Information Needs Assessment for Rural Communities

An Indian Case Study

July 2003
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Assessing the Information Needs of the Rural Communities in India using Information Need Assessment Model (INAM)

1.0 Information Needs Assessment Model – An Overview

1.1. Introduction

Why are we emphasizing on the Information Needs Assessment of Rural Masses? After all as Scientists, Planners and Domain Experts we are used to finding out the specific requirements and goals that the solution (ICT) must address! Probably, it is the term “Rural” that lends importance to the entire Needs Assessment exercise, that too in two ways. First, a majority of the population in India and developing world lives in rural areas and more importantly, poverty also co-inhabits with the rural masses in these areas. Therefore, the developmental initiatives, with or without ICT, must focus on the needs of the rural populace, which necessitates an exact determination of those requirements, so as to render the development efforts successful. Secondly, the rural domain exhibits different characteristics than urban areas, implying that the needs of an urban man cannot be taken to mean the requirements of the rural poor as well, which is generally the convention. Rural sector is different from the urban in quite a few respects as indicated below:

- Marginalized from the mainstream
- Poor standard of living
- Low Literacy
- Strong feeling of voicelessness and powerlessness
- Strong local imprints
- Conservative society
- Closer to the Mother Nature
- Traditional ways of learning

A closer analysis of ICTs reveals that there is a tremendous scope of ICT’s application in rural areas. ICT can reduce the globe into a village thus addressing the issue of marginalization. It can help improve the economic status directly through e-commerce applications and indirectly through access to varied kind of business information. Internet can empower people by inducing transparency and accountability in the system and also building a smooth interface with the Government. Most importantly, Internet serves without any prejudices of caste, creed or religion thus removing all barriers of social injustice. In short, ICT is powered to address the issues related to the rural areas.

However, it is important to emphasize that the ICT solutions should be sensitive to the rural characteristics. The applications should be designed in such way that it speaks the rural poor’s language, reflect their culture and above all should address their information needs.
1.2. The Information Needs Assessment Model (INAM)

Information Needs Assessment Model (INAM) aims at identifying the information needs of the rural communities. INAM comprises a set of activities, which ensure that the information needs emerging as a result are based on ground realities and past experiences. The set of activities include Theme Analysis, Existing Community Information Systems Analysis, Profile Analysis and Prioritization of Information Needs. Following diagram summarises INAM:

- Theme Analysis
- Profile Analysis
- Existing Community IS Analysis
- Prioritization of Information Needs
2.0. Application of Information Needs Assessment Model in Indian Context

To assess the information needs of the underprivileged in rural India, input from Live and Internet surveys have been fed into the Information Needs Assessment Model. The information needs thus identified have then been prioritized and represented in the form of information categories. As there was no particular theme for assessment of information needs, the first step viz. Theme Analysis was not undertaken. For Profile Analysis, the underprivileged communities of Bihar, which is one of the poorest States in India has been taken as the target area. To conduct an analysis of the Existing Community Information Systems, Internet survey and research has been conducted on major implementations in India. Following diagram depicts the adoption of INAM for Indian case study:
2.1. Information Need Assessment: Profile Analysis

2.1.1. Profile Analysis - Survey conducted during e-Readiness Conference in Bihar

National Informatics Centre organized the country’s first National Conference on e-readiness Expectations of Rural Masses during December 2002 in the State of Bihar. Among others, people from various walks of life including the ones from rural communities attended the conference. With a view to identify the information needs of the rural masses, questionnaire, specifically designed for the purpose was distributed and as many as 179 respondents expressed their views about ICTs and their expectations from ICT based services. Following is the broad analysis of the survey conducted during the conference.

Percentage Positive Response vis-à-vis Information Categories
Health and Telemedicine – 74%
Rainfall – 74%
Cropping Pattern – 71.5%
Modern Techniques of cultivation – 71.51%
Distance Education – 61.45%
Information on Market & Market Prices – 67.6%
Information on Soft Loans and Financial Institutions – 67.6%
Information on Land Records – 63.69%
Information on School and Virtual Schooling – 61.45%
Information on Irrigation – 67.6%

Reorganization of Information Categories

Health – 74%

Agriculture
Rainfall (forecasting) – 74%
Cropping Pattern – 71.5%
Modern Techniques of Cultivation/Farming – 71.5%
Irrigation (Sources) – 67.6%
Information on Market and Market Prices – 67.6%

Education
Distance Education/Learning – 61.45%
Information on Schools & Virtual Schooling – 61.45%

Government Information
Information on Soft loans & Financial Institutions – 67.6%
Information on Government Go downs – 51.96%

**Land Records** – 63.69%

Surveyed Sample

**Sample size** – 179

Sample Composition
Age-group
20-30 : 43
30-40 : 75
40-50 : 41
50-60 : 10
60-70 : 01

Literacy
Non-Matric – 8.38%
Matric – 16.76%
Intermediate – 14.53%
Graduate – 51.96%
Post Graduate – 7.26%
Ph.D – 0.56%

Occupation
Mukhiya : 35.75 %
Vice-Mukhiya : 2.79 %
Ward Member : 6.7 %
Professor : 0.56%
Chief Secretary : 1.12%
Engineer : 1.12%
Advocate : 1.68%
Guest Faculty : 2.23%
Lecturer : 1.12%
Sales Representative : 1.68%
Nirikshak : 0.56%
Others : 47.49%
2.1.2. Information Needs Assessment: Profile Analysis - Internet Survey

As suggested by the Information Needs Assessment Model (INAM), Profile analysis, through profiling the lives of the underprivileged for the targeted community and the area/region/country inhabited by them is performed with a view to gain an understanding of the life events of the underprivileged and their priorities. It further suggests to conduct a SWOT analysis to bring forth the areas of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats, which are representative areas that need intervention to bring about development and at the same time they are also reflective of the critical areas of information needs of the targeted community.

2.1.2.1. Profile and SWOT of the Under Privileged in India

Profiling the underprivileged has been attempted taking India as the representative domain and three rural sites in Bihar, which is one of the poorest States, as the actual site.

The efforts undertaken by the World Bank as part of preparation of the World Development Report (WDR) 2000/1 on Attacking Poverty included Consultations with the Poor, around the world, to know the dynamics, conditions and consequences of poverty from the perspectives of the poor. The findings and analysis of these surveys were brought out as “Voices of the Poor” documented in three volumes, which resulted in the preparation of WDR 2000/1.

The extensive groundwork that has been done to inform the World Development Report on Attacking Poverty provides deep insights into the lives of the underprivileged across the globe, including India/Bihar. Besides, it is one of the most recent surveys based on the life-events of the Poor that lends credibility to the entire exercise, apart from the fact that it was done under the auspices of the World bank. It has therefore been selected as the basis for performing Domain Analysis.

