



**Redefining the  
Possibilities**



# Redefining the Possibilities

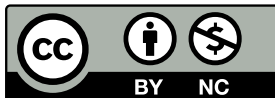
Samarth Soochnapreneur is an initiative of the EquallyAble Foundation and Digital Empowerment Foundation, intended to uplift the socio-economic status of Differently-Abled people.



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# Introduction >>

Samarth Soochnapreneur is an initiative in which 100 differently abled people were connected with digital technology which is vital for their inclusive growth and capabilities. The digital divide in its broadest sense implies a chain of causality — both means and the ends of social stratification, and not a linear process. The lack of access to computers and the Internet affects many aspects of everyday life, but societal factors also determine the categories of “info rich” and “info poor.” Disability produces an invisible minority that is socially, culturally, and economically marginalized. This is where the organisations’ believe that it’s a process of making services available at village level, and not just to empower the rural community but by creating a sustainable livelihood earning option for the local level samarth entrepreneurs.

As per Census 2011, in India, the increasing focus on digital governance and the availability of digital technologies have proved to be empowering persons with disabilities, who are around 2.21% of the total population. This figure is likely to be more than 5% as stated by the Planning Commission and the World Bank, however, the estimated range from 5% to 15% of

the population. Among the disabled population an estimated number of 56% are males and 44% are females.

Majority (69%) of the disabled population resided in rural areas while the remaining 31% resided in urban areas.

In urban areas, 67% of the total disabled persons are literate while 49% in rural areas. In urban areas 20% have matric/ secondary level education but below graduate and 10% are graduate and above, while in rural areas, the corresponding figures are 10% and 2% respectively. In urban areas, among the disabled who are literate, 15% of them are graduates, while in rural areas only 5% of them are graduates.

UNESCO data reveals that a majority of PwDs are unable to earn any livelihood for a variety of reasons, due to the lack of adequate education or training. Only one to two percent of PwDs in developing countries receive education (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1998). The rate of employment of disabled persons is below 5%. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is increasingly enabling persons with disabilities to level the

playing field in access to lifelong education, skills development, and employment (Broadband Commission for Digital Development et al. 2013). Despite the existence of central and state schemes and programmes, people with disabilities still lead challenging lives. They are not only considered as liabilities but also, they are excluded and are bound to live unequal, unproductive, unsafe and undignified lives. ICT has a tremendous potential to promote inclusion and full participation of persons with disabilities



# Geographic Spread



- Bihar
- Haryana
- Jharkhand
- Madhya Pradesh
- Odisha
- Rajasthan
- Telangana
- Uttar Pradesh









# Embracing Abilities

Pratap is a true inspiration for people with disabilities and others. Once a school dropout, he now holds a postgraduate degree in Computer Applications. His mother always encouraged him to pursue his studies and build a career.

When he was in 8th, he had to leave school. The school infrastructure was ill-equipped and teachers were very demotivating. However, a few years later, he resumed and completed his education successfully.

But after completing his studies, he found it difficult to find a suitable job. He was rejected in many job interviews because of his disability; places that accepted him had an inaccessible workstation. He managed to open a grocery shop, but that too was not enough to ends meet. While looking for more options, Pratap met the Samarth Sochnapreneur (SSP) team during a training workshop in Alwar. Pratap was mesmerized to see how the program is empowering and changing

the lives of people with disabilities.

He expressed interest to be a part of the larger team and, after profiling and interviewing him, he was selected as a SoochanPreneur. He was given digital infrastructure and, he received training from DEF and EquallyAble Foundation on how to use digital tools for social good. Today, he is earning a living for his family and disseminating information to the remote places in his district.

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*“After completing his studies, he faced difficulties in finding a suitable job as everybody rejected him due to his disability”.*

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Pratap Singh  
Samarth Soochnaprneur  
Alwar, Rajasthan

# Digital Empowerment can Change Lives

Chandan belongs to a community, living in a small village in the Guna district of Madhya Pradesh. He lives with his parents and siblings and is the only earner in his family. Before joining the program and becoming a SoochnaPreneur, Chandan used to be a teacher in a primary school.

