Chapter 21

Gram Suraj in Chhattisgarh

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I) OVERVIEW

An elected government is answerable to its citizens. The Government of Chhattisgarh believes that development initiative must begin from the grass-root level. Even small problems of villagers cannot be ignored. Annual interaction with the people at their doorsteps is important. The government therefore launched Gram Suraj Abhiyan under the leadership of the Chief Minister. Elaborate preparations for Gram Suraj Abhiyan were made on the lines of national programs like general elections or pulse polio program. All the eighteen districts were divided into around 800 zones under 800 zonal officers. About 2955 in-charge officers and 2779 assistant officers were appointed to support them. In each village an officer was appointed as *Gram Prabhari*, village in-charge. Under Gram Suraj Abhiyan, in 10 days, nearly 3000 teams of government officials and employees visited around 20,000 villages under 9,820 Gram Panchayats. During the visit, the team members interacted with the villagers and obtained feedback on various government schemes being run for them. The team members likewise informed the villagers about various welfare schemes being run by government for them and also reviewed the progress of developmental works being done under various schemes. As part of the Abhiyan, thousands of applications (more than 7 lacs!) related to grievances/demands were received. Likewise, the teams gathered vital data and information, status of government schemes related to agriculture, revenue, forest, social welfare, rural development, education, drinking water, health, veterinary etc from every village. Five basic problems and demands of each and every village were collected. It was a challenge to process these through manual system to generate meaningful reports. The responsiveness of the Government and its credibility with the people depended on meaningful follow-up action. Hence it was decided to harness technology to develop an on-line web based application to cover the entire process of the Gram Suraj Abhiyan.

II) RESULT INDICATORS

1. Key Performance

- Enhanced transparency in operations as a deterrent to check corruption.
- All the reports emerging from the *abhiyan* are made available to citizens on web for social audit.
- Enhanced responsiveness by cutting on time required for redressal of grievances.
- Since anyone, including the citizen/media, can see the status of any scheme of any department, the social pressure on departments to resolve the problem in time gets strengthened.
- Providing single platform for all departments.
- User-id and password have been created for every department. All the departments are using the same portal for monitoring/updating purpose.
- Reducing man power for compiling the huge data
- Capturing village-level information related to agriculture, drinking water, school education, village infrastructure, health, revenue, FPS (Fair Price Shop), forest, women & child welfare, energy, social welfare, rural development schemes, five basic problems and five basic demands of each village, and any other useful information related to villagers.
- Obtaining ground reports of government schemes in rural areas.
- Creating database to help departments in their planning for rural people.
- Identifying bottleneck(s), if any in implementation of existing schemes.
- Preparing a village directory common for all projects.
- Reinforcing credibility of Government machinery among rural people.
- Interaction with the people in their courtyards and try, to the extent possible, to redress their grievances on the spot.
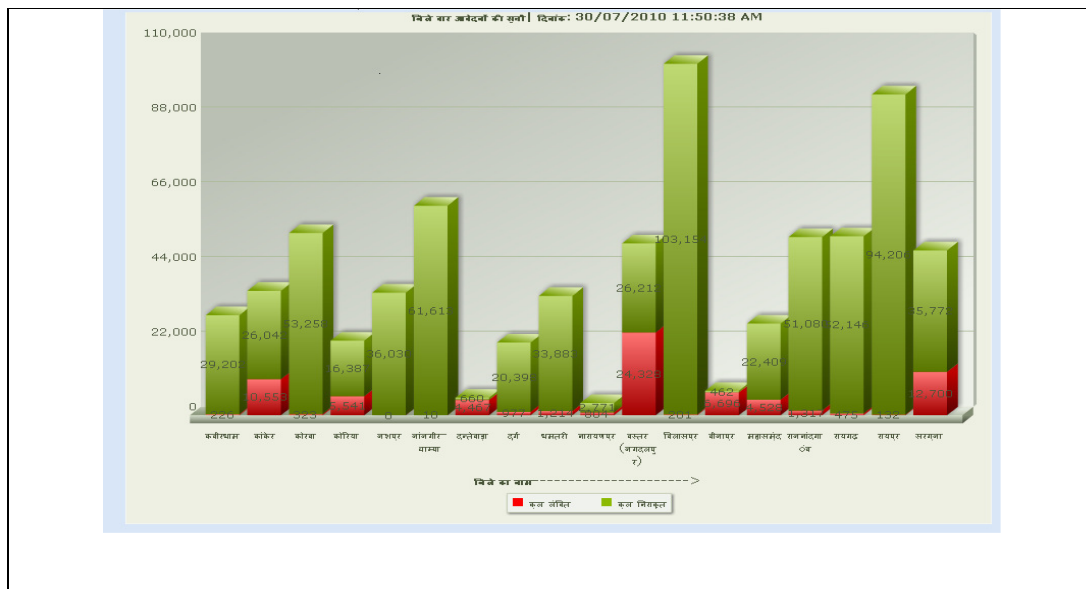
Purpose & priorities of the initiative

