



SUCHNA MITRA

Making People Partners in
E-Governance



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AISECT'S PREAMBLE

India's leading Social Enterprise, AISECT has been instrumental in delivering quality Education, Skill Development, Financial Inclusion and other ICT-based services that builds careers for students and brings about inclusive changes in the previously untapped semi-urban and rural areas of the country. Established in 1985, AISECT has been working towards bridging the skill and ICT gap between urban and rural India and creating local opportunities for the rural youth. Focused on creating an inclusive society, AISECT has been untiringly reaching out to the remotest corners of the country to empower people, generate employment for the youth and unfold entrepreneurial initiatives.

AISECT's determined efforts towards social development had been published earlier as series named "PEHEL". These initiatives were:

1. MULTIPURPOSE ELECTRONICS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY CENTRES-Promoting I.T. Entrepreneurship Employment and Maintenance in Rural Areas
2. INDIRA SUCHNA SHAKTI YOJNA – One of the Biggest Computer Education Projects in Schools in India
3. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR WOMEN -Empowering Women with Skills in Information Technology
4. SUCHNA MITRA – Making People Partners in E-Governance
5. I.T. YATRA – A Campaign for Taking Information Technology to People
6. AISECT PUBLICATIONS – Creating Contents in Indian Languages
7. ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

AISECT has been working towards its mission of delivering its services to every nook and corner of the country in the past years and is dedicated towards bringing a social change through its initiatives. AISECT will continue to publish these new initiatives in the field of education, skill development and services by the name "SAMARTH".

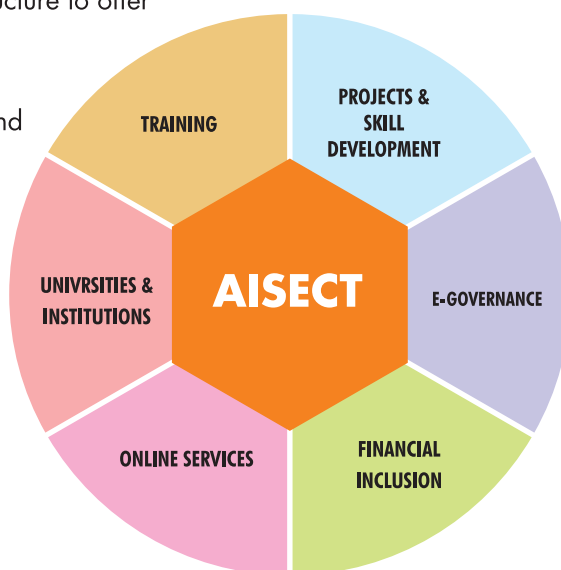
AISECT is aligned to the Government of India's key Missions of Digital India, Skill India, Start Up Stand Up, Financial Inclusion, Women Empowerment and will continue to work towards developing a New India. AISECT is committed towards spreading its array of services to reach the unreached and will continue to deliver quality Education, Skill Development, Financial Inclusion and other ICT-based services.

ABOUT AISECT

India's **leading Social Enterprise**, AISECT has been instrumental in delivering quality **Education, Skill Development, Financial Inclusion** and other **ICT-based services** that builds careers for students and brings about inclusive changes in the previously untapped semi-urban and rural areas of the country. Established in 1985, AISECT has been working towards **bridging the skill and ICT gap between urban and rural India and creating local opportunities for the rural youth**. Focused on creating an inclusive society, AISECT has been untiringly reaching out to the remotest corners of the country to empower people, generate employment for the youth and **unfold entrepreneurial initiatives**.

With a PAN-India presence of **20,000 Centres across 29 States and 3 Union Territories, 12 State offices and 28 Regional offices**, Adopting the **most self-sustainable, demand-led model**, the AISECT model reflects the demand side of communities for various skills and services required in the unorganized sector. Having successfully set up **India's biggest entrepreneurial driven network at the district (475), block (1500) and Panchayat (7200) levels**, AISECT has **generated more than 15,000 rural entrepreneurs** with an annual income ranging from Rs. 2 lakh to 1 crore.

Pioneering the 'Multipurpose Centre' Model, AISECT utilized their existing Education & Training Centre infrastructure to offer numerous services including skill development, capacity building, information window, maintenance and repair, sale of allied products and services, e-Governance through Common Service Centres (CSC), banking and insurance services, etc. Initiating strategic innovations to reach out to its target audience which comprises primarily of semi-urban and rural masses, AISECT has initiated IT content creation in Hindi and other regional languages.



AISECT Network



-  Headquarter
-  Delhi Office
-  Skill Knowledge Provider Centres
-  State Offices

PAN-India Presence:

29 States
3 Union Territories
475 Districts
1,500 Blocks
7,200 Panchayats

Offices:

20,000 Centres
12 State Offices
28 Regional Offices

Connected with:

20 Lakh people trained
15,000 Rural entrepreneurs generated
11 Lakh recruitments
50 Lakh people empowered

AISECT primarily works in seven verticals. In their endeavour to uplift and empower the rural and semi-urban masses, AISECT's unique value proposition has helped in the advancement of Educational Academies, Skill Development, Capacity Building Projects, Common Service Centres, Banking Services, Rural Job Placements and Higher Education Institutions.



Skill Development and Vocational Education :

AISECT has been working in the field of skill development and training for the past 31 years and have reached the remotest corners of the country. It is a pioneer in imparting skill development courses in local language which explains its reach at the grassroots. AISECT's reach within the country is aptly showcased through a Demographic Pyramid whereby the penetration of AISECT's various activities is highest at the bottom.

