The Top Ten is an illustration provided for the search on NREGA and NREGA and BAIGA, one of more marginalized groups and it indicates the high level of impact and effect of the use of the technology and human reach. This document also briefly chronicles the noteworthy achievements and challenges.

Mobilize-ing the Voice of Unheard Aid Recipients

About 776 results (0.18 seconds)
Results
For
Search

" NREGA"

[nrega](#)

50 of us worked for **NREGA** in January 2014, No wages yet, Pls call officers. ... Worked under **NREGA** in June 2014, haven't received wages yet, please help.

[Worked under **NREGA** in June 2014, haven't received wages yet **...**](#)

5 days ago **...** Ravikant Pandre has reached Manikpur village and panchayat in Samnapur block of Dindori district in Madhya Pradesh and talking to ...

[Worked in **NREGA** 4 years ago, No wages yet, No job card either **...**](#)

Apr 11, 2015 **...** Worked in **NREGA** 4 years ago, No wages yet, No job card either, Please ... worked for 8 days under **NREGA** 4 years ago but didn't get wages.

[Impact: After recording message on Swara we got our due **NREGA ...**](#)

6 days ago **...** Impact: After recording message on Swara we got our due **NREGA** ... for 2 weeks under **NREGA** but did not get their payment then he recorded ...

[Impact: 35 of us got our due **NREGA** wages after message on Swara **...**](#)

Apr 14, 2015 **...** Impact: 35 of us got our due **NREGA** wages after message on Swara, ... Pandre who tells him that 35 of them had worked under **NREGA** but did ...

[More than 60 of us worked in **NREGA** 6 months back, No wages yet **...**](#)

Mar 24, 2015 **...** More than 60 of us worked in **NREGA** 6 months back, No wages yet, pls ... that more than 60 of them had worked under **NREGA** 6 months ago ...

[We worked in well digging for **NREGA** last year, waiting for wages **...**](#)

6 days ago **...** We worked in well digging for **NREGA** last year, waiting for wages. ... many of them had worked in well digging for 12 days under **NREGA** but ...

[Impact: Got **NREGA** wages due from 8 months after Swara report **...**](#)

Mar 29, 2015 **...** They had worked in road laying under **NREGA** but didn't got payment after 8 months. Then they reported it on Swara and following this their ...

[No **NREGA** work from 6 years, we need to migrate to cities in search **...**](#)

Mar 13, 2015 **...** They say people from both villages haven't got work under **NREGA** for 6 years now and they migrate in search of labor to cities like Nasik.

" NREGA + BAIGA"

[**Baiga adivasis worked in NREGA year back,still waiting for wages ...**](#)

Feb 5, 2015 **...** **Baiga** adivasis worked in **NREGA** year back,still waiting for wages, pls help. ... CEO@ 9424160405 to help suffering **Baiga** adivasis. Naresh ...

[300 **Baiga** adivasis worked in **NREGA**,18 lakhs due from more than **...**](#)

Jan 30, 2015 **...** 300 **Baiga** adivasis worked in **NREGA**,18 lakhs due from more than 10 ... in road construction for 15 days at different places under **NREGA** in ...

[**Baiga** adivasi women worked in **NREGA** a year back, still waiting for **...**](#)

Aug 22, 2014 **...** **Baiga** adivasi women worked in **NREGA** a year back, still waiting for ... to **Baiga** adivasi women who tell him that they worked under **NREGA** for ...

[350 **Baiga** Adivasis worked in **NREGA** 3 months back, still waiting **...**](#)

Aug 20, 2014 **...** 350 **Baiga** Adivasis worked in **NREGA** 3 months back, still waiting for wages. ... to call Collector@ 9425270044 to help these **Baiga** adivasis.

[**NREGA** wages unpaid from 2009, Pls request officer to visit, say **...**](#)

Jul 23, 2014 **...** **NREGA** wages unpaid from 2009, Pls request officer to visit, say **Baiga** tribals. ... People tell him that they had reported on Swara about not getting their **NREGA** wages from 2009 and problem in some ration cards. After the ...

[Govt postman takes a cut before making **NREGA** payment in **Baiga ...**](#)

Sep 1, 2012 **...** Govt postman takes a cut before making **NREGA** payment in **Baiga** ... Santram **Baiga** an adivasi who tells him that he worked on **NREGA** twice ...

[**NREGA**, FRA: No fulfilment of promises made to **Baiga** tribals **...**](#)

Oct 12, 2011 **...** **NREGA**, FRA: No fulfilment of promises made to **Baiga** tribals ... of Forest Rights Act and **NREGA** when SDM promised an enquiry. There is due ...

