

**IMPROVING GOVERNANCE - AN INITIATIVE BY DM BANDA SH.
HEERA LAL JI**

1A. Title of initiative - Innovative Banda! For the people - By the people.

1B. Ministry / Department / State Govt. / District / Organization where the initiative was implemented - Banda District Administration, U.P

1C. Area of Initiative - Improving Governance

1D. Commencement of the initiative - September 2018

1E. Has the outcome or impact of the initiative been audited or evaluated by any independent agency for reality check of the realized benefits vis-à-vis those envisaged?

Audited & encouraged by:

Mr. H.R.Nagendra, Chancellor S-VYASA

Mr. Alok Ranjan, Retd. Ch. Sec., GoUP

Mr. Anup Chandra Pandey, Retd. Chief. Sec., GoUP

Mr. Rajiv Kumar, Retd. Chief. Sec., GoUP, Chmn. RERA UP.

Dr. Prabhat Kumar, IAS, Chmn. UPPSC

Ms. Kalpana Awasthi, IAS, P.S., GoUP

Mr. Anurag Srivastava, IAS, P.S., GoUP

Mr. Vijay K. Anand, DG, SE & SPD, Education for all

Ms. Samina Bano, CEO, RightWalk Foundation

1F. Was this initiative winner of any other award(s) instituted by any other National / International organization?

U.P. Gaurav Samman, 2019

Presented by Minister of State, Agriculture, Sh. Lakhan Singh Rajput - GoUP

Rashtriya Neem Ratan Samman, 2020

Presented by Jal Shakti Minister, Sh. Mahendra Singh - GoUP

2. Please provide Detailed Write-up of the work done under the initiative between 1 st April, 2018 and 31 st March, 2020 covering the following:

A. OBJECTIVE OF INITIATIVE AND HOW THE INITIATIVE ACHIEVED THOSE OBJECTIVES

#BACKGROUND

Governance has been defined to refer to structures and processes that are designed to ensure accountability, transparency, responsiveness, rule of law, stability, equity & inclusiveness, empowerment, and broad-based participation.

Banda, a most backward district in Uttar Pradesh, has witnessed steady, yet slow development. According to an **Institute of Applied Statistics and Development Studies, report of 2016**, Banda is plagued by some critical challenges like:

- Poor agriculture
- Constrained access to technical knowledge
- Unavailability of Irrigation Water
- Degraded land
- Poor infrastructure
- Poor health facilities
- Improper Public Distribution System
- Inefficient execution of government schemes
- Migration and unemployment
- Poor estimates of nutritional status

The governance delivery model of Banda showed fatigue, and needed grass-root innovation to infuse life in it, thereby efficiently discharging its duty towards the citizens.

#OBJECTIVES

- To design & develop efficient administration-people connect through constant engagement.
- To implement creative growth strategies in critical areas like local trade promotion, basic education, women development, tourism promotion, environment and water conservation, public health etc.
- To create an environment of harmony and collaboration, thereby ensuring that people take ownership of all initiatives, increasing its success.

#OBJECTIVE FULFILMENT

Under the umbrella of Innovative Banda, multiple simultaneous initiatives were undertaken, each catering to a targeted focus group. These were aimed at delivering specific results, which when put together, would not only help us improve governance, but would also help accelerate development in Banda. In this context, this strategy of implementing integrated, multi-focussed campaigns paid-off and helped us achieve our objectives.

B. INTRODUCING AND IMPLEMENTING AN INNOVATIVE IDEA/ SCHEME/PROJECT TO MEET STAKEHOLDERS' REQUIREMENT

#INTRODUCTION

We conducted a thorough situational analysis of the current situation in Banda by consulting representatives of stakeholders, and studying various reports issued by reputed institutions.

According to a report by **United Nations Development Program and Niti Aayog**, Banda was lagging behind in many development indicators like its per capita income being only 43% of the India average. Likewise, indicators like output per worker, output per hectare of agriculture (net sown area) were all showing very low figures. Overall, Banda had been ranked 6th, within the Bundelkhand region, which was not very encouraging.

#THE SOLUTION | IMAGINE THE IMPOSSIBLE - DO THE IMPROBABLE

Clearly, lack of schemes and plans was not the issue. It was a gap in delivery of such social benefits. We designed and implemented an ambitious campaign titled **Innovative Banda! For the people - By the people.**

It was a complete detour from conventional governance and development practices that had been followed in Banda till date.

#STRATEGIC GOVERNANCE MODEL

We categorized critical sectors and focus groups of the district into broad five themes. Customized programs and a unique governance-delivery mechanism was created for each.

#PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY

We realized that instead of treating each issue in isolation, if we clubbed these issues with similar fundamentals, we could possibly transform disadvantages of one, into an advantage for another.