AISECT Target Segments



The Indian Pyramid and its Digital and Skill Divide

With the evolution of AISECT by working in the field of skill development some major learnings which differentiated it are as follows :

AISECT's Differentiating Factors and Learnings in the field of Skill Development

Pioneering 'Multipurpose IT Centre' Model	Course Material creation in Local Languages	Creation of an Entrepreneurial & Demand led Model	Innovative Mobilization Campaigns
Forging Developmental Linkages with ongoing Government Initiatives	Creating an 'Access Anywhere' MOOCs: aisectonline.com	Creating an innovative online & offline Placement support portal: Rojgarmantra.com	Integrating Skill Development within the Higher Education Framework
Launching India's first Community Radio station by a University	Introducing Online Live Lectures through Distance Learning Centres	Continuous addition of Emerging Vocations	In summary trying to Organize the Unorganized Sector



AISECT – NSDC Partnership:

AISECT joined hands with NSDC with the mission to skill around 1.3 million youth across rural and semi-urban India in 2012, in seven of the twenty-one priority sectors identified by NSDC. The seven sectors identified by AISECT for training the youth are IT and ITES, Electronics and Hardware, Banking and Financial Services, Teacher and Assessor Training, Textiles, Organised Retail and Agri skills. These are the sectors which are estimated to have the highest contribution towards the requirement of skilled workforce in the country over next ten years. Under this partnership AISECT has also been affiliated with 12 Sector Skill Councils formed under NSDC.

The main objectives of this partnership were :

- To **expand the skilling and training facilities of AISECT**, first in the rural and backward regions of states such as Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Maharashtra and Punjab and then expand across the country.
- To **undertake massive “Training of Trainers”** program to improve the quality of skill training and to up skill the technology utilization of trainers in training.
- To **utilize the nearly 6,000 Common Service Centres (CSCs)** set up by AISECT at the Panchayat Level across Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh & Punjab for skilling youth.
- To **link skill development programs with university education** and to set up Vocational Academies or Skill Resource Centers within the two AISECT Universities.
- To **support the skill development training programs by providing placement** services both online and offline to the trained manpower.
- To **expand and develop the AISECT Content Creation Center** as the backbone of the ongoing skill development efforts.

Thus, AISECT has been contributing to the Skill India Mission through the following initiatives :

SSDM	NULM/SUDA	CENTRAL MINISTRIES	NSQF
STATES (11)	STATES (12)	SCHEMES : STATES	STATES (11)
RSLDC	MP	DDUGKY: MP	HARYANA
OSEM	UP	DDUGKY: GUJARAT	RAJASTHAN
BSDM	CG	DDUGKY: HARYANA	DELHI
UPSDM	BIHAR	DDUGKY: PUNJAB	JHARKHAND
CSSDA	JHARKHAND	EDCIL	MP
GLPC	GUJARAT	MoMA, MoD	CG
PSDM	MIZORAM	MANAS	PUNJAB
JSDM	MAHARASTHRA	NEEM	W BENGAL
APSSDC	PUNJAB	MSSDC	H P
ASDM	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	SILF	ODISHA
PBSSDM	J & K		ANDHRA PRADESH
	WEST BENGAL		



Higher Education :

A path-breaker in the field of ICT and skill-based education and training, AISECT has positively empowered millions of lives through their educational initiatives over the last 33 years. The Group has established several premier higher education institutions at locations which were in dire need of quality higher education institutions. In 2006, **Dr. C. V. Raman University, central India's first private university,** was established in **Chhattisgarh** and has empowered thousands of students with industry-oriented skills. Moreover, **India's first skill-based private University, Rabindranath Tagore University, Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh** strives to impart skill-based quality education and promote research driven advancement of knowledge for creating successful professionals. Established by the AISECT Group in 2010, it has carved a niche for itself in **Madhya Pradesh**. This need of imparting skill based higher education motivated to established **AISECT University, Jharkhand, Dr. C. V. Raman University, Bihar** and **Dr. C. V. Raman University, Madhya Pradesh**. Furthermore, **SCOPE Group of Institution** (SCOPE College of Engineering and SCOPE College of Education) has been established in Bhopal. With strong industry linkages, AISECT's focus lies in the holistic learning and development of a student in order to ensure the effective application of knowledge for a secure future.



AISECT School Services :

AISECT's rich experience in the education sector has led to the establishment of a series of educational ventures, **Brainy Bear Activity Club & Pre-School**, Brainy Bear Publications and multimedia school content for students from kindergarten to class 12th that provides cost-effective, interactive learning solution to children.

AISECT has successfully integrated itself in the pre-school segment by establishing **Brainy Bear Pre-school and Activity Club chain**, aimed at providing first-of-its-kind affordable pre-schooling chain in tier 2 and 3 cities. It has also included other programs like, Mother Toddler Program and After School Program. AISECT's pre-schooling chain in the rural areas was initiated as Brainy Bear Prarambh. With over 16 centres launched within 1 year, AISECT's Brainy Bear Pre-school and Activity Club chain has successfully enrolled more than 500 students in an attempt to provide affordable and quality early childhood education to students of semi-urban and rural India.