[Workshop on **NREGA** and Forest Rights Act for **Baiga** tribals in **...**](#)

Workshop on **NREGA** and Forest Rights Act for **Baiga** tribals in Bilaspur. Posted on: Apr 03, 2010. Tags: FOREST **NREGA** ...

[**Baigas** from 8 villages worked for 6 weeks under **NREGA**, waiting for **...**](#)

Aug 18, 2014 **...** **Baigas** from 8 villages worked for 6 weeks under **NREGA**, waiting for ... is talking to **Baiga** adivasi women from Pandripani village in Pandaria ...

[View Older Reports](#)

NREGA: 70 worked for 40 days 6 months back, officers threaten if ask for wages. ... **Baiga** adivasis worked in **NREGA** year back,still waiting for wages, pls help.

Noteworthy Achievements

- CGNet Swara published **3,283 reports** from **1,389 contributors**. All reports originated from an audio message, though they are also viewable at http://cgnetswara.org/with a textual summary by our moderators. (Note that only a fraction of these reports are grievances; they also represent news, songs, and other cultural content.)

- There were **175 impact cases**: grievances that were resolved as a result of a report on CGNet Swara. All impact cases are highlighted on our website at http://cgnetswara.org/impact.

- There were **260,035 calls** (spanning **29,951 users**) to CGNet Swara. Most of these users were calling to listen to other reports, as opposed to recording their own stories. Since the impact cases were also highlighted on the service, this means that we disseminated the success of government programs to many thousands of people.

- We trained about **2,000 reporters**, mostly in 3-day workshops. The travel, accommodation, and trainer expenses for these workshops were made possible due to the support of this grant. A photo from one of our workshops appears in Figure 1.

- A traveling dance, drama, and puppetry troupe (the "Yatra") **visited 330 tribal villages**, spreading awareness of CGNet Swara by bringing it to the doorstep of rural communities. A photo from one of the Yatra performances appears in Figure 2.

- The impact of CGNet Swara was rigorously studied by our collaborators at Microsoft Research India, resulting in a **peer-reviewed publication** at the conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development (ICTD 2015). (Bill Gates spoke at this conference in 2009.) The full citation is "M. Marathe, J. O'Neill, P. Pain, and W. Thies, *Revisiting CGNet Swara and its Impact in Rural India,* ICTD 2015".

- The founder of CGNet Swara, Shubhranshu Choudhary, was recognized with international awards including the **Google Digital Activism Award** (in which he beat out Edward Snowden) and **Foreign Policy's 100 Leading Global Thinkers**.

Figure 1: A training workshop for reporters.

Figure 2: The Yatra performing in rural India.

Example: Impact Story

To give more context for what the 175 impact cases really mean, we provide a detailed narrative surrounding one particular impact. This narrative evolved from field interviews conducted by researchers at Microsoft.

In July, 2014, CGNet received a report (http://cgnetswara.org/index.php?id=37266) from an adivasi bricklayer in Gadhvayi village, Madhya Pradesh, saying that cholera was spreading through the village and three people had died in the last ten days. After the outbreak, village members sought help from the village ASHA as well as an appointed medical officer. However, the ASHA fled the village once cholera started to spread, and the medical officer was unresponsive. The people in the village felt helpless. The government had never sent ambulances or doctors, citing the remote location and the lack of good roads. At the time of the post on CGNet Swara, this story had not been picked up by any newspaper or TV channel.

Our moderator team received this story late at night (12 AM) and immediately released it. Local field champions were notified and immediately called the chief medical officer of the district, as well as the district collector.

Ten days after the original report, a social worker from the village recorded an impact post (http://cgnetswara.org/index.php?id=37644), thanking CGNet Swara "for saving our lives". It reported that the chief medical officer and a team of doctors had visited the village the day after the post appeared on CGNet. The team brought medical supplies and stayed fora week. The chief medical officer later confirmed to us that the ASHA had left because cholera had broken out in the Dalit (low caste) quarters. The chief medical officer fired both the ASHA as well as the medical officer for the village. We visited the village a few weeks later and found that the spread of cholera had stopped. While some patients were still recovering, no new cases were reported.

Re-tracing the steps that led to impact, the chief medical officer said, "I got a few phone calls and I immediately rushed to send help." This case illustrates how CGNet Swara can combat corruption by bringing key issues to the direct attention of senior officials. It also engenders hope in rural areas that government officials are willing and able to respond to their problems.

