



INDUS ACTION



A NEW VISION FOR CONSTRUCTION WORKERS' WELFARE

HALF-YEARLY REPORT
APRIL-OCTOBER 2024

A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH BETWEEN
THE CHHATTISGARH LABOUR DEPARTMENT
AND INDUS ACTION

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ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

At Indus Action, we are at the frontline in solving the entrenched challenge of poverty and systemic barriers that keep large sections of the Indian population unable to access their welfare entitlements. Our guiding beacon is a simple yet powerful conviction: every family in India, particularly those subsisting on an income of less than Rs. 12,000 (\$145) per month, should have unrestricted access to their welfare entitlements that grant them a path to quality education, robust health, and secure livelihoods, amongst others.

As we navigate the intricate web of policies and regulations, we are faced with the towering figure of 890 million citizens, a segment that continues to live below the poverty line, trapped in a maze of systemic inefficiencies that hinder access to welfare rights anchored in education, health, and livelihood security. The journey to upliftment is anchored to over 5000+ schemes, a wide range of opportunities that unfortunately culminate in low-impact delivery, leaving a substantial portion of the populace grappling with poverty.

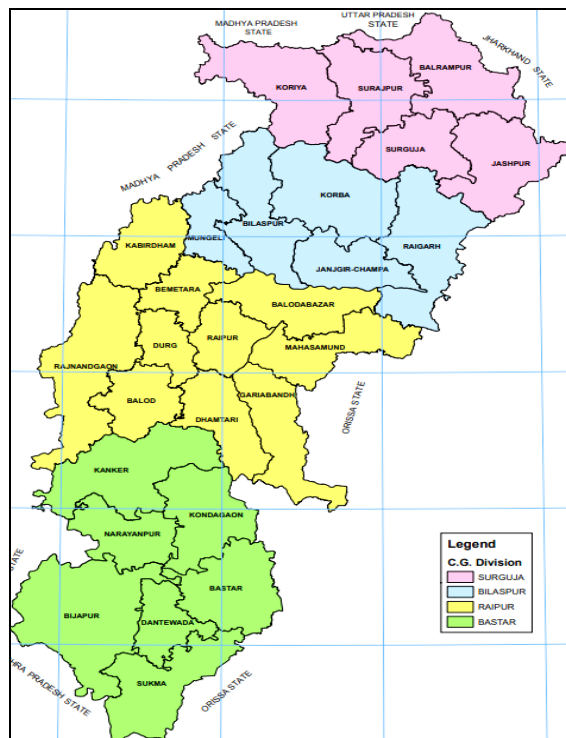
At the core of our work lies the transformative Portfolio of Welfare and Entitlement Rights (PoWER). It is not just a portfolio but a testament to our unwavering commitment to redefining the boundaries of welfare in India, translating the 500+ fragmented low-impact schemes into a consolidated set of 5-10 high-impact, accessible welfare schemes. Through scheme rationalisation, we aspire to unlock welfare benefits across various dimensions, assisting 10 million families and helping them reclaim their entitlements and navigate their way out of poverty by 2030.

Indus Action is a policy implementation organisation doing the necessary tasks to see that policies designed to transform the social fabric of the country are fully realised. Indus Action strives to improve the delivery of welfare rights for families with an income of less than Rs. 12,000 per month across 12 states in India. In essence, we bridge the gap between law and action.

ABOUT THE PROJECT - Accessing Livelihood Entitlements

(A collaborative approach by Chhattisgarh Labour Department and Indus Action)

Through its work under the Building and Other Construction Workers Act 1986, Indus Action aims to increase the receipt of welfare by labourers while reducing the process friction and administrative burden. Indus Action has been collaborating with different State Governments in various roles in this direction. For instance, in Delhi, Indus Action collaborated with the government as a technology partner, whereas in Chhattisgarh, Indus Action acted as a knowledge partner. In addition to redesigning BoCW welfare programs, Indus Action through the Labour Department's Project Management Unit began working on process intervention in 2022-23.



Program Management Unit: In Chhattisgarh, the Program Management Unit (PMU) was established in 2020 to provide policy, process, and technical support to the Commissionerate wherein United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Jan Sahas, and Indus Action became part of the PMU. The collaboration of the NGO partners with the Chhattisgarh Labour Department focussed on developing a self-sustainable model of social protection services for labourers that includes Building and other Construction labourers, inter-state and intra-state Migrant workers and unorganised workers.

