have little capacity or motivation to deliver services to the poor effectively.

Over time and with experience it was realized that adequate housing is not just mere provisioning of four walls and a roof but implies access to basic amenities of water, sanitation and domestic energy, offering a sense of privacy, safety, dignity and opportunities for income generation. It was also realized that large segments of rural population have low levels of income and the poor do not even have house-sites. Especially for BPL households in the rural areas, access to credit is critical however access to affordable housing is constrained primarily on account of low level of household income and negligible savings. Therefore, a need was felt to improve the housing infrastructure in rural areas by moving from allocation-based schemes to a broader perspective having a basket of bankable schemes to eradicate shelterlessness from the India. In the implementation of the Rural Housing Scheme there are issues on ground like transparency in selection of beneficiaries in states; unsupportive financial institutions to additional finance to beneficiaries were noted. Also Banks used to provide funds only when potential borrowers provided sufficient proof of their capacity to repay loans in a prescribed manner.

The specific objectives of the study was to document: to what extent have the attempts of the Government of India to implement food security programmes (PDS, MDM and ICDS), social security programmes for widow (Widow pension) and rural housing scheme for the poor been successful in 6 of the most backward districts of Northern India. The study also aimed to draw action interventions based on the findings so as to strengthen these programmes in general and improve the overall implementation in the selected backward districts.

METHODOLOGY & SAMPLE SIZE

The Survey took place in six backward districts of five states (Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh) during Jan-April 2017. In each district; we selected 7 Blocks and 96 panchayats for this survey where our partner organisations are working.

The surveys were undertaken to understand realities on the ground and the gaps in implementation. It was also designed to explore avenues of influencing policy decisions and affecting change in whatever practical way possible, giving it an action oriented edge.

The research adopted both quantitative and qualitative methods to secure primary information. Key methodological imperatives such as household visits, interview method and in-depth interactions were leveraged to capture experiences and perceptions of beneficiaries and key stakeholders across states.

The programmes covered by the survey were: Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme, Public Distribution System (PDS), Indira Awas Yojana and Social Security Pensions (Widow Pension). The survey consisted of two parts: First, a household questionnaire that focused on Public Distribution system, Midday meal and Integrated Child Development Scheme, and second, a door-to-door verification of widow pension and Indira Awas Yojana that included a detailed pension and housing questionnaire. A total of 2841 households who have been availing benefits from these entitlements were covered during the survey.

SELECTED PROFILES OF RESPONDENTS

The noted majority (69%) of the respondents contacted under the study were women. State level data indicates that in Bihar, an over whelming majority (78%) were women, whereas in Jharkhand, the distribution of men and women were almost equal in proportion. In Madhya Pradesh, the number of female respondents was higher with 65% and male constituted a little over one-third (35%) of the total respondents contacted in the state. The data from Uttar Pradesh also indicates that, the number of female respondents was higher with 72% and in Himachal Pradesh majority (64%) of the respondents were women.

Largely, respondents contacted in the study area were in the productive age group, as 70% of the respondents were between 40-60 years old followed by 13.8% in the age bracket of 30-40 years. In Bihar, 63.8% were in the age group of 40-60 years followed by 34.1% in the age group 30-40 years. Jharkhand showed a similar trend too with 48% respondents were 40-50 years, followed by 15% in the age group 30-40 years. In Madhya Pradesh also 69% of the respondents were 41-60 years old and in Uttar Pradesh 79.1% were in the age group of 40-60 years.

Of about 72% respondents contacted in the study area were illiterate or functionally literate, less than 18% of the respondents were educated up to primary level. State-wise data revealed in Jharkhand 90% of the respondents were illiterate/functionally literate, only 4% respondents with education up to upper primary. In Bihar a big chunk of the respondents were under the illiterate/functionally literate category (90%) and 8% of the respondents had completed primary level of education. In Madhya Pradesh 75% of respondents were illiterate/functionally literate, 25% were educated up to primary level. In Himachal Pradesh 69% respondents were under the illiterate/functionally literate category and in Uttar Pradesh respondents percentage under the illiterate/functionally literate category was 85%.

The total beneficiaries contacted under the study belonged to 46% Scheduled Castes (SCs) followed by 40% Scheduled Tribe (ST) and the rest 14% were from Muslim. State-wise variations indicated that in Bihar, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh majority of the respondents were SCs, and in Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh, majority (73%) belonged to the STs and 5% Gujjars were covered in Himachal Pradesh. In one of the selected district in Uttar Pradesh (Pratapgarh), 14% respondents were noted to be Muslims.

PROGRAMMES SHORTFALL

During the study, some important weak points/short comings across all the surveyed districts have been noted as under:-

INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

- There has been an increase in the number of Anganwadis during the last 3 years, in response to Supreme Court orders as well as to community demands. The number of children covered by the Anganwadi has also risen significantly. Yet, 27% respondents said that there are habitations without Anganwadi- especially small hamlets where poor communities reside.
- Only 29% respondents are aware about the health check-ups and very few (12%) are aware about the referral service. People are mostly (92.8%) aware of the supplementary nutrition service and frequently avail it too. Among children aged 3-6 years, 46% get pre – school education from the Anganwadi. Though these numbers indicate improvement over time a lot more still needs to be done.
- Existing infrastructure of the Anganwadi is a key concern in effective delivery of targeted services by the Anganwadi. More than 67% centres have Pucca (well-constructed) building, whereas remaining 33% do not having a well-constructed building. Out of 67%, only 55% Anganwadi centre have their own building while the remaining run in nearby school buildings or Gram Panchayat Bhawan, rented buildings or in the house of the Anganwadi worker.

- Around 25% children registered in AWCs are malnourished and out of that more than 50% come under 'A' grade. As per government guidelines, children who come under the malnourished category are entitled to get double ration, but many of centres (approx. 118 centers) do not provide it while 8 centres were not even aware about such guidelines.

MID-DAY MEAL

- Only 7% schools had registration between 121 to 150 and 27% schools had registration of more than 150 children. 66% schools had registration below 120 while the actual attendance of children was always below the numbers registered. There are several that are the reasons for lower enrolment and low attendance.
- More than 90% schools have drinking water facilities in their school but the quality of water safety is questionable. Good habits of washing hands before eating food and after toilet is still an issue especially in rural areas. While around 88% schools cook their mid-day meals under a shade, the remaining cook in the open. Although guidelines insist on the quality of mid-day meals, a major concern is the preparation of mid-day meal as per the decided menu and the frequency of distribution of mid-day meal in a month. Only 70% responded stated that mid-day meal is provided as per menu and the frequency to providing mid-day meal is 85%.
- 60.8% respondent said that the quality of midday meal was good. But it was also found that children were getting lesser quantity of rice and dal than was supplied to schools.

PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

- As far as awareness of grain entitlements is concerned, generally people knew what they were entitled to. For instance, in the case of Antyodaya cardholders. However, in the case of other commodities such as sugar, kerosene, dals and oils there was a lack of clarity on entitlement and irregularity in the supply of these commodities were seen.
- Generally, the accessibility of the PDS is quite remarkable: local ration shops were approximately two kilometers away for 49% of the respondent's and within 5 km for 16.6% of respondents. Respondents reported that, on average, the last round-trip to the ration shop (including commuting and waiting time) took two hours. Distance to the ration shop remains an issue in some of the remoter regions of the surveyed areas.
- Mostly people knew what kind and quantity of commodities they can avail from Public Distribution Shops. Despite public awareness, people are not very satisfied about the distribution mechanisms, availability of commodities and the erratic timings of the PDS shops. It was observed in most states other than Bihar that BPL and Antyodaya cardholders seem to find a marked improvement in the ration distribution from previous years. The problem of timely ration is persistent through all states.
- In Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Pratapgarh district of Uttar Pradesh, half or more respondents felt that things had improved- There has been much improvement in the regularity of PDS distribution and opening PDS shops. More than 70% of sample households said that their quota had not been diverted to the open market even once in the past six months. This simple and effective reform measure needs to be enforced strictly in all states.
- Overall, 74.4% of respondents reported getting good quality grain at the time of their last purchase; nearly (15.3%) said it was of "same" quality and 4.6% said that the grain they received was of poor quality.
- Overall 54% respondent reported that there are improvements in quantity supplied of the PDS in comparison to 3 years ago; nearly (40.3%) said it was of "same" and 1.8% said that the quantity they received was of less.

WIDOW PENSION

- The biggest problem being faced by widow pensioners is that they don't receive their pension amounts regularly. In all 6 districts there are 716 widow pensioners who were interviewed during the study. Nearly 85% women said that there is no fixed date to receive pension.
- The lack of transparency and access to information leads to a situation where in people feel obliged and

dependant on the Pradhan or Surpanch. In all most all the surveyed districts the online systems were introduced stating eligibility, application procedures, pension sanctions etc. However the dependence of the respondents on external agencies has only increased. Now they have to further incur transaction costs to get their documents collected to complete the application procedure.

- 30% widow women stated that their applications were rejected on the grounds of inadequate supporting documents or discrepancies in the documents, and very often this is not communicated to the applicant.
- Almost all the respondent said that the amount is not enough for them to live with dignity for a month. 95% of respondents said that they received pensions once in 3-4 months. In some cases, the respondents reported missing payments for months other than the last 3-4 months. These missing payments need to be probed further. On an average, it took pensioners 5 hours to reach the bank/post office, collect their pension and return to their house.
- 95.4% of respondents were illiterate. 60.5% of the respondents had irregular passbook entries, including some with no entries in their passbooks at all. This poses a great danger in the effective implementation of social pensions as people can easily be cheated by the middleman or bank officials.
- 33.4% agreed that the officials at the bank or panchayat level officials were helpful and had no complaints regarding them. While 65.5% of the respondents were not happy with how the bank and panchayat officials behaved.

INDIRA AWAAS YOJANA

- More than 21% of the respondents indicated to have received Rs.75, 000/-and 51% indicated to have received Rs.70,000/- for construction of IAY houses. A majority of respondents (84%) were noted to have spent additional amount for construction of their houses. The additional amount, however, was not availed from institutional sources.
- It was noted that half of the respondents had not built toilets. Less than one third (31%) completed IAY units were having logos.
- It was noted that a majority (80.8%) of respondents had completed construction within 2 years, 7.6% had taken 3 years to complete. Those who had either not completed their houses or taken more than 2 years to complete construction had accounted for 18.7% of the total sample. It was noted that about 19% indicated of instalments received late, 37% indicated high construction cost and 40% indicated time over-run owing to non-availability of trained mason.
- 38.4% respondents told that house was allotted in the name of husband, 39.7% respondents share that their houses were allotted jointly both in husband's and wife's name and only 11.4% respondents told that houses were allotted in the name of women.
- 31.5% houses have sanitary latrines and 8.5% houses had developed their land under NREGA. Out of total beneficiaries, 46.5% beneficiaries were not benefitted from any other schemes with which IAY could have been converged.
- (84%) indicated that monitoring was not done by officials during the course of construction of IAY units. Quality construction and timely completion of dwelling units are achieved if monitoring is taken up in right earnest.
- A large majority of respondents (59.5%) indicated that there is no system of proactive disclosure of eligible beneficiaries of five year priority list of IAY beneficiaries in the panchayat. And also system for selection of beneficiaries was not adequate so there is a possibility of partiality and biasness in selection of beneficiaries by panchayats and concerned officials also.

SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS-

On the basis of various findings and observations the following recommendations have been proposed for qualitative improvement in implementation of this scheme and other similar schemes:

INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SCHEME-

- Need for a paradigm/strategic shift to focus on changing feeding behaviour and strengthening the existing localized food model to ensure continuous supply of quality food acceptable to community and monitored by community building operational efficiency: Strengthening existing infrastructure and support for robust monitoring and supervision.
- In order to position Anganwadi as a change agent, it is imperative that capacities of the AWW and of supervisory staff are built accordingly. AWC needs to work as counselling and outreach centres" rather than just being the "Food distribution centre". It is also imperative to revise the training curriculum and to include specific session on counselling and interpersonal communication to position them more effectively as a change agent.
- Timely and quality supply needs to be ensured by making local monitoring system involving PRIs and civil society's organization. Ensuring strong convergence with Panchayat: Active Involvement of Panchayat as a check and balances mechanism.
- Enhance community participation and making Anganwadi's more accountable to the clients. Localized Food Model currently provides the opportunity to institutions such as Mothers group in deciding about the local food, the nature of preparation and the menu. This practice needs to be further strengthened by regularly presenting the stock situation and procurement problem if any in Panchayat meeting.
- Community based monitoring system needs to be implemented on an experimental basis. This may enhance efficiency of service delivery specifically of government schemes. Displaying the stock situation outside Anganwadis should also be made mandatory. To increase efficiency and outreach of the scheme communities should also be involved in monitoring the quality of services provided.
- Existing infrastructure of the Anganwadi is a key concern in effective delivery of targeted services by the Anganwadi. This being key issue, mechanism for developing necessary infrastructure needs to be explored and operationalized.
- Expediting the process of procurement and redistribution of educational and medicine kits as well as ensuring continuous supply is therefore necessary.
- Continuous monitoring of processes and outputs is prerequisite for timely action towards course correction in the quest for envisioned objectives of ICDS. And therefore adequate investment in M&E systems and capacities is necessary. At the present juncture, there is considerable scope for improvement as well as making the existing system more efficient.

MID-DAY MEAL SCHEME (MDM)

- There is a scope for convergence with schemes like National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme for construction of kitchen sheds and honorarium of cooks and helpers, Drinking water / toilet through government scheme/programme and health check-up and micronutrients through school health programme under National Rural health Mission.
- District level management committees should be made effective - their meetings should be held regularly so that monitoring and supervision by the Block education officer/District education officer is ensured through these meetings.
- Guidelines issued by Government regarding the delivery of food grains by PDS dealer to school directly should be implemented as this will help in: i. averting the leakage of food grains from the delivery point and reduce the supply channel. ii. taking off pressure from Head Master or implementing authority.
- The implementing agency should be made responsible for cooking, serving and cleaning of the utensils and plates and the school staff should be confined only to supervision of the serving.
- As frequent changes in prices of ingredients especially the prices of oil and pulses fluctuate frequently, it is thus becomes difficult for the implementing agency to meet the costs. Therefore there must be a regular review of the costs being paid to implementing agency once in 6 months.

- Preference for an implementing agency should be given to, local women self-help groups or mothers of children studying in the schools. This will not only ensure a means of employment and income for the SHGs, but also ensure that the local pallets are taken into consideration while cooking meals. For proper monitoring, meetings of steering-cum-monitoring committee at block level should be held on regular basis. The minutes of the meetings should be sent to the central, state and district nodal authorities.
- Orders of the government giving powers to Block level nodal agency to sanction the conversion charges to the implementing agency on production of utilization certificate should be implemented to ensure regular payment of conversion charges to implementing agency.
- Utilization certificates of food grains/funds from the school should be taken by the block level officer on priority basis and should be sent to the district authority so that release of funds is expedited.

PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM (PDS)

- Improving procedure for selection of BPL – The present procedure for selection of BPL beneficiaries is opaque, bureaucratic, and does not involve gram sabha. The basis on which village wise cap on the maximum number of entitled beneficiaries is fixed, is not clear and not well defined. A clear policy should be laid down by the Ministry of Rural Development.
- Reducing paper work and transaction costs – Due to cumbersome procedures, often there is a time difference of several days between the FPS dealer depositing his bank draft and the grain being released to him. This unnecessarily blocks the money of the dealer. It is suggested that the dealer should deposit advance directly in the bank account of the SFC/FCI, and there is no necessity of the bank draft being handled physically. The SFC/FCI should put its account number on the web so that anyone can see which dealer has deposited, when, and how much. On the same page SFC/FCI should issue an electronic release order. On the same day SFC/FCI should issue a manual release order too, as not all shop keepers will have computer facility at present. This will bring transparency in the entire operation, and anyone can see where delay is taking place.
- Fixation of APL quota – The norm for release of APL quota should be transparent and realistic. Some states, such as Bihar, Jharkhand and Uttar Pradesh are not releasing the APL quota on the ground that they did not lift it in the past when the market price was low. This policy favours the southern states which have been subsidizing the APL quota out of state funds, and punishes the poorer states.
- Leakages in APL quota – One of the main reasons for the black marketing of the APL quota is the fact that GOI does not release full quota as per the number of APL cards, which gives a handle to the dealer to refuse supplies on the ground that the limited quota has already been lifted. In case GOI does not release full quota for APL, the cardholders' entitlement should be reduced accordingly, and this fact must be given due publicity.
- Elimination of Ghost Ration Cards – All card holders must be photographed, and their details along with their photographs should be in the public domain. This will make it easy for the civil society or consumers to check the list.
- There should be only one annual order from the district indicating quota of each dealer, so that the dealer does not have to wait every month for the district to issue allotment order. Government should also issue just one order in the beginning of the year in which quota of all the dealers can be mentioned.
- Making it obligatory for dealers to sell non-cereal items – Dealers should be asked to improve their viability by selling items of mass consumption other than wheat and rice. They should be encouraged to do so by issuing a specific order to that effect. Gujarat has made FPS multi-product shops, but no such order exists in many states. The dealers' psychology is that "everything is prohibited unless specifically permitted".
- Role of Panchayat should be increased – We recommend the active and positive role of Panchayats in preparing 'correct schedule' of cardholders, cardless households, and BPL and APL categories by income and occupation. This role of Panchayats has to be interactive with State Supply Office/BDO etc. for cross check/double check to ensure transparent functioning of the system. In this context, we recommend Training for Panchayat Members, including Panchayat Presidents, arranged by the State Supply Depart-

ment. These training programmes should take into confidence the consumers' bodies (NGOs), Research Institutes and Universities located in the neighbourhood to play a constructive role

- Itemized display for public – We recommend public display of quantity of items distributed by the Fair Price Shop Dealers per period, and quantity of items remaining undistributed, one month-wise calendar used for each of these 'displays'. The State Supply Department will have to provide these calendars through the Supply Inspectors for use by the FPS Dealers.

WIDOW PENSION SCHEME

- Expand coverage and universalize - Given that the number of widow women in the unorganized sector in the country is very high number. It is evident that the coverage of the scheme is severely inadequate. It is necessary to expand this. The principle of universalisation with clearly defined exclusion criteria is the demonstrated alternative as in the cases of Rajasthan which have done away with the Below Poverty Line criteria.
- Institutionalize proactive identification and enrolment mechanisms-Programme should have widened their coverage for pensions. Enrolment mechanisms even in their current form of camps, Mela/camps/khula darbars, and surveys need to be held regularly on fixed dates and widely publicized. It must be incumbent on the administration to identify pensioners rather than for persons to prove themselves eligible.
- Simplify application and sanctioning process- A single window system where applicants can obtain all the necessary supporting documents for their pension application as well as submit their pension application for processing is recommended. Facilitation support to complete all the required procedures for submitting the form must be provided at the relevant administrative office and the locations where camps or village level enrolment drives are being held. Further the processing times for sanctioning of pensions must be specified, proactively disclosed and have strict enforcement provisions such as fines for delays. The timelines, as specified in the guidelines must not be more than three months. Where Right to Public Service Acts is in place, pensions should be brought under its ambit.
- Intimating reasons for pension application- If a pension application has been rejected on grounds of inadequate supporting documents or discrepancies in the documents (particularly with regard to age, which is commonly reported), the administration should take proactive measures to assist the applicant in furnishing necessary documents. In cases where a pension application cannot be entertained the applicant should be informed within a specified time period about the reason for rejection.
- Pensioner Dashboards-Efforts should be made to make information available in a form which is useful to pensioners. They should firstly be given a record of their pensions (for example in the form of a pass-book). Secondly, simple, transparent mechanisms for tracking applications should be introduced. Thirdly, all information related to allocations and expenditures should be easily accessible at all levels.
- Indexing and rationalizing amounts-Currently there is no rationale for the widow pension amount. It is strongly recommended that it be indexed to inflation and revised annually (in the same manner as MN-REGA wage rates and that of the salaries of government servants.) While the new guidelines urge states to provide an addition amount which is equal to the assistance provided by the Central Government, it does not specify a minimum.
- Regular payments-Regular disbursement of funds on a fixed date every month must be followed at everywhere. In case of payment delays, compensation must be paid to the pensioner. States must formulate rules to this effect. A systematic survey of the distance between the payment agency and the village/area where beneficiaries reside must be undertaken and where the distance is over 3 km, alternative modes of delivery must be put in place such as doorstep delivery, where digital payment gateway not adopted so far.
- Social audits and other transparency and accountability measures-The absence of community monitoring in any state emerges as a stark finding. As the new NSAP guidelines state, social audits must be made mandatory and states must issue detailed rules on its implementation and redressal.

INDIRA AWAS YOJNA (IAY)

- Eligibility criteria needs to be changed- In backward areas, the Government needs to address the issue of

housing from the perspective that in addition to general housing shortage, there are shortages on account of violence in areas or natural calamity in which houses have been destroyed. It is therefore imperative that the Government must make attempts to proactively consider that all sections of people whose houses have been destroyed in violence or otherwise should be eligible under IAY, no matter whether they belong to BPL or not .