For example, schemes and bodies like MNREGA, ICDS etc had inherited their own implementation roadblocks. However, when we channelized these laggard resources as tools for another issue, i.e., environment conservation and women-health development, it showed astonishing results.

Likewise, each governance delivery mechanism was based on the following:

- An unrelenting focus on the end-beneficiary ensured widespread campaign acceptance and anticipation for upcoming engagements.
- We adopted a completely empirical execution route. We constantly analyzed and aligned each campaign, ensuring high success rate.
- Community collaboration was key. This helped us achieve the desired progress towards the transformation of identified critical sectors, and focus groups.

#IMPLEMENTATION FLOW

- Central task force was set-up with community representatives identifying issues and designing solutions and innovative implementations.
- Detailed engagement plans were designed keeping in mind all aspects.

- Each were implemented like small modules. This helped us extract learnings and continuously improve the program.
- The project design ensured the ownership of the campaign was always with the people.

#KEY INFLUENCER ENGAGEMENT

Treading the path of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, right at the onset, all our campaigns were designed as if we were preparing to engage with our large family. And within this large family, we identified people / micro-communities which became the flag-bearers of our initiatives.

C. BRINGING PERCEPTIBLE IMPROVEMENTS IN PROCESSES/ SYSTEMS AND BUILDING INSTITUTIONS

Any major transformation requires a complete deep-dive into the idea, and functioning of each process and institutional system. We made the following efforts with an intention to bring about improvements in processes / systems building our institutions:

- Collection of credible performance data for empirical analysis.
- Consistent benchmarking on set parameters and tracking performance.
- Using insights to design and improve interventions.
- Designed innovative cross-departmental communication and collaboration channels for effective governance.
- We continually solicited citizen inputs with an intention of improving public services.
- Encouraged people participation enabling better ownership and tried to restrict governance's role to supervision and overall project leadership.
- Across various campaigns, we conducted Train-The-Trainer programs, re-skilling and up-skilling governance delivery departments to better perform on their duties.
- Created a platform for collaboration between administration, social sector and private players enabling seamless governance.

D. APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY ADOPTED TO BRING INNOVATION

#APPROACH

A goal as big as bringing about a district's transformation requires a courageous approach. We set out to meet the mission objectives through a collaborative, participatory, inclusive and innovative outlook.

We grouped together issues with common genesis, and formed broad themes which helped us create an integrated solutions approach. The themes were as follows:

Theme 1: Banda-for-people

- Creating community-bonding & helping the poor through **Neki Ki Deewar**

- Women empowerment and development
- Mid-Day meal program

Theme 2: Banda-for-health & environment

- Ped Jiaaon abhiyaan
- Practice and promotion of Yoga

Theme 3: Banda-for-trade (Local for Local)

- Plastic substitution
- Measures towards doubling of farmer income
- Horticulture
- Dairy
- Arhar Samoan
- Mandi Yatra & Vikas Bhavan Eater

Theme 4: Banda-for-education

- Initiatives on improving Basic Education
- Initiatives on strengthening adult literacy
- Measures to increase people-administration interaction through Ek Din Ka Adhikaari
- Efforts to improve students' knowledge and sharing of insights with them through Chatra Nirmaan Samvaad

Theme 5: Banda-for-world

- Increasing tourism attraction of Banda

#METHODOLOGY

Banda comprises of 471 gram panchayats and 8 urban bodies. Governance delivery to such a wide and diverse audience can't be singular in character. Therefore, to achieve our ambitious objectives, a sincere, consistent and innovative engagement methodology was needed. Below are some of our such efforts:

1. Neki Ki Deewar & Neki Ki Deepwali:

What? - Dedicated walls created by district administration, where anyone could donate any item and the needy could take those items from there. Likewise, Neki Ki Deepawali were

gatherings organized close to Diwali, taking donation and distribution of items to the doorstep of the needy.

Why? - To create a sense of compassion for needy and build a community-bond between all residents of Banda.

2. Women development & Empowerment:

What? - Under the National Rural Livelihood Mission, sustained programs were run empowering women with skills and opportunities across dairy, agricultural trading, animal husbandry, yoga among others.

Why? - 'Educate a woman, and you will empower an entire family.' Walking on this philosophy, we ensured that if we are able to empower one woman, she in turn will grow her entire family.

3. Mid-Day meal program:

What? - Mid-day meal had found wide reach, we came across inefficiencies and inconsistencies in its implementation. We therefore implemented small, yet effective innovations in the form of mandating signature of each meal-beneficiary among other modifications in this scheme's governance delivery.

Why? - A very large scale execution is bound to attract inconsistencies and hence small local innovations can keep its integrity intact and the goal of the scheme can be achieved.

4. Ped Jiaon abhiyaan:

What? - Large scale tree plantation drive was initiated, led by each department of Banda, who not only planted but also took care of these trees.

A very popular initiative was distribution of tree saplings as Prasad in Mandirs and other places of worships. People took to this idea instantly, and was widely practiced.

