



## **ICT Enabled District Public Library Hub-Spoke Model Launched in District Unnao, Uttar Pradesh, India**

*[An initiative with the support of the District Administration, Unnao, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) under its Global Libraries (GL) Programme, and the Digital Empowerment Foundation, New Delhi]*

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*The Pilot launch of the Hub and Spoke Library Model covering Unnao District Library and three other surrounding spoke libraries is an initiative with the support of the Global Libraries Programme of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, with district implementation facilitation by the Digital Empowerment Foundation. The launch is an initiative to build a network of information, services, knowledge and programme support covering three libraries with maximum support of the district hub library. This initiative seeks to develop capacities of the spoke libraries to deliver better information and services to the local communities using ICTs. This brief report is an account of the launch programme.*

## Brijrani Singh Spoke Public Library, Unnao District

The Brijrani Singh Public Library became the first spoke library to be inaugurated under the project on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2015. The event was attended by the Local Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) of Unnao Sadar, Mr. Pankaj Gupta; Programme Director, Digital Empowerment, Dr. Neena Jha; Unnao District Librarian, Dr. Mridula Pandit and Unnao District Assistant Librarian Mrs. Saurabhi Shrivastav. The Chief Guest, Mr. Pankaj Gupta in



his opening address expressed his happiness and thanked DEF and BMGF for the Digital Hub and Spoke Model initiative. He highlighted the fact that a common man's basic digital necessities have become very important, like agriculture related information for farmer and information about Government schemes for the ordinary people. He assured the people of a public transport to the library and better infrastructure in order to

support this initiative. Dr Neena Jha shed light on the ICT Services under this project. She drew the examples of Ebooks, E-Newspapers, Online information about careers and mentoring and other such services which are available online but do not reach the common man because of the information divide. Mr. Pramendra Singh, Librarian, Brijrani Singh Library extended his gratefulness to BMGF and DEF for the project implementation in the library. In his address he talked about how it was more than a dream come true to be able to serve people at the grassroots level with technology aided services. The project has enabled digital services access to people who work as labourers and vocational skill development to the many brick kiln workers in the area. Dr. Mridula Pandit stressed the importance of libraries in growth of a society. She took the initiative of promising to conduct activities conducive to the need of the people and to make sure that all services run smoothly and the Brijrani Singh Public Library is established as a model spoke library.



## Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Spoke Library, Shuklaganj, Unnao District

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Library was the next to be inaugurated under the project. Held on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2015, this inauguration function saw a total participation of 150 members. The event was attended by a former Reader of the Central Hindi Institute Agra, Dr. Rashmi Dixit; Advocate Mrs. Uma Lodhi, District Librarian and Dr. Mridula Pandit. Dr. Dixit implored the audience and library staff to remember Vishambhar Dayal Tripathi and Dr. B.R. Ambedkar



for the role they had to play in the development of the education sector in India. Not only this, she even requested all citizens of Shuklaganj to avail the benefit of the Digital Services that have been started under the project. Mrs. Uma Lodhi summed up beautifully in a single sentence, *“This program of digital library involves the availability of the high quality based information and its resources with easy access to every person of the society.”* Mr. Mahendra Kumar, who has been

associated with the library for long, also asserted that it is important and almost necessary to spread awareness about the digital library concept in the entire city and he assured to make that happen.



## **Ku. Devendra Singh Spoke Public Library, Unnao District**

Third on the list of libraries under the Hub and Spokes Model, this library was inaugurated on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2015. The event was attended by more than 300 people who included Mr. Kuldeep Singh Sengar, Local MLA (Bhagwant Nagar), Mr. Satish Kumar Shukla, Former President Bar Council of Unnao, Swami Ramswaroop, Brahmhchari Ashram and Dr. Mridula Pandit. Mr. Sengar was very impressed with the training courses and other services that have been started in the library. He told the audience about the importance of libraries and how he gets to know so much that his kids learn there. He offered all possible support as the local MLA for the library's development activities. Mr. Shukla spoke about the need that was felt in Chakalvanshi since long, and that was of a community empowerment and literacy wing in the form of a library like the Unnao District Library. It is fortunate; he added that this library was selected for the Hub and Spokes Model Project and that the entire town is in high hopes of development activities and establishment of the library as a central space for learning and availing digital services.

Swami Ramswaroop talked about the importance of digitizing spiritual books and old manuscripts that have become a rare read now days. He expressed his happiness about the fact that his kids can now read those books online, search for information and preserve and carry forward the culture of their ancestors for years to come. Dr. Mridula Pandit encouraged the audience to take part in the library development activities and shared her experience as the librarian of Unnao District Library. She specifically implored housewives, senior citizens and children to become members of the library as it could help them not just with books to read but an overall grooming of their individual personality.