Background

The Labour Department, Government of Chhattisgarh, has undertaken multiple initiatives to ensure the welfare of registered workers in the state. These span across technology-driven initiatives, policy and process improvements - with schemes for maternity, pension, education, migration, and food, as well as process changes to make registration, renewal and claims access easier for the worker. Initiatives have also been taken for efficient grievance redressal in the state, with a helpline set up at the state level as well as training of Labour Resource Center operators to aid labourers on the ground. Indus Action Initiatives have been consistently collaborating with the government in the design and implementation of multiple initiatives to ensure the welfare of BoCW and UOW registered workers and suggesting measures to optimise the registration process. This document captures the work done in the quarter, April to September 2024 by Indus Action in collaboration with the Labour Department and NIC.

Key project outcomes

Impact Table:

Scheme	Citizens Impacted	Welfare Unlock (Cr)
Maternity	22,743	INR 22,74,30,000
Coaching	1,370	INR 10,96,00,000
LRC (multiple schemes)	355	INR 22,12,150
Total	24,468	INR 33,92,42,150

Key outputs linked to the activities

- **Technology product design**

- **Category:** Citizen Experience
- **Description:** **Website deck** with the summary slides and detailed description of the changes made in the website in order to make it more user-friendly which includes officials and beneficiaries, in collaboration with NIC and Chhattisgarh Labour Department.
- Suggested mobile application-related significant changes to ensure the mobile application is user-friendly and all key sections are prominently visible on the home page.
- E-ticketing system for CM Helpline number has been designed, tutorials created and launched in collaboration with the CG Labour Department and their Vendor Dipija Telecom services.
- **Key Output Indicators/Data Points:** Launch of the website Version 3 in the presence of Hon. CM and Labour Minister on 17th September. The event was organised by the Labour Department supported by the Indus Action team.
- Training of 85 officials which included Labour Inspectors and Sub-labour Inspectors from all 5 Zones as Master trainers on website and mobile application.
- Training of 170 LRC operators from all 5 zones website and mobile application.
- **Links to evidence/collaterals:**
 -  CG Labour Website_Summary and changes details_13102024
 - Jashpur Field visit details
 -  CG_Labour_collaterals_2024 - Emails and Letters
 -  Migration Module Demo पलायन सूचना

- **BoCW Maternity Schemes Design**
 - **Category: Welfare Unlock**
 - **Description:** Indus Action designed the end-to-end workflow for the implementation of the Maternity Scheme under BoCW.

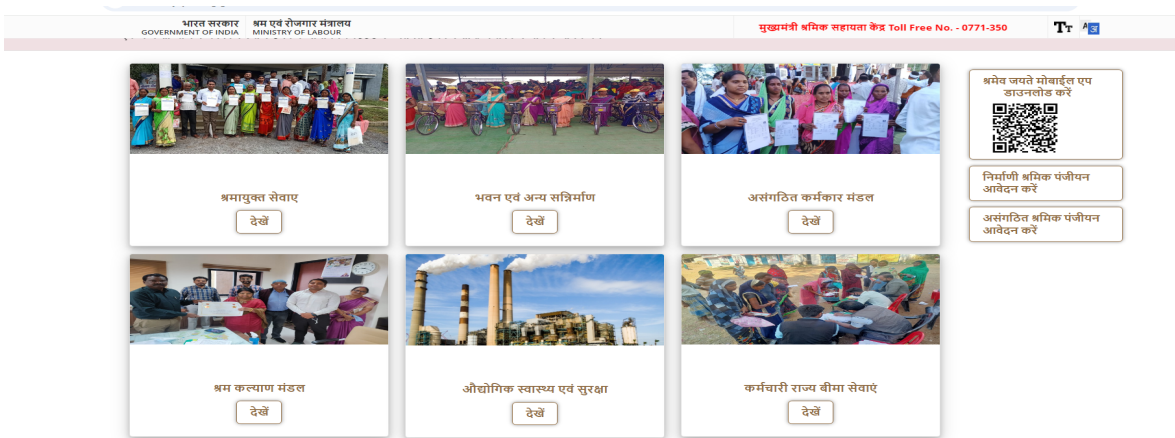
Key initiatives undertaken by the Chhattisgarh Government, Labour Department and supported by Indus Action

