

A woman with grey hair, wearing a green and yellow striped sari over a red top, stands smiling in the doorway of a rustic building with peeling white paint. The background shows wooden steps and interior structures.

Swaniti Initiative

# Annual Report

March 2019-March 2020



### **Looking back and learning....**

2019-2020 has been an incredible year of growth as we have expanded our work with state governments and demonstrated impact through state level policy shift. Our work has been able to converge support with Parliamentarians as we have been able to leverage our relationship with them and experience of constituency development to be able to create state level impact. From working with the Urban Development department in Manipur to Department of Health in Bihar, we have gotten the opportunity to span across departments and assess how state level planning is translating to ground level scheme delivery.

Our commitment, subsequently, to data driven governance and research has only grown. Using our experiences within state governments, we have been able to develop more indepth research and knowledge pieces that can cut across states. For example, in Manipur we learned that the lack of skill of data entry officers at a block level is a major bottleneck to scheme enrollment in key government programs. We were able to take this learning to our district work in Jharkhand and translate it to action. Being present in multiple states has allowed us this opportunity.

Going forward, in 2020-21 we plan on continuing to work with more state and districts governments on issues of livelihood, health and social safety net and continue engaging key constituents like Parliamentarians through this process. .



# ABOUT SWANITI INITIATIVE



Swaniti Initiative is a social enterprise that provides development solutions to improve delivery of public services. We leverage research, data and a knowledge base of public service delivery to create the most impact.

### **The Problem:**

- **Lack of human capital support**
- **Limited specialised knowledge**

**Indian bureaucrats** are the primary medium of **executing development programs worth over \$250 billion** annually in areas of health, education, gender, infrastructure and environment. Unfortunately, **for every 100,000 people, there are only 125 government administrators, and sparse data points.** Similarly, legislators are responsible for oversight of 30.42 crore of budgetary allocation. However, India has 543 legislators for 1.34 billion Indians, i.e, a single legislator represents almost 25 lakh Indians. Severe understaffing has led to major bottlenecks in welfare projects.

### **Our Solution:**

- **Creating networks**
- **Building relationships**
- **Leveraging data-driven tools**

This is where Swaniti Initiative comes in. Swaniti saw a tremendous opportunity in building networks between state governments, policy leaders, private sector and communities throughout the world, equipping them with a mix of problem-solving tools, data & research insights, and on ground support. We work extensively across rungs of governance to deliver development solutions to the bottom of the pyramid in grassroots India. Our core ethos is to engage with the government to catalyze development and bridge the existing knowledge gap by developing efficient and impactful frameworks and leveraging data-driven tools.

Swaniti Initiative's theory of change believes that if basic services of health, economic empowerment and social welfare is provided to the most vulnerable populations through government services to all citizens, then the country will have an opportunity to grow equally and justly. To effectively combat the three challenges to public service delivery, we do the following::

### Lack of Human Capital



There is only **100 government official** serving every **125,000 people**. One-fifth the number of administrators than US.



We engage communities by placing Associates directly where they can inform and engage people about basic rights and how they can access them (including building capacity).

### Lack of Knowledge



Less than **one percent** of budgets are invested in getting key **knowledge support** to better support administrators.



Associates then conduct research, document experiences and providing insights on development experiences on ground to create longer term sustainable changes.

### Lack of Systems Support



There is lack of capacity and absence of **technology tools** at the to complement the efforts put in by the senior officials.



We leverage technology tools and create visualization and dashboards to identify which communities are deprived of the kind of programs.

All these findings are presented through real time dashboards, project monitoring platform and community response platforms.