- **Augmenting utilization of IAY allocation-** In order to effectively utilize IAY allocations disbursed to states, state governments should not be much worried about its share rather leverage the allocation for better reduction of shelter-less areas. It is time that states must learn from other states like Gujarat, Punjab and some districts in Uttar Pradesh, who have succeeded in exhausting their existing BPL lists for the IAY and now making move to eye to include non-BPL households under IAY.
- **Ensuring Transparency in Beneficiary Selection-**To ensure transparency in selection of beneficiaries, it is needed that the districts follow the Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC) instead of the BPL survey while finalizing the list of eligible IAY beneficiaries. It may be noted that the methodology adopted under SECC is more objective and is enabled with simplified process for beneficiary identification. The three-fold classification of rural households under SECC would expectedly ensure identification of those who truly require assistance under IAY the most. Moreover, validity of such list needs to be on yearly basis, not 5 years as currently practiced.
- **Prioritization of Physical Monitoring at grassroots-** There is no systematic verification mechanism during and after construction. Monitoring of construction is one of the bigger issues that have severely dented the effective operationalisation of the scheme at the grassroots. Social audits and participatory monitoring with greater involvement of PRI functionaries and representatives of households can be ensured. Up to 5% funds under scheme must be kept aside for monitoring purpose. Ground Positioning System (GPS) based monitoring of physical targets with photographs to ensure correct reporting needs to be pursued.
- **Qualitative dwelling units to be targeted-** Since the beneficiary takes up the responsibility to construct the house on its own, quality guidance or technical guidance is of paramount importance. Trained and skilled hands cannot be hired by beneficiaries due to affordability factor as well as the assisted amount under scheme is not sufficient. It is, therefore, suggested that training to beneficiaries on matters related to construction methodology, type design and masonry may be imparted at the GP level. Proven alternate and indigenous technologies that are cost effective and environment friendly needed to be popularized through GPs.
- **Increased Involvement of Local Stakeholders -** Upfront efforts to involve stakeholders under IAY are needed. The need for improving efficiency, local stakeholders need to be involved effectively in IAY delivery. NGOs must be professionally engaged to support PRIs to facilitate safe and sustainable habitat development under IAY system operationalisation.
- **Generating awareness on additional financing option and convergence -**Awareness generation through intensive IEC activities using electronic media, print, press advertisements, outreach contacts, Panchayat meetings, village level meetings, and interpersonal communication etc. on the availability of top up loan from any nationalized bank at very low or subsidized rate of interest. Also, awareness needs to be generated about provision for electricity connection to IAY houses through convergence approach.

OVERVIEW & METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND

Social protection has a crucial role to play in reducing poverty. It tackles the insecurity trap for protecting poor people from shocks and reducing their extreme vulnerability. It helps them conserve and accumulate assets so they can improve their livelihoods and productivity. While the private, informal and public sectors all have roles to play in providing social protection, the public provision of social protection needs to be prioritized¹. Public schemes play an important role in poverty reduction, reducing inequalities and promoting inclusive growth. It is estimated that a rural poor household could gain substantial support if they are able to access the benefits of public schemes. On one hand this is dependent on effective implementation of these schemes by a responsive and accountable delivery mechanism and on the other hand this is enabled through demand raised by an aware citizen. The World Social Protection Report 2013/14: Building economic recovery, inclusive development and social justice by the International Labour Organization claims that only 27% of the global population enjoys full access to social protection and social security. Unofficial sources claim that in India this could be below 10%². This is evident in the low budget utilization of some of the schemes. Social security is essential for promoting equitable growth and inclusive development for realization of human rights for all individuals. Increased access to services has direct impact on improving the human development indicators.

Education, Health care, Food security, Pension and housing— these are all people's basic rights. Provision of these services and forms of social security is the undeniable responsibility of the state and the government must provide to all people in form of universal entitlements. India implements massive food, livelihood and social security programmes— some of the largest in the world. Through this survey

we review three key social protection measures— The programmes related to food security (Public Distribution System, Integrated Child Development Scheme and Mid-Day Meal), the social security programme (for widows) and the Rural Housing Scheme.

Food Security- 1) Public Distribution System: The public distribution system (PDS) is among the most important food security programmes of the Government of India. Since the introduction of the PDS, many field based studies were done. Most of them have focused on inclusion and exclusion errors (see e.g., Swaminathan and Misra 2001; Hirway 2003; Khera 2008; Mahamallik and Sahu 2011). Using National Sample Survey (NSS) data, others have focused on leakages from the PDS (see, e.g., Jha and Ramaswami 2010; Himanshu and Sen 2011; Khera 2011c, among others). Several other equally important questions, e.g., the nutritional impact of the PDS, policy changes in the past decade (especially at the state level), the role of the PDS in providing food security, have remained neglected³.

The National Food Security Act (NFSA) was enacted by the Indian Parliament on 10 September 2013, after a long struggle for legal recognition of the right to food. The National Food Security Act requires the PDS to cover at least 75% of the rural population and 50% of the urban population at the all-India level. These ratios are adjusted state-wise, so that the coverage is higher in the poorer states. For instance, in rural Jharkhand, the mandatory coverage is 86%, in rural Bihar, coverage is 85%, in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, coverage is 80%.

After the enactment of National Food Security Act there are also states where the Public distribution system has been well expanded and improved e.g. In many states under PDS— Antyodaya households are getting 35 kg of food grains per month at Rs 3/kg for rice, Rs 2/kg for wheat, Rs 1/kg for millets. The Pri-

¹ S Parasuraman — Economic Liberalization, Informalization of labour and social protection in India

² S Parasuraman — Economic Liberalization, Informalization of labour and social protection in India

³ Reetika Khera, Revival of the Public Distribution System: Evidence and Explanations, Economic & Political Weekly EPW November 5, 2011 vol xlvi nos 44 & 45

ority households are also getting 5 kg per person per month at the same price and also children below the age of 6 years at local anganwadi are getting cooked meals or take home rations and hot, cooked nutritious meal every day for school children in schools, whichever is applicable.

Three years have gone by since the passing of the NFSA, yet its implementation leaves much to be desired. Some states are yet to bring their public distribution system in line with the Act. Some households are gaining from NFSA and others are losing, in terms of PDS entitlements. The losers are mainly small households that used to have a BPL card: they used to get 35 kg per month but are now getting 5 kg per person per month, i.e. less than before if the household size is below 7. The gainers are mainly households that had no ration card earlier, or an APL (or "atirikt BPL") card. Overall, PDS entitlements have remained much the same after NFSA, for an average household. However, under the per-capita system, the distribution across households is more equitable than before. If we look at individuals instead of households, 29% are losers and 55% are gainers⁴.

However there are confusions in the PDS system after Aadhaar linkage in the ground. The evidence from Manika block (one of the surveyed block) of Jharkhand reflect that in between August and October 2016, Jharkhand moved towards adopting a 'paperless' public distribution system (PDS), linked to individual Aadhaar numbers. A person's identity is to be authenticated at a ration dealer's shop using their biometrics, a 'point of sales' machine then calculates what they are eligible for and the purchase is made. The state decided to make the move to this biometric-authenticated PDS system in separate ways, depending on internet connectivity in different regions. The online system is meant for regions with strong internet connections. Once an Aadhaar-linked person goes to a ration dealer's shop, the POS machine is used to ID them using their biometrics and if that works, they are given a receipt, asked for the payment and given the ration due to their household. The offline system seems to work almost exactly in the way the old register system did – except that instead of a register the dealer uses a POS machine and those without Aadhaar cards aren't eligible to rations.

According to government data, more than 90% of the population in Jharkhand is registered in the Aadhaar system. While this is an impressive number at first glance, it seems as though the people excluded are often those who most need the PDS – the elderly who live alone, persons with disabilities and others who for some reason or the other were simply not able to get their card made.

⁴ Special Article, Jean Drèze and Reetika Khera

Integrated Child Development Services: Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) is the most important scheme for children under six years of age. A survey done by Ministry of women and Child Development in 2013-14 showed that 29% of children were under-weight while 39% were too short for their age. There has been some progress in reducing malnutrition during the last decade. For instance, the proportion of underweight children came down from 42% in 2005 to 29% in 2013-14. But this much progress is not enough. India still has worse malnutrition rates than most other countries in the world.

The NFSA also included various provisions to protect children's right to food and improve their health and well being. In response to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) on the right to food, the Supreme Court has issued many orders on ICDS.

1. Universalization- To ensure that all children 6 years of age, pregnant and lactating women and all adolescent girls must have access to an Anganwadi and are entitled to all ICDS services.
2. Supplementary nutrition: Children aged between 6 months and 6 years must get food from the Anganwadi that provides atleast 500 calories and 12-15 grams of protein per child per day. This should be available for atleast 300 days per year.
3. Private contractors cannot be involved by governments to supply supplementary nutrition in ICDS. NFSA also covers the supplementary nutrition part of ICDS and confirms the entitlements mentioned above.

If ICDS is to meet its objectives, more funds are required from the central government. The financial norms for supplementary nutrition have not been increased for many years. Funds are also needed for better infrastructure. Some states, like Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand have allocated small amount to ICDS food. The quality of ICDS for children also leaves much to be desired in many of the poorer states.

Mid-Day meal Programme: Poverty and malnutrition among students, hailing from low income families have become a major concern in India. As a result, the Mid-Day Meal Programme was launched to universalise primary education, increase enrolment rates, reduce dropout rates as well as improve the nutritional status of students in primary classes. MDM is the world's largest school meal programme and reaches an estimated 11 crore children across 12 lakh schools in India. The scheme is implemented through the State/UT Governments. The central and state governments share the cost of the Midday

Meal Scheme, with the centre providing 75 percent and the states 25 percent.

The objectives of the Mid-Day Meal Scheme are to address two of the pressing problems for majority of children in India, viz. hunger and education by:

1. Improving the nutritional status of children in classes I – VIII in Government school and
2. Encouraging poor children, belonging to disadvantaged sections, to attend school more regularly and help them concentrate on classroom activities.

The school meals are an important entitlement for children, legally enforceable under Supreme Court orders as well as under the National Food Security Act. Numerous studies like *Study of Impact of Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Programme on School Enrollments* show that India's midday meal scheme has made an important contribution to higher school attendance, better child nutrition and more effective learning. Midday meals also help to break the barriers of class and caste by imparting to children of diverse backgrounds a habit of sharing meals.

Several State Governments have evolved practices to improve the implementation of the MDMS in their states. These include involving mothers of students in implementation of the scheme in Uttarakhand and Jharkhand; creation of kitchen gardens, i.e., food is grown in the premises of the school, in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Punjab and West Bengal; construction of dining halls in Tamil Nadu; and increased community participation in the implementation of the scheme in Gujarat. There are however serious concerns related to quality and quantity of the meal in almost all the schools, with a lot of scope for improvement. As seen above, some of the issues were exaggeration of attendance rates, improper maintenance of accounts related to rice and other cooking costs, poor infrastructure facilities, lack of a varied menu, poor quality of food, etc. There were also problems related to the selection of the cooking agency, delay in payment and so on. However, many of these were rectified once the community became involved in monitoring the MDM. Once the community was made aware of the provisions of the scheme and was mobilised to monitor it, the cooking agency and the headmaster also became more accountable.

Widow Pension Scheme- Pension Schemes are implemented as part of the National social assistance programme (NSAP) to provide a minimum national standard of social assistance for the poor. The Govt. of India runs three non-contributory pension schemes as part of the NSAP. These are the Indira

Gandhi National Old Age Pension Scheme, the Indira Gandhi National Widow Pension Scheme, and The Indira Gandhi National Disable Pension Scheme. For IGNWPS, widows in the age group of 40-59 years from BPL households are getting 300 per month from Central Government.

With regard to widow pension benefits, evidence shows that the Scheme is reaching the intended beneficiaries. A survey in 2013 by researchers at the Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi, recorded that among nearly 900 rural respondents selected at random from the official pension lists in 10 States, 97 per cent were getting their pension. The majority of beneficiaries- 76⁵ per cent, however, said they received pensions in their bank accounts after delays of over a month. While the amounts are small, they are crucial in supplementing the resources to allow them to afford medicines, food, and other necessities. But it is crucial to note that vast shortages in implementation can be observed. One of the main problems is that the management of the schemes is mostly poor, with much planning and implementation left to lower level bureaucracy who has little capacity or the motivation to deliver services to the poor effectively. Accountability is another serious problem, there is little results-culture, and the monitoring and supervision required to obtain that.

Indira Awas Yojana - Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awas Yojana is a renamed and improved version of Indira Awas Yojana rural housing scheme. It is a social welfare flagship programme, created by the Indian Government, to provide housing for the rural poor in India. The broad purpose of the scheme is to provide financial assistance to some of the weakest sections of society for them to upgrade or construct a house of respectable quality for their personal living. In order to estimate the order of magnitude of the shortage of housing in rural India, the Planning Commission estimates the shortage of houses to be about 40 million housing units (MoRD 2011, p. 9).

Also in the National Housing policy (Vide clause no 4.9.3), the women need for acquiring ownership of land and house is emphasized. The housing schemes also insist on ownership of two cents of land to become eligible for inclusion in the scheme. Landless women who are the most deprived socially and economically do not come under the purview of the schemes at all. Though different departments of the government deal with land and housing, little integration among the departments concerned exists. Over time and with experience it was realized that adequate housing is not just mere provisioning of four walls and a roof but implies access to basic amenities of water, sanitation and domestic energy,

5 A PEEP at another India, Jean Drèze and Reetika Khera with the PEEP Team

offering a sense of privacy, safety and dignity and opportunities for income generation. It was also realized that large segments of rural population have low levels of income and the poorest do not even have house-sites. Especially for BPL households in the rural areas, access to credit is critical and access to affordable housing is constrained primarily on account of low level of household income and negligible savings. Therefore, a need was felt to improve the house infrastructure in rural areas by moving from allocation-based schemes to a broader perspective having a basket of bankable schemes to eradicate shelterlessness from the country⁶. In the implementation of the Rural Housing Scheme there are issues in the ground like transparency in selection of beneficiaries in states, unsupportive financial institutions to additional finance to beneficiaries were noted. Also Banks used to provide funds only when potential borrowers provided sufficient proof of their capacity to repay loans in prescribed manner.

A close look at India's record in providing social security shows that while only a fraction of citizens enjoy any "protection" at all, these are being further eroded with the current pattern of economic growth. Even this survey reveals that - priorities, the poorest communities have shown clear preference towards making social security measures more efficient and accountable. They reinforce the widely accepted conclusion that provision of mid-day meals, Integrated Child Development Scheme, effective Public Distribution System, Widow Pension, Rural Housing Scheme etc. have added to the quality of life for millions, but such provisions are increasingly facing budget cuts instead of enhancement.

Study References: Keeping these perspectives in the forefront and to understand as to what extent the attempts of the Government of India to implement food security programme (PDS, MDM and ICDS), social security programme for widow(Widow pension) and Rural Housing Scheme for the poor has come good in 6 most backward districts of Northern India, ActionAid Association with the support of European Union intended to institute a study for the purpose so as to identify programmatic and policy interventions further required to accomplish the task of enabling the poor to better access of the entitlements in these areas.

Furthermore, Contrary to a common belief in policy debates (and academic circles) that the food security and social security programmes are an irreparably dysfunctional schemes; this survey finds that many state governments have undertaken a series of measures that have made the food security pro-

⁶ Study Report on "Evaluation of Rural Housing Programme (IAY) under Economic Stimulus Package (ESP) in Selected Naxal Affected Districts Supported by NitiAyog, Government of India

gramme functional. Therefore we also intended to understand the state-specific programme operational processes and to ascertain state specific implementation pattern in 6 backward districts of Northern India.

STUDY APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The survey on implementation status of five entitlement programme was initiated by ActionAid Association with support of European Union and conducted by volunteers of the local organisations (Samvad Samajhik Sansthan, Samajhik Sodh Evam-Vikas Sansthan, Vikas Sahyog Kendra, Vasudha Vikas Sansthan). The Survey took place in six backward districts of five states (Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh) during Jan-April 2017. In each district; we selected 7 Blocks and 96 panchayats for this survey where our partner organisations are working.

These surveys have been envisaged; to address some of the gaps in the implementation, and understand the ground realities in six backward districts in five states. This survey has been designed to also explore avenues of influencing policy decisions and affecting change in whatever practical way possible, giving it an action oriented edge.

The programmes covered by the survey were: Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme, Mid-Day Meal (MDM) Scheme, Public Distribution System (PDS), Rural Housing Scheme (Indira Awaas Yojana) and Social Security Pensions (Widow Pension). The survey consisted of two parts: First, a household questionnaire that focused on Public Distribution system, Midday meal and Integrated Child Development Scheme, and second, a door-to-door verification of widow pension and Indira Awaas Yojana that included a detailed pension and housing questionnaire. A total of 2841 households who have been availing benefits from these entitlements were covered during the survey.

SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

Inception of the Study- During inception phase, we had undertaken consultative meeting with the key representatives of the organisations to gain a complete understanding of the study and the objectives behind the current study.

Pre testing of study questionnaires- After inception we had undertaken pre-testing of all tools in questionnaires in East Champaran district. The study team had visited schools, Anganwadi Centres, and Fair price shop. The team had also visited beneficiaries of Indira Awas Yojana and Widow Pension.

Training of Study team- The field supervisors were

SURVEY SAMPLE

STATE	DISTRICT	BLOCK	PANCHAYAT	NO. OF VILLAGES/ HAMLETS
Bihar	East Champaran	Chakia	13	60
Jharkhand	Latehar	Manika	8	42
Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	Meghnagar	18	25
Himachal Pradesh	Chamba	Chamba Mehala	20	40
Uttar Pradesh	Pratapgarh	Kalakanker	20	30
	Barabanki	Nindura	17	24
5 STATES	6 DISTRICTS	7 BLOCKS	96	234



TOTAL NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD COVERED

STATE	DISTRICT	WIDOW PENSION	ICDS	MDM	IAY	PDS	TOTAL
Madhya Pradesh	Jhabua	125	74	46	125	125	495
Jharkhand	Latehar	98	20	42	21	203	384
Himachal Pradesh	Chamba	139	30	30	130	188	517
Uttar Pradesh	Pratapgarh	98	42	32	97	100	369
	Barabanki	74	28	24	81	90	297
Bihar	E.Champaran	191	58	55	228	247	779
		725	252	229	682	953	2841

provided with class-room as well as on-site training in all the surveyed districts. Actual fieldwork commenced only once the interviewers were trained to the satisfaction of researchers.

Primary Research- As per study requirement, both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used for Primary data collection.

For ICDS and MDM: In each village, team visited the Anganwadi centres, local primary school without prior announcement and enquire about the status of Anganwadi centres and Mid-Day meal from the Anganwadi worker and the teachers. They tried to visit the school at the time of the distribution of supplementary food and Mid-Day meal and observe the process. They also talked to the person who cooks the food, and to a few parents.

For PDS: The team also visited at least 10 household (Members of a family who share the same "chulha") in each village and enquire about the status of public distribution system from members of the family. In many places they visited the PDS shop at the time of the distribution of grain and observe the process. They talked to the person who have a ration card, and to a few who didnot have a ration card.

For Widow Pension and Indira Awaas Yojana: Team-visited at least 5 eligible beneficiaries in each village for each scheme and enquire about the status of widow pension and rural housing scheme.

Data Tabulation: All the filled-in interview schedules underwent a process of editing and data entry. The filled-in interview schedules were further processed using SPSS data entry. The data processing was carried out with the help of trained office editor and trained data entry operators under the supervision of the Data Analyst. Once the data was entered and edited, the analysis of data was undertaken and the final tables were generated.

Report Structure: The study report comprises of five major chapters. While Chapter-I is devoted to illustrate study methodology and study processes, Chapter-II makes a brief profile of Socio demographic profile of the respondents. Chapter-III elucidates the assessment of entitlement Implementation at field level. Chapter-IV elucidates the State wise-field level findings and Chapter-V makes an inventory of problems associated with implementation of all the five entitlements as well as action interventions suggested there of in order to make entitlements purposive.

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

Socio Demographic Profile of respondent households under the present study, a total number of 2841 household who have been getting benefits of the Integrated Child Development Scheme, Mid-Day Meal and Public Distribution System, Widow Pension and Indira Awas Yojana were interviewed. Selected randomly from the surveyed villages, the sample respondents were covered from 234 villages spread over 11 blocks and 6 backward districts in the states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

This chapter focuses on the socio-economic, demographic as well as programmatic profiles of respondent beneficiaries.

BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS:

It was noted that a majority (69%) of the respondents contacted under the study were women. State level data indicates that in Bihar, an overwhelming majority (78%) were women, whereas in Jharkhand, the distribution of men and women were almost equal in proportion. In Madhya Pradesh, the number of female respondents was higher with 65% and male constituted a little over one-third (35%) of the total respondents contacted in the state. The data from Uttar Pradesh also indicates that, the number of female respondents was higher with 72% and in Himachal Pradesh majority (64%) of the respondents were women.

By and large, respondents contacted in the study area were in the productive agegroup, as 70% of the respondents were 40-60 years old followed by 13.8% in the age bracket of 30-40 years. In Bihar, 63.8% were in the age group of 40-60 years followed by 34.1% in the age group 30-40 years. Jharkhand showed a similar trend too with 48% respondents were 40-50 years, followed by 15% in the age group 30-40 years. In Madhya Pradesh also 69% of the respondents were 41-60 years old and in Uttar Pradesh 79.1% were in the age group of 40-60 years.

Of about 72% respondents contacted in the study area were illiterate or functionally literate, less than 18% of the sample was educated up to primary level. State-wise data revealed in Jharkhand 90% of the respondents were illiterate/functionally literate, only 4% respondents with education up to upper primary. In Bihar a big chunk of the respondents were under the illiterate/functionally literate category (90%) and 8% of the respondents had completed primary level of education. In Madhya Pradesh 75% of respondents were illiterate/functionally literate, 25% were educated up to primary level. In Himachal Pradesh also 69% respondents were under the illiterate/functionally literate category and in Uttar Pradesh respondents percentage under the illiterate/functionally literate category was 85%.