Technology-driven Initiatives

1. Redesigned Labour Website (Link: Labour Department Chhattisgarh)

The Department of Labour recognised the need to enhance the effectiveness of its website, making it more user-friendly and informative for the public. Indus Action consistently collaborated with the Labour Department in the redesigning process that aimed to include essential information while eliminating unnecessary content. The website redesigning involved two significant aspects -

1. Improved design for users
2. Streamlined and Modified for official purpose



The steps involved in this process and the subsequent result have been outlined in the table below:

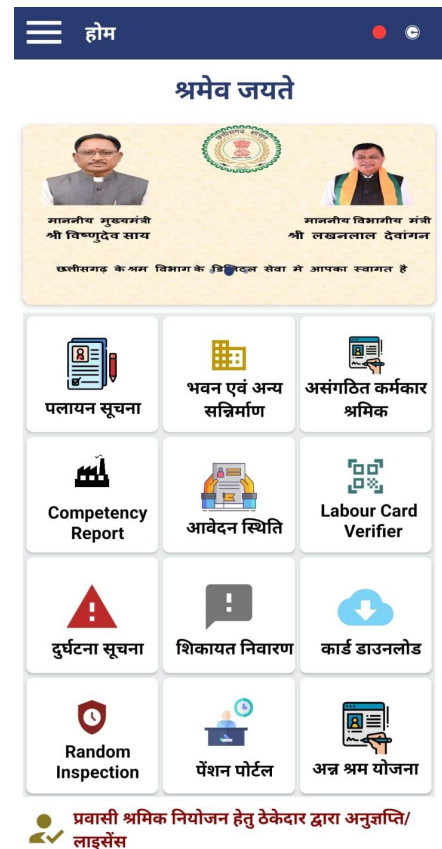
Redesigning processes	Outcome
Renaming of the website from CG Labour Website to Shramev Jayate Website Link - https://www.shramevjayate.cg.gov.in/	The name Shramev Jayate is in alignment with Shramev Jayate Mobile Application
Brainstorming on the content with the concerned section in-charges	Accessing and procuring information from the website has become more convenient
Support in the development of relevant content	Server issues were resolved
Elimination of outdated and irrelevant content	The direct scheme application option on the homepage has made it easily accessible for the labourers
Hindi to English translation wherever necessary	Notable increase in the applications directly submitted by the labourers.
Creation of a clear site map for easy navigation	Increase in the volume of applications received from CSC centres
Designing an improved user-friendly layout	The BoCW registration application option is prominently featured on the homepage of the website, increasing its visibility and accessibility
Simplified grievance redressal processes through section-wise complaint forms	
Development of a structured hierarchy and process map for uploading new content on the website	
Capacity-building sessions for all section in-charges and operators	
Generated login id for various sections and districts to facilitate easy access	This aims to increase data access facilitating data-driven decision-making.
The dashboard is designed and will be incorporated into the website landing page. This is still in process.	
Prominent display of Shramev Jayate QR Code on the landing page	Aims to increase visibility and promote the use of Mobile application

2. Shramev Jayate Mobile Application

Indus Action extensively collaborated with the Labour Department and NIC team in redesigning the Shramev Jayate mobile application that brings all the services provided by the Labour Department directly to workers' smartphones in a very simple manner. Through this app, workers can register for their labour cards, apply for various schemes, check their registration status, renew their cards, and even download their labour cards. Workers from the Building and Other Construction Workers' Board and the Unorganized Workers' Board can benefit from this service.

Additionally, migrant workers travelling to and from Chhattisgarh can also register in the migration list through this app. Workers registered in the migration list are eligible to receive benefits from all labour Department schemes. The app is also useful for officials, allowing them to record cases of accidents and document observations from random inspections. Another important feature for workers is that they can check the status of their pension through their labour card.