When he joined the Samarth SoochnaPreneur program, he was low on self-esteem, disheartened and, clueless about what is happening in his life. DEF & EAF supported him by giving him digital tools and training him on how to use them.

He uses the digital centre to help people avail benefits from government entitlements. He said, “these services have not only helped marginalized people to access their entitlements but also proved to be a regular source of income for me”. Now, he has become a successful information entrepreneur; he can be seen busy during the day, serving people in need and

disseminating relevant information. Chandan has also opened up a small grocery shop and leads a dignified life. The additional income helps to run the family and take care of the education of his siblings.

Today, his income has increased and, expectations from life have changed. He majorly serves the people from the marginalized and vulnerable sections of the society and provides the services free of cost.

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*“He can be seen busy during day, serving people in need and disseminating relevant information”*

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Chandan  
Samarth Sochnaprneur  
Guna, Madhya Pradesh

# Ensuring the Right to Live

Socioeconomic index of people with disabilities isn't very encouraging in India, it worsens in case of people from marginalized background. Sudama is an example of that, in the past he faced many hardships, couldn't find a stable source of income, didn't have a social status and people always looked at him with pity.

Sudama is an educated man, but with no possible job opportunities he started working in a small grocery store. In spite of his disability, being an elder sibling, he took the responsibility of supporting his family.

Asha, one of DEF's field coordinators met Sudama. Upon hearing about the Samarth SoochnaPreneur program Sudama showed his willingness to be a part of it. He was digitally equipped with devices that would help him provide basic digital services in his village. He set up a small centre in the community.

Today Sudama is a strong advocate for accessibility of information; he believes that the

benefits must reach to the doors of those entitled to it. He wants to see things change at the ground level and envisions a world where information directly reaches the beneficiary.

With his dedication, he has broken the perception that disabled people cannot serve others. Sudama is now a well-respected man in his community, people have respect for him and look at him as a man with answers to all their questions.

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*“He wants to see things change at the ground level and envisions a world where information directly reaches the beneficiary.”*

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Sudama Mahto  
Samarth Soochnaprneur  
Ranchi, Jharkhand

# Breaking the Stereotype

Livelihood is critical to combating poverty, especially for people with disabilities. Dalima Kumari lives with her family in a small village in Bihar.

She grew up as an ambitious girl who wanted to work. Her disability was not the only hurdle to cross; being a girl had its challenges. When she wanted to complete her education, she was burdened with household work. When she wanted to be independent, she was bounded by the tie of marriage but, her destiny had something else planned for her.

One day, she visited a workshop organized by DEF. She showed her interest in volunteering for the Samarth SoochnaPreneur programme after listening to the beneficiaries speaking about how their lives changed because of the program.

Today she is running a digital information centre and helping people access their rights and entitlements. Now she is vocal about girls rights.

Dalima's new source of income acts as a financial support to her family and along with that, she is also able to continue her higher education.

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*“ She showed her interest in volunteering for the Samarth SoochnaPreneur programme after listening to the beneficiaries speaking about how their lives changed because of the program”*

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Dalima Kumari  
Samarth Soochnapreneur  
West Champaran, Bihar

# Shaping her own Destiny

Bandana was married off at the age of 18 to an older man and, she lost her husband just three years after the marriage. Left with a child to take care of without any financial support; her life came to a sudden stop.

With no options left, she tried to find a job, but that too was not easy. In rural areas, jobs for women are very limited and selecting a woman over a man is unusual. Soon all the resources went dry and, there were days when she fed soaked rice to her child and went to sleep on an empty stomach. “Those days were the worst days in my life”, she recalls. Bandana was a bright student and, her interest in education earned her a job with an institution registered under Bihar Education Project. Her salary was not good but, she managed to make ends meet. After 5 years, the project got over and, she was jobless again.

She heard about the Samarth SoochnaPreneur Program from her friends. Seeing the livelihood opportunity, she soon joined the program. Initial

days were difficult for her as she never used a mobile phone in her life and now, she was asked to use a phone, computer and Internet but, she managed well.

