

# MISAAL

## NEWSLETTER

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| New Delhi



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## 1. Misaal Fellowship Programme

**Our core work, creating awareness on rights and entitlements; organizing local communities; training and capacity building active members from them; and advocacy with state and non-state actors, all to improve people's access to rights and opportunities.**

### BIHAR

#### Madhubani

During November 2016, the month under report, in Madhubani, the fellow mostly worked on helping individuals access benefits for the



*Taleem Center, Madhubani*

various schemes available for all, especially for minorities. The work this month was focused on submission of applications for the chief minister's loan scheme (4), Ujjwala Yojana (9), as well as scholarships (149). Two women victims of domestic abuse, were also helped, to seek justice.

Another significant area of work was related to filing applications to help farmer access grants. Meetings were also held in order to correct mistakes in the ration cards applied for.

#### Sitamarhi

In Sitamarhi, a day long legal training was conducted by the fellows on November 30, 2016. For this meeting, the *Mukhia*, the ward member, members of the community, District Minority Welfare Officer (DMWO,

Advocate Lakshman Mandal and the state supervisor were present. The training was a great success as it was attended by 110 individuals from the community.

This was the first such legal training



organised by *Legal Training Workshop, Sitamarhi* any organisation for the community, and hence, there was learning from the workshop as well.

The fellow also concentrated his work on getting access to the Ujjwala Yojana (4 applications) as well old age pensions (2 applications).

#### Patna

A lot of work was carried out in the district of Patna. In terms of numbers, 3 applications were submitted for the minority loan scheme, 3 applications were filed for divorce, 24 applications were submitted for identity cards. 4 income certificates were also received. Apart from these activities 7 children were vaccinated as a result of mobilization by our fellows. The fellows also actively worked with women affected by domestic violence

and plan to organise a series workshop related to their legal rights, especially in the context of domestic violence, in the coming month as well. The fellows



*Community Meeting, Patna*

also learnt that working on issues of domestic violence with women, is a challenging area which needs careful planning, mobilisation, and winning trust of stakeholders.

### **Vaishali**

Similar activities were conducted in Vaishali as well. The focus was on helping widows access pension benefits (2 applications), and also helping individuals access the Ujjwala Yojana. 7 out of 10 applications

submitted under this scheme have been awarded the scheme, and these individuals

now have a gas supply since the past one month.



*Community Meeting, Vaishali*

Apart from these activities, under Misaal Taleem (programme, surely not department), free tuition have been started for school-going children unable to attend school. Misaal mobilised 3 local youth volunteers to act as teachers, and as of today, 60 young boys and girls are making full use of this facility. All this was the outcome of close working of our fellow with local mentor and community volunteers.

## **UTTAR PRADESH**

### **Banda**

Banda is one of the pioneering areas of Misaal's work in Uttar Pradesh. Highlight of the work in November



*Students in JNV Coaching, Banda*

2016 was a legal training workshop (on minority, human and women's rights), for which important local officials were invited. Information regarding programme for minorities in election manifesto of political parties contesting the upcoming state assembly elections, was also included as part of the training.

In terms of numbers, 2 online applications for widow pension scheme were submitted. 7 individuals were registered under a skill development program run by our local partner - Vidhya Dham Samiti, out of which one individual has also got employment. Three persons received their gas connections under the Ujjwala scheme. Marriage grant applications were also submitted to the district headquarters. As part of outreach with parents, guardians of 7 children to be admitted in schools, were also spoken with and prepared in order to prevent any drop outs.

## Faizabad

In the area of Rudauli, 2 applications for marriage grants and 5 applications for income certificates were submitted. Activities related to the management of tuition classes as well as the tailoring centre were engaged in. Apart from these activities, a seminar for women and minority rights was conducted, in which around 120 persons participated and gained understanding of the laws and grievance redressal mechanisms.



Children's day was also observed, and various activities organised. Local Misaal fellow and volunteers reported that these activities helped them with gaining experience in organising events on a large scale.

