

State ID Name of District/Capital _____ Block

PEOPLE'S RTI ASSESSMENT- 2008
Focus Group Discussion

Village/Ward Profile

Name of the village/Ward _____ District _____

Name of Block _____ Gram Panchayat _____

Name of the subdivision _____

Name of town/city _____

Date of Focus Group Discussion / /

Any NGOs/CBOs/Clubs in the village 1. Yes 2. No

Total Population (*Record approximately*) _____

Introduction

The main purpose of the village (or ward) meeting is to determine the felt need for information in the village as a means to addressing their most important problems. It is possible that the villagers might not immediately recognise the lack of information as an important factor inhibiting the resolution of many of their problems. Therefore it is important to probe the levels of information they have about the genesis and cause of their problems and about the solutions that can be applied. However, it is important to do this in a manner that is not leading or suggestive, as we do not want them to come to the conclusions that we have assumed to be correct.

Once they have talked about the level of information they have relating to their problems, then we can link up their information needs to the RTI Act and find out whether they know about it, whether they recognise that it could be relevant to their lives, whether they know how to use it, whether they would like to use it or, whether there are factors that discourage them from using it.

This is the most important part of the rural survey for, the justification and rationale for the RTI Act is **not** the demand for the act (as many might not have yet heard of it, or know how to use it), but the demand for information, especially as a means of empowerment to address some of the basic problems facing the people.

Key Questions to initiate FGD

H1. What are the five most important problems facing your village (or ward)? [*Do Not Read Out Options*]

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Unemployment | 8. Lack of/poor road connectivity |
| 2. Inadequate health care facilities | 9. Shortage of drinking water |
| 3. Lack/shortage of irrigation water | 10. Problems with the ration shop/ PDS |
| 4. Problems related to educational facilities/school | |
| 4.1 Absent/incompetent/negligent school teachers | |
| 4.2 Problems with the mid day meals | |
| 5. Problems with supply/charges of electricity | |
| 6. Problems with seeds/agri extension services | 11. Lack of access to credit |
| 7. Indebtedness | 12. Lack of veterinary care |

13. Proposed land acquisitions	18. Upcoming projects
14. Problems with disbursement of pensions e.g.	
14.1 Old age	
14.2 Widow	
14.3 Disability	
14.4 others	
15. NREGA related problems	19. Problems with electoral card/rolls
16. Problems related to certificates	
11.1 Birth	
11.2 Death	
17. Problems related to the police	20. Any other (<i>specify</i>) _____

H2. Would Access to some information help you in resolving these problems or having these problems resolved? Yes No

H3. If so, how? [*Do Not Read Out Options*]

1. By knowing why the problem has occurred
2. By knowing who deals with the problem
3. By knowing what action has been or is being taken to solve the problem
4. By knowing what action has been taken on past complaints or requests
5. By knowing how long it would take to resolve the problem
6. By knowing what else you can do to resolve the problem
7. Others (please specify)

H4. Have you tried to access any of this information from the government/ other agencies?

H5. If so, what has been your experience?

H6. Have you heard/Do you know about the RTI Act? (modified as per each state's nomenclature of RTI) Yes No

H7. In what way, if any, can this Act be help solve your problems/ relevant to your lives/?

H8. How did you hear about it? [*Do Not Read Out Options*]

Newspaper _____ Radio _____

Television _____ Meeting _____

Through government/panchayat functionary _____

NGO/CBO/CLUB _____ Any other (specify) _____

H9. Has any person in the village (or elsewhere whom you know about) used it?

Yes No

H10. If yes, what is his/her name and address? [*Take Down Names and Addresses*]

H11. Do you all know if he/she got any response? Yes No

H12. Would any of you like to use the RTI Act? Yes No

H13. If so, for what?

Remarks of the Field Team

Number of Participants
Men _____ Women _____ SC _____ ST _____
Village office bearers (*Specify*) _____
Prominent Persons (*Specify*) _____

H14. Did the villagers/group recognize the link between access to information and their problems?

Yes No

H15. How universal was this recognition? (only a few, many, most, all)

H16. In your opinion, how many of the participants were aware of the RTI Act? (all, most, many, some, few, none)

H17. How many of the participants showed an interest in using the RTI act once it was explained to them?

H18. Was there anyone who had tried to use the RTI act but been prevented from doing so?

H19. In your opinion, was there an apprehension or fear about using the RTI Act?

H20. If yes, was this based on a specific incident or occurrence, or was it a part of the general fear of authority?

H21. Do you think the discussion in this group was open and all segments of the group were able and willing to speak freely?

H22. If not, please describe the constraints and limitations you noticed.