2.1.2.1.1. Drawing Profiles of the Under Privileged using “Consultations with the Poor in India”

(http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/voices/reports/national/India.pdf)

The Country Synthesis Reports are part of a global research effort entitled Consultations with the Poor, designed to inform the World Development Report 2000/1 on poverty and Development. The research involved poor people in twenty-three countries around the world. The effort also included two comprehensive reviews of Participatory Poverty Assessments completed in recent years by the World Bank and other agencies.

The insights on the focal thematic areas were obtained largely by means of extensive interactions using PRA methods.

The consultations with the poor were conducted across ten different sites in two states of India, i.e. Bihar - the poorest state in India, and Andhra Pradesh - a state with a better...
organised response to eradicate poverty by the Government and the NGOs. This included two urban sites, two semi-urban sites and six rural sites.

However, the profiling exercise for information needs assessment takes into account the rural sites in Bihar, as they are most poverty stricken.

2.1.2.1.2. Profile of the Surveyed Sites in Bihar –

Following were the sites selected, from among the ten sites surveyed during “Consultations with the Poor” in India for the purpose of profiling the underprivileged in Bihar -

1. Netarhat Panchayat (Palamu district, Bihar) Rural
2. Sohrai (Jhanjharpur district, Bihar) Rural
3. Manjhar (Gaya district, Bihar) Rural

Netarhat

Geography. Netarhat forms the tip of the southern plateau of south Bihar, and is characterised by remoteness, habitation of Asurs - a primitive tribe of India and bauxite mines. Consultations were carried out across three hamlets of Netarhat (Jobhipaat, Jaamtoli and Mohnapath) spread over an area of 10 km radius, including two contiguous ones. The terrain of Netarhat is made of rocky uplands with adequate forest cover. Netarhat is isolated from the other towns on the plains due to its altitude, and non availability of regular means of transportation.

Economy. The economy of the region thrives on the mines, which offers livelihood security to a large number of poor tribals.

Problems. Scarcity of drinking water, lack of regular school, non-availability of govt. support / infrastructure and lack of alternative income generation options were identified to be key problems of the people. In recent years, the panchayat has become the den of extremists, owing allegiance to a left wing political outfit.

Manjhar

Geography. Village Manjhar is located on the banks of river Murahar of Gaya District, Bihar. The village falls under the administrative block of Paraiya - 6 km by road from Manjhar.

The consultations were carried out across a population of 550 people spread over 107 households, predominantly constituted of scheduled caste people.

Economy. Agriculture is the mainstay of Manjhar economy and cultivation, sharecropping and wage labour are the three main sources of livelihood for the poor people in Manjhar. In the perception of the people in Manjhar, there has been an overall increase in well being
status of the people at large, owing to their social empowerment stemming from the current political developments in the state, which has brought about a lot of awareness amongst them.

**Problems.** Frequent floods, siltation over fertile top soil and large scale migration are the other salient characteristics of the site.

**Sohrai**

**Geography.** Sohrai is a small village in north Bihar with a population of about a thousand people drawn from 177 households. The village is flood-prone location, and falls under the Jhanjharpur subdivision of Madhubani district in Bihar. However, it falls in the postal jurisdiction of Darbhanga district of Bihar.

**Economy.** The village is predominantly constituted of the Musahar (traditional rat-eaters) population, but has a strong proportion of fisherfolk and oil-millers. The villagers access railways, bus and market at Jhanjharpur, 8 kilometres away from the village. The village has several good hand-pumps in working condition, and is one of few sites of consultations, where drinking water is not a problem at all.

**Problems.** The village is ravaged by flood almost every year in the rainy season, which causes heavy damage to life and property.

2.1.2.1.3. **Priorities of the Poor in the surveyed sites**

A large number of problems, as perceived by the poor, were identified as part of consultations in the surveyed sites as indicated below:

**Livelihood Security.** Most of the problems identified in the process were linked to concerns of livelihood security, and aspirations for fulfilment of basic needs.

**Lack of employment** emerged as the overriding concern of the poor and the perceived intensity of the problem can be gauged from the fact that most of the respondents identified the issue as one of their five most pressing problems.

**Lack of irrigation water** also appeared to be a major problem in sites of consultations, other than Manjhar, a site characterised by waterlogging and ravages of flood. The situation in the other sites was hardly conducive for cultivating water-intensive crops.

**Scarcity of Drinking Water.** The consultation sites also reported an acute shortage of drinking water, and the resident villagers were required to cover long distance on foot to fetch their daily household requirement of drinking water. Most government installations for supply of water were found to be either defunct or inaccessible for the poorest household due to socio-cultural reasons. In Netarhat, the risks involved in the process of fetching water from outside the village found expression in the voices of a
large number of women. Initiatives, however few, taken by villagers in some of the locations for getting drinking water supply were all reported to have been futile.

**Expenditure on health.** This was stated to be a common impediment for the poor people to be able to amass surplus. In large families particularly, the expenditure per month in treating diseases was found to be extremely high, and often beyond the reach of the poor. The government establishments for health services delivery were found to be in poor shape in nearly all sites, and instances of speed-money payments were stated to be common for accessing services. Nearly all the sites were found to have bases of popular private doctors. Next to illiteracy and unemployment, the maximum number of responses attributed to be leading to poverty were related to ill health.

**Illiteracy.** This was believed to be another pressing problem in the Bihar villages. While in Manjhar and Sohrai, high levels of illiteracy was believed to cause backwardness, in Netarhat, lack of regular schools emerged as the problem.

**Houselessness** and the dilapidated condition of houses in the rural sites were also identified as major problems by the menfolk in Netarhat and Manjhar. Repairing houses was a major expenditure head for the poor households, and every alternate year, a significant amount of money had to be spent in bringing houses to livable conditions. Houselessness, was identified as a prominent criteria in distinguishing poor households from better-off ones.

Most other problems identified in the course of the consultations were specific to the situations in different rural sites. These included natural calamities, caste-based discrimination, high interest on loans, lack of fuelwood, lack of good infrastructure - roads, drainage, electricity etc., and lack of consistent government support.

**Gender based perception of Problems.** The problems listed by women were found to be linked more with day-to-day concerns of livelihood, e.g. lack of ration cards, unemployment, high interest on loans, drinking water scarcity and lack of land / water for good quality irrigation. The men’s problems, on the other hand, were linked mostly to broader aspirations, e.g. lack of capital, houselessness, lack of government schemes, lack of shops and latrines etc.

**Important Institutions**

**NGOs.** The importance of alternative, non-government mechanisms for community development emerges prominently in the responses of the villagers in the consultation sites, with regard to their institutional preferences.

**Local Collectivities.** The importance of local collectivities of villagers is reinforced in the ranks accorded to local savings groups and village development councils. The success of local NGOs in generating significant social mobilisation through self-help
group mechanisms is a visible inferential outcome of the consultations with the poor in India.