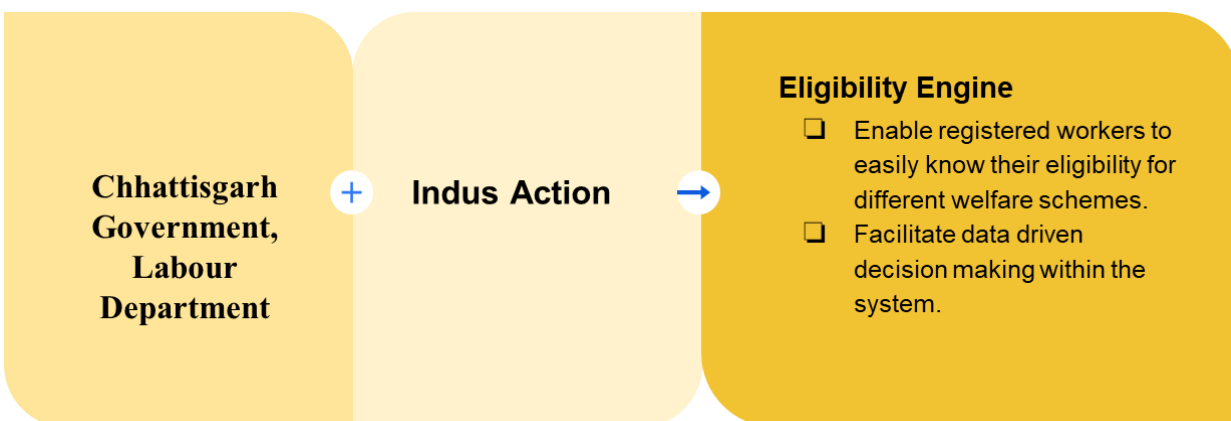
In summary, the Shramev Jayate app is a convenient tool for delivering all labour Department services directly to workers, reducing their need to visit the office frequently. This app is a significant step toward simplifying workers' lives and ensuring their rights.



3. Eligibility Engine

Indus Action took the initiative to introduce Eligibility Engine, a technology product that intends to increase the data driven decision making within the system and enables the system to identify the beneficiaries eligible for the welfare schemes. It integrates into the existing database of the labour card holders. At regular intervals, it sends notification (through IVRS, SMS, and calling) to beneficiaries for renewal of BoCW cards, and application to the schemes.

Demonstration of the eligibility engine has been done and approved by the department officials. Going forward, Indus Action and NIC team would be working collaboratively on this technology product in order to integrate it with the system database.



Policy and Process Changes

1. Direct Registration Drive

The objective of the direct registration drive was to gain insights into the challenges faced by labourers during the registration process and understand the system's functioning from their perspective.

S.No	Key findings gathered from the Direct Registration Drive Initiative	Outcomes-based on the findings
1.	Some CSC centres charged labour families high fees, with some demanding up to 50% of the scheme benefits.	In response to the high fees charged by the CSC centres, the Department issued a circular stating that CSC centres charging excessive fees or a percentage of the scheme from the labourers will be blacklisted and face strict action.
2.	The challenges faced by construction labourers in obtaining an employer certificate resulted in CSC centres issuing them FAQ certificates and charging fees for the same.	The Labour Department issued a letter outlining the format for employer certificates to address challenges related to them. Now, the information on the certificate is verified by the Labour Inspector directly at construction sites.
3.	Limited open-source access for BoCW registration creates a dependency on the CSC centres or Shramev Jayate application.	The Labour Department initiated the open-source registration process through the redesigned website.
4.	Labour families feared that they would not receive benefits if CSC centres did not process their applications.	10,000 new registrations were successfully completed with a limited team size of 4 individual Labour families received Rs. 80 lakhs in
5.	Labour inspectors rejected those applications	

	submitted without income certificates from patwaris despite instructions permitting submissions through gram pradhans, ward parshads, or patwaris. However, only submissions from patwaris were accepted.	benefits.
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2. Minimata Mahtari Jatan Yojna - Maternity Scheme

For the delivery of the first two children of female construction workers registered under the Board, a lump sum amount of Rs 20,000 is provided by the division after the birth of the child.

Total number of beneficiaries till 30th September 2024 - 21,381



3. Education-related Schemes:

1. Free Coaching Scheme, BoCW

Indus Action created a coaching scheme for registered BoCW families to empower their children through education. Under this scheme, the government would bear the expenses incurred in coaching classes for a maximum of 2 children from each registered BoCW family.

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Total number of beneficiaries: 1742

5. Atal Utkrisht Shiksha Yojna

The scheme is one of the recent initiatives undertaken by the Chhattisgarh Labour Department. The “**Atal Utkrisht Shiksha Yojna**” aims to provide holistic development opportunities for children of construction workers in selected districts. The main objective of the scheme is to ensure that these children receive proper schooling from Class 6 to Class 12 in



*this picture is being used for representational purposes only

selected private residential schools that meet educational standards. This initiative is designed to give these children better opportunities for their development and future prospects.

In the first phase, selected children of construction workers from districts such as Raipur, Bilaspur, Durg, Koriya, and Rajnandgaon will be given the opportunity to enroll in quality private schools. The state government will cover all expenses, including tuition fees, hostel facilities, uniforms, and meals. Further expansion of the scheme will take place based on need and government approval, with additional districts being included.