Online Education :

Giving shape to AISECT's endeavor to support the Skill India and **Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan** movements, **aisectmoocs.com was established as India's largest free online open learning platform**. AISECT in association with Ireland-based ALISON, offers inclusivity in education by giving students in the remotest corners of the country easy and free access to world-class course curriculum with over **2000 free certificate/diploma courses available in both English and Hindi**. In a blended model students enrolled for an AISECT MOOC course will have the choice of studying at home or coming to the AISECT Centre to make use of the available facilities.

AISECT has also launched a portal '**aisectonline.com**' to empower students in the remotest corners of the country with anywhere, anytime access to education.

AISECT has also initiated concentrated efforts in various B2C services such as mobile and DTH recharge, examination form download and submission, railway ticket booking, data entry operations etc., to make such services more accessible to the common man by integrating with government departments, private businesses and other organizations.



Financial Inclusion and e-Governance Services :

Keeping in mind the urgent need for **Financial Inclusion** in the country, AISECT has successfully established a Financial Inclusion model that has been synchronizing more and more services through the AISECT's Multi-purpose ICT enable centres in rural areas. AISECT has set up over **4000 banking kiosks** in association with **3 nationalized banks and 2 regional rural banks with 88 lakh accounts opened so far and transactions worth Rs. 5000 crores**, initiated mobile ATM services, and started offering renewal premium collection services for reputed insurance companies.

AISECT's prestigious Common Service Centre Project, under the Government of India, was a resonating success and led to the establishment of 2926 CSCs in Madhya Pradesh, 1487 in Chhattisgarh and 585 CSCs in Punjab. Apart from AISECT's core education, training & B2C services, these CSCs provided services under schemes like Jan Sunwai Kendra, Farmer Registration, PFRDA, MP Online, National Population Register, MNREGA, PAN Card as well as Suvidhaa Online. The AISECT's CSCs in M.P, Chhattisgarh and Punjab also functioned as the permanent UID (Aadhar) Card Enrolment Centres. Recently AISECT has also established 300 E-Mitra Kiosks in Rajasthan which are providing government services to the citizens



Placement :

Focused on bridging the demand and supply gap in the job market, AISECT has established India's biggest rural job portal, **Rojgar Mantra**. Rojgarmantra.com is a one-of-a-kind job portal focused on providing relevant employment opportunities and related services to the job seekers while at the same time providing a medium for employers to recruit suitable skilled and semi skilled manpower. With over 3 lakh job seekers already registered with the portal, Rojgar Mantra is poised to be the biggest rural job placement initiative of India.



Award & Accolades :

A true path-breaker in terms of its vision, reach and passion for spreading education, technical expertise, generating employment as well as revenue opportunities for the previously untapped semi-urban and rural areas of the country, AISECT has won numerous awards and recognitions at national as well as international platforms. Recognized as “the most sustainable and scalable form of IT penetration & popularization in India” by the World Bank-IM (A) Joint Report, AISECT has been working towards bridging the skill and ICT gap between urban and rural India. It has also been recognized by UNDP for its innovative ICT based vocational training to youth in rural and semi-urban India. The organization has been a recipient of prestigious awards like the Schwab Foundation's Social Entrepreneur of the Year Award instituted by the World Economic Forum as well as the Ashoka Senior Fellowship for AISECT's Chairman & Managing Director Mr. Santosh Choubey, Indian Innovation Award, Manthan Award South Asia & Asia Pacific, Skoch Corporate Leadership Award, NASSCOM I.T. Innovation Award, ASSOCHAM Excellence in Education Award, NASSCOM EMERGE 50 Leader Award, Golden Icon National e-Governance Award, TiE Lumis Partners Entrepreneurial Excellence Award, World Education Summit Award, Inc India 500 Award, Asian Forum i4d Award and Best Practice Recognition Award by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC).



eGov India
Award 2011



TIE Lumis Partners
Entrepreneurial
Excellence Award 2009



Indian Innovation
Award 2005



Social Entrepreneur
of the Year Award 2010



Shiksha Ratna
Award 2012



Skoch Corporate
Leadership Award 2013



Golden Icon National
E-Governance Award 2005



Financial Inclusion
& Payment Systems
Award 2013



Bihar Innovation
Forum Award



27th amongst the
fastest growing mid-size
businesses in India 2013



ASSOCHAM National
Education Excellence
Awards (AISECT University)



NASSCOM Emerge
50 Leader Award 2009



ASHOKA Senior
Fellowship 2011



The National CSI
Award 2011



NASSCOM I.T.
Innovation Award 2006



Manthan Award South Asia
& Asia Pacific 2012



Voted amongst
the top 100 franchises
in 2010 and 2013



Elets Smart City
Award, 2015 for Skill
Development Initiatives



Asian Forum i4d
Award 2007

1. BACKGROUND

The Kotmi sonar project implemented by AISECT at the village Kotmi-Sonar at district Janjgir (then in M.P., now in C.G) was the first of its kind in M.P. prior to other well publicised projects. It was conceived in Sept. 1993. as a pilot project to bring the benefits of Information and Communication Technology(ICT) to the common people of the District and different Government offices situated at the Block, and District-level. The Kotmi-Sonar project used an offline i.e. not connected to the Internet, standalone computer system with battery backup and a printer system having the data stored on the CDROM as per the needs of the villagers that were identified in an extensive survey. It was kept off-line because at that time Internet was not available in Janjgir District. The hardware used for this system was a Pentium-I, system with 8 MB RAM and 200 MB HDD with a CDROM drive. The software was developed using Foxpro 2.6 (Windows version) in local language. The project was unique for its simplicity and easy operational procedure. The Hardware was provided by AISECT. A detailed survey was organized to identify the user's need in that area and then the information was collected and digitized by local students voluntarily. The administrative support was provided by AISCT and the local administration to implement the project.

