Develop Villages to Develop India

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SEHGAL FOUNDATION

Situation Analysis Report
RESEARCH, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Contents

1. Introduction

India is a country of villages; more than 68 percent of the population live in rural villages (Census 2011). Consequently, the development of the nation lies in the development of villages. The term "rural development" is a broad concept and depends on many components. In general, rural communities remain apart from any meaningful development because of gaps in policy implementation, and they lack access to basic needs such as water, healthcare, food, and education (Kamba 2009).[i] Access to information is an important and fundamental component of rural development that has gained attention in recent decades. Lack of information is a primary reason for socioeconomic deprivation that leads to exploitation of the underprivileged (Valdman 2008).[ii] Widespread ignorance of rights and entitlements is spread across a large percentage of the population in India (Planning Commission).[iii] The Government of India has introduced a large number of flagship programs such as TPDS, ICDS, MDM for the overall development of rural villagers. These are well structured, but implementation of the programs on the ground suffers due to the lack of awareness about the provisions of the programs (Pahwa 2017).[iv] Generating awareness about government programs among beneficiaries, their entitlements, and rights is a means to create accountability in relevant government officials and village panchayats.

In the rural context, young people play an integrated and essential role in the development process. Digital literacy and life skills education can serve as important tools to create awareness among youth on various government schemes and impart the skills to access them. Bringing transparency and accountability to effective service delivery is another major challenge in rural governance, and digital education is important to overcome these problems.

Another area of village development is access to clean water, which is the biggest challenge in India. The absence of safe drinking water makes life critical for survival (JMPR, 2017).[v] The absence of clean water impacts health, food security, and the livelihoods of families. Estimates show that 63.4 million people are living without access to clean water (State of the world's water 2017). Access to water is one of the UN's sustainable development goals. SDG 6 has committed to universal access to safe drinking water by the year 2030.

Within the developed state of Haryana, Nuh is a district declared as the most "backward" by Niti Ayog.[vi] The reasons for this include poor health, lack of infrastructure, poor literacy, and severe water scarcity. Understanding the needs of this region, S M Sehgal Foundation (Sehgal Foundation), a Gurugram-based NGO that addresses the critical issues of water security, food security, and good rural governance has undertaken a project known as "Develop Villages to Develop India" in collaboration with Gartner India to bring positive changes in the lives of rural communities.

2. About the Project: Develop Villages to Develop India

The project emphasizes building capacities of rural communities to empower rural people to lead their own development. The project adopts an integrated approach, focusing on aspects crucial to the well-being of rural lives including the village panchayat and community members to improve the delivery of public services, rural education, and health. The project has three major components including the village leadership schools, which empower citizens by carrying out participatory training sessions on government programs, entitlements, and their rights. Another component is life skills education (LSE) and digital literacy (DL) training which focuses on rural youth. The course provides basic life skills to enhance self-confidence,

decision-making, and leadership abilities. The course also provides knowledge on governance to improve their understanding of the functioning of government programs and institutions. The project also focuses on women by easing their access to water with the construction of storage tanks. The geographical scope of the project is two villages, Rangala and Khori Khurd in Tauru block of the district Nuh.

Project Components
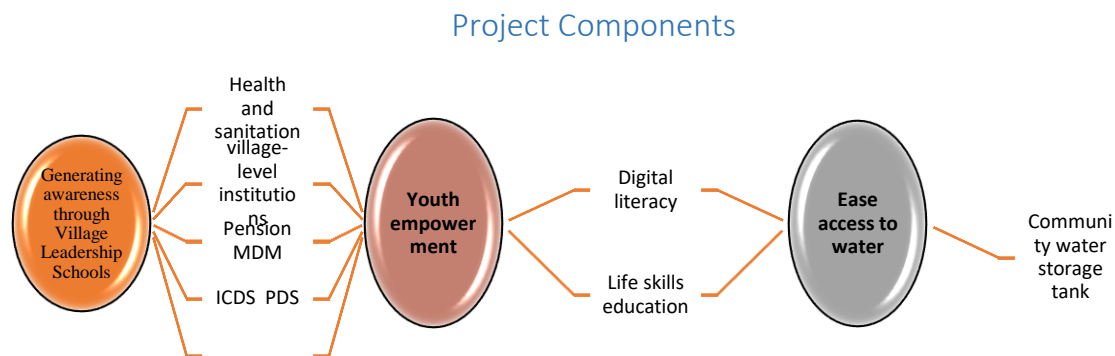
3. Objectives

The present study aims to understand the situation, especially before program implementation, within the defined parameters of the program components. The specific objectives of the study:

1. Assess the awareness level of the selected community workers in regard to food security and social security schemes and health and hygiene.

2. Measure the awareness level of selected course participants about the village-level institutions, welfare schemes, knowledge about common diseases, and digital knowledge.

3. Understand the implementation status of flagship programs including rights and entitlements of eligible villagers.

4. Map the existing water availability situation and the extent of the problem faced by villagers in accessing water.

Theory of Change: Develop Villages to Develop India
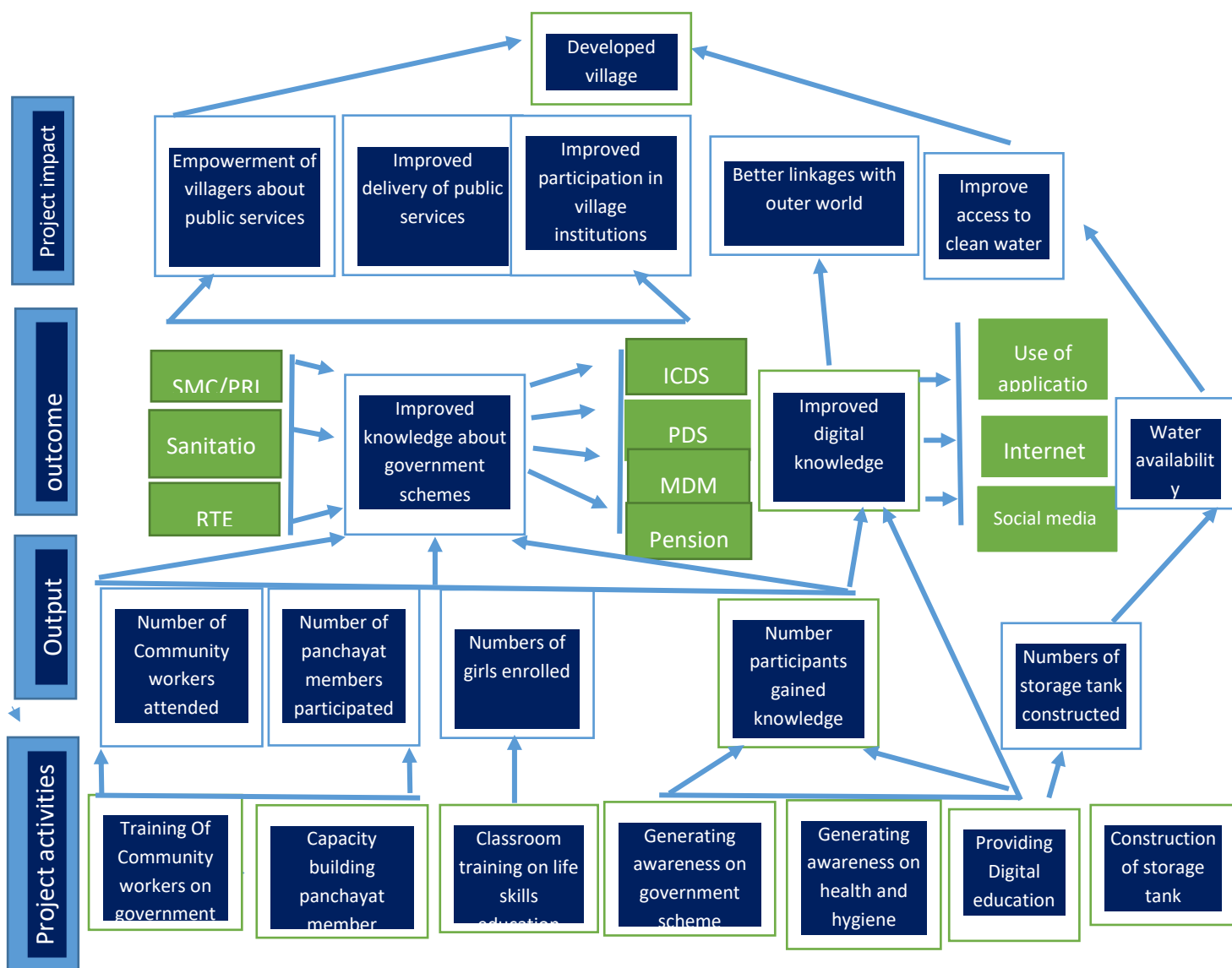
3. Methodology of the Study