Eligibility and Admission Process:

1. This scheme will be open to children of registered construction workers. The benefit will be available for up to two children per family.
2. The children must meet the minimum age requirement for enrollment in Class 6 as of January 1st of the academic year.
3. A selection process will be conducted by the district labour offices, and the final admission list will be prepared by a state-level committee. Admission preference will be given to students who have maintained consistent academic performance in the previous year.
4. If there are more applicants than available seats, the selection will be made through an entrance exam. The district offices and selected private schools will provide information regarding the selection process.
5. The state-level committee will oversee the scheme's implementation and ensure regular monitoring of students' progress. The local nodal officers will also send reports on the development and performance of enrolled students.

Labour Canteen - Model Labour Canteen Design and Monitoring

Shaheed Veer Narayan Singh Shram Ann Yojna (Labour Canteen)

The Chhattisgarh Labour Department operates 21 labour food canteens across seven districts, with an existing vendor in place. However, there is currently no monitoring system to assess the performance of these canteens. It is crucial to determine whether labourers benefit from these facilities or if there are issues with proper implementation. Vendors submit monthly bills claiming that labourers are availing themselves of the canteen services.



Following discussions with the lab through the use of information technology. Workers can resolve their complaints or issues by calling the helpline number: **0771-3505050** provided by the Labour Department.

The Labour Department's visit to labour canteens focused on observing the following aspects: food quality, operating hours, token charges, register maintenance, security measures, and the presence of CCTV cameras. The quality and quantity of the food met prescribed standards, staff behaviour was deemed satisfactory, and drinking water was readily available.

However, the toilets were lacking in cleanliness. Security was provided 24/7 only at the industrial premises, covering four out of the five canteens. CCTV facilities were also present solely in the industrial premises. Overall, the canteens were considered satisfactory. Based on the observations, a monitoring mechanism was developed for the Labour Canteens.

Facial Recognition System - Based on the feedback received, the labour department decided to create facial recognition system for the beneficiaries availing canteen services and integrate this system with the mobile application. This work has been initiated and the first version of the FRS has been designed. This aims to ensure monitoring of the labour canteen, track the number of true beneficiaries and increase the access of canteen services.



Revised Meal - The menu of the meal provided in the canteen has been revised to add more nutritional value to the meal served to the beneficiaries.

Model Canteen - The department has envisaged the establishment of model canteens equipped with clean functional toilets, serving stations, a sanitary napkin vending machine adjacent to the female toilets, a revised meal menu with seasonal vegetables, a display of content on the wall to spread awareness amongst workers to facilitate registration and welfare schemes accessibility and registration drive corners.

Grievance Redressal Mechanism

1. CM Helpline Caller's Capacity Building-Grievance Redressal Mechanism

The grievance redressal system for workers has been made easier by the labour Department. The CM Helpline initiative was undertaken by the State Labour Department to inform labour families about various welfare schemes offered by the Labour Department, the eligibility criteria for those schemes, the locations of LRC and CSC centres, and to record their grievances. For this purpose, 300 callers were hired by the vendor Dipija Telecom and were orientated to various aspects such as labour welfare schemes, their eligibility criteria for the schemes, relevant sections, dos and don'ts, application process, registration process, legislative policies, and scheme linkages.

