

FORUM FOR SOCIAL INITIATIVES

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020



SUBMITTED BY
Forum for Social Initiatives
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Organization Background

The **Forum for Social Initiatives (FSI)** is a registered organization under the *Societies Registration Act, 1860*, with the Government of Bihar. FSI was established to promote social justice, equity, and sustainable development for the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in the region. Over

the years, it has brought together various like-minded social action groups under a common platform to amplify efforts toward inclusive growth and social transformation.

FSI focuses on six key areas: **food security, health, education, land and shelter, disaster risk reduction, and environmental sustainability**. The organization is dedicated to empowering disadvantaged groups such as Mahadalits, backward classes, and other vulnerable communities by improving their access to essential services, rights, and opportunities for a dignified life.

FSI is actively working towards strengthening **coordination and collaboration** among social development organizations while fostering partnerships with government agencies, civil society groups, and other stakeholders. Through effective networking, advocacy, and policy engagement, FSI strives to enhance the impact and reach of social interventions, ensuring greater benefits for those in need.

As part of its commitment to capacity building, FSI has conducted training programs for Diocesan and partner organization staff on critical themes such as **gender equality, social inclusion, human rights and advocacy, and networking**. These training initiatives have significantly improved the implementation of development programs, ensuring a sustainable and long-lasting impact on the lives of Bihar's most marginalized communities.

Thrust Areas: Key Goal – Right to Life with Dignity

1. Education

- Promoting inclusive and quality education for children from marginalized communities.
- Advocating for improved school infrastructure, resources, and teacher training.
- Supporting non-formal and remedial education for children who have dropped out.

2. Health

- Strengthening access to quality healthcare services, particularly for women and children.
- Raising awareness on maternal and child health, nutrition, and reproductive rights.
- Supporting preventive healthcare, immunization, and community-based health initiatives.

3. Food Security

- Ensuring access to adequate and nutritious food for marginalized families.
- Promoting sustainable agriculture and livelihood opportunities for small farmers.
- Addressing malnutrition through targeted interventions, especially for children and pregnant women.

4. Land & Shelter

- Advocating for land rights and secure housing for landless and homeless families.

- Facilitating access to government housing schemes and land entitlement programs.
- Supporting the construction of safe, affordable, and disaster-resilient shelters.

5. Environment

- Promoting environmental conservation and sustainable natural resource management.
- Raising awareness on climate change adaptation and mitigation.
- Encouraging eco-friendly practices such as afforestation, waste management, and water conservation.

6. Disaster Risk Reduction

- Enhancing community resilience to natural disasters like floods, droughts, and cyclones.
- Strengthening emergency preparedness and response mechanisms at the community level.
- Providing relief and rehabilitation support to disaster-affected populations.

GOVERNING BODY MEMBERS:

William D' Souza.	President
Sebastian Kallupura	Vice President
Kurian Valiyakandathil	Member
Francis Tirkey	Secretary
Amal Raj S.	Treasurer cum - Director
Dorothy	Member
Teresa	Member
Pascal Anand	Member
Anil Bennet	Member

- **VISION**

A just and humane Society based on the Gospel values of love, peace and equality.

- **MISSION**

To promote human dignity of the oppressed and marginalized through collaboration and networking with like-minded bodies thus empowering the partner organizations in their search, struggle and initiatives.

Catalytic Role of the Forum

- Coordinating with partner organizations
- Capacitating and strengthening partner organizations
- Alliance Building and Networking with Govt., National and International NGOs

- Campaign and Advocacy for policy changes and social transformation
- Facilitating research studies, documentation and publication.

Social Development Work Approaches

FSI employs a **holistic and rights-based approach** to social development, ensuring that marginalized communities can access their entitlements and participate actively in their own upliftment. The organization integrates multiple strategies to create sustainable and long-term impact in its intervention areas.

1. Social Awareness Creation on Development Issues

- Raising awareness among communities on key social issues such as education, health, food security, gender equality, and environmental sustainability.
- Conducting workshops, street plays, campaigns, and community dialogues to inform people about their rights and responsibilities.
- Encouraging behavioral change through participatory communication and knowledge-sharing.

2. Community Mobilization and Capacity Building

- Strengthening local communities by forming self-help groups, women's collectives, and youth forums to foster leadership and self-reliance.
- Providing training sessions on livelihood development, financial literacy, disaster preparedness, and sustainable farming practices.
- Empowering grassroots organizations and community-based institutions to drive social change.