All the reports emerging from the *abhiyan* are made available to citizens on web for social audit

To enhance **transparency** in operations as a deterrent to check corruption
- To **enhance responsiveness** by cutting on time required for redressal of grievances.
- Since anyone, including the citizen/media, can see the status of any scheme of any department, the social pressure on departments to resolve the problem in time gets strengthened.
- To **provide single platform** for all departments.
- User-id and password has been created for every department. All the departments are using the same portal for monitoring/updating purpose.
- To **reduce man power** for compiling the huge data
- To **capture village-level information** related to agriculture, drinking water, school education, village infrastructure, health, revenue, FPS (Fair Price Shop), forest, women & child welfare, energy, social welfare, rural development schemes, five basic problems and five basic demands of each village, and any other useful information related to villagers.
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2. *Efficiency improvement*

- This portal simplified the old manual complex procedure.
- Increased the transparency, perfect real time reporting, remove the manipulation of records.
- Training about the using the portal at District level officers is provided by concerned DIOs. DIOs are trained using the Video Conferencing technology without moving toward to State Centre.
- Timely support is provided to officers of the concerned departments.

- Due to In-house development by the NIC, any modification/corrections are made as and when received.
- No costly hardware or system software has been procured for implementing the project.
- All process/modules update the common database in real-time.
- 24X7 Accessibility from anywhere.
- Portal can be accessed from any PC using a browser.
- Role and Authority base account is created.
- Many age old problems of villagers have been settled through Gram Suraj Abhiyan. More than 90% grievances are resolved.
- Top 5 districts that solved more grievances are displayed on the portal. Every district try to come on top 5 lists due to this motive all are trying to resolve the grievances at earliest.
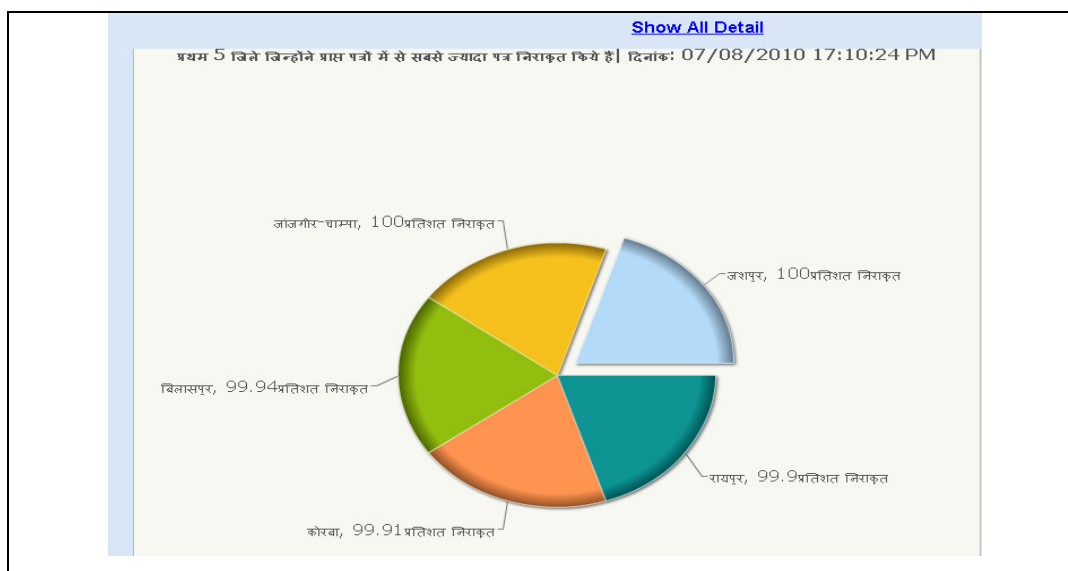
III) ENABLER INDICATORS

1. *Processes*

a. *Major back end process changes and implemented*

- An exhaustive questionnaire was prepared and the teams were required to gather responses and information according to the questionnaire.
- Total process of the Gram Suraj Abhiyan including printed receipt with unique code to applicants, Village directory, Data bank of Village information, dispatch letter generation, office orders etc were computerized.

- National Informatics Centre, a Government of India enterprise was selected as ICT partner for design, development and implementation support. NIC is providing ICT support to the project as an insider to the department rather than external agency. This strategy has helped enhance its commitment towards and sustainability of the System.
- Dispatch letters to the department(s) and applicant(s) relating to the abhiyan is being generated by the system.
- Connectivity has been given highest priority. Different networks like NICNET, VSAT, CGSWAN and Broadband are used for data entry.
- To create confidence and test the system a demo portal exactly similar to the real portal has been created.
- A number of workshops at State/District/Block level have been conducted from the project initiation stage as part of the strategy to involve the field officers in the system so that they may have a sense of ownership.