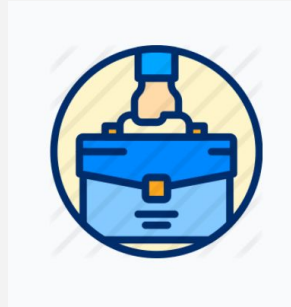
Swaniti Initiative's core areas of work concentrate on raising the standard of basic services relating to health, sustainable livelihood and social safety nets. It is these three pillar, that we believe, if effectively targeted, can enable us to lift the most vulnerable populations out of poverty. In this respect, Swaniti works on three key pillars:

### Building Public Health Systems



We believe that access to healthcare enriches a person's life and enables them to work towards a better future.

### Creating Sustainable Livelihoods



Steady and rewarding jobs, engage communities to help draw people out of poverty.

### Strengthening Social Safety Nets



Social security nets help empower citizens through non-contributory assistance to further empower them.



# ENGAGEMENTS WITH STATE GOVERNMENTS





# Andhra Pradesh

Swaniti Initiative is currently working with the government of Andhra Pradesh to strengthen policy planning processes through bottom up feedback systems. We anticipate the citizen feedback will allow for inclusion of last mile beneficiaries and equal access to all citizens for basic government programs.



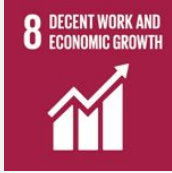
## KEY ACTIVITIES

- **Conducting on-ground assessments** of existing programs
- **Identifying systemic gaps** and issues
- **Working with the administration** to build capacity and support
- Identify ways to **substantively institutionalize program support**
- **Introducing systemic changes** in policy design process
- **Institutionalizing cultural change** in policy processes

## KEY SECTORS & SCHEMES IN FOCUS

- **Agriculture and Allied Activities**  
Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, Rythu Bharosa
- **Crop Insurance and Farm Productivity**  
PM Fasal Bima Yojna, National Food Security Mission
- **Irrigation and Water Conservation**  
IWMP, PM Krishi Sinchayee, Rural Drinking Water
- **Rural Development and Skilling**  
DDUKGY, Pension Kanuka, Unnathil





# Manipur and Tripura

In association with Better Than Cash Alliance, Swaniti worked in the North East of India, with the state governments of Manipur and Tripura for improving access to a range of government benefits, administered through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) programs which aims to drive the shift from cash to digital payments as an alternative to reduce poverty and drive inclusive growth.



## KEY ACTIVITIES

- The Swaniti Team, in its stakeholder interactions, **identified that state governments were not using the PFMS platform**, and recommended changes.
- They further **set up mechanisms to consolidate inputs in an IEC network** for swift uptake and fewer rejections.
- The team **worked in collaboration with the state government to solve logistical challenges** such as that of manpower and capacity building.

## SWANITI'S IMPACT

- Through our recommendations, we **impacted 1,46,622 beneficiaries**
- The project **helped in initiating payment of INR 103 cr** on PFMS for Manipur and Tripura
- Beneficiary **verification for PMAY formalised, payment process timespan reduced from 96 hours to 48 hours**, regular reporting on scheme progress for every individual beneficiary
- **Payment error and failure as per last payment is zero** in Department of Urban Development Tripura



# Uttar Pradesh & Bihar

Swaniti works with the Human Liberty Network to help analyze the conditions of the vulnerability of marginalized population in UP and Bihar. We further provide insights to NGOs and the government to help strengthen the policies of the governments in UP and Bihar to tackle deteriorating situations of debt bondage and human trafficking.



## Engaging with Govt Stakeholders

- **Organised a state-level consultation in Patna** with a focus to give HLN a higher visibility and provide a platform to survivors to make their voices heard among high policy stakeholders.
- **Signed an MOU with the Bihar Health Department**, to provide technical support on the to study the implementation of Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthaan Yojana (MKUY)
- **Placed Technical Units** on healthcare schemes within Bihar and UP governments.

## Building Capacity of HLN Partners

- **Carried out strength mapping of all HLN partners** to understand the different approaches used by partners
- **Undertook one on one engagements** to achieve conceptual and directional clarity on policy engagement.
- **Provided technical support** to help partners meet district goals
- **Connected partners with leading experts and policy makers** for knowledge building.