**Panchayats.** The prominent position accorded to village *panchayats* (democratically elected traditional body of villagers) and traditional village head brings to the fore villagers’ strong trust in their traditional bodies. In Netarhat, lot of importance is attached to priests and quacks too, mainly in the eyes of the women.

**Government.** However, the importance of *government officers*, as visible from the responses, cannot be understated, if the communities’ views are an indication. High intensity development measures are expected to be accruing from the government establishments only.

**Schools.** The increasing popularity of education can be gauged from the importance ranks accorded to schools in all the rural sites. Schools are increasingly being seen as necessity in the rural sites and the link of education not merely with better employment prospects, but also with quality of life in general, is being realised by more and more rural communities. The criteria for determining the well being status of people in rural communities, as developed by the people themselves, as a clear pointer to this effect, with the prominent place given to educational parameters therein.

**Anganwari schools** in the opinion of the women, the importance of Anganwari schools (preschools) comes to the fore. The mid-day meal scheme for school going children proves to be a major attraction amongst parents of poor children.

**ANMs.** Auxiliary nurses and midwives in the primary health centres, wherever existent, as well as traditional birth attendants in the communities are the other preferred institutions of women on the importance ground.

**Bank** appears as another popular institution on the importance front, and many villagers, despite not having their own accounts in banks, considered it important owing to perceived transparency in operations and assurance of safety of deposits.

**Gender Relations**

The trends available from sites of consultations with the poor in India point at increasing role of the womenfolk outside the household domain. The income earned by them in the rural and households through petty trades like selling fuel-wood made significant contribution towards meeting household expenditure. The role of women outside the household boundary was seen to be far more intensive in the communities of schedules castes and tribes, compared to that in the forward castes.

The advent of NGOs seems to have helped in creating more space for women in the community. Through the instruments of Self-Help groups and village development committees initiated by local NGOs, a large number of women drawn from the backward communities have been able to find more respectability both within household and in the community, with increased access to financial resources. Interface with the outside world has
brought about a significant enhancement in the awareness and confidence levels of the womenfolk in many sites, and a large number of women were found to be engaged in livelihood activities in close association with traders from cities (e.g. the case of women engaged in the pear farm of Netarhat). In poor households particularly, where men are habitual migrants in pursuit of livelihood, women were found to play pivotal role in earning for the household.

In the area of access to opportunities and services, the women were found to have advanced, albeit marginally, over the years. In many rural communities, e.g. the tribal community of Netarhat (Bihar), girls are rarely sent to school and are expected to learn their household responsibilities the hard way. In community affairs like panchayat meetings and conflict resolution activities, its mostly the menfolk whose participation matters, and women rarely attend such gatherings unless required to be present as witnesses or stakeholders. In community ceremonies like marriages and festivals, women’s participation is restricted to keeping within flocks of fellow women. Its mostly men and elderly women who are entitled to attend feasts and rituals. Girls rarely have a say in the matter of selecting life-partners, which is formalized within parleys of men folk in consultations, occasionally, with elderly women. Inter-caste marriages are rarely held in the communities consulted, and there exist strict sanctions and penalties for people violating social norms.

The instances of household violence against women were seen to be closely linked with alcoholism. The level of domestic violence, in many sites, was believed to have decreased over the years owing to increasing awareness amongst the womenfolk stemming from their participation in NGO-induced fora like Self Help groups and village development committees. Several single women (mainly widows) were consulted during the study, and it was found that in spite of hardships in the day-to-day life, they were able to survive with the informal support received from village folk.

2.1.2.1.4. SWOT Analysis for the Under Privileged in India/Bihar

From the above Profile of the under privileged in India/Bihar, based on Country Synthesis Report, prepared as a part of Consultations with the Poor Project by the World Bank and the regional profile of Bihar State, following areas of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats emerge, which are reflective of the important information needs of the underprivileged in India and Bihar, the poorest state in India, in particular:

**Strengths**: Basic inner strength and faith in God to cope up with adversities, increasing interest of women folk outside the household domain to support family income, support from local NGOs, strong local collectivities in terms of Self Help Groups and other local organizations.

**Weaknesses**: Livelihood insecurity, lack of employment, scarcity of drinking water, illiteracy, Health Problems and associated expenditure, Houseless ness and associated expenditure on dilapidated houses, Lack of infrastructure, Lack of Government support, extremist activities.
Opportunities: Fertile soil, Mineral Resources, Water Resources, Forest

Threats: Floods, possible threat of mining disasters

2.1.2.2. Bihar Profile and SWOT Analysis

2.1.2.2.1. Bihar Profile

The above profile provides a view of the priorities of the underprivileged inhabiting the rural areas of Bihar, which is one of the poorest States in India. Following paragraphs describe the profile of the State of Bihar and India as a whole.

After separation of Jharkhand in 2000 Bihar is primarily an agriculture dependent state. The state is Geographically situated between the 21°58‘10” E and 27°31’15” E latitudes and 82°19’50” N and 88°17’40” N longitudes, the state covers an area of 94 Lakh Sq. Km. and is a basically plain area lying at an altitude of 173 Ft above Mean Sea Level. Bihar is an entirely land-locked state. Although the outlet to the sea through the port of Kolkata is not far away. Bihar lies mid-way between the humid West Bengal in the east and the sub humid Uttar Pradesh in the west which provides it with a transitional position in respect of climate, economy and culture. The neighboring states & country are Nepal in its North, Jharkhand in its South, West Bengal in its East & Utter Pradesh in the West. Bihar is located in the eastern part of the country.

The river Ganges divides the North & South part of the state. According to the 2001 census it has a total population of 8,28,78,796 which is 8.06 % of the population of the country. The density of population per kilometer of the state is 880 against the country population of 324. The state has 68,39,849 ha agricultural land.

The state in terms of its geographical situation is the most flood affected state in the country. Out of 94 Lakh ha. geographical area an area of 68.80 Lakh Ha. are flood prone areas i.e. 73.3 % of the total area are prone to flood. Out of the total area North Bihar has 58.50 Lakh Ha. and out of that 44.47 Lakh Ha. area is flood prone which is 77% of the north Bihar are vulnerable to flood.

