

# **A Window to the World--Project Arrow**

Project Arrow was conceived in April 2008 as an integrated and focused approach to enhance the quality of services and improve the 'Look and Feel' of identified Post Offices across the country. The underlying objective of the project was to provide all e-enabled services so that Post Offices become a "Window to the World" for the aamaadmi. Project Arrow follows a focussed approach with aamaadmi in the centre.

## **Scope of the Project**

- To make Post Offices, especially those in the rural areas, a window to the common person for availing services, up till now confined to urban post office;
- To enable Post Offices to play a larger role in the social and economic transformation of the country by taking up new roles and challenges;
- To transform the large man power into a committed and professional human resource;
- To provide IT enabled services, especially in areas where it matters the most ;
- To change the "look and feel" of the post office to give it a distinct identity of its own, and;
- To ensure a return on investment necessary for a self- sustained growth and development. Every Project Arrow Post offices should be a profit center.

## **Strategy Adopted**

- Implementation of the Project in a phased manner.
- Clearly define the objectives.
- Focus on areas of operations where minimum efforts can give maximum results.
- Identify key performance indicators.
- Putting a monitoring system in place for regular assessment and evaluation;
- Strict adherence to the timelines.
- A Steering Committee and a Core Team have been constituted to conceptualize the theme of the project and to monitor the implementation through all its stages.
- Two Work Stream Leaders for Core Operations and Look & Feel were identified

with 4 Change Agents, with each of them having the responsibility of planning and implementation of changes down the line in different fields of activities.

- Each Change Agent supported by 3-4 members.

### Two Components of the Project

- 'Get the Core Right' with focus areas on Mail Delivery, Remittances, Savings Bank and Office Service Levels
- Modernize 'Look and Feel' – with focus areas on Branding, IT, Human Resource and Infrastructure

In the first phase, 50 post offices in 10 Circles were given a facelift in exteriors and interiors. Rebranding was done with a new look. The facilities were upgraded with a specific focus on customer service. In each of these post offices, more space was made available to the customers for business transaction. Facilities, like writing tables and chairs for customers and ramps for differently abled, wherever possible, were provided in the post offices.

There was greater emphasis on upgrading the quality of service. Post office counters were converted to Multi-purpose counters in order to provide Registration, Speed Post, savings bank, life insurance, money transmission and other services at every counter of the Post office. Service delivery norms were devised for every service transaction and Citizen's Charter duly displayed in the post offices. Adherence to these norms in areas of business, like mails and savings bank transactions, deposit of insurance premiums, sale of stamps etc. was made the responsibility of the stream leaders (APM Mails delivery, APM Counter etc) in the Post office.

In short, all efforts were made to make transacting business with post offices a pleasant experience through upgraded physical environment and better service delivery.

Training was also imparted to the Postal staff in soft skills, so that the transition from a monopolistic way of operating to offering services in a customer friendly and competitive environment could be professionally managed.

Under Project Arrow, 2515 Post offices have so far been upgraded under look and feel and a total of 18600 Post offices are being monitored for Core operations across the country. In the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan there is a proposal to upgrade 2500 Post offices under look and feel; out of these, 780 Post offices have already been

upgraded in the financial year 2012-13. In order to enable Core Operation monitoring in 18600 Post offices, technology Upgradation through computerization and networking was done under the Technology project.

All the Post offices across the country shall soon be networked and commence operating on new software for counter and mails and Core Banking solutions. Thus the efforts made under Project Arrow for infrastructure and core operations improvement shall complement the IT rollout. The Project will finally ensure the repositioning of India Post as a modern dynamic organization to operate in a highly volatile and competitive market.

Project Arrow was awarded the Prime Minister's award for Excellence in Public Administration for the year 2008-09

*(PIB Features.)*