The total beneficiaries contacted under the study belonged to Scheduled Castes (SCs) followed by 40% Scheduled Tribe (ST) and the rest 14% were from Muslim. State-wise variations indicated that in Bihar, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh a majority of the respondents were SCs, and in Jharkhand and Madhya Pradesh, a majority (73%) belonged to the STs and 5% Gujjars were covered in Himachal Pradesh. In one of the selected district in Uttar Pradesh (Pratapgarh), 14% respondents were noted to be Muslims.

Awareness & Participation: Under the study it was also ascertained whether respondents had knowledge about on-going centrally sponsored programme specially food security schemes, social security schemes, Rural housing scheme etc and their level of participation in that programme. It was noted that a majority (88%) had knowledge about the centrally sponsored programme being implemented in their areas and cent percent indicated to have participated in that programme. It thus indicates that their knowledge stems from their participation in the centrally sponsored programme.

FIELD LEVEL FINDINGS

INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Access to Anganwadi: There has been an increase in the number of Anganwadis during the last 3 years, in response to Supreme Court orders as well as to community demand. The number of children covered by the Anganwadi has also risen significantly in the studied area. Still, 27% respondents said that there are habitations without Anganwadi- especially small hamlets where poor communities reside.

Awareness and access to the services of Anganwadi: Having an Anganwadi within accessible distance is- necessary. Then knowing about the various services of Anganwadi and actually receiving the services is important. The field survey reveals that,

The above table shows that a small proportion of the people know about the services like health check-ups and referral. This is likely when these services are weak. Supplementary nutrition is the service which most people know, are receiving it. Among children aged 3-6 years, 46% get pre – school education from the Anganwadi. Some of these numbers indicates improvement over time, but they also show that more needs to be done.

Many of the people spoken to in the surveyed villages stated that their children were not learning at the AWCs. This aspect of the survey however could not be quantified, as no learning assessment of the children going to AWCs could be made. Also it is important to note that there were very few toys, games and learning aids at most of the centres.

Infrastructure Gap: Field level survey shows major infrastructure gaps in ICDS. Of the 231 Anganwadi Centres we covered during the survey and as per the findings of this survey, existing infrastructure of the Anganwadi is a key concern in effective delivery of targeted services by the Anganwadi. The analysis shows that more than 67% centres have Pucca (well-

TABLE 1: AWARENESS AND ACCESS TO THE SERVICES OF ANGANWADI: SURVEY FINDINGS (SELECTED DISTRICTS)

Proportion of mothers of young children who are aware about the following Anganwadi services.	
Supplementary Nutrition	92.8%
Immunization	57%
Health Check up	29%
Referral	12%
Proportion of intended beneficiaries who are getting supplementary nutrition:	
6 months to 3 years	89.8%
3 to 6 years	96%
Proportion of children aged 3-6 years who get pre-school education at anganwadi centres.	46%
Proportion of Anganwadi which were opening regularly (25 or more days in a month)	67%

constructed) building, whereas remaining 33% are not having well-constructed building. Out of 67%, only 55% Anganwadi centre have their own building and remaining are running in nearest school building or Gram Panchayat Bhawan, rented building or in their own house of Anganwadi worker.

Also less than 33% centres do not have toilet facilities and are also devoid of drinking water facilities. And only 85% have weight machine at centres and 88% centres have relevant toys for children. Due to unavailability of government building or any building near the village, parents are not too keen to send them to Anganwadi centres, infact Anganwadi workers were found to be less motivated and showed low interest in running the centres. Concerning the facilities available at centre, out of 231, only 33% centers have toilet facilities.

QUALITY ISSUES

Quality services also make the Anganwadi more attractive, helping to ensure that people monitor it actively. Although almost all children (0-3 years) who

FIGURE 1: STATUS OF AWC IN DISTRICTS

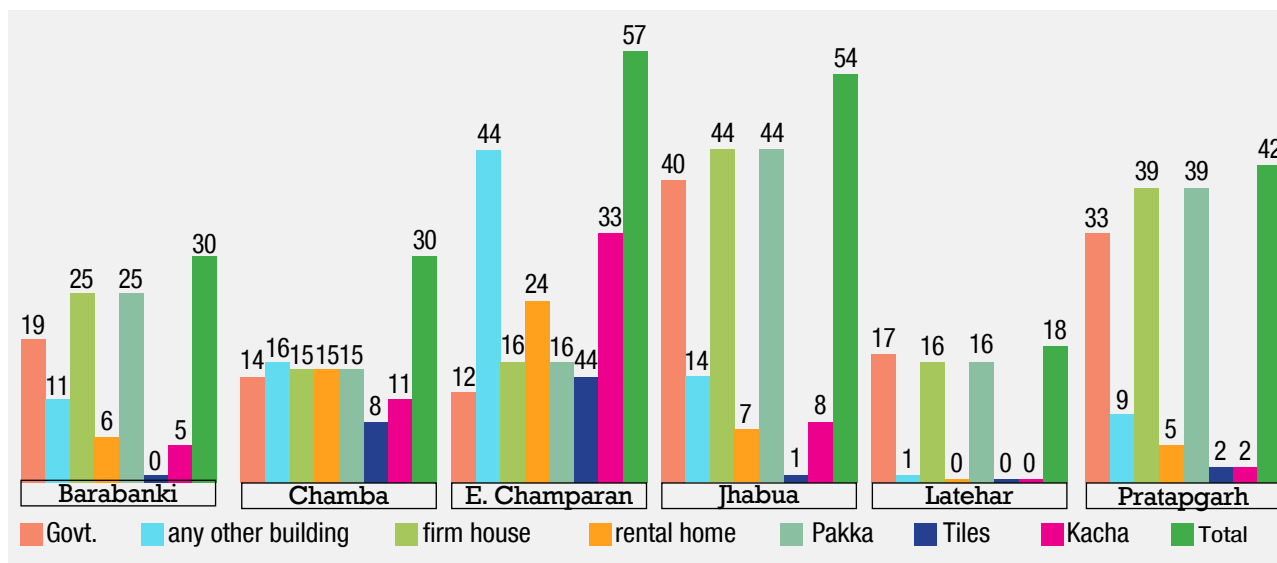
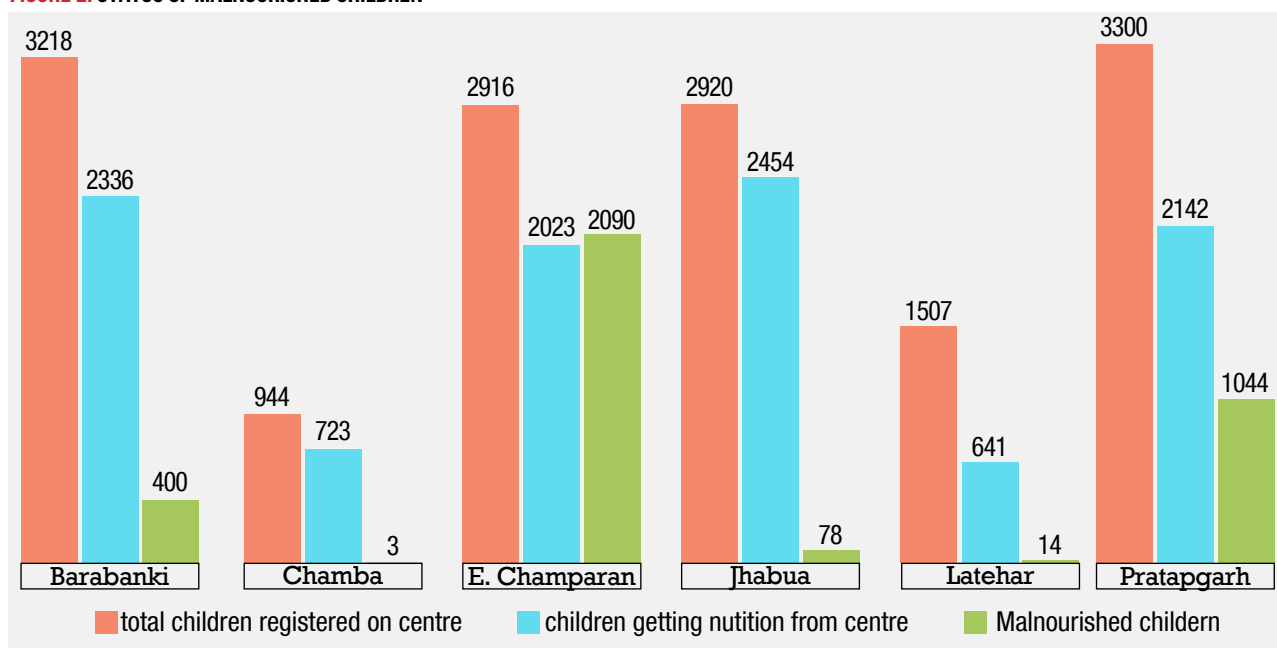


FIGURE 2: STATUS OF MALNOURISHED CHILDREN



are registered under that centre, getting the nutrition, but the alarming data is that only 18% children are getting nutrition at Anganwadi centres, and 82% children are given to take for their home. Therefore it is very clear that centre is only for distributing the supplementary nutrition, not providing other universal services that are defined under Integrated Child development Services.

Besides the above situation, around 25% children registered in AWCs are malnourished and out of that more than 50% are comes under 'A' grade. As per guidelines, children who come under malnourished category are supposed to get double ration, but many of the centers (approx.118 centres) are not pro-

viding it and 8 centres were not aware about such guidelines.

Out of total 10333 children were registered and out of between (3-6) age group only 6064 children were found present at centres while conducting the survey. More than 60% children who are getting the supplementary nutrition almost every day and 4% children who are getting supplementary nutrition less than 10 days and 6 percent children getting supplementary nutrition between 1- to 20 days. In Jharkhand Anganwadis have started giving eggs which is important as the egg contains better quality protein. Some respondents stated that even for children below the age of three, hot

FIGURE 8: ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL

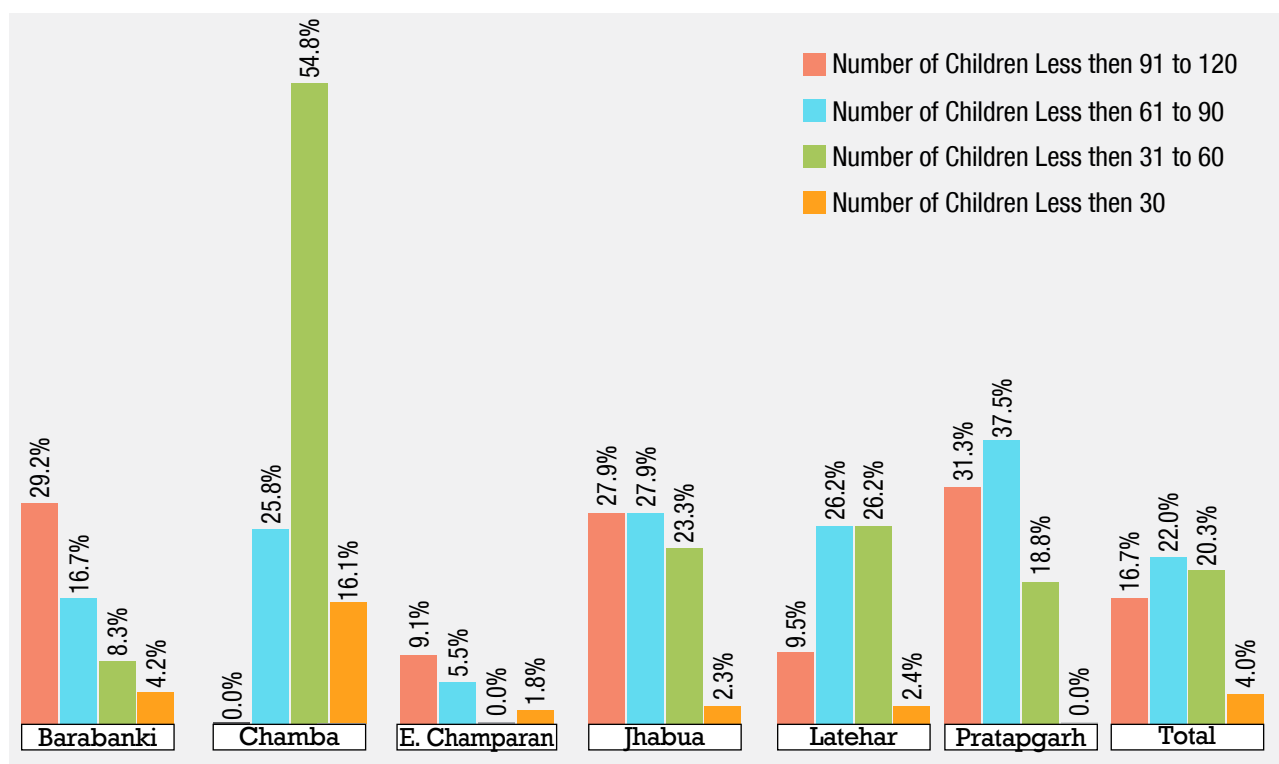
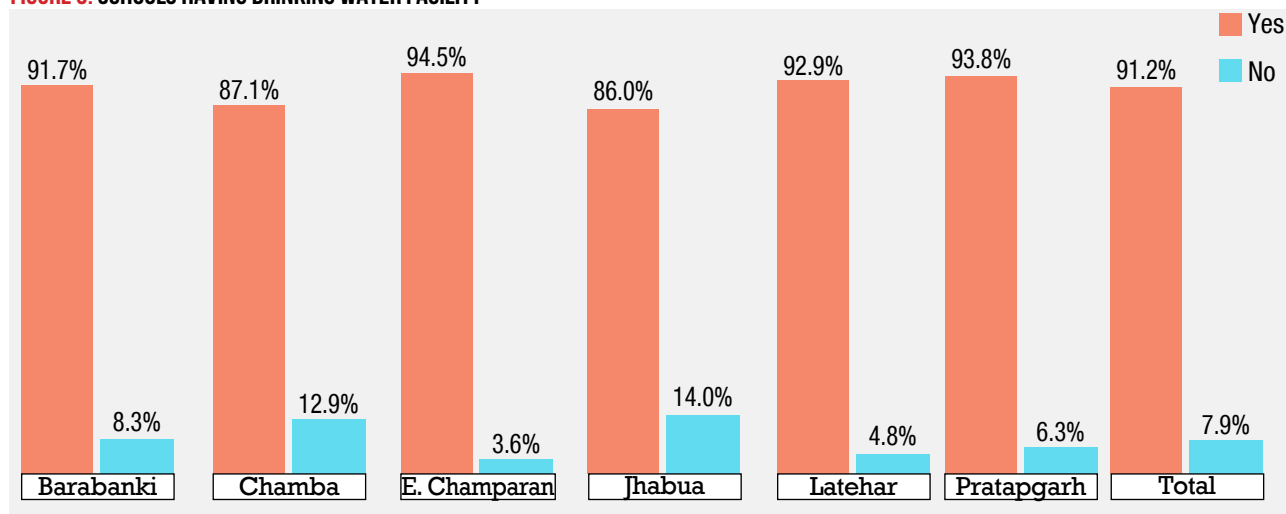


FIGURE 9: SCHOOLS HAVING DRINKING WATER FACILITY



cooked meals work better than take home rations.

CASE STUDY

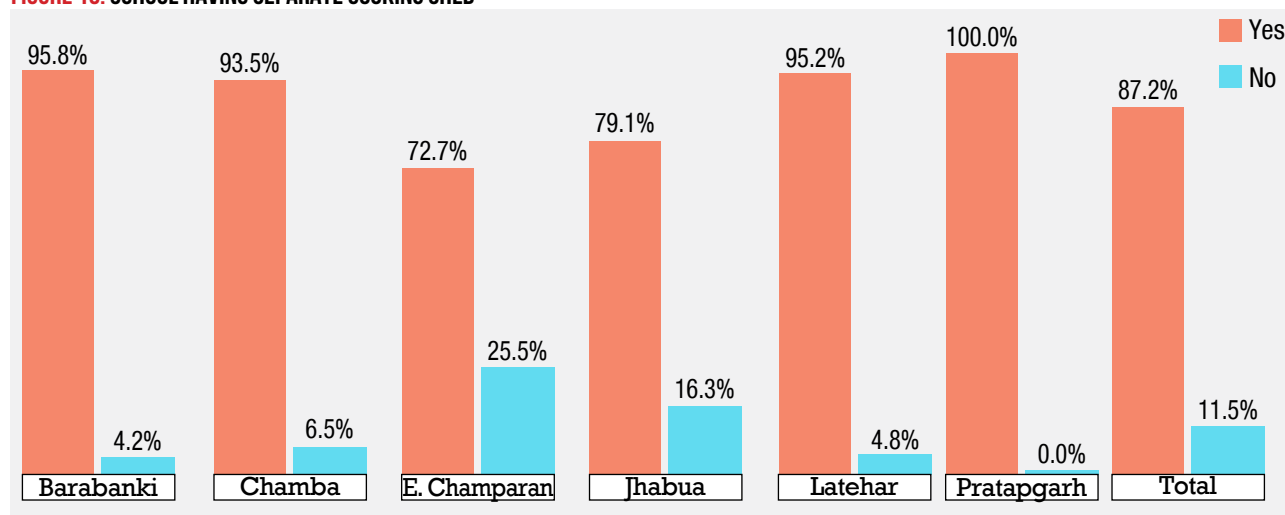
In the Sardamdag village centre in Latehar districts there were no toys, games and learning aids. An Anganwadi worker has not been recruited for the last one year, which seems rare if the centre is opened 25 days a month and everyday there has to be one and a half hour learning sessions. Even if some learning is happening at the centre it is evident that the parents do not think so, which may also be attributed to the fact that parents are not made party to their children's learning.

MID-DAY MEAL SCHEMES

The provision of cooked, nutritious midday meals in primary schools is another example of social arrangement geared to the protection of children's rights. Their primary objective is to promote the right to food and the right to education, but they can also serve many other useful purposes. Today, every child who attends a government or government assisted primary school is entitled to a hot cooked nutritious midday meal, as per Supreme Court orders.

However, this entitlement is far from being realised: the coverage of midday meals is close to universal,

FIGURE 10: SCHOOL HAVING SEPARATE COOKING SHED



but their quality still leaves much to be desired in surveyed states.

LESS ENROLMENT OF STUDENTS IN THE SCHOOL

In total we have reached 215 schools, whereas 227 primary schools are government school and remaining are government added. Only 7% schools having registration between 121 to 150 and 27% school having registration more than 150 children's. 66% schools are having registration below 120 and the presence of students will be less than registration. There are several factors that work behind less enrolment as well as less attendance. As per Right to Education Act, all state governments are duty bound to provide free and compulsory education to all children up to class 8th. They have minimum standard of infrastructure and teaching learning level. State government spent huge on human resource and other facilities such as mid-day meal, free books and note books etc.; despite children enrolment is very less.

INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES

Districts where study was conducted found that more than 90% schools have drinking facilities in their school but the quality and safety is questionable. Good habits of washing hand before food and after toilet is still an issue especially in rural area. Around 88% schools have a shade for their kitchen while the remaining cooks food in the open. Most schools do not have safe drinking water facilities. The quality of mid-day meal was stated to be average by respondents in almost all districts.

SCHOOL HAVE DRINKING WATER FACILITIES

Despite quality of mid-day meal, another major concern is preparation of mid-day meal as per decided menu and frequency of distribution of mid-day meal in a month. Only 70% responded told that mid-day

meal is provided as per menu and the frequency to providing mid-day meal is 85%.

60.8% respondent said that the quality of midday meal was good. However, children were getting less than the apportioned quantity even in schools that were provided with the proper ration of food. As per Govt. guidelines, each child in the school is entitled to eat 8 eggs in a month. But from the study it was found that only two sample states of Jharkhand and Bihar were providing eggs. However in both the states respondents said that the eggs have not been properly supplied to schools from the Block office. Supply of eggs to the schools has been stopped in Madhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh and now Soya Chunk is being supplied to the schools replacing egg which is tasteless and the students do not seem to like it. .

CASE STUDY

Mid day Meal-In UP, the team members also observed that discrimination on the basis of caste was quite prevalent in Murassupur village- "Plates are marked for dalit and non-dalit children for mid-day meal". Also children were bringing plates from their own houses for mid-day meal in Keraodeh village of Keraodeh Panchayat. "In Antamau village discrimination was also observed among staff and cook. Teachers who are non- dalit never taste the mid -day meals cooked for children by a Dalit cook".

PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM AWARENESS OF ENTITLEMENTS

As far as awareness of grain entitlements is concerned, generally people knew what they were entitled to. For instance, in the case of Antyodaya cardholders, less than 5% were unable to answer the question on grain entitlement correctly. Among BPL cardholders the correct answers ranged between 84% and 100%. However, in the case of other

FIGURE 11: QUALITY OF GRAIN FOR MDM

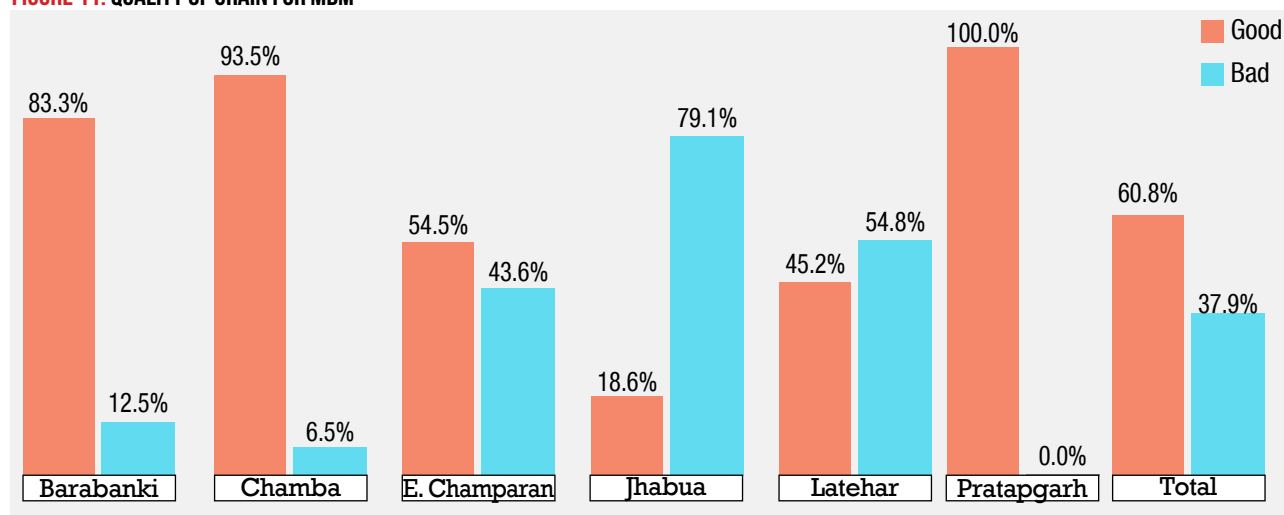
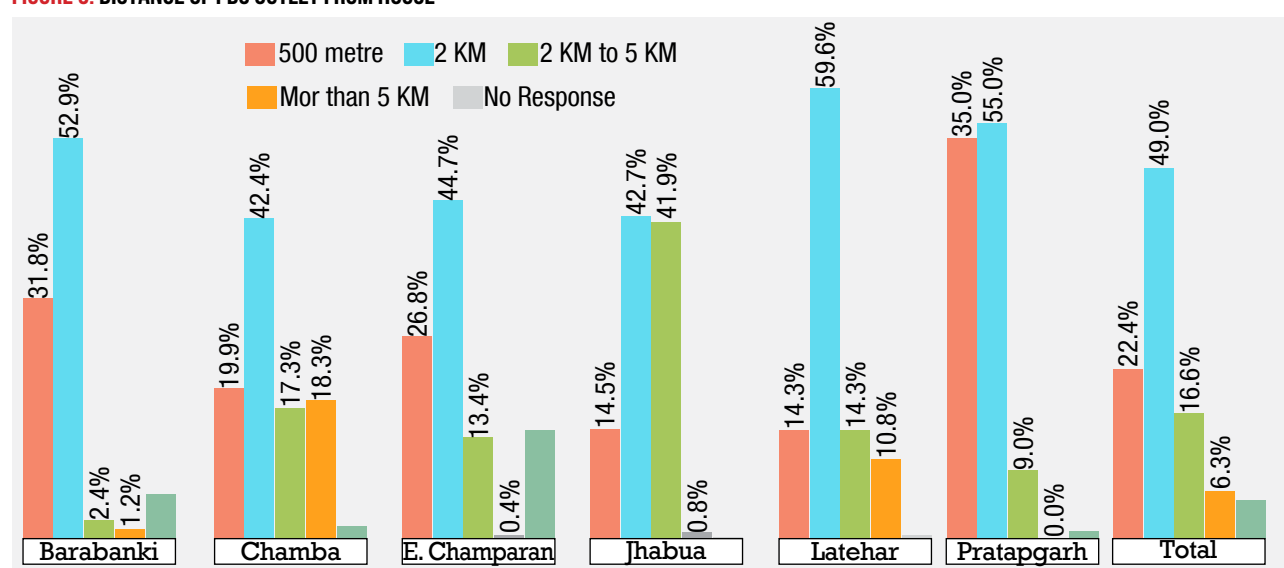


FIGURE 3: DISTANCE OF PDS OUTLET FROM HOUSE



commodities such as sugar, kerosene, dals and oils there was a lack of clarity and irregularity in the supply of these commodities. Also 83.6% of the people are in possession of their own ration card. However, 4.5% of the respondents ration cards were with the Sarpanch or Ration Dealer.

ACCESSIBILITY

Generally, the accessibility of the PDS is quite remarkable: the local ration shop was 2 km away from the respondent's house on average for 49%, and within 5 km for 16.6% of respondents. Respondents reported that, on average, the last round-trip to the ration shop (including commuting and waiting time) took two hours. Distance to the ration shop remains an issue in some of the remoter regions of the sample areas.

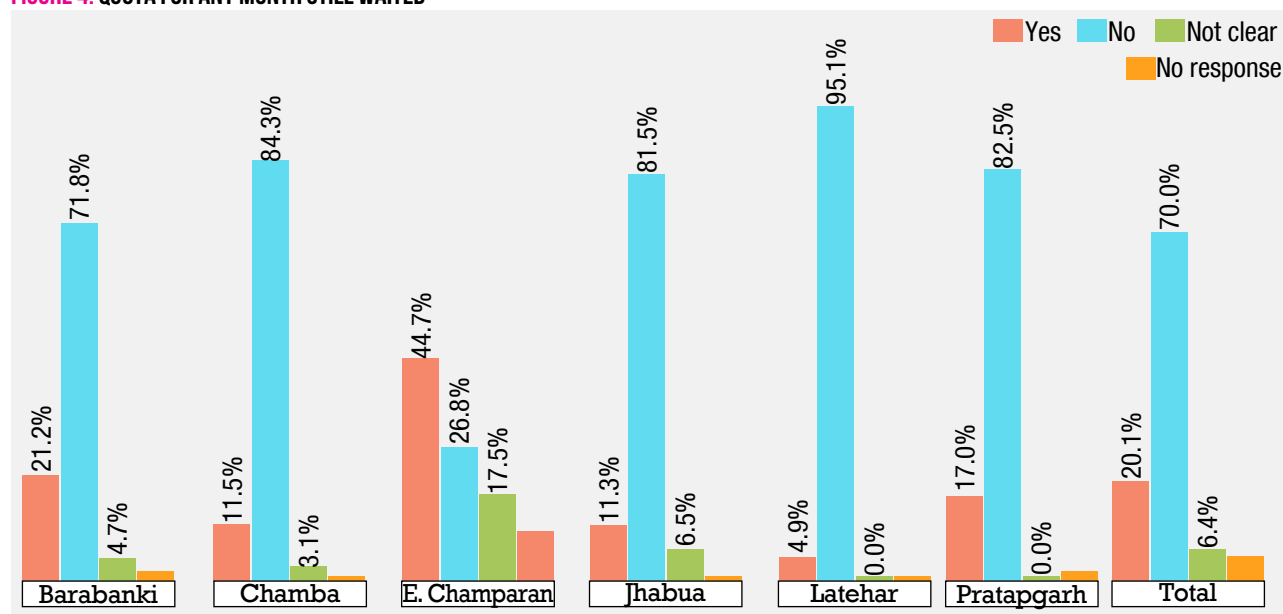
Although all most all the districts have ration shops and people are aware about it. Generally people knew what kind of commodities they can take and in

which quantity from Public Distribution Shops. Despite the public awareness about Public Distribution System, people are not very satisfied about the distribution, availability of goods and timings to open of the shops. We interviewed 949 beneficiaries in all 6 districts. Around 50% people stated that shops are open only 3 to 5 days in a month. Only 15% responded agreed, shops open 10 or more days in a month. It shows that ration shops donot open at a prescribed time. Except Chamba district all five districts have erratic timings of opening PDS shops. Another aspect is the time of opening the shop is not fixed and more than 75% shops are not open on time.

CORRUPTION AND THE PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

The survey questionnaire included a very careful accounting of purchases of PDS grain by sample households. Respondents were asked three complementary questions to arrive at a reliable estimate of

FIGURE 4: QUOTA FOR ANY MONTH STILL WAITED



the extent to which they were able to secure their full entitlements: (1) how much they “normally” get from the ration shop; (2) Is the quota for any of (past 3) months still awaited; and (3) Are they agree with the entries for the last three months given on their ration card, from June to September 2016.

Improvement in distribution of ration from Public Distribution System Shop

One of the major findings of the survey is that as far as BPL and Antyodaya cardholders are concerned, there has been a marked improvement in the distribution of ration from the PDS Shop, except in Bihar. Three-quarters of respondents reported getting their full quota in the six survey districts. The two important exceptions to this general pattern of high PERs are Bihar and Jharkhand. In Bihar, the situation remains grim (even though it seems to have improved even there, at least by Bihar’s standards). Only 18% of BPL households reported getting their full quota in Bihar, followed by Jharkhand where 25% get their full entitlement.

20.1% of sample respondents complained about their quota were pending and 11.1% of sample households said that their quota had been diverted to the open market even once in the past six months

Despite of easy accessibility of ration shops, many respondents also complained that people are not able to get their ration on time due to less supply and no information of shop timings. In many of the sample districts, it used to be common for private dealers to open the PDS shop when ever they liked. This meant that households may or may not hear about the PDS shop being open. By the time they did

get to hear of it, the dealer would tell them that stocks are over. Further, when opening days are predictable, households can plan their budgets better and arrange to have cash in hand on those days.

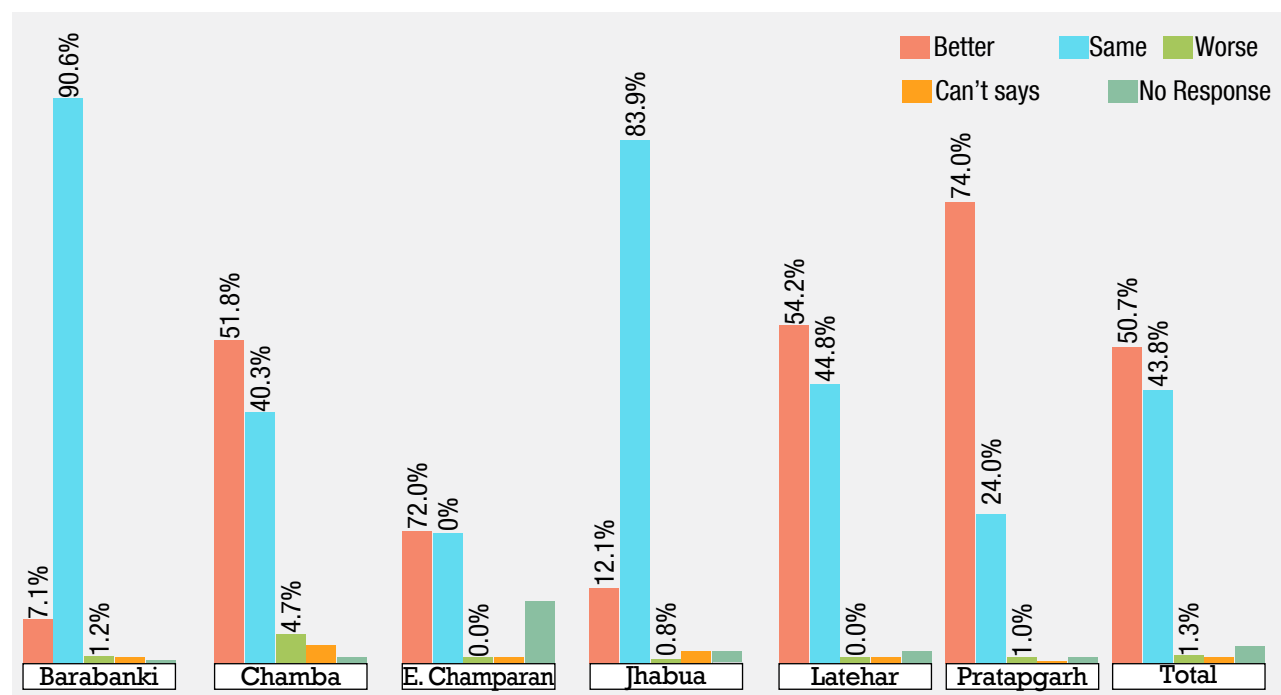
There were also few instances of “overcharging” (charging more than the official issue price) for PDS grain. In Jharkhand (where BPL households now pay Rs 1/kg for rice) we heard some complaints of people paying Rs 35 each month, even though they were given only 32 kg of rice. One factor that has helped to prevent overcharging is the reduction in prices and the use of round figures.

TRANSACTION COSTS HAVE INCREASED IN THE PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM AFTER AADHAAR LINKAGE.

Shyama Singh, mukhia of the Namudag panchayat in Manika block, Jharkhand said “We have so many complaints of people having to make repeated trips due to Aadhaar linkage. But it’s not in our hands – this is the system now, and if a dealer says that authentication isn’t happening on a particular day or that there is no connectivity, there is nothing really we can do about it,” she told. Before becoming mukhia, Shyama was a local activist working on better implementation of welfare schemes in this area known for its corruption.

“Katauti (dealers cutting a person’s ration to keep it for themselves) used to be incredibly high in the area – out of 12 months, a family would be losing 3-4 months ration. After years of hard work from groups who were trying to increase awareness about the scheme and hold dealers and government officials responsible, we saw quite a significant change even before the introduction of Aadhaar. I think Aadhaar has decreased katauti further, but costs are also high – we don’t know how to help those who are being left out of the system,” she said.

FIGURE 5: FUNCTIONING OF THE PDS COMPARED WITH 3 YEARS IN REGULARITY



ASSESSMENT OF PDS SHOP

People's perception of the overall change in the PDS over the past three years was also recorded. In Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, half or more respondents felt that things had improved. One-tenth of all respondents said that things had become worse over the past three years.

REGULARITY

There has been much improvement in the regularity of PDS distribution and opening PDS shops. Most state governments have now instituted a system of pre-announced for distribution of PDS rations. For instance, Jharkhand PDS shops are open on 15th and 25th of each month for "Chawal Diwas"- Rice Day. Regularity and predictability in opening days and hours is a major convenience for rural households, and also important to prevent diversion of PDS quotas. More than 70% of sample households said that their quota had not been diverted to the open market even once in the past six months. This simple and effective reform measure needs to be enforced strictly in all states. This step was welcomed by the sample households and yet it was clear that this rule needs better enforcement. Though PDS shops are supposed to remain open throughout the month (as per Supreme Court orders) or at least for a week (as per the newly instituted schedule in many states), respondents complained that shops would be open only for two to three days. This also resulted in some areas, in long waiting hours (sometimes the whole day to buy the month's quota). It was not uncommon to find PDS that remain open throughout

the month in Himachal Pradesh. Some households also said that they could buy two months' ration together, if they had been unable to purchase it in the previous month.

QUALITY OF GRAIN

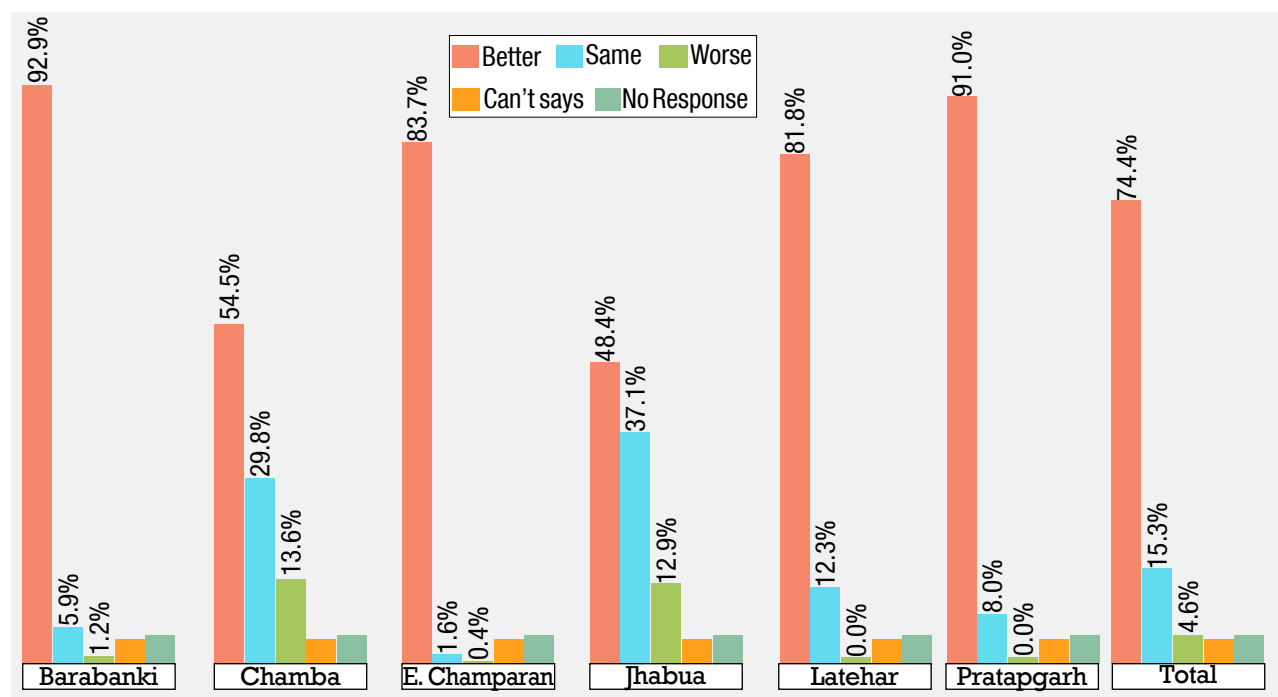
Overall, 74.4% of respondents reported getting good quality grain at the time of their last purchase; nearly (15.3%) said it was of "same" quality and 4.6% said that the grain they received was of poor quality. The qualitative data, however, suggest that perhaps the quantitative data do not capture grain quality issues adequately.

Many interviews were interspersed with complaints regarding quality. This was especially true in Barabanki district (Uttar Pradesh) where some households reported finding 2-3 kg of stones in the wheat out of the 35 kg they bought each month. In Bihar, some households said that they prefer to pay more and get better quality rice than get free or cheap rice of poor quality. Further evidence of the quality of grain being an issue comes from the fact that when people were presented with the option of buying PDS grain or getting cash, one-fourth of all sample households cited grain quality among the relevant considerations.

QUANTITY

Overall 54% respondent reported that there are improvements in quantity supplied of the PDS in comparison to 3 years ago; nearly (40.3%) said it was of "same" and 1.8% said that the quantity they received was of less.

FIGURE 6: FUNCTIONING OF THE PDS COMPARED WITH 3 YEARS IN QUALITY OF GRAIN



CASE STUDY

PDS: Cheating continues

In September 2016, the month preceding the survey, almost 78% household received some rice or wheat from the PDS. However, they received less than their entitlements – about 8% less on average. It seems to be a common practice for dealers to deduct 2 kg of grain from each ration card every month.

Some dealers are also asking for bribes from excluded households, when they forward their applications for a ration card. For instance, in Sagar village of East Champaran, Bihar the Pradhan, asks for anything between Rs 500 and 2,500 to forward an application.

WIDOW PENSION SCHEME

PENSION ARE NOT GIVEN REGULARLY

The biggest problem being faced by widow pensioners is that they don't receive their pension amounts regularly. In all 6 districts there are 716 widow pensioners who have interviewed during the study. Nearly 85% women stated that there is no fixed date to receive pension. While it is correct that there is no fixed date for pension disbursements, the pension amounts of several months is deposited together. Thus this is not technically a delay in the sense of the word. Instead, the picture that emerges is one of erratic pensions rather than delayed pensions. However within this delivery system, people are largely aware of the frequency in which pensions are to be expected whether it is once every two or six months. Only 15% are receiving on fix time and out of that most of them are belongs from Jhabua and Latehar districts. 48% of our respondents claimed they had to

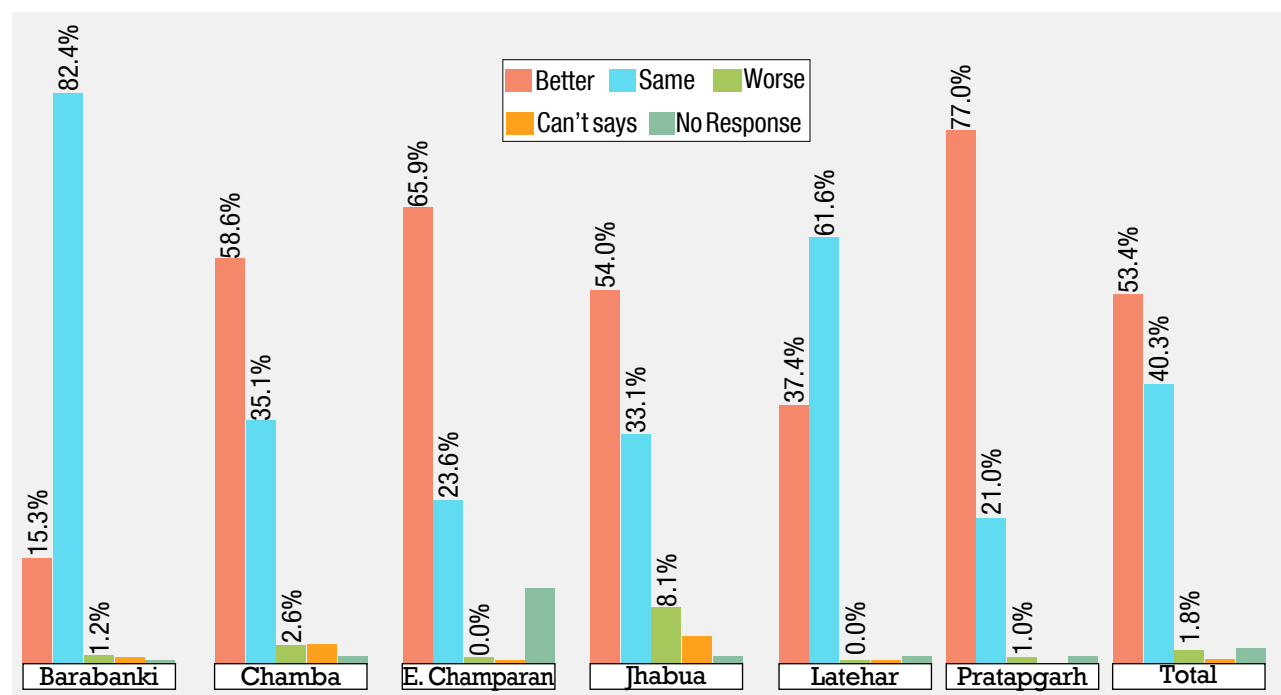
make more than one trip to collect their pensions (i.e. for various reasons they were asked to return home and come on a later date). Only 38 percent women update their passbooks while the remaining are visit banks occasionally.