3. Rights-Based Approach (RBA)

- Ensuring that marginalized groups can claim their fundamental rights related to education, health, livelihood, and social security.
- Facilitating access to government welfare schemes and entitlements.
- Promoting community-led development and participatory governance to hold duty-bearers accountable.

4. Social and Gender Equity

- Advocating for equal opportunities and participation of women, Dalits, and other disadvantaged groups in decision-making processes.
- Addressing gender-based violence and discrimination through legal awareness, counseling, and support mechanisms.

- Integrating gender perspectives into all development initiatives to promote fairness and inclusion.

5. Networking

- Strengthening alliances with local, national, and international organizations working in similar domains to enhance impact and resource-sharing.
- Collaborating with government agencies, NGOs, faith-based organizations, and corporate partners for greater outreach and effectiveness.
- Facilitating inter-organizational dialogue to exchange best practices and innovative solutions for community development.

6. Advocacy & Lobbying for Good Governance

- Engaging in policy advocacy to influence government decisions and ensure pro-poor policies are effectively implemented.
- Training communities on governance and accountability to empower them to demand transparency and fairness in public service delivery.
- Encouraging participatory governance through social audits, public hearings, and citizen engagement initiatives.

7. Emergency Response

- Providing rapid relief and rehabilitation support to communities affected by disasters such as floods, droughts, and pandemics.
- Strengthening disaster preparedness by training communities in risk mitigation and first-response mechanisms.
- Working with government agencies and humanitarian organizations to ensure a coordinated and efficient emergency response.

I. Key Program Activities by FSI (2019-2020)

1. Training for Community Vigilance Group (CVG) Leaders on Government Schemes and Entitlements

Introduction

The Forum for Social Initiatives (FSI) organized a one-day training session for Community Vigilance Group (CVG) leaders on April 18, 2019, at Barh. The objective of this training was to equip CVG leaders with **comprehensive knowledge of various government welfare schemes and entitlements** to help them guide and support their communities in accessing these benefits effectively.



The training was conducted by **Mr. Ravi Kumar**, a subject expert in social welfare programs. He focused on educating participants about different **State and Central Government schemes**, their eligibility criteria, required documents, and the process of availing benefits.

Training Objectives

- To **create awareness** among CVG leaders about **welfare schemes** related to education, health, livelihood, housing, sanitation, and social security.
- To **enhance the capacity** of CVG leaders in identifying eligible beneficiaries within their communities.
- To provide **clarity on documentation requirements** and procedural challenges in accessing these schemes.
- To enable CVG leaders to act as **community facilitators** in connecting people with government services.

Training Session Details

1. Welcome & Introduction

The session began with a **brief introduction** where participants shared their experiences regarding government schemes and the challenges faced in availing them. This was followed by an **overview of the training agenda** and its expected outcomes.

2. Detailed Discussion on Government Schemes

Mr. Ravi Kumar provided a **structured explanation** of various **State and Central Government welfare schemes**, highlighting their objectives, provisions, and the entitlements offered.

A. Bihar State Government Schemes

1. **JEEViKA (Bihar Rural Livelihoods Promotion Society)** – A program focused on empowering women through **self-help groups (SHGs)** and providing access to credit, employment, and economic opportunities.
2. **Mukhyamantri Kanya Utthan Yojana** – A scheme promoting **education and financial independence** for girls in Bihar.
3. **Mukhyamantri Kanya Vivah Yojana** – A financial assistance scheme for economically weaker families to support **the marriage of girls**.
4. **Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) & Anganwadi Schemes** – Programs aimed at improving **child nutrition, health, and early childhood education** through Anganwadi centers.

B. Central Government Schemes

1. **Pradhan Mantri Gramin Awas Yojana (PMGAY)** – A scheme providing **financial assistance for constructing houses** for rural families.
2. **Swachh Bharat Abhiyan** – A national initiative focused on **sanitation, toilet construction, and hygiene awareness** to eliminate open defecation.
3. **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana (PMUY)** – A scheme providing **free LPG connections** to low-income households, particularly benefiting women.
4. **Public Distribution System (PDS)** – A government initiative to **ensure food security** by distributing **subsidized grains and essential commodities** to eligible families.
5. **Mudra Yojana** – A financial support program for **small entrepreneurs and micro-business owners** to enhance income-generating opportunities.

