

Strengthening grassroots governance

While understanding that development must be community led and there is power in empowerment, the Good Rural Governance Program at Sehgal Foundation creates a culture of good governance at the grassroots by empowering citizens and village institutions. A two-pronged strategy for social justice includes Good Governance Now!, which empowers individuals; and Strengthening Village-Level Institutions, which works with local institutions to train and empower their members.

To sustain efforts to strengthen grassroots governance, Sehgal Foundation facilitates platforms to engage citizens and the government, and conducts legal literacy camps in collaboration with District Legal Services Authorities to expand the reach of governance programs. These camps have enabled access to justice to citizens through legal services authorities across India. Sehgal Foundation has come a long way in conducting these camps and the model of collaboration with the legal services authorities has impressed state-level institutions to collaborate more with NGOs in their community work. Sehgal Foundation exhibited this work at the Suraj Kund Crafts Mela in Faridabad and conducted various interface meetings and conclaves in an effort to make district Nuh a good governance district.

NGO-Legal Services Authorities collaborative model exhibited



The 32nd International Art and Craft Fair, set up in collaboration with the Haryana State Legal Services Authority (HALSA), under the guidance of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA), was held at the [Surajkund Crafts Mela](#) from February 2–18, 2018. More than

5,250 people from seven states in India visited the exhibit to learn about the rights and entitlements of various government programs.

The event was inaugurated by Honourable Justice Mr. Ajay Kumar Mittal (judge of Punjab and Haryana High Court and executive chairperson, HALSA) and visited by several officials who learned about the good governance initiative. Other legal luminaries who visited included Supreme Court of India Judge, Justice Sapre; High Court Judge, Punjab and Haryana high court, Justice Bindal; judges of NALSA, and several judicial officers and judges of 22 districts of Haryana.

Panchayat Sammelan, January 31, 2018



The Strengthening Village-Level Institutions initiative organized a *panchayat sammelan* (village councils conclave) for giving a platform to elected representatives of panchayats to interact with government officials to discuss, share, and suggest mechanisms for strengthening panchayati raj in Haryana. More than 90 people participated, including 65 panchayat representatives from Nuh and Gurugram district. Chief Guest, Mr. Anurag Rastogi, principal secretary to the Government of Haryana, gave a patient ear to the concerns of representatives of panchayati raj institutions. Along with Mr. Rastogi, Mr. R. K. Mehta (deputy director, Department of Development and Panchayat, Haryana), Mr. D. R. Mahipal (former director, Ministry of Rural Development), Mr. Jaiveer Singh Arya (additional deputy commissioner, Nuh), Mr. M. D. Asthana (retired director, Council for Social Development), and Mr. Hem Tiwari (senior manager, CSR and Sustainability, Maruti Suzuki India Ltd) also graced the occasion.

Elected representatives shared their successes and concerns in availing government programs and in subsequent implementations of the same. The highlight of the event was the open forum facilitated by the principal secretary. A key discussion point was handing over power of 29 line items listed in the eleventh schedule of the Constitution to the local bodies. Using the example of elementary education, panchayat representatives felt it was imperative for them to make decisions about schools in their villages. Mr. Rastogi suggested that the PRI members, along with Sehgal Foundation, prepare a memorandum for devolution to include three line items and submit this to the administration. This should also include effective mechanisms to ensure the same. The

administration also solicited support from the elected representatives to make villages in Haryana polythene free.

Government Citizenry Dialogue, February 7, 2018



A citizen-government departments' dialogue organized on February 7, 2018, in Tauru block of Nuh district, Haryana, provided a platform for citizens to interact with officers and functionaries of various government departments including Agriculture, Integrated Child Development Services, District Food

and Supply Controller's office, women police stations, and so on. More than 150 participants, including citizens and government officials, expressed opinions, concerns pertaining to improved, and effective local governance.

Vikas Sammelan, February 16, 2018



Vikas Sammelan (development conclave) drew a packed house as community members in Alwar joined the interface meeting with representatives from various government departments, including Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, and Veterinary Services.

The Strengthening Village-Level Institutions team at Sehgal Foundation organized the event to bring institutional stakeholders together and provide them with a platform to share their experiences. More than 150 *sangathan* (collective) members participated in the event. Laxmi, the star performer at the digital literacy center in Alwar, was felicitated during the event. Mr. Lokesh Kumar Meena (Rajasthan Administrative Service) assistant CEO, Zila Parishad, graced the occasion as chief guest. Mr. Dilip Sharma, assistant director, Agriculture Extension Program, and Mr. Vinod Bhan, Agriculture Research Department, also shared information on various government schemes related to agriculture.