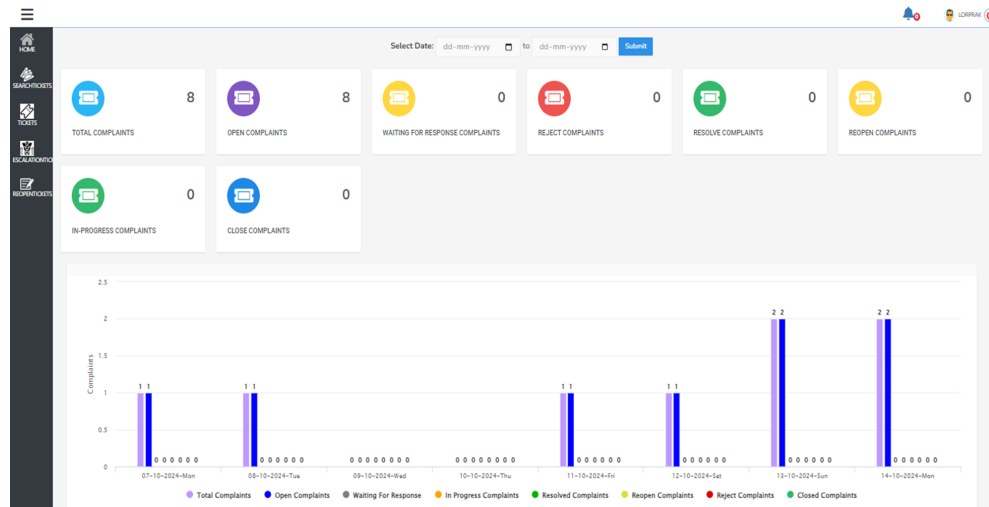


The primary objective of the e-ticketing system is to streamline the complaints received at the Chief Minister's Helpline Center and ensure their resolution within a set time frame. Indus Action was entrusted with the responsibility to design the E-ticketing system which required multiple rounds of discussion with the Labour Department officials, creating a prototype of the dashboard to facilitate grievance redressal through data driven decision making and constantly collaborating with Dipija Telecom in the redesign process. A key feature of this system is that if a complaint is not resolved within the stipulated time, it is automatically escalated to higher-level officials. Call operators or callers at the Chief Minister's Helpline Center respond to questions related to worker card registration and applications for various schemes. If there is a complaint, it is forwarded to labour inspectors.

At every level—whether it is the labour inspector, assistant labour commissioner at the district or state level, or at the commissioner level—a 7-day time limit is set for resolving the complaint. If it is not resolved within this period, it is escalated to a higher-level officer.

All officials have been given access to a special dashboard, where they can review the number of complaints and the time taken to resolve them. This e-ticketing system and dashboard ensure that the Labour Department reaches out to workers and resolves their grievances in a timely manner.

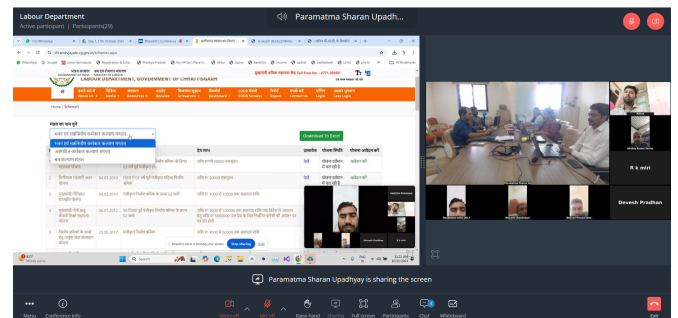
Online Grievance Redressal System - Dashboard



