



CUTS-Centre for Human Development (CUTS-CHD)

PACE

Participation and Action towards Community Empowerment

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Mid-day Meal Scheme

Launch Meeting of Expenditure Tracking Survey

CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS-CHD), in collaboration with South Asia Social Accountability Network (SasaNet) of the World Bank (WB), has taken up a new project, 'Participatory Expenditure Tracking and Survey on Mid-day Meal Scheme' (MDMS) in Rajasthan focusing Chittorgarh district. The project Launch Meeting and orientation of surveyors was organised at Chittorgarh on October 21, 2005.

In the inaugural session, Ashutosh Gupta, District Collector, Chittorgarh addressed the meeting as the chief guest. Keynote addresses were delivered by Narabda Bhambi District



District collector, Chittorgarh, delivering the speech at the project launch meeting.

Education Officer (DEO) Sunil Kumar Jha Additional chief executive officer, Zila Parishad, Chittorgarh, Pradhan, panchayat samiti, Chittorgarh, J V R Murthy WB representative, George Cheriyan, the then Assistant Director, CUTS International, K C Sharma and Dhanna Singh Rawat, the Project Coordinators.

The other distinguished participants included the Block Development Officers (BDOs), panchayat samiti/gram panchayat representatives, teachers, non-governmental organisation (NGO) representatives, surveyors and other social activists. More than 100 representatives from all over the district participated in the Launch Meeting.

In the second session of the workshop, 28 surveyors (2 from each block) from all the 14 blocks of Chittorgarh district participated in the orientation programme. The survey will be conducted in 221 Government/Non-Government Primary Schools covering all the blocks of Chittorgarