

CITIZEN ACTION SUPPORT GROUP

# Citizens Fighting Corruption

Results and Lessons  
of an Innovative Pilot  
Programme in India

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**PUBLIC  
AFFAIRS CENTRE**



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***Citizens Fighting Corruption: Results and Lessons of an Innovative Pilot Programme in India***

by Vinay Bhargava, Indira Sandilya, Alexander Varghese and Harish Poovaiah

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Public Affairs Centre (PAC) is a not for profit organization, established in 1994 that is dedicated to improving the quality of governance in India. The focus of PAC is primarily in areas where citizens and civil society organizations can play a proactive role in improving governance. In this regard, PAC undertakes and supports research, disseminates research findings, facilitates collective citizen action through awareness raising and capacity building activities, and provides advisory services to state and non-state agencies.

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## GLOSSARY

BDO	Block Development Office/r
BPL	Below Poverty Line
CAC	Citizens Against Corruption
CfAR	Centre for Advocacy & Research
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CUTS	Consumers' Union Trust Society
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
FPS	Fair Price Shop
GP	Gram Panchayat
GRS	Gaon Rojgar Sevaks (deputed by the Government for the MGNREGS project exclusively)
ICDS	Integrated Child Development Scheme
JSY	Janani Suraksha Yojana
LFA	logical framework
MGNREGS/A	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme /Act
MTR	mid-term review
NRHM	National Rural Health Mission
NGO	non-governmental organization
NJMO	Navajeevana Mahila Okkuta
NREGS /A	National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme/Act
PAC	Public Affairs Centre
PDS	Public Distribution System
PDSMC	PDS Monitoring Committees
PEA	Panchayat Executive Assistant
PEO	Panchayat Executive Officer (who deals with panchayat matters, every panchayat has one PEO deputed by the Government)
PO	people's organization
PREM	People's Rural Education Movement
PRI	Panchayati Raj Institutions
PRIA	Participatory Research Institute of Asia
PTF	Partnership for Transparency Fund
RLEK	Rural Litigation and Entitlement Kendra
Rs.	rupees
RTI	right to information
SMART	specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time-bound
SVYM	Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement
TI	Transparency International
VICALP	Visionaries of Creative Action for Liberation and Progress
YSD	Youth for Social Development



## Foreword

This report comes at an opportune time. Citizens of India are angry and frustrated at the pervasive and endemic corruption that is coming to light all the time. The corruption hurts the poorest in India the most, i.e. the households living Below the Poverty Line (BPL). First, they are trapped in chronic poverty despite an otherwise booming economy. Second, corruption prevents them from fully benefiting from the commendable social safety net schemes (for example, MGNREGA, PDS, NRHM, widow and old age pensions) that the Government of India has put in place to alleviate the suffering of BPL households. The executive branch of the government as well as the non-executive independent accountability institutions (Ombudsmen, Comptroller and Accountant General, judiciary) are making good faith efforts to eliminate corruption in these safety net schemes but widespread corruption remains. By the government's own admission, corruption and poor governance are undermining the effectiveness of these social safety net schemes. Numerous studies and media reports confirm that corruption is a pervasive problem.

*What more can be done to supplement the government's and accountability institutions' efforts to curb corruption in delivery of social safety net services to the poor? As this report shows there is hope. It presents efforts and results achieved by 14 grassroots Non-government Organizations (NGOs) spanning four diverse states in India (Odisha, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttarkhand) in helping citizens engage to produce positive results to reduce corruption and improve service delivery. The evidence presented in the study points to a citizen led approach to fighting corruption that works when some essential ingredients are present. Among the ingredients are the key role played by NGO facilitators, raising community awareness, empowered citizen volunteers, constructive engagement by citizens with public officials committed to improve services, media support, and focus on programmatic results and solving problems faced by individuals.*

The citizen led approach used to produce results is built upon the fundamental truth that information is power, and the power of collective action to enlighten and enable communities to demand and obtain their entitlements. Only awareness and the collective force of those bypassed by development can demand corruption free, effective and responsive service delivery. Being a pilot programme in its initial stage, its reach is geographically small. Compared to the vastness of India, it has a number of significant challenges to overcome. Even so, its achievements are impressive and definitely point towards immense possibilities should the movement and its momentum be sustained. The report argues for replication and scaling up of this citizen-based approach to fighting corruption.

The Citizen Against Corruption (CAC) project on which this report is based is an innovative pilot project that was started in 2009 with support from the Department for International Development, United Kingdom through its global Governance and Transparency Fund. Their support is gratefully acknowledged. The ongoing CAC programme is being implemented by a partnership of the Public Affairs Centre (PAC), Bangalore, India and the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF) – a US-based international NGO committed to helping citizens fight corruption.

The real heroes in the stories presented in this report are the citizen volunteers, the Non-Governmental Organizations, and the progressive public officials who worked hard and selflessly to make a difference in the lives of real people living in remote and poor areas. They are too many to name. It is to them that we owe our profound thanks and that we dedicate this report. We are committed to continue our support to them and urge others to support them as well.

**For the Public Affairs Centre**  
**Raghavan Suresh, Director**

**For the Partnership for Transparency Fund**  
**Daniel Ritchie, President**

# Executive Summary

## Background

This paper synthesises the results in the first 18 months (2009-10) of the pilot Citizens Against Corruption (CAC) programme that is helping reduce corruption in India's social safety net schemes using innovative approaches. The programme is sponsored by the Public Affairs Centre (PAC, [www.pacindia.org](http://www.pacindia.org)) and the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF, [www.ptfund.org](http://www.ptfund.org)) with funding support by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) under its Governance and Transparency Fund. The context for the pilot is that efforts by government ministries and domestic accountability institutions (e.g. Ombudsmen, Central Vigilance Commission, Comptroller and Accountant General of India) have shown limited success in controlling corruption in these schemes. Everyone seems to agree that the status quo is unacceptable. New and innovative approaches are needed. We believe, and the premise of the pilot CAC programme is, that governance and control of corruption in public service delivery schemes can be improved when the state-led oversight mechanisms are combined with citizen-led social accountability initiatives and civil society constructively engages the state.

The CAC pilot programme provided grants to grassroots civil society organisations (CSOs) for projects that are addressing corruption in three major Government of India social safety net programmes: the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS), the Public Distribution System (PDS), and the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM). These schemes touch the daily lives of more than 300 million mostly poor households in India with an annual budget outlay of more than 1.5 *lakh crores* Indian Rupees (more than \$30 billion). The CAC pilot programme covered a tiny fraction of these schemes. It currently covers over 1000 villages and is benefitting over 88,000 households with incomes below the poverty line. Most of the CAC project areas (see map) are much below the national average in terms of human, social and economic development indicators, being in

tribal and hilly areas and urban slums that have greater socio-economic disparities and less effective local institutions. As a result, the task of promoting public action and strengthening citizen influence on local public institutions for better governance are more challenging compared to many other parts of India.

### **Corruption Issues and Strategies for Citizens to Fight Corruption**

Experience from these grassroots citizen oversight initiatives shows that significant governance corruption and governance weaknesses persist despite the official mechanisms for monitoring, control, inspection and audit (Box 1). In one project area, nearly 80 percent of the respondents reported paying bribes for PDS services they were entitled to for free. In another project area, 100 percent of the surveyed beneficiaries reported paying bribes to obtain benefits under MGNREGS.

To address the corruption and governance problems in their project areas, the CSO partners mobilised citizens against corruption in their communities using a variety of strategies and tools. The main strategies used to achieve results were: empowering communities through awareness campaigns about their rights and entitlements including use of the right to information (RTI) to help them obtain better services; combining citizen's monitoring and vigilance to demand accountability and corruption free services; and community mobilisation for constructive engagement with public organisations to improve responsiveness. These strategies were employed at various stages of the project cycle and were tailored to it. Their relevance and importance varied according to the project context and capacities and approaches of the CSOs. A variety of social accountability tools were used. These included: awareness campaigns using audio, video, drama and printed materials; formation of citizens monitoring/vigilance groups; collective action; public hearings; citizen report cards; social audits; media campaigns; and so on. Often, combinations of strategies, methods and tools were required to achieve results.

### **Emerging Results**

The results emerging from the first 18 months of the CAC programme are compiled from the project completion reports submitted by CSO partners as well as an independent evaluation by the Participatory Research Institute of Asia (PRIA) and an independent mid-term evaluation (MTE) of the CAC programme commissioned by PTF on behalf of DFID. PRIA's evaluation rated most CSO partners successful in accomplishing the results that were specified in their logframe. The MTE found that aggregating the impact of CAC beneficiaries is difficult. Nevertheless, just taking a few projects where direct savings can be calculated, it is evident that the immediate financial savings alone are worth much more than the PTF grant. There are other benefits such as community empowerment, new structures for citizen vigilance, reformed bidding processes, and so on, all of which ensure that improvements will

### **Box 1: Corruption and Governance Issues**

#### **In the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)**

- ◆ Exclusion of eligible families (no job cards)
- ◆ Card holders not given the stipulated 100 days of employment
- ◆ Ineligible persons receive jobs
- ◆ Bogus claims by the authorities of full employment
- ◆ Workers not paid the stipulated wages
- ◆ Guaranteed unemployment allowance not given
- ◆ Workers not given other stipulated allowances and facilities
- ◆ Job cards kept with the officials instead of beneficiaries
- ◆ Delays in payment of wages.
- ◆ Wages paid in cash or not deposited
- ◆ Authorities using machinery instead of beneficiaries
- ◆ “Ghost workers” are employed and the wages supposedly paid
- ◆ Employment provided in unsuitable locations and seasons
- ◆ Bribes demanded in exchange for employment

#### **In the Public Distribution Scheme (PDS)**

- ◆ Eligible beneficiaries not given “below the poverty line” (BPL) cards
- ◆ Ineligible persons given BPL cards
- ◆ Stipulated items not supplied in sufficient quality and quantity
- ◆ Irregular and contaminated supply of PDS food supplies
- ◆ Overpricing of commodities and unjustified extra charges
- ◆ Shops not open for required hours and do not display information
- ◆ One study found that about half of the food grains do not reach the intended households and 11 percent of the households reported paying bribes to get a ration card.

#### **In the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)**

- ◆ Entitled medicine is not available free of cost
- ◆ Doctors and other service providers not available during duty hours
- ◆ People in the project area paid more than \$11,000 annually in “corruption taxes” to government health service providers.
- ◆ The government hospital charges for child birth delivery when it is supposed to be free.
- ◆ Health services have become a business rather than a service.
- ◆ Payments to patients are delayed.

*Source: Baseline studies under the CAC programme*

be sustained. Furthermore, CAC partners have been extremely effective at enhancing the transparency of public services and bodies.

***Awareness Campaigns increased awareness of rights and entitlements and actions to use the RTI Act.***

Awareness raising campaigns covered more than 1,000 villages in four states. Initial awareness levels were found to be low (5-10 percent of village residents) but increased significantly during the campaigns. More than 2000 RTI applications were filed and satisfaction levels with the response to RTI applications increased.

***Citizen groups were mobilised and capacity was built to demand good governance through collective action.***

The projects facilitated the formation of more than 100 collective action groups (anti-corruption committees, social watch groups, and vigilance committees) and trained more than one thousand citizen group members. These activists held hundreds of public hearings, events, and mass rallies, gathered data on corruption problems, and worked with media to increase pressure on authorities to improve service delivery responsiveness and hold corrupt officials accountable.

**Success Stories of Communities Fighting Corruption**

One of the major success stories in obtaining justice in the fight against corrupt practices in MGNREGS through the application of the Right to Information (RTI) is in Rudai Village, Ajaygada Gram Panchayat (GP) where a village road with a road side nallah had been constructed. With the help of the CSO (Suraksha), the vigilance committee and the entitlement holders recovered more than 140,000 Rupees (about 50 rupees = US \$1) due them from the implementing level authorities.

Another case was when, for the first time in Orissa, the Panchayat Raj department of the government was forced to conduct an inquiry leading to the suspension and dismissal of five corrupt officials for misappropriation of funds under MGNREGS and attempts to cover it up. The block department had on paper spent more than Rs. 213,000 for the construction of seven farm ponds on the private land of seven beneficiaries of Kusmal Village during 2007-2009. This was discovered through a RTI application and made public in newspapers and electronic media through the efforts of the CSO Ayauskam.

***Constructive engagement and citizen monitoring and vigilance improved delivery of services.***

More than 20,000 eligible persons received job cards (MGNREGS) and ration cards (PDS) which had been denied to them. This was done in a corruption free manner. In one project area, 74 new MGNREGS projects were sanctioned. Many areas reported that the percent of eligible people receiving work on demand rose significantly with one area reaching 100 percent. Two areas reported that the

average number of work days doubled and wages paid increased from 35-50 percent of the minimum wage to 90 percent. In several areas, drinking water, shade and first aid began to be provided to workers.

***In most project areas, officials started appearing at public hearings which resulted in actions to provide better services and grievance resolution.***

In areas with constructive engagement, PDS shops started opening on time, publicly displayed the required information, and delivered full entitlements at the stipulated prices. In one area, 60 village fair price shops showed more than a 50 percent improvement in non-corrupt delivery of services as the authorities and citizen groups paid more attention. Some PDS shops were declared “Model Fair Price Shops” and provided corruption free services. In another project area, the anti-corruption committee helped to ensure that the right amount (25 kg) of rice was distributed to the beneficiaries as compared to 4-5 kg that was given initially.

***Corruption was reduced.***

Two projects reported the recovery of more than 12 million rupees (\$250,000) in wages from corrupt officials. One project reported that 58 percent of new job-cardholders did not pay a bribe compared to 65 percent of job-card holders before. Another area reported that following the project, wages were disbursed without any bribe being paid about 70 percent of the time. Four slums in a project area were provided with public water taps in a corruption free manner.

### **The Replicability and Sustainability of the CAC Pilot Programme**

Experience shows that translating the pilot programme successes into programme level impact will require a number of actions. It is clear that CSOs and community based organisations (CBOs) play the critical catalytic and facilitation role between the people (demand side) and the government (supply side). Without them, citizen efforts to fight corruption are diffused. It is important that CSOs and CBOs are seen as a part of a national system of accountability institutions, and that challenges of CSO sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness are addressed. A large number of CSOs with integrity and a grassroots presence will need to be identified. Investments will be needed to build CSO and citizen monitoring group capacity for social accountability and constructive engagement. Networks and coalitions will need to be built for gravitas and advocacy. Consistent application of social media and other ICT tools and innovations will be needed. The participating CSOs will need to overcome internal and external challenges.

According to the MTE, the CAC approach can be scaled up (through replication) in a wide range of countries and settings where three contexts apply: (a) widespread problems of low-level corruption which make it a big enough issue for most

communities to desire to change the status quo; (b) freedom of association which makes it possible for CSOs to form and operate relatively freely; and (c) officials or elected representatives are prepared to engage with the citizens and CSOs and will make available at least a minimum amount of information

The MTE also noted the following factors likely to contribute towards sustainability of the pilot CAC programme activities:

- a) *The virtuous circle of voluntary effort*: As citizens become more confident of their own capacities in tackling corruption, they become more prepared to undertake future action.
- b) *Proven effectiveness of social accountability tools*: In widely differing settings, tools which have proved effective include surveys, community report cards, social audits, filing right to information requests, etc.
- c) *Resilience of local structures*: CAC activities have led to the formation of local structures for tackling corruption, including Social Watch Groups, service watchdogs or monitoring committees, forest or water user groups, etc.
- d) *Support networks are emerging*: Some grantees provide mutual support and experience sharing by establishing networks that link together these new local structures. Elsewhere they are joining broader civil society networks to encourage greater impact of their work.
- e) *Strong local leadership*: The local structures have facilitated the rise of new cadres of grassroots leaders, especially among women and youth.
- f) *The power of constructive engagement*: This has enabled many groups to establish regular engagement with key public bodies and they have been gratified to find supporters within these bodies.
- g) *Community contributions to costs*: Community contributions, beginning to be levied by a few of the new local structures, are able to cover some of their local costs but, for the present, are far from covering the cost of their supporting NGO.

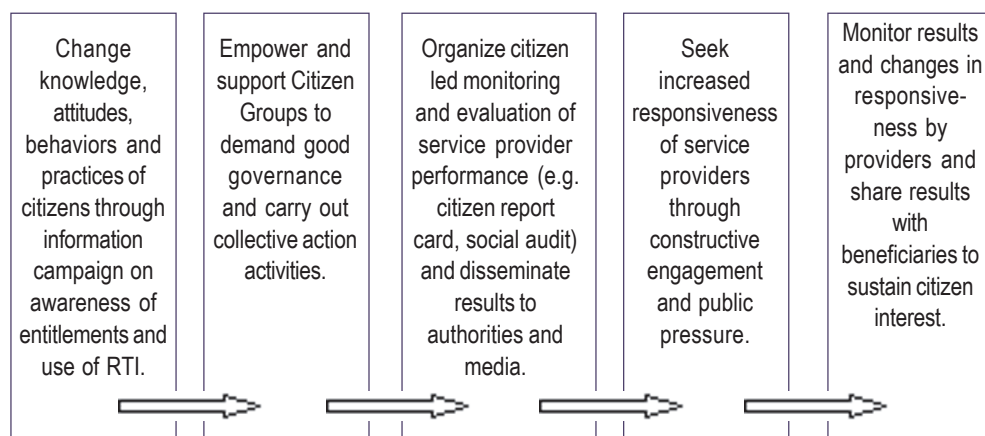
## Lessons

It is duly noted that given the size and complexity of India, the CAC pilot programme is a drop in the ocean. The small community-based CAC projects being funded are at the very best pin pricks in the hard skin of corrupt service providers and do not add up to a critical mass of evidence to impress and engage policy makers. They also do not address the grand corruption issues that pervade these national schemes. However, the results emerging from the pilot programme are sufficiently robust to provide enough data to support three conclusions: (a) the government's official



mechanisms for monitoring, control, inspection and audit are insufficient in preventing corruption and inefficiency; (b) many of the governance and corruption issues can be mitigated by CAC-type citizen activism; and (c) a model for change is emerging for getting from 'here' to 'there', 'here' being the current state of widespread corruption and other governance weaknesses in social safety net schemes and 'there' being less corruption and increased accountability and responsiveness as a result of approaches piloted under the CAC programme.

A change model for lowering corruption and improving responsiveness in service delivery is emerging. Results so far under the CAC programme indicate that corruption can be lowered, governance improved, and responsiveness increased when the following sequence of activities is followed.



A number of key lessons have emerged so far:

- ♦ ***Citizen monitoring can work effectively where three conditions are present:***
  - a. corruption is endemic, affecting incomes and livelihoods of individuals and communities;
  - b. CSOs can be created and operate relatively freely without repression or serious threat; and
  - c. some officials or elected representatives are prepared to engage constructively with the grantees and make available information that is needed for beneficiaries to provide feedback. In many states in India these conditions exist to sufficient degree to allow a successful programme.
- ♦ ***Focusing the effort on specific programmes is effective and can facilitate replication:***

Targeting corruption in large public sector programmes by multiple CSOs

can facilitate standardisation of results indicators, survey instruments and communication materials, and identify systemic successes and failures that can facilitate replication and aggregation of results.

- ♦ ***Sustainability of citizen engagement is a hard and long term endeavor but is facilitated by:***
  - a. visible improvements in the local situation due to voluntary efforts;
  - b. effective use of social accountability tools and local structures;
  - c. the emergence of support networks and strong local leadership;
  - d. the presence of public officials committed to service and integrity; and
  - e. mechanisms to encourage community financial contributions to cover the costs of citizen engagement.
- ♦ *Translating local level successes into programme level impacts is challenging.*

Grassroots CSOs usually do not have the analytical, advocacy and political economy skills needed to influence policy makers. For success, investment is needed in building networks and coalitions. Traditional and new media involvement is a must.

- ♦ ***Social media and other ICT tools need to be applied consistently to social accountability.***

Good practices and innovations in this area are emerging very rapidly and civil society organisations face the challenge of keeping up with the innovations and applying them in their work.

## The Way Forward

Ensuring good governance and corruption free delivery of public services is primarily the responsibility of the executive branch of government and domestic accountability institutions outside the executive branch, e.g. Ombudsman, Comptroller and Auditor General of India, Central Vigilance Commission, etc. However, experience under the CAC pilot programme as well as a growing body of work in public sector management (e.g., Open Government) is showing that governance of service delivery schemes is improved when the state-led oversight mechanisms are combined with citizen-led social accountability initiatives and constructive engagement between the state and civil society. This is not to say that citizen led initiatives should or could substitute for the government's primary responsibility to deliver corruption free services. However, the reality is that the state-led initiatives have not been, and are unlikely to be, sufficient. The results under the CAC pilot programme demonstrate that corruption was reduced and service delivery provider responsiveness improved

when official government oversight mechanisms are complemented by citizen oversight and engagement. Analysis presented in this paper shows that the pilot programme strategy and approach can be scaled up and sustained with proper investments. A deepening and broadening of the CAC programme is being planned for 2012-16.

## Introduction To CAC Pilot Programme

India is in the grip of a culture of corruption that afflicts all key segments of society – government, judiciary, media, civil society, the legislature, and business. The public accountability system and institutions (e.g. Ombudsman, Central Vigilance Commission, Comptroller and Accountant General of India, etc.) are not yet very effective in controlling corruption. The public anger is at a boiling point as demonstrated by the outpouring of support for the anti-corruption movement led by Mr. Anna Hazare. The search for solutions that work is underway and all key segments of the society are involved. Many innovative solutions have been pioneered, such as citizen report cards by Public Affairs Centre, Right to Information coalition, hundreds of social accountability projects by NGOs, use of social media (<http://ipaidabribe.com/>), clean election campaign by the Election Commission, investigations by Ombudsmen and Comptroller and Auditor General and the recent India Against Corruption movement led by Mr. Anna Hazare. In this context, an innovative pilot programme called Citizens against Corruption (CAC) was initiated in 2008 to pilot test and demonstrate the relevance and impact of CSO mechanisms and approaches to improving transparency and accountability, and in fighting corruption, in collaboration with communities.

**This paper describes and analyses the innovative Citizens against Corruption (CAC) programme in India that is yielding impressive results.** The CAC programme is sponsored by the PAC and PTF and is being implemented by 15 CSO partners. Funding support is provided by DFID under its Governance and Transparency Fund programme. Grant making under the CAC programme started in 2009 and, as of March 2012, 30 projects have been approved in India of which 16 have been completed and 14 are ongoing. The total amount approved is ...

Projects funded under CAC programme are demand driven. They emerged from a general call for proposals in 2009 which emphasised the focus on helping citizens fight corruption in one or more of the following thematic areas:

- ◆ Transparency and accountability in public procurement, sale of public assets, and privatisation or sale of concessions.
- ◆ Public expenditure tracking and initiatives to increase transparency and strengthen systems of financial accountability.
- ◆ Monitoring of corruption in the delivery of public services through citizen participation and action programmes to reduce such corruption.
- ◆ Monitoring activities of public agencies related to transparency and accountability (e.g. official anti-corruption offices, citizen charters, etc.).
- ◆ Contributing to the preparation of draft legislation and regulations related to fighting corruption and the regulation of party political financing.
- ◆ Promoting transparent government (e.g. right to information laws).
- ◆ Media campaigns and strengthening capacity for investigative reporting.

This synthesis report draws on the project completion reports by CSO partners as well as independent evaluations by PRIA ([www.pria.org](http://www.pria.org)). Its objective is to document results so far, the approaches used to get results, and lessons to date. Its intended audience comprises partners involved in the CAC programme (CSOs, PTF, PAC and DFID), policy makers and practitioners in India, and the global community interested in the CAC programme. The location of the projects is shown on the map below.

Figure 1: CAC Programmes in India and Elsewhere



The **PDS** (Public Distribution System) provides ongoing distribution of essential commodities to a large number of people through a network of fair price shops (FPS). The commodities are wheat, rice, sugar and kerosene. PDS evolved as a major instrument of the government's economic policy for ensuring availability of food grains to the public at affordable prices, a strategy for poverty eradication as well as for enhancing food security for the poor who are also at risk nutritionally. PDS is operated under joint responsibility. The central government ensures the procurement, storage, transportation and bulk allocation of food grains. The responsibility for distributing these to the consumers through the network of FPSs rests with the state governments. This also involves identification of families below the poverty line (BPL), issuing ration cards, and supervision and monitoring the functioning of FPSs.

The **NRHM** (National Rural Health Mission) seeks to provide effective healthcare to the rural population throughout the country with a special focus on states that have weak public health indicators and/or poor infrastructure. Its key components are: the provision of a female health activist in each village; a village health plan prepared by a local team headed by the Health and Sanitation Committee of the Panchayat; strengthening of the rural hospital for curative care and to make it accountable to the community through Indian Public Health Standards (IPHS); and integration of vertical Health and Family Welfare Programmes and Funds for optimal utilisation of funds and infrastructure; and strengthening delivery of primary healthcare. It aims at effective integration of health concerns with determinants of health like sanitation, hygiene, nutrition, and safe drinking water through a district health plan.

Most of the CAC project areas are far below the national average in terms of human, social and economic development indicators. Project areas include hilly and tribal areas of western and southern Orissa, slum areas of Bangalore, rural areas of Raichur District, tribal and hilly areas of Mysore district, and rural areas of Rajasthan and Uttaranchal. As a result, the task of promoting public action and strengthening citizen influence on local institutions for better governance is more challenging compared to other parts of India.

#### **Box 1: An Example of the Corruption in NREGS Employment**

An illustrative example is NREGA implementation in Lalusahi village in Namangada Gram Panchayat (GP), Gumma Block, Gajapathi district. In 2006-07, all job card holders worked 13 days and were paid 1001 rupees to construct a road. During the organising of a public hearing and social audit, Suraksha (an NGO) discovered that the records showed that the job card holders had actually worked 14 days. Despite the village's proximity to the GP headquarters, due to illiteracy and ignorance of the entitlement holders, their rights had been violated. Thousands of rupees had been pocketed through corrupt practices in NREGS related activities during implementation.

Table 1: Focus and Coverage of the Projects by CAC Partner CSOs in Phase 1<sup>1</sup>

Themes, NGOs and Project Area (district and state)	Total no. of villages in project area	Total no. of households	Total no. of beneficiary households
ADHAR (MGNREGS & PDS in Bolangir, Orissa)	48	8,405	7,884
Suraksha (MGNREGS & PDS in Gajapathi, Orissa)	121	9155	17,000
VICALP (MGNREGS in Gajapathi, Orissa)	200	4857	1,751
YSD (PDS, land records and drinking water issues in Berhampur , Odisha)	8	13,076	10,599
CfAR (PDS in slum areas of Bangalore, Karnataka)	6	3,059	900
PARASPANA Trust (PDS in slum areas of Bangalore)	30	12,334	600
SVYM (PDS in Mysore)	371	33,172	33,172
PRERANA /NJMO (MGNREGS & PDS in Raichur, Karnataka)	60	18,000	5,000
RLEK (MGNREGS in 4 blocks of Uttarkhand)	57	3090	3090
Sambandh (MGNREGS in 9 blocks of Mayurbhanj, Orissa)	58	3,261	3,261
CUTS (MGNREGS in 2 districts of Rajasthan)	9 districts	36,000,000	15,000
PREM (MGNREGS, PDS & Forest Rights in 2 blocks of Gajapathi, Orissa)	160	8,110	8,110
AYAUSKAM (Health Service delivery in Khariar, Orissa)	64	11,600	11,600
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1183</b>	<b>128,119</b>	<b>112,967</b>

<sup>1</sup> These numbers are as reported and validated by the CSO Partners in their project completion reports for this publication.

The majority of households in the project areas, which are the main victims of corruption and the primary stakeholders of the projects, belong to the socially and economically weaker sections of society (BPL families, slum dwellers, scheduled castes and tribes, etc.). They are often controlled and exploited by the more powerful and dominant sections (land owners, traders, contractors, upper castes, local politicians, etc.). Addressing corruption in PDS and MGNREGS is more challenging with the prevailing complex structure and system of class and caste relations, and the collusion of powerful interest groups with corrupt sections of the public institutions.

### **Selection process for partner CSOs in the CAC programme**

From the outset, the credibility of programme partners is ensured through accreditation with the Credibility Alliance (CA), a national organisation that aims to improve transparency within the NGO sector through the development of standard minimum good governance norms and practices for NGOs. Once the programme principles of community empowerment, constructive engagement with government, and peer learning have been agreed upon by all stakeholders, an open call for concept papers is issued, providing details on selection criteria and outlining programme priorities so applicants can design their project concepts accordingly.

After project concept submissions are completed, viable projects, in alignment with programme goals, are identified through a rigorous screening process. All project concept papers are scored and ranked on the quality of the concept and the degree to which they comply with programme strategies. The top ranked applicants are invited to a Proposal Development Workshop where their capacity is enhanced in

#### **The four pillars upon which all projects in CAC have been developed**

**Community Organisation:** the community is consistently engaged in all the activities of the project.

**Constructive Engagement:** all participants in CAC establish rapport with the public officials and engage them constructively in addressing the problems at the grassroots.

**Peer Learning:** partners work on different programmes in different regions and come together to learn from each other's experiences and contribute from their own experiences.

**Knowledge Sharing:** partners disseminate and share their knowledge from the grassroots to wider audience. The knowledge acquired as a part of the project is documented and circulated widely through blogs, publications, and other channels.



project design and proposal structure including explanation of the theoretical underpinnings of goals, objectives, activities and outcomes. Each concept paper is subject to peer review by other workshop participants so learning and dialogue among different partners begins during the initial stages.

PAC then visits all partner organisations, their office as well as the proposed field area, to observe first hand their activities and assess their capacity to carry out the proposed work. After partners have submitted their first draft proposals, there is a two-stage review process whereby first PAC and then PTF give suggestions for the revision of proposals by partners, concluding with PTF granting approval of the project.

# 2

## Corruption Issues Addressed and the Strategies and Tools Used

*Ms. Bhujje Chinda, a landless widow, was living in a dilapidated mud house in the village of Karngamal with her five daughters (one mentally challenged) and two sons. Even four years after her husband's death, she was neither aware of nor benefitting from any of the government social safety net schemes for BPL households.*

*Many landless persons of Ranimunda Panchayat had been allotted homestead land titles some three or four decades ago but the land was never demarcated for their use despite their paying regular property taxes. It was reported that the revenue inspector was demanding Rs. 300 per person for land demarcation.*

*Ms. Keshari Paharia was admitted to the Khariar UGSPC for delivery. The nurse and the doctor demanded Rs. 800 from the husband who mortgaged family gold for Rs. 1000 rupees to meet the cost of medicine although Ms. Paharia was entitled to free delivery and an incentive payment for choosing institutional delivery instead of home delivery.*

*Mr. Sambaru Majhi, aged 55, is a TB patient, blind in one eye and his son, aged 20, has a kidney problem. He had already spent Rs.17,000 on his son's treatment by private doctors by taking a loan against his land. He was receiving free treatment for TB from UGPHC, Khariar. But the anganwadi worker in his village, who was responsible for giving him medicines, started demanding Rs. 100 per month. After three months, when Mr. Majhi could no longer pay, the health worker suspended the supply. Within one month, Mr. Majhi's health deteriorated.*

*An RTI request led to the discovery that the block department had claimed more than Rs. 213,000 under the MGNREGS for construction of seven farm ponds on the private plots of seven landowners of Kusmal village. But there was no physical evidence. The land-owners and villagers from Kusmal complained about this matter to the BDO, Khariar and the District Collector, Nuapada, but no action was taken.*

These stories and many others illustrate the challenges facing corruption-free delivery of services to BPL households. These stories, reported by the PTF-funded CSO Ayaskam, come from the Nuapada district, Odisha state, where 85 per cent of nearly 100,000 households are officially classified as BPL. These poor are being victimised twice. First, the poverty reduction programmes in India are bypassing them and the poverty incidence in the district has declined by less than 1 per cent annually during the last decade, keeping them in chronic poverty. Second, their access to benefits under many of the social safety net schemes put in place by the government to help BPL households is being undermined by pervasive corruption.

### **The Extent and Types of Corruption Faced by Citizens in Project Areas**

Surveys done by the CSOs implementing the CAC programme found widespread corrupt practices in the implementation of the three schemes.

#### **Corruption issues in the MGNREGS**

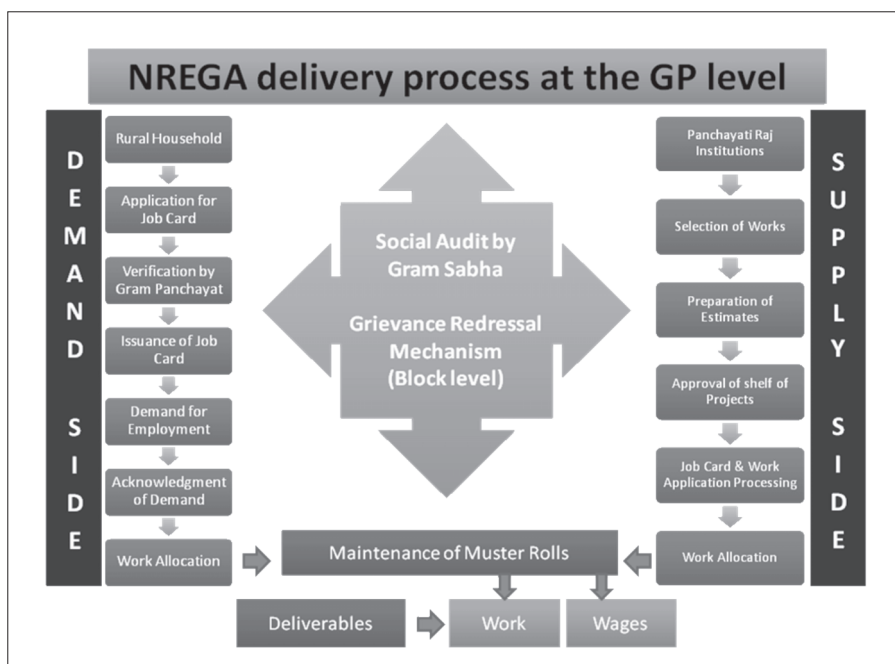
In the employment scheme, the main corrupt practices were:

- ◆ Exclusion of eligible families (not given job cards).
- ◆ Job card holders not given the stipulated 100 days of employment.
- ◆ Ineligible persons included in NREGS (employed, and paid wages).
- ◆ Bogus claims by the authorities of full employment.
- ◆ Workers not paid the stipulated wages for days employed.
- ◆ Job card holders not given the guaranteed unemployment allowance.
- ◆ Workers not given the stipulated other allowances and facilities.
- ◆ Job cards kept with the officials (and not given to the beneficiaries).
- ◆ Delays in payment of wages. Wages paid in cash.
- ◆ Authorities using machinery, instead of beneficiaries, for construction work.
- ◆ ‘Ghost workers’ are employed and the wages supposedly paid.
- ◆ Employment provided in unsuitable locations and seasons.
- ◆ Bribes demanded in return for the employment.

#### **Corruption issues in PDS**

Studies by government and NGOs indicate that there are massive leakages in this food distribution scheme in the state of Karnataka due to a variety of corrupt practices. A recent report by Lokayukta (Ombudsman) notes about 5 per cent of eligible recipients are mistakenly excluded, 49 per cent of recipients should not be eligible,

Figure 2: NREGA Delivery Process at the GP Level



half of the food grains intended for BPL households do not reach them, and about 11 per cent of the households reported paying bribes to obtain a ration card. The baseline surveys by CSO partners found the following corrupt practices to be prevalent:

- ◆ Eligible beneficiaries not given below poverty line (BPL) cards.
- ◆ Ineligible persons given BPL cards.
- ◆ Stipulated items not supplied in sufficient quality and quantity.
- ◆ Irregular and tardy supply.
- ◆ Overpricing of commodities and unjustified extra charges.
- ◆ Shops do not open for required hours and do not display information.

### Corruption in health services

A detailed survey in 10 Panchayats (64 villages) of Khariar block in Nuapada district found that there is massive corruption in government schemes such as the National Rural Health Mission. Examples include:

- ◆ Medicines are not available free of cost.

- ◆ Doctors and the other service providers are not available during duty hours.
- ◆ Checks are delayed after institutional delivery under Janani Suraksha Yojana (a programme using cash incentives to encourage institutional delivery).
- ◆ Clinical trials are sometimes violate human rights and have other forms of corruption.
- ◆ Physicians receive incentives to recruit patients into trials, and do this without obtaining informed consent of the patients.
- ◆ Participants are subjected to unethical practices such as deprivation of effective medicines.
- ◆ Medical treatment and compensation are denied for the growing number of trial-related injuries and deaths.
- ◆ Bioequivalence trials offer participants large payments in blatant violation of existing ethical guidelines, inducing poor people to risk their lives in these trials.
- ◆ Often the participants in these trials are completely unaware that they are trial subjects.

### **Strategies and Tools Used to Fight Corruption**

Help for the BPL households in Nuapada arrived under the CAC programme when Ayauskam—an NGO that had been working on poverty, health, forest land rights and livelihood issues in Khariar block since 2003—was selected to carry out a project to check corruption in the health sector in 10 Panchayats of Khariar block. Ayauskam started with a baseline survey of 64 villages to assess the extent and nature of corruption. The survey confirmed what the stories above illustrate, that corruption in the health sector was rampant. It found that people surveyed paid more than \$11,000 annually in “corruption taxes” to government health service providers. The government hospital was charging \$55 for delivering a child when it is supposed to be free under the NRHM. Health services had become a business rather than a service. Medicine was not available free of cost, and doctors and the other health service providers were not available during duty hours. Hospital staff demonstrated condescending and inhumane behavior toward patients and their relatives.

The first step taken by Ayauskam was to increase media awareness about corruption. Survey findings were discussed with print and electronic media reporters during a media consultation workshop. This generated a lot of enthusiasm. The journalists subsequently covered stories on health right violations including service provider behavior, lack of free medicine, and so on. The next step was to establish and strengthen CBOs through training and village meetings. Every village formed a

“Durnity Birodhy Manch” (DBM, Citizens Against Corruption) forum to protest corruption at the village level. These formed a network at the Panchayat, block and district levels.

Capacity development programmes were organised to train women change agents, members of Panchayati Raj Institutions, CBOs, youth clubs, government officials and service providers. Campaigns against corruption were initiated in the villages. Social audits were conducted to discuss the problems of each village followed by public hearings with district level officials including the District Collector and the head of the district health department. Villagers obtained information about services which enabled them to become more articulate. An impact monitoring tool was developed for community volunteers and self-help group members to monitor health service delivery and corrupt practices. Rallies and demonstrations were conducted to show the strength of the CBOs and the community.

There were many challenges. Service providers and block and district officials initially reacted negatively. They influenced people to not cooperate with the project team. Doctors tried to influence the leaders of political parties to subvert the effort. Their strategies included making threats to file criminal and false claims against DBM members, and withholding information. Without the relevant information, it was not possible to organise people. In all cases, information was provided after the applicants filed appeals using the Right to Information Act.

Nonetheless, the DBM members persisted, wrote letters, and conducted regular discussions with higher authorities and local politicians. This forced authorities and politicians to involve the people in improving health services. Gradually the situation improved. Increased awareness and greater participation of people forced service providers to take their questions seriously. DBM members started discussions with

**Box 2: A success story from the Ayauskam project of using the right to information**

This is a success story of the Ayauskam project which created a critical awareness among the tribal people on the use and power of RTI to combat corruption. Mr. Nahasan Majhi, a GP level activist of Angur GP who received training from the People’s Rural Education Movement (PREM) on RTI and fighting corruption, inquired about some suspicious discrepancies in the loan details that were brought to his attention by local SHGs and individuals. Utilising RTI, he obtained the information from the bank manager of Punjab National Bank pertaining to the loan details of 209 families in Angur and Kirama GP. Upon verification, it was found that the bank’s records for the value of the loans and the actual amount the people received were vastly different figures. The former Sarpanch, Mr. Suku Gomango and certain accomplices at the bank, had conspired to steal more than 18 million rupees. Immediately, with the help of Mr. Majhi, these 209 families approached the district collector, NABARD regional manager and the police. They invited all the print and TV media and exposed the theft. The district administration came forward to resolve the issue. The guilty are in jail and 60 persons have received the sanctioned amount while loan files of the remaining 149 are under investigation.

service providers. DBM made it clear that it is fighting against corruption and not against individuals. Cooperation between the community and service providers evolved as problems were shared and solved.

Many local groups helped support the DBM efforts. The involvement of Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRI) members has helped. Grassroots service providers cooperated and participated in project activities. Cooperation between community organisers and local level health functionaries is improving. Social audits strengthened cooperation between the health care administration and the DBM forum at the local level. The training for CBOs encouraged them to support the cause. Self-help groups in every village have become active on the corruption issue.

CSO partners mobilised citizens against corruption in their communities, using a variety of strategies and tools. As illustrated by the above example of Ayauksam to confront and lower corruption in Nuapada area, the strategies and tools needed to be tailored to the project context. The main features of strategies used by the CSO partners under the CAC programme are summarised below and CSO-specific examples are in Annexure 1.

- ◆ Training project teams (including community /village level workers).
- ◆ Information generation and sharing with citizens and project teams.
- ◆ Community-level problem analysis and planning.
- ◆ Community level /participatory monitoring and analysis of information.
- ◆ Use of provisions of the RTI Act.
- ◆ Use of ombudsman and complaint mechanisms.
- ◆ Promoting participation at the Panchayat, *grama sabha* and PDS shop level.

### **Box 3: Fighting Corruption in National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme**

One of the major success stories in obtaining justice in the fight against corrupt practices in NREGS through the application of RTI is in Rudai Village, Ajaygada GP where a village road with a road side nallah had been constructed. With the help of Suraksha, the Vigilance Committee & the entitlement holders recovered more than Rs.1,40,000/- due to them from the implementing level authorities of Gumma Block of Gajapathi district of Orissa. (Suraksha).

Another case was when, for the first time in Orissa, the PR department of the government was forced to conduct an inquiry, leading to suspension and dismissal of 5 corrupt officials for misappropriation of funds under MGNREGS and attempts to cover it. The block department had, only on paper, spent more than Rs.2.13 lakhs for construction of 7 farm ponds in the private plots of 7 beneficiaries of Kusmal Village during 2007-9. This was unearthed through RTI and made public through newspapers & electronic media. (Ayauksam).

- ◆ Direct interactions of the citizens and project team with the service providers.
- ◆ Networking and coalition with other village level groups and project teams.
- ◆ Organising advocacy events.
- ◆ Peer learning through visits.

### Strategies and Tools Used for Influencing Service Providers

- ◆ Use of the RTI Act.
- ◆ Participation of citizens at the Panchayat, *Grama Sabha* and PDS shop levels.
- ◆ Direct interactions of citizens groups and the project team with service providers.
- ◆ Public hearing and social audits.
- ◆ Appealing to the Ombudsman and complaint mechanisms.
- ◆ Sharing information /reports with the media, policy makers and service providers.
- ◆ Advocacy through different methods including direct interactions, rallies, campaigns, and using the media by citizen groups and project teams.

#### **Box 4: A CUTS Success Story in Obtaining a Self-Help Group Loan**

Gumani Devi was a member of a self-help group (SHG) which was constituted under SGSY for starting a 'Breeding of Goats and Dairy Business'. The SHG was granted a revolving fund and had its own income from group members who deposit monthly fixed amount. The second loan had been long delayed because a bank official did not provide a second loan rating was demanding money for doing the review. The coordinator of the NGO RTI Advisory and Information Cell got in touch with the local CGCC, who supported him in filing an RTI application with the bank, asking about the reasons for the delay in the sanctioning of the loan to the SHG. The RTI application reached the Bank Manager directly, who instructed the concerned bank official to complete the second loan rating process for the SHG loan within 30 days and it was done within that time period. As a result of this rating, the SHG was able to get a loan of 2.25 lakh to start the planned business activity.



**Table 2: Strategies and tools employed at various stages of the project cycle**

Stage	Methods and Tools
Problem Identification and Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collecting and using secondary information on corrupt practices.</li> <li>• collecting primary information from the service providers</li> <li>• direct interactions using RTI</li> <li>• participatory methods (focus group discussions, semi-structured interviews, community scoring, rankings, problem flow charts, street plays, etc.)</li> <li>• use of telephones and other media</li> </ul>
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• community level meetings</li> <li>• formats /templates shared by PTF/PAC, log-frame, project planning matrix</li> <li>• promoting participation at the Panchayat, Grama Sabha and PDS shop levels</li> </ul>
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organise activities according to the monthly, quarterly and yearly plans</li> <li>• interactions with different stakeholders, particularly the service providers, community and groups</li> <li>• team meetings</li> <li>• management of the mobilised resources- management of the project finances</li> <li>• completing activities according to the plans</li> </ul>
Monitoring and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• collection and analysis of information on MGNREGS and PDS by the Vigilance, Social Audit and Monitoring Committees</li> <li>• community monitoring and analysis of information</li> <li>• project staff monitoring and analysis of information</li> <li>• use of RTI and media</li> <li>• organising evaluations and studies</li> <li>• interactions with the beneficiaries and other stakeholders</li> </ul>
Sharing of Experiences and Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participation in workshops and meetings</li> <li>• Preparation and sharing of reports at periodical intervals with the key stakeholders</li> <li>• community group meetings</li> <li>• project team meetings</li> <li>• bilateral discussions with PTF and PAC</li> <li>• photo documentation</li> <li>• visiting other organisations</li> </ul>
Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of the processes and experiences at periodical intervals at the levels of the NGO and Project team; analysis of the processes and results by the community at the village level; analysis of the Project processes and Results at the levels of PTF /PAC.</li> </ul>

The relevance and importance of the above strategies, methods and tools in achieving the planned results varied according to the project contexts and capacities of the CSOs. Often, combinations of strategies, methods and tools were required to achieve the planned results. As such, it is difficult to assess separately the contribution of each strategy, method and tool in achieving the desired or planned results.

# 3

## Results Achieved Under the CAC Pilot Programme

The previous chapters have been following the story of corrupt practices present in Nuapada district and strategies and tools used by CAC funded CSO partner, Ayauskam to confront and lessen the corruption. Did this effort make a difference? Consider the following results.

- *With DBM help, Ms. Bhujje Chinda was included in the PDS and is receiving 10 kg of rice free of cost. She received Rs.10,000 under the family benefit scheme and is included in the widow pension scheme.*
- *To help the landless persons in Ranimunda panchayat, DBM decided to conduct a social audit and invited the Tahsildar (local revenue officer). Before attending the audit, the Tahsildar ordered demarcation of the land. The work that was not done for 25 years was conducted in one day! The Tahsildar responded immediately because he feared that the CAC would organise a people's rally.*
- *When DBM raised Ms. Paharia's case with authorities, the doctors protested and filed a police case against members of the DBM, accusing it of instigating people to give false complaints. Members of the DBM met the higher level Medical Officer who reprimanded the staff at the Khariar health centre, but the staff took retaliatory action and the husband decided not to file charges. It was not possible for DBM to prove the corruption charges due to the change of statement, but the issue raised fear within the service providers.*
- *DBM has taken up Mr. Majhi's case but has had no success in resolving it. Rather than taking any action in Kusmal to investigate, some government officers tried to dig the ponds using a machine. This was stopped by the villagers and the machine was handed over to the police. This matter was reported in various newspapers and electronic media. The government of Odisha was forced to conduct an inquiry and determined that five government officials were responsible. Two were suspended and three lost their jobs. These actions by the government against the officials misappropriating funds under MGNREGs were unprecedented.*

The rallies conducted against corruption increased the people's confidence and they are expecting more such events. The impact study shows that there has been a reduction of corrupt practices in government hospitals. Of those surveyed, 80 percent are not paying fees for child delivery at a hospital. Payment of the service tax to other service providers has been reduced by 50 percent. Expenditures on medical services during pregnancy and delivery have been reduced by 82 percent. Village health committees have been formed, free medicines are available at the village level, and countersigning of checks for financial support to mothers after hospital delivery is done immediately. There is effective distribution of the full quota of Take Home Rations under the ICDS, medicine lists are displayed at government hospitals, and malnourished children receive special care. Ante-natal and post-natal health services have improved. Each household is now able to save more than \$55 per year due to these efforts. People's participation in the decision making process, and in the implementation and monitoring of programmes, has increased. The process is community-owned and can be sustained by village level leadership, CBOs and the block level DBM.

**The story of results achieved by Ayauskam and the difference they make in the lives of poor people are repeated and visible in most of the CSO projects funded under the CAC programme.** The CSO partners have been successful in bringing specific changes with respect to identified schemes and government programmes. Some of these results were improvements in service delivery of that specific scheme while others were related to the efforts of the communities towards the improved execution of the schemes. These results were gathered by the independent evaluator (PRIA) through discussions with the communities during field visits, reading project reports, and anecdotes of the community.

### **Public Distribution System**

Under the project run by CfAR in Bengaluru, Karnataka, 371 new ration cards were issued to citizens. The efforts of the vigilance committee members led to the declaration of two ration shops as model ration shops. As a result of three public hearings on basic amenities and the right to housing and food in Kaveri Nagar, Laxmi Devi Nagar and Hosabalunagar, KFCS (Karnataka Food and Civil Supplies) department officials seized a ration shop and retrieved inedible rations from two ration shops.

The Paraspara Trust in Bengaluru, Karnataka formed 30 PDS Monitoring Committees (PDSMCs) and enhanced the capacity of up to 300 members to successfully identify and speak out against corruption issues in ration distribution in the slums. An apex PDSMC was also formed at the zonal level called "Danya Hakku Forum" with 15 active members. Furthermore, due to the efforts of the organisation, three Fair Price Shops were also declared model ration shops as they complied with all the rules and norms of the PDS.

The postcard campaign from one of the villages under the SVYM project (Mysore, Karnataka) proved so powerful that it made the district level authorities issue orders to the taluk officials to monitor the activity of the PDS shops and conduct surprise checks. As a result of this, the food inspectors now regularly monitor the PDS shops. The officials are also now available on a fixed day at the taluk HQ so that people can meet them directly. In a number of cases, pending ration cards have been issued to needy families after they demanded them from the concerned officials. Due to constant pressure by the citizens, 40 PDS shops have displayed information boards under Section 4 of the RTI Act.

Under the CAC project run by Youth for Social Development (YSD) in Orissa, it was revealed that the anti-corruption helpline launched for PDS related complaints is functioning successfully and many citizens have used it to register their complaints. PDS shops use their Citizen Information Boards to regularly disclose important information regarding PDS and rations (quantity, type, etc.). The PDS shop opening time has changed due to the order of the District Civil Supply Officer. Corrupt PDS shop owners have been issued notices at the request of the citizens.

In Orissa, due to the efforts of Adhar, 95 eligible families received PDS cards that were long overdue. Twenty out of 25 PDS shops ensured that the correct quantities of rice, wheat and sugar are distributed to the citizens. In Thakurapalli village, through the efforts of the anti-corruption committee, the discrepancies in the distribution of kerosene oil were resolved and the dealer was suspended. In Uparbahal GP, the anti-corruption committee helped ensure that the correct quantity (25 kg) of rice was distributed to beneficiaries compared to the 4-5 kg that was previously distributed.

In the project implemented by PREM in Orissa, the quality of food grains provided by the PDS shop owners improved after citizen intervention. The citizens started returning inferior quality rations to the Gram Panchayat. Thirty-four fake BPL ration cards were also identified and confiscated by panchayats in the area.

### **National Rural Employment Guarantee Act**

Efforts by Sambandh in Jashipur (Orissa) led to the release of job cards to 274 citizens as well as payments for 173 workers which had been long delayed. This was possible due to the formation of a rural call centre which citizens used as a platform

#### **Box 5: Improving Ration Distribution in Karnataka**

People of Muguthanamoole village in Karnataka were not receiving the correct quota of rations per the allotment list. After SVYM's orientation session about PDS entitlements, the villagers submitted a written complaint to the GP President. Immediately, the GP members met and discussed the issue and corrective actions were taken. Buoyed by the success, the villagers are now trying to ensure that cash receipts are issued to all and the quantity of rations issued is mentioned on the individual PDS cards.

to gather information about different schemes and their provisions, and also due to the active involvement of the Social Watch Group.

Under the project implemented by PREM in Orissa, a number of changes occurred. For example, average work days increased from 30 to 52. The percentage of job card holders having a bank account for direct and timely payment of wages increased from 32 to 95. In select gram panchayats in Bolangir district, Orissa, 85 percent of NREGS work was conducted without the use of machines and 850 fake job cards were identified as a result of the anti-corruption committees.

In Mohana Block of Gajapathi district, the efforts by VICALP led to the submission of 29 new job demands by 3,560 citizens from 68 villages resulting in new NREGS projects that provided employment to 2,991 citizens. In the target villages, 90 percent of worksites now have drinking water and 20 percent have child care facilities due to effective monitoring of NREGS by the Social Watch Committees. Wages also increased from 35 to 90 rupees.

**Box 6: Obtaining Work for Job Card Holders in Chandiput**

VICALP educates citizens about RTI and teaches community social watch committees the skills to hold local government service provider departments accountable to the people they serve. The campaign, "Ekta Abhiyan", was particularly effective in Chandiput village where 80 percent of households obtained NREGS job cards since 2006 but not a single person had received a job up to 2009. About 200 of them were mobilized and petitioned the BDO for work. After several months of waiting, a complaint was made to the Block Grievance Officer. Finally, meeting the Deputy Commissioner proved successful and work was allotted.

**Ayuskam (on Corruption in NRHM)**

There is reduction of corrupt practices in government hospitals in Khariar Block, Nuapada district of Orissa: 80 percent beneficiaries are not paying fees for institutional delivery. Payment of a service tax to other service providers was reduced by 50 percent. Free medicines are available at the sub-centre and village level, countersigning of checks for financial support to mother after institutional delivery under JSY are done immediately, and checks worth Rs.1400 (\$28) were handed over. There is effective distribution of the full quota of Take Home Rations under the ICDS. The medicine list is displayed at the Government hospital. Special care is given to malnourished children. Village health committees have been formed. People's participation has increased in the decision making process, implementing and monitoring of programmes. Every household is now able to save more than Rs.3000 (\$60) per year due to these efforts.

**Jananeethi (on Human Rights Violations in Clinical Trials)**

Jananeethi was the first whistle blower in Kerala, publicly challenging and protesting

unethical and corrupt practices in clinical drug trials. Jananeethi submitted a detailed report on violations of human rights in clinical drug trials to the National Human Rights Commission. It was invited for consultations by the ICMR, WHO, the Office of the Drugs Controller General of India, International Medical Research Organisation and even a national consultation on clinical drug trial regulations. Jananeethi held three press meetings and issued several press releases on the subject. Two major news channels in Kerala published investigative reports on corruption and unethical practices in drug trials. Institutions and doctors, who initially refused to listen, responded positively to the issues raised by Jananeethi. The Health Secretary of Kerala promised strict measures to ensure ethical standards in Government institutions with respect to drug trials.

# 4

## The Emerging Change Model and Results Chain of the CAC Programme

### The change model of the CAC Programme

Results of the CAC programme indicate that corruption can be reduced, governance improved, and responsiveness increased with the following sequence of activities.

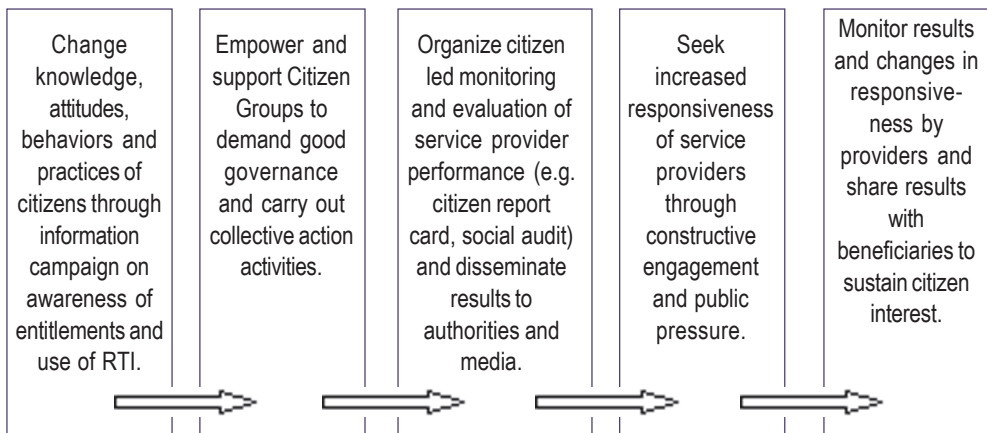





Table 3: The Expected Results Chain for the CAC Programme

Inputs	Outputs	Intermediate Outcomes	Outcomes
Inform community about entitlements and rights	Awareness meetings, IEC materials, media campaigns, tool kits	Increased community awareness and knowledge on rights and entitlements	Eligible excluded families are able to access services / benefits.



<b>Inputs</b>  <b>Outputs</b>  <b>Intermediate Outcomes</b>  <b>Outcomes</b>			
Form and train Citizen Monitoring groups	Number of collective actions taken.	Increased capacities for collective action. Corrupt practices are discovered /deterred and remedial actions demanded. Greater sense of empowerment	Greater access to entitlements / eligible benefits in a corruption free manner.  Reduction of leakages resulting from corruption, leading to improved budget utilisation and delivery of services to intended beneficiaries
Train Citizens on Right to Information	Citizens helped to use RTI through helpdesk, tools and navigational support	Increased citizen capacity and opportunity to use information to demand action (number of applications filed and satisfactorily addressed)	
Survey corrupt practices and magnitude	Baseline and follow up surveys Citizen report cards Results disseminated	Excluded beneficiaries and corruption vulnerabilities identified	
Undertake citizen monitoring	Monitoring activities carried out. Social audits	Enhanced user action in demanding delivery of services in stipulated amounts without corruption. Issues covered are brought to notice of public and authorities.	Improved governance of the schemes.
Constructively engage with officials	Public hearings Dialogue with senior officials Dialogue with service providers	Increased responsiveness of service delivery provider (number of effective actions by service providers on issues identified in the monitoring) and number of excluded beneficiaries helped to access services in a corruption free manner.Improved grievance handling	Establishment of sustainable community based groups and organisations
Build coalitions for advocacy	Networks formed or joined Coalition activities	Service agencies improve their governance by implementing administrative, regulatory and policy reforms	

## Mapping Outcomes of the CAC Programme in Six Results Areas

The CAC programme is only 18 months old, so it is too early for definitive outcomes and impacts. Nevertheless, a number of intermediate outcomes and preliminary outcomes are visible. To map these results, we have adapted a methodology developed by Gaventa and Barret<sup>1</sup> of the Development Research Centre, UK. They used this methodology to code and analyse almost 830 outcomes from citizen engagement in a sample of 100 cases. They categorised four broad areas in which citizen engagement and participation have the potential to influence state-society relations in either a positive or a negative direction. These categories are shown in table 4 below.

**Table 4: Outcomes of Citizen Engagement**

OUTCOME	POSITIVE	NEGATIVE
Construction of Citizenship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased civic and political knowledge</li> <li>• Greater sense of empowerment and agency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased knowledge dependencies</li> <li>• Disempowerment and reduced sense of agency</li> </ul>
Practices of Citizen Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased capacities for collective action</li> <li>• New forms of participation</li> <li>• Deepening of networks and solidarities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New capacities used for 'negative' purposes</li> <li>• Tokenistic or 'captured' forms of participation</li> <li>• Lack of accountability and representation in networks</li> </ul>
Responsive and Accountable States	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater access to state services and resources</li> <li>• Greater realisation of rights</li> <li>• Enhanced state responsiveness and accountability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denial of state services and resources</li> <li>• Social, economic and political reprisals</li> <li>• Violent or coercive state response</li> </ul>
Inclusive and Cohesive Societies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of new actors and issues in public spaces</li> <li>• Greater social cohesion across groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reinforcement of social hierarchies and exclusion</li> <li>• Increased conflict and violence</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> "Citizenship, Participation and Accountability: So What Difference Does It Make?" by John Gaventa and Gregory Barrett, The Development Research Centre on Citizenship, Participation and Accountability (Citizenship DRC), Institute of Development Studies. Accessed at: <http://www.drc-citizenship.org/>

Inspired by the above analytical framework for mapping the outcomes of citizen engagement, participation and accountability, this report uses the following classification for analyzing and reporting results of the CAC programme:

1. Community awareness and knowledge about rights and entitlements including the use of the right to information
2. Establishment of community based organizations and networks for collective action
3. Inclusion of eligible but excluded families who are able to access services and benefits as a result of project help
4. An increase in full entitlements and eligible benefits for eligible beneficiaries
5. Reduction of leakages due to corruption
6. Improved governance of the schemes as measured by the number of effective actions and reforms implemented by authorities in response to the CAC programme

### **Result 1: Increased community awareness and knowledge on rights and entitlements, including the use of the right to information**

The baseline surveys done under the projects show that the awareness levels were low on one or more significant aspects of the schemes, and benefits and rights under them. Therefore most of the project time and money was spent on awareness raising activities and helping citizens seek information to obtain better services and entitled benefits using a variety of tools (see Table 3 above). For example, in Gajapathi district of Orissa, Suraksha has run awareness programmes, campaigns in school and colleges and a village level folk media and talk show campaign. As a result, knowledge, attitudes, behaviour and practices changed as illustrated by the results reported in the PRIA independent evaluation and project completion

#### **Box 7: Citizen Use of the Right to Information**

SVYM, in its awareness campaigns, has conducted video shows, street plays, wall paintings, community meetings, door to door campaigns, and training for SHGs, youth groups, college students and PDS shop owners, as well as multi-stakeholder meetings and sponsored cricket matches. An example of a citizen inspired by their campaigns is Somashekar, an enthusiastic young man with a lot of social concerns who runs a provision store in H.D.Kote town. He attended a training programme conducted for youth groups and realised the enormous power and potential of the RTI Act. He applied to his Gram Panchayat, seeking information about allotments under the Ashraya housing scheme. He also sought information regarding frequent transfers of Tahsildar in H.D.Kote and PDS allotment. He has also motivated his friends and relatives to make use of the Act. He shares knowledge about RTI to people coming to his provision store and distributes pamphlets given by SVYM. When he has time, he also volunteers at the RTI clinic in the Taluk office premises.

reports. PRIA reports that in all 4 CSO partner projects in Karnataka, the community has become more aware of corruption issues and practices affecting them and their potential role in contesting them. The partner CSOs have been successful in mobilising and organising the community to use various transparency and accountability instruments like RTI, public hearings, social audits, etc.

PRIA also reports that effective Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials (pamphlets, booklets, flyers, posters, and so on) were produced and published by partner CSOs in local languages about the provisions of the RTI Act, entitlements under the PDS, ethical guidelines on drug trials, etc. The pictorial IEC materials helped even illiterate people understand their role in fighting corruption.

- ◆ In Raichur, 100 RTI applications were filed, of which 20 cases are on appeal. RTI pamphlets have also been produced. (NJMO)
- ◆ The community in the Bengaluru slum is now very aware of the pervasive corruption in the PDS and there has been a 75 percent increase in community awareness resulting in many enquiries about the RTI. (Paraspara)
- ◆ There was a 2 percent rise in RTI applications and 50 percent received satisfactory responses. (CfAR)
- ◆ 905 families were made aware of RTI application procedures and 57 of them have filed RTI applications and 48 percent of these are satisfied with the response. (YSD)
- ◆ In Mohana block, Gajapathi district 55 RTIs were lodged on MGNREGS, 10 cases solved; two officials penalised. (VICALP)
- ◆ In the Project area of Gumma block, 23 RTI cases have been filed on MGNREGS; and 20 cases solved. As a result, job card holders were supported to recover more than Rs.130,000/- diverted during Implementation of MGNREGS and another case of pending dues of Rs.150,000 by using RTI tools. (Suraksha)
- ◆ Members of the Bassappan Katte Women's Forum helped Parvati, a widow with 3 children, receive rations as stipulated for a BPL card holder, with the help of the RTI.
- ◆ Bassappan Katte Forum members also used the RTI to get KFCS to replace 25 kg of inedible rice from a PDS shop and to locate the shop's Vigilance Committee members who were hidden. Since then members of Bassappan Katte have been receiving good quality rations.
- ◆ Members of Jagriti Mahila Vedike (Laxmi Devi Nagar) intervened to get an APL card replaced by a BPL card for Neelamma, a single, widowed woman, by

### **Box 8: Using the RTI to Fight the Distribution of Contaminated Food**

Members of Bheemabhai Mahila Vedike (Sanjay Gandhi Nagar) conducted a similar intervention in their area. Haseena, community advocate and forum member, said, "In the month of March some people in our area complained, just as the forum members of Bassappan Katte had done, of contaminated food grains being distributed in ration shop number-70". When the members went and spoke to the shop owner his response was no different from the ration shop owner in Bassappan Katte. He also said that the food grain he was distributing was supplied by KFCS and that they should similarly complain to KFCS because there was not much he could do. Having learned from the experience of Bassappan Katte Forum, the members directly approached the Food Inspector. Though he initially tried to side-track the issue, he finally gave in to mounting pressure from the forum members and other community members, and replaced 30 kgs of food grain in shop number 70.

directly meeting the Commissioner, Food and Civil Supplies and registering a complaint.

- ◆ In Berhampur, 21 general applications were filed relating to the PDS, six demanding water service; complaints were filed against corrupt officials.
- ◆ In the project villages of Bolangir district, 140 RTI cases were filed by community leaders for irregularities in MGNREGS and PDS, out of which 45 persons have got complete and satisfactory information (Adhar).
- ◆ Forty percent of the people know about RTI in Nuagada block; 70 RTI cases were filed during the first phase of the project in Nuagada. (PREM).
- ◆ Information on NREGS, facilitation for accessing entitlements under the scheme, filing of RTI, grievance submission, and related work is being done at the call centre in Mayurbhanj district (Sambandh).
- ◆ An "RTI Advisory and Information Cell" (RAIC) was started to advise and educate the masses. A total of 210 phone calls were received, out of which 43

### **Box 9: A CUTS Success Story in Jaipur Division**

Banwari Lal Bairathi, a married resident and social activist with a 12<sup>th</sup> standard education, filed an RTI application. His electric meter was running too fast and not working properly. His electric bill was always very high in comparison to his electricity consumption. He had complained about it to the Rajasthan State Electricity Board (RSEB) office many times but nothing happened. Electric company engineers treated the RTI application as a simple complaint but applicant was determined to take the information sought. Subordinate staff was furious at the applicant and threatened to disconnect the electricity connection. He finally filed an RTI application at the Engineer's office. The RSEB responded promptly and replaced his electric meter within three days and admitted that the meter was not working properly. Now RSEB authorities are more serious about such complaints and act promptly. Sometime later the Electric Department responded to complaints of a neighbour immediately. Service delivery has improved.

callers and visitors filed RTI applications in various departments and were helped in getting services without paying any bribe, in Jaipur and Tonk districts of Rajasthan. 779 RTIs were filed in Ajmer and Jaipur Divisions. (CUTS)

- ◆ Badri, a mason, on the advice of a CGCC member, managed to get his Indira Aawas application sanctioned after filing an RTI application, seeking his number in the IAY wait list, and an explanation for not sanctioning Indira Aawas to him so far.
- ◆ An RTI application to the bank, asking the reasons for delay in the grading process of the Shoba SHG, enabled Manni Devi to get her revolving fund for starting a dairy business. This was due to advice from CGCC.
- ◆ The community learned the importance and use of the RTI Act for better and transparent functioning of the MGNREGA; 80 RTI cases were filed in the project area in two blocks of Uttaranchal. (RLEK)

## **Result 2: Establishment of CBOs and networks for collective action**

It is said that there is strength in numbers. Thus, a key strategy adopted by the projects to fight corruption was to mobilise the collective power of citizens to demand corruption free delivery of services. Accordingly, the projects facilitated formation of collective action groups, trained the group members, and helped them carry out collective actions. Specific results generated by collective action are listed in Table 5.

According to PRIA, a major result or achievement of the projects in Orissa, Karnataka and Kerala is the formation of community groups and organisations. All the CSO partners have put in tremendous energy and time in mobilising and collectivising communities to form anti-corruption committees /social watch groups /vigilance committees, etc. Youth and women of the community have also been sensitised to come together and form collectives in order to raise their voice against corruption. Many of these committees have been able to identify and raise issues through the use of RTI and other social accountability tools like social audits, public hearings, etc. The formation of a rural call centre by Sambandh on entrepreneurship basis is another example of engaging the communities in the activities of the project as well as raising their awareness and knowledge on the use of RTI to curb corruption. The following specific examples illustrate the results achieved.

PRIA reports that in Karnataka, women's and youth groups,<sup>2</sup> SHGs, PDS monitoring committees (PDSMCs), and other groups have been formed and assisted in different project areas to enable them to raise their voice against corruption. In many cases,

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<sup>1</sup> In Mysore (SVYM), Bengaluru (CFAR and Paraspara Trust) and Raichur (NJMO)

**Table 5: Outcomes of Collective Action**

CSO	Collective Action by Community	Outcome of Collective Action
Adhar	Community demonstration before <i>gram panchayat</i> and media	Submitted memorandum to officials; initiating interaction with the media
Ayaskam	Public rallies	Leadership has emerged at village level
CfAR	Participation in local public meetings	New bore wells and water tanks installed
CUTS	Monitoring corruption and supporting filing of RTI by the Consortium of Groups Combating Corruption (CGCC)	Increasing awareness on MGNREGS and other government schemes; reduction in corruption.
NJMO	Mass protests	Recovered Rs 8.5 million as back wages
Paraspara	Meetings and involvement with PDSMCs	75 percent increase in community awareness and participation
PREM	Community interface with different stakeholders; participation at all stages of the project cycle in the Project areas	Influencing the public institutions and reduction of corruption in MGNREGS, PDS and Forest related programmes
RLEK	Road Shows	Learning to deal with corruption issues independently
Sambandh	Public rallies and demonstrations; interaction of the social watch groups and the community with the media, PRIs and other institutions; coalition and networking among the CBOs and with the NGO	Increased knowledge of MGNREGS; influenced decisions of the government agencies and PRIs; reduction of corruption in MGNREGS and other government programme

CSO	Collective Action by Community	Outcome of Collective Action
Suraksha	Participation in interface meetings with service providers and in social audit and public hearings	Increased awareness of the community on MGNREGS; changes in the schemes based on demand by the people; reduction in corruption
SVYM	Multi-stakeholder meeting with local government officials	Several pending issues were resolved
VICALP	Community participation in 130 <i>palli sabha</i> and 12 <i>grama sabha</i> meetings; 27 collective visits to government offices; 126 meetings in 12 panchayats, lobbying and advocacy	Community participation and ownership of the MGNREGS plans increased; Reduced corruption in MGNREGS; Increased knowledge of implementation of the MGNREGS; changes in MGNREGS based on demands of citizens
YSD and six other CSOs	Coalition of CSOs (Alliance against Corruption) created	Citizens' campaign

the enhanced awareness and knowledge of the community has helped them to access improved services.

Siddamma, a 45 year old widow with 3 small children, working as a domestic servant, applied for a BPL card in 2007 but had still not been allotted one. She attended the PDSMC meeting and received help from the members to get a BPL card without paying a bribe.

According to PRIA, a major result in Karnataka is the strong emphasis on networking and alliance building that has taken place between partner CSOs and like-minded

#### **Box 10: Community Action to Stop Corruption in Fair Price Shops**

Ganganna, the owner of Manjunath Fair Price Shop (FPS) in Vinayakapura, had put his own relatives on the Vigilance Committee. SVYM conducted the PDSMC meeting in the community, sharing information about vigilance committee and their roles and responsibilities. Then the PDSMC members questioned the PDS shop owner about the transparency of the Vigilance Committee and demanded to include PDSMC members and other community members. They were successful. A FPS was closed down and reopened with a new owner after it was found that the owner was making men pledge their BPL cards in return for money for drinking. This action was taken after a PDSMC meeting, following which members submitted a complaint letter to the Deputy Director, Food and Civil Supplies.



organisations working on the issues of corruption, food security, livelihood, rights based approach, and so on. It could be seen that though the partner organisations were working in their respective intervention areas on concerned issues, they also became part of larger state and national level coalitions and platforms like Right to Food campaign (RTF), CIVIC Bengaluru, etc.

Many protests and hunger strikes were staged by Dalit women in Raichur. Typically, at these events, 20 to 30 women sit in front of a government office, singing songs about the corrupt practices they encounter in the operation of anti-poverty programmes intended to benefit them. These demonstrations have been covered by local media and, on occasion, by national newspapers, with favorable results. (NJMO)

A public rally organised against corruption has generated confidence among beneficiaries. The community has realised that it does not need to tolerate the existing situation since it can be improved through concerted action. The leadership that has thus emerged at the village level continuously raises issues at the *Panchayat* level and is a vibrant presence at the block-level DBM forum. (Ayauskam)

In Bolangir district in Odisha, the community demonstrated before six *gram panchayats* against reduced quantities and delayed PDS, and lodged complaints before the District Collector against the non-distribution of PDS and delayed payment of wages under the MGNREGS. A cluster-level people's organisation highlighted corruption issues in the MGNREGS and the PDS to the media and submitted a memorandum to the district administration. (Adhar)

**In Berhampur, Odisha**, community groups and leaders support programme activities enthusiastically. **A coalition against corruption, an alliance of CSOs, has led a citizens' campaign. The coalition was initiated under the aegis of six local NGOs: YSD, Aruna, Jeevandhara, GPSS, Apex Guideline and ISRA.** Twelve vigilance committees active in the project area monitor FPS operations. Shops open at regular times: 8-10 am and 5-8 pm. (YSD)

Community groups of Sambandh organised a public demonstration before a *panchayat* office and BDO at Podagarh and lobbied the government officials, resulting in the issuance of 200 job cards and opening of bank accounts for the job card holders. Social Watch Groups' members are keeping track and monitoring the MGNREGS in the four model *Gram Panchayats* of Jashipur block. Coalitions have been formed with SHGs, SHG Federations, farmers' groups and federations, local organisations and other NGOs like PRADAN, Lutheran World Service, and others. An NGO forum at the block level has been developed. (Sambandh)

An informal structure, the Consortium of Groups Combating Corruption (CGCC), was formed in the Ajmer and Jaipur Divisions of Rajasthan. The CGCC is strengthened with knowledge, information, and active support from a network of

42 CSOs and NGOs, cooperation from vigilant citizens, and support from proactive and committed government officials to promote the use of RTI and to address corruption. (CUTS)

A team of more than 800 village level workers who formed part of the community organisation “Ekta Abhiyan” (EA) in Mohana block was formed and strengthened. EA supported eligible families to receive MGNREGS job cards; all job card holders receiving bank account books and wage payments by check; enhanced payment of wages up to Rs. 90 with more working days; and planning and implementing more MGNREGS projects. EA also organised campaigns demanding corruption free services in MGNREGS, responded to EA’s demand that the district collector establish a grievance cell in Mohana to hear the grievances of people, and solved 10 cases. EA campaigns also increased awareness of the villagers on MGNREGS by distributing leaflets, pamphlets and posters; conducted 156 Panchayat level meetings; and organised a mass gathering at the block headquarters involving all the department heads and PRI members. The meetings discussed hostility and abusive behavior by corrupt officials and PRI members towards citizens and citizen groups, and the department heads and PRI leaders were forced to take a public stand on the issues. (VICALP)

Village level groups called Rozgaar Adhikar Satarkta Samiti (RASS) were formed and strengthened to support people to act as watch dogs and report against any form of corruption pursuant to the implementation of MGNREGA. A Jan Sunwai was organised in Jaunpur block of Tehri district in the presence of the Panchayat Development Officer. During the Jan Sunwai, people came forward with their grievances about irregularities in implementing MGNREGA. Many grievances were addressed by the officials. (RLEK)

Two local people’s organisations (POs), Palli Vikas and Mahargadarsi, actively addressed corruption in MGNREGS, PDS and government forest programmes. Social watch monitors (SWMs) have also been involved. POs and SWMs were given orientation and capacity building. As a result, the community had ownership of the project from the beginning. The POs and SWMs helped the people to expose corruption in many schemes. They also engaged in local grassroots lobbying and advocacy and lobbied the government and PRIs. People became more confident in dealing with corruption cases independently or with the support of POs and SWMs. (PREM)

Vigilance Committees and SHG members addressed, identified, and monitored corruption in MGNREGS in the Gumma block. They received support and capacity building. Peoples’ awareness and actions on MGNREGS also increased as a result. (Suraksha)

### **Result 3: An increase in inclusion of eligible but excluded families who are able to access services and benefits as a result of project help.**

Prior to the project many people were not receiving the benefits and services to which they were entitled. Due to the project, many more people now receive benefits and the number of ineligible beneficiaries has been reduced. The following examples demonstrate these kinds of impacts.

- ◆ About 15,000 people have been able to get BPL cards as entitled. Over 80 percent of eligible tribal families received their BPL cards. (SVYM)
- ◆ At the end of Phase I, there was a 10 percent increase in the number of eligible cardholders (nearly 350 families). (Paraspara)
- ◆ The community received 200 BPL cards and had 400 APL cards converted to BPL cards. (Paraspara)
- ◆ After filing 100 applications, the community received 371 BPL cards. (CfAR).
- ◆ Among targeted households, 98 percent now have job cards compared 40 percent before the project. (VICALP)
- ◆ All job cards are now held by the cardholders compared to 9 percent before. (VICALP)
- ◆ 40 percent more beneficiaries are now registered for MGNREGS. (Adhar)
- ◆ A total of 850 fake cards have been rescinded from those that are ineligible. (Adhar)

### **Result 4: An increase in full entitlements and eligible benefits**

The PRIA evaluation reported that in almost all the projects, project teams were able to foster good rapport with the government line departments, elected representatives and communities. Using constructive engagement, the partner organisations have sensitised and influenced government officials to participate in their local level anti-corruption initiatives. In many cases, local elected representatives have been made part of the anti-corruption committees or social watch committees so that they are continuously engaged in fighting corruption. This strategy has been very helpful as it prevents local government officials from indulging in corrupt activities themselves and it also is a check on others who might do so by creating peer pressure. Specific examples of this, drawn from the project completion reports, are listed below.

- ◆ PDS shops offering sub-standard food fell from 44 to 26 percent in one project area.
- ◆ Shops opening the correct number of days rose from 10 to 60 percent in one project.

- ◆ Sixty village FPSs show more than a 50 percent improvement in non-corrupt delivery of services. (NJMO)
- ◆ Two FPSs were declared as models. (CfAR)
- ◆ There was a 20 percent increase in FPSs with functioning VCs. (SVYM)
- ◆ The *Panchayat* office is open every day of the week (compared to twice a week before). (VICALP)
- ◆ All applicants receive receipts on application, and none was denied a job card. (VICALP)
- ◆ Work sites have drinking water and shade, 50 percent have first aid and 70 percent have crèches. (VICALP)
- ◆ A total of 74 new MGNREGS projects have been sanctioned. (VICALP)
- ◆ Those receiving work increased from 48 to 88 percent of the target population.
- ◆ The number of days of employment increased from 30 to 60 days each year. (Adhar)
- ◆ The number of days of work under MGNREGS increased from 26 to 60 days a year. (Suraksha)
- ◆ Average wages paid rose from 35-50 percent of the minimum wage to 90 percent.
- ◆ Shops in one project, allocating the correct range and weight of items, rose from 50 percent to 85.

#### **Box 11: Fighting Illegal Charges in Hospitals and Health Clinics**

A rally was organised in Khariar, Orissa under the banner of Durnity Birodhi Manch. A memorandum was submitted demanding free service under the NRHM. This immediately resulted in a complete stoppage of illegal and corrupt charges (doctors' fees, demands for payment for free medicines, misbehavior with patients, etc.) by the doctors and the service providers. It also had positive effects on facilities like drinking water, cleanliness and display of lists of free medicines.

#### **Result 5: Reduction of leakages resulting from corruption**

The main focus on collective action is reducing corruption and therefore increasing corruption-free service delivery. The PRIA evaluation found many instances of citizen action leading to a reduction in corrupt practices. Some examples are listed below.

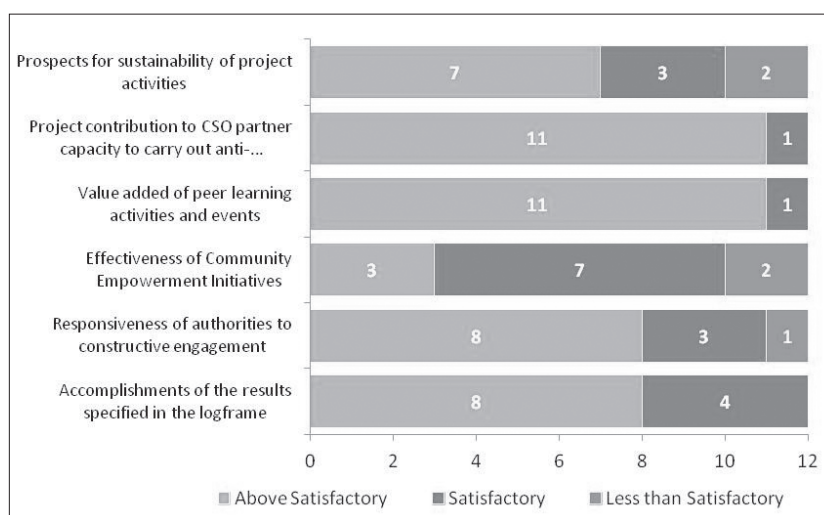
- ◆ Fake job cards in one project area were reduced from 2100 to 1250.
- ◆ MGNREGS expenditures in Raichur district increased by more than 25 percent and were disbursed without corruption. (NJMO)

- ◆ Wages were disbursed without paying bribes about 70 percent of the time. (Adhar)
- ◆ Bribery and corruption decreased from 82 percent to 54 percent. (YSD)
- ◆ Four slums were provided with public water taps after long delays but without any corruption. (YSD)
- ◆ More than Rs.130,000 was recovered in two cases of corrupt practices in MGNREGS. (Suraksha)
- ◆ 58 percent of new job-card holders did not pay a bribe compared to 65 percent of job-card holders who previously paid bribes during job applications. (VICALP)
- ◆ All payments are made by check and all are paid Rs. 90 (\$1.80) day. (VICALP)
- ◆ Compared to before the project, 36 percent more households secured corruption-free benefits of various government schemes. (CfAR)

How robust are the results: findings of independent evaluations

The 12 completed projects were submitted to an independent evaluation by PRIA. In addition, a mid-term review of the CAC programme was carried out by John Clark, an NGO expert with extensive experience in senior positions at OXFAM-UK and the World Bank.<sup>3</sup>

**Figure 3: Results and Impacts as per PRIA Evaluation**



<sup>1</sup> Both of these reports are available at PTF website: <http://ptfund.org/publications/special-reports/>

According to PRIA (Figure 3), most CSO partners were rated as either ‘above satisfactory’ or ‘satisfactory’ in accomplishing the results that were specified in their log frame. It also shows that projects evaluated in Karnataka had better ratings than those in Orissa. According to PRIA, this difference could be attributed to the sensitive socio-political conditions (predominantly tribal and marginalised communities, increasing Naxalism, etc.) and the difficult physical terrain in Orissa. Other reasons could be the difference in the governments of the three states (Karnataka, Kerala and Orissa) and their different socio-political and development histories as well as the strengths, capacities and operating space of CSOs to promote people’s participation and social change. While the projects in Orissa have not had the same level of impacts as some of the projects in Karnataka and Kerala, they have been able to successfully initiate and sustain a movement for citizens’ action against corruption.

According to the mid-term evaluation of the CAC programme, aggregating the impact of the many CAC projects is difficult because: (i) the problems tackled and the contexts vary so greatly, (ii) because impact is often intrinsically very hard to attribute and quantify, (iii) the grantees’ skills at documentation and analysis vary greatly, and (iv) the paucity of baseline data. Nevertheless, just taking a few projects where direct savings can be listed, it is evident that the immediate financial savings alone are worth much more than the PTF grant. Beyond this are other benefits such as community empowerment, new structures for citizen vigilance, reformed bidding processes, and so on – all of which ensure that improvements will be sustained. Grantees are contributing significantly to changing the culture from one of grudging acceptance of corruption as a way of life to public antipathy and a demand for change.

