## Uncompleted and unsuccessful rehabilitation of manual scavengers in India<sup>1</sup>

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India initiated the Self Employment scheme for Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers (SRMS) in 2007. An amount of Rs.735.60 Crores was allocated for the rehabilitation of 3,42,468 individuals. This scheme was for the period January 2007 to March 2009 but was extended till March 2010. Under this scheme only 1,18,474 individuals showed interest to avail the benefits out of which 78,941 individuals were benefited and 39,533 individuals could not due to various reasons. According to the Ministry a total of Rs.231 Crores were released under this schemes between financial years 2006-2007 to financial year 2009-2010. Under this scheme 13275 individuals were benefited. Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan – Jan Sahas conducted a survey on Implementation status of SRMS in 3 states of India in year 2010-11. Some findings of this study are given below:

- 76 % people got benefits which they were not involved in the manual scavenging practice.
- Scheme was not launched in the 25% of districts and said that manual scavenging practice does not exist in these districts. But during the study found that manual scavenging practice is going on these districts.
- 98 per cent of people engaged in the profession are women. But it was found that benefits of SRMS were given to 51 per cent of men in these three states.
- 85% people said that they have faced various types of problems to get benefits of scheme like time wasting, bribe, misbehavior and problems related to the documents and processes.
- Middle men or commission agents would visit Dalit bastis telling households to sign on so and so papers as the government had chosen them as beneficiaries of a new scheme. The beneficiaries would never get to know the loan amount, sanctioning officer or other details of the transactions. After a while, the middle men would revisit them and hand over Rs 3,000 to Rs 4,500. Many of these people did not even know why they were being given the money or how much money had been borrowed in their names. In Madhya Pradesh, around 68 per cent of the beneficiaries were taken for a ride by the brokers, in Uttar Pradesh, 63 per cent and in Rajasthan 62 per cent.

## Self-contradiction and non implementation of scholarship scheme for manual scavengers $^2$

An example of a particularly self-defeating government programme is a scholarship for the children of the manual scavengers, (Scholarship for the Children of Families involved in incline occupation) which require the families seeking the benefit to have been engaged in manual scavenging for at least 100 days in a year. This scholarship scheme provides a perverse incentive to the Dalit households to continue in this occupation. Recently government had done some policy level changes. But, these changes are not implementing by the state governments.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Study on rehabilitation of manual scavengers (implementation status of SRMS scheme) in India by Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan – Jan Sahas <a href="https://www.dalits.nl/pdf/120328.pdf">www.dalits.nl/pdf/120328.pdf</a>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> National Public Hearing on Rehabilitation of Manual Scavengers and their Children in India organized by Rashtriya Garima Abhiyan – Jan Sahas <a href="http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article3261450.ece">http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/article3261450.ece</a>