LACK OF TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The lack of transparency and access to information leads to a situation wherein people feel obliged to the Pradhan or Surpanch. Some of them were therefore reluctant to talk about the commission they paid the Pradhan/Surpanch for sanctioning of pensions. None of the survey districts reported pro-active initiatives by the local government to identify potential beneficiaries for widow pension. In Latehar district of Jharkhand; camps were set up in various parts of the district to facilitate the process of identification and application. In Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh gram sabhas were conducted every three months during which potential beneficiaries were identified. In other surveyed districts potential beneficiaries directly submitted their applications at the panchayat or at the district level Common Service Kendra.

The findings reveals that the online systems were introduced that stated the eligibility, application procedures, pension sanctions etc. but still respondent said that there were dependent on external agencies to obtain and complete the application form, high costs were incurred to collect supporting documents and significant transaction costs to complete application procedure. This puts widow women at the mercy of middlemen and petty corrup-

FIGURE 7: FUNCTIONING OF THE PDS COMPARED WITH 3 YEARS IN QUANTITY SUPPLIED



tion. To curb this pension sanctions and payments must be put online. A citizen friendly information system, including access to all official records, wall painting of names of beneficiaries and payments made to them should be set up. The use of public hearings and collective camps would also help in ensuring that eligible people get their pensions.

REJECTION OF PENSION APPLICATIONS WITHOUT CLEAR INFORMATION TO THE APPLICANTS.

30% widow women face that their applications were rejected on the grounds of inadequate supporting documents or discrepancies in the documents, but often this is not communicated to the applicant. Many applicants were observed to be repeatedly applying without knowing the reason for rejection. If a pension application has been rejected on grounds of inadequate supporting documents or discrepancies in the documents (particularly with regard to age, which is commonly reported), the administration should take proactive measures to assist the applicant in furnishing necessary documents. In cases where a pension application cannot be entertained the applicant should be informed within a specified time period about the reason for rejection. This issue may be addressed by bringing pensions under the ambit of the Right to Public Service Acts, where these are in place. For example, this has been done in Bihar.

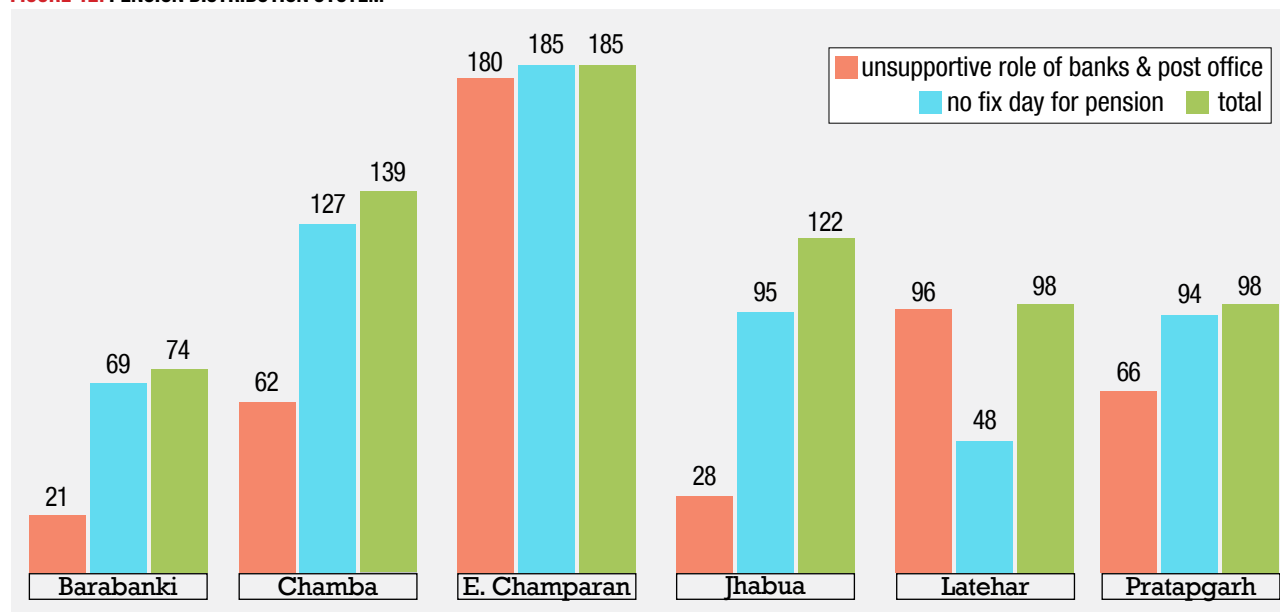
PENSION AMOUNT RELATED ISSUES

The widow pension amounts in the surveyed states remain constant for years together. Almost all the respondent said that the amount is not enough for

them to live with dignity for a month. Out of 716 only 4 women are self-employed and 211 are engaged in agricultural work, remaining 63 percentage women are engaged in labour or daily wages work. East Champaran is one most deprived district. Respondent told that to meet the daily need either relatives or the neighbours or other kind of people have to help. Many states do contribute their own funds to increase the pension amounts. For example, Delhi gives monthly pensions of Rs 1000 with an additional Rs 500 for those from SC/ST/minorities. Haryana gives Rs 1400 per month. Goa leads with a monthly pension of Rs 2,000 per person. Where as in surveyed states, Jharkhand gives Rs 600, Bihar gives Rs 400, Himachal gives Rs 650, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh gives Rs 300 only.

95% of respondents said that they received pensions once in 3-4 months. This was primarily due to the change in the mode of payment at the block level (earlier the block office would transfer the pension amount to the gram panchayat's account but now the amount was being transferred directly to the pensioners' accounts). This change has led to these delays in the payment of pensions. In some cases, the respondents reported missing payments for months other than the last 3-4 months. These missing payments need to be probed further. On an average, it took pensioners 5 hours to reach the bank/post office, collect their pension and return to their house. All sample villages did not have a post office or bank so most pensioners had to travel to another village to withdraw their pensions. The average distance each pensioner had to travel (usually on foot) was 4-5 km.

FIGURE 12: PENSION DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM



95.4% of respondents were illiterate. 60.5% of the respondents had irregular passbook entries, including some with no entries in their passbooks at all. This poses a great danger in the effective implementation of social pensions as people can easily be cheated by the middle man or bank officials.

REGULAR ENTRIES IN THE PASSBOOK

37.7% agreed that they had regular entries in their passbook and officials at the bank or panchayat level officials were helpful and had no complaints regarding them. While 60.5% of the respondents were not agreed to their entries in the passbook and also not happy with how the bank and panchayat officials behaved.

CASE STUDY

Guddi Bhuriya (35) was widowed 15 month ago. Her family consists of two sons and a daughter. She has tried to apply for widow pension but the Pradhan told that her pension application cannot be entertained because of insufficient documents. Guddi is yet to approach the block office in this regard.

Guddi lives alone because her children are barely able to meet their own expenses. She works off and on under the NREGA scheme but is yet to get paid. Guddi adds that there is no other work in the village except under NREGA. Guddi doesn't have a ration card.

INDIRA AWAAS YOJANA INDIRA AWAAS YOJANA (IAY)

Although performance of Indira Awaas Yojana has improved since its inception, yet a great deal remains to be done. The Indira Awaas Yojana scheme has not been implemented as per the guidelines and hence has not achieved its objectives. Maximum

beneficiaries and non beneficiaries even some of the officials of DRDAs were not fully aware of the components of the scheme and their responsibilities in implementing the scheme. During the survey, some important weak points/short comings of the scheme have been witnessed as under:

Location of plot: The IAY dwelling units should normally be built on individual plot owned by beneficiary in the main habitat of the village. Houses can also be built in cluster within a habitation to facilitate common infrastructures. If on a cluster, these should be constructed close to village so that safety and security are ensured for occupants. From the table below it can be noted that over-all, 20.5% houses were constructed close to the old house of the beneficiary household and only 1.3% were in other places.

Under IAY, Rs.75, 000/- (in hilly areas)-/ 70,000/- (in plain areas) was disbursed to beneficiary households for construction of IAY houses. More than 21% of the respondents indicated to have received Rs.75, 000/- and 51% indicated to have received Rs.70,000/- for construction of IAY houses. A majority of respondents (84%) were noted to have spent additional amount for construction of their houses. The additional amount, however, was not availed from institutional sources. 59% beneficiaries contacted had constructed a single room only, 34% had constructed a single room along with a verandah, 3% had constructed a separate living room along with a verandah and 4% beneficiaries had constructed separate kitchen attached to the single room having no verandah. It was noted that half of the respondents had not built toilets. Less than one third (31%) completed IAY units had logos.

Time Period- Cost and time are two key elements in

FIGURE 13: REGULAR ENTRIES IN TO PASSBOOK

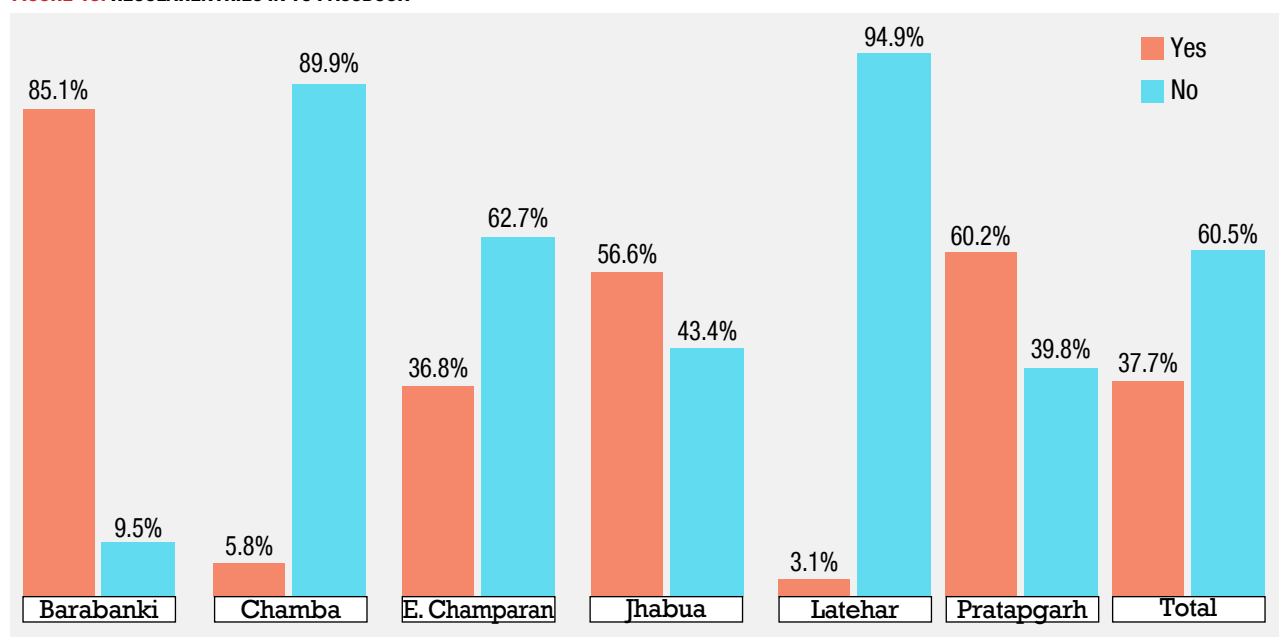
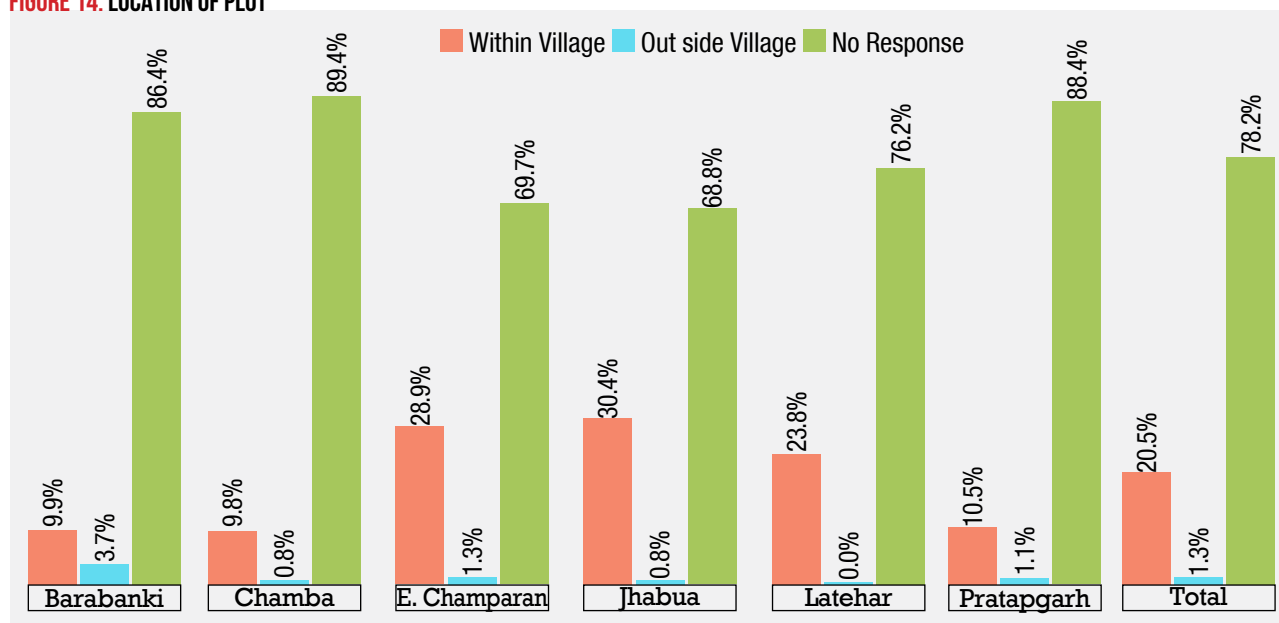


FIGURE 14: LOCATION OF PLOT



the assessment of efficiency of implementation of any house construction scheme. Implementation has to be efficient to prevent time and cost over-run. In housing, as time goes by, material prices escalate leading to increase in cost of construction. Hence it is important that construction is completed within the shortest time possible. The time limit for disbursing the second instalment in Bihar was maximum six months and in Jharkhand, no time limit was fixed but satisfactory progress of construction. In Uttar Pradesh, also the time limit for disbursing the second instalment was maximum six months. It was noted that 11.1% houses were not completely constructed and on being asked to indicate time for completion, it was noted that a majority (80.8%) of

respondents had completed construction within 2 years, 7.6% had taken 3 years to complete and very few indicated to have taken more than 3 years to fully complete their units. Reasons for consuming time for construction - Those who had either not completed their houses or taken more than 2 years to complete construction had accounted for 18.7% of the total sample. They were further asked to specify reasons for delay of construction and it was noted that about 19% indicated of instalments received late, 37% indicated high construction cost and 40% indicated time over-run owing to non-availability of trained mason. Also it was evident that in regions which materials were available in the surroundings of the construction site itself, the proportion of ben-

FIGURE 15: TIME PERIOD FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF HOUSE

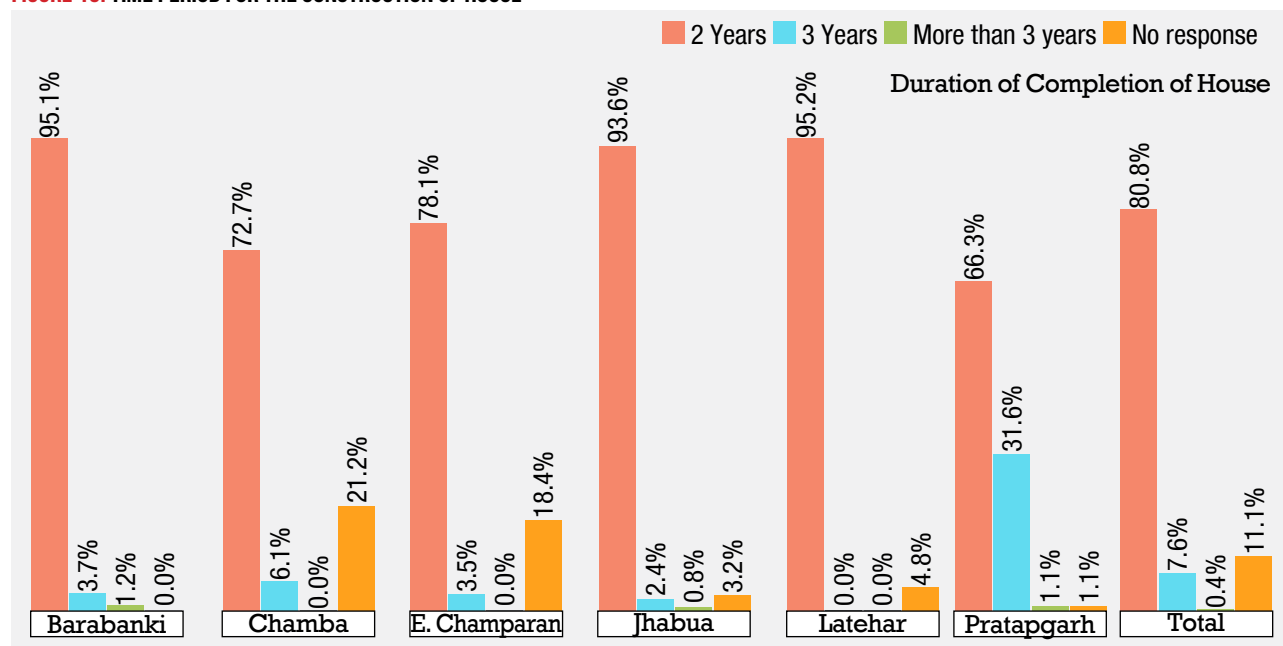
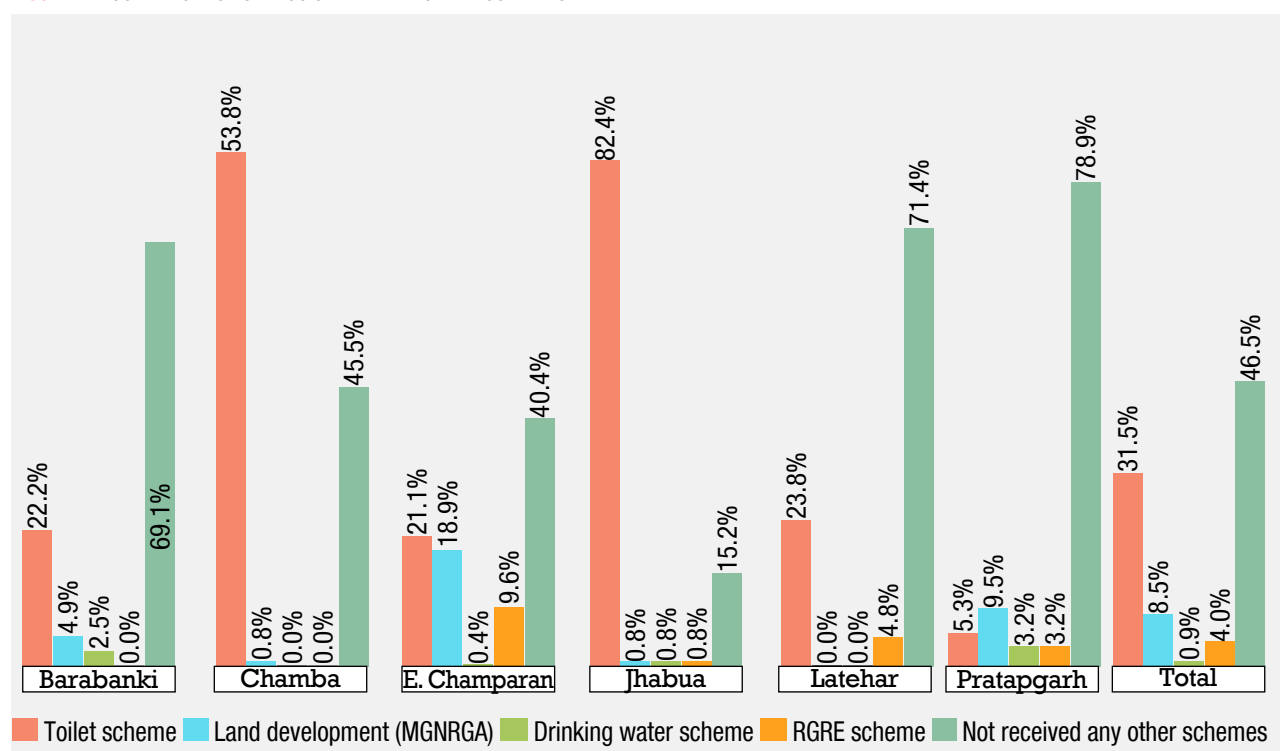


FIGURE 17: CONVERGENCE STATUS OF IAY WITH OTHER SCHEMES



eficiaries who completed construction within a reasonable period says within 2 years, is higher in Jharkhand.

