

Workshops with Resident Welfare Associations (RWAs):

CHRI, along with Parivartan (a Delhi based organisation working actively on the issue of RTI) held a series of workshops for RWAs all over Delhi. RWAs in Delhi have a high frequency of interaction with government bodies to get their grievances addressed. They also are in a good position to scrutinise any particular work in progress in their area. Thus from an implementation point of view they are well placed to test the RTI law in practise. The workshops were conducted for all five zones covering Delhi.

The first workshop in this series was held on the 8th of June. About eighty-five RWA representatives from the East Delhi Zone attended it. In addition to introducing them to the value of this right for the citizens they were given a primer on the RTI legislation and its usage. An experience-sharing segment helped in demonstrating the effects of using this law. The participants were extremely keen to make use of this right for improving the living conditions in their own area. A distinct feature of this workshop was that the participants were also apprised of the importance of the voters right to know and how they could in practical terms use their rights to make way for elements of good governance in the city. This was an opportune moment to get the citizens of the city involved in this initiative considering this is the election year in Delhi.

Outcome:

Though few of the participants had already applied for information under the Delhi Right to Information Act, yet most of them were unaware of this law. At the end of the workshop they were divided into subgroups according to the kind of initiative they were inclined to be a part of. Broadly, there were three different activities that were outlined in order to promote and implement the right to information in the city. The first among these was to ensure the implementation of the MCD (Municipal Corporation of Delhi) orders asking for suo-moto declaration of any work in progress in a particular area. The second was to procure copies of contracts of ongoing works and cross check them on ground. The third component was that of voters right to know and in the coming months CHRI will be strategizing with RWAs among other civil society groups to promote this right and work towards its practical realisation.