The survey conducted at Kotmi Sonar indicated that while the Government aims at improving the standards of living of common man and on eradicating poverty, the objectives of different poverty alleviation schemes introduced by both the central & state government are not properly disseminated to the common people. The Villagers are not aware, who are the actual beneficiaries of different social security programmes. Even the villagers are not aware of the formats for applying different development schemes. For all these small things, they have to run to the District or Block Head quarter. It generally takes a lot of time for sending information from G.Ps to Blocks, Blocks to Sub-division and District Head quarter for compilation and decision-making. To resolve some of these issues "Kotmi-Sonar" was conceived. Some problems addressed under this project were : Which language should be used for dissemination of information? What information should be made public? How to enter all the voluminous data? Should we use



stand alone system, Intranet or Internet? How connectivity will be obtained future? How dissemination of information is done? How they will be funded? Who will own and manage the kiosks at villages and Gram Panchayats level etc. There were various technical, financial and operational considerations that had to be weighed before the commencement of the project.

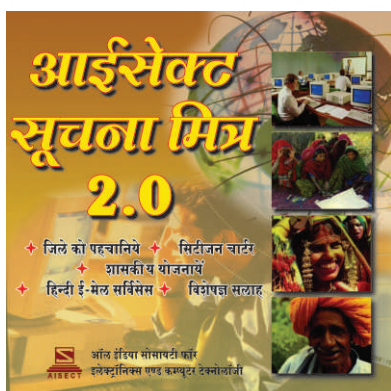
Before the Kotmi sonar initiative was undertaken, villagers approached the government offices for ascertaining information and many times they had to return disappointed, as they were not provided with relevant information. Indeed, several times, they were at the mercy of these officials; in addition to the humiliation they faced, they had to forego wages, spend unnecessary time and money. Kotmi-Sonar project helped change all this. Introduction of Kotmi-Sonar made the access to Government information, formats and other need-based information much easier. The information they required was made available to them at nearest location and they did not have to face difficulties, they faced earlier. The overwhelming public response to the Project led the government to not only scale up the Project throughout the district but also make AISECT centres as e-governance centres. All government departments were advised to identify the kind of services that were needed to be delivered through the AISECT centers and to report on their efficiency. These centres were called Suvidha Centres and 50 such centres were set up.

As a follow up to Suvidha, the Suchna Mitra software was developed.

2. OBJECTIVES OF SUCHNA MITRA

The Suchna-Mitra project was initiated with the mission to provide the benefits of using ICT in governance to the citizens of the district, living in distant rural areas, at their door-steps. The major objectives envisaged were :

- Easy and better dissemination of Government information, resulting in better awareness among rural masses about various Government schemes. This would bring in transparency in governance.
- Redressal of complaints without physically visiting the Government offices. This would save time and harassment of the citizens.
- Reduction in response time to redress complaints by the concerned departments and making administration responsive and accountable.
- Employment generation by way of allowing opening up of Citizen Information Centres (kiosks) in the private sector.



- Virtual Extension Counters for the Government, by way of using these Centres for getting the departmental data entered and transmitted from time to time.
- A common platform for the people to interact with each other on subjects of mutual interest e.g. matrimonial, sale/purchases.

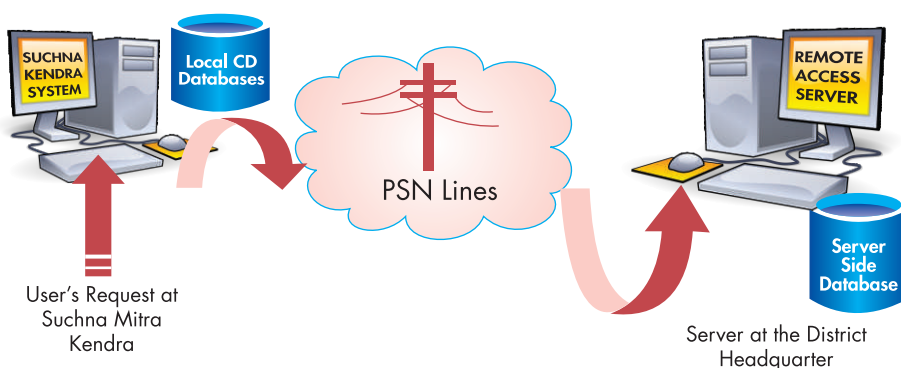
The Suchna Mitra Kendra is a multipurpose Center that works as a nodal point in the block for providing e-governance citizen services, electronics and I.T. related services under one roof. The Suchna Mitra Kendra is being set up after an extensive assessment of demand coupled with sample survey. The key words governing the Information Center perspective are as follows :

- Local Need Based
- Multipurpose
- Training as major support activity
- Effective Interlinkages
- Innovative
- Strategic and Responsive

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Suchna Mitra is a web based application software, which works in a client/server environment as an Intranet.

Figure 1 : Suchna Mitra Architecture



The software offers easy governance solution via E-governance. Implementation of this software can save a lot of time and money of the district administration as well as of common man. The software gives, necessary information, on Govt. schemes and helps

common people in many ways. This software also provides an efficient way for monitoring of developmental works and public grievances.