Physical Features

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latitude</td>
<td>21° 58' 10&quot; to 27° 31' 15&quot; North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Longitude</td>
<td>82° 19' 50&quot; to 88° 17' 40&quot; East</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>94,163.00 Sq. KM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>92,257.51 Sq. KM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>1,095.49 Sq. KM.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Height above Sea Level 173 Ft.
Rainfall - (2001):
(i) Normal rainfall (M.M.) 1204.6
(ii) Actual rainfall (M.M.) 1288.3
(iii) Avg. no. of rainy days 52.5
Administrative Units
Divisions 9
Districts 38
Subdivisions 101
CD Blocks 533
Panchayats 8471
Number of Revenue Villages 45103
Number of Urban Agglomerations 9
Number of Towns 130
(i) Statutory Towns 125
(ii) Census Towns (Non-Statutory) 5
Police Station :-
(i) Civil Police Station 813
(ii) Railway Police Station 40
Police District :-
(i) Civil 39
(ii) Railways 4
Population of Bihar
Population (2001 Census) Provisional
Total 8,28,78,796
Male 4,31,53,964
Female 3,97,24,832
Population (0-6 Age Group)
(i) Absolute - Persons 1,62,34,539
Male 83,75,532
Female 78,59,007
(ii) Percentage to total Population - Persons 19.59%
Male 19.41%
Female 19.78%
Literacy
(i) Absolute - Persons 3,16,75,607
Male 2,09,78,955
Female 1,06,96,652
(ii) Percentage - Persons 47.53%
Male 60.32%
Female 33.57%
(i) Absolute 1,83,48,242
(ii) Percentage 28.43%
District With Highest Decadal Growth --- Sheohar
36.16%
District With Lowest Decadal Growth --- Nalanda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Density of Population (Per Sq.Km.)</th>
<th>880</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) Most Densely Populated District - Patna</td>
<td>1471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Least Densely Populated District - Kaimur</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex Ratio (No. of Females /1000 Males)</th>
<th>921</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(i) District having highest Sex Ratio - Siwan</td>
<td>1033</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) District having Lowest Sex Ratio - Patna</td>
<td>873</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| District having highest literacy rate --- Patna | 63.82% |
| District having lowest literacy rate --- Kishanganj | 31.02% |

| Average population of a district of the State | 2239967 |

SOIL

Soil is one of the most important resources of a nation. It is the gift of nature of immense value. Almost all the economic activities are directly or indirectly dependent on soil. Thus soil is the backbone of agricultural and industrial development.

Soil has a number of characteristics, which may be regarded as the aggregate of the physical, chemical and biological properties. There are three major types of soil in Bihar:

1. Piedmont swamp soil - found in northwestern part of west Champaran district.
2. Terai soil – found in northern part of the state along the border of Nepal.
3. The gangetic Alluvium – the plain in Bihar is covered by gangetic alluvium. It is divisible into –
   a. Older alluvium (bhangar soil)
   b. New alluvium (khaddar soil)

CLIMATE

The climate of Bihar is a part of the climatic pattern of the Indian subcontinent. It enjoys a continental monsoon type of climate and following are the major seasons with their duration:

- Cold weather season - December to February.
- Hot weather season – March to May.
- Southwest monsoon – June to September.
- Retreating southwest monsoon – October to November.
NATURAL RESOURCES

Bihar lies in the tropical to sub tropical region. Rainfall here is the most significant factor in determining the nature of vegetation. Bihar has a monsoon climate with an average annual rainfall of 1200 mm.

Forests

The sub Himalayan foothill of someshwar and Dun ranges in Champaran constitute another belt of moist deciduous forests. These also consist of scrub, grass and reeds. Here the rainfall is above 1600 mm and thus promotes luxuriant Sal forests in the favoured areas. The hot and dry summer gives the deduous forests. The most important trees are Shorea Robusta (Sal), Shisham, Cedrela Toona, Khair, and Semal. This type of forests also occurs in Saharasa and Purnia districts.

Fertile Land

The topography of Bihar can be easily described as a fertile alluvial plain occupying the Gangetic Valley. The plain extends from the foothills of the Himalayas in the north to a few miles south of the river Ganges as it flows through the State from the west to the east. Rich farmland and lush orchards extend throughout the state. Following are the major crops: paddy, wheat, lentils, sugarcane, jute (hemp, related to the marijuana plant, but a source of tough fibers and "gunny bags"). Also, cane grows wild in the marshes of West Champaran. The principal fruits are: mangoes, banana, jack fruit and litchis. This is one the very few areas outside China which produces litchi.

Water Resources

Water like ground and mineral resources is of great significance as it provides means of drinking water for man and animals, irrigation for agriculture, industrial uses, production of hydro-electricity, transportation and recreation etc. The importance of water is so immense that the people in ancient times worshipped it.

Bihar is richly endowed with water resources, both the ground water resource and the surface water resource. Not only by rainfall but it has considerable water supply from the rivers, which flow within the territory of the State. Ganga is the main river, which is joined by tributaries with their sources in the Himalayas. Some of them are Saryu (Ghaghra), Gandak, Budhi Gandak, Bagmati, Kamla-Balan and Mahananda.

There are some other rivers that start from the platue area and meet in Ganges or its associate rivers after flowing towards north. Some of them are Sone, Uttari Koyal, Punpun, Panchane and Karmnasha.
Mineral Production 1999-2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mineral</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limestone</td>
<td>4,78,000 MT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mica (Crude)</td>
<td>53 Tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pyrites</td>
<td>9539 Tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quartzite</td>
<td>14865 Tonnes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steatite</td>
<td>945 Tonnes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HISTORY

Bihar the ancient land of Budha has witnessed golden period of Indian history. It is the same land where the seeds of the first republic were sown and which cultivated the first crop of democracy. Such fertile is the soil that has given birth to innumerable intellectuals which spread the light of knowledge and wisdom not only in the country but in the whole world. The state has its capital at Patna, which is situated on the bank of the holy river Ganga. The state as it is today has been shaped from its partition from the province of Bengal and most recently after the separation of the tribal southern region now called Jharkhand.

2.1.2.2 SWOT Analysis for Bihar

Following are the areas of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats emerge, which are reflective of the important information needs of Bihar, one of the poorest state in India:

**Strengths** : Increasing interest of women folk outside the household domain to support family income, support from local NGOs, strong local collectivities in terms of Self Help Groups and other local organizations, availability of labour.

**Weaknesses** : Second Most populous State in India, lowest per capita income among all Indian States, economically most backward State, high proportion of population below poverty line, Unemployment, poor land reforms implementation, Livelihood insecurity, poor public distribution system, scarcity of drinking water, lowest literacy rate among all Indian States, Health Problems, Lack of infrastructure, Lack of Government support, extremist activities, backwardness of agricultural and industrial sector, extremist activities

**Opportunities** : Fertile soil, Mineral Resources, Water Resources, Forests

**Threats**: Floods, droughts in some areas

2.1.2.2.3 Profile Analysis

Internet survey and research reveals that basic services including livelihood, health, housing, drinking water, education, infrastructure are the priority issues appearing as
“weaknesses” in the SWOT analysis, indicating intervention for development of the region and also reflective of critical information needs. It also emerges that Public Distribution System, Land Reforms and Government support in general need to be improved. Besides, natural resources, labour, skilled manpower could be judiciously tapped keeping environmental concerns in mind. Disaster Management and awareness also emerge as important areas considering some areas to be prone to natural hazards.
2.2. Existing Community Information Systems Analysis – Internet Survey

This section has been devoted to the internet research on a dozen Community Information Systems operational in India. The study includes community information projects, e-governance initiatives, e-commerce efforts and other ICT endeavours that have impacted the lives of the rural communities.

