

GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Action Aid – India

Securing rights and sustainable livelihoods through collective action and education for people dependent on the informal economy in India

Good Practice: Women on Wheels

1) Key Areas of Good Practice

- Leadership training/Empowerment Training **(3.4)**
- Vocational training **(3.6)**
- Knowledge of rights, laws and regulations
- Enabling particularly vulnerable groups on economic empowerment **(4.12)**

2) Context - Brief description

The course is provided to women who were formerly waste/rag pickers to become taxi and hired drivers. The course covers driving and rules of the road training. It also provides a course in self-defence and basic first aid.

Where the good practice was implemented:

Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India. Indore is the largest and most populous city in the Indian state of Madhya Pradesh. It serves as the headquarters of both Indore District and Indore Division.

Why the good practice was implemented:

ActionAid strongly acknowledge that women make up an important constituency, whereas within society, they are deemed a “weaker” group. Through this training, ActionAid wanted women to create an identity of their own and be independent.

Who was involved:

SAMAAN Society, a local NGO and ActionAid project staff. This training is exclusive to women and female youth.

When the activity was implemented:

From September 2016 until October 2017. Duration of approximately one year.

3) Level and type of innovation of the good practice

4) Description: processes and steps involved

The Indore team conducted visits to the 48 slums and resettlement colonies. They first spoke with community members to understand religious and educational profiles. Then further discussed issues the community faced and the involvement of women in various livelihoods. Locations for mobilization were selected based on specific criteria with strategies developed based on context of each area.

Criteria for Area selection:

- Supporting grass-root level NGOs working in selected area, which is helpful for initial rapport building.
- Dense population of eligible women e.g. Kacchi Basti etc.
- Good connectivity with Sakha clients locations, which is helpful for easy recruitment of trained drivers.

During the period, various outreach and mobilization activities, including 42 meetings with women, were conducted. This enabled face-to-face dialogue with eligible young women to gauge their interest in joining Women on Wheels (WoW), potential barriers to joining the course, availability of required documents for enrolment as well as their marital/family and economic status.

The Drive Campaign was organized in 31 slums of Indore with two drivers driving a car in communities. The action shows women as role models for other young girls and women. The Drive Campaign has proven to be an effective tool through which communities can interact with drivers. Communities can thus develop positive perspectives towards driving as a profession for women.

Meetings were organized with grass-root organizations, NGO/CBOs, Government agencies and individuals with the objective to disseminate information about the WoW programme. The meetings served to mobilize eligible and interested female anganwadi workers and others from their working areas.

A range of IEC materials (pamphlets, canopy displays, stands and posters) were also disseminated in 48 slums. Counselling was provided to women and their families in cases where families were opposed to a family member joining WoW. Once enrolled, trainees were supported to acquire documents essential to obtaining driving license.

5) Resources and skills needed to carry out the good practice

Resources: mobilizers, counsellors, trainers, transport authority of Indore

Skills: communications, driving, traffic rules and regulations

6) Sustainability of the Good Practice

Writing proposal for raising funds through Corporate Social Responsibility. We are trying to raise funds for implementing similar practice in the cities of Bangalore and Jaipur

7) Link to Other Resources: Meenu Vadera: Founder, Azad Foundation, 9899000646

Lesson Learned:

- This particular practice was innovative because of the concept of promoting women as taxi and hired drivers within the local socio-cultural environment.