The software is organised in two modules. The first module can be accessed from any client machine (PC) available in the district, without any password protection. The second module can only be accessed via Suchna Mitra kendras on payment basis.

3.1 Components of Module –1

The first Module provides general, but very useful, information of the district. The brief description of each of the components is as follows:

Jile Ko Pahichaniye – (Know Your District)



This module provides information about the district in which the user lives. Every district is more than the land, river and hills. Rich traditions, culture and great history makes it different from others. This module also gives the geographic, census, agriculture and other details of the whole district.

Mantri Parishad (Information About the Cabinet and Ministers)

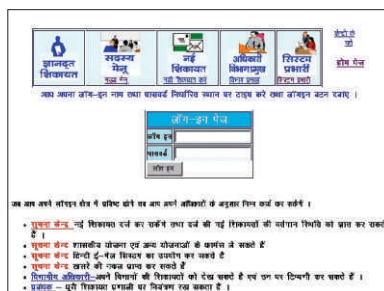
This module provides the information about the Cabinet and State Ministers of state with their department, office and residential address and phone no. In future the software will provide the direct e-mail service from panchyat/block level to the minister.

Sachiv (Secretary)

This module provides information about the secretaries of each department, his office and residential address and phone no. In future the software will provide direct e-mail redirection service from panchyat/block level to the secretary.

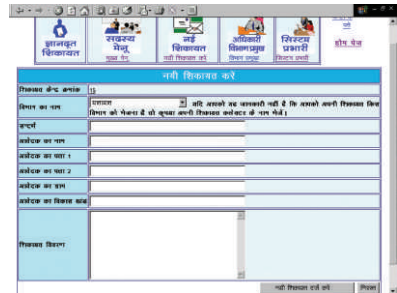
Vidhayak (Member Of The Legislature)

This module provides information about all the Vidhayaks (Members of the Legislature) of each constituency of the state, his office and residential address and phone no. In future the software will provide direct e-mail redirection service from panchyat/block level to the Vidhayak.



Citizen Charter (Nagrik Adhikar Patrak)

This module provides information about the Citizen Charters. Citizen Charters are defined for effective and responsive administration in terms of time-bound services to the public. These are framed and implemented under the co-ordination of the department of administrative reforms and public grievances. These relate to the transparency of processes in the govt. departments.



Swasthya (Health)

This module provides information about the health, common disease, first aid, emergency aid, Infectious diseases, child-care and other health related information. This module also provides health-related advice to the public.

Aage Aayen Labh Uthayen (Details of Government Schemes for Self Employment and Monetary Help)

This module provides information about various governmental schemes details for self-employment and monetary helps for common man. Here details of every scheme are available for each govt. department.

Jila Sarkar (District Government)

Madhya Pradesh is one of the first states of the country that implemented the Panchyati Raj in the state. This module gives detailed information about the Jila Sarkar, its constitution, its rights and other related information.

Khoj Khabar (District's E-Newspaper)

This E-newspaper, Khoj-khabar provides developmental news of the panchayats, blocks, tehsils and district, along with the other news of common nature. This is updated on weekly basis. The Suchaks of Suchna Mitra Kendras work as E-samwaddata (reporter) and feed the news for this Khoj-Khabar, which acts as district's weekly bulletin.



Vargikrat (Classified Advertisement)

Under this module people may have information about various classified eg. Sale/ purchase/lost/ stolen property/live stocks etc.

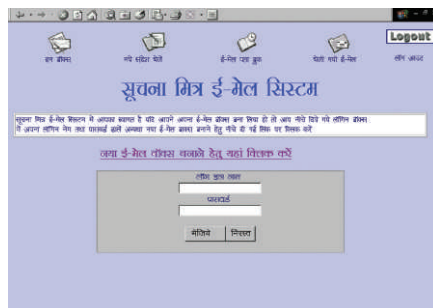
Bhav Taav (Mandi Rates)

This section provides rates of different commodities in various mandies on daily/weekly basis. This section helps the farmers to decide the time/ Mandi, most suited for their crops, so that they can have maximum benefit. This module not only gives

rates from various mandies around the district for crops but also gives rates of various vegetables of surrounding Hat/Mandi.

Hamara Bazar (Local Market)

This section is the virtual market place for the people of the district. In this section local artisans can putup their product for marketing. Apart from it, if any other person wants to sell some new/used article/live stock, he can also putup the same in this section. This provides a large customer base for the product.



Jila Nirdeshika (District Directory)

This section of the Suchna Mitra software contains important address/telephone numbers of the district/tehsil/block. This includes various doctors, blood banks, hospitals, govt. offices, factories, etc.

Rojgaar Samachar (Employment News)

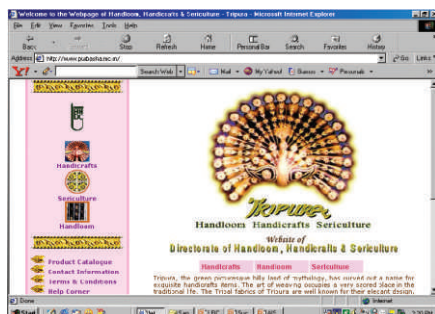
This section gives list of openings available for the unemployed persons, within the district and other places. The Module gives information collected from the local employment office, local newspaper and other sources regarding the employment and related issues.

Vivaah Prastav (Matrimonial)

This section displays classified advertisement for marriage both for boys and girls. This helps the local community to get a suitable person.