# Jharkhand

Swaniti Initiative has set up District Mineral Foundation Trusts (DMFT) in **four mining affected districts** in Jharkhand - **Ramgarh, Ranchi, Godda and Pakur**. These Planning and monitoring units support the District Administration with the aim of benefiting people affected by mining related activities and improving their living conditions.



## KEY ACTIVITIES:

- **Conducting Need Assessments** in mining villages
- **Supporting gram sabhas** in preparing annual action plans
- **Supporting the district administration** in planning interventions
- **Developing monitoring frameworks** for on-going projects
- **Carrying out stakeholder interactions** through community consultations and interviews with officials.

## SWANITI'S IMPACT:

- Using insights from local data collection and discussions, our Jharkhand **team got a total of 2396 projects approved** by the Governing Council
- The team oversaw the upgradation of facilities in the Ramgarh district hospital **leading to a 90% reduction in referrals to State hospitals**
- The team created of a comprehensive and sustainable system to ensure projects are completed in a timely manner, and regular updates are given.





# Rajasthan and Punjab



Swaniti Initiative, in partnership with the North India office of the U.S. Embassy New Delhi, implemented the “Supporting Her Empowerment via Digital Tools” - a workshop series that seeks to increase and broaden women artisans’ market access. We worked with CSO and NGOs to provide trainings on digital tools and strategies required to grow businesses beyond the local marketplace and contribute to the economic growth women artisans and their communities. **Swaniti held two workshops in Punjab and Rajasthan. In addition to the workshop, participating artisans would be provided with dedicated handholding for a six-month period.**



## SWANITI'S IMPACT

- **Participants reported an increase in online traction** within 2 months of each workshop.
- **Participants also trained other artisans**, helping us reach 5 times the people attending the workshops.
- **Working with Aajeevika National Rural Livelihoods Mission** Swaniti took trainers through sessions on holding similar programs.

## PARTNERSHIPS ESTABLISHED

- **Flipkart Samarth:** A breakthrough initiative by India's leading e-commerce marketplace Flipkart, they **onboarded participants to help them break onto e-commerce.**
- **Lal10:** A social enterprise building tech tools to improve market linkages for artisans, they **helped artisans understand how to use tech to interact with customers easily.**

# Fighting Forced Migration Across 11 States

Swaniti Initiative is the technical assistance partner for the India Working Group Against Trafficking (IWG), a network of 22 NGOs working across 11 states who are doing grassroots work to combat forced migration. Swaniti is working with IWG at a policy level to help them understand the ecosystem. Below is a glimpse of the work Swaniti has carried out this year.



## Engaging with Govt Stakeholders

- Initiated **engagements with key policy stakeholders** such as members of Labour Standing Committee
- **Arranged a closed-door interaction in February 2020 with policy makers** for IWG partners to showcase their work.
- Facilitated the creation of a **recommendation paper by IWG submitted to NITI Aayog** - the government think-tank.
- **Submitted letters to the PMO** on proposing recommendations to combat distress of migrant workers.

## Building Capacity of IWG Members

- **Prepared comparative notes** on ISMWA and the OSH Code, 2019,
- **Conducted periodical webinars and meetings** for IWG partners on knowledge building.
- **Prepared detailed research methodology, and evidence collection tools** for IWG partners to facilitate a coordinated data collection strategy
- **Leveraged Swaniti's experience with social media** to work on a comprehensive strategy for online activism.



# WORKING WITH PARLIAMENTARIANS



- The States' Total Deficit would rise by Rs 211 lakh crore
- The GDP instead of being Rs 211 lakh crore assumed in the budget would be Rs 200 lakh crore
- If no cut in expenditures, Centre's Deficit would be 4.63% of GDP
- The total FD would be  $4.63 \times 2.4 \text{ (PSU)} \times 3.78 \text{ (States)} = 10.76\%$

# Protecting children's rights



Since Swaniti Initiative has the unique advantage of having an ear to the ground, as well as consistent interactions with Parliamentarians across party lines, a unique forum called the Parliamentarians' Group for Children (PGC) was set up in 2017 by Swaniti Initiative and UNICEF India. PGC is a platform that convenes, informs and engages Members of Parliament (MPs) on issues of children's rights.