## Muzaffarnagar

In the resettlement colonies in Muzaffarnagar/Shamli we work in,



our activities during the month focused on helping people access ration facilities. After much efforts and persistence, 97 individuals received ration and another 114 fresh

applications were submitted for ration cards under the public distribution system in the *Tehsil Diwas*. The fellows also worked with a representative from Amnesty International to prepare documents for communal violence compensations, of individuals. A legal training seminar on minority, human and women's rights, was also conducted, which was attended by more than 130 members of the community.(any numbers?)

## Jaunpur

In Jaunpur, our fellow helped submit 13 applications for income certificates, needed for community members to apply for a large number of social security schemes. Out of these applications 8 received acknowledgement. The fellow also began working on *Taleem* in the Jogyana area. Although the progress



Community Meeting in Jogyana, Jaunpur

of the work seemed slow in this month, the fellows committed to preparing a plan for activities and following through with the plan, such that they are able to progress in their work. We appointed a new *Taleem Ustad* in Jaunpur who will be anchoring a *Taleem Center*.

## **Misaal-State Advisory Group (SAG) Meetings**

At the beginning of the month, we also organized our State Advisory Group meetings in Lucknow and Patna on October 31 and November 2, 2016 respectively, as opportunity for us to engage our stakeholders and supporters in the two states we work in. During these meeting, a review of existing activities and programs was conducted, and ideas for further advocacy and outreach, besides planning new pilots were also discussed. SAG forums are also platforms for fellows and state supervisors to share problems and challenges faced by them as part of their work.

As part of the mentoring and handholding work, a team of Misaal NRC Delhi and state supervisors, also visited during the month, Jaunpur site in UP and Vaishali in Bihar, to kick off work there, help the fellow plan better, and engage with the community.

## **2. MISAAL TALEEM**

*MisaalTaleem*, our pilot project on improving access to quality education for poorest children continued in Banda, Shamli and Faizabad in Uttar Pradesh as well as in Madhubani and Patna in Bihar. Under this programme, to enable promising children from poor backgrounds to obtain admission in Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas (JNVs that are free residential model public schools, one in each district of the country), we are providing coaching to a selected group of students from the community, for them to successfully sit entrance tests to JNVs at entry stage (Class 6).32 students in Banda, 20 in Shamli, 12 in Patna and 3 in Madhubani are being provided intensive coaching, by tutors appointed for the purpose. The JNV entrance test for next academic session is on 9<sup>th</sup> of January 2017.

During the month of November, we conducted mock tests thrice at each site, and the results have been encouraging as we can see a positive growth in the knowledge as well as in the scores of the children.

Towards the end of the month, we were also able to appoint a teacher in Jaunpur who will be running a MisaalTaleem Centre for the children from poor Muslim families there, as a pilot, in partnership with Azad Shiksha Kendra, our Jaunpur

partner. This will be our fourth centre in addition to existing one in Jaunpur and others Banda and Rudauli, where centres are run by volunteers. We hope to use the learnings from our Jaunpur pilot (on wider education for out of school/dropped out children), to launch something similar at all our Misaal fellowship sites. We are currently fundraising for this.

### 3. MISAAL ROZGAAR

Under *Misaal Rozgaar*, we have been trying to formulate a sustainable livelihood model for the communities where we are working. In month of November, we have tried to network with the organizations that work on skill and vocational training. We also tried to develop a workable action plan for the same, which will be launched as a pilot in one site each in UP and Bihar, from January 2017.

### 4. KNOWLEDGE CREATION AND ADVOCACY

**This is the documentation and advocacy aspect of our work, to fill the gap in data there is on minority rights and exclusion generally; and use that for advocacy for improved results.**

Misaal anchors the South Asia Collective, a platform of research and advocacy groups from across South Asia, working on better minority and human rights outcomes in the region. The first knowledge product of the collective- the South Asia State of Minorities Report 2016 - was released in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 11th November 2016. South Asia Collective members also formally presented a copy of the report, the same day, to the Secretary General of SAARC, along with a memorandum of demands for improved minority rights in the region.



At SAARC Secretariat, Kathmandu



South Asia State of Minorities Report 2016 release event, Kathmandu

More on this at <http://sacollective.misaal.ngo/>