Shiksha-Diksha (Education)

This section gives addresses of middle/secondary/college/institutions available in the district along with the subjects available in the same for study., information about the vocational institutes, scholarship scheme, and education loan scheme of various organisations. This section also displays the timetable of exams for middle/secondary/college level exams and other competitive exams.



As already stated, the above said components of the Suchna Mitra software can be accessed from any PC, of the district which can be connected to the server by modem, but addition of these informations can only be possible via the Suchna Mitra Kendra.

3.2 Components of Module – II

The second module which is accessible only through the Suchna Mitra Kendra, consists of the following components -

Bhoo Rajasv (Land Records)

This section provides copy of the Khasra (Record of right), immediately to the person. The khasra is the most needed document for the farmers and they require it for taking loans before the cropping seasons.

Lok Shikayat (Public Grievances)

This section of the software provides an opportunity to the villagers to launch their complaints regarding electricity, road damage, Hand pump, functioning of village school, functioning of Anganwadi, Ration-card etc, without going to the block/tehsil/ district office. This saves a lot of time/money, which he would have spent on travelling. He also gets an action taken report from the same suchna Mitra kendra within seven working days of launching of a complaint.

Samanya Aavedan (General Application)

At present if any body requires a certificate for income, caste, and domicile he has to travel to the tehsil/district office. Once this section is implemented the villager can file his application from any Suchna Mitra Kendra after paying the required fee for the certificate. The certificate is to be prepared within 7 working days of filing the application. Once the certificate is ready the information regarding it will be sent to the Suchna Mitra Kendra, from where the applicant sent his application. After confirming from there he can come to the concerned office and will get the desired certificate after showing the related papers.

Shaskiya Yojna Aavedan Patra (Govt. Scheme Application Forms)

In this section the user gets the desired application forms required for different government schemes along with their details. This also includes forms for FIR, form for various certificates etc.

Visheshgya Salah – (Expert Advice)

If any villager wants to take help of any expert regarding agriculture, he can send his question to the agriculture expert and will get the expert opinion within 3 working days. This facility can be extended to other departments such as law, education.

Hindi E-Mail

With the use of this section people can send e-mail on any subject to the district administration as well as to the different Suchna Mitra Kendras. This module can be used to get connected every government office of the district through e-mail. Other appropriate modules can be added depending on local demands at a later stage.

4. TECHNOLOGY USED IN SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

- Windows NT Server 4.0 Operating System
- Windows NT Remote Access Server
- Microsoft Web Server - Internet Information Server (IIS)
- Active Server Pages (ASP)

5. INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDED

5.1 Server Side

The hardware/software needed for the Suchna Mitra Mukhya Kendra (Server side) located at the district Head Quarter will be as follows :

Hardware Requirement –

- One Pentium III or above – Min 800 Mhz., RAM – Min 128 MB Suggested 256 MB, Hard Disk Capacity – Min 10 GB Suggested 20 GB, 15" Color Monitor, Mouse, Multi Media Sound Card and CD-ROM, 1.44 MB Floppy Drive.
- Multi Port Serial Card (Min 5 Port for Remote Access Server capability Suggested 10 Port Serial Card)
- Min 5 Modem (For Dial-in to the server)
- UPS Min 1 KVA capacity with 2-3 Hrs. power backup.
- One Laser Printer/Dot Matrix Printer for report printing.
- One CD-Writer recommended for data and software backup.



Software Requirement –

- Min Windows NT 4.0 with 10 user License (Suggested MS-Windows 2000 server with 10 user License for better security purpose. Secure Socket Layer (SSL) with Digital Certificate is available on this only)
- Internet Information Server(IIS) 4.0/ 5.0
- MS-office 97 or MS-Office 2000
- MS- FrontPage 98 or MS Front Page 2000
- Leap Office, MS – Explorer Web Browser
- Server side software of Suchna Mitra

5.2 Client Side

The Hardware/software needed for Suchna Mitra kendra (Client side) -

Hardware

- Any 486 or above PC, with Min 16 MB RAM (Rec. 32 MB RAM), 2 GB hard Disk, (Rec. 4.3 GB HDD), 1.44 MB FDD, Mouse, 14" Monitor (Color/ Monochrome).
- 0.5 KVA UPS with 15-20 Min Power Backup (Only for Suchna Kendra)
- One telephone connection,
- One 56 KBPS Internal/External modem
- One dot matrix/Ink Jet/laser printer.



Software

- Windows 95/98 operating system
- MS-office 97
- Leap office
- MS-Explorer (Web Browser)

6. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

To make the Suchna Mitra project successful certain groundwork is to be done, before actual implementation. This includes :

- Collection of information to be put under "Jila Nirdeshika", "Shiksha- Deeksha, "Jile ko Pahichaniye", "Hamara-Bazaar", "Shashkiya Yojana Aavedan Patra". For land record section the collection of authentic Khasra information is also needed. This land record information is to be kept in MS-ACCESS format.
- Database creation for the district in Hindi.
- A nodal officer is to be appointed to coordinate with different departments. He will be responsible for forwarding of complaints to the concerned department and for follow up actions. He will also coordinate with the server administrator for updation of information.
- Appropriate locations and persons are to be identified for opening up of the Suchna Mitra Kendras in different geographical locations of the district.