## KEY INITIATIVES

- **Capacity building of Parliamentarians** for creating improved and sustainable policies
- **Roundtable conferences** with section experts
- **Creating a safe platform for cross-party discussions** on issues of children's rights at quarterly meetings
- **Creation of a newsletter** to inform Parliamentarians of latests news and best practises in the realm of child rights.

## SWANITI'S IMPACT

- **Onboarding 250 Parliamentarians** to the PGC platform who pledged to work towards better child rights.
- **Creation of a core PGC committee** headed by stalwarts such as Ms. Vandana Chavan, Mr. Gaurav Gogoi, Dr. Amee Yagnik, Mr. Ravi Prakash Verma, Dr. Sanjay Jaiswal, Dr. Vikas Mahatme and Ms. Heena Gavit.
- **Creating media engagement pieces** through videos and opinion pieces to highlight challenges and achievements .





# Creating economic opportunity



Swaniti collaborated on a project with UBER India, that looked to improve economic opportunities for its partners by streamlining formalisation through Uber. As a part of analytical advocacy, Swaniti conduct primary and secondary research to assess the impact of Uber in employment generation, formalisation, skill development within the gig economy through the lens of political representatives.

## KEY ACTIVITIES

- To build a study on the 'Impact of Tech Aggregators on the Indian Economy', the **Swaniti team first carried out a secondary research** to understand the overall impact of aggregators globally and nationally.
- Post that, **one-on-one interviews were carried out with 30 key parliamentarians** to gauge the perception of the Political Economy on these aggregators and their impact on the gig economy
- In addition, **a closed door session was organised which witnessed 15 MPs in attendance across party lines** to better understand the gig economy, potential of job creation through Uber, challenges for the labour market and the way forward.
- The **meetings resulted in a report** on best practises in designing effective policy interventions, protecting the interests of driver partners and aggregators and streamlining formal employment for UBER India.



# ROUNDTABLES



Swaniti Initiative has held multiple roundtables every Thursday during the Parliament session. Swaniti believes, that by bringing Parliamentarians and section experts together to converse on India's most pressing problems, we can help quicken the process of problem solving.

**Our aim with the closed door roundtables is to equip Parliamentarians with information that helps them take data and evidence-based decisions.** In the past year, we have hosted roundtables on matters such as **the annual budget, child rights, the gig economy, creating vocational jobs in districts, healthcare innovation and budgeting**, and many more.

# SWANITI TALKS



Swaniti Initiative believes that great ideas germinate through candid discussions and based on this premise organizes "Swaniti Talks" that had the youth of the country, and eminent politicians come together for a discussion. The Initiative was to foster an environment where constituents have the opportunity gain insights about governance and development, express their thoughts and ideas and network.

We saw the participation of MPs like **Ms. Aparajita Sarangi** and **Mr. Lavu Sri Krishna Devarayalu** for Swaniti Talks sessions in the past year.



# Key Research Papers Developed

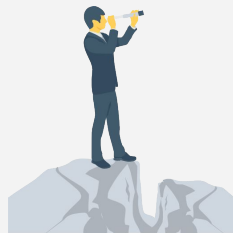
Backed by a research team, Swaniti creates a number of legislative briefs and insight papers. A few examples are below:

## Analysing Government Schemes

- Agriculture Price Policy and Minimum Support Price in India
- National Rural Drinking Water Programme
- Food Security and PDS in Andhra Pradesh
- Macro Policy Impediments for Women Care in India
- Effective Management of Public Finances for State Sponsored Welfare for Andhra Pradesh Schemes