6. **Kisan Samriddhi Yojana** – A scheme supporting **farmers with financial aid, improved agricultural resources, and subsidies.**
7. **Ayushman Bharat Yojana (Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana - PMJAY)** – A **health insurance scheme** providing **free medical treatment** to economically disadvantaged families at government and empanelled private hospitals.

3. Key Discussions and Clarifications

During the session, participants raised **various queries** regarding scheme eligibility, procedural challenges, and the reasons why some community members face difficulties in availing benefits. The following topics were **discussed in detail**:

- **Common obstacles in accessing schemes** (e.g., lack of awareness, incomplete documentation, delays in application processing).
- **Key documents required for availing government benefits**, such as:
 - ✓ **Aadhaar Card** (Identity proof)
 - ✓ **Bank Passbook** (For direct benefit transfers)
 - ✓ **Ration Card** (Eligibility proof for food security schemes)
 - ✓ **MGNREGA Job Card** (For rural employment schemes)
 - ✓ **Income and Caste Certificates** (For category-specific benefits)
- **Practical steps** for beneficiaries to apply for these schemes through government portals, panchayats, and Common Service Centers (CSCs).
- **Case studies** of successful beneficiaries who have availed these schemes and improved their socio-economic conditions.

4. Role of CVG Leaders in Community Development

- CVG leaders were **encouraged to actively disseminate** this information within their communities and assist in filling out application forms.
- They were advised to **monitor the implementation of these schemes** at the grassroots level and report any discrepancies.
- The training emphasized the need for **regular follow-ups with government departments** to ensure timely disbursement of benefits.

Key Outcomes of the Training

- Participants gained **comprehensive knowledge** of multiple government schemes and their entitlements.
- They learned about **the necessary documentation** and ways to address common application-related issues.
- CVG leaders **expressed confidence** in supporting their communities by **facilitating access to government services**.
- The training enhanced **community leadership and engagement**, ensuring **greater outreach** to underprivileged families.

Conclusion & Way Forward

The training concluded with a **commitment from CVG leaders** to use their newly acquired knowledge to assist **marginalized families in accessing government schemes**. Participants also suggested organizing **follow-up workshops** to track progress and address any emerging challenges.

FSI remains committed to empowering **local community leaders** through training and capacity-building initiatives, ensuring that government welfare programs **reach those who need them the most**.

2. Training on Org strength assessment and Report documentation

Date & Venue:

The training was held on **31st May and 1st June, 2019**, at **Sewa Kendra, Patna**. A total of **39 participants** from various sectors attended and gained insights on **organizational strength assessment** and **quality report documentation** in social development.

Training Overview:

The training focused on enhancing the participants' understanding of assessing the **strengths of an organization** in the context of social development. Participants were also trained on how to incorporate **community reflections** in **report documentation** for better impact and transparency.



A dedicated session was held on **Stakeholder Analysis**, covering the **identification, roles, and involvement of stakeholders** in enhancing the **impact** of organizational programs on target communities.

Training Contents:

- **Introduction to Social Development Organizations:** Understanding their functions and role in society.
- **SWOT Analysis:** Analysing the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats** of an organization.
- **Program/Project Cycle Management:** Understanding the lifecycle of social programs and projects.
- **Stakeholder Identification & Analysis:** Mapping stakeholders, understanding their importance, and how to engage them for program success.
- **Result-Based Reporting:** Techniques to measure and report outcomes effectively.
- **Writing Case Studies:** Practical skills to document and communicate case studies.

Documentation Gaps in ‘Success Stories’:

Participants discussed common issues that affect the **quality of documentation**, particularly in success stories:

- **Credibility of Sources**
- **Language Barriers**
- **Time Constraints**
- **Improper Communication**
- **Lack of Fact Verification**
- **Absence of Verification Tools**

Outcomes and Impact:

The training provided valuable insights into conducting a **SWOT analysis** and documenting **quality reports**, which will help in scaling up successful practices within the organization. The knowledge gained will also assist in writing **impactful success stories** that reflect the true contributions of staff and communities involved in development programs.

Participants left the training with enhanced skills in **organizational assessment, stakeholder engagement, and effective reporting**, equipping them to strengthen their organizations and improve program delivery.

3. Capacity Building Training to Field staff

Date & Venue:

FSI organized a **Capacity Building Training** for field staff on **Community Mobilization and Empowerment** at **Barh, Patna** on **15-16th August 2019**. The training was attended by **28 staff members** working in various development sectors, including **women empowerment, education, and rights**.

