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## **PRESS NOTE**

### **An Evaluation Study of Outcomes of SVEEP Activities and Facilities Provided to PwDs in General Assembly Election 2018 & Lok Sabha Election-2019 in Karnataka**

#### **INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS for Persons with Disabilities**

2018 Assembly Elections in Karnataka was the first to comprehensively try out accessibility Strategies for the Persons with Disabilities, and many of its strategies could be used to contribute to the national framework for the electoral participation of persons with disabilities which came later. We are happy to get our strategies and outcomes evaluated so that the strategies could be further refined based on evidences. This book documents the good practices, achievements and gaps and it is a matter of satisfaction that more than 4 lakhs of the PwDs could be mapped and more than 80 % of them participated in the elections to exercise their franchise, and enjoyed being part of the Festival of Democracy. Convergence with the local bodies ensured adequate resources for the wheel Chairs, magnifying glasses, sign interpreters etc., and the Panchayat Volunteers of the Department of Persons with Disabilities bridged the last mile connectivity through their data base and reach to the individual PwDs. But still lots of effort were required to map out remaining PwDs and to motivate them to participate in the electoral process. Evaluation shows need for a separate more vigorous SVEEP strategy for the PwDs who are otherwise left out in the ordinary SVEEP interventions. It also shows inadequate database

maintained with the department and house to house approach to identify them was required. One of the important achievements in Karnataka was voluntary participation of sizable numbers of PwD employees in managing the Polling Stations which strengthened their self-esteem and confidence. Institute for Social and Economic Change has done this evaluation study based on 2400 interviews of PwDs, responses from 10 polling stations handled by the PwDs and 16 focused group discussion. The findings are being used to further improve our strategies and this book may be used as a base material for capacity building.

Today the book titled “An Evaluation Study of Outcomes of SVEEP Activities and Facilities Provided to PwDs in General Assembly Election 2018 & Lok Sabha Election-2019 in Karnataka - INCLUSIVE AND ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS for Persons with Disabilities” has been released in the National Conference on Accessible Election 2021 held at Delhi by the Hon’ble Election Commission of India.

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