The study follows a twofold approach including baseline and situation analysis.[1] To measure the findings, the study administered both quantitative and qualitative data from two sample villages.[2] The quantitative tools include the structured and coded interview schedule which was administered for selected community workers under the VLS and for course participants under LSE and DL. Toward a better understanding of the implementation of these schemes at the

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[1] Components like Village Leadership School (VLS), Life Skills Education (LSE) and Digital Literacy (DL) for measuring individual awareness were covered with a baseline approach. Implementation status of the government programs studied were covered under by a situation analysis approach. The existing water situation in the village was studied using both qualitative and quantitative tools.

[2] Data was collected at different time periods. Data collection for the governance components and the Life Skills Education and Digital Literacy trainings were undertaken during May and June 2018. The qualitative data collection for the water structure was done during the same period. Whereas, the household survey for water structure and Life Skills Education for Batch II was done during October 2018.

village level, observation was a part of the qualitative tools employed. The enumerator visited the site of Mid-Day Meal distribution and the anganwadi centers for two consecutive days within the stipulated timeframe of official opening days. They spent approximately three to four hours at the site to closely observe the functioning of these institutions. A transect walk along with discussion with villagers were part of a qualitative tools used to map the existing water sources and availability of water in the village and to understand the kinds of water problems faced by villagers for drinking and non-drinking purposes. At the same time, to understand the existing water available situation, a household survey was undertaken in the village.

The two villages, Rangala and Khori Khurd, were selected purposely as the program intervention was for two villages. All the selected community workers and course participants of LSE and DL were considered purposely for the study. A careful selection of participants for focus group discussion was done in the presence of eligible population (parents of the children belonging to aged birth to six for ICDS and parents of the schoolchildren in government and government-aided schools) for the Mid-Day Meal. Likewise, for pension, the focus was on the inclusion in the discussion of elderly people who are entitled to pension. The sample size against each component is noted in the table below.[3]

4. Status of Local Governance

The Government of India (GOI) introduced several key programs to fight against poverty, hunger, and malnutrition. To combat hunger and malnutrition, the GOI has introduced Mid-Day Meal (MDM) in school and Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) to provide a supplementary diet to children and pregnant and lactating women and to provide subsidized grain for those living below poverty line through the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS). Toward ensuring social security of the underprivileged community like the elderly, disabled people, and widows, the government provides a minimal amount as a pension under the social security scheme. However, earlier studies established that there are gaps in the implementation of the program at the ground level, and beneficiaries do not receive the benefits (Pahwa 2017). To overcome this problem, Sehgal Foundation in collaboration with Gartner

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[3]

Components	Qualitative	Quantitative	Tools		Sample size/number
Community workers (VLS)		✓	1.	Structure coded interview schedule	54
Implementation status of the government schemes	✓		1.	Focus group discussion	8
Digital literacy and Life Skills Education		✓	1.	Structure coded interview schedule	Batch 1-30 Batch 11- 30
Water Intervention (construction of storage tank)	✓	✓	1.	Transect walk	1
			2.	Focus group discussion	4
			3.	Structure coded interview schedule	183

India, initiated a program to generate awareness among the community for accessing their rightful benefits.

The organization is taking initiatives to make the institutional process more effective with the active participation of people. A group of volunteers called community workers are imparted knowledge about the government schemes through village leadership schools. These volunteers share the gained knowledge with fellow villagers and help them in accessing their entitlements, thus help to improve the local governance.
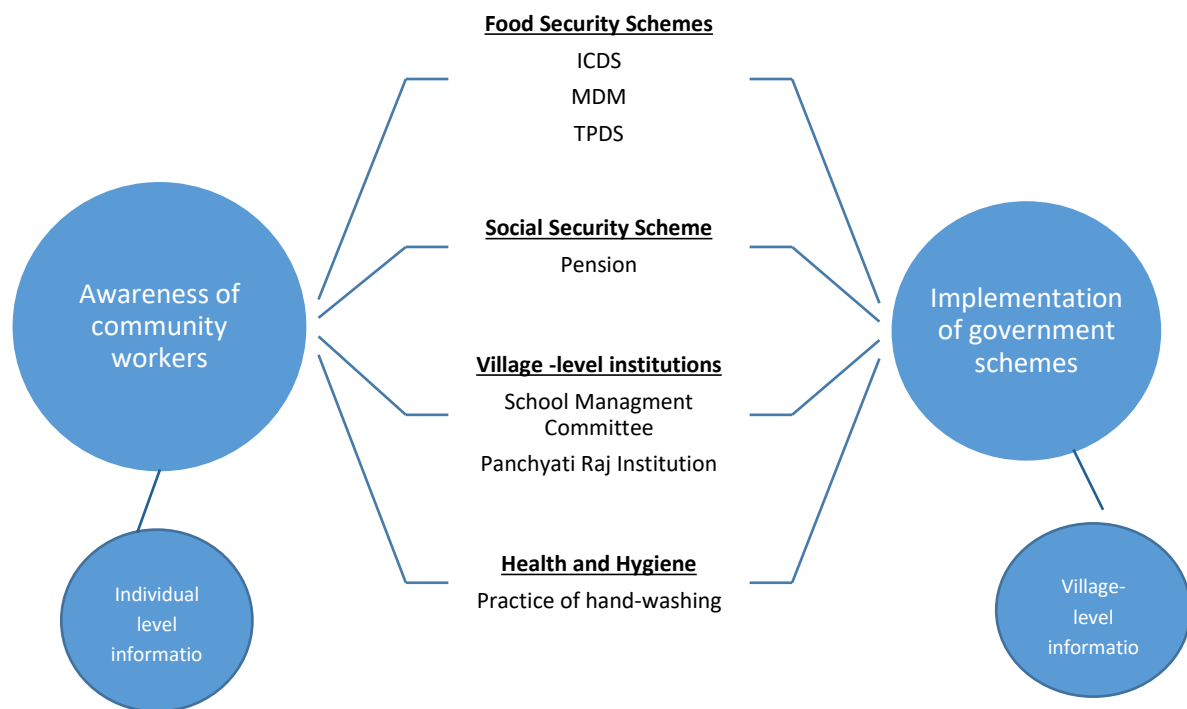
4.1 Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

Integrated Child Development Services is one of the world's largest and unique programs for early childhood development (Sachdeva & Dasgupta 2001).[vii] The scheme provides a package of six services that are most important for early childhood care: supplementary nutrition program (SNP), immunization, health checkups, referral services, play school for small children, and health education. Under this section, the awareness level of community workers and current implementation status of the scheme at village level was explored.

