

Critical Review of Samajik Suvidha Sangam 2008-13

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Abstract

Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi launched an initiative, Samajik Suvidha Sangam, (registered under Societies Registration Act, 1860). It aims at equity, social justice, and empowerment of the marginalized and underprivileged sections of society heading towards comprehensive growth and all round development. This will improve the quality of life of its citizens especially the most vulnerable and disadvantaged sections making them a productive component of society.

Introduction

The first Human Development Report of Delhi in 2006 revealed high level of inequalities and lack of access to social welfare schemes which were meant for the poor. On 14th August 2008, Delhi government launched Mission Convergence/ Samajik Suvidha Sangam (SSS), in order to identify the needy & vulnerable and to strengthen delivery system with an enabling mechanism.

Aim of Samajik Suvidha Sangam

The aim of this program is to take initiative and to alleviate the poverty and to provide systemic identification to most vulnerable citizen so that they can find the ways to achieve their basic fundamental rights of food education, health care and social security in the society.

Administration and Organization Structure

Started with nine Administrative District, SSS now operate from eleven Administrative District namely, West, North, Central, New Delhi, South, South-East, South-West, Shahdara, North East and North West. The Samajik Suvidha Sangam is an interface between different government departments, the Deputy Commissioner's office of each District and the Nodal Agencies (NGOs and CBOs: Community Based Organization). The MLA of each area is part of the District Entitlement Communities. SSS is headed by Delhi Chief Minister.

Initially, the program was started with 94 Gender Resource Center- Suvidha Kendaras (GRC-SK), presently there are 124 GRC-SK (104 GRC-SKs, 18 GRC-SK extension centers and 2 Stand-alone extension centers) run by various NGOs located in different parts of Delhi. In 11 district of Delhi, there are 9 District Resource Centers (DRC) which monitor and train these GRC-SK. The work of these DRCs and GRC-SK is further monitored by Deputy Commissioner and officers from nine convergence government Departments. In addition, independent monitoring is

done by the Project Management Unit (PMU) at state level through Mother NGOs (MNGO). **Society for Service to voluntary Agencies (SOSVA)** and **Modicare**, the initial MNGOs of SSS covered its 9 Administrative District. With the increase in Administrative District from 9 to 11, a need was felt for an additional MNGO to cater the increased area. For effective monitoring an additional MNGO, **Child Fund India (CFI)** was opened. Now the districts have been re-distributed among these 3 MNGOs. The list of Administrative District that comes under each MNGO is:

- 1) SOSVA : East, North-East, Central, Shahdra,
- 2) Modicare : West, North, North-West,
- 3) CFI : South, South-West, New Delhi, South-East,

In 2010, to know the number of homeless population in Delhi, the Delhi govt conducted many door to door surveys and established an effective network of 7 HRCs and **St. Stephen** as its MNGO.

Criteria and Matrix to Identify People Status:

The criteria of economic strata have its own shortcomings when used to identify under privileged. The method of identification was sometimes misleading in some metropolitan cities like Delhi. For instance, a person may be above the poverty line but may still be vulnerable because of his or her living conditions. With the launch of SSS this criteria has been redefined.

The matrix of identification of the vulnerable is now based on three fillers: Spatial vulnerability (their place of residence), Social vulnerability and Occupational vulnerability.

Most Vulnerable Households = Social + Spatial Vulnerability = Antyodaya

Vulnerable Groups = Occupational + Spatial Vulnerability = BPL

The computerized data of the most vulnerable and vulnerable population of Delhi is prepared by conducting three phases of survey. This vulnerable population gets facilitated by Single window system, under which various welfare schemes are catered by various government departments through single platform.

The dream of catering so many welfare schemes under one umbrella faced many challenges in a due course of time, this lead to some changes in the prevailing system. Now the nature of work has changed, people only get facilitated with the procedure and the follow up is left to them. Such changes are more evident in Financial Assistance Scheme.

Samajik Suvidha Sangam a Ray of Hope

Mission Convergence/ SSS is a ray of hope forgetting freedom from poverty, which is not only a part of the welfare measures of the government, but the right of all citizens of a democratic country. Privatization and contractualisation has opened its arm and embracing in all sphere of life. There is private-public partnership, NGOs and various associations discharging their efforts at a concrete level to motivate and support the welfare scheme of government.