2.2.1. Citizen Services Portal ([http://www.iimahd.ernet.in/~egov](http://www.iimahd.ernet.in/~egov))

The objective of the project is to offer the rural citizens an improved access to information on government schemes and services and also facilitate the process of applying for the same from their villages, through an Internet portal and PC based information kiosks. The portal is expected to enhance transparency in government functioning and offer scope for improved service delivery.

CEG-IIMA has chosen Panchmahals district of Gujarat as the pilot district because it is predominantly a tribal district and most importantly because of the enterprising efforts of the district collector in involving the various departments at the collectorate and the concerned agencies in the state capital of Gandhinagar. CEG, with the Panchmahal District Collectorate has launched the Citizen Services Portal on 4th October, 2001

During the conceptualization and design phase, CEG held several meetings with various department officials, their heads, community leaders, elected representatives and the common man. The voluminous data received from the departments is categorized and converted to easily understandable local language format. Services of a retired state government official were used for two months for this language conversion task.

The portal contains about 130 forms, 45 schemes and 700 pages, cutting across 13 departments. Simple user interfaces were built for Grievance Redressal, Search Engines and Feedback sections. The information and services offered by this portal include:

- Information about various government departments
  - General Information
  - Departmental Schemes
  - Forms
  - Departmental Performance & Citizen’s grading
This section allows grassroots organisations and NGOs to register at the website by providing some minimal information.

Information on all major development proposals (schemes that have not yet been taken up but are under review) are put up on the site by the collectorate office.

Reactions, both in a structured and unstructured format are invited from registered organisations.

Individuals, who may want to express their opinion, may do so by approaching the relevant registered NGOs.

Public Utilities

Jobs

HelpLine

Area Profile (Panchmahal District)

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2.2.2. TARAhaat.com ([www.tarahaat.com](http://www.tarahaat.com))

TARAhaat.com is the road that connects the Indian villager to the rest of the world. Using computers, telephone lines, satellites in the sky and a wonderful idea called the "Internet" or the "Worldwide Web" – things that did not exist anywhere in the world only a few years ago -- TARAhaat opens opportunities for each one of us to reach our fullest potential.

TARAhaat.com is designed to be so simple that even a small child or an illiterate person can quickly learn to use it and get all the benefits it offers. The computer is the most faithful servant, doing whatever you ask it to do. For a few rupees, the citizen can use a computer at a TARAdhaba to find out the crop prices at a faraway mandi, print out a map of her land or find a bridegroom for his daughter.

The following pages briefly describe the information and services offered by the site as reported on 11.12.2002. A closer look at the information categorization design reveals the following points:

- The information and services have been separated into “Channels” and “Services”.

The available channels include Entertainment, Health, Livelihood, Schemes, Law, Governance, Water, Events, Agriculture and TARAGyan. The Services offered are TARAmandi, TARAdak, Astrology, Classifieds, Discussions, Resume, Matrimonial, Opportunity, Weather and w Pages

Each of them has “Read”, “Do” and “Find” sections.

Whereas, the “Read” section provides information on the categories defined for the selected channel/service, the “Do” section allows the users to contact experts, file complaints, post material(resume, advertisements etc.) related to the category for the selected Channel/Service. “Find” has generally not been working on the day of access, but appears to have been placed for performing search operations.

Information and Services Available at the Site (As on 11.12.2002) are as follows:

Channels:

- Entertainment

  Read, Do and Find Sections

  - Read
    - Movies (news from bollywood, movie reviews etc.)
    - Music(Personality profile, news, informative articles etc.)
    - Television(serials on various channels)

  - Do
    - Ask an Expert
    - File Complaint

  - Find
    - Search

- Health

  Read, Do and Find Sections
Read

- Child Health (Development Process of Child, Teething, Vaccination, Malnutrition etc.)
- Nutrition (Healthy Foods: that give energy, facilitate growth, prevent illness & diseases, vitamin & mineral rich foods)
- First Aid (first aid for common ailments like nose bleeds, cuts, scrapes & small wounds, very high fever, Infectious diseases, external bleeding fractures, eye injuries)
- Family Planning (no subsequent information)
- Disease (Polio)

Do

- Ask an Expert (Provision for sending mail to livelihood@tarahaat.com on one of the enlisted subjects- Small scale industries, Choose your enterprise, Success Stories, Health. However, the facility is not fully functional.)
- File Complaint
- Find
- Search

Livelihood

Read

- Small Scale Industries

Under this section following has been covered:

- Set up your own small scale enterprise to increase your source of income and improve your standard of life, using following information:
  - Finance
  - Registration / Statutory Licenses And Clearances
  - Repayment of Loans
  - Production
  - Marketing
Choose Your Enterprise
- In this section, information on starting small business using local resources has been provided. This includes preparation of beverages from ginger oil, selling corn oil extracted from corn seeds, preparing incense sticks, pickles, laundry soaps, sugarcane based products like gur & khandsari, herbal products like cosmetics, medicines, oils, vermicomposting i.e. converting organic waste into manure etc. The information includes the things required to be done for starting the business, capital required and the market potential for the business.

Success Stories
- This section includes success stories narrating the experiences of budding entrepreneurs.

Schemes

Read
- This section provides information about the schemes under following categories
  - Literacy
  - Insurance
  - Agriculture
  - Employment
  - Home & Family
  - Youth
  - Health
This section provides information about various laws that govern day-to-day activities of the common man.

Read, Do and Find Sections

Read
- You and Your Employer
- Marriage
- Woman’s Right to Property
- You and the Police
- First Information Report
- Land Acquisition

Do
- Ask an Expert (Provision for sending mail to law@tarahaat.com on one of the enlisted subjects -Marriage, You & Your employer, A Woman’s Right to property, You and the Police, First Information Report, Land Acquisition. However, the facility is not fully functional.)
- File Complaints

Find
- Search (Not Working)
- Read
  - The Constitution of India
  - System of Governance
  - Legislature
  - Judiciary
  - Democracy
  - Elections

- Do
  - Ask an Expert (Provision for send mail to governance@tarahaat.com on one of the enlisted subjects – The constitution of India, System of Governance, Legislature, Judiciary, Democracy, Elections. However, the facility is not fully functional).
  - File Complaints

- Find
  - Search

Water

Read, Do and Find Sections

- Read
  - Chlorinating Water Pools
  - Boiling
  - Filtering Methods
  - Community’s Role
  - Harvesting & Conservation
  - Roof Top Harvesting
  - Bunding
  - Contour Trenching
  - Terracing
  - Check Dams
  - Water Logging
  - Moisture Retention in Soil
  - Mulching
  - Strip Cropping
  - Watershed brings smiles
  - Chlorinating Tube wells
  - Contour Farming
- Do
  - Ask an Expert (Though not fully functional, it provides an opportunity to send e-mails to water@tarahaat.com to contact experts in one of the enlisted areas – Health Expert, Insurance, Chlorinating Water Pools, Boiling, Filtering Methods, Mulching, Community’s Role, Loan Schemes, Nursery, Harvesting & Conservation, Roof Top Harvesting, Bunding, Contour Trenching & Terracing.)