House Allotted in whose Name: Ownership of property provides women with an asset base and facilitates their access to credit. Within the family, it enables women to have greater say on financial matters hitherto a male domain. Further ownership of property instils a sense of security and enhanced esteem

in women, which ultimately leads to empowerment. The survey data reveals that allotment was made in the name of the land owner, 38.4% allotments were made in the name of husband only 11.4% allotments of the houses were made in the name of the women, where women do not own land, a joint ownership agreement were entered into for the IAY which were 39.7%. This measures help woman to have a say on their houses. Even then, the legal validity of the agreement is debatable.

FIGURE 16: IAY HOUSE ALLOTTED IN WHOSE NAME

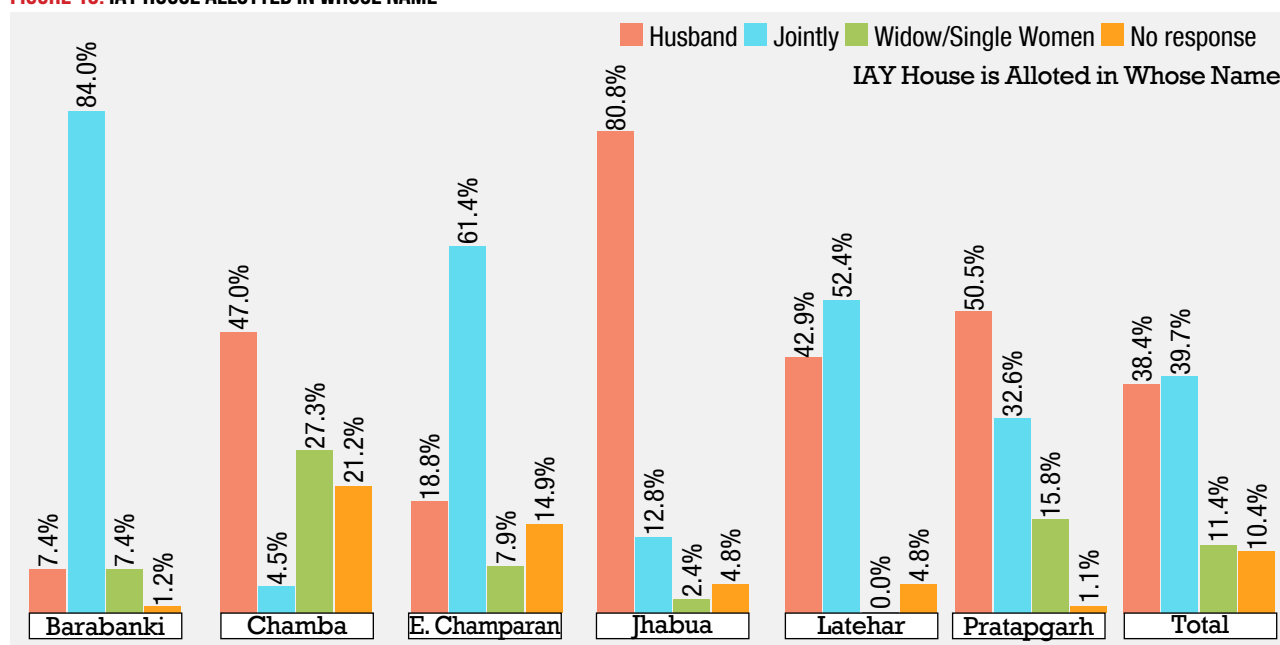
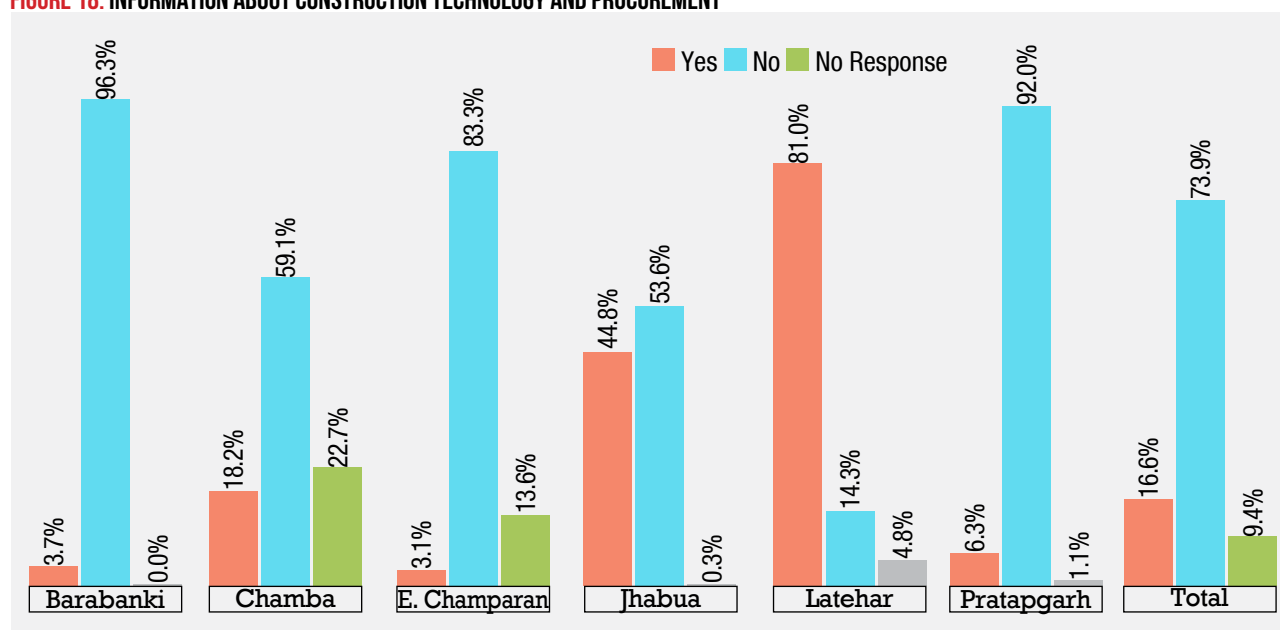


FIGURE 18: INFORMATION ABOUT CONSTRUCTION TECHNOLOGY AND PROCUREMENT

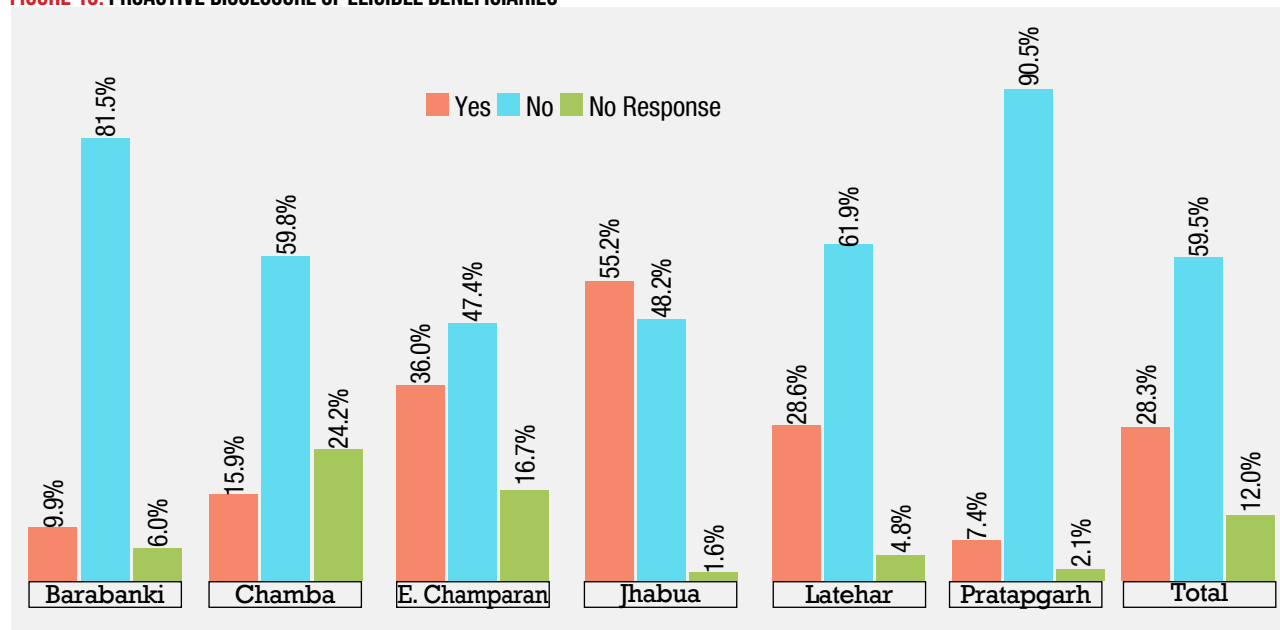


Convergence Status of IAY with Other schemes: IAY houses constructed by beneficiaries had sanitary latrines, land development of beneficiaries and electricity facilities. It was noted that 31.5% houses have sanitary latrines and 8.5% houses had developed their land under NREGA. It may be noted that the NBA/SBM along with IAY's emphasis on toilet provision, has resulted in quite a few households constructing individual toilets. However, it was noted that most of these were of poor quality and most of these are seldom used as toilets because the inadequacy of water. It is therefore imperative to create awareness about the benefits of using them under IAY and NBA/SBM. Out of total beneficiaries, 46.5% beneficiaries

were not benefitted from any other schemes with which IAY could have been converged.

A large majority of respondents (84%) indicated that monitoring was not done by officials during the course of construction of IAY units. State-wise data reveals that 14% in Bihar, 10% in Jharkhand and 15% beneficiaries in Madhya Pradesh had indicated that officials have made one visit while the construction was under progress. Quality construction and timely completion of dwelling units are achieved if monitoring is taken up in right earnest. These vital tenets of programme implementation were not adequately followed in the studied states.

FIGURE 19: PROACTIVE DISCLOSURE OF ELIGIBLE BENEFICIARIES



Information about construction technology and procurement: There was a lack of responsibility among the concerned officials in implementing the scheme regarding quality of raw material used and proper utilization of funds. The data reveals that only 16.6% beneficiaries got information about construction technology or procurement of raw materials, which resulted in construction of poor quality houses.

Issues related to proactive disclosure: A large majority of respondents (59.5%) indicated that there is no system of proactive disclosure of eligible beneficiaries of five year priority list in the panchayat. State-wise data reveals that 81.5% in Barabanki (one selected district of UP), 90.5% in Pratapgarh (another selected district of UP) and 61.9% beneficiaries in Jharkhand, 59.8% in Himachal, 47.4% in Bihar and 43.2% in Madhya Pradesh had indicated that there is no system of proactive disclosure of the priority list of IAY and also system for selection of beneficiaries was not adequate so there is a possibility of partiality and biasedness in selection of beneficiaries by panchayats and concerned officials.



CASE STUDY- INDIRA AWAS

This Indira Awas belongs to Samaptiya Devi W/O Mohan. She belongs to the SC caste and is from Palehya Panchayat of Manika block in Latehar district. This Awaas was sanctioned in the year 2015-16 and the sanctioned amount was Rs 70,000. During our visit we found that the house construction was not completed yet.

Further investigation lead us to the finding that the sanctioned amount has already been released by the concerned office to the bank account of Sampatiya Devi from which this amount was withdrawn by her husband and the middlemen. The Panchayat officials said that this unit was sanctioned by the prior Sarpanch and they had no idea that the house was incomplete.

STATE WISE — FIELD LEVEL FINDINGS

MADHYA PRADESH- RESULTS FROM JHABUA DISTRICT

Findings from a Survey of Jhabua District, Nov-Dec 2016. A field survey of five entitlement programmes – the Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY), the Public Distribution System (PDS), the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), Mid-Day Meals (MDM), and widow pension – initiated by the VasudhaVikasSansthan. As part of this survey a 3-4-member team visited 25 villages covered 18 panchayats in Meghnagar Block of Jhabua District.

The team conducted in-depth interviews with 25-30 randomly selected households in each village to understand the status of PDS, ICDS, MDM, Indira Awaas Yojana and widow pension. Detailed interviews with 5-5 beneficiaries in each village to evaluate widow pensions and Indira Awas Yojana.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

- Regularity- the Anganwadis in all the surveyed villages open regularly.
- Services-Most respondents said that the Anganwadi opens only for children to eat hot meals and receive food packets, and not for pre-school education or health check-ups.
- 12.8% are malnourished; extra support for drought affected people was not served in any of the ICDS centres of the survey villages. Most of them did their regular works. And 59.3% respondent said that the malnourished children are getting double ration.
- 96.3% respondents said that anganwadi centres has provided take home ration to the 0-3 years children and the frequency of food given was weekly.
- 70.4% respondents said that the food prepared for the 3-6 years children in the anganwadi cen-

tre and 87% children eat the food in the centre. But the additional supply of eggs or milk or any other nutritional substitute has not been provided in any anganwadi Centres in Meghnagar block of Jhabua districts.

- In Jhabua we covered 54 Anganwadi Centres during the survey and as per the findings of this survey. Existing infrastructure of the Anganwadi is a key concern in effective delivery of targeted services by the Anganwadi. The data shows that more than 81.5% centers have Pakka (well-constructed) building, whereas remaining 28.5% do not have well-constructed building. Out of 81.5%, only 66.7% Anganwadi center have their own building and the rest are running in nearby school buildings or Gram Panchayat Bhawan, rented building or in the house of the Anganwadi worker.
- Also less than 32% centres do not have toilet facilities and are also devoid of drinking water facilities. And only 49% have weight machine at centers and 52% centers have relevant toys for children. Due to unavailability of government building or any building near by the village, parents are not too keen to send them to Anganwadi centers, in fact Anganwadi workers seem to lack motivation and show less interest in running these centres.

Mid-Day meal (MDM)

- In Jhabua district of Meghnagar Block we have reached 43 schools. Only 27.9% schools having registration between 91 to 120 children's. There are several factors that are responsible for less enrolment and less attendance. In Jhabua, they have minimum standard of infrastructure and teaching learning level.
- In Jhabua 86% schools have drinking facilities in their school but not sure it is safe or not. Habits of wash hand before food and after toilet is still

an issue especially in rural area. Around 79.1% schools have shade above the kitchen where they cooked mid-day meals while the remaining AWC-Cook food in the open and do not have safe drinking water facilities.

- Regularity –Another major concern is preparation of mid-day meal as per decided menu and frequency of distribution of mid-day meal in a month. Most of the respondents stated that mid-day meal is not provided as per menu and the frequency of providing mid-day meal is 72.1%.
- The persons responsible for cooking the MDM complained that they were not receiving their rations on time. They also mentioned that the funds being provided for pulses, oil and vegetables were below the market rate. In most cases, the menu was not being followed and children were getting only rice and dal.
- Quality- Only 18.6% respondents were satisfied with the quality of MDMs, respondents from the remaining villages said their children did not like the food.

Public distributed system (PDS)

- The survey reveals that 17.5% of the total household are not getting food grains on regular basis. However, 17.5% of the households have reported that there was no regular (i.e. monthly) distribution of PDS food grains. As grains for 2-3 months were being distributed together, it was difficult for PDS beneficiaries to keep track of whether they were receiving complete quotas for all months.
- Food coupons are basis for PDS. 53% villages reported that there instances of denial of PDS because of lack of food coupons.
- In these villages, almost all families have received ration through this except 2 to 5%; 85.5% respondent reported that opening days of the PDS shops are not adequate. PDS outlay open for 3-5 days in a month.
- Also 24.2% reported that they do not agree with the entries for the last six month given on the ration card. There were irregularities in the maintenance of the ration card like 15.3% mentioned that entries were missing, 7.3% reported that there were fake information.
- Each person having PDS Card will get 6 kg and maximum limit per family is 30 kg. And other than rice they will get 1 kg of wheat, 1 kg sugar and 1 litre kerosene but other than that rice items will be supplied twice or thrice in a year, which defeats the basket of food purpose through PDS.

- PDS Shop –The PDS shops were mostly located in the villages and in some villages the PDS shops were located 2-3 km away from villages. 54% reported that there are improvements in quantity supplied of the PDS in comparison to 3 years ago.

- 48.4% beneficiaries were satisfied with the quality of wheat and rice being distributed at the PDS, respondents from other villages complained about the poor quality of food grains they were getting. The most common complaint regarding the quality of rice was the presence of stones in the rice.

Widow Pension

- All widow pensioners we interviewed were receiving the correct amounts but payments were very irregular and this created a lot of difficulties for the recipients
- In Jhabua 94.3% pensioners who are illiterate, only 4.9% pensioners whose educational qualification are up to 5th. Out of 122 respondents, 52.5% are engaged in agriculture work and 47.5% are engaged in labour or daily wages work.
- Nearly 78% women said that there is no fixed date to receive pension. Since most of the places governments start direct case transfer scheme but still around 76.2% women are receiving their pension through bank. In most cases, pensions were being distributed with a lag of three- four months. Not only did this make life difficult for pensioners (many of whom rely solely on pensions for their daily needs) but also made it hard for them to keep track of payments. There are no arrangements for regular monthly payment on a fixed date (as per Supreme Court orders). Also, pensioners are not informed when payments are made. As a result, many pensioners have to visit the bank many times to collect their pension.
- 43.4% respondent shared that their passbooks were not updated. Some passbooks are completely blank, ever since they the bank account opened.
- In every village, there are many people who have a BPL Card and are eligible for a pension but not get one. Pensioners have to travel a long distance (to the block headquarters) to withdraw their pension from the bank. They take five to seven hours, on average, to collect their pension.

Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)

- Survey data reveals that in Jhabua over-all, 30.4% houses under Indira Awaas Yojana were constructed close by the old house of the bene-

ficiary household and very few were in other places.

- It was noted that a majority (93.6%) of respondents had completed construction within 2 years, 2.4% had taken 3 years to complete and very few indicated to have taken more than 3 years to fully complete their units. Those who had either not completed their houses or taken more than 2 years to complete construction were further asked to specify reasons for delay of construction and it was noted that about 49% indicated of instalments received late, 21% indicated high construction cost and 20% indicated time over-run owing to non-availability of trained mason.
- Around 80% respondents said that house was allotted in the name of the husband, 4.8% respondents share that their houses were allotted jointly both in husband's and wife's name and only 2.4% respondents told that houses were allotted in the name of women.
- It was noted that 82.4% houses have sanitary latrines and very few 0.8% houses had developed their land under NREGA. It may be noted that the NBA/SBM along with IAY's emphasis on toilet provision, has resulted in quite a few households constructing individual toilets. Out of total beneficiaries, 15.2% beneficiaries were not benefited from any other schemes with which IAY could have been converged.
- 15% beneficiaries in Jhabua had indicated that officials have made one visit while the construction was under progress.
- The data reveals that in Jhabua 48.8% beneficiaries got information about procurement of raw materials.
- 43.2% in Madhya Pradesh had indicated that there is no system of proactive disclosure of the priority list of IAY and also system for selection of beneficiaries was not adequate so there is a possibility of partiality and biasness in selection of beneficiaries by panchayats and concerned officials also.

HIMACHAL PRADESH- RESULTS FROM CHAMBA DISTRICT

This report summarises the main findings of a survey conducted in 40 villages of Chamba and Mahala Block of Chamba district in Nov - Dec 2016. The team went to schools, Anganwadi centers, conducted household interviews, had village meetings as well as spoke to government officials to get the widest possible picture of these schemes. Himachal

Pradesh is widely credited as having a well-functioning social security system. While 4 out of the 5 schemes functioned quite well in comparison to other surveyed states.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS)

Anganwadi centers and schools were visited to see the impact and coverage of the ICDS and MDM, and overall the picture seems to be quite positive.

- Regularity- the Anganwadis in all the surveyed villages open regularly but only for 2-3 hours.
- Services-Most respondents said that the Anganwadi opens only for children to eat hot meals and receive food packets, and not for pre-school education. Only 1% are malnourished and all of them are getting double ration.
- For 0-3 years children 63.3% respondents said that anganwadi centres has provided both take home ration and also fed in the centre. 56.7% respondent said that the frequency of given food (Take home ration) were monthly.
- For 3-6 years children, 73.3% respondents said that the food was prepared in the centre and 83.3% children eat the food in the centre. But the additional supply of eggs or milk or any other nutritional substitute has not been provided in any anganwadi Centres in Chamba districts.
- 33.3% villages the anganwadi centres has its own building located within the distance of about 1-3 Km while the remaining are running in the-neareby school buildings or Gram Panchayat Bhawan, rented building or in their own house of Anganwadi worker. But still it is difficult for the children during rainy season to attend anganwadi due to the distance.
- Also only 21% centres have toilet facilities and drinking water facilities. And only 28% have weight machine at centres and 26% centres have relevant toys for children.
- Most of the respondents said that reported they received medicines and take-home ration for pregnant women. The anganwadis seemed to function well by opening regularly. While children were getting pre-school education, the team felt that the workers should be given more training so that they could engage better with the children. Parents should also be encouraged to send their children to the anganwadis
- more often.