Now she is running a mobile information centre and visits people at their homes. She is committed to the people of her community to deliver the services swiftly and promptly. She recalls her transformation from a girl who never used a phone to a woman who connects people to the world. Her journey had many roadblocks but, she managed to get through all of it.

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*“There were days when she fed soaked rice to her child and sometimes also went to sleep empty stomach”.*

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Bandana  
Samarth Soochnaprneur  
West Champaran, Bihar

# It's All About Perception

“I’d feel included if others around create such an environment,” says Aftab. It is his story of change. Aftab is from the capital of Jharkhand – Ranchi. He was diagnosed with polio in his childhood. He struggles to walk without crutches.

Despite the circumstances, he feels blessed to have friends, teachers and family who always support, motivate, and encourage him to overcome the challenges he faces in his daily life.

After completing his graduation, he wanted to build a career in Mass Communication. He was not able to make it to the merit list even after his best efforts. Suddenly all his hopes and aspirations disappeared.

Aftab waited a year to find a suitable job. Another DEF team member heard his aim and suggested he attends the Samarth SoochnaPreneur (Information Entrepreneur) workshop. It was a new world for Aftab, one where everyone is equally abled.

Now he is an entrepreneur and runs his centre. His job is to help people gain access to information. He goes further to ensure that no one is deprived of their benefits. Aftab’s reason for success are his determination and commitment along with the support of his family.

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*“He feels blessed to have friends, teachers and family who always supported, motivated and encouraged him to overcome the challenges he faced in his life”.*

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Aftab  
Samarth Sochnaprneur  
Ranchi, Jharkhand

# Where There is a Will, there is a way

Gajo Manusri is a SoochnaPreneur who lives in Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand. Before joining the program, he ran a small grocery shop, earning enough to cover the family expenses. When his children started attending a private school, his income was not sufficient for the family.

He approached the SSP program team and sought their support. Gajo underwent a two month training programme to advance his knowledge. Soon he opened a centre to provide the same service to the community.

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*“A reliable source of information would make the life of people easy and secure”.*

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With an increasing number of queries, he explored to find the latest information on the schemes. Over the next few months, he submitted over 600 forms under Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojna. It is because of his relentless effort that every household in his village now has a gas connection.

It gave him confidence, and with time and more research, he answered all the queries. He also provides online services to apply for scholarships and other schemes for students.

Above all, he charges a reasonable amount. Now, he not only runs his digital information centre but is involved in other projects and is an advocate of digital empowerment. According to him, a reliable source of the information would make their life easy and secure.





Gajo Manusari  
Samarth Soochnaprneur  
Ranchi, Jharkhand

# Technology Doesn't See Disability

Kaluram is the only breadwinner in his family. He completed his education and enrolled for a Diploma to secure a government job. Unfortunately, he did not get in. However, he put in the required effort and began a social service. He started assisting villagers to complete their documentation required to avail the State and Central government welfare schemes. It is his only source of income.

During the block visit, he met with the member of DEF's digital centre and learned of the

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*“He shared the depressive episode of his life, which caused due to limited knowledge”.*

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Samarth SoochnaPreneur program. There he expressed his interest to join the programme. He was mentored by DEF's team. He attended several training sessions. During one of the phone calls, he shared the depressive episode of his life, which caused due to limited knowledge of the English language, failing exams, and dropping out due to financial struggle. Being kind-hearted and shy, he never expressed himself to anyone. He put all his focus on helping the community.

The team taught him to operate a computer and the internet. They also motivated him to develop his communication skills. Today, he is doing an advance Digital Literacy course and aspiring to grow in the same field. The training sessions have inspired him to work as a Digital Service provider in his village. He wishes to reach the remote locations and provide government entitlements to them.



Irshad  
Samarth SoochnaPreneur  
Alwar, Rajasthan

# Kalamani Devi is a hard working lady

Sushma Kumari is a 23-year-old Samarth SoochnaPreneur from the village – Khoka Beyang, District Ramgarh, Jharkhand. Sushma's vision is genetically impaired. She was excellent in academics and graduated from high school with good grades. Later she found it difficult to convince her family to continue her higher education. Sushma's teacher heard her ordeal and helped her to write the electronic communication engineering polytechnic competition exam. Fortunately, she received a scholarship and finished her graduation without

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*“She was forced to deny the opportunities due to societal norms”.*

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being a burden on her family.