Why? - For a district which suffers from acute water crisis, planting trees was an obvious and must-do initiative, preventing soil erosion, retaining ground water and conserving the environment.

5. Yoga for public health:

What? - A district-wide yoga practice and promotion initiative was launched, spreading awareness about its benefits, not only for physical health, but for mental health too.

Why? - Banda spends heavily on public health, ailments and their cure. Taking a progressive approach, we adopted Yoga as a preventive measure to protect people from illness, not only helping people build good health but also avoid financial burden.

6. Banda for trade | Local-for-Local (promoting local production & its local consumption)

What? - We initiated the Plastic substitution campaign, along with taking measures towards doubling of farmer income by technically educating them to produce more and better. Likewise, trainings were conducted in Horticulture and Dairy, creating diversification opportunities for existing farmers and aspiring new ones.

Our unique Arhar Sammelan was a major hit, as we helped exploration of newer markets for our produce and encouraged growing of crops not yet grown.

Mandi Yatra and Vikas Bhawan yatra were significant and innovative too. Here, we toured shortlisted farmers across agriculture-related government departments, making them understand different processes and people associated with it.

Why? - With an intent to educate about all social products, e.g., various schemes, campaigns etc., it was important to lead the trade and agriculture community explore new products and new markets. These ideas not only led to many new opportunities being created, but also gave birth to many first generation entrepreneurs. This had a major impact on Banda moving towards improved and good governance.

7. Banda for education:

What? - Various cultural programs, competitions and external workshops were conducted to improve overall productivity of the basic education ecosystem along with all other 23 innovations.

Through our unique Ek Din Ka Adhikaari program, identified students were made to experience the roles, responsibilities and duties of a district officer.

Chatra Nirmaan Samwaad was to inspire young minds to create and identify their life's aim and knowledge on personality-and-character building, helping them achieve those aims.

Why? - A disconnect between administration and that area's residents is a bane for governance. Therefore, to eradicate it right from the start, we wanted to educate young student minds.

8. Banda for world - Increasing tourism attractiveness :

What? - To promote local spots of Banda into popular tourism destinations. These included organizing the Kalingar Mahotsav on the Kalingar fort, Aarti mahotsavs on the banks of river Ken, conversion of (name) as Suya Darshan and Selfie point, with the entire district of Banda as its backdrop.

Plans were also put in place to promote Bhuragad fort, Nawab Tank, Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel Oxygen Park, Bombashwar hill among others as prominent tourist destinations.

Why? - Having popular local tourism spots not only boosts a district's economy, it also popularizes its name, steadily increasing investment and development in that district. It also helps conserve its natural and cultural heritage, while generating awareness.

E. IMPACTS/BENEFITS RESULTING FROM THE INITIATIVE

- **Neki Ki Deewar & Neki Ki Deepwali** has seen more than 10000 articles donated, benefitting more than 3000 needy poor people of Banda till the last record date.
- Through the **women development** program under NRLM, 8000-10000 women have been able to run their self-employment units successfully.
- **Mid-day meal**
- The **Ped Jiaon abhiyaan** saw an unprecedented plantation of 19,13,228 trees across Banda, with plantation contribution coming in from all departments across the district.
- A major win for Banda, one excellence centre was awarded in Horticulture, giving Banda's horticulture initiatives a big boost.
- Likewise, Banda was also proudly awarded another excellence centre in Agriculture, at Atarra farm house - again a major accelerator towards innovation in agriculture.

- We worked proactively on multiple initiatives around education and development of scientific temper in Banda. This resulted in the government dedicating an exclusive Science Park to Banda to sustain and encourage a scientific lifestyle in locals.
- Through our focussed push in promoting environment-sensitive business opportunities, a mitti-bartan industry has started to find its roots in Banda with entrepreneurs looking to set-up large industries for mitti-bartan and exporting for national and global use.
- Physical & mental fitness was brought to mass-awareness through our impetus on promoting **yoga** as a part of healthy lifestyle. Local hospitals, government offices and other institutions started adopting yoga to improve fitness and efficiency.
- Our efforts to boost local trade, encourage entrepreneurship and local business showed great results. Sectors like fisheries and dairy showed renewed interest and increased business productivity and income.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CONTEXT

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- ii. Constrained access to technical knowledge
- iii. Unavailability of Irrigation Water
- iv. Degraded land
- v. Poor infrastructure
- vi. Poor health facilities
- vii. Improper Public Distribution System
- viii. Inefficient execution of government schemes
- ix. Migration and unemployment
- x. Poor estimates of nutritional status

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- Efforts to increase student knowledge & help them in character building through Chatra Samwaad Sammelan

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IMPACT & BENEFITS**AWARD**

U.P Gaurav Samman, 2019

Rashtriya Neem Ratan Samman, 2020