Training Overview:

This training aimed to strengthen the field staff's capabilities in engaging with communities and implementing development programs at the grassroots level. As these staff members are the **key connectors** between the organization and the communities, the training focused on enhancing their **skills in mobilizing and empowering** social groups.

Training Contents:

- **Community, Society, and Development:** Understanding the interconnection and importance of community-driven development.
- **Building Rapport with the Community:** Techniques for establishing trust and effective communication with local populations.
- **Community-Based Development Groups:** Forming and managing community-driven groups for sustainable development.
- **Role of CBOs:** The significance of **Community-Based Organizations** in empowering local communities.
- **Social Group Awareness & Capacity Building:** Empowering marginalized social groups and raising awareness about their rights.
- **Panchayats and Government Linkages:** Understanding the roles of **local governance (Panchayats)** and **government programs** in supporting disadvantaged groups like **Mahadalits**.
- **Education, Rights, and Empowerment:** Raising awareness about citizens' rights, duties, and pathways to empowerment.

Outcomes & Impact:

This training was pivotal in **enhancing the skills** of field staff, enabling them to engage with communities more effectively and mobilize them for **development actions**. By strengthening their understanding of **community-based development** and **empowerment strategies**, the training equips

staff to bring about significant **positive change** in their respective sectors. These enhanced capabilities are expected to foster **greater community involvement**, leading to improved **social outcomes** and contributions to the nation's progress.

4. Community Health Global Network Meeting

Date & Venue:

The **Community Health Global Network**, in collaboration with **Forum for Social Initiatives (FSI)**, organized a **two-day meeting** on **26-27th July 2019** at **Sewa Kendra, Patna**. The meeting focused on **enhancing healthcare access, addressing gaps in rural health systems, and empowering marginalized communities, particularly women, for holistic social transformation.**

Objectives of the Meeting:

- To **assess the gaps** in the existing **healthcare system** and identify challenges faced by marginalized communities.
- To **explore strategies** for enhancing **community health, hygiene, and awareness** programs.
- To **strengthen collaboration** between stakeholders, including **government bodies, healthcare professionals, and grassroots organizations.**
- To **promote leadership development** in the health sector, encouraging proactive initiatives for rural healthcare improvements.

Key Discussion Areas:

1. **Provision of Appropriate Healthcare** – Ensuring accessible and quality healthcare services for all.
2. **Gaps in the Government Health System** – Identifying barriers in reaching underserved populations.
3. **Rural Healthcare Challenges** – Addressing critical healthcare shortages in remote areas.
4. **Health & Hygiene Education** – Promoting community awareness on disease prevention and hygiene practices.
5. **Community Empowerment through Health Programs** – Integrating health and development efforts for long-term impact.
6. **Global Cooperation** – Strengthening international and regional partnerships for better healthcare solutions.

7. **Leadership Development in the Health Sector** – Encouraging proactive participation of healthcare professionals and local leaders in community health initiatives.

Key Outcomes & Recommendations:

- **Equal Healthcare Access:** The meeting emphasized that **healthcare should be inclusive and unbiased**, irrespective of caste, creed, religion, or socio-economic status.
- **Focus on Rural Bihar:** Strengthening **health infrastructure and services** in rural districts was recognized as a priority.
- **Enhanced Government & Institutional Collaboration:** A strong recommendation was made for **better coordination** between **government health departments, NGOs, and community leaders** to ensure efficient service delivery.
- **Capacity Building for Healthcare Workers:** The importance of **training and leadership development** in the health sector was highlighted to improve service quality and outreach.
- **Sustained Community Engagement:** Encouraging **active participation of communities** in their own healthcare initiatives to foster long-term, sustainable change.

Conclusion:

The meeting reinforced the **need for collective action** to address **healthcare inequalities** and ensure **sustainable health interventions** in Bihar. Participants agreed that **individual efforts, institutional support, and multi-sectoral collaboration** are essential for a **transformative impact** in community health. The discussion set the stage for **future partnerships and strategic interventions** aimed at **improving the well-being of the most vulnerable populations**.

5. Strategic Planning & Review Meeting

Date & Venue:

The **Forum for Social Initiatives (FSI)** conducted a **Strategic Planning and Review Meeting** on **22nd October 2019** at **Sewa Kendra, Patna**. The meeting was attended by **23 program staff**, including the **Project Coordinator, Supervisors, and Field Animators**. The focus was on **reviewing activity progress, evaluating results, and planning future interventions**.