4.1.1 Awareness Level of Community Workers about the Scheme

To determine the impact of any program, mobilization and awareness generation play a very important role. The project identifies community workers and trains them about the provisions under the scheme, which is expected to improve the delivery system at the village level. The findings of the study established that the existence of the program is well recognized by all community workers. But when it came to the level of beneficiary awareness, the responses for lactating mothers were comparatively lower than

Fig 1. Knowledge about beneficiaries of ICDS (percent)

children below six years and pregnant women. It is the general perception of villagers that anganwadi centers (AWC) are for children and pregnant women. Therefore, many did not recognize that lactating mothers could also be beneficiaries of the program. The AWC provides a package of six services; and the awareness level of community workers was highest for immunization (98 percent), followed by supplementary nutrition (85percent), health checkups (35percent), play school (20 percent), generating awareness on health and nutrition education (17percent), and referral services (7 percent). The high awareness level for immunization and the supplementary nutrition program is well supported by the nature of the program which has a visible impact on the health condition of pregnant women and children.
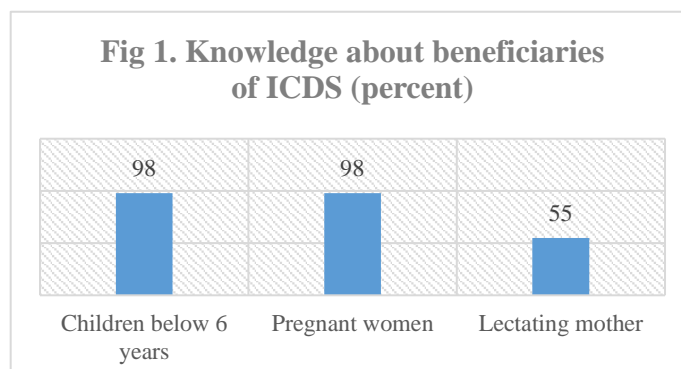
A population survey and monitoring the growth of small children are two important responsibilities of anganwadi workers and approximately 90 percent of the respondents knew about it. At the same time, the work of anganwadi helpers (AWH) was well recognized by community workers, which includes cleaning of AWC (96 percent), cooking and distribution of food (94 percent), and bringing small children to AWC (94 percent). As per the guidelines under the SNP, a variety of food is decided by the government to be distributed in the AWC for the better health of children and pregnant and expecting women, and 68 percent of the community workers were aware of it. In total, 52 percent of respondents said they visit the center intermittently to see the work being done.

4.1.2 Implementation Status of the Scheme

The ICDS works through the establishment of AWCs at the grassroots level. In the studied villages, three AWCs found including two in the village Rangala and one in Khori Khurd. According to Census 2011, the village Rangala population is 1,920; and of them, more than 330 are below age six. Therefore, to cater to a high number of children, two AWCs were established in village Rangala. One anganwadi is at Ambedkar Colony and another is at Menehar Mohalla; whereas in Khori Khurd, one AWC is established. The functionality status of these three centers is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Functionality Status of AWC

	Rangala- 1	Rangala-2	Khori-Khurd
Regularity in coming to AWC AWW	Regular	Regular	Regular
Regularity in coming to AWC AWH	Regular	Regular	Regular
Distribution of supplementary nutrition for children (3-6 years)	Not regular	Not regular	----------
Playschool for children (3-6 years)	Nonfunctional	Nonfunctional	Nonfunctional
Immunization of small children including pregnant and lactating women	Regular	Not regular	Regular

The study confirmed that the anganwadi centers are open regularly in both villages. Even though the AWW and AWH are regularly at the center, the distribution of supplementary nutrition is not regular in any of the centers. Further inquiries in this regard revealed that the irregular supply of ration by the panchayat restrict the AWW from cooking the food regularly for children. Beneficiaries of Take Home Ration[4] (THR), especially the pregnant and lactating women, do not come to the center to avail their benefits. According to these women, going to the centers to receive a meager amount of food is a simple waste of time for them. The play school component is completely nonfunctional in all the centers. As per the parents of Ambedkar colony of village Rangala, the AWCs only provide cooked food to children. Again, parents of this center said that the location of AWC was not very conducive to sending their children to the center. It was observed that the center was full of dust and pollution due to the proximity of factories. Immunizations are regularly undertaken in all the AWCs. However, the immunization program in Ambedkar Colony was operating from the home of the AWW as villagers avoid coming to the center due to heavy dust, as informed by AWW and villagers.

Enumerators visited all the AWCs for two consecutive days on the official opening days. However, in Khori Khurd, the center was closed for both days, and in Rangala it was open. These two centers remain open for four hours on both days from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The AWC of Ambedkar Colony was not well maintained; there was no proper kitchen in either center. It was operated from a room which was also used for the store. Though there are toilets in both centers, lack of water does not allow the children or the staff members to use them. It was also observed that, for the purpose of cooking, water was brought from home. The food menu was not followed, but in both centers cooked food was served.

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[4] Pregnant and lactating women are entitled for Take Home Ration under which packets of nutritious food are distributed to them locally called Panjri.
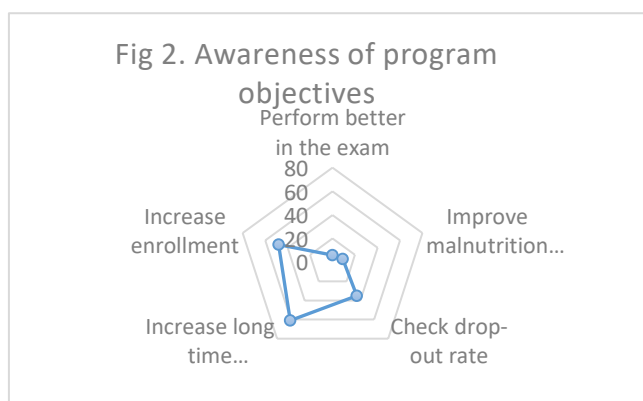
4.2 Mid-Day Meal Scheme

National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education, popularly known as the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, was started on August 15, 1995. Under the scheme, cooked food is provided to children ages six to fourteen in all government and government-aided schools.[viii] The food is prepared with a minimum content of 300 calories and 8 to 12 grams of protein and is served every day of school on not less than 200 days in a year. This section analyzes the awareness level of community workers about the scheme and the functionality status of the scheme at the village level.

4.2.1 Awareness Level of Community Workers about the Scheme

Mid-Day Meal is one of the popular and well-known programs in the villages. Findings established that all the selected community workers were aware of the existence of the scheme. However, when it came to the objective of the program, the recognition level was higher for increasing students' presence in the school, followed by increasing enrollment and checking the dropout rate. At the same time, 89 percent of the community workers knew the eligible age group for accessing the scheme (ages six for fourteen). As per the guideline, the food needs to be served for at least 200 days in a year, but only 11 percent of community workers knew that. As per the

Fig 2. Awareness of program objectives

provision, the cooked food in the school is to be tested by the competent authority before it is served to schoolchildren. The awareness level of community workers in this regard was 80 percent. Of those aware of it, 69 percent knew that it is to be tested either by the headmaster or by SMC members. As per the government guideline, the food menu should be displayed in the school so that parents and children know about the menu of the day, and 64 percent of the community workers knew this particular provision. Of them, only 35 percent had visited the school to see quality, quantity, and regularity of food distribution under MDM.