Capacity Building Initiatives

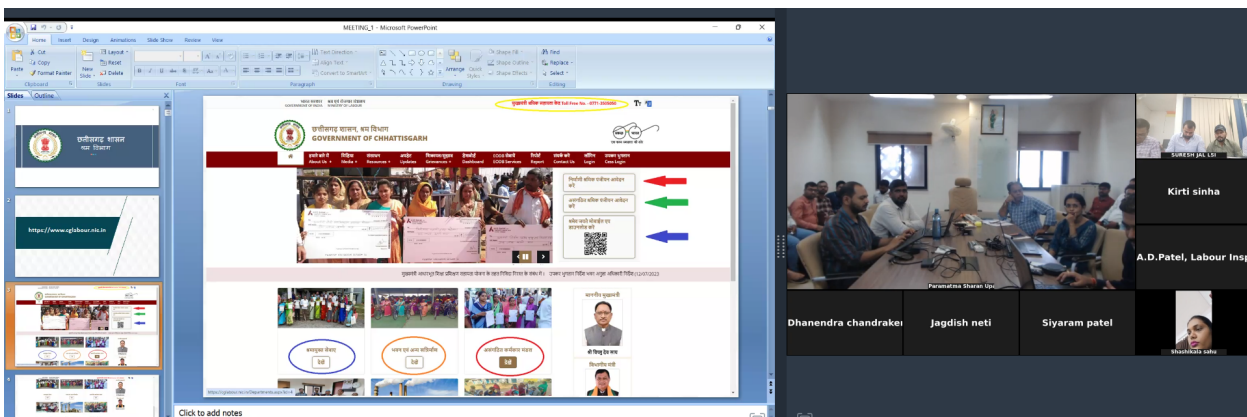
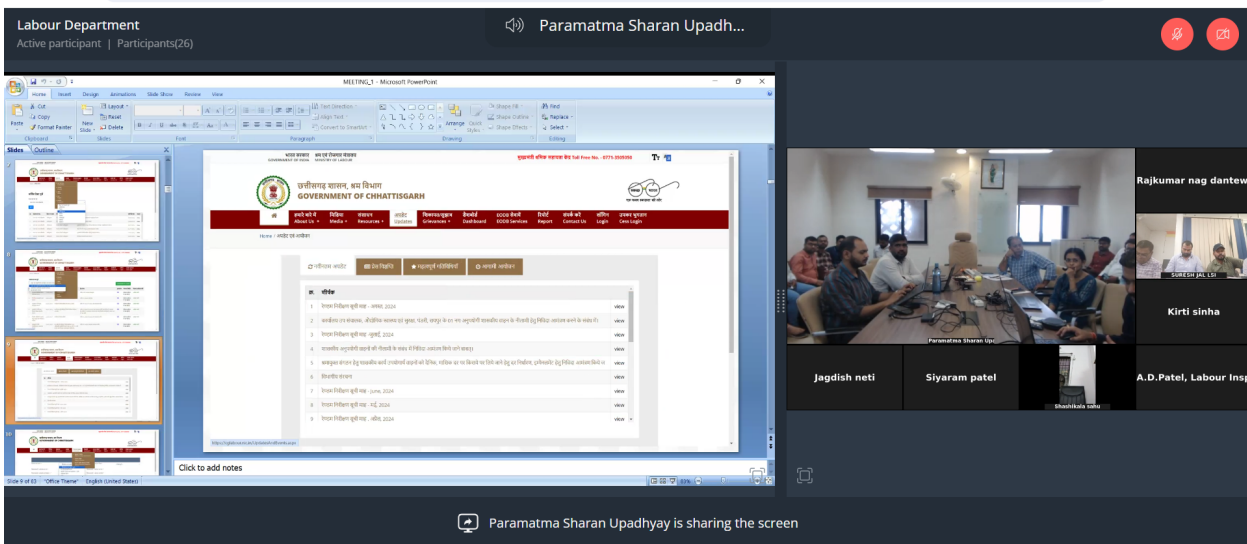
1. Labour Resource Centre Operators' Capacity Building

The former Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh proclaimed the establishment of 174 Labour Resource Centers (LRC) in every block and district on National Labour Day, 1 May 2023. These centres are equipped with essential equipment to aid in the free registration and scheme linkages for labour families. Indus Action imparted training to 170 LRC operators through online training sessions in collaboration with the NIC team in 5 batches from 21st September to 23rd September, 2024. The sessions intended to resolve the challenges faced by the LRC operators and orient them on the changes made in the Labour Department website and Shramev Jayate Mobile Application.



2. Labour Inspectors and Sub Labour Inspectors capacity building -

Training of 85 officials which included Labour Inspectors and Sub-labour Inspectors from all 5 Zones as Master trainers on website and mobile application was conducted on an online forum with the support of NIC team from 22nd to 28th September, 2024.



Labour Inspectors Training on Labour Department Website and Shramev Jayate Mobile Application

Two Days workshop organised by Labour Department, Chhattisgarh Government

Event Overview

The Chhattisgarh Labour Department, in partnership with Indus Action, organised a two-day event on the 17th and 18th of October 2024. The sessions, facilitated by government officials, industry representatives, and stakeholders from different states, aimed to discuss key initiatives, policies, challenges and sharing of best practices in labour welfare, including digital tools and industry best practices.



Day 1 Highlights (17th October 2024)

1. Inaugural Session

- The event was inaugurated by the Chhattisgarh Labour Department, with Indus Action providing support. This session introduced the agenda and set the tone for the discussions on social security and labor advancements.

2. e-Shram & Social Security

- Facilitators: Smt. Savita Mishra, Additional Labour Commissioner, and Ms. Madhuri Dhariwal, Associate Director, Indus Action
- This session covered the e-Shram platform, aimed at improving access to social security for unorganized workers, and discussed its benefits and implementation challenges.

3. Labour Website and Mobile Application

- Facilitators: Shri Shubham and Shri Parmatma from NIC, supported by Indus Action
- Aimed at simplifying labor-related processes, this session focused on the features of the new labor website and mobile app, which streamline communication and provide resources for workers.

4. E-ticketing System

- Facilitator: Dipija Telecom
- This segment introduced a new e-ticketing system to facilitate streamlined reporting and processing of grievances.