One CAC-financed survey of an Indian city found that 82 percent of citizens pay bribes in order to access public services to which they are entitled. While larger scams usually attract more media interest, the cumulative impact of pervasive smaller-scale corruption is much more damaging to society and development. Systemic but low-level corruption affecting ordinary people has a cumulative impact that is higher in terms of lost national development potential than the major national corruption cases and this usually has a much more serious, direct impact on the poor.

CAC partners have been very effective at enhancing the transparency of public services and agencies. For example, CAC partners in India have filed more than 600 requests for information under the Right to Information Act, and have persuaded some public bodies to routinely make information available rather than wait until it is requested. Many groups have also made transparency more effective by educating the public about the power of that information or the use of mass media.

There are a number of impressive project results under the CAC programme. Individually they provide anecdotes of success but collectively they amount to a

clear narrative. Combining citizens' investigation and vigilance, community mobilisation, constructive engagement with public bodies, plus eliciting the support of reform champions, provides a formula that is effective in addressing the problems of corruption that are experienced by ordinary people.

Currently there are 14 grantees clustered in Karnataka, Kerala and Odisha, most of who seek to reduce corruption in two national safety-net schemes. It is clear that such a concentration not only yields efficiency gains but also synergy and political gains. Having a number of CSOs using similar tools (such as social audits, Right to Information requests, vigilance committees, etc.) to scrutinise important schemes has increased the attention of authorities and the media, elicited support from key public figures (such as state-level ombudsmen and RTI Commissioners), and deepened the confidence and mutual support among grantees.

# 5

## Scaling Up and the Sustainability of the CAC Programme

To what extent are the approaches and results of the CAC programme replicable and thereby scalable? A one size fits all approach to replication is neither possible nor advisable. This is because the local context and political economy differ from one local government to another. Nevertheless, the analysis of implementation and results of CAC projects so far, as well as the independent Mid-Term Evaluation of the CAC programme, indicate that, with due regard and adaptation to local context, successful replication and scaling up of the CAC strategies and change model are very much possible.

We analysed the replicability of approaches used in the CAC. The results of the analysis are presented in the table below. Almost all the conditions noted below prevail everywhere in India and have sufficient grounding in national laws.

Table 6: Replicability of CAC Strategies and Approaches

CAC Approaches that can be replicated	Context where the CAC approach can be replicated
Sustainable community action	Pervasive petty corruption prevails at community level
Constructive Engagement	Where public officials at community and/or next higher levels are willing or responsive to media and/or community pressure
Use of RTI	RTI law exists
Citizens Group Against Corruption	Involvement of different stakeholders - in favorable conditions for constructive engagement



Involvement of different stakeholders against corruption	Demonstrable results are forthcoming
CAC programme concept, approach, strategies, etc.	Making service providers declare their stand against corruption publicly is politically correct.
Mass gathering against corruption	Mass gathering against corruption is feasible everywhere provided chances of violent state response are low.
Social watch groups with different social groups against corruption	Provision of public hearings and citizens' interaction with the service providers is grounded in law.
Jan Sunwai – citizens' interaction with the service providers	When grounded in law and/or constructive engagement is welcome

According to the MTR, the CAC approach can be replicated in a wide range of countries and settings where three contexts apply. These three conditions exist in most places which creates an enabling environment for replication and scaling up of the CAC programme.

1. **Freedom of association:** It must be possible to form CSOs relatively freely and to conduct activities that challenge segments of authority without repression or serious threat to the CSO personnel.
2. **Officials are prepared to engage:** The CAC approach only works if at least some officials or elected representatives are prepared to engage with the grantees and will make available at least the minimum amount of information needed for them to do their job.
3. **Widespread problems of low-level corruption:** If corruption is a minor problem to most communities in a country, the CAC approach will not yield a high dividend, and it would be better either to invest in strengthening investigative journalism (to tackle the occasional major scam) or to deploy the resources elsewhere.

### Sustainability of the CAC Programme

Sustainability is a key focus of the CAC programme and the CSO partners were required to present a sustainability plan at the proposal stage, during the progress reporting, and at the completion of the project. Four dimensions of sustainability are analysed: technical, social, institutional and financial. This analysis was based on the CSO partner response to the following questions in their project completion reports:

- ◆ **Technical sustainability**
  - ✧ What measures have been taken to ensure sustainability of project processes like knowledge generation, constructive engagement and community empowerment?
  - ✧ What are the plans to ensure sustainability of project outcomes?
- ◆ **Financial sustainability**
  - ✧ Does the community financially contribute to the project?
  - ✧ How much financial support does the organisation mobilise from other donors?
  - ✧ Have any other donors expressed interest in supporting such initiatives?
- ◆ **Social sustainability**
  - ✧ How much ownership does the community have of the process?
  - ✧ How independent is the community in dealing with corruption issues?
  - ✧ How far can the community independently organise the road shows or protests for their rights and for curbing corruption?
- ◆ **Institutional sustainability**
  - ✧ What are the organisational plans to continue the project on their own?
  - ✧ How far have the CBOs formed /strengthened and can work on their own?

The findings and conclusions of the analysis of CSO partner responses, on the different forms of sustainability of the processes initiated by them, and results achieved, through the Projects in MGNREGS and PDS are as follows:

### **MGNREGS**

**Technical sustainability.** Most NGOs hope that the enhanced knowledge imparted to the community through the trainings and workshops as part of the project will remain as a base to be used by the communities after the project to continue their fight against corruption. Few NGOs have plans to update the knowledge of the communities. Most NGOs are positive about the future roles of the community based organisations and their leaders in constructively engaging with the government agencies. Most NGOs hope to sustain community empowerment based on the capacities gained through the trainings and workshops and forming and strengthening the CBOs and their leadership in Phase 1.

**Financial sustainability.** Most NGOs state that the community is contributing mostly by giving their labor and time, and in some cases they meet part of the cost. Most

NGOs agree that the community does not have the capacity yet to make more contributions. Most NGOs also are not confident of mobilising funds from other (non-donor) sources. Only in two cases, other donors are supporting similar projects. All other NGOs have only PTF as partner. Most of them did not approach any other donor even though there is no guarantee that existing donors will be interested in continuing funding.

**Social sustainability.** All NGOs, except one, do not directly answer the question about community ownership of the process. Instead they present different measures which may enhance and sustain community ownership. It can be realistically assumed that these measures enhance community ownership, to ensure sustainability of the processes beyond Phase I, but it is not clear to what extent. Most NGOs observe improvement in the capacity of the communities to address corruption independently and identify certain independent actions by the communities. However, almost all of them reported that at present the communities do not have the required capacities to address corruption in MGNREGS on their own. Most NGOs feel that their communities can, if need be, organise road shows and protests, but very few feel that they can do it independently without the support of the NGO.

**Institutional sustainability** focuses on the NGOs and the CBOs. All NGOs base the institutional sustainability of the initiatives of Phase I more on the community organisations, and consider themselves as only supporters and facilitators of the initiatives managed by the CBOs. In all project contexts, the CBOs consist mainly of people belonging to the socially, economically and politically weaker sections. Again, in most project contexts, the interests of the CBOs, and to some extent the NGOs, conflict with those of the powerful socio-economic and political groups. These powerful elements are the agents and beneficiaries of corruption in most cases, and have the support of the government. Most NGOs realistically state that the CBOs require ongoing support to sustain their efforts in addressing corruption in the MGNREGS. It is important to note that corruption, even if completely eliminated for some time, can return. Therefore, citizens need to be vigilant about corruption all the time. It is important that NGOs formulate their own realistic long term strategies to fight corruption and to strengthen CBOs to fight corruption together or independent of NGOs.

### **Public Distribution System (PDS)**

**Institutional sustainability.** CBOs and their capacity to address corruption independently varied across the NGO partners. Projects strengthened the CBOs. In most cases, their awareness about corruption increased and many CBOs independently addressed corruption. However, in most cases, there is a need to further strengthen the CBOs to sustain their efforts as the forces involved in corruption are stronger than the CBOs. All NGOs involved in the PDS programme are committed to

address corruption over the long term even though clear plans are not yet ready. The NGOs also realise that they cannot address corruption alone and have established working relations with other organisations such as other NGOs, networks and their own CBOs. Institutional sustainability in addressing corruption in PDS therefore depends not only on strengthening the NGOs but also strengthening their relations with other institutions.

**Financial sustainability.** The financial contribution of the community to address corruption is limited in the number of cases and amount of money. However, most NGOs aim to mobilise more resources from the community using locally suitable methods. Contributions from the community may increase with their commitment and ownership of the processes to address corruption. All except two NGOs have no other donors to support fighting corruption in the PDS. Most NGOs are interested in mobilising funds from other sources to continue and expand their activities.

There are many important external and internal factors influencing the sustainability of the processes and outcomes of the projects. In the Indian context, the external factors include: (a) the increasing awareness and responses of citizens to corruption; (b) responses of policy makers and service providers to corruption; (c) capacities and responses of beneficiaries and practitioners to corruption; and (d) the responses and strategies of civil society to the desires and demands of citizens in addressing corruption.

The Mid-Term Evaluation found the following indicators of the sustainability of CAC's local level work even if there is no further external funding:

**The virtuous circle of voluntary effort:** As citizens identify and address problems of corruption, they become more confident of their own capacities, gratified with the improvements in the local situation and the punishments meted out to offenders, more trusting of the NGO that supports them, and more prepared to commit effort to future action.

**Proven effectiveness of social accountability tools:** In widely differing settings, social accountability tools have proved effective including surveys, community report cards, social audits, right to information requests, etc. Such tools enable poor, often illiterate, people to become the producers of information for the first time. Careful monitoring permits them to move their experience of corruption beyond anecdote to systematic data.

**Resilience of local structures:** CAC activities have led to the creation of local structures for tackling corruption, including Social Watch Groups, service watchdogs, monitoring committees, forest or water user groups, etc. This sometimes leads to the inclusion of grantees' representatives in local governance structures. This generates stronger conduits to feed grassroots experience into local level decision-making.

**Support networks are emerging:** Some grantees have established networks that link together these new local structures to provide mutual support and experience sharing. Grantees are joining broader civil society networks to encourage greater impact of their work. This helps to replicate anti-corruption measures.

**Strong local leadership:** The local structures have also helped identify new cadres of grassroots leaders, especially among women and youth, who have a zeal for expanding this type of work.

**The power of constructive engagement:** Most groups report great difficulty initially in reaching out to any officials but increasing ease in the rapport as the groups demonstrate their commitment to constructive engagement and the rigor of their evidence. Many groups have come to establish regular engagement with key public bodies and have found sympathisers within those bodies who will go out of their way to help.

**Community contributions to costs:** Some (but still the minority) of groups report that the new local structures are levying community contributions towards the costs of the social accountability activities such as membership fees. While these may cover local costs (such as conducting surveys or travelling to meet officials), there is no sign as yet that these contributions will cover the costs of the NGO that supports their activism.

## Challenges Involved in Replicating and Scaling Up

In the vastness of India the pilot CAC programme is a drop in the ocean. The small community-based CAC projects being funded are at the very best pin pricks in the hard skin of corrupt service providers and do not add up to a critical mass of evidence to impress and engage policy makers. They also do not address the grand corruption issues that afflict these national schemes. However, they do provide enough data to support two conclusions: (i) the government's official mechanisms for monitoring, control, inspection and audit are ineffective in preventing corruption; and (ii) many of the governance and corruption issues can be mitigated by CAC-type citizen activism. The peer learning activities of the CAC programme and the mid-term review provide the following lessons and challenges involved in scaling up the CAC programme.

**Citizen monitoring can work effectively where three conditions are present:** (i) corruption is endemic, affecting incomes and livelihoods of individuals and communities; (ii) CSOs can be created and operate relatively freely without repression or serious threat; and (iii) some officials or elected representatives are prepared to engage constructively with the grantees and make available information that is needed for beneficiaries to provide feedback. In many states in India these conditions exist to a sufficient degree to allow a successful programme.

***Focusing the effort on specific programmes is effective and can facilitate replication:***

Targeting corruption in large public sector programmes by multiple CSOs can facilitate standardisation of results indicators, survey instruments and communication materials, and identify systemic successes and failures that can facilitate replication and aggregation of results.

***Sustainability of citizen engagement is a difficult and long term endeavor but is facilitated by:***

(i) visible improvements in the local situation due to voluntary efforts; (ii) effective use of social accountability tools and local structures; (iii) the emergence of support networks and strong local leadership; (iv) the presence of public officials committed to service and integrity and; (v) mechanisms to encourage community financial contributions to cover the costs of citizen engagement.

***Translating local level successes into programme level impact is challenging.***

Grassroots CSOs usually do not have the analytical, advocacy and political economy skills needed to influence policy makers. For success, investment is needed in building networks and coalitions. Traditional and new media involvement is a must.

***Social media and other ICT tools need to be applied consistently to social accountability.***

Good practices and innovations in this area are emerging very rapidly and civil society organisations face the challenge of keeping up with the innovations and applying them in their work.

# 6

## Challenges and Lessons

The CSO Partners under the CAC programme faced a wide range of external and internal challenges (see lists below) that provided rich experiences for drawing lessons. Some of these were overcome, while other issues present ongoing challenges which will need to be addressed in subsequent phases of the programme. The results are impressive given these challenges.

The challenges listed below are in the form of factors and forces which can be classified as internal (weaknesses) and external (threats) in a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, objectives, and threats) framework. The relative importance and strength of these factors and forces varied across the projects. Therefore the strategies to address them need to be different.

The first set of challenges was external, i.e. in working with the communities as well as with other stakeholders (PRIs and government institutions). The main issues related to the: (a) knowledge, attitude and capacities of communities and service providers; (b) capacity and participation of communities and citizens; (c) socio-economic relations among citizens; (d) collusion between powerful classes and service providers reinforcing corrupt practices; (e) influence and role of extremist political organisations; (f) conflict or disunity among different social groups (castes); and so on. These are listed in more detail in Table 7 below.

**Table 7: Challenges Faced by CSO Partners**

<b>External Challenges</b>	<b>Operational Issues with Other Stakeholders</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Opposition from local vested interest groups including physical threats</li><li>◆ Coercion of citizens by local leaders</li><li>◆ People not telling the truth due to fear of officials</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Limited knowledge of PRI and local officials about social safety net schemes</li><li>◆ Effort needed to sensitise PRI members and local officials on schemes</li><li>◆ PRIs not ready to work against</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Unresponsive service providers (government)- Frequent transfer of service providers</li> <li>◆ Difficulty in talking against corruption due to heavy dependence on government funds</li> <li>◆ Tracking success of all RTI applicants</li> <li>◆ Government officials do not visit project villages due to extremist groups</li> <li>◆ Citizens losing interest – long struggle</li> <li>◆ Improper allocation and utilisation of resources by government for MGNREGS</li> <li>◆ No incentives for good service providers</li> <li>◆ No constructive involvement of people</li> <li>◆ Lack of collective demand of citizens</li> <li>◆ Language barriers with tribal people</li> <li>◆ Communal violence in the nearby region</li> <li>◆ Skepticism of citizens regarding success in reducing corruption</li> <li>◆ Political interference in PDS by leaders</li> <li>◆ Unfavorable state and national policies (in PDS and MGNREGS)</li> </ul>	<p>corruption</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Lack of coordination between PRIs and other government institutions</li> <li>◆ Domination by elite groups in villages</li> <li>◆ Feudal socio-political structures/relations</li> <li>◆ Collusion between powerful classes and service providers reinforcing corruption</li> <li>◆ Officials unresponsive, especially at the local level</li> <li>◆ Some government officials unwilling to accept existence of corrupt practices in PDS</li> <li>◆ Resistance of PDS shop owners</li> <li>◆ Absence of active village level leaders</li> <li>◆ Very low literacy and knowledge level of citizens (tribal groups)</li> <li>◆ Lack of unity (and conflict) among different communities and castes</li> <li>◆ Low participation of citizens in training and awareness programmes</li> <li>◆ Other competing programmes in the area</li> <li>◆ Weak regional networking or leveraging support from other CSO projects</li> </ul>
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### CSO Strategies in Overcoming Challenges

NGOs adopted project specific strategies to overcome obstacles. Strategies were focused on:

- (a) service providers and government institutions;
- (b) communities and citizen entitlement holders; and
- (c) NGOs and CSOs.