- These kendras can be opened in any part of the district, where telephone and electricity connection is available.
- A necessary training to operate the Suchna Mitra software is also required to be completed before the actual implementation of the system. Although the operation of software does not require too much skill, one time training helps the operator to serve the community better.
- An awareness campaign may be launched for the use of Suchna Mitra Kendra for its successful implementation.
- There is also a need to educate the officers/officials of different government departments about the project, then only the Suchna Mitra project can be implemented successfully.
- An entrepreneurship workshop should be organised at district level to train prospective entrepreneurs for setting up block/cluster level centre at the client end.

7. OTHER ROLES OF SUCHNA MITRA KENDRA

The Suchna Mitra Kendra are village information centers and are also networked to form an information base for local level planning. They are envisaged as a service provider to the rural and tribal community. Their goal is not only to cater to the information needs of the community but also to act as a pro-active problem-solving group.

The centers may require very little initial funding for capital equipment as a loan and minimum manpower for maintenance and day-to-day operations. These centers can develop into a unit that will be sustained after some time because the community needs such a resource centre. This will be achieved by developing income generating activities around the centre. The following information is kept in the centre :

- Village profile on geographic, economic, social and cultural aspects as computer databases.
- Database management systems and Management information systems for land-use management, agricultural operations, public health status,
- Geographical Information systems for agriculture related land-use management
- Databases on agro-climatic variables like rainfall, water availability and soil nutrient status.
- Developing local capabilities in the area of computer-aided resource planning.
- Imparting computer literacy to the community through various training programmes.
- Intervening in rural and tribal development by helping local level planning.
- Information on various development schemes and welfare programmes for providing advice and guidance to the people in matters of employment and self-employment.

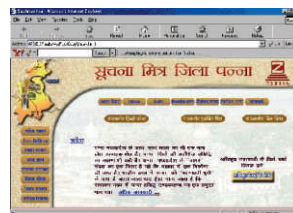
The centre can also fulfil the following needs :

- Address the needs of village level community organisations, Gram Panchayats and voluntary sector working towards socio-economic development.
- Effective management of development programmes and streamlining the functioning of local bodies thereby increasing the pace of rural development programmes.
- Transparency of administration and providing free access to information which is otherwise hidden from community scrutiny
- Empowerment and enhancing the role of communities in local g-governance
- Providing internet connectivity wherever communication facilities are available and there by act as a window to the global community.
- Providing Multimedia facilities for educational and training activities in the area of agricultural extension, health-related and other awareness generation programmes.

8. MULTIPLICATION OF SUCHNA MITRA FOR IMPROVING CITIZEN SERVICES AND E-GOVERNANCE

The above software has been installed after suitable customisation in Panna, Guna, Narsinghpur and Dindori districts in Madhya Pradesh. Ranchi in Jharkhand and Banswara in Rajasthan. A Brief description follows :

Suchna Mitra Panna : Suchna Mitra Panna was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh Shri Digvijay Singh on 26th Jan.'2002. At present 10 Suchna Kendras are functional in the district. Bhav-Tav and Hamara Bazar are more useful modules.



Suchna Mitra Guna : Suchna Mitra Guna was inaugurated in July 2002. At present 18 Suchna Mitra kendras are functional in Guna district. A module for marketing famous Chanderi Sarees is very popular. Due to Optical Fiber Cable, connectivity to server is easier in Guna.

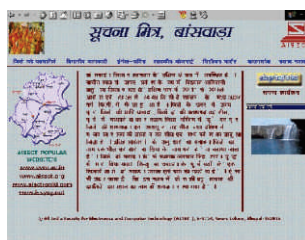
Suchna Mitra Narsinghpur : Suchna Mitra Narsinghpur was inaugurated by Minister for Finance GoMP, on 9th Nov. 2004. At present 15 Suchna Kendras are functional in Narsinghpur district, Health module is very popular.



Suchna Mitra Dindori : Suchna Mitra software for Dindori district is being developed. The preliminary demonstration of software has been done. About ten Suchna Mitra Kendras will be functionalised in the district.

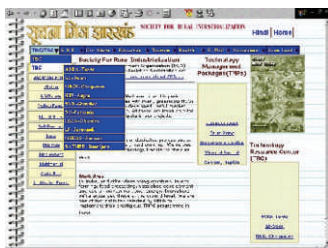


Suchna Mitra Banswara : Suchna Mitra Banswara was inaugurated on 26th January 2003. At present 6 authorised information centres are functional in the district.



This is the very first district in Rajasthan which is using this intranet project. It has a good coverage of information about Tourism of Rajasthan especially Banswara district in Hindi.

Suchna Mitra Jharkhand : "Suchna Mitra Jharkhand" is the name of the project which is being run by Society for Rural Industrialisation with 10 different small NGO's for its UNDP (United Nation Development Plan) programme. This is a state



level intranet site which has a lot of information on whole of Jharkhand and NGO's programmes in both English and Hindi. The server which is located in capital Ranchi is connected with 10 different blocks. Content and technology development has been done by AISECT.

SUCHNA MITRA MANUAL

For replication of the Suchna Mitra Software AISECT has now documented installation procedure in Administrative manual and operational instructions in the user manual. We can replicate this software anywhere in the country.