5. Labor Inspections and Compliance

- Facilitators: Shri S.S. Paikra, Deputy Labour Commissioner, and Shri Toshan Kumar Sahu, Deputy Director
- The session covered inspection protocols, prosecution guidelines, and compliance requirements for labor-related grievances and factory operations.

6. Court and Quasi-Judicial Processes

- Facilitator: Shri S.L. Matre, Retired Member Judge, Industrial Court
- Focused on the legal aspects of labor disputes, this segment discussed procedures for handling cases in quasi-judicial and judicial settings.

Day 2 Highlights (18th October 2024)

1. Health and Working Conditions

- Facilitator: Dr. Hidaytullah Khan, Jindal Steel & Power LTD
- Addressing health and safety standards, this session focused on improving workplace conditions across various industries in Chhattisgarh.

2. Cess Assessment and Panel Discussion

- Facilitators: Shri Sanjeev Kasliwal and representatives from Godawari Power & ISPAT LTD, Adani Power LTD, and Trade Unions
- Time: 11:45 - 01:30
- The assessment of cess collection and distribution was discussed, along with insights from key industry players.



3. Best Practices in Labor Welfare

- Facilitators: Shri Rajesh Prasad, Joint Labour Commissioner, Jharkhand and Shri Shivam Sharma, Project Manager, BoCW, Uttar Pradesh
- This session highlighted innovative approaches to labor welfare, sharing effective practices from Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand.

i. Key learnings from Uttar Pradesh:

Uttar Pradesh Government launched **Atal Avasiya Yojna** with an aim to provide residential educational facility for the children of registered workers. This initiative was undertaken by Uttar Pradesh government to ensure that migration of labourers do not hamper the education of their children.

ii. Key learnings from Jharkhand:

Safe and responsible Migration Initiatives (SRMI) scheme was launched by the Jharkhand government with an objective to facilitate inter-state coordination to maintain migrant workers databases and ensure registration and linkages of workers and their families to all social welfare schemes.

4. Felicitation & Closing Ceremony

- **Guest of Honor: Hon. Labour Minister, Government of Chhattisgarh**
- The event concluded with a ceremony honouring contributors, followed by closing remarks from the Honourable Labour Minister.

Conclusion

The event successfully provided a platform to enhance collaboration between government, industry, and labour representatives, focusing on social security, digital tools, and labour welfare. The event also served as a platform for officials to discuss the challenges encountered in implementing various schemes and ensuring beneficiary access. This facilitated the identification of monitoring measures to address registration and access issues related to welfare schemes. Additionally, discussions highlighted improvements needed in online platforms to streamline the registration and application processes for these schemes, as well as strategies for enhancing CESS collection.



FUTURE PATHWAYS

1. **Study on Migrant workers:** Conduct initial study on the migrant workers' status in selected blocks within Janjgir Champa with an aim to identify the migrant workers registration status, challenges faced by the them, present status of the existing welfare schemes and their reach to the beneficiaries and recommendations for increased integration of migrant workers details in the database and their easy access to the welfare schemes. The study will also focus on strengthening the existing policy based on the initial findings and streamlining the process to mitigate challenges in registration of migrant workers and their access to welfare services.
2. **Capacity building:** Conducting capacity-building sessions for PRI representatives to facilitate the registration process for BoCW and Migrant labourers.
3. **Framework for Domestic Workers:** Follow up on the framework detailing regulations and welfare measures.
4. **Redesign Model Labour Canteen,** including monitoring, in collaboration with the Labour Department. This involves a collaborative approach to providing recommendations for infrastructural improvements, conducting on-site monitoring visits, overseeing registration drives, and supporting the design of IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) materials.
5. **Implementation of the Atal Utkrisht Shiksh Yojna:** Collaborate with the department on the implementation and monitoring of the educational policy for the children of registered migrant workers' in the selected residential schools.
6. **Design and launch of Eligibility Engine:** Collaborate with NIC in integration of eligibility engine both the website for the citizens and in the system database, and ensure its implementation and monitoring. Integration of the eligibility engine will facilitate the registered workers to identify their eligibility for different welfare schemes and access them with ease. Integrating an eligibility engine will empower labour department officials to identify eligible beneficiaries more effectively, increase registered workers' access to available schemes, and enhance awareness about these opportunities. This technology will also enable officials to engage directly with beneficiaries and utilise data-driven decision-making to improve the implementation of welfare schemes.
