

## **GEET – A platform connecting ‘the last mile’ populace to social welfare schemes.**



*UNDP Representative giving the GEET App demo*

Natasha, aged 17 years, is a bright student from a remote village Gaudaiya of Punjab. She wants to go for higher studies, but her family’s economic situation does not allow her to pursue the same.



*Natasha (left) with her scholarship certificate, facilitated by the project Community Mobilizer*

COVID has only made matters worse, as her father belonging to the unorganized sector (daily wager), has been rendered jobless. Even though multiple social welfare schemes have been made available by both central and state government, for Natasha as well as her father, they both do not know about the existence of such schemes let alone understanding how to avail them. This changed, when the GEET pilot project awareness generation session was carried out in the village, explaining about the GEET Application.

Natasha reached out the community mobilizer, Ishrat, of the GEET project team to enquire if there was some scheme which would allow her to pursue her education. After filling all her details on GEET app, Natasha found out that she there was a scheme under which she could avail educational scholarship as her family came under BPL category and belonged to a lower caste. This encouraged Natasha, to also fill in details of her father, which lead to access to another scheme provisioning support to unemployed people.

After confirming scheme eligibility as well as understanding the process of availing scheme benefits (documentation, forms etc.) with support of the GEET project community mobilizers and community volunteers, today Natasha has got a scholarship of INR.13,000 (\$175.20) and her father has started getting a monthly support of INR 1500 (\$20.22).

One of the many challenges encountered by underprivileged communities in India is availing the



*Awareness session with village women, in progress*

benefits of scores of social welfare programmes run by both state and central governments. In the absence of proper information, or clarity regarding eligibility, a large part of the population, especially communities based in rural and remote areas, is 'left out'. While men and women miss out on employment and health benefits, children miss out on nutrition and the elderly on their monthly pension entitlement. In such a scenario, a system like GEET (GIS-Enabled Entitlement Tracking) becomes critical for good governance. GEET is a technological platform (mobile application) developed by UNDP to address these issues.

Geographic Information System (GIS) - Enabled Entitlement Tracking (GEET) developed by UNDP, pools information on various government entitlements and schemes on a single platform to help rural communities. It is a technological platform that helps connecting people with their entitlements and social welfare schemes being run by the government. By uploading basic information such as state, age, gender, marital status, disability, caste and economic benchmark age, GEET informs the beneficiaries about:

- [1] list of schemes and programs for which the person is eligible for and
- [2] where and how to apply to avail the scheme benefits

A person can also look for schemes by using the advanced search option and further customizing his/her search criteria. GEET then scans the eligibility criteria of all the schemes and codifies all the criteria on a basic questionnaire to be administered at an individual or household level. The platform



visually represents the entitlements information on a GIS-enabled dashboard that can be accessed by officials to record information and monitor progress.

Gagandeep, 38 is one of the many female construction workers in village Balbheda, Sanour block of Punjab. Being of the unorganized sector, she is unable to claim the benefits of government schemes available for her. She and many like her are uneducated and don't know what the schemes are and benefits they are eligible for, the documents required to access the schemes, or which forms to fill and so on.

"I have heard on TV, government starting many schemes for women, but I do not know what to do? I had lots of problem in filling the form, getting it stamped (attested) and submitting it. Getting the form attested from different authorities and even after doing all those things forms got rejected multiple times". However, things have changed for the better for Gagandeep now. With support of the GEET App and the project team, she has been able to get her labor card and its related benefits.

Sarbjit Kaur, a widow is the lone earning member in her family of four. Not only this, due to various health issues, she has to incur medical expenses regularly and deal with work absence on her weaker days. Her plight was magnified due to frequent rejection of her application to avail the 'Widow Pension Scheme'. With the intervention and support of the GEET Project, she was able to submit the proper documents and is currently able to avail the pension amount. For her, the community mobilizers of the project signify a fundamental shift in the quality of her life as well as the lives of those close to her.