4.2.2 Implementation Status of the Scheme

Increasing enrollment and attendance in government schools are the prime objectives of the introduction of mid-day meal. However, at the village level, approximately 65 to 70 percent of children belonging to the age group of six to fourteen years have enrolled and go to the school regularly. Both schools serve cooked food regularly as informed by the parents of the school children. However, regarding the display of menu in the schools, the awareness level of parents was 25 to 75 percent. Parents realized that the quality of food served in the school is good, and children have no complaints about the quality of food served in the school. There was no evidence of falling sick after consumption of MDM in either village.

The two days' observation revealed that in both schools, food was served regularly. There is no separate kitchen in schools, and food was prepared in the classroom. The food menu was

displayed in both schools. The behavior of the concerned authority during the distribution of food was appropriate.

Forty students from both schools were interviewed in person to learn about the functionality status of MDM in the past month. All of them said that food was served every day in the school in the past month. In regard to the quality of the food, all students said that the quality was good. Foods like *chawal, dal, dalia, roti, sabji, khir, polao, paratha,* and *puri* were served in the past month. All of them said that without their attendance, they do not get food at school.

4.3 Targeted Public Distribution System

The Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) identifies the poorest households and gives them a fixed entitlement of food grains at a specially subsidized price. The scheme targets three economic groups: above poverty line (APL) priority households (PH), below poverty line (BPL), and *antodaya anna yojana* (AAY) (those with no means of support).[ix] In this section, the awareness level of community workers was measured regarding the provisions mentioned under the scheme and functional status of the scheme at the village level was measured.

4.3.1 Awareness level of community workers

Awareness about entitlements is essential to access a citizen's rightful benefits every month. The Targeted Public Distribution System is one of the most popular programs in rural India. Selected community workers well recognized the existence of the program. The Government of India has considered certain criterion for the identification of beneficiaries for BPL and AAY groups. Community workers are well aware of daily wage laborers, followed by widow and women-headed households, landless people, and the physically handicapped as inclusion criteria for the TPDS. However, none of them were found to know the land criterion, as those who have less than two acres of land are entitled to the benefit of the program. Under the scheme, food rations including wheat, sugar, and dal are distributed to beneficiaries. During the survey, there was no supply of kerosene; mustard oil was distributed instead. Wheat is the main item,

Fig. 3. Beneficiaries identification Criteria

Criteria	Value
Widow and women headed…	65
Physically Handicapped	52
Daily wage labourer	89
Landless People	57

and it is included in all categories. The awareness level for wheat distribution was 100 percent followed by dal (69percent) and sugar (39percent). The awareness level regarding quantity and price of these items was found to be more negligible for the AAY group than the BPL group as shown in Table 2.
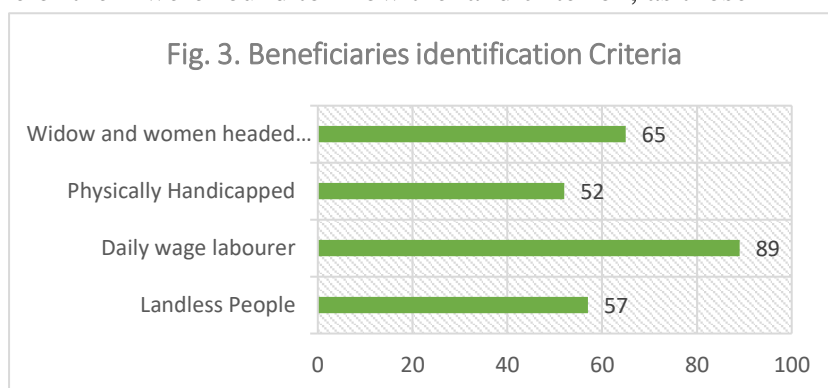
Table 2. Knowledge about the right quantity and price rate

Item	Frequency	APL/ PH		BPL		AAY	
		Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price	Quantity	Price
Wheat	100	88	81	83	81	37	72
Sugar	39	N/A	N/A	43	0	43	0
Dal	69	N/A	N/A	16	59	11	46

Only 24 percent of respondents had visited a ration distribution site to monitor the distribution. In particular, the purpose of the visit was to know whether or not all items are available. The average number of visits of these community workers was three times in the past six months.

4.3.2 Implementation Status of the Program

In Mewat, ration is distributed once a month, and the day is not fixed. With the general practice, the depot holder announces the day one day before distribution. One-day distribution seems not enough notice to cover all eligible beneficiaries. Those who are absent from the village during that time generally do not access their benefit. In village Khori Khurd, many villagers had not received their entitlements in the past six months. They received only wheat whereas dal and sugar was distributed in the past. Many said that they had received dal with an amount of RS 20/per kg three months before, and sugar almost eight months back. Mustard oil was distributed only once approximately three months back.

The discussion in a particular hamlet where the *Balmiki* community resides, which is included under the Scheduled Caste category of the government administrative list, raised the issue of corruption since eighteen to twenty households had paid INR 400 toward bringing their cards to the local authority. The incident took place approximately four to five months before the survey, but they hadn't received anything yet, and there is no *Adhar* linkage to it.

4.4 Social Security Scheme: Pension

Social security is a basic human right, as was recognized in the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The Right to Life, recognized as a fundamental right by Article 21 of the Constitution of India, implies the right to live with human dignity. It encompasses not only the security regarding the basic human needs of food, clothing, and shelter, but also health security. Social security schemes usually give priority to income security because generally the basic needs of vulnerable sections may be satisfied if people have an adequate income. The Government of India as well as the state governments have undertaken some initiatives in this direction and provide cash assistance in the form of pensions to the elderly, widows, and

citizens with disabilities. This section covers the awareness level of community workers and the implementation status of the scheme in the village.

4.4.1 Awareness Level of Community Workers

Providing pensions to BPL families is one of the important social security schemes of the government, and almost all the community workers were well aware of this pension scheme. The awareness about old age and widow pensions was recognized by 100 percent of respondents, whereas 91 percent recognized disability pensions. However, when it came to the age criterion for each category, the awareness level was found to be higher for old age pensions (98 percent) than physically handicapped (44 percent) and widow pensions (31percent). In the study area, all respondents said that beneficiaries receive INR 1,800 toward their pension amount, and all of them are aware of it. For the identification of these beneficiaries, the government has fixed the income norm with the annual household income to be less than two lacs, and none of the respondents were found to know about the income criteria for accessing pensions.

4.4.2 Implementation Status of the Scheme

Almost all villagers were well aware of three major types of pension schemes covering old age, widows, and the physically handicapped. In village Rangala, all eligible people receive their pension regularly; however, in Khori Khurd, according to villagers, 50 to 75 percent of the eligible population receives the benefit of the old age pension. The single dominant reason was lack of appropriate documents as proof of old age. The pension amount disbursed is through account transfers, which are deposited to the accounts of the beneficiaries every month.

4.5 School Management Committee

Section 21 of the Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (RTE) mandates the formation of School Management Committees (SMCs) in all elementary government and government-aided schools and special category schools in the country. The RTE Act envisions an SMC as the basic unit of a decentralized model of governance with the active involvement of parents in the school's functioning (MHRD).[x] This section tries to identify the levels of awareness among the community about the prescribed provisions of the committee.

4.5.1 Awareness Level of Community Workers

In total, 43 percent of the selected community workers were aware of the provision of SMC and, out of those aware of it, 95 percent knew the objective of the constitution of the body. At the same time, 78 percent of them knew that the members are represented through a general body meeting.

Teachers, students, and parents all together are the members of the School Management Committee. However, the awareness level was found to be higher for parents and teachers than for students. At the same time, only 30 percent of the community workers were found to know that all three categories can be members of the SMC. A negligible percentage (22percent) knew about the School Development Plan (SDP). Only 39 percent of the community members said that some initiatives including the availability of water and classroom construction were undertaken in the school premises with their initiative.