A. User Manual : This manual is useful for kiosk operations.

B. Administrative Manual : This manual provides guidelines to install and configure the software at server level.



9. CHARACTERISTICS OF RURAL ENVIRONMENT

The profile of average Indian rural citizen has the following characteristics :

- Majority of them are non-English speaking.
- Majority of them are poor.
- A large number of them are illiterate.
- They are traditional and conservative in their approach towards anything foreign.
- Majority of them have not seen a computer in their life. Even among those who have seen one or have used one, the usage is very limited, both in terms of time and purpose of usage.
- They are the potential users of government services and benefits
- They have practically little or no knowledge about the structure and workings of government departments nor do they have a desire or a need to know.
- Their usage of Internet is restricted both by lack of infrastructure and lack of knowledge of English language.

The above profile emphasizes the need to understand e-Governance architecture and delivery mechanism in the Indian context, keeping the need of rural masses in mind.

The above analysis of the characteristics of rural areas and the profile of the rural citizen throws fresh challenges to the government and the e-Governance System Designer. The major ones include :

- Illiteracy is a major barrier to the use of Internet. The illiterate segment of the population can in no way be expected to be capable of accessing (let alone use) the government services, if only Internet connectivity is provided to them.

- Lack of knowledge of English is another major barrier to either directly accessing or searching for government web sites. This rules out another major chunk of the population that is literate but lacks English knowledge.
- Searching is made costlier by the poor communication infrastructure and lack of suitable skill set to search for information. This becomes a highly prohibitive barrier for the rural people majority of whom are poor.
- Searching for information & services in Government cyber space is a daunting task. Government cyber space is an ocean as compared to the local needs of the rural people. Rural people, with their limited capabilities and needs, are likely to get lost in the labyrinth of government information/ services.
- Last but not the least is the cultural barrier which people in rural areas face. The cultural aspect is generally ignored when discussing the barriers to the use of new technologies and interacting in a virtual space. The traditional and conservative outlook of the rural people makes them overly cautious about trusting anything that is foreign to them. This is not only true in real space but also in virtual space. They naturally come to trust any information source that is local and known to them than a source that is not local and unknown to them. When translated into the virtual space, this is likely to manifest as reluctance to seek and use the information source from the global virtual space. The same information/service, when presented through more familiar local virtual space/channel meets ready acceptance by the people.

10. CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTATION

Various implementation issues were involved in implementation of Suchna-Mitra system in the field. These were :

10.1 Infrastructure Issues

At infrastructure front, poor rural telecommunications network, power problems in various places, and network connectivity are major issues. Unless these three areas are improved, an effective e-governance programme cannot be implemented.

10.2 Social and Cultural Issues

Suchna-Mitra implementation leads to information sharing at each small unit level in the masses, high awareness and transparency in governmental functioning. This

also needs a strong back end functional support to successfully maintain the e governance initiative; in the absence of which the system will collapse. The following factors affected the overall functioning of the e-governance system :

- Corruption, which is deep rooted in the political and administrative system.
- Resistance of staff. People always fear to experiment new things, newer means of functioning.
- Poor overall literacy rate and language barriers are other issues, which limit the usage.
- In the initial stages, any e governance project is likely to face criticism and set backs because of lesser public participation.
- Further owing to lower literacy rate in majority of the Indian states, the reach of the project remains restricted to the literate people in the society.
- Non-involvement of end-users during this process.
- Poor or negligible IT awareness among decision-makers, poor management of knowledge and human resources, non-compatibility between IT projects and business processes, poor risk management, choice of technology and over-ambitious projects are among the root causes of problems in achieving significant e-governance benefits.

10.3 Security Challenges

Defining a security policy can be a complicated task as each Government must decide beforehand which aspects of protection are most important, thereby compromising between security and ease of use.

10.4 Hardware, Software & Technical Challenges

- Identifying the appropriate hardware platforms and software application packages for cost effective delivery of public services is an important ingredient of the e-governance system
- The mismatch between local rural telephone exchanges with the optical fiber cable causing poor or no connectivity which reduces the economic viability of the kiosk and decreases the motivation level of the kiosk manager.
- Unavailability of telephone lines in many village areas.
- Alternative power supply for the kiosk is a must looking to the poor status of power supply in the state.

11. RESPONSE TO THE IMPLEMENTATIONAL CHALLENGES

The following were some responses to the implementational challenges :

- In the follow up projects AISECT provisioned for both On Line and Off-Line delivery of information.
- A solar power driven computer system has been designed to over come the power supply barrier in rural areas.
- The next stages of Suchna Mitra project include a WLL system based on the Cor DECT design of I.I.T. Chennai for improved connectivity.
- Repeated I.T. Yatras were conducted to educate people about the potential of information technology and to overcome social resistance. The I.T. Yatras were conducted with the help of a mobile Van.
- To reduce dependence on Literacy, more graphical interfaces are being introduced.
- A core group of officials, social workers, kiosk operators and local leaders has been created to continuously discuss and improve the system. This also acts as a pressure group on district administration.
- Training programmes of Govt. officials and beneficiaries have been initiated.

12. CONCLUSION

Indeed several lessons relating to the integrated rural development, the nodal role of the IT department, cooperation and coordination between various other departments have been learnt from the Suchna Mitra exercise. Inputs from similar projects like Gyandoot of this state and many others from other states have also proved useful. This initiative has helped bridge digital divide, social & economic. It has cut across age and gender and has brought the fruits of development to the doorsteps as it were, in areas where it most matters. The impact on social changes has been remarkable so much so that the urban-rural divide in certain rural areas has reduced considerably. The success of the project has been possible only with a drive by championing at the highest level and ownership at the ground level. The success does not end here. Suchna Mitra is poised for a continuous progress.