*Gagandeep (right) with her labor card, facilitated by the project Community Mobilizer*

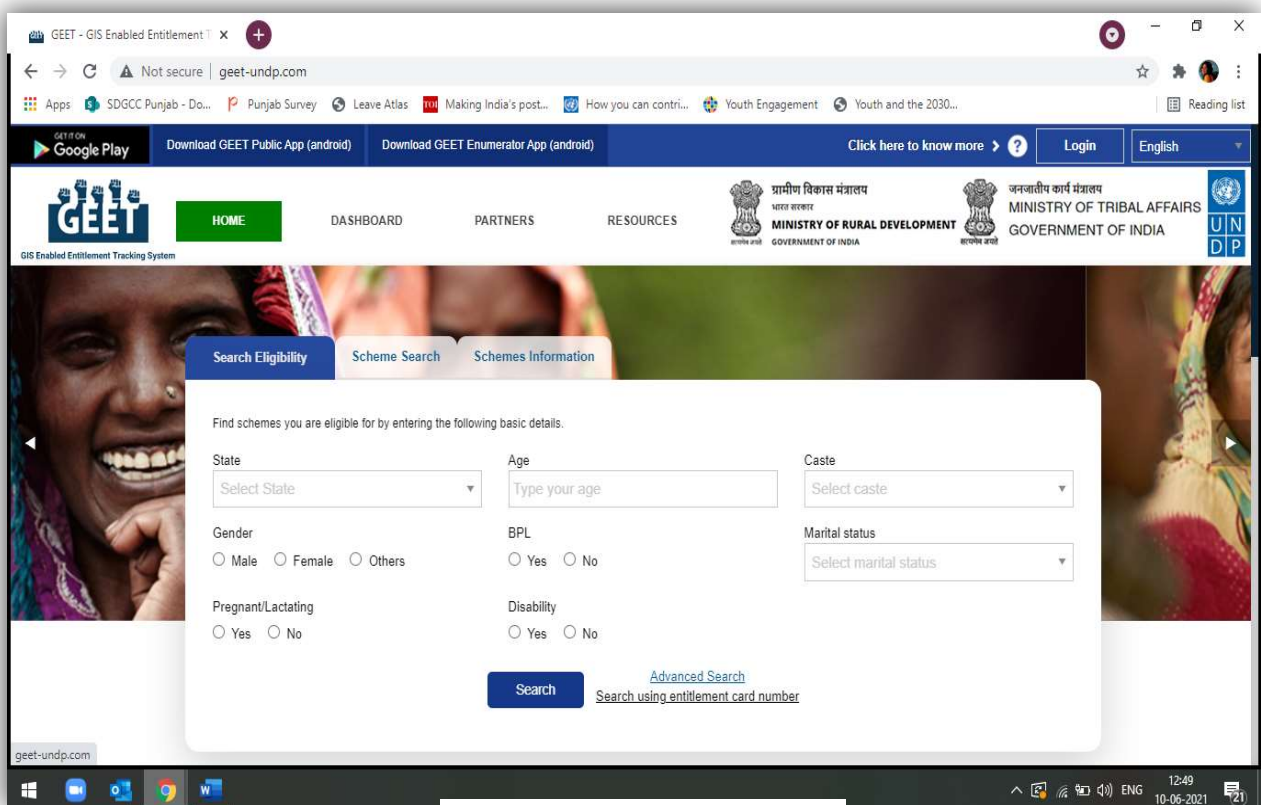


*Community Mobilizers assisting the villagers in filling up forms and other documentation process, to avail the scheme benefits*

UNDP SDG Coordination Centre (SDGCC) in Punjab, India conceptualized and conducted a pilot intervention focused around GEET platform in 3 blocks of Patiala district to create awareness and ensure larger coverage of government schemes, initiatives, and entitlements. SEWA Bharat Punjab was onboarded as the local implementation partner for the pilot, which engaged its Community Mobilizers to roll out the initiative on ground. Project period was from Feb'21 to May'21. Some of the key achievements include:

- 11,000+ people made aware on government schemes/COVID relief schemes and other entitlements
- 3000+ beneficiaries connected to relevant schemes and entitlements including 2184 women
- Around 98 frontline workers trained on the GEET App as well various schemes and benefits
- Capacity building of 39 PRI members/Sarpanches

The App is available for download in Google Play store under name 'GEET Public App'



Screenshot of the GEET Portal