Fig. 4. Awareness about who can be a member in SMC (percent)
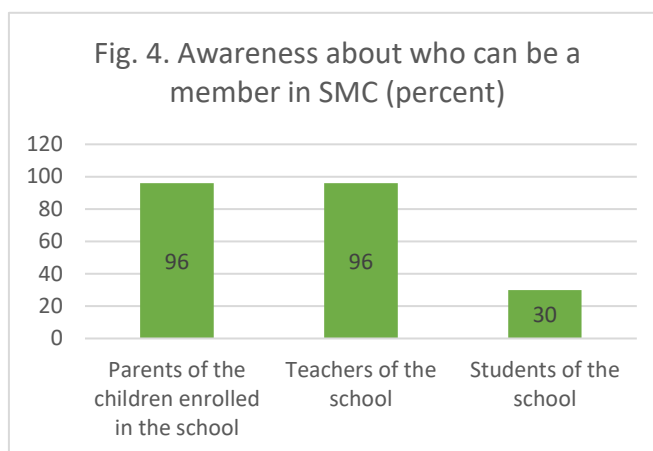
4.6 Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI)

Panchayati raj is the basic unit of administration in a system of governance. It refers to the system of local self-government and is based on the traditional panchayati system. It is established in all states of India by the acts of the state legislature to build democracy at the grassroots level. It is entrusted with rural development and constitutionalized through the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992. The responsibility of PRI is to prepare plans for economic development and social justice, and therefore it is very important to know the work of PRI. This section explores the awareness level of community workers about the structure and function of PRI.

4.6.1 Awareness Level of Community Workers

Findings confirmed that awareness regarding the existence of PRI is known by all the community workers. Community workers well recognized the major function of the PRI. Important work of the PRI is making an annual budget for the panchayat and preparing an agenda for panchayat meetings. This was negligibly responded to by community workers more than the implementation of the government scheme and village development (refer to Fig 4.). At the village level, the panchayat remained active for construction of toilets and houses which is quite visible and at the same time the village development plan gets

Fig 5. Awareness about the work of PRI (percent)
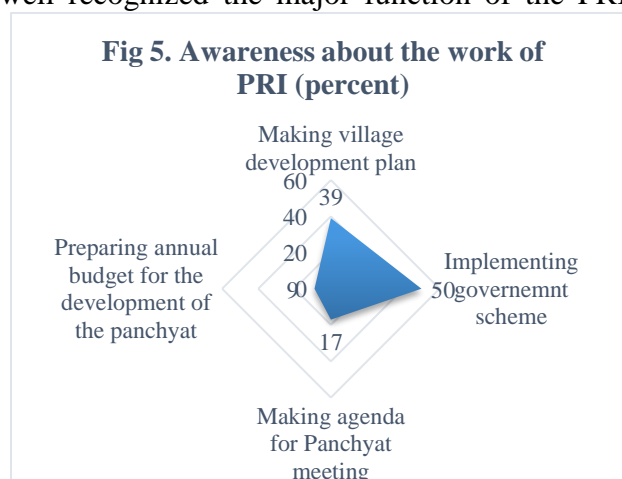
sanctioned by villagers through the gram sabha (larger village council). Therefore, knowledge in these two components was found to be higher than the other two components. Women's participation regarding attending the meeting and keeping their concern was found to be less by 10 percent.
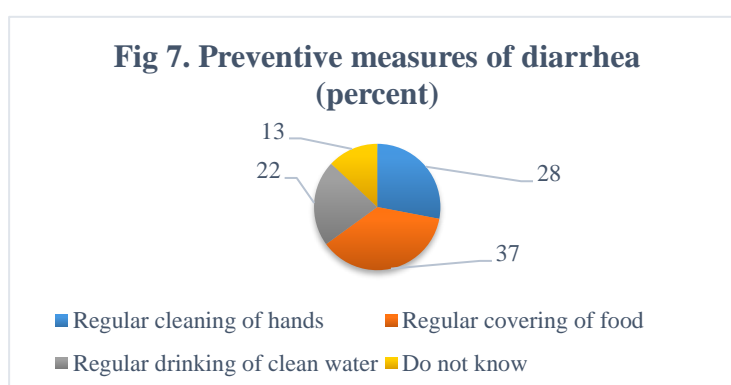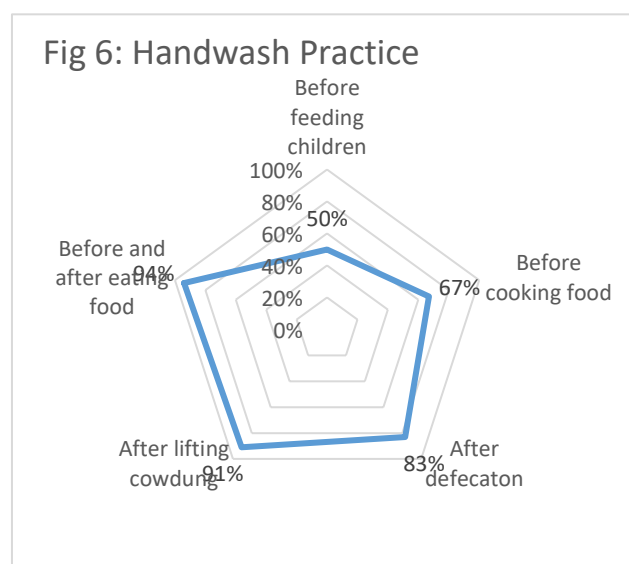
4.7 Health and Hygiene: Practice of Handwashing

Washing of hands is the best way to reduce germs and thus infection in most situations. Studies have established that the impact of poor hand hygiene habits are linked to increasing occurrences of illness and associated costs. The absence of hand hygiene also contributes to an increase in community-based infections including gastrointestinal skin and respiratory infections (Scott 2013). This section explores the hand-washing practices followed by community workers.

4.7.1 Hand-washing Practices by Community Workers

The diagram representation shows that hand-washing practice is comparatively higher for before and after eating food and after lifting cow dung than before cooking food and feeding children. This depends on the availability of soap they use, and they sometimes clean their hands with only water. However, the use of soap is higher (61 percent) than with only plain water (39 percent). All of them realized that hand-washing is essential to reduce the spread of infectious diseases.

Fig 6: Handwash Practice

Diarrhea is one of the most common health problems in rural India, and bacteria, viruses, or parasites cause these. Therefore, clean drinking water is most important for checking the spread of diarrhea. Regarding the preventive measures, respondents were aware of the preventive measures (shown in Fig. 6); however, 13 percent said they were not aware of the preventive measures for diarrhea.

Fig 7. Preventive measures of diarrhea (percent)

■ Regular cleaning of hands   ■ Regular covering of food
■ Regular drinking of clean water   ■ Do not know

5. Life Skills Education and Digital Literacy Training

The government of Haryana is trying to attract significant investment in the state to make the state visible on the electronic map (IT & ESDM Policy 2017)[xi] by providing various subsidies and putting necessary infrastructures in place. As a part of this project, the government focused on improving its human capital by providing a specific set of technical skills required by the industry and is in the process of exploring the possibility of introducing industry-recognized certificate courses in degree colleges. Further efforts are being made by the Haryana government to provide better internet access across the state.

Against this backdrop, Sehgal Foundation, with the support of Gartner India, has initiated life skills education and digital literacy training in the villages of Rangala and Khori Khurd during two different periods. The idea was to provide youth with basic life skills to enhance their self-confidence, decision-making, and leadership skills. This guidance becomes all the more important as most of the students enrolled are girls and have to struggle with the predominant socioeconomic structure that has long restricted their opportunities. Digital literacy training serves as an introduction to the operation of digital devices and their functions such as browsing email, internet banking, and other services that students can use to benefit themselves and their families. The course serves as the stepping stone to the boundless possibilities of the digital world.