Key Discussion Points:

1. **Activity Progress & Achievements** – Reviewing ongoing projects and their impact.

2. **Capacity Building of SHGs & Children's Peer Groups** – Strengthening self-help groups (SHGs) and youth-led initiatives.
3. **Internal Loaning & Income Generation** – Assessing loan utilization and promoting economic self-sufficiency.
4. **Government Schemes – Benefits & Challenges** – Identifying gaps in scheme implementation and community access.
5. **Community Engagement with Government Departments** – Enhancing access to **ICDS, ATMA, NABARD**, and other welfare programs.
6. **Future Planning & Strategy Development** – Outlining goals for the next quarter.

Key Issues & Resolutions:

- **Challenges in Government Scheme Implementation:**

- DBT (Direct Benefit Transfer) schemes are well-intended but face delays due to non-cooperation from banks and government departments.
- Despite submitting necessary documents like Aadhaar, many beneficiaries are unable to access entitlements.
- Action Plan: Program staff were instructed to escalate issues to Mukhiya and higher officials in case of malpractice, particularly in **PDS and other essential services**.

- **Utilization of Internal Loans in SHGs:**

- A concern was raised that **most internal loans** are being used for **weddings and family expenses** rather than **income-generating activities**.
- **Recommendation:** SHG leaders and members should be **trained on financial literacy** and encouraged to invest in **livelihood activities**, following the successful **JEEViKA model**.

Outcomes & Next Steps:

- ✦ Identified **key intervention areas** for improving government scheme accessibility.
- ✦ Emphasized **financial discipline** within SHGs for sustainable growth.
- ✦ Developed an **action plan for the next quarter** with clear **targets and strategies** for program staff.

6. Orientation of Program Staff on Key Strategic Pillars (KSPs)

Date & Venue:

An **Orientation Session on Key Strategic Pillars (KSPs)** was conducted on **12th December 2019** at **Sewa Kendra, Patna**. A total of **21 program field staff** from various locations participated in the session, which aimed to enhance their understanding and implementation of KSPs in **Diocesan-level development programs**.



Objectives of the Orientation:

- To introduce **Key Strategic Pillars (KSPs)** and their significance in development programs.
- To **mainstream development components** across sectors such as **education, women empowerment, DRR, and livelihood**.
- To build **staff capacity** for effective **community engagement, dialogue, volunteering, and resource sharing**.
- To address **challenges in sensitizing** Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and marginalized communities.

Key Discussion Points:

1. **Understanding Key Strategic Pillars (KSPs)** – Their meaning, concept, and practical application in fieldwork.
2. **Mainstreaming Development Components** – Integrating KSPs in **education, women's empowerment, disaster risk reduction (DRR), and livelihood programs**.
3. **Dialogue, Volunteering & Community Sharing** – Encouraging participatory development approaches.
4. **Challenges in Community Sensitization** – Addressing **low literacy levels, weak social structures, and lack of awareness** in marginalized communities.
5. **Success Factors & Limitations** – Identifying best practices for program sustainability.

Key Outcomes & Recommendations:

- **KSPs were acknowledged as essential for strengthening community engagement** and ensuring long-term program sustainability.
- **Need for simplified awareness strategies** to effectively **sensitize CBOs and marginalized groups**.
- **Integration of dialogue, volunteering, and shared community responsibility** as fundamental principles in future development initiatives.
- **Action Plan:** Field Supervisors and Animators were encouraged to develop **localized approaches** for implementing KSPs within their respective program areas.

Conclusion:

The session provided **valuable insights** into the **implementation of KSPs** and highlighted the **need for strong community participation**. The program staff committed to **adopting these strategic approaches** in their work to **enhance development impact and sustainability**.

Future Directions

FSI aims to expand its impact by strengthening partnerships, enhancing community engagement, and advocating for policy changes. Key focus areas include:

- Scaling up education, health, and livelihood programs for marginalized communities.
- Strengthening capacity-building initiatives for field staff and community leaders.
- Promoting environmental sustainability and disaster resilience.
- Enhancing research, documentation, and policy advocacy efforts for social transformation.

Gratitude

FSI expresses sincere gratitude to its dedicated staff, volunteers, donors, government agencies, and partner organizations for their unwavering support. Their contributions have been instrumental in advancing our mission of social justice and community empowerment. We look forward to continued collaboration in making a lasting impact.