

Behaviour Analysis of Truck Drivers Conducted



Truck drivers received certificates during Suhana Safar training at Dadri Depot

Truck drivers are one of the most vulnerable sections of society as they face numerous challenges due to long working hours, deadline pressure, and lack of access to basic needs such as hygienic food, healthcare facilities, and clean working environment. In 2015, Suhana Safar Programme, which is funded by MAERSK, was initiated to spread awareness among truck drivers about road signs and safety, financial literacy, first aid, nutrition, and WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene). During the pilot phase, we conducted capacity building interventions involving 1046 truck drivers. The eighth phase of the programme will end in March 2023. **In this phase, 780 truck drivers have been reached out through capacity building interventions against the target of 900 and 1136 truck drivers, helpers, and community members have been provided with health awareness through health camps against the target of 1300. Over 15,000 truck drivers have engaged with us during this 8-year journey.**

As the programme's eighth phase progressed, it became clear that an assessment of truck drivers' behaviour regarding road safety practices, WASH and nutrition intake, and practices regarding their rights and entitlements was necessary so that interventions could be revised to increase the programme's impact. Thus, a survey was conducted, which included 197 truck drivers and helpers. **Regarding road safety, over 75% of participants reported receiving one to five challans for traffic violations the previous year, and about the same number of truck drivers acknowledged to having no heavy vehicle driving training.** They also acknowledged that 40–60% of truck drivers use



Truck drivers participating in an activity on road signs during Suhana Safar Training at Tughlakabad Depot

their vehicles when intoxicated. The data suggest that **Suhana Safar training is crucial for truck drivers since it imparts critical information about driving safely. And, there is a need to raise awareness about the negative consequences of drunk driving.**

As COVID-19 emerged as a major concern, truck drivers' and helpers' health became the programme's priority. With this, health camps are held in depots and dhabas where truck drivers layover to sensitise them about their health. It is noteworthy that 45% truck drivers said they have driven trucks continuously for more than a day and 40% of them have driven for 2 days continuously. About **64% of truck drivers claim to sleeping only 4–5 hours per night. And, 77% of truck drivers do not have health insurance.** The data suggest that **truck drivers always put their jobs first and often neglect their own needs as a result of their hectic schedules.** They do not want to invest in any health insurance programmes because they do not have a long-term perspective.



Eye Specialist performing eye check-up at Community Health Camp in Tughlakabad, New Delhi

Awareness of basic financial literacy, including the ability to save money, make online payments, and conduct banking transactions, is another crucial factor in improving the lifestyle of truck drivers. **It was noted that 88% of truck drivers lack the knowledge necessary to send money home through various online channels.** Additionally, they have limited knowledge of the numerous government support programmes. The same is evident from the fact that **approximately 90% of the truck drivers have still not taken benefit of any government schemes like Aayushman Bharat Jan Dhan**

Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Yojana, Atal Pension Yojana etc. The data imply that information on online payment methods and different government programmes can be provided to them so they can take advantage of the numerous platforms and welfare-related programmes designed for their benefit.

This analysis has brought into light various issues related to truck drivers where awareness is warranted. As a response, with the programme's new phase, an endeavour will be to include knowledge from the survey to enhance truck driver's behaviour in the important areas of life and increase the programme's impact.