She studied in a government school, received a scholarship for her under-graduation, and was presented with an opportunity in a company that she was forced to deny due to a disagreement within the family. She returned to the village.

She again tried to prepare for the competition exam but was unable to pass as the daily chores with work did not provide her with enough time. Recently, she contacted the DEF supervisor to discuss the Samarth SoochnaPreneur Programme.

During the program, she has learned basic life and moral skills, how to help people, how to be honest, how to become self-reliant, and how we can become the service provider instead of being a service seeker. After seeing her work, the program team decided to support her with digital infrastructure.



Sushma Kumari  
Samarth Soochnaprneur  
Ramghar, Jharkhand

# Disseminating Information as Source of Income

Being a differently-abled person, he didn't know which way to go and support his family. This is the story of Khushiram, a 28-year-old from Alwar, Rajasthan. Before joining the program, he was looking for opportunities to support his family.

DEF coordinator Ms Shalu Yadav met with him and learned more about his objective. He enrolled him for the Samarth SoochnaPreneur programme. After several interactions with the coordinator,

Khushiram gained the confidence to take up any task. Khushiram also discussed his challenges, hardships, financial problems, and plans for starting a centre in his village. To help, DEF has supported Khushiram with digital infrastructure. He now wants to generate revenue

by disseminating reliable information, service delivery and digital literacy classes.

After the training, he became a SoochnaPreneur with the support of digital resources from EquallyAble Foundation & DEF under the programme.

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*“After several interactions with the coordinator, Khushiram gained the confidence to take up any task.”*

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Khushi Ram  
Samarth Sochnapneur  
Alwar, Rajasthan

# What Confidence Can Unlock is Limitless

She couldn't walk because of her disability, but this didn't stop her from standing against all odds. 24-year-old Pappu Kanwar uses her hand and two wooden sticks to walk. She is the fifth child of her parents, out of 6 children. She completed her graduation in arts with the help of a scholarship.

She went through depression because she thought her disability would never allow her to help and support her family. She had lost all her confidence and given up hope.

During the COVID-19 Lockdown, she came to know about Digital Empowerment Foundation and visited the Barmer Digital Center. There she started learning computers and enrolled for the Samarth SoochnaPreneur program.

Pappu was trained and skilled under the SSP program and, after talking to Shakti Singh, the district coordinator, Pappu got a vision and clarity, she also felt confident, and it changed her perception

completely, in a positive way. Now, she has got

the direction and is more focused and committed towards her dreams and goals. She is currently working on improving her vocabulary. She is also acquiring Advanced computer skills. She is constantly working on her digital skills with the Phone provided by DEF under the Samarth SoochnaPreneur program.

She is now confident in using various digital platforms to learn and deliver services. She is also learning cooking skills and keeps looking up other people who live life to the fullest with disability.

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*“She went through depression because she thought her disability would never allow her to help and support her family”.*

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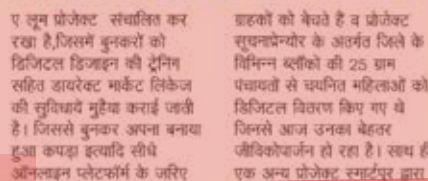
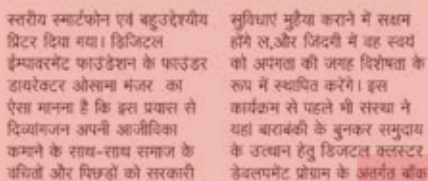
Pappu Kanwar  
Samarth Soochnaprneur  
Barmer, Rajasthan





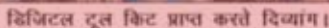
ग्राम पंचायतों से चयनित 11 दिव्यांगों को डिजिटल सामग्री वितरित की