This section explores the perceptions of selected participants about their future aspirations and awareness level on different aspects such as the work of panchayats (PRI), Right to Education (RTE), Integrated Child Development Service (ICDS), Mid-Day Meal in schools (MDM), and basic hygiene. Under digital literacy training, course participants' knowledge was measured regarding creating a folder, copying a file, and how to use the internet for different purposes.

(Fig 8. Components of LSE and Digital Literacy Training
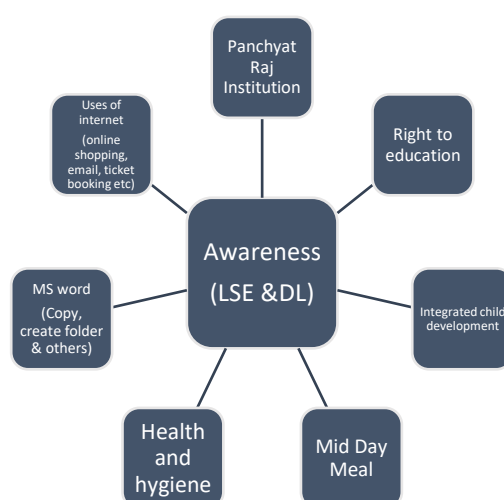
5.1 *Career Aspiration*

According to the ASER report of 2017,[xii] youth aspirations in the state of Haryana are gendered with males mentioning Army/Police and Engineer as preferred professions, while females selected Teachers and Doctor/Nurse. With a similar line, the findings of the particular study confirmed the preferred job for the course participants for both batches was Army/police, teaching, doctor, and computer-related work. Girl students mostly want to become a teacher or a doctor. According to them, this is the most comfortable job that they prefer whereas boys want to join Army/police. To further probe the aspirations, respondents were asked about the level boys and girls can study to; and of the total course participants, 87 percent from Batch I and 60 percent from

Fig 9: Career Aspiration (percent)

Batch II perceived that girls should study as much as they wish, and the same was 93 percent for boys in Batch I and 83 percent in Batch II.
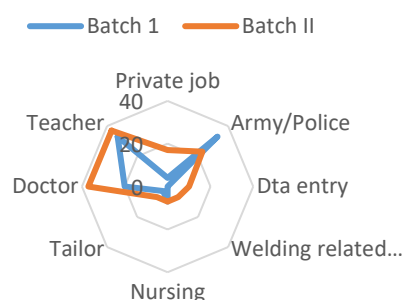
The responsibility of men as governed by the cultural norms is to earn money, while for women it is to take care of household activities. The same pattern was observed in the responses received. Other responsibilities such as working on the farm, contributing toward family matters, and taking care of home were seen as of the responsibility of both males and females.

Fig 10. Basic responsiblities (percent) Batch I

Fig 11. Major responsiblities Batch II
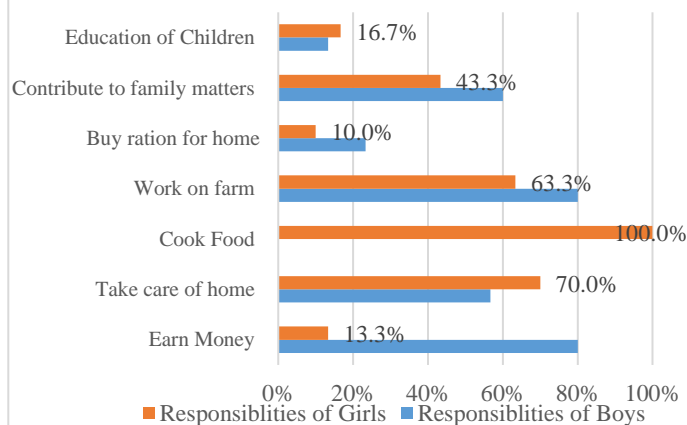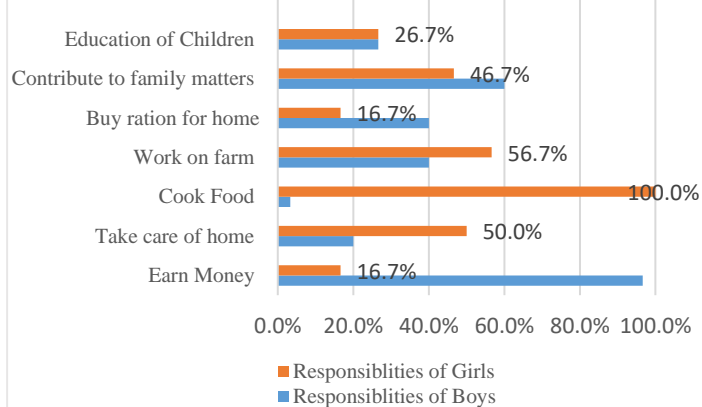
The legal age of marriage protects underage individuals from abuse, harm, violence, and exploitation. As many as 93 percent of respondents from both batches responded with the correct legal age of marriage for girls which is age eighteen, and 90 percent and 70 percent of course participants from the Batch I and Batch II knew the correct legal age for boys which is twenty-one.

5.2 Awareness about the Government Schemes

Development and democracy in India cannot materialize without the active participation of youth who make a bulk in India (19percent are ages fifteen to twenty-four per Census 2011). Their active participation in the governance system solely depends on their knowledge about government schemes and provisions. This section explores the level of awareness among course participants of both batches about the expanded provisions of the programs.

5.2.1   Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI)

PRI functions as a basic unit of administration in village governance. Awareness about PRI and its functioning are essential for participating as a citizen of the village and contributing toward its development. According to respondents, the major functions of the panchayat are to work on the village development plan, make government schemes available to villagers, and ensure basic amenities such as water, electricity, cleanliness, and waste disposal facilities.

The provision of 33 percent reserved for women in panchayats is better responded to by Batch I (30percent) than the Batch II (7percent). At the same time, 60 and 77 percent of the respondents of Batch I and Batch II were aware of panchayat work being sanctioned by a sarpanch. Gram sabha is the grassroots-level democratic process holder in each village. Gram sabha is essentially a meeting of all adults eighteen or above who live in that area who discuss various administrative issues of the village. Awareness about gram sabha among the course participants of Batch I was significantly higher (53percent) than Batch II (13percent).

5.2.2 Right to Education (RTE)

The government introduced right to education in 2010. This right guarantees free education to the children ages three to eight in government schools. In total 63 percent of participants from Batch I and 50 percent from Batch II were aware of the provision. Those in both batches who were aware of the scheme were mostly aware of the different kinds of benefits under the schemes: the distribution of books, free education in the school, and distribution of uniforms free of cost.