- Find
  - Search

- Events
  - Read
  - Cultural Shows
  - Festivals
  - Find
  - Search

- Agriculture

Read, Do and Find Sections

- Read
  - Agroforestry
  - Commercial Trees
  - Crops
  - Fertilizers
  - Herbicides
  - Insects
  - Loan Schemes
  - Nursery
- Organic Farming
- Plant Diseases
- Planting Systems
- Soil
- Tractor Maintenance
- Types of Farming
- Weeds

- Do
  - Ask an Expert (Though not fully functional, it provides an opportunity to send e-mails to agriculture@tarahaat.com to contact experts in one of the enlisted areas – Agroforestry, Commercial Trees, Crops, Fertilizers, Herbicides, Insects, Organic Farming and Plant Diseases)

- File Complaints

- Find
  - Search

- TARAGyan

Services:

- TARAmandi

  It provides daily price variations in the enlisted mandis of the area. The prices are provided for commodities like fruits, grains, oilseeds and vegetables. Mandi-wise and Commodity-wise information on price variations for a particular date are also provided. However, on the date of accessing the site, no information was available.

- TARAdak

  This is a messaging service available to the registered users and has all the routine facilities provided by e-mail providers.
❖ Astrology

This provides weekly sun-sign forecast for the registered users.

❖ Classifieds

TARAhaat's mission is to become the premium Classified directory service, providing information to buyers and sellers in all areas where they operate. The idea is to provide value to their customers and users by generating business leads and providing information and purchasing solutions. To meet the changing demands of the customers and users they take advantage of the latest technologies and communication methods. This will allow to continue to provide value to our advertisers and users.

TARAhaat's Classified Pages can make some very lucrative bargains. Moreover, the users have the option of choosing from different vendors and comparing the rates offered. TARAhaat's Classifieds eliminates the middleman and brings the buyer and seller in direct contact with each other. This makes the whole buying and selling process swift and efficient.

Read, Do and Find Sections:

- Read
  - Civil Supplies
  - Sanitary ware
  - Farm equipment
  - Home Appliances
  - Motor Parts
  - Hardware
  - Building Material
  - Books-Education
  - Dairy-Poultry
  - Health-Medicine
  - Food
  - Web Designer
- Do
  - Buy
  - Sell
  - Barter
  - Post a Classified

- Find
  - General search

- Discussions
  This service allows users to join a discussion, post and view replies.

- Resume

Read, Do and Find Section

- Read
  - Sales & Marketing
  - Medical
  - Building and Construction
  - Management
  - Teaching
  - Others
  - Accounts
  - Secretarial
  - Computers
  - Tips on writing a Resume
  - Tips on writing a covering Letter

- Do
  - Post a Resume (using an easy-to-fill form)

- Find
  - Jobs in your city
  - General search (Not working)

- Matrimonial
Read, Do and Find sections

- Read
  - Matrimonial for Bride (brief bio-data of prospective brides & a search facility on age/mother tongue/religion/marital status/region)
  - Matrimonial for Groom (brief bio-data for prospective grooms & a search facility on age/mother tongue/religion/marital status/region)

- Do
  - Post Details for Matrimonial Advertisement (Using an easy-to-fill form)

- Find
  - Search

Opportunity

Read, Do and Find Sections:

- Read
  - Sales & Marketing
  - Medical
  - Building and Construction
  - Management
  - Teaching
  - Others
  - Accounts
  - Secretarial
  - Computers
  - Others
  - Education
  - Consulting
Weather

This service intends to provide weather forecast for major Indian cities for the current day and three days hence in terms of parameters like Max./Min. temperature, Relative humidity, Sun rise, sun set and current conditions. However, on the day of access, the service was not functional.

Yellow Pages

Service Introduction as reported by the site:

Yellow Pages in TARAhaat have a wide reach. It is viewed not only in the nearby towns but also in metros and even in cities abroad. Besides getting listed with the yellow pages, there is provision for putting up banner advertisement on this site at a very nominal cost.

TARAhaat has the unique advantage of being viewed by the rural masses all over Jhansi and Bathinda as well as city dwellers, promoters, partners and funders. It reaches out to people in three different languages and it is planned to add eight more Indian languages. Yellow Pages hope to bridge the divide between rural and urban India, open up the market, and thus providing rural India an opportunity to play an active part in Indian and Global economy.

Read, Do and Find Sections:

- Read
  - Advocates
Ambulance  
Books and Stationery  
Farm Equipment  
Farming Chemicals  
Fertilizers, Pesticides  
Gas service  
Government  
Hardware  
Home Appliances  
Hospitals  
Hotels  
Sanitary ware  
Tractor Parts

- Do  
  - Get Listed in the Yellow Pages  
- Find  
  - General Search

2.2.3. Gyandoot (www.gyandoot.nic.in)

Gyandoot is an intranet in Dhar district connecting rural cyber cafes catering to the everyday needs of the masses. This web site of GYANDOOT is an extension of Gyandoot intranet, for giving global access. Following information is offered by the site (as reported by the web site on 10.12.2002):

- Commodity/ Mandi Marketing Information System.
- Income Certificate.
- Domicile Certificate (mool niwasi)
- Caste Certificate.
- Landholder's passbook of land rights and loans (Bhoo adhikar evam rin pustika).
- Rural Hindi e-mail.
- Public Grievances Redressal (Shikayat Nivaran)
- Forms of Various Government Schemes.
- Below Poverty Line Family List.
- Employment news.
Rural matrimonial (Vivah Sambandh).
Rural Market (Gaon ka Bazaar).
Rural News Paper (Gram Samachar).
Advisory module (Salahkar)
E-education
Driving License.
Khasra Nakal Avedan.
Varmi Compost Khad Booking.


Introduction

Under this prestigious Bhoomi E-Governance project of the Government all 20 million land records of 6.7 million land owners in 176 taluks of Karnataka have been computerised. This system works with the software called "BHOOMI" designed fully in-house by National Informatics Center, Bangalore. While the project is largely funded by Government of India; some critical components of this project are funded by State Government.