## Papers Looking At Social Safety Nets

- Roadmap to Revive the Andhra Economy
- Alternate Finance for Infrastructure Development
- MUDRA - A Pathway to Financial Inclusion
- Climate Change and Mitigation Strategy in India
- Streamlining Employment Data in India
- Development Progress of West Bengal



# Looking Forward - The Year Ahead

While the past year had been incredible for Swaniti Initiative, we aim to further work towards the following:

## > SCALE UP OUR WORK

We aim to scale up our work to collaborate with more MPs and state governments. We believe that our research work, coupled with our on-the-ground experience have prepared us to share valuable development support with a sizeable cohort of MPs. Additionally we also see the prospect of working with more MPs as an opportunity for us to share our knowledge tools with a bigger population and engage in a two-way process.

## > INCREASE OUR OUTREACH

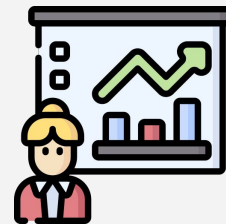
Through effective use of media, we aim to bring development concerns to the notice of the public and help them engage with their Parliamentarians. In the coming year, Swaniti will make a concerted effort to increase our outreach to constituents through social media platform (such as Twitter and Facebook), the print media (by aiming to release information about development and governance periodically) and Swaniti Talks.

## > STRENGTHEN OUR SUPPORT

We aim to continue strengthening our human capital and donor support. Swaniti's current team and alumni consist of tremendously talented professionals and we expect to continue building on this talent within the team. Additionally, the team looks forward to a year of strong partnerships and collaboration with different organisation towards our goals of helping the governance system function well. Swaniti looks forward to starting new projects very soon.



# Funders and supporters



We are thankful  
to our donors  
for their  
support!

Funders	Description of project	Geography of support
Letzdream Foundation	Strengthening public service delivery in rural India	Andhra Pradesh
UNICEF	Secretariat support for Parliamentarians group for children	Pan-India
UNDP	Outreach support to improve livelihood opportunities	Pan-India
UNCDF	Improving direct benefit transfer programs in key government schemes	Manipur and Tripura
Freedom Fund	Setting up a secretariat to ensure social safety of migrant workers	Pan India with a strong focus on UP and Bihar
Government of Jharkhand	Support in creating green jobs across Jharkhand	Key districts across Jharkhand

# OUR PARTNERS



# SUPPORT SWANITI



Swaniti Initiative works to make governance in India more informed, effective, & transparent by providing actionable policy solutions and quality human capital to elected officials. It is a hard job, but one we are immensely happy and proud to do! To help us, please consider the following avenues:

## > VOLUNTEER



Swaniti Initiative is driven by the relentless efforts of our motivated volunteers across India. Whether it is researching on core policy issues, developing case studies, assisting with field-level work or developing visuals for our Talks, volunteers have been instrumental in building Swaniti. If you are interested in volunteering with us, write to [swaniti@swaniti.in](mailto:swaniti@swaniti.in)

## > DONATE



Every single donation, no matter how big or small, helps us support our work in improving governance in India. Donations are tax-deductible and should be made out to “Swaniti Initiative”. In-kind resources such as IT Equipment, and data sources are also of immense value for us. To learn more about giving to Swaniti, please write to us at [swaniti@swaniti.in](mailto:swaniti@swaniti.in)

## > SPREAD THE WORD



Recruiting talented individuals to add value to the governance systems is not easy. If you are aware of driven professionals who are willing to support elected officials or craft actionable policy solutions, please let us know. Write to us at [Swaniti@swaniti.in](mailto:Swaniti@swaniti.in) or visit [www.swaniti.in](http://www.swaniti.in)



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to Swaniti Initiative – we couldn't have made an impact with your hard work, belief and commitment! We are especially thankful to our incredible advisors and partners, Parliamentarians who have provided us with immense encouragement to continue our work and our entire team and tireless volunteers who transforming governance for a better India!