Fig 12:Awareness about provisions in RTE(Batch-1)

Fig 13: Awareness about provisions in RTE (Batch-II)
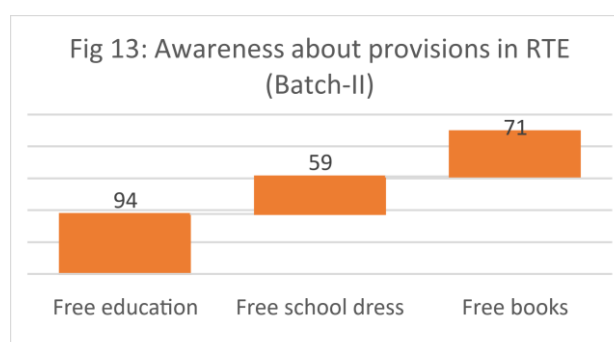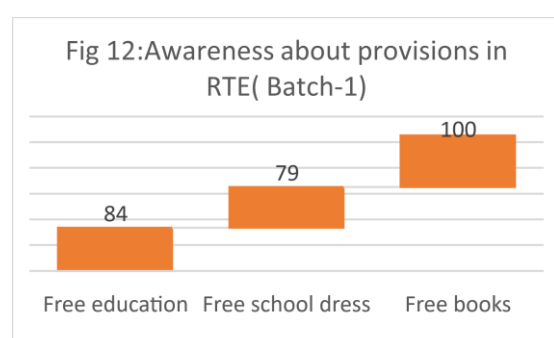
5.2.3 Mid-Day Meal (MDM)

A National Programme of Nutritional Support to Primary Education, known as the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, was started on August 15, 1995. Under the scheme, cooked food is provided to children ages six to fourteen years in all government and government-aided schools.[xiii] The beneficiaries of the scheme are children studying in classes 1 to 8. More than 90 percent of students from both batches (Batch I/97percent and Batch II/90percent) were aware that the scheme provides cooked meals to schoolchildren. In Haryana, the particular scheme was extended to all middle schools in 2008–09.[xiv] Knowledge about the inclusion of middle-class

students under the scheme was recognized by 90 percent of students from Batch I whereas the same knowledge for Batch II was 67 percent.

5.2.4 Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS)

Under the ICDS, anganwadis are operated with the purpose of providing a means to combat hunger and malnutrition. (Sachdeva & Dasgupta 2011).[xv] Almost all respondents from both batches were aware of the functioning of the anganwadi centers at the village level.

Provisions provided by the center immunization and provisions of supplementary nutrition were well recognized among the playschool services in the anganwadi by both batches. Knowledge regarding health-related services of women and children provided in the anganwadi centers, such as knowledge about the pentavalent number of tetanus doses to be taken during pregnancy and the number of iron tablets required during pregnancy were found to be poor among course participants in both batches.

Table: Knowledge about health services provided to women and children by anganwadi centers

	Batch 1	Batch 2
Knowledge of pentavalents	10percent	3percent
Knowledge of number of tetanus injections during pregnancy	27percent	17percent
Knowledge of the correct number of iron tablets a pregnant woman should have	13percent	13percent

5.2.5 Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (SBA)

Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (SBA) launched in 2014 with a primary objective to make India free from open defecation (ODF) by the year 2019. The program has gained popularity in recent years, and this was reflected in the responses of course participants as all of them knew of the program, and all of them said that they had constructed toilets in their homes. One of the main challenges of making a village ODF, in addition to building toilets, is to inoculate the habit of actually using them. Of the respondents who had toilets in their homes, less than 10 percent from both batches reported that all the members of their household actually use the toilet.

5.2.6 National Skill Development Mission (NSDM)

National Skill Development Mission is educating young people to develop skills through institutions that have short capital/resources including a sub-institution within every village panchayat. NSDM provides youth with the opportunity to participate in relevant courses that would help them in the future. None of the respondents from Batch I and only 6 percent from Batch II knew about NSDM.

5.3 Health and Hygiene

Health and hygiene are essential for a good lifestyle. Good health is important for personal, social, and psychological well-being.[xvi] Information on hand-washing and mediums used were sought from respondents.

Respondents in both batches most commonly use soap. At the same time hand-washing practice commonly found after defecation and before and after eating food, and awareness of washing hands after feeding children, feeding livestock, and

Hand- wash practice (percent)

before cooking food was not much among the course participants of both the batches.
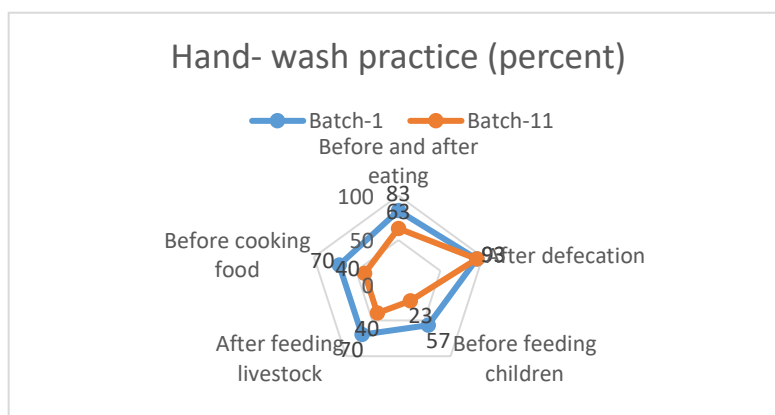
Diarrhea is the third leading cause of childhood mortality in India and is responsible for 13 percent of all deaths/year in children under age five (Lakshminarayanan & Jaylakshmy 2015)[xvii] In total, 67 percent of the course participants for Batch I and 47 percent for Batch II were aware of the causes of diarrhea. The methods for the prevention of diarrhea are seen as (1) washing hands (Batch I/50percent, Batch II/30percent), (2) keeping food covered (Batch I/57percent, Batch II/43percent), and (3) using clean water (Batch I/23percent, Batch II/20percent).

Drinking clean water is essential as it prevents various diseases. All the course participants from both batches were aware of the essentialness of clean water for the body. However, when it came to the adoption of the practice at the household level, 70 percent from the Batch I and 73 percent from Batch II said they clean water before drinking. Those who do not follow any method to clean water feel that the water is already clean and they do not need to clean it. The most common ways employed to clean water were boiling, filtering through thin cloth, and adopting water filters. According to the World Health Organization 2017 World Malaria Report, India has the fourth-highest number of malaria deaths in the world.[xviii] More than 90 percent of respondents from both batches knew the causes of malaria. The major ways of preventing malaria according to study are: not letting rainwater accumulate, using a mosquito net, and using insect repellent.

5.4 Digital Literacy

The world is increasingly becoming digital by the day. The education curriculum and infrastructure at the government schools and local private schools are not updated regularly and hence prove inadequate to prepare students to navigate and face the challenges of the digital world. Lack of digital education leads to gap in the access of various opportunities and in turn deprives students of rural India of the economic, societal, and personal growth. Digital literacy classes enable students to find, evaluate, and use digital content in meaningful ways to achieve their purpose. This section explores the existing knowledge and uses of digital devises of the course participants of both batches.

The use of computer and internet are growing daily. By understanding the importance of computer education, the course is introduced in all schools. Out of the total course participants, 47 percent from the Batch I and 33 percent from Batch II said they have computers in school,

whereas 20 percent from the Batch I and none of the students from Batch II have ever been taught about computers in school. Many students said they don't even have a computer teacher in the school.

Also, the use of digital devices is mostly limited to the use of mobiles (Batch I/80percent and Batch II/60percent), followed by laptop/computers (Batch I/23percent and Batch II/7percent). Of those who have laptop/computers, 20 percent from Batch I and none from Batch II knew about advanced computer applications like MS Word and Excel.

The internet provides many opportunities in varied ways, and a lot can be done through the internet such as social media, accessing government schemes, purchasing online tickets, etc. Findings confirmed that only 53 percent of the respondents in Batch I and 60 percent in Batch II were aware of the internet while 27 percent from Batch I and 10 percent from Batch II were aware of the social media, and 10 percent each from both batches were aware of the use of email. Mobile applications have become popular in recent years, and 23 percent from Batch I and 20 percent from Batch II were aware of Facebook, and 20 percent and 27 percent from Batch I and Batch II were aware of WhatsApp.