लीगीसपुर बाराबंकी। ग्राम  
पुर में महतुब बेगम हमिदा  
कुली की कोठी में पिछले 5  
दिनों दिल्ली की सरसवा  
किंगटल एम्बेडमेंट कार्डेशन  
द्वारा समर्पित किए गए कई  
किंगटल रिसेलेंस सेंटर पर  
दिनांक 26 कार्डेशन के  
समय से शुरू किए गए समर्प  
मुद्राण-योर कार्यक्रम के अंतर्गत  
की अभिनव कलाओं की  
दोस्तद विकली, मन्नापुर, धनेरी,  
नेलायानन, रोहपुर, खजुरी,  
शामपुर, कर्धपुर, पसर, यमपुर  
सहित 10 ग्राम पंचायतों से व्यक्त  
11 दिवस जहाँ को किंगटल  
सामग्री विवरित को किंगटल में  
सभी विद्यार्थी को लेस उच्च



मिलने के 10 गांव में स्वास्थ्य शिक्षा शासन विभाग मनीषरजन आज सुविधाएं प्रदान करने के साथ-साथ समुदाय को मुफ्त में डेंटल उपलब्ध कराया जा रहा है। तीन बच्चों को यह 10 गांव पूरी तरह होमोपैथिक विलेज बन चुके हैं जहां एक ही छत के नीचे ग्रामीणों को हर एक आधुनिक सुविधाएं मिल रही हैं जिसके लिए उन्हें दूर कहीं जाना पड़ता था। आज यह कार्यक्रम समर्थ समुदायव्यापार हेड अर्जुन शर्मा की देखरेख में संचालित हो रहा है। जमीनी स्तर पर इस कार्यक्रम को मूलरूप अलिश्वर सिंह राजवत प्रभोटीक ऑफिसरी डीपैक एग्रीमेंट के सदस्यों जोश जावेद लवकराम और नूरी खातून द्वारा दिया जा रहा है।

के पांच दिव्यांगों को मिला मोबाईल व फोटो कॉपी मशीन



जीसना भयज है। जसुने  
 गुरीपेरात सेको में बीजल  
 जलख जगाने की धीछल उछाल  
 जलनीय कीसे हिजिलीकरनी की  
 जलने अलखरी हु इलकी लेखन कई  
 कार्यकल सेक प्रखलल में उखल।  
 राजपनी के लीरी जिलल की 50  
 मिलनलकी की बीछ डिजिलल

प साज-उज कर रहे हैं।  
 सामुदायिक सुचना साधन  
 बम्बो को निशुल्क कंप्यूटर से  
 व सुचना प्रेषण द्वारा किये  
 रहे। बम्बो को सिखाए जा  
 सेंसिक कंप्यूटर कोर्स की बारे  
 डिजिटल सेवाओं की बारे  
 बताया गई। इसकी अला  
 उपस्थित सामग्री सुचना दिये  
 को दैक मित्र से मेटेड विकास  
 व पैरो द्वारात्मक करना। फ  
 विभाजित करना। मेरा एम्प  
 (टी) करने, मोनयुज से जोड़  
 । उनको प्रोत्साहित से बना।  
 से स्वकीय कनवा फोटो दिख  
 और टाइटल कैप्शन अदि  
 साइको से किस तरह बात  
 जाती है और प्राइक को  
 समुद्रक करके भेजती है।  
 दुकान को किस तरह से क  
 कोजमकरी की गयी। सीक  
 शरीर साज देव कुमार  
 सुचना केदार बिक्र  
 कुमारी राकम माली  
 अलया कर हाजील थे।



# दैनिक

## लाइव न्यूज़ 24

हर खबर सच्चाई के साथ

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समाचार, विश्लेषण और विशेष रिपोर्टों के साथ-साथ देश-विदेश की ताज़ा खबरें।



### यौनवात विनाशकारी संक्रमणों से निवारण के लिए युवाओं में जागरूकता बढ़ाने के लिए समर्थ सेवा के माध्यम से

## यौनवातों को लोगों तक पहुंचाने में सूचना सेवा सबसे अग्रे

15 अक्टूबर 2023

समर्थ सेवा द्वारा

समर्थ सेवा के माध्यम से युवाओं में जागरूकता बढ़ाने के लिए समर्थ सेवा के माध्यम से