- The services that were provided at most Anganwadis are immunisation, health check-up, take-home rations (THR) and provision of iron tablet. The services which are not provided in most of the Anganwadis are cooked midday meals on a daily basis, pre-school education and referral services. Some of these Anganwadis also did not have adequate infrastructure facilities.

MID-DAY MEAL (MDM)

The mid-day meal is served regularly in schools, is cooked hygienically and is usually nutritious. All schools had a School-Management Committee (SMC) which oversaw the scheme. Though a few teachers complained that MDM disrupts classroom activity by distracting the students, nearly all the teachers argued for its continuation and said that the overall health and nutrition of children had improved since the initiation of MDM. Parents also were in favour of the scheme, saying that it had helped out poor families especially who could not always afford good-quality food for their children.

Public distributed System (PDS)

Overall the team saw that the PDS is functioning quite well through the ration shops and depots. Himachal Pradesh offers several dals and mustard oil in its depots. While the delivery and quality of rice and wheat was good, most families complained of a shortage in dals and sugar.

Opening days of the PDS shops are adequate. PDS outlets open for more than 15 days in a month. Hardly anyone reported receiving kerosene, and while the team heard allegations that it was being sold on the black market, there was never any evidence to substantiate these claims. The team had also asked families about their diet, and all the families seemed to be eating a nutritious and balanced diet.

The team had a detailed discussion with families about the proposed Cash Transfer scheme, where families would get money in their bank account to buy the same amount of ration from the market instead of the ration shops. According to our survey, majority of the families prefer the ration shops over cash transfers. Some of the reasons for this choice include the inaccessibility of banks, hassles

Widow Pension

- While all pensioners reported getting the money on time every three months, they all complained that the amount was too low, and not enough to cover their expenses. Given the need and responsibilities of the pensioners and thus it was very important for them to have some cash in hand so that they could pay for any unforeseen emergencies.

- In Chamba 89.2% pensioners are illiterate, only 7.2% pensioners whose educational qualification are up to 5th. Out of 139 respondents, 56.1% are engaged in agriculture work and 33.8% are engaged in labour or daily wages work.
- Nearly 91% women said that there is no fixed date to receive pension. Only 5% are receiving it on time. 52.5% women are receiving their pension through post office or bank.
- 89.9% respondent shared that their passbooks were not updated. Some passbooks are completely blank, ever since they the bank account opened.
- One finds that despite the efforts of the government and various officials, that many eligible people are out of the coverage of the pension lists. This is a huge problem especially for those who have been abandoned by the family member after the death of their husband, and do not have any regular source of income. Similarly, the team also heard that families were put on the BPL lists on the basis of the political parties that they voted for, rather than the actual income levels of the families. This is a serious allegation, both in terms of the BPL lists and Pension scheme and needs to be looked into seriously.
- Team also encountered a problem in Chamba district that the 52.5% pensioners said that the postman would come to the houses of the pensioners to deliver the pensions.

Indira Awaas Yojana- (IAY)

- Survey data reveals that in Chamba, only 9.8% respondent said that their houses under Indira Awaas Yojana were constructed close by the old house.
- It was noted that a majority (72.7%) of respondents had completed construction within 2 years, 6.1% had taken 3 years to complete and very few indicated to have taken more than 3 years to fully complete their units. Those who had either not completed their houses or taken more than 2 years to complete construction were further asked to specify reasons for delay of construction and it was noted that about 35% indicated of instalments received late, 17% indicated high construction cost and 9% indicated time over-run owing to non-availability of trained mason.
- Around 47% respondents told that house was allotted in the name of husband, 4.5% respondents shared that their houses were allotted jointly

both in husband's and wife's name and 27.3% respondents told that houses were allotted in the name of women.

- 53.8% houses have sanitary latrines and very few 0.8% houses had developed their land under NREGA. It may be noted that the NBA/SBM along with IAY's emphasis on toilet provision, has resulted in quite a few households constructing individual toilets. Out of total beneficiaries, 45.5% beneficiaries were not benefitted from any other schemes with which IAY could have been converged.
- The data reveals that in Chamba 18.2% beneficiaries got information about procurement of raw materials.
- 59.8% in Chamba had indicated that there is no system of proactive disclosure of the priority list of IAY and also system for selection of beneficiaries was not adequate so there is a possibility of partiality and biasness in selection of beneficiaries by panchayats and concerned officials also.

JHARKHAND- RESULTS FROM LATEHAR DISTRICT

This report summarises the main findings of a survey conducted in 42 villages of Manika Block of Latehar district in Nov - Dec 2016. In each village, the survey team filled a survey questionnaire, interviewed 25 households and 12 pensioners, verified the entire list of pensioners, and inspected the local ration shop. In Latehar survey was done by volunteers of VikasSahyog Kendra.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

- Regularity- the Anganwadis in all the surveyed villages open regularly. The coverage of ICDS has significantly expanded. However, many children are still excluded from ICDS because the nearest Anganwadi is too far
- Services- Most respondents said that the Anganwadi opens only for children to eat hot meals and receive food packets, and not for pre-school education or health checkups in Latehar.
- 83.3% respondents said that anganwadi centres has provided take home ration to the 0-3 years children and the frequency of given food were monthly.
- 83.3% respondents said that 3-6 years children were given mid-day meal and 16.7% respondents said that food prepared in the centres. Also an additional supply of eggs has been provided

in Anganwadi Centres in Manika block of Latehar districts.

- In Latehar out of 18 Anganwadi Centres covered during the survey 88.9% centres have Pakka (well-constructed) building, whereas remaining 11.1% are not having well-constructed building. Out of 88.9%, 83.3% Anganwadi centre have their own building and remaining are running in nearest school building or Gram Panchayat Bhawan, rented building or in their own house of Anganwadi worker.
- Also 7% centers have toilet facilities and are also devoid of drinking water facilities. And only 8% have weight machine at centers and 16% centers have relevant toys for children.

Mid-Day meal (MDM)

- The midday meal programme is functioning relatively well in all villages, In Latehar district of Manika Block we have reached 42 schools. Only 26.2% schools having registration between 61 to 90 children's and only 9.5% schools having registration between 91 to 120 children's. There are several factors may work behind less enrolment as well as less attendance. In Latehar also, they have minimum standard of infrastructure and teaching learning level.
- In Latehar 92.9% schools have drinking facilities in their school but not sure it is safe or not. And around 95.2% schools having shade on kitchen where they cooked mid-day meal.
- Regularity –78.3% respondents told that mid-day meal is provided as per menu and 85.7% respondents told that mid-day meal had been provided every day.
- The 19% respondents responsible for cooking the MDM complained that they were not receiving their rations on time. They also mentioned that the funds being provided for pulses, oil and vegetables were below the market rate. In most cases, the menu was not being followed and children were getting only rice and dal.
- Quality- Only 45.2% respondents were satisfied with the quality of MDMs.

Public Distribution System

- The ration shops in the sample villages are functioning and distributing rice to BPL households every month. However, none of them provide 35 kgs of rice per month to BPL households. In most cases they provide 30 to 32 kgs instead of 35 kgs.
- In these villages, almost all families have re-

ceived ration through this except 2 to 5%; 99% respondent reported that opening days of the PDS shops are adequate. PDS outlay open for 3-5 days in a month but they said ration is not provided after the 15th of the month, if someone happens to go a day late.

- Also 14.8% reported that they do not agree with the entries for the last three month given on the ration card. There were some irregularities in the maintenance of the ration card like 1% mentioned that entries were missing, 2% reported that there were fake information.
- PDS Shop –The PDS shops were mostly located in the villages and in some villages the PDS shops were located in 2-3 km away from villages. 37.4% reported that there are improvements in quantity supplied of the PDS in comparison to 3 years ago.
- 81.8% beneficiaries were satisfied with the quality of wheat and rice being distributed at the PDS, respondents from other villages complained about the poor quality of food grains they were getting.
- There was a lack of clarity among beneficiaries and ration dealers about the entitlements of "Atirikt" households. Beneficiaries also did not have information on whether they were going to continue to receive ration.

Widow pension

- 49% respondent told that payments are irregular and also there are no arrangements for regular monthly payment on a fixed date (as per Supreme Court orders). Also, pensioners are not informed when payments are made. As a result, many pensioners have to visit the bank many times to collect their pension.
- In Latehar 95.9% pensioners are illiterate, only 4.1% pensioners whose educational qualification are up to 5th. Out of 98 respondents, 49% are engaged in agriculture and work.
- Nearly 49% women told that there is no fixed date to receive pension. 52.5% women are receiving their pension through bank.
- 94.9% respondent shared that their passbooks were not updated. Some passbooks are completely blank, ever since they the bank account opened.
- In Latehar, it was observed that 2% pensioners above the age of 80 are only receiving an amount of Rs 600.
- In every village, there are many people who have

a BPL Card and are eligible for a pension but not get one.

- In Latehar also Pensioners have to travel a long distance (to the block headquarters) to withdraw their pension from the bank. They take five to seven hours, on average, to collect their pension. There is no separate queue for pensioners at the bank, causing further delays.

Indira Awaas Yojana- (IAY)

- Survey data reveals that in Latehar, only 23.8% respondent said that their houses under Indira Awaas Yojana were constructed close by the old house.
- It was noted that a majority (95.2%) of respondents had completed construction within 2 years. 4.8% respondents were not responded.
- Around 52.4% respondents told that houses were allotted in the both Husband's and wife's name and 42.9% respondents shared that the house was allotted in husband's name only.
- In Latehar 23.8% houses have sanitary latrines and none of surveyed houses had developed their land under NREGA. It may be noted that the NBA/SBM along with IAY's emphasis on toilet provision, has resulted in quite a few households constructing individual toilets. Out of total beneficiaries, 71.4% beneficiaries were not benefited from any other schemes with which IAY could have been converged.
- The data reveals that in Latehar 81% beneficiaries got information about procurement of raw materials.
- 61.9% respondents in Latehar had indicated that there is no system of proactive disclosure of the priority list of IAY and also system for selection of beneficiaries was not adequate so there is a possibility of partiality and biasness in selection of beneficiaries by panchayats and concerned officials also.

UTTAR PRADESH- RESULTS FROM PRATAPGARH AND BARABANKI DISTRICTS

This report summarises the main findings of a survey conducted in 30 villages covered 20 panchayats in Kalankanker Block of Pratapgarh district and 24 villages covered 17 panchayats in Barabanki block of Barabanki district. In each village, the survey team filled a survey questionnaire, interviewed 25 households and 12 pensioners, verified the entire list of pensioners, and inspected the local ration shop. In Pratapgarh and Barabanki

survey was done by volunteers of Samvad Samajhik Sansthan.

SURVEY FINDINGS

Integrated Child Development Scheme

- The coverage of ICDS has significantly expanded in Barabanki and Pratapgarh districts. However, many children are still excluded from ICDS because the nearest anganwadi is too far.
- The services which are not provided in most of the anganwadis are cooked midday meals on a daily basis, pre-school education and referral services. Some of these Anganwadis also did not have adequate infrastructure facilities.
- Regularity- the anganwadis in all the surveyed villages open regularly but only for 2-3 hours.
- Services-Most respondents said that the Anganwadi opens only for children to eat hot meals and receive food packets, and not for pre-school education or health check-ups.
- 76.7% respondents in Barabanki and 95.2% respondents in Pratapgarh said that anganwadi centres has provided take home ration to 0-3 years children. Respondent also said that the frequency of given food (Take home ration) were weekly.(eg5,15,25 of every month)
- For 3-6 years children, 73.3% respondents said that the food prepared in the centre and 83.3% children eat the food in the centre. But the additional supply of eggs or milk or any other nutritional substitute has not been provided in any Anganwadi Centres in Pratapgarh and Barabanki districts; in 33.3% villages the anganwadi centres has its own building located within the distance of about 1-3 Km.
- Most of the respondents reported that they received medicines and take-home ration for pregnant women. The anganwadis seemed to function well by opening regularly. While children were getting pre-school education, the team felt that the workers should be given more training so that they could engage the children better. Parents should also be encouraged to send their children to the anganwadis more often.
- The services that were provided at most anganwadis are immunisation, health check-up, take-home rations (THR) and provision of iron tablet in both the districts.
- The services which are not provided in most of the anganwadis are cooked midday meals on a

daily basis, pre-school education and referral services. Some of these anganwadis also did not have adequate infrastructure facilities in both the districts.

- For the team, it was also disheartening to see that discrimination on the basis of caste was quite wide-spread and prevalent all over. Many families that we interviewed said that they objected to their children eating with children of lower-castes in the schools. In addition we saw in the a Anganwadi Centres children from lower-castes often got left out. They either voluntarily decided to not attend the anganwadis or were not visited by the anganwadi sevika. In Parsaee village of Pratapgarh district discrimination has noticed while distributing the supplementary nutrition.

Mid-Day meal (MDM)

- In Barabanki 91.7% and in Pratapgarh 93.8% schools have drinking facilities in their school. And around 95.8% schools in surveyed villages in Barabanki and 100% schools in surveyed villages in Pratapgarh having shade on kitchen where they cooked mid-day meal.
- Regularity –78.2% respondents told that mid-day meal is provided as per menu in Barabanki. Whereas in Pratapgarh 87.5% respondents told that mid-day meal is provided as per menu
- The 79.2% respondents in Barabanki and 89.1% respondents in Pratapgarh told that grain usually reach the school on time while 11% respondents in Barabanki and 7.3% respondents in Pratapgarh responsible for cooking the MDM complained that they were not receiving their rations on time. They also mentioned that the funds being provided for pulses, oil and vegetables were below the market rate. In most cases, the menu was not being followed and children were getting rice and dal.
- Quality- 83.3% respondents in Barabanki and 100% respondents in Pratapgarh were not satisfied with the quality of MDMs.

Public distributed system (PDS)

- The survey reveals that 17% of the total household in 20 villages of Pratapgarh and 21.2% of the total household in 17 villages in the Barabanki are not getting food grains on regular basis. They have reported that there was no regular (i.e. monthly) distribution of PDS food grains.
- 90.6% respondent in Barabanki and 50% responded in Pratapgarh reported that opening days of the PDS shops are not adequate. PDS

outlay open for 3-5 days in a month in Barabanki and only 2 days in a month in Pratapgarh.

- Also 12.9% reported in Barabanki and 30% reported in Pratapgarh that they do not agree with the entries for the last six month given on the ration card. There were irregularities in the maintenance of the ration card like 4.7% mentioned that entries were missing, 4.7% reported that there were fake information in Barabanki while in Pratapgarh 9% mentioned about missing entries and 16% reported that there were fake information.
- PDS Shop –The PDS shops were mostly located within 2 km away from villages and in some villages the PDS shops were located in 3-5 km away from villages in both the districts. 15.3% reported in Barabanki and 77% reported in Pratapgarh that there are improvements in quantity supplied of the PDS in comparison to 3 years ago.
- 92.9% beneficiaries in Barabanki and 91% beneficiaries were satisfied with the quality of wheat and rice being distributed at the PDS, few respondents from other villages complained about the poor quality of food grains they were getting. The most common complaint regarding the quality of rice and wheat was the presence of stones and poor quality of grains. And regarding quantity many respondent complained that they are getting less ration from dealers but they have full entries in their card.

Widow Pension

- In Barabanki 93% respondent and in Pratapgarh 96% told that payments are irregular and also there are no arrangements for regular monthly payment on a fixed date (as per Supreme Court orders). Also, pensioners are not informed when payments are made. As a result, many pensioners have to visit the bank many times to collect their pension.
- In Barabanki 100% pensioners and in Pratapgarh 93.9% pensioners are illiterate, only 5.1% pensioners whose educational qualification are up to 5th in Pratapgarh. In Barabanki out of 74 respondents, 32.4% pensioners are engaged in agriculture work and 58.1% are engaged in labour work. While in Pratapgarh 9.2% pensioners are engaged in agriculture work and 83.7% are engaged in labour or daily wage work.
- In Barabanki nearly 93% women and in Pratapgarh 96% women told that there is no fixed date to receive pension.
- 9.5% respondent shared that their passbooks were not updated in Barabanki and 39.8% re-

spondent said this in Pratapgarh. Some pass-books are completely blank, ever since they the bank account opened.

- In every village, there are many people who have a BPL Card and are eligible for a pension but do not get one.

Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)

- Survey data reveals that in Barabanki 9.9% and in Pratapgarh 10.5% told that they have received houses under Indira Awaas Yojana close by the old house and very few were in other places.
- It was noted that a majority (95.1%) of respondents in Barabanki and 66.3% respondents in Pratapgarh shared that they had completed construction within 2 years, 3.7% in Barabanki and 31.6% had taken 3 years to complete and very few indicated to have taken more than 3 years to fully complete their units. Those who had either not completed their houses or taken more than 2 years to complete construction were further asked to specify reasons for delay of construction and it was noted that about 2.1% in Barabanki and 38% in Pratapgarh indicated of instalments received late, 1% in Barabanki and 13% in Pratapgarh indicated high construction cost.
- Around 7.4% respondents in Barabanki and 50.5% respondents in Pratapgarh told that house was allotted in the name of husband, 84% respondents in Barabanki and 32.6% respondents in Pratapgarh share that their houses were allotted jointly both in husband's and wife's name and only 7.4% respondents in Barabanki and 15.8% in Pratapgarh told that houses were allotted in the name of women.
- It was noted that 22.2% houses in Barabanki and only 5.3% houses in Pratapgarh have sanitary latrines and few 4.9% houses in Barabanki and 9.5% houses in Pratapgarh had developed their land under NREGA. Out of total beneficiaries, majority of the beneficiaries 69.1% in Barabanki and 78.9% in Pratapgarh were not benefitted from any other schemes with which IAY could have been converged.
- In Barabanki only 3.7% beneficiaries and in Pratapgarh 6.3% Beneficiaries got information about procurement of raw materials.
- 81.5% in Barabanki and 90.5% in Pratapgarh had indicated that there is no system of proactive disclosure of the priority list of IAY and also system for selection of beneficiaries was not adequate so there is a possibility of partiality and

biasness in selection of beneficiaries by panchayats and concerned officials also.

- A large majority of respondents 87% in Barabanki and 78% in Pratapgarh indicated that monitoring was not done by officials during the course of construction of IAY units.

BIHAR- RESULTS FROM EAST CHAMPARAN DISTRICT

This report summarises the main findings of a survey conducted in 60 villages covered 13 panchayats in Mehshi Block of East Champaran district. In each village, the survey team filled a survey questionnaire, interviewed 25 households and 12 pensioners, verified the entire list of pensioners, and inspected the local ration shop. In East Champaran survey was done by volunteers of Samajik Sodh Evam Vikas Sansthan.

SURVEY FINDINGS

In East Champaran the team found massive irregularities in the functioning of these programmes but also found reasons for hope, as people expressed their appreciation for their entitlements when they are able to get them. Anganwadi centres and schools were visited to see the impact and coverage of the ICDS and MDM, and overall the picture seems to be quite positive.

Integrated child development programme

- Regularity- the Anganwadis in all the surveyed villages open regularly but only for 2-3 hours.
- Services-Most respondents said that the Anganwadi opens only for children to eat hot meals and receive food packets.
- For 0-3 years children 89.5.3% respondents said that anganwadi centres has provided take home ration. 56.7% and the frequency of given food were monthly.
- For 3-6 years children, 94.7% respondents said that the food prepared in the centre and children eat the food in the centre. But the additional supply of eggs or milk or any other nutritional substitute has not been provided in any Anganwadi Centres in East Champaran districts; in 10.5% villages the anganwadi centres has its own building located within the distance of about 1-2Km.
- Most of the respondents said that they received medicines and take-home ration for pregnant women. The anganwadis seemed to function well by opening regularly. While children were getting pre-school education, the team felt that the workers should be given more training so

that they could engage the children better. Parents should also be encouraged to send their children to the anganwadis more often.

- In E. Champaran out of 57 Anganwadi Centres covered during the survey only 28.1% centers have Pakka (well-constructed) building, whereas remaining 66.4% are not having well-constructed building (having either tin shed or tiles). Out of 28.1%, only 10.5% Anganwadi center have their own building and remaining are running in nearest school building or Gram Panchayat Bhaban, rented building or in their own house of Anganwadi worker.
- Also 4% centres have toilet facilities and also of drinking water facilities. And 50% have weight machine at centres and 47% centres have relevant toys for children.

Mid-Day meal (MDM)

- In East Champaran district of Mehshi Block we have reached 55 schools. Only 9.1% schools having registration between 91 to 120 children's. There are several factors may work behind less enrolment as well as less attendance. Like in other surveyed districts, in E. Champaran also, they have minimum standard of infrastructure and teaching learning level.
- In E. Champaran 94.5% schools have drinking facilities in their school but not sure it is safe or not. And around 72.7% schools having shade on kitchen where they cooked mid-day meal.
- Regularity –78.2% respondents told that mid-day meal is provided as per menu and 81.8% respondents told that mid-day meal had been provided every day.
- The 89.1% respondents told that grain usually reach the school on time while 7.3% respondents responsible for cooking the MDM complained that they were not receiving their rations on time. They also mentioned that the funds being provided for pulses, oil and vegetables were below the market rate. In most cases, the menu was not being followed and children were getting rice and dal.
- Quality- Only 43.6% respondents were not satisfied with the quality of MDMs in E. Champaran districts.