b. *Major front end process changes and implemented*

Improvement in delivery time of services
- It is benefiting more than 7.00 lacs applicants, it will benefit a huge number of villagers living in more than 20,000 villages in Chhattisgarh State
- Database created of more than 20000 villages Information of each village including status of the schemes/projects implemented by the government to serve as single source of data base for all the departments.
- Data has been collected directly by physical survey to all villages. More than 50 base departments, more than 1500 departments at State/District/tehsil/block level, and more than 10000 officers/employees are regularly using this system.
- A unique code is given to each application and pre printed receipt is given to each applicant during Gram Suraj Abhiyan. Any applicant can see the status of his/her complaint at any time on the portal at http://cg.nic.in/gramsuraj.
- In a short time, maximum number of grievances are resolved.
- The application has been designed as an online, work flow, role and authority based suite of applications with roles for various stakeholders like state departments, District department, Block department, District Administrators, Functionaries, and the Public. As soon as data is updated by any user at the State/district/block levels or any department geographically located in different locations, the same is instantly reflected on the portal.

Improvement in measurable indicators –

- More than 7 lac applications received during Gram Suraj Abhiyan have been registered.
- Five most major problems and demands of more than 20,000 villages identified and registered in the system for due redressal.
- More than 200 questionnaires prepared to collect the information of each village about the exact status of the schemes/projects implemented by the government. All the information collected during Gram Suraj Abhiyan are registered in the e-GramSuraj portal.
- Within three months about 90% grievances could be resolved.
- Tedious system of sending reports/messages/data by e-mail/fax/CD etc has been discontinued and all information now flows only through portal.
- One can see any time the latest status of the entire state. Previously it would take months to compile the report at Blocks then Districts then finally at State level.
- No official can claim ignorance if any letter is marked to him.
- Departments now have reliable database to prepare future plan(s) for the villages.
- Government can now easily identify gaps in areas like road connectivity, drinking water facility, women child welfare projects, children education system, agriculture, health system, mid day meal scheme and other sectors where the improvement is required.
- Villagers have greater faith that their Government is responsive and sensitive to their problems.
- Following is a real time chart about the applications reflecting the impact of Computerization of Gram Suraj Abhiyan.

2. People and Resources

a. Leadership:

- Mr. N. Baijendra Kumar - Principal Secretary to Hon'ble CM, Government of Chhattisgarh
- Mr. Subodh Kumar Singh – Special Secretary to Hon'ble CM
- Mr. Manoj Kumar Mishra, SIO, NIC Chhattisgarh, sio-cg@nic.in
- Mr. Ashok Maurya PSA, NIC, CGSC. amaurya@nic.in , 9425580763 – contact person

b. Development & O&M Team

- Mr. Pratik Chandrakar Scientific Officer 'SB' NIC
- Mr. Shrikant Scientific Officer 'SB' NIC

- Mr. Dilip Kumar Vishwakarma, Asst. Programmer
- Mr. Ved PrakashShrawad, Asst. Programmer
- Mr. Bhanu Pratap Yadav
- Mr. Sukhdev Kashyap
- More than 1800 officers/employees login created at state/district/tehsil/block level to operate the portal.
- More than 1500 departments of entire state are participating to resolve the problems/demands which were collected during Gram Suraj Abhiyan.

c. *Achievements of training of internal & external members on the new system*

- NIC provided training to the persons involved with the project.
- Training helped in skills for extensive use and operation of the portal.
- Cascading effects of training included appreciation of technology appreciation and keener interest in good governance.

d. *Change management strategy defined and implemented*

- The change management strategy included change of the mindset and attitudes.
- The Gram Suraj was facing the threat of degenerating into a ritual done under compulsion. The officials were willing to make it meaningful but had no clue as to how to cope with the sheer volume of work generated by the abhiyan.
- Orientation, training and the user-friendly portal helped in this regard.

e. *Leadership support (Political, Bureaucratic) and its visibility*

- Gram Suraj was an initiative of the Chief Minister. He was personally committed to making it meaningful. His credibility depended upon it. Leadership support followed easily.

f. *Financial Model*

- The initiative was funded by the State.
- The initiative has a fast pay-back element, because of the saving in terms of time and manpower, and the saving in terms of wasteful expenditure that was unavoidable when implementing welfare programs in the absence of reliable database.

3. Technology
- The system is fully web enabled with backend MS SQL server 2008 and Front end ASP.NET.

- High-end Servers are maintained at NIC Chhattisgarh State Centre - 1) application server, 2) Database server 3) Backup server.
- The benefit enjoyed by the villagers, government bodies and public participation has made the system sustainable. There is public pressure and demand in case the system fails due to any reason
- No financial burden to State Government exchequer for its operation. In-house development by NIC for sustenance of project in long term.
- System benefits concerned department for better planning for rural areas.
- The application has designed as an online, work flow, role and authority based suite of applications with roles for various stakeholders like state departments, District department, Block department, District Administrators Functionaries, and the Public. Password is encrypted to increase the security of the system and all other securities measures are incorporated.
- Provision for SMS facility is being implemented.

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