समर्थ सेवा के माध्यम से युवाओं में जागरूकता बढ़ाने के लिए समर्थ सेवा के माध्यम से

# The Importance of Access to Basic Needs



Kadir Ahmed is the son of Sagir Ahmed, a resident of the village Sahavpur, District Barabanki, Uttar Pradesh. He is a 25-year-old migrant labourer who much like others, moved to the city to earn a livelihood for his family in Uttar Pradesh. Due to uncertainty of work, he had to return to his native place. Since the transactions are done through the Aadhar payment system, he was not able to open a bank account and redeem government schemes.

Salman, who is the Samarth SoochnaPreneur of Sahavpur district, mapped the entire village amid the lockdown and it was a challenging task. During those times he got to meet Shamim, who he registered on the MeraApp. He then informed them about the benefit of the government schemes and how it will be credited into his bank account. He also shared how some schemes will not be available without Aadhar card or PAN card.

Shamim helped with the necessary documents and asked Salman to apply for his Aadhar & PAN card. After a few weeks, Shamim's PAN card arrived and he soon opened his bank account. Within the next few days, he received the benefit from the account of honourable Chief Minister. Later, he heartily thanked our Samarth SoochnaPreneur Salman.

# When Necessity Meets Convenience



Amir Khan is a resident of Barmer, Rajasthan. He lives with his wife and three sons, working as a vegetable supplier at the local mandi. One of his son's runs a grocery shop which was shut during the national lockdown. "We have recently acquired the basic amenities for our house", he said.

Things were not always this comfortable. There were nights when he gave his kids rice soaked in water for dinner and they (him & his wife) went to bed hungry. "Those were really tough times," he recalls.

The bank too is crowded due to the lockdown and in addition, people above the age of 60 are not allowed to enter. Amir couldn't withdraw his pension for his family's survival. He then came across the Samarth SoochnaPreneur center of Nawab's, where he could withdraw the cash.

Whenever Amir Khan visited the Samarth SoochnaPreneur Centre, Nawab would withdraw money from Amir's account for him. This would help him avoid the extended waiting period.

# When Technology is a Source of Livelihood



Vadibai lives in a small village of Madhya Pradesh with her husband and 6 children. She farms with her husband to generate livelihood for their children. Due to weak economic conditions, the health of two of her children is severely affected.

Her children have been malnourished due to lack of proper and nutritious food. When Samarth SoochnaPreneur Sangeeta Bhilal met VadiBai during her field visit, she found that two of Vadibai's children are malnourished and are very much in need of high nutritional food. Sangeeta advises her that they (children) should be given an inclusive diet to accelerate physical growth along with mother's milk, or cereal amongst other products that hold high nutritional value.

Sangeeta had also suggested taking the children to the Anganwadi center, and request the Anganwadi worker for additional food. The next day, she took both of her children to the Anganwadi centre herself. One of the Anganwadi worker's got her child admitted to NRC.

VadiBai then started focusing on her children's growth and on Sangeeta's request, she got her child admitted in NRC. Soon her children's health began recovering. In the coming weeks, her children will be free of malnutrition.



# Insuring the Right of a Living



Kalamani Devi is a hard working lady who used to work in a paddy field for her livelihood. During off season, she'd work as a labourer outside her village with her husband. They have three children, a sister-in-law and the grandmother to support. They are struggling during the pandemic.

The Samarth SoochnaPreneurs registered their name in "Labour Insurance Card" scheme a few months back with all necessary documentation. This Govt. beneficial scheme covers all the vital schemes for any labour class family.

Recently she got a sari set for herself and a shirt and pant for her husband through "Shram Niyojan Prashikshan Vibhag". These cloth-set were distributed by "Shramik Mitra" in their nearby Block. The cloth distribution is organised once a year for the labourers. Kalamani Devi needs a lot of support for a better living standard and through this particular scheme she can obtain working- kit, safety-kit, insurance policy, health support, pension, delivery support scholarships for their children, marriage support, accidental support, etc.

**In collaboration with**



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