Projects results were due to a combination of these strategies. It would be difficult to determine the contribution of any single factor to the higher level results. Among the strategies used by CSO partners in the CAC programme are:

- ◆ Constructive engagement with service providers to induce changes



- ◆ Increased use of RTI by citizens and monitoring responses of service providers
- ◆ Citizen group monitoring of service delivery
- ◆ Improved communication through innovative call centres, RTI cells and booths
- ◆ Engaging the media in the fight against corruption
- ◆ Strong regional network of CSOs against corruption
- ◆ Increased citizen awareness
- ◆ Increased use of public hearings and social audits
- ◆ Mass campaigns, meetings and collective actions against corruption
- ◆ Government officials forced to take a public stand against corruption
- ◆ Formation of inter-caste community groups to create and increase unity
- ◆ Capacity building of a large team of volunteers to fight corruption
- ◆ Increased involvement of youth in addressing corruption
- ◆ Support of city corporation councilors

### **Lessons Learned**

The most critical role in the CAC programme is played by the facilitating organisations – NGOs and CBOs. They are the link between the people (demand side) and the government (supply side) that keeps constructive engagement in place. They are the catalysts for positive change. It will be a challenge to find a large number of CSOs that possess the necessary capacity and integrity to undertake the CAC programme on a large scale. A programme to build sustainability, efficiency and effectiveness of CSOs will be needed. CSO capacity will need to be built and enhanced in the following areas:

- ◆ Technical skills as government programmes keep changing
- ◆ Understand governance structures and the role of PRIs in service delivery
- ◆ Understand the delivery process of national welfare programmes (budgets, entitlements, roles and responsibilities)
- ◆ Understanding transparency and accountability in service delivery and strategies to build them in nationally sponsored schemes like NREGS and SSA
- ◆ Strengthen participation platforms, both formal and informal, such as the *gram sabhas*, *ward sabhas*, vigilance and monitoring committees, school development committees, health and sanitation committees, etc.
- ◆ Using social accountability tools such as social audits, public hearings, etc.

- ◆ Reinvigorate grievance redressal systems and ultimately to access entitlements.
- ◆ Creating a powerful yet practical IEC tool to promote awareness and empowerment
- ◆ Use the Right to Information Act to generate baseline data, access budget and expenditure data, track them at all levels, and access documents like muster rolls, bills, and vouchers
- ◆ Leverage information and communication tools to monitor and evaluate (e.g., data tracking available at [www.nrega.nic.in](http://www.nrega.nic.in) built on real time MIS)
- ◆ Adopt well defined measurable indicators based on the deliverables (a commonly agreed log frame with baseline measures)
- ◆ Achieve financial stability to support the efforts in a defined area

Demand side management requires citizens to go beyond awareness raising to action. This requires that people are energised to demand their rights and entitlements on their own and continuously engage with the system. This needs a shift from awareness tools and strategies to empowerment tools and training. They need to be made aware of the entire supply process, of their rights as citizens, and about transparency and accountability tools to engage formally with the system. The strategies to overcome the political, social, and systemic challenges need to be explored on site as it differs from place to place.

Supply side engagement needs building a critical mass of data and experiences, and creating an advocacy tool to constructively engage the system for policy change. The anecdotal evidence presented by the pilot CAC programme is not compelling enough to influence policy makers to make systemic changes. For a given geographical area, a critical mass of data and experience is necessary for meaningful engagement with government authorities for policy and programme change. A compelling case can only be made with a large numbers of cases. This critical mass of data and experience—which is collected, recorded and verified by people through the social audits and public hearings—is likely to yield substantial benefits.

This effort to build an evidence base can start at the Gram Panchayat level and then be aggregated to become an advocacy tool at the district level. When district level data and experience is aggregated, a forceful advocacy tool to engage with the state government emerges. Therefore it becomes necessary at all these levels to have people, CSOs, CBOs, partner organisations and federations facilitate building this advocacy tool and to engage with the government at all levels as a coalition of interest groups to achieve corruption free services.

The existing coalitions of state and national networks should be used to promote the advocacy tool with state and national governments. The advocacy tool should be

shared extensively through the media to create public awareness and to build pressure for policy change. The coordination at this level, and technical and financial support to sustain the networks, rests with PAC and PTF, a tall order, but realistically attainable.

Finally, a scaled-up CAC programme will need to: (i) have realistic goals and objectives, (ii) build on and learn from Phase 1 structures and results, (iii) create and sustain further changes in citizen groups, NGOs, and service providers, (iv) formulate and implement strategies and actions to achieve the planned objectives, (v) empower citizens, develop NGO capacity, and Influence service providers, (vi) strengthen and sustain the processes, (vii) replicate and mainstream best practices, and (viii) influence policies and programmes at higher levels.

## Types and Extent of Corruption in Project Areas

This annex lists the findings on the main types of corruption in the MGNREGS and PDS identified by the NGOs during surveys and field work they carried out in their project areas. The findings for the two schemes are presented separately. The main corrupt practices identified by CSO partners in MGNREGS are:

- ◆ Exclusion of eligible families from MGNREGS; job cards denied
- ◆ Job card holders not given the stipulated days of employment
- ◆ Workers not given the stipulated wages and delay in payment of wages
- ◆ Non-payment of guaranteed allowances for the days of unemployment
- ◆ Non-payment of other benefits such as travel reimbursement, accident/health insurance, compensation for using own tools, implements, etc.
- ◆ Absence of worksite facilities such as work sheds, drinking water, child care, etc.

These practices reflect elements of corruption and poor governance by the service providers. Some of these practices, identified as corruption, may however be due to poor governance. For example, it is corruption if the eligible families were excluded for non-payment of bribes. It is poor governance if the eligible families were excluded due to inadequacy of the system – no information about the excluded families while issuing the job cards, no decision to include them again and issue new cards, non-responsiveness of the officials to include them, etc.

In the case of payment of wages, the elements of corruption and poor governance also need to be separated. Not paying the stipulated wages and accounting only the actual wages paid is not corruption (because nobody is taking the money personally); it might be due to the inadequacy of the system. However, it is corruption if accounted

wages are higher than the actual wages paid, because the difference is pocketed by somebody. In the first case, delay in payment may be due to corruption if prompt payment is made to those who paid bribes and due to poor system if the delayed payment is common, irrespective of the payment of bribes.

Payment of other benefits and provision of facilities to the participants of MGNREGS are influenced by inefficiency and /or corrupt practices. If these entitlements are not provided and not accounted, there is no corruption, as the funds are not diverted. However, it is corruption if the entitlements are not given funds, and instead are diverted for personal gain. The following listing of corrupt practices reported by the CSO partners should be read with the above caveats in mind.

### **Types of Corruption Found in the MGNREGS**

#### **Exclusion of eligible families (no job cards)**

ADHAR (Bolangir, Odisha)

- ◆ 1 percent of families have more than one job card.
- ◆ 88 percent of applicants received job cards within 15-30 days of registration and 4 percent received cards after 2-3 months.
- ◆ 87 percent of cards filled by the officials after work or payment.
- ◆ 10 percent of eligible families do not know about the application process.
- ◆ 28 percent of cards are entered in front of the card holders and 26 percent of cards are taken by officials with them and returned after filling the application.

PREM (Sample survey - 160 selected villages in Naugada Block, Gajapathi District, Orissa)

- ◆ 21 percent (170 families) do not have MGNREGS cards

RLEK (26 Villages in Uttaranchal)

- ◆ 61 percent of respondents said job cards were issued without paying a large bribe.

Sambandh (Jashipur Block, Mayurbhanj District, Orissa)

- ◆ 97 percent of families have job cards.
- ◆ 22 percent of families paid bribes to get job cards.

Suraksha (Gajapathi District, Orissa)

- ◆ Delays, often more than three months, in receiving job cards

VICALP (49 Villages of 7 Gram Panchayats, Mohana block, Gajapathi District, Odisha)

- ◆ 249 respondents said that they received their job cards after 15 days.
- ◆ 1532 respondents said that they received their job cards after one month.
- ◆ 593 respondents said that they paid money for the photograph to be pasted on the job card and 1188 respondents said they did not.
- ◆ 247 respondents said that the PRI officials asked for money for registration.
- ◆ 785 respondents said that the Gram Rozgar Sahayak (GRS) asked for money
- ◆ 125 respondents said that the executive officers asked for money.
- ◆ Out of the 1781 respondents, 748 respondents paid money for registration and 1033 respondents did not pay.
- ◆ 593 respondents paid money to GP members
- ◆ 154 respondents paid money to GRS for job cards.
- ◆ Exclusion of eligible families due to systemic weakness, as well as corruption, is reported.

**Employment – job card holders not given the stipulated 100 days of employment per year**

**ADHAR**

- ◆ 23 percent of beneficiaries demanded jobs whenever they needed work.
- ◆ 21 percent went to the GP member or officials asking for work.
- ◆ 37 percent of beneficiaries did not demand work but got involved when work started and filed the form later.
- ◆ 9 percent of beneficiaries knew about the guaranteed days of employment.
- ◆ 16 percent of beneficiaries' demands for jobs were refused.
- ◆ 47 percent of applicants got receipts for their demand for jobs.
- ◆ 24 percent of applicants received jobs immediately after application.

**NJMO**

- ◆ Only 3 percent of the 10,000 families surveyed received the stipulated 100 days of employment in MGNREGS.

**PREM (588 families)**

- ◆ 81 percent of job card holders applied for employment in MGNREGS.
- ◆ 26 percent of them received acknowledgement of their demand for employment.

- ◆ 28 percent of them received employment.
- ◆ On average they received 31 days of employment in MGNREGS compared to the stipulated 100 days.

#### RLEK

- ◆ 39 percent of respondents were allotted work within 15 days of their demand for jobs.

#### Sambandh

- ◆ 9 percent of respondents demanded jobs in MGNREGS.
- ◆ 97 percent of respondents received acknowledgement of non-provision of work.
- ◆ 1 percent of job card holders received the minimum stipulated 100 days of work.
- ◆ 38 percent received work within a 5 km radius of their village.

#### Suraksha

- ◆ None of the job card holders received the stipulated 100 days of employment.
- ◆ 90 percent of the job card holders did not know the guaranteed days of employment.

#### VICALP (1781 respondents)

- ◆ All 1781 respondents went to the Gram Panchayat to demand jobs.
- ◆ 1532 respondents reported that they did not know the guaranteed days of employment and 249 said they knew.
- ◆ 939 respondents reported that the GP officials did not accept their demand for jobs; 249 said GP officials accepted; and 593 reported that GP officials asked them to come back later with their demands.
- ◆ 249 respondents reported that the GP officials received group application for jobs; 1532 respondents said they did not.
- ◆ All the respondents reported that they did not receive a receipt after submitting their applications demanding jobs.
- ◆ 249 respondents reported that they received work within 15 days after demanding work.
- ◆ 939 respondents reported getting jobs within one month
- ◆ 593 respondents reported getting jobs after more than one month.
- ◆ In almost all cases the beneficiaries were not receiving the stipulated 100 days of work.

- ♦ The reason for the workers not receiving the full stipulated days of employment seems mostly due to weakness of the system, in planning and implementing activities, and mobilising and utilising the related funds for MGNREGS activities by the local authorities.

### **Wages – Workers not given the stipulated wages**

#### **ADHAR**

- ♦ 23 percent of the muster roll was filled at the worksite and the rest at the GP office.
- ♦ 35 percent of laborers received wages after 15 days of work.
- ♦ 4 percent of beneficiaries received extra wages for working more than 5 km from home.
- ♦ 9 percent of beneficiaries received wages in cash, 54 percent received wages by check, and 37 percent received through A/C deposit.
- ♦ 12 percent were sure about the accuracy of their muster roll.
- ♦ 4 percent were paid less than the minimum wage and 31 percent had no idea what the minimum wage was.
- ♦ 16 percent of beneficiaries originally signed the muster roll after wage payment, 64 percent signed before payment, and 19 percent signed a blank muster roll.

#### **NJMO**

- ♦ Only about 70 percent of workers received the stipulated wages.

#### **PREM**

- ♦ 164 job card holders received work under NREGS.
- ♦ 36 families (22 percent) said they received their wages within one month.
- ♦ 46 families (26 percent) said they received their wages within 2 months
- ♦ 86 families (52 percent) said they received their wages within 3 months.

#### **RLEK**

- ♦ 54 percent of respondents were not paid regularly.

#### **Sambandh**

- ♦ 71 percent of respondents reported males and females receiving equal wages.
- ♦ 52 percent of respondents reported that they were not aware of the stipulated wage rates for different kinds of work.



- ◆ Half the respondents reported that the muster roll entries were not done at the worksites or on a daily basis.
- ◆ 60 percent of respondents reported that payment of wages was not on time.

#### Suraksha

- ◆ Except for rare cases of being paid minimum wages, the majority of workers are receiving wages far below the stipulated minimum wage.
- ◆ In most of the cases, the wages are delayed for more than 3 months even after completion of the work.
- ◆ The workers do not know the total budgetary allocations and measurements of the work they are doing.
- ◆ A common allegation of the workers is that the Block Level Monitor (the Engineer) is taking the measurements either alone or along with the Gram Rozgar Sahayak (GRS) and Panchayat Executive Officer (PEO). They are forgetting to include the laborers during the measurement period.
- ◆ In most cases, the estimated amount paid for the work varies significantly from the actual expenses occurred.
- ◆ In one case at Adanguda of G.P. Jhami, instead of employing manual labor for excavation of the pond, the Gram Sathi had employed an earth excavating machine, but the job cards of the workers reflected that each of them had worked for 52 days.
- ◆ No job cards or muster rolls are being entered at the site of work. The filing of documents is being done long after completion of the work.
- ◆ At Sourakulunda village of Tarongoda, G.P. PEO Mr. Padmanava Pattanaik asked for bribes from the workers at the village road site allegedly to cover their expenses.

#### VICALP

- ◆ 1097 (out of the total 1781) respondents received payment of wages through cash, 593 received payments through checks, and 91 were paid through money transfers.
- ◆ 1188 respondents were sure that the money had reached their accounts, but 593 were not sure.
- ◆ 441 respondents reported that officials read muster rolls in front of them before payment of wages and 749 respondents reported reading of muster rolls after payments.

- ◆ 47 respondents reported that GP officials shared details of the measurement of works and payment of wages; 1143 respondents reported that the officials did not share the measurements and estimation of payments.
- ◆ 296 respondents said the GP office makes the payments, 640 said through post office, and 845 respondents said through the bank.
- ◆ 593 respondents said that they get compensation for late payments.
- ◆ 1188 respondents said they did not get compensation for late payments.
- ◆ One respondent still has yet to receive his payments while 1780 respondents have received their payments.
- ◆ 986 respondents said that they received less than 70 rupees on any day and 202 said no.
- ◆ 1587 said that they signed the muster roll before payment and 194 said they do so when GP officials ask.
- ◆ 1183 respondents said that nobody without work has received money.
- ◆ 1781 respondents said that no wages have been paid in the name of a dead person.

#### **Unemployment allowances – job card holders not given the guaranteed unemployment allowances**

##### **ADHAR**

- ◆ 9 percent of beneficiaries knew about the guaranteed unemployment allowance.

##### **RLEK**

- ◆ Unemployment allowance not paid at all.

##### **Sambandh**

- ◆ None of the job card holders received unemployment allowance in case of no work.

##### **Suraksha**

- ◆ None of the workers in the whole block (Gumma) knew about unemployment allowance nor did they receive any such allowance.

##### **VICALP**

- ◆ Out of the 1781 respondents, 42 percent (746) reported that they received the allowance for unemployment days and the remaining 58 percent (1034) reported that they did not.

- ◆ Of the NGOs reporting on unemployment allowances, for those who demanded work but did not get it, only VICALP reported that 42 percent of the workers received unemployment allowance.
- ◆ It is not known how many demanded unemployment allowance. It may be that the remaining 58 percent did not receive unemployment allowance because they did not demand it.
- ◆ It is surprising that in the neighboring block of Gumma (project area of Suraksha), none of the job card holders received unemployment allowance. The reason for this variation within Gajapathi district needs to be researched.

**Other benefits - workers not given other stipulated allowances (travel allowances, compensation for using own tools, accident insurance, etc.)**

**ADHAR**

- ◆ Only 4 percent of beneficiaries received extra wages and/or allowances for working more than 5 km away from their villages.

**PREM**

- ◆ 95 percent of the respondent families said they did not have worksite facilities during MGNREGS work.

**VICALP**

- ◆ Of the 1781 respondents, 1092 respondents reported receiving MGNREGS work in their own village, whereas the remaining 689 respondents received work in a nearby village.

**Not providing the prescribed facilities at worksites**

**ADHAR**

- ◆ Drinking water is available in 64 percent of worksites, shade is available in 11 percent, and first aid is available in only 4 percent.

**RLEK**

- ◆ Only 32 percent of respondents worked on sites with such facilities.

**Sambandh**

- ◆ 53 percent of respondents stated availability of worksite facilities; and the remaining 47 percent reported provision of no such facilities.

**Suraksha**

- ◆ Contingency funds for the workers have not been used at the majority of worksites. In most of the cases, the workers do not receive basic entitlements

such as common rest sheds, crèche centres, clean and safe drinking water, first aid, rent for the instruments used during the construction activities at the worksite, etc.

#### VICALP

- ◆ About 60 percent of the workers reported of none of the facilities were provided at worksites.
- ◆ About 4 percent reported provision of drinking water facilities.
- ◆ About 2 percent reported provision of first aid facilities.

