

Draft

Best Practice

IT Initiatives of District Sonipat to Increase the Efficiency of Administration

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Introduction

Taking a leaf from the Prime Minister's wise counsel on COVID-19, 'Extraordinary times require extraordinary solutions', the district administration employed IT-based initiatives to manage demanding situations in the present crisis. The major challenge was to identify and classify the people who needed immediate support for sustenance. The information thus gathered was to be strategically used to maintain supply chain and distribution of food and essential items eliminating fake calls. Equally important is the challenge to support post-harvest food grain procurement seamlessly and with adequate precautions. The district administration of Sonipat made best use of technology, personnel and managerial skill to tide over these challenges.

I. Household Survey using GPS enabled app

Supply and distribution of food was the biggest problem faced by the administration during the lockdown period. The problem was compounded with a large number of labourers and industrial workers going out of work for almost a month. It became a challenge for the district administration to ensure that not a single person goes to bed without food.

Within a week of establishing the COVID Control Room at Sonipat, Kharkhoda, Gohana and Ganaur, there was a surge in the number of complaints and food requests on all the helpline channels. In order to assess the imminent demand and plan supply mechanism a door to door survey was started to collect data regarding the number of households requiring ration or cooked food or both. Besides, the data was also collected to identify the number of households with old people, specially-abled, and sick persons. This survey was conducted using GPS enabled devices and got completed in a short period of just four days. The devices were installed with the app developed by the administration to feed in the required details. It was made successful by a workforce of 300 personnel under the supervision of the Deputy Commissioner, Sonipat.

Earlier in 2017 too the Government of Haryana had conducted a door to door survey with the assistance of SAKSHAM personnel and e-numerators. This survey was done to collect the basic details about every household. A unique ID was assigned to each house based on the collected data. This time the database of the households was revisited and utilized by BLOs comprising AWM/ASHA/SAKSHAM/ e-numerators to collect a new set of metadata for the already existing unique IDs. This metadata was about the livelihood of families affected by the Corona crisis and their requirement of ration and food.

Problems addressed

Although the requests for food were to be addressed by registering at the control rooms, yet the administration was also experiencing the menace of increasing fake calls for food on the

helpline. The surge in fake calls diverted the resources away from the needy. The survey, hence, would help verify such requests.

Objectives achieved

- Now, with relevant data in hand, administration shall focus on targeted food delivery.
- Fake calls are minimised by blacklisting people who are regular fraud callers.
- Efficiency of food distribution shall be ensured by the proper management of NGOs and volunteers involved in the task. This has been made possible by detecting fake calls.

Outcomes

- A total of 72,772 families were surveyed, out of which 31054 families demanded ration. A total of 11084 families were identified as ration card holders whereas 19970 families did not have ration cards. Dry ration was demanded by 27,836 families once a week whereas 5894 families needed cooked food.
- Medicines were demanded by 1205 families and 788 families needed physiotherapy.
- 23 families were found to have come in contact with the COVID symptomatic persons.

Data was prepared ward-wise and also classified according to number of females, old-aged and disabled.

Challenges

People living in group housing societies and those living in the sectors did not participate in the survey.

Residents of Idgah colony also did not cooperate with the deputed workforce conducting the survey.

Reason for considering it a best practice

The number of calls on helpline demanding food has plummeted after integrating the metadata obtained from the survey with the control room data. The survey was conducted within just four days. This shows the resolute will power of the administration in charting out a plan for efficient and speedy conduct of survey. This surely makes it stand among the best practices.

II. App for the Appetite:

After conducting the survey, the district administration has decided to distribute ration to the verified households. As a result, it is expected that the number of the calls registered at the Control Rooms pertaining to food will be rationalized.

Mapping of the requests received by the concerned BLOs of the respective areas for verification and ration distribution purposes is being done through an online interface in the form of an App - 'collect data', developed to feed the details of the requests.

At the frontend, the operators at the Control Room feed the details such as the name of the

family head member, their contact number, Aadhar number, age, total family members, gender, ration card if issued, request for any special care, whether getting financial benefit from the government, any suspected case of corona in the family. At the backend, the data filled by the operators gets reflected on the version of the App developed for the BLOs. The BLOs verify the requests and distribute the ration to the genuine households.

Several NGOs have lent a helping hand here by covering the areas beyond the reach of Municipal Corporation.

Problems resolved:

Efficiency of targeted food distribution has been improved as now the data obtained from control room calls for food is first cross-checked by the respective BLOs for the beneficiaries who have already availed dry ration. This eliminates multiple supplies to a single beneficiary. It also ensures proper utilization of resources for bringing optimum number of people under food security net.

III. App- Paving the Path for Procurement of Farm Produce

During this crisis period, the district administration is also tasked with the efficient and safe management of the approaching Rabi harvesting and procurement season. Accordingly, the farmers have been directed to register themselves on the 'MeriFasalMeraByora' portal. Till date 1326 farmers have registered themselves. They are also advised to take help from the Common Service Centres (CSCs) for registration purposes. Farmers, who are still not registered, are advised to visit AtalSevaKendras in their villages for registration purposes till 19.04.2020. The procurement of Mustard is scheduled to be held on 15.04.2020 in the Mandis of Sonipat and Gohana whereas; the procurement of Wheat is scheduled on 19.04.2020 in 47 purchase centres. The biggest challenge is to prevent overcrowding at the procurement.

To follow the guidelines issued by the state government and the Central government for social distancing, an online application has been developed to map the registered farmers to their nearby authorized Mandis. A unique ID is generated and an SMS is sent to inform the timings at which the farmer has to arrive at the Mandi for the procurement purpose. Staggered purchase timings are devised. Only one hundred farmers, fifty farmers each in the morning and evening shall be called each day.

Problem Addressed and related outcomes

- *Social distancing:* Arhtiyas (middlemen) and related government departments are being taken on board to decongest the Mandis and ensure close human interactions are reduced
- *Addressing farmer's concerns:* Farmers' woes were addressed and they didn't have to waste their time and energy on worrying about the procurement of their produce in the market
- *Time efficient:* The whole procedure is well planned and time saving.
- *Optimum resource utilisation:* The available online platforms and established administrative structures have been properly utilised.

- *Promoting technology:* The proper implementation of procurement drive using *Meri FasalMeraByora* portal will ensure that the technology use is widely encouraged among Farmers.
- The aim is to facilitate steady crop arrival and eliminate gluts in Mandis
- *Security measures:* Area Patwaris and Area SHO along with other police personnel are ensuring the smooth functioning of the procurement process. High resolution cameras have been installed at the entry/exit points of all the Mandis and purchase centres.

IV. Umeed Counselling Centre

Online learning has emerged as a favourite trend among the students. This becomes even more relevant during the period of lockdown. Students would never have imagined such a long period of vacation. Learners generally associate ‘vacation’ with ‘playing outside’ or ‘outing’, whereas both are not possible in the current situation. Also, those who like studying might get struck at some difficult concepts.

Within this scenario, the education department of the district has decided to launch ‘*Umeed Counselling Centre*’, providing free counselling services to the students of both the private and government schools daily. The learners can now discuss any query related either to their studies or to any personal issues with the trained counsellors appointed by the department.

The students can call at 6283848597 to seek solutions to their problems. The centre operates for two times in a day—from 12.00 p.m. to 3.00 p.m. and from 5.00 p.m. to 7.00 p.m.

Officer Trainees attached to Sonipat district

- *Mr. Siddarth Dahiya, HCS*
- *Mr. Rajesh Kumar Soni, HCS*
- *Ms. Srishti, Class-As Tehsildar*
- *Ms. Vinti, Class-A Tehsildar*