

State of exclusion from PDS due to mandatory seeding of Aadhaar: survey from 3 districts of Odisha

The last date for seeding of Aadhaar for PDS was 31 August 2019. As per media report, there were around 31 lakhs persons in Odisha who were left out from PDS due to the non-seeding of Aadhaar. The last date was extended to 15 September 2019. On 16 September, the media reported that the number of persons whose Aadhaar was not seeded was approximately 19 lakhs.

Between 20-30 September 2019, PDS rice was distributed in KBK area. As usual two months (September and October) quota of rice was given to households having a card and seeded to Aadhaar.

A quick survey was undertaken by Odisha Khadya Adhikar Abhijan (an informal network working on issues of right to food and nutrition) in 38 Panchayats of 8 blocks in Nabarangpur, Nuapada and Malkangiri district to ascertain the ground reality pertaining to Aadhaar seeding with ration cards and denial of food grain. The survey was conducted in the first week of October. The team visited such households, where due to non-seeding of Aadhaar their PDS rice has not been given for two months.

As part of the survey, information was collected from 348 households (in 82 villages) having ration card and either some or all family members were denied food grain in September 2019 due to non-linking of Aadhaar with ration card. In terms of caste composition ST 65 %, SC 13% and OBC 20.7% and 1 % belonged to general category.

Among the 348 HHs, Aadhaar was not seeded with ration cards of 574 out of 1626 members which is one third of the family members.

Children got deprived the most: Around 31% of individuals whose ration card was not seeded with Aadhaar are children of less than 10 years old.

Administrative lapses leading to denial: Around one fifth of the left out individuals (19.80%) reported that they have submitted their Aadhaar card but it is not linked with ration card and they are not aware of the reasons.

Non-Availability of Aadhaar: Around 12.42% individuals reported that they don't have Aadhaar number so they are unable to link it with ration card. Some of them reported that they have applied various times for Aadhaar number still it could not be prepared till now. Some of old aged persons are physically unable to move out of villages to go to the nearest Aadhaar enrolment centre.

	Nuapada	Nabrangpur	Malkangiri	Total
Sample size	6 villages from 3 Gram Panchayats (1 block)	63 villages from 25 Gram Panchayats (4 blocks)	13 Villages from 4 Gram Panchayat (3 blocks)	82 Villages from 32 Gram Panchayats of 8 blocks in 3 districts
Number of households	29	272	47	348
Number of family member on ration card in these households	127	1272	227	1626
Number of affected persons due to non-seeding of Aadhar	51	435 ¹	88 ²	574
Entire families left out	3	17	6	26
People without Aadhaar	3	185	14	203
People who have applied for Aadhaar but not got it	3	30	-	33
People who have Aadhaar, but it is not seeded	48	228 ³	46	322
Deletion due to Death and/or marriage	-	17	3	22
Genuine deletion (ghost, bogus, duplicate)	0	0	0	0

¹ Of this, 35% are children between the age group of 0-10 years of age.

² Of this 24% are children between the age group of 0-10 years of age.

³Of this, 72 submitted their Aadhar in the GP but they don't know why their Aadhar has not been seeded, 17 such persons whose Aadhar number is reflected in the PDS card but they are not sure why their name has been deleted and 23 persons whose name, village name or photo is mismatching so they have been eliminated.