#### **Types of Corruption Found in the PDS**

The types and extent of corruption in PDS reported by the NGOs at the start of Phase I of the projects are summarised below. Citizens' perception of corruption in PDS is not clear in some cases. For example, giving PDS entitlements to ineligible families (including more than one PDS card to the same family) is not considered a major crime by people. Another issue is to distinguish between supply based on demand and non-supply because of the lack of demand. In many cases the rural population was not demanding or buying their PDS entitlements because of lack of demand. Lack of demand is also due to lack of purchasing power and a lack of interest in buying the available items mainly because of seasonal availability of items from other sources and unsatisfactory quality of the items.

#### **Eligible families not given BPL cards**

##### ADHAR:

- ◆ 80 percent of the eligible beneficiaries are accessing PDS.
- ◆ 95 percent of the ration cards are made available to beneficiaries and their families during migration.

##### CfAR:

- ◆ 1000 respondents who did not have ration cards applied for BPL ration cards.
- ◆ 371 have been issued BPL ration cards.

##### PARASPARA:

- ◆ 2250 eligible families are excluded from PDS system in the project area.

##### SVYM:

- ◆ All eligible beneficiaries are getting rations in 95 percent of the PDS shops.

#### **PDS rations not supplied in prescribed quality and quantity**

##### ADHAR:

- ◆ 55 percent card holders received less than 25 kg of rice.

- ◆ 53 percent card holders received only 1.5 kg of sugar per month.
- ◆ 79 percent BPL card holders received only 3 liters of kerosene.

NJMO:

- ◆ 50 percent of PDS shops are not supplying all the items continuously.

PREM:

- ◆ During baseline study noone was receiving kerosene oil.
- ◆ Now they are receiving it regularly.
- ◆ Quality issues in PDS items like rice still persist.
- ◆ Now all the BPL card holders receive PDS entitlement every month, in the correct quantity, in all the GPs.

SVYM:

- ◆ 99 percent of the shops are issuing all items (rice, wheat, ragi and kerosene).
- ◆ 65 percent of the shops are issuing the prescribed quantity of rations.

YSD

- ◆ BPL per card holders are receiving 3-5 kg rice less than prescribed.
- ◆ Little awareness about PDS entitlements.
- ◆ Low quality of rationed items.

### **Overpricing of rations and unjustified extra charges**

ADHAR:

- ◆ No extra charges are paid by BPL beneficiaries except for kerosene.
- ◆ 76 percent APL card holders paid excessive prices for wheat and kerosene.

### **PDS shops not open the required hours**

NJMO:

- ◆ 90 percent of PDS shops are not open more than 2 days.

SVYM:

- ◆ 60 percent of the shops adhere to the prescribed hours.

YSD:

- ◆ Shops are open only 5-8 pm, and then only irregularly.

### **PDS shops not displaying the required information**

SVYM:

- ◆ Only 61 percent of the shops display Section 4 boards.

- ◆ 33 percent of the shops display ration stock levels.

YSD:

- ◆ None of the shop owners disclosed information on the display boards.

### **No complaint mechanisms**

ADHAR:

- ◆ 97 percent of PDS card holders have not seen any meeting of the shop level monitoring committee.

SVYM:

- ◆ 20 percent of the shops have functioning Vigilance Committees.
- ◆ 35 percent of the shops are maintained well.
- ◆ 47 percent of the shops have average maintenance.

YSD:

- ◆ Lack of knowledge of the vigilance monitoring committee members.
- ◆ No citizen monitoring of the PDS and water services
- ◆ No interaction between the public and PDS officials.

## Examples of Key Strategies Used by CSOs

### Strategy 1: Raise community awareness about entitlements and rights

**Adhar:** Promoted and strengthened peoples' institutions (such as the Dumiti Nibarana Manch), conducted awareness meetings in 48 villages (for daily laborers, BPL families, SHG members, village development committees and CBOs), and printed and distributed IEC material.

**Ayuskam:** Received support from SHGs and the Krushak Sakti Sangathan (KSS, a community farmers' organisation) and established an apex forum (Durnity Birodhi Manch) in every village as centres for disseminating information. A partner, Surakshya, developed IEC materials in the Kui language. This has helped people obtain information on development programmes and implementation procedures, and their rights and responsibilities. The SHGs are an active voice in various forums including the Palli Sabha. KSS has motivated people in five Panchayats.

**CfAR:** Strengthened existing committees such as the Daksha Samuha (Women's Forum) and organised 3 formal and 6 informal workshops on PDS, maternal health and RTI, as well as public hearings in 3 slum localities attended by 550 people (67 percent of the community).

**NJMO:** Built a cadre of local women (*Karyakartas*) to educate their peers on rights, entitlements, and the use of RTI. They have increased beneficiary knowledge as well as their capacity to undertake anti-corruption activities.

**Paraspara:** Organised a public hearing and 20 street plays, as well as a press meeting at which 5,000 handbills were distributed. The community is now fully capable of mass mobilisation, gathering evidence to back up its demands, and confronting government officials as needed.

**RLEK:** Despite the inaccessible hilly terrain, poor sanitary conditions and rough weather, 15 community mobilisation camps were organised in two development blocks. These covered distant hilltop villages that are not connected by roads. In

addition, six Jan Sunwai (public hearings) were organised with the media highlighting the issues raised.

**Sambandh:** Village meetings were conducted in 5 Gram Panchayats twice a month to increase people's awareness about MGNREGA and their entitlements. Rural Call Centre (RCC), the information centre helping to bridge the information gap, facilitated teaching about citizens' requirements related to MGNREGA and upgraded the findings of the social audit from the block for better understanding. The RCC facilitated 374 job card applications and 223 job card issues; 1567 people visited the RCC and 600 households were facilitated for IAY. The RCC conducted a blood drive and 48 units of blood were collected. Sixty transparency workers, mobilised at the village level, and a Social Watch Group at block level, also played a key role in awareness raising. IEC materials were published and distributed to communities through the RCC, SWGs and transparency workers. The travel media workshop and campaign also raised awareness.

**Suraksha:** Conducted Panchayat-level awareness campaigns and village-level sensitisation programmes, through posters, folk media, audio visual materials (in local languages), talk shows, meetings, workshops, public hearings and social audits.

**SVYM:** Conducted 20 street plays, 30 video showings, 20 wall paintings, and one mass meeting. Also broadcast programmes on radio and distributed IEC materials. As a result, 102 CBOs and 41 youth groups are now claiming their rightful entitlements.

**VICALP:** Undertook a mass orientation of the community in 12 Panchayats covering 1,031 male and female leaders of whom 826 are now actively involved in anti-corruption activities. It is estimated that about 70 percent of the people in the 200 villages covered are well-informed about their rights and entitlements.

**YSD:** Disseminated IEC materials (leaflets, posters, a handbook and a toolkit), and held three public hearings where government agency officials disclosed and disseminated service delivery norms and procedures (including for water, PDS and land records). These efforts covered more than 2,000 households.

## **Strategy 2: Help citizens make use of the RTI to have their grievances redressed**

**Adhar:** 60 youth were trained in RTI, and 140 applications were filed by community leaders, of which 45 received complete and satisfactory information.

**CfAR:** More than 35 RTI applications were filed.

**NJMO:** 100 RTI applications were filed, of which 20 cases are on appeal. RTI pamphlets have been produced and distributed to beneficiaries.

**RLEK:** Initially, RTI applications were filed with no clear understanding of the



process. Training camps were conducted exclusively on RTI applications and an RTI helpline set up. Since then, nearly 80 applications have been successfully filed and are being followed up.

**Suraksha:** The community has filed 23 RTI applications on various issues regarding MGNREGS implementation (targeting various corruption issues such as muster roll entries and misappropriations). Job card holders now decide whether to meet the authority in person or seek information through the RTI.

**SVYM:** Conducted weekly RTI clinics in the project area by strategically setting up temporary booths at places where the public usually gathers such as the village market. As a result, the number of RTI applications increased from 2 to 10 per month.

**VICALP:** 55 RTI applications were filed, of which 9 were later withdrawn because the problems were solved before any reply was received. The block grievance cell solved 10 cases, while 6 cases were solved after a reply was received. As a result of these applications, the government is under great pressure to carry out a MGNREGS evaluation in the 12 target Panchayats.

**YSD:** A citizens' handbook on RTI was prepared, and 161 applications filed. Six public service agencies were assisted in implementing proactive information disclosure about their organisations functions (as government departments are required to do under the RTI Act).

### **Strategy 3: Collective action to reinforce the other measures undertaken**

**Adhar:** The community demonstrated before 6 Gram Panchayats against reduced quantities and delays in the distribution of PDS rations, and lodged complaints before the District Collector against non-distribution in the PDS and delayed payment of wages under MGNREGS. A cluster-level peoples' organisation highlighted corruption issues in MGNREGS and PDS to the media and submitted a memorandum to the district administration.

**Ayaskam:** A public rally against corruption issues has generated confidence among beneficiaries. The community has realised that it does not have to tolerate the existing situation since it can be improved through concerted action. They expect to organise more such events in the future. The leadership that has emerged at the village level continuously raises issues at the panchayat level and is a vibrant presence at the block-level DBM forum.

**CfAR:** Efforts to build community capacity have been rewarded by strong community participation in public meetings. Recently, one slum community managed to get new bore wells and water tanks installed, along with the requisite electric connections.

**NJMO:** In 2010, NJMO members protested en masse in front of the Zilla Parishad

(district council) office and succeeded in recovering over Rs 8.5 million from MGNREGS in back wages.

**Paraspara:** The community is now very aware of the pervasive corruption in the PDS and participates actively in meetings and in the PDSMCs. There has been an increase in community awareness resulting in many enquires about the RTI.

**RLEK:** Community motivation has become a cornerstone of the project. The community is gearing up to deal independently with corruption issues. However, as most of the people are recently literate, it may take a little more time before the community is able to organise road shows and other events on its own, and to assert their rights and protest against corruption.

**Sambandh:** Podagram Panchayat had poor road connections and as a result transportation was very difficult and the rainy season was particularly difficult. Baletarash SHG Federation went to the panchayat and the block headquarters officer (BDO) and lobbied the panchayat for work. The demonstration in the panchayat and BDO resulted in the issuance of 131 job cards and road construction work was started.

In Baunsanali Gram Panchayat, 4 tribals were interested in MGNREGA work. In spite of repeated visits and expressing their interest, their request was not accepted and they did not receive job cards. Being agitated by the official attitude, nearly 200 people from 4 villages marched and made a massive demonstration. As a result of this joint effort, 200 job cards were issued to poor tribal families.

**SVYM:** Operating mainly in tribal areas, SVYM has initiated multi-stakeholder meetings where government officials interact directly with the people. Several pending issues have been resolved at these meetings. These successes, however modest, are a great motivation for the community.

**YSD:** Community groups and leaders support programme activities enthusiastically. **A coalition against corruption, an alliance of CSOs, has led a citizens' campaign in Berhampur since 2009. The coalition was initiated under the aegis of six local NGOs: YSD, Aruna, Jeevandhara, GPSS, Apex Guideline and Isara.**

#### **Strategy 4: Constructively engage with MGNREGS authorities and FPS owners to increase their responsiveness to citizen demands**

**Adhar:** Local government staff members were unclear about their responsibilities concerning RTI, MGNREGS and PDS. There was also a lack of coordination between the Gram Panchayat and Block officials. Adhar sensitised staff in Loisingha block and they are now responding to beneficiary demands for jobs and wage payments. Beneficiaries are also receiving their quota of food grains on time and in appropriate quantities and quality.

**Ayauskam:** Conducted public hearings and social audits in the presence of government officials, such as the Collector, sub-divisional police officers and the CDMO. As a result, cooperation of government field staff with all grassroots health officials is strengthening, and service delivery is improving.

**CfAR:** Although CfAR has tried to capacitate women for collective advocacy, they may still not be able to engage the authorities without CfAR's support. On the positive side, the Commissioner of Karnataka's Food and Civil Supplies Department now champions the community's cause and readily recognises CfAR's and the community's efforts. The latter have also interacted with lawyers associated with the Karnataka Legal Services Authority in challenging corruption at a local police station.

**NJMO:** It engaged in constructive advocacy with local authorities by pursuing specific cases with proper documentation, and following up each case. It ensured that the appropriate official attended to each case and the beneficiaries themselves did the follow-up.

**Paraspara:** It has consistently engaged with government officials, and also has good rapport with the media. As a result, Paraspara's and the community's relationship with government authorities has improved markedly. The latter was previously in denial about corruption in the PDS. Shop owners claimed they were not short-changing beneficiaries. Both now accept the truth and the need to improve matters. Paraspara wishes to further improve such interaction, especially with the food commissioner, food inspectors, and FPS owners. This is because government officials and FPS owners still show some hesitation in recognising the PDSMCs.

**RLEK:** It has successfully facilitated the Jan Sunwai (public hearing) in the presence of government officials at the block level. This brings the aggrieved community face to face with the government officials to seek immediate solutions to issues. At first, the community was disconcerted by the experience and the officials were not always available. Nevertheless, grievances were recorded by the Panchayat Development Officer, particularly anomalies in wage payments. Government officials are now gearing up to maintain proper records and regularise the functioning of MGNREGS. This has already been reflected when the Krushak Sakti Sangathana and the Jami O Jangal Mukti Andolan organised a number of road shows and forced the government to accept their demands.

**Sambandh:** It has effectively involved the media in the project area through a Travel Media Workshop and they have constructively involved Sarpanch, VLW, GRS and ward members by inviting them to this forum in which they participated. The grievances which were addressed in the forum were recorded and solved. In addition to this, in conducting interface meetings with different stake holders, governmental officials were also invited and participated actively.

**Suraksha:** Conducted an interface workshop with government officials, Gram Panchayat and village Vigilance Committee members, and PRI members. It also undertook a sensitisation programme for implementing officers on social audits and other transparency measures for MGNREGS. Public hearings were conducted at 6 villages of 2 Gram Panchayats to address issues of job card holders such as non-payment of wages and lack of work. Subsequently, officials are now displaying more information under MGNREGS and other government schemes. Therefore, conflicts between implementing officials and MGNREGS job-cardholders have been reduced.

**SVYM:** Multi-stakeholder interface meetings established a platform for the community to access government officials directly. The residents of Siddapura village in M.C.Tholalu Panchayat launched a self-motivated postcard campaign after SVYM's awareness drive. As a result, the Deputy Director (Food and Civil Supplies) issued a notice to the Tahsildar and the errant company to speed up the distribution of cards to beneficiaries in the village.

**VICALP:** Promoted regular dialogue, feedback and interaction between government departments and panchayat level social watch committees and PRI institutions. Government officials were invited by Ekta Abhiyan to interact directly with people through Panchayat level meetings and other events such as training and the MGNREGS evaluation. Social Watch volunteers are regularly involved in Panchayat meetings and they, along with other leaders, interact with the block office. In all, they organised 27 collective visits with the community to the Block office for filing RTI cases, making job demands and other community concerns.

**YSD:** Constructive engagement with public agencies was carried out by building rapport with public officials (reform champions). YSD helped train public officials on information disclosure and citizen monitors provided feedback on service delivery issues (corruption and lack of accountability) during a public hearing with government officials. Government officials now participate actively in meetings with the CAC and community groups and in training programmes, which constitutes commendable support to the community.

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2. *Public Services and the Urban Poor in Mumbai: A Report Card* (Suresh Balakrishnan, Sita Sekhar), 1995.
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4. *Bangalore Hospitals and the Urban Poor: A Report Card* (Suresh Balakrishnan, Anjana Iyer), 1998.
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6. *Elections in Bangalore Municipal Corporation: An Experiment to Stimulate Informed Choices* (S. Manjunath), 1998.
7. *Voices from the Capital: A Report Card on Public Service in Delhi* (Sita Sekhar, Suresh Balakrishnan), 1999.
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24. *Holding a Mirror to the New Lok Sabha* (Samuel Paul, M. Vivekananda), 2005.
25. *Karnataka's Citizens' Charters: A Preliminary Assessment* (Anuradha Rao), 2005.
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31. *Holding the State to Account: Lessons of Bangalore's Citizen Report Cards* (Samuel Paul), 2006.
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1. *Holding the State to Account: Citizen Monitoring in Action* (Samuel Paul), Books for Change: 2002.
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The Citizens Against Corruption (CAC) project on which this report is based is an innovative pilot project started in 2009 with support from the Department for International Development, UK through its global Governance and Transparency Fund. CAC is implemented in South Asia by a partnership of the Public Affairs Centre (PAC), Bangalore, India and the Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF) – a US-based international NGO committed to helping citizens fight corruption.

This report shows that there is hope in curbing corruption. It presents efforts and results achieved by 14 grassroots Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) spanning four diverse states in India (Odisha, Karnataka, Rajasthan and Uttarkhand) in helping citizens engage to produce positive results to reduce corruption and improve service delivery.

The real heroes in the stories presented in this report are the citizen volunteers and the progressive public officials who worked hard and selflessly to make a difference in the lives of real people living in remote and poor areas.