6. Water availability situation

The project also proposed construction of water storage tanks with a capacity of 25,000 liters in both villages. This storage tank will provide water for approximately 100 households in both villages. Groundwater is the only source of water used for drinking and non-drinking purposes in both villages, which is extracted either through bore wells or hand pumps. Three bore wells were installed by the village panchayat: two in Khori Khurd and one in Rangala. Households have made connections with these bore wells to their homes through pipelines and lift the water with electric pumps. Besides this, there are hand pumps, personal bore wells, and a storage tank available for household use of water. However, accessing water through the pipeline is the common practice for 86 percent, followed by public hand pumps (15percent), owned bore wells (14percent), and others' bore wells (7percent). All these sources are mostly used for drinking, cooking, washing, and livestock purposes. Water from these sources is sweet and easily used for cooking rice and dal. Villagers, especially who reside in the upper part, have mentioned that they do not get sufficient water from the pipeline because of low pressure. Furthermore, due to the erratic supply of electricity, villagers fetch water from hand pumps or bore wells owned by others.

6.1 Scenario of Purchased Water

Purchasing water for household purposes is not a common phenomenon in either village. In the village of Rangala, only 23 percent of the population depends on purchased water, or they fetch water from others' bore wells without paying anything. At the same time, none of the respondents in village Khori Khurd purchase water for drinking and cooking purposes. Villagers store water in drums (63percent), followed by available pots including bucket and Balti (33percent), and in storage tanks constructed at the roof (4percent). The average capacity of these storage tanks is 350 liters.

Table 4: Village details of purchased water

Village	Purchased water	Collect water from others but do not pay	Do not purchase water
Rangala n=87	17percent	6percent	77percent
Khori Khurd n= 97	0	7percent	93percent

The water cost is paid on a monthly basis with an average monthly cost of INR 290. The cost varies from INR 200 to INR 400 depending on the storage capacity of the households, which they consume for one or two days. The average depth of these bore wells is 300 to 400 feet. More than 96 percent of respondents realized that the water table has gone down over the years perhaps due to erratic rainfall (90percent), followed by installation of more bore wells (22percent), increasing population (10percent), and the increasing rate of intensive crop cultivation (4percent).

Though a sizable population does not rely on purchased water, still 43 percent feel that the available water is not sufficient for their household consumption needs. As a consequence, 29 percent said they use water very carefully and sometimes manage with much less water. At the same time, 9 percent of the population has reduced their livestock rearing.

The situation of availability and accessibility of drinking water

Village description: Rangala	**Village description: Khori Khurd**
The village Rangala is home to 404 households with a population of 1,920. Of the total population, 1,051 are male, and 869 are female (Census 2011). The village has three clusters divided on caste structure. The proposed water storage tank construction has been proposed for Ambedkar Colony, home to approximately 250 households. Residents are from different parts of India, i.e. Rajasthan, Bihar, and Haryana. The particular hamlet is located at the foothills of the Aravallis and is again divided into two divisions, i.e. the lower part and upper part. The forty to fifty households that live on the upper part have no easy access to water due to the presence of rock. There are three or four bore wells in this area which do not supply sufficient water for household consumption according to the villagers. Almost all households in this locality are connected to the underground pipeline from households that own water sources hooked up to their water tank installed at the roof. In regard to water cost, locals voiced two opinions: the service provider divides the electricity bill with the number of households sharing water, or the service provider supplies water with a monthly charge which is approximately INR 250–300. On average, a household supplies water to three to five households. The quality of the groundwater is sweet according to the villagers. The bore wells installed in the locality are mostly used for household consumption, and those who have farmland irrigate through borewells dug in the farmland. Electricity is a major problem for these dwellers as it is on only four to five hours a day during summer and winter.	Khori Khurd is a small village with only 102 households and a population of 629, of which 309 are male and 320 are female (Census 2011). The village has two hamlets; the upper side is the main village where approximately seventy to eighty households reside, and at the dawn side the hamlet, called *dhani, is* where approximately thirty to thirty-five households reside. The proposed site of the water tank is the main village where a mixed community of Hindu and Meo Muslims reside. Availability of drinking water is a major problem in this locality. There are two bore wells installed by the sarpanch in the *dhani* because water is available there at 300 to 400 feet, and all the households have underground pipe connections from these bore wells and lift water through motors installed in their homes. However, according to villagers, electricity is very erratic and they do not get sufficient pressure as everyone lifts water at the same time. Women fetch water from long distances from the farming land they call *jungle,* and bore wells are installed by the landlords for irrigation. The approximate distance from these farmlands is 500 meters to 2 km. On average, it takes around half an hour each time to collect water. The landowners do not charge for water. Women spend more than half of the day bringing water for household uses like cooking, drinking, washing, and livestock rearing. Again it was observed that almost all households in the village have two or three buffalo and a number of goats. In the recent past, all the households constructed toilets under the government scheme, but many said they do not use them due to water scarcity. It was also observed that, though everyone suffers due to water scarcity, they still unnecessarily keep their motors on and discharge water in the drains unnecessarily.

6. Conclusion

A situation analysis was conducted by Sehgal Foundation for the project Develop Villages to Develop India using an integrated approach of village development with support from Gartner India in two villages, Rangala and Khori Khurd in Taoru block district Nuh. The project followed an approach of community-led development for bringing positive change to the lives of the rural community by empowering the villagers about their rights and entitlements in government schemes, digital and life skills awareness among the youth, and making easy access to water in the community.

The situation analysis was conducted before the implementation of the project with an objective to capture the situation within the defined parameter of the project components. A highlighted point under the integrated child development program was the low awareness level of community workers about the playschool components and referral services and health and nutrition education. One major concern was the deplorable condition of AWCs in the Ambedkar Colony with a lot of dust and pollution due to the proximity of a factory in Rangala village. The anganwadi worker does not allow the children to come and spend four hours, and she works from her home. In regard to distribution of MDM, satisfactory responses were received from children and parents concerning the quality of the food and the regularity in food distribution. However, the awareness level of community workers in regard to multifold objectives of the program were found to be low especially in the parameters for addressing the issue of malnutrition, better performance in exams, and checking dropout rates, which are the objectives of the Mid-Day Meal program. The ration distribution in Khori Khurd was irregular compared to Rangala village. Though the BPL and AAY categories are entitled to get items like sugar, dal, and oil, they had only received wheat in the past few months, which was also not very regular. Distribution of pension amounts is regular as are transfers to the accounts of beneficiaries each month. The School Management Committee was well recognized by the community workers, however their knowledge was found to be limited in regard to role, functions, and constitution of the body.

The life skills education and digital literacy trainings provide knowledge on the village institutions and provisions under the government schemes. The digital literacy course serves the operation of digital devices including browsing email, internet banking, and other services. The course participants were found to be well aware of many components including RTE, MDM and ICDS, and PRI. However, knowledge about prenatal care was found low among the course participants. Regarding hand-washing, respondents commonly use soap. However, awareness about hand-washing before feeding children or cooking food needs to be improved.

Even though the government promotes digital literacy education, the findings from the course participants established that less than 50 percent of the schools have computers and, worse than that, none of the schools have a computer teacher. This restricts the students to hands-on experience with computer use. Course participants have very limited knowledge of the basic functions of computers like creating and saving folders or software programs like Word or Excel. Though the internet was well recognized by students, knowledge about social media and email ID use was very limited.

Groundwater is the only source of water in both the villages. Households access groundwater from bore wells connected through an underground pipeline to their homes. However, the erratic electricity supply and low water pressure do not allow households to have easy access to water. Women in Khori Khurd fetch water from long distances and spend around half of each day in water collection. Purchasing water was found to be common in Rangala where villagers purchase water from households that own bore wells. The average cost of water is INR 250 to 300 every month. Against this scenario, a water storage tank could help the villagers gain easier access to water.

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