

# IDEATION

A RESOURCE FOR POLICY IDEAS

INAUGURAL EDITION

*Accountability Initiative at the  
Centre for Policy Research*

## ABOUT IDEATION

Ideation is a knowledge resource brought out by the Accountability Initiative at the Centre for Policy Research. It seeks to offer today's decision-takers and policy shapers, distilled insights from both our work as well as interactions in the public policy and development spaces.



# THE FUTURE OF GOVERNANCE

*The Future of Governance virtual forum was curated by us and co-hosted with Arthan, a social enterprise, in early October. With over 900 participants spanning 1.5 days, the forum buzzed with new and familiar ideas on civil society-government engagement.*

As the world races to develop a potent COVID-19 vaccine, the role of governments (and public administration structures) will come into sharper focus when a solution is found. *Nobody will be safe till everybody is protected.* But the country-wide effort to roll out the vaccine will need unprecedented mobilisation of government resources and people. Three major questions are bound to emerge soon.

- How can the Union and State governments leverage the support of existing civil society networks to reach the last-mile?
- What will it take to make sure that nobody is left behind?
- Where do challenges in the civil society-government relationship lie?

## LOOKING BACK TO GO FORWARD

THE FORUM'S  
DELIBERATIONS

We welcome your comments and feedback.

You can reach out to the ideators at:

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## LOOKING BACK TO GO FORWARD

The COVID-19 pandemic has placed the fragility of our public health systems, and social security nets upfront. The conundrum that civil society organisations and different tiers of government are likely to face will be on reconciling a messy reality- how can old ways of functioning be remoulded? This will require strategising with a long-term perspective, and empathy for people both within the system and outside of it.

The five panels held during the forum unpacked precisely these strategies, and ways forward. Summary notes of some are below. The videos of all panels, the fireside chat and keynote address, can be accessed from the section on the left.



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PANEL VIDEOS

[FIRESIDE CHAT WITH YAMINI AIYAR OF CENTRE FOR POLICY RESEARCH AND ANURAG BEHAR OF AZIM PREMJI FOUNDATION](#)

[PANEL ON THE IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING THE NUTS AND BOLTS OF GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONING](#)

[PANEL ON GRANTMAKING AS AN ENABLER OF CITIZEN-STATE ENGAGEMENT](#)

[PANEL ON BUILDING KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ATTITUDES FOR EFFECTIVE GOVERNMENT ENGAGEMENT](#)

[PANEL ON HOW CAN GRASSROOTS FIELD WORKERS ENGAGE WITH LOCAL ADMINISTRATION EFFECTIVELY?](#)



COMING IN WAVES

# INSIDE DISTRICTS

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SENSEMAKER READ

India's bureaucratic challenge in the post-pandemic era



As the pandemic ebbs and flows, India needs to shore up its people resources. But who are they, and how are they coping?

In April, shortly after the first country-wide lockdown, we documented the perspectives of people critical to the pandemic effort. The human interest series, called Inside Districts, poignantly captures the challenges and solutioneering of frontline workers and government staff in five major Indian states.

We've published the interviews ever since, as a public resource. These perspectives provide numerous entry points for rethinking the role of frontline workers, their relationship with the upper bureaucracy, and their contribution in making social safety nets stronger.

Even as they continue to carry on their routine and pandemic tasks simultaneously, questions on their safety and incentives continue, abound.



PRESS ICON TO VISIT



# LEARNING IN DISRUPTIVE TIMES



PRESS ICON TO VISIT

Equipping frontline workers will not be enough, solutions will be needed from the grassroots up. Staff members and young entrants to the development profession are perfect for the task. But they, in turn, need more than attempts at *capacity building*. To work hand in hand with the government, they would have to *upskill* to interpret and act on the nuances government functioning.

As the pandemic took hold, so did we repivot our experiential learning programmes to suit current learning needs. Our courses Understanding State Capabilities (English) and Hum Aur Humaari Sarkaar (Hindi/upcoming) draw extensively from a decade's worth of evidence generation.

*In the COVID-19 pandemic, my Panchayat had received money to spray disinfectants. But it did not do anything.*

*What I learnt about the public administrative structure at the local level as a participant of the Hum Aur Humaari Sarkaar course came in handy. The knowledge helped me identify the right official to complain to. I approached the District Magistrate, and also made use of a helpline number.*

*This forced the Panchayat to spend the money as directed.*

Mr. Nasiruddin  
Ibtada  
Rajasthan

SENSEMAKER READ

Supporting field workers to  
combat COVID-19



# POLICY REDUX

This is a pivotal moment for modern India. While public policy in the country has largely invested in securing long-term development gains, the pandemic threatens the reversal of many of these. Preventing a backslide is going to be hard fought, requiring multidisciplinary and convergent efforts. Now, more than ever, policy practice will need to make action plans from the bottom up - keeping the intended beneficiaries at the centre of their efforts - much like humanitarian programmes. Some of our research over the last 9 months shows exactly why.



## BRIEF ON SOCIAL SECURITY FOR INFORMAL WORKERS IN INDIA

The Indian labour market is predominantly informal with about 90% workers without a social security net. But there is hope.



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## STUDY OF STATE FINANCES

The pandemic has placed enormous fiscal burden on the Union and State governments, but state finances *were stressed* even before it began.



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# HELP YOUR TEAMS MAKE SENSE OF THE CONTEXT



We have a vibrant online community that your teams can join to understand and engage with pressing policy issues of the day. Why not circulate the Ideation or let them know where we are?



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#ResponsiveGovernance