

A Journey from Vulnerability to Empowerment through Government Welfare Schemes

Village: **Rahtalav**, Dholera Taluka, District Ahmedabad, Gujarat

In the heart of Gujarat's Dholera taluka lies **Rahtalav**, a village where the transformative impact of public welfare schemes is becoming increasingly evident. Among the many inspiring examples is the story of Fulabhai Bhadbhidiya and his extended family, who have successfully accessed multiple government schemes to transition from economic vulnerability to self-reliance and prosperity.

Fulabhai, a 65-year-old marginal farmer from a traditionally agricultural family, lives in a joint household of **20 members** comprising his three sons, their families, and elderly parents. The family possesses agricultural land and holds a Below Poverty Line (BPL) card, which made them eligible for a range of state and central government welfare schemes / initiatives.

A turning point came when Fulabhai visited the **Community Help Desk Center** established in his village—as an initiative supported by **Mahiti Trust** in partnership with the **Gujarat CSR Authority**. This center serves as a local knowledge hub, disseminating information on welfare schemes and assisting residents with applications and documentation.

Through the help desk, Fulabhai learned about the Indira Awas Yojana and promptly applied. The centre's staff has facilitated this application with appropriate authority and it was approved, allowing the family to construct a pucca (permanent) house, replacing their earlier inadequate shelter.



Over time, the family accessed **eight different government schemes**, including:

1. Through **I-Kisan** Portal – He availed subsidy scheme for a **tractor** to enhance farming productivity.
2. **Kisan Kalyan Yojana** – Receiving ₹900 per month for cow maintenance.
3. Irrigation Pipeline Scheme – Sanctioned a **33-meter pipeline** to supply water to their fields.
4. **Roof-Top Rainwater Harvesting Tank**– Constructed an underground tank with 70% financial support from WASMO and Mahiti Trust, enhancing water security.
5. Swachh Bharat Mission – Built **toilet** within the household premises with government support, improving sanitation and hygiene.
6. **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi Yojana** – Receiving ₹6,000 per year, disbursed in three instalments, as direct income support.
7. **Vaya Vandana Yojana** – Both Fulabhai and his wife, being over 60, receiving a monthly pension of ₹750 each, ensuring old-age security.
8. **Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana** – Received a cooking gas connection and subsidy, significantly improving kitchen conditions and reducing indoor air pollution.

Through effective convergence of schemes and community facilitation, the Bhadbhidiya family has emerged as a model of integrated rural development. Their story highlights the crucial role of information accessibility, local facilitation, and multi-scheme synergy in realizing the vision of an empowered and self-reliant rural India.

Fulabhai gives credit to the Mahiti Trust and the Community Help Desk Center for guiding them through these processes and helping them unlock the benefits of available government schemes/programs. Their story is a testimony to how even the most rural and marginalized households can chart a path toward prosperity when empowered with the right support and information.