Broader Impact on Rural Communities

While the resolution of grievances is an important part of CGNet Swara's impact, we discovered numerous other ways in which the service has personal impact on people. To understand this impact, researchers at Microsoft conducted a three-month inquiry, using a mixed-methods approach that includes 70 interviews with contributors, listeners, moderators, journalists, officials, and other actors, as well as two focus groups and a 9-day field immersion.

The following are example categories of impact that emerged as a result of this study. As we don't have space for a detailed discussion here, we supply only an illustrative quote for each category. Please refer to the ICTD 2015 publication for a more detailed discussion.

- **Having a voice, feeling heard.** Many of CGNet's posts originate from typically unheard and powerless sections of society. Using CGNet Swara, they gained a voice of their own. One contributor said, *"It gives us a voice that we didn't have before. It's a rendition of the issues we face and it portrays our issues through our voice. It's what we want to say. We aren't often given this chance."*

- **Artistic, cultural and other forms of expression.**The importance of having a voice was wider than news and grievances. Some contributors exclusively post songs or poems, because along with mainstream media, mainstream culture also marginalizes the same constituency of people. One contributor said, *"Where else will be go with songs of this kind? No other media is interested. I think CGNet's greatest influence is not just the issues it solves but the fact that it also gives us a space to record these cultural items. It's becoming a repertoire of our culture."*

- **Enabling journalists and officials to discover issues**. A journalist said that CGNet keeps him "rooted" and highlights "real issues" that are not reported elsewhere and could benefit from publicity in mainstream press. Likewise, an official said *"I listen to CGNet about issues that concern areas under my jurisdiction. I think it's a very good service that goes deep into areas where collecting information is hard. It helps us reach places that don't feature on our radar."*

- **Connecting tribal communities to each other.** Several respondents said that they benefited by hearing posts from other tribal areas on CGNet. For example, one contributor said, *"Adivasis from different parts of the country get to listen to issues Adivasis face in other parts of India and realize that they share the same problems. It proves to be a great learning experience as well. When they hear, for example, about land grabbing or human rights abuses they can take a lesson and become more careful about protecting themselves."*

- **Source of inspiration, confidence, and agency.** Hearing that other people's grievances get resolved gives people the confidence that they too can change things. One contributor said, *"To me its biggest impact has been managing to convince people that they can solve their problems. All it takes is the ability to pick up your phone and make that call."* Another contributor says that CGNet helps to *"do things we would never endeavor to do, helps us achieve things that we wouldn't have imagined earlier."*

Challenges

The core model of CGNet Swara has been working very effectively. The challenges that we face are related to bringing the service to a greater scale. The following are three obstacles to scaling the service, and how we are addressing them in current and future work:

1. **Promoting awareness in remote areas.** While most services focus on gaining participation in dense urban areas, CGNet Swara focuses on remote and marginalized groups from tribal areas. Often these Adivasi people speak only tribal languages, and are distrustful of outsiders, who have failed to deliver on many promises over the years.

   Recognizing that broadcast media would never engender the trust and uptake needed for the service to succeed, we decided to embrace a high-touch model in which our message is taken straight to the doorstep of rural communities via the traveling Yatra. This approach is neither easy nor cheap, but we believe there is no substitute for face-to-face contact in achieving meaningful social change. We continue to seek and develop methods to spread that Yatra's message as far as possible while keeping within our resource constraints.

2. **Moderation and follow-up**. Soliciting usage of the IVR system is only one small part of the CGNet Swara ecosystem. The real impact relies on the human elements: a team of moderators invites, improves, and fact-checks the incoming messages, while a team of field workers lobbies government officials to resolve the issues raised. During the time period of this grant, we scaled the moderator team from a few people to eight full-time members, and built a network of volunteers to help with follow-up in various locales.

   For us to amplify CGNet Swara's impact, we will need to amplify the size and effectiveness of this team even more. We are experimenting with ways to coordinate large numbers of volunteers to help with both moderation and follow-up. For example, callers to the IVR service can help with some moderation tasks, by helping to categorize posts or to flag ones that deserve more attention. Also, our website can be enhanced with more capabilities for urban volunteers to help coordinate follow-up with officials.

3. **Low-cost dissemination of content**. Our reliance on ordinary phone calls enables CGNet Swara to be highly accessible across all of India. However, phone calls are a relatively expensive way to broadcast information, especially when users are listening to the same content.

To reduce costs in the future, we are actively exploring collaborations with medium-wave radio stations, including All India Radio, which would enable large-scale dissemination of our content at much lower cost. We have also built a mobile application for Android phones, which enables audio to be transferred over mobile Internet as opposed to voice calls, saving up to a factor of 10. The application also enables files to be saved locally and shared peer-to-peer (free of cost) using Bluetooth and SD card sharing.