Motive of Samajik Suvidha Sangam

The main motive of SSS is poverty alleviation and overall welfare. With this motive SSS have build positive attitude by creating awareness making people knowledgeable and bringing out girls for self empowerment.

Vulnerability is getting reduced by community workshop, employment programme, and overall development of woman such as SHGs and helping society by guiding right information at the right time.

Through single window approach all these are done within the legal sphere which provides motives and encouragement without any time lag and easy for all to understand it.

Awareness

SSS adequately and timely spreads awareness among the masses about the welfare schemes and people entitlement. This awareness is making people more responsible towards their basic rights and duties, as every girl child is getting her birth certificates. All this is possible due to benefit they are getting through **Ladli scheme**. Awareness is making easier for people to get their basic documents done and also encourages banking habit.

Mission Convergence frequently conducts various programs such as festive mela, which promotes displays and sale of the various products being manufactured by the beneficiaries trained under the Skill Development & Vocational Training program and **SJSRY** at various Gender Resource Centers-Suvidha Kendras.

Achievements

Samajik Suvidha Sangam program has won first position out of 150 entries from several commonwealth nations on 20th October 2010. SSS wins hearts at Commonwealth Association for Public Administration (CAPAM) and is awarded CAPAM international innovations award for innovation in Government services and program and overall gold medal in innovation 2010.

Mission Convergence has brought about a new framework of governance. It has energized Deputy Commissioners who are the crux of implementation mechanism. It has given an extraordinary reach to community based organizations to interact with the poor people in various colonies. It has enable the Program Management Unit of Samajik Suvidha Sangam to interact with global best practices and learn from the best experiences in the world on the progress made in tackling poverty in urban environments. It has opened a series of debates and search for ideas and frameworks, which can enable the Mission Convergence to fulfill its objectives as committed in the Mission Statement.

Failure

In spite of all the efforts and facilities there is still lot of hardship. Government department failed to cooperate with SSS in implementing different schemes especially **Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY)** as it is a complex scheme and the capacities were not lacking only in Government but also among hospitals, insurance companies and NGOs. SSS has now become target oriented and lack the proper implementation, as every district and its further GRC areas have their own challenges, which sometime also affects the quality of work.

Currently under SSS, almost all the work is done online while, previously it was manual. This additional online work has undoubtedly proved to be beneficial by speeding work but there are certain limitations to it as well. At times work gets delayed due to the problems of down server and long power cuts.

Owing to this and other additional schemes and activities to the program there is excessive work pressure on employees working at the grass root level, low and delayed salaries also add to the dissatisfaction of employees, thus leading to frequent change in staff. All this affect the work flow and finally the program itself.

It is mandatory for all citizens to have a proof of residence in order to avail any welfare scheme run by the State Government. Many of the deserving people are unable to avail the benefit simply because they are not affluent enough to get the required documents. As this program is targeted for the people below poverty line, so the **suvidha card** is being introduced that would act as a medium to identify the vulnerable. Along with the relevant information this card contains biometric features and therefore reduces the scope of corruption in the schemes .It will ease out for the vulnerable to avail benefits of the welfare schemes and can also be used as residence proof but, no such card has been made yet.

Conclusion

Since 2008, with the objective of improving the quality of life of its vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of society, SSS has travelled some distance during the past couple of years. In its journey SSS has faced many operational challenges. The presence of the GRCs in the heart of the targeted community is an advantage for routing their schemes and better targeting their beneficiaries, thus it should have optimally implemented on the ground.

Though, the SSS has given an extraordinary reach to community based organizations to interact with the poor people in various colonies still the program should work on the excessive work pressure at the grass root level. The low paid salaries that lead to dissatisfaction among the employees should be seen as this leads to frequent change in staff.

Mission Convergence functions in a flexible manner to meet the needs of a dynamic and changing society. Its strength lies in its quickness in addressing the demands and needs of people by catering many welfare schemes under one umbrella but with the course of time prevailing system has changed and if it continues so it will lose on its aims and motive.

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