Public distribution system

- The survey reveals that 44.7% of the total household in 60 villages of E. Champaran are not getting food grains on regular basis. They have reported that there was no regular (i.e. monthly)

distribution of PDS food grains and during Jan – Dec 2016 they got ration for only 6 to 9 months.

- 59.3% respondent reported that opening days of the PDS shops are not adequate. PDS outlay open for 5-7 days in a month.
- 40.2% reported that they do not agree with the entries for the last six month given on the ration card. There were irregularities in the maintenance of the ration card like 4.9% mentioned that entries were missing, 56.9% reported that there were fake information and 4.7% reported that some entries have been over written.
- PDS Shop –The PDS shops were mostly located within 2 km away from villages and in some villages the PDS shops were located in 3-5 km away from villages in both the districts.
- 50% that there are improvements in quantity supplied of the PDS in comparison to 3 years ago. While 50% reported the same as 3 years ago.
- 83.7% were satisfied with the quality of wheat and rice being distributed at the PDS, while 14.2% beneficiaries from other villages complained about the poor quality of food grains they were getting.
- The PDS dealers, are often influential people of the village (such as Gram Panchayat members), were reported to be unresponsive to the people's demands for regular supply of rations, commonly turning them away saying they did not get the supply.

Widow pension

- 49% respondent told that payments are irregular and also there are no arrangements for regular monthly payment on a fixed date (as per Supreme Court orders). Also, pensioners are not informed when payments are made. As a result, many pensioners have to visit the bank many times to collect their pension.
- In East Champaran out of 139 respondents, all the target pensioners are illiterate. Nearly 98.9% pensioners are engaged in labour work.
- All the interviewed women told that there is no fixed date to receive pension. 97.3% women are receiving their pension through bank.
- 89.9% respondent shared that their passbooks were not updated. Some passbooks are completely blank, ever since they the bank account opened.

- Like in other surveyed villages, in every village, there are many people who have a BPL Card and are eligible for a pension but not get one.
- In East Champaran also pensioners have to travel a long distance (to the block headquarters) to withdraw their pension from the bank. They take five to seven hours, on average, to collect their pension. There is no separate queue for pensioners at the bank, causing further delays.

Indira Awaas Yojana (IAY)

- Survey data reveals that in East Champaran overall, 28.8% houses under Indira Awaas Yojana were constructed close by the old house of the beneficiary household and very few were in other places.
- It was noted that a majority (78.1%) of respondents had completed construction within 2 years, 3.5% had taken 3 years to complete and very few indicated to have taken more than 3 years to fully complete their units. Those who had either not completed their houses or taken more than 2 years to complete construction were further asked to specify reasons for delay of construction and it was noted that about 35% indicated of instalments received late and 11% indicated high construction cost.
- Around 15.8% respondents told that house was allotted in the name of husband, 61.4% respondents share that their houses were allotted jointly both in husband's and wife's name and only 7.9% respondents told that houses were allotted in the name of women.
- It was noted that 24.1% houses have sanitary latrines and very few 18.9% houses had developed their land under NREGA. In East Champaran 9.6% houses have electricity connection with IAY. Out of total beneficiaries, 40.4% beneficiaries were not benefitted from any other schemes with which IAY could have been converged.
- 14% beneficiaries in East Champaran had indicated that officials have made one visit while the construction was under progress.
- A very few 3.1% beneficiaries got information about construction technology and procurement of raw materials.
- 47.4% in East Champaran had indicated that there is no system of proactive disclosure of the priority list of IAY and also system for selection of beneficiaries was not adequate so there is a possibility of partiality and biasness in selection of beneficiaries by panchayats and concerned officials also.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTED INTERVENTIONS

Although the government social security schemes and others are very well designed but the lack of political willingness and low accountability of service providers become the bottle necks for schemes to be well implemented and attain its objective. Based on the findings in this survey, the following recommendations are made;

RECOMMENDATIONS CATEGORIES WISE

The recommendations below are segregated into intervention at strategic level and intervention at operational level to strengthen the operational system.

INTEGRATED CHILD DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES

- Strengthening infrastructure of the Anganwadi –Existing infrastructure of the Anganwadi is a key concern in effective delivery of targeted services by the Anganwadi. The survey shows that several Anganwadi are functioning out of rented buildings or kuccha buildings. More than half of the Anganwadi are Pucca; more than 30 percent centres do not have toilet facilities and are devoid of drinking water facilities. These being key issues, it is pertinent that mechanism for developing necessary infrastructure needs to be explored and operationalized.
- Location and connectivity of AWC –The location of the AWC needs to be carefully structured in a way that it is easily accessible for the defined population and the families avail maximum benefits like supplementary nutrition for children from the AWC. The two main reasons cited for non-utilization are- distance of the AWC from the household and non-availability of family members to collect food. A possible alternative could be the Anganwadi Sahayika delivering packed food to the excluded households on a weekly basis. This is a plausible alternative as

the total number of target group in a given AWC is mostly a reachable number. Besides reaching out to the targeted beneficiaries through increased home visits will also provide opportunities of quality counselling families on nutrition and other benefits.

- Capacity/skills of AWW – In order to position Anganwadi as a change agent, it is imperative that capacities of the AWW and of supervisory staff are built accordingly. It is imperative to revise the training curriculum and to include specific sessions on counselling and interpersonal communication to position them more effectively as a change agent.
- Provisioning of supplies – During the study, almost half of the AWCs reported not having pre-school education system. Only around 50 percent of the AWCs were found to have outdoor-indoor play material. IEC material was available in around 30 percent of AWCs however these were also a couple of years old. Expediting the process of procurement and redistribution of educational and medicine kits as well as ensuring continuous supply is key to effective functioning of the AWC's.
- Counselling & outreach – AWC needs to work as counselling and outreach centres" rather than just being the "Food distribution centre". The second broad strategy to complement the household level feeding behaviour change is to strengthen the existing Localized Food Model Strategy.
- Enhance community participation and making Angandwadi's more accountable to the clients Localized Food Model currently provides the opportunity wherein communities through institution such as Mothers group are participating in deciding about the local food, the nature of preparation and also in deciding the menu. It needs

to be further strengthened by regularly presenting the stock situation and procurement problem if any in Panchayat meeting.

- Ensuring continuous supply of supplementary nutrition to the Anganwadi – During the study it was found that many centres did not have regular supply as well prerequisite quantity & quality of food. It was also reported that, in the last 6 months, the supply has been erratic in most of AWCs. Timely and quality supply needs to be ensured. This could be done through an monitoring system which involves PRI's and civil society organisations. Ensuring strong convergence with Panchayat. Active involvement of the Panchayat can serve as a check and balance mechanism
- Community Based Monitoring and Evaluation System – Community based monitoring systems need to be implemented on an experimental basis. This may enhance efficiency of service deliveries specifically of government schemes to a large extent. It shall also be made mandatory to display the stock situation outside Anganwadi Centre. Besides, community shall also be involved in monitoring the quality of services provided.
- Enhancing Monitoring efficiency – Continuous monitoring of processes and outputs is prerequisite for timely action towards course correction in the quest for envisioned objectives of ICDS. And therefore adequate investment in M&E systems and capacities is necessary. Presently there is considerable scope for improvement as well as making the existing system more efficient.
- Grading system – It is proposed to come up with a grading system based on the key indicators such as:
 - ◇ Number of Malnourished children in AWC
 - ◇ Immunization Status
 - ◇ Maintenance of Records
 - ◇ Cleanliness at AWC
 - ◇ Distribution of Food to Beneficiary
 - ◇ Presence of Weighing scale and Growth Monitoring Chart

Based on the above indicators it is proposed that a grading system for the Anganwadi starting from A to D be adopted. The grading system shall help not only in better utilization of the data for decision making but will also bring a sense of self-monitoring.

- Coordination for convergence with other

programmes – There is evidence of joint planning and implementation of activities targeting health and nutrition of children and mothers through cross-departmental initiatives of health, Panchayat and Rural development, Department of Education and PDS. This gets exemplified by activities like immunization, village health and nutrition day, referral services to PHC and NRC, engagement of SHGs in supply of food items, construction of AWCs, enrolment of children into schools etc.

Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDM)

- The survey shows that more than 11% schools don't have separate kitchen sheds and 7.9% schools don't have drinking water/ toilet facilities. There is scope for convergence with schemes like National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme for construction of kitchen sheds and honorarium for cooks and helpers, drinking water / toilet facilities through government scheme/programme and health check-up and micronutrients through school health programme under National Rural health Mission.
- Steering-cum-monitoring committees should be made functional and active at district/block levels for effective implementation, convergence and monitoring of the scheme. Also
- district level management committees should be made effective - their meetings should be held regularly so that monitoring and supervision by the Block education officer/District education officer is ensured through these meetings.
- Guidelines issued by Government regarding the delivery of food grains by PDS dealer to school directly should be implemented as this will help in:
 1. Averting the leakage of food grains from the delivery point and reduce the supply channel.
 2. Taking off pressure from Head Master or implementing authority.
- Since price of commodities have been fluctuating quite frequently especially items like oil and pulses, it becomes difficult for the IA to meet the costs. Therefore there must be a regular review of the costs being paid to IA once in 6 months. Preference for the choice of Implementing Agencies must be given to local women self-help groups or mothers of children studying in the schools. This will have a two pronged benefit. Both of ensuring a means of employment to women as well as cooking locally prevalent food which suits the tastes of the children.

- Steering-cum-monitoring committees from State to Block level should be constituted and concerned head at each level should be made responsible for holding the meetings regularly.
- A copy of release orders of food grains should be provided to the head master of the school for cross checking the supply made by the fair price shop dealers every month. And with prior information to block level committee and Gram Panchayat Municipality, the funds should be electronically transferred to the account of Implementing Authority (IA). The IA agency should be made responsible for cooking, serving and cleaning of the utensils and plates and the school staff should be confined only to supervision of the serving.
- One member of block level committee should attend the meetings of school development and management committee so that participation of member of Parent Teacher Association and PRIs can be ensured.
- District nodal authority should be strict in getting utilization certificates from the implementing authority at school level, in time, so that funds/ food grains are delivered timely.
- For proper monitoring, meetings of steering-cum-monitoring committee at block level should be held on regular basis. The minutes of the meetings should be sent to the central, state and district nodal authorities.
- Orders of the government giving powers to Block level nodal agency to sanction the conversion charges to the implementing agency on production of utilization certificate should be implemented to ensure regular payment of conversion charges to implementing agency.
- Utilization certificates of food grains/funds from the school should be taken by the block level officer on priority basis and should be sent to the district authority so that release of funds is expedited.
- Fixation of APL quota – The norm for release of APL quota should be transparent and realistic. Some states, such as Bihar, Jharkhand and UP are not releasing the APL quota on the ground that they did not lift it in the past when the market price was low. This policy favours the southern states which have been subsidizing the APL quota out of state funds, and punishing the poorer states.
- Leakages in APL quota – One of the main reasons for the black marketing of the APL quota is the fact that GOI does not release full quota as per the number of APL cards, which gives a handle to the dealer to refuse supplies on the ground that the limited quota has already been lifted. In case GOI does not release full quota for APL, the cardholders' entitlement should be reduced accordingly, and this fact must be given due publicity. In other words, there should be food grain for each APL card, though the quantity may be much less than 35 kg.
- Elimination of Ghost Ration Cards – All card holders must be photographed, and their details along with their photographs should be in the public domain. This will make it easy for the civil society or consumers to check the list.
- Making it obligatory for dealers to sell non-cereal items: Dealers should be asked to improve their viability by selling items of mass consumption other than wheat and rice. They should be encouraged to do so by issuing a specific order to that effect. Gujarat has made FPS multi-product shops, but no such order exists in many states. The dealers' psychology is that "everything is prohibited unless specifically permitted".
- Role of Panchayat should be increased - We recommend the active and positive role of Panchayats in preparing 'correct schedule' of cardholders, cradles households, and BPL and APL categories by income and occupation. This role of Panchayats has to be interactive with State Supply Office/BDO etc. for cross check/double check to ensure transparent functioning of the system. In this context, we recommend Training for Panchayat Members, including Panchayat Presidents, arranged by the State Supply Department. These training programmes should take into confidence the consumers' bodies (NGOs), Research Institutes and Universities located in the neighbourhood to play a constructive role.
- Itemized display for public - We recommend public display of quantity of items distributed by

Public Distribution System (PDS)

- Improving procedure for selection of BPL – The present procedure for selection of BPL beneficiaries is opaque, bureaucratic, and does not involve gram sabha. The basis on which village wise cap on the maximum number of entitled beneficiaries is fixed, is not clear and not well defined. A white paper should be prepared on the subject, and clear policy lay down by the Ministry of Rural Development.

the FPS Dealers per period, and quantity of items remaining undistributed, one month-wise calendar used for each of these 'displays'. The State Supply Department will have to provide these calendars through the Supply Inspectors for use by the FPS Dealers.

- Reducing paper work and transaction costs: Due to cumbersome procedures, often there is a time difference of several days between the FPS dealer depositing his bank draft and the grain being released to him. This unnecessarily blocks the money of the dealer. It is suggested that the dealer should deposit advance directly in the bank account of the SFC/FCI, and there is no necessity of the bank draft being handled physically. The SFC/FCI should put its account number on the web so that anyone can see which dealer has deposited, when, and how much. On the same page SFC/FCI should issue an electronic release order. On the same day SFC/FCI should issue a manual release order too, as not all shop keepers will have computer facility at present. This will bring transparency in the entire operation, and anyone can see where delay is taking place.
- There should be only one annual order from the district indicating quota of each dealer, so that the dealer does not have to wait every month for the district to issue allotment order. Government should also issue just one order in the beginning of the year in which quota of all the dealers can be mentioned.

Suggestions for Implementation by State Level Functionaries-

- Allotment of kerosene oil should be increased per card/unit.
- Identify local need and supply/distribute items accordingly.
- Every household should have a ration card not only to get items but also as an identity.
- A single window (Department) at the level of the state must be assigned the responsibility for the execution of the delivery mechanism, right from FCI godown to FPSs. This should be a Government Department separate from the autonomous Food Rights Commission.
- Each Block should have one food grain godown and one oil depot.
- Kerosene Oil depot owners may be allowed to distribute LPG also.
- Members of the household should be in the unorganised sector to be eligible for BPL card..
- To the extent possible, state government has to shed the load of the FPS dealer by ensuring supply at the door of the supply point in the village, rather than the FPS dealers going a long way with cash to carry back distributable items. This will save cost on transport-cum-transactions.

Widow Pension scheme

- Expand coverage and universalize— It was observed that coverage of the widow pension scheme is grossly inadequate. Therefore it is important to increase coverage of the scheme with an aim of universalization. In order to achieve universalization of the scheme, exclusion should be used as the criteria for coverage in places of below poverty line which has already been demonstrated as an alternative by Rajasthan.
- There is a need to institutionalize proactive identification and enrolment mechanisms for widow pension. State should proactively identify and enrol prospective pensioner instead of the prospective pensioners proving their eligibility to the state. In order to achieve the enrolment, mechanisms need to be institutionalized. Even in their current form of camps, Mela/camps/khuladarbars and surveys need to be held regularly on fixed dates and widely publicized as part of the identification and enrolment mechanism.
- A single window system should be adapted to process applications. Further, applicants should be given support to complete their applications along with all required documentation. Also the processing times for sanctioning of pensions must be specified, proactively disclosed and have strict enforcement provisions such as fines for delays. The timelines, as specified in the guidelines should not be more than three months and wherever Right to Public Service Acts is in place, pensions should be brought under its ambit.
- If a pension application has been rejected on grounds of inadequate supporting documents or discrepancies in the documents (particularly with regard to age, which is commonly reported), the administration should take proactive measures to assist the applicant in furnishing necessary documents. In cases where a pension application cannot be entertained the applicant should be informed within a specified time period about the reasons for rejection. Many applicants were observed to be repeatedly applying without knowing the reason for rejection.
- Efforts should be made to make information

available in a form which is useful to pensioners. They should firstly be given a record of their pensions (for example in the form of a passbook). Secondly, simple, transparent mechanisms for tracking applications should be introduced. Thirdly, all information related to allocations and expenditures should be easily accessible at all levels.

- Currently there is no rationale for the widow pension amount. It is strongly recommended that it be indexed to inflation and revised annually (in the same manner as MNREGA wage rates and that of the salaries of government servants.) While the new guidelines urge states to provide an addition amount which is equal to the assistance provided by the Central Government, it does not specify a minimum.
- Regular payments – Regular disbursement of funds on a fixed date every month should be practiced by the states so that the pensioners are well informed and spared from any related issues such as repeatedly approaching the bank to withdraw their pensions. Also a systematic survey of the distance between the payment agency and the village/area where beneficiaries reside should be undertaken and where the distance is more than 3 km, alternative modes of delivery should be put in place such as doorstep delivery.
- Focus on highly vulnerable groups – States must proactively identify particularly vulnerable groups such as single women (destitute, abandoned, divorced, separated, never married, females headed households etc.) must be included under the pension scheme to address the increasing feminization of poverty and provide support to women who do not have access to equal opportunities.
- The absence of community monitoring in any state emerges as a stark finding. Social audits must be made mandatory and states must issue detailed rules on its implementation and redressal.

Rural Housing Scheme- (Indira Awas Yojna)

- Ensuring Transparency in beneficiary selection – To ensure transparency in selection of beneficiaries, it is needed that the districts follow the Socio Economic Caste Census (SECC) instead of the BPL survey while finalizing the list of eligible IAY or any beneficiaries for rural housing schemes. It may be noted that the methodology adopted under SECC is more objective and is enabled with simplified process for beneficiary identification. The three-fold classification of rural households under SECC would expectedly ensure identification of those who truly require assistance under IAY or rural housing scheme the most. Moreover, validity of such list needs to be on yearly basis, not 5 years as currently practiced.
- Prioritization of physical monitoring at grassroots – There is no systematic verification mechanism during and after construction. Monitoring of construction is one of the bigger issues that have severely dented the effective operationalisation of the scheme at the grassroots. Officials fear to tread and travel to remote areas as a result of which physical monitoring is not taken up as desired. Social audits and participatory monitoring with greater involvement of PRI functionaries and representatives of households can be taken up in backward areas. Up to 5% funds under scheme must be kept aside for monitoring purpose. Ground Positioning System (GPS) based monitoring of physical targets with photographs to ensure correct reporting needs to be pursued.
- Qualitative dwelling units to be targeted – Since the beneficiary takes up the responsibility to construct the house on its own, quality guidance or technical guidance is of paramount importance. Trained and skilled hands cannot be hired by beneficiaries due to affordability factor as well as the assisted amount under scheme is not sufficient. It is, therefore, suggested that training to beneficiaries on matters related to construction methodology, type design and masonry may be imparted at the GP level. Proven alternate and indigenous technologies that are cost effective and environment friendly needed to be popularized through GPs. Officials dealing with IAY / rural housing scheme both at block and district level need to be imparted training in disaster resistant features to be adopted in construction of house. Concern authorities should organize such training programmes for implementing officials and PRI functionaries. There is a need to expand the availability of technical assistance at block and village levels as 84% respondents in the study area indicated that technical training or support guidance would be highly beneficial for quality construction.
- Eligibility criteria needs to be changed – In backward areas, the government needs to address the issue of housing from the perspective that in addition to general housing shortage, there are shortages on account of natural calamity in which houses have been destroyed. It is therefore imperative that the government must make attempts to proactively consider that all sections

of people whose houses have been destroyed should be eligible under rural housing, no matter whether they belong to BPL or not .

- The survey data reveals that, only 11.4% allotments of the houses were made in the name of the women. We have come across the cases in which majority of the women were deprived of housing scheme due to their non-ownership of lands. In families in which the internal balance of power as between the sexes comes to be questioned, women are thrown into crises. Such a situation calls for positive intervention by government to give land to landless women.
- Augmenting utilization of IAY/rural housing allocation – In order to effectively utilize IAY or any rural housing schemes allocations disbursed to states, state governments should not be worried about its share rather leverage the allocation for better reduction of shelter-less areas. It is time that states must learn from other states like Gujarat, Punjab and some districts in Uttar Pradesh, who have succeeded in exhausting their existing BPL lists for the IAY and now making move to eye to include non-BPL households under IAY. Moreover, states should adhere timeline for release the state share to the allocation for a given FY and timely release it to the districts during the same FY so that unnecessary burden of physical achievement for districts is avoided. It was noted that state government's belated release of state share of their component had accounted for belated utilization/non-utilization by the studied districts.
- Increased Involvement of Local Stakeholders – Upfront efforts to involve stakeholders under rural housing are needed. The need for improving efficiency, local stakeholders need to be involved effectively in rural housing scheme deliverance. NGOs must be professionally engaged to support PRIs to facilitate safe and sustainable habitat development under rural housing system operationalisation.
- Generating awareness on additional financing option and convergence – Awareness generation through intensive IEC activities using electronic media, print, press advertisements, outreach contacts, Panchayat meetings, village level meetings, and interpersonal communication etc. on the availability of top up loan from any nationalized bank at very low or subsidized rate of interest. Also, awareness needs to be generated about provision for electricity connection to houses, safe water supply through convergence approach.

- Periodic review cum planning meeting – Under any scheme either central sponsored, state or jointly, there is importance of periodic review by the senior authority both at district level and state level.

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