Important Features of BHOOMI

"Bhoomi" is a very comprehensive software designed by NIC, Bangalore. This software provides for printing of land records as and when required. It incorporates process of online updation to ensure that the RTCs provided to the farmers is in sync with the time. The manual land records in operationalised taluks have been declared illegal. All the mutations to the land records database are done on the computer itself so as to ensure that data on computer remain current with time.

2.2.5. MSSRF Initiatives

In an experiment under Information Village Research Project in electronic knowledge delivery to the poor, MSSRF has connected ten villages near Pondicherry in southern India by a hybrid wired and wireless network that facilitates both voice and data transfer, and have enabled the villagers to get information that they need and can use to improve their lot. The entire project draws its sustenance from the holistic philosophy of Swaminathan, which emphasizes an integrated pro-poor, pro-women, pro-nature orientation to development and community ownership of technological tools against personal or family ownership, and encourages collective action for spread of technology.
The **bottom up exercise** involves local volunteers to gather information, feed it into an Intranet and provide access through nodes in different villages. Value addition to the raw information, use of the local language (Tamil) and multimedia (to facilitate illiterate users) and participation by local people right from the beginning are the noteworthy features of the project. Most of the operators and volunteers providing primary information are women, thus giving them status and influence. All centres evolved themselves to meet the information demands made by the community.

**Databases**

Creation and updating of relevant content to suit local needs is a key factor in the programme. Unless people get what they want - unless they get answers to their queries - they will lose interest in the whole programme. The value addition center in Villianur has generated a number of databases to fulfill many of these requirements. Most of them are frequently updated. A considerable part of information is accessed from the local sources. All the databases are in Tamil except one on below-poverty-line families which is an official document in English. Local volunteers facilitate the users to know if they were listed under BPL. Rural Yellow Pages have also been created, and people are allowed to insert advertisements. For example, one can know who is renting a tractor and at what price. A tailor buying a new sewing machine can announce the sale of his old machine and someone renovating house can announce the sale of old tiles and bricks.

In one of the villages sugar cane crop was being affected by red rot disease. The Knowledge Centre volunteer contacted a sugar cane expert and found out what should be done and transmitted the information to the affected farmers and they could save their crops. Given below is an indicative list of databases.

**Current Information**

- Today’s News
- Meteorological report
- Wave height up to 1200 noon
- Wave height up to 1200 midnight
- Gold / Silver prices today
- Vegetable prices today
- Vegetable prices today at Farmers market
- Acquisition price of paddy varieties
- Purchase price of crop varieties
- Bio-Fertiliser stock at godown
- Fertiliser stock at godown
- Pesticide stock at godown
- Details of paddy (seed) at godown

Useful [long-term] information

- Government schemes / programmes
- Pondicherry Government schemes / programmes
- Programme for Children/students
- Programmes for people/citizens
- Programme for women
- Programmes for SC/ST
- Programmes or the Handicapped
- Programmes for people below poverty line
- Police Department News
- Historical Information

Citizens' Charter

- Social Welfare Board
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Fisheries & Fishermen's Welfare
- District Industrial Centre
- Department of Social Welfare
- Department of Tribal Welfare
- Department of Child/Women Welfare
- Department of statistics & Economics Welfare
- Department of Local Government
- Department of Animal Husbandry

Cattle and Feeds
- Use of Green Fodder
- Disease free Animals - Indicators of Healthy Animals
- Indicators of common cattle diseases

Health Information
- TB treatment
- Medical care for women (O & G)
- Address of Hospitals
- Health notes
- Visual explanation of diarrhea
- Elephantiasis
- Fruit medicine

Agricultural Information
- Controlling the borer in Mango
- Disease control in Brinjal
- Controlling the borer in Plantain tee
- Paddy cultivation methods
- Fungal diseases affecting rice crops in winter
- Sugarcane cultivation methods
- Grasses and their uses
- Soil testing procedures
- Seasons and agronomic procedures
- New Sugarcane variety
• Earthworm manure production

Educational Information

• Pondicherry University - Directorate of Distance Education
• How to pass examinations - students guide
• Educational Institutions in - TAGORE
• Diploma in Information Technology - Madurai Kamaraj University (20.07.2000)
• Entrance Examination Maths Model Question Paper
• Entrance Examination Biology Model Question Paper
• Entrance Examination Physics Model Question Paper
• Community College of Pondicherry University
• Education Treasury

General Information

• Important [Emergency] telephone numbers
• Addresses and Telephone Number in Pondicherry (17. 07. 2000)
• Telephone numbers of Central and State government offices
• National Insurance Plan
• United India Insurance
• Foreign postage rates
• Wage fixed by the Government
• Rules and regulations of employment exchange

2.2.6. E-Governance Initiatives (as on 12.12.2002)

Apart from above there are a host of e-governance initiatives undertaken by the Indian Government at various levels of its administrative set up. Almost all the ministries at the National level have their official web sites disseminating information of public interest. Besides, most of the State governments are also on-line with a number of citizen-oriented information and services. The details are available at http://Indialmage.nic.in which is the gateway to government of India web sites and services.

Following is a list of some of the major efforts in this direction.
- Rajasthan Government - Lokmitra (www.lokmitra.gov.in)
- Haryana Govt. - Nai Disha (www.nai-disha.nic.in)
- Himachal Pradesh Government – (http://himachal.nic.in)
- AP-online (www.aponline.gov.in)
- Punjab Government (http://punjabgovt.nic.in)
- Bihar Government (http://bih.nic.in)
- Maharashtra Government (http://maharashtra.gov.in)
- Goa Government (http://goagovt.nic.in)
- Sikkim Government (http://sikkim.nic.in)
- Karnataka web site (http://kar.nic.in) etc.

All other government of India official web sites have been catalogued at http://goidirectory.nic.in.

The information & services offered by the government web sites include various government forms & procedures, certificates, area profiles, bus/railway/airlines time tables, census data, yellow pages, grievance redressal, information about educational institutions.

2.2.7. E-Commerce Initiatives


PEOPLink, a non-profit organization formed in 1995, employs a grassroots strategy to help artisans in over 22 less developed countries use the Internet to reach world markets. Working at the local community level, PEOPLink has opened doors for many aspiring artists the world over by providing them with access to a variety of modern technologies, including digital imaging and Internet technologies. With the goal of empowering artisans in the developing world through e-commerce, and a commitment to narrowing the digital divide by offering self-sustaining techniques for reaching world markets, PEOPLink fosters the linking of cultures in the ever-evolving global society. With a growing network of trading partners throughout the world, most of which are women, PEOPLink gives artisans access to virtually every global market.
This dream project of catapulting the artisans from the shadows to the thresholds of global footwear fashion has been conceptualized and implemented through the synergistic efforts of the Central Leather Research Institute which has provided the design and technical inputs, ASCENT (Asian Centre for Entrepreneurial Initiatives created the road maps to entrepreneurial initiatives and market linkages and NLDP (National Leather Development Programme) has supported the programme.

2.3. Prioritization and Grouping of Information Needs

It is important to prioritize the information and services, so as to ensure that the critical areas of information needs are addressed, particularly those that are highlighted as priority issues by the poor themselves. Such areas include livelihood security, employment opportunities, education, health drinking water, irrigation water etc. It is equally important to group the identified information areas appropriately so that an information structure, which is commonly applicable across the rural communities and at the same time, which incorporates the local specificities, emerges as a result.

From the above study and research it follows that government entitlements, Education, Agriculture, Fisheries, Health, weather reports and bus time tables are the popular areas of information access among the rural communities. The information relates to prices of agricultural inputs (such as seeds, fertilizers, pesticides) and outputs (rice, vegetables), market (potential for export), entitlement (the multitude of schemes of the central and state governments, banks), health care (availability of doctors and paramedics in nearby hospitals, women's diseases), cattle diseases, transport (road conditions, cancellation of bus trips), weather (appropriate time for sowing, areas of abundant fish catch, wave heights in the sea), etc. Another important development is the emerging interest, especially among the youth, to create local content that could be shared within the network. These relate to traditional and indigenous knowledge, commercial information and educational opportunities.

Domain Analysis confirmed that basic services including livelihood, health, housing, drinking water, education, infrastructure are the priority issues appearing as “weaknesses” in the SWOT analysis, indicating intervention for development of the region and also reflective of critical information needs. It also emerges that Public Distribution System, Land Reforms and Government support in general needed to be improved. Besides, natural resources, labour, skilled manpower could be judiciously tapped keeping environmental concerns in mind. Disaster Management and awareness also emerged as important areas considering some areas to be prone to natural hazards.

Following Information Categories and sub-categories emerge as a result of Internet and live survey data when fed into Information Need Assessment Model (INAM)
Category 1: Basic Needs

- Sub-Category 1: Livelihood
  - Agriculture/Farming (Best farming Practices, Crop Diseases, Fertilizers, Agro-forestry etc.)
  - Animal Husbandry (Cattle rearing, common diseases, veterinary services etc)
  - Fisheries
  - Ask an Expert

- Sub-Category 2: Health
  - Health Facilities
  - Basic Hygiene
  - Nutrition
  - First Aid
  - Child Health
  - Women Health
  - Common Diseases
  - Family Planning
  - Doctor’s Advice

- Sub-Category 3: Drinking Water
  - Sources of Safe Drinking Water
  - Purification Methods

- Sub-Category 4: Transport
  - Time Tables (Bus, train)
  - Hiring Services

- Sub-Category 5: Emergency Services
  - Blood Banks
  - Ambulance
  - Fire Station
  - Medical

- Sub-Category 6: Education
  - Educational Facilities
  - Non-Formal Education
  - Vocational Education
  - Distance Education
  - Virtual Schools
  - Examination Results
  - Career Counselling
  - General Knowledge
  - Educative Material
  - Libraries / e-Libraries
Useful sites (Question banks, Dictionary.com etc.)

**Category2: Government Information**

- **Sub-Category1:** Government Schemes
  - For various Groups (Child, Girls, Youth, Women, Handicapped, SC/ST, Old )
  - Sector-wise (Agriculture, Education, Health etc.)

- **Sub-Category2:** Forms

- **Sub-Category3:** Certificates

- **Sub-Category4:** Land Records

- **Sub-Category5:** Below Poverty Line Family List

- **Sub-Category6:** Voter List

- **Sub-Category7:** Employment Opportunities

- **Sub-Category8:** Licenses and Permits

- **Sub-Category9:** Contact Government

- **Sub-Category10:** Department wise Citizen’s Charter

**Category3: Self Employment**

- **Sub-Category1:** Set up your own Enterprise using local resources
  - Potential Enterprises (Pickles, Incense sticks, Vermi composting etc.)
    - Steps to be undertaken
    - Capital required
    - Market Potential
    - Sources of Assistance
    - Statutory Licenses and Clearances
Sub-Category2: Traditional skills and know-how exchange

- Rural Technologies
- Preparing Herbal Medicines

Sub-Category3: Success Stories

Category4: Access to Justice

Sub-Category1: Rights & Responsibilities
- The System of Governance
- You and Your Employer
- Marriage
- Women’s Right to property
- Land Acquisition
- First Information Report (FIR)
- Police Services
- Elections
- Legal advice

Sub-Category2: Grievance Redress
- Lodge a Grievance
- Grievance Status

Sub-Category3: Court Case Information

Category5: Daily Information

Sub-Category1: Inventory/Stock Positions in various Fair Price Shops

Sub-Category2: Market Prices for various commodities

Sub-Category3: Daily News

Sub-Category4: Water Release Time Schedule for Irrigation

Sub-Category5: Daily Weather Report

Sub-Category6: Visit Schedules of Government Functionaries
Category 6: Environmental Awareness

- Sub-Category 1: Keep your environment clean
  - Health and Sanitation

- Sub-Category 2: Pollution
  - Pollution Types
  - Sources of Pollution
  - How to Check Pollution

- Sub-Category 3: Environment Protection Measures
  - Soil Conservation
  - Water Conservation
  - Forest Conservation

- Sub-Category 4: Disaster Management
  - Preventive Measures
  - What to do in case of a disaster
  - Rehabilitation Measures
  - Sources of Assistance

- Sub-Category 5: Environment Protection Act and Guidelines

Category 7: Classifieds and Entertainment

- Sub-Category 1: Employment Services

- Sub-Category 2: Yellow Pages

- Sub-Category 3: Deals (Buying, Selling, Bartering, Mortgaging and Lending offers for different categories – Farm Equipment, Livestock, Spare parts, Grains etc.)

- Sub-Category 4: Matrimonial

- Sub-Category 5: Astrology
Sub-Category6: Entertainment

Category8: Announcements

- Sub-Category1: Immunization/Polio Vaccination Dates
- Sub-Category2: Visit of Government Functionaries
- Sub-Category3: Health Camps
- Sub-Category4: Admission Notices to Schools/Colleges
- Sub-Category5: Seasonal Diseases and Preventive Measures
- Sub-Category6: Epidemic Outbreak & Preventive Measures
- Sub-Category7: SHG Meetings
- Sub-Category8: Vocational Education Programs
- Sub-Category9: Fairs and Festivals

Category9: Area Profile

- Sub-Category1: Area Fact Sheet
- Sub-Category2: Niche & Opportunities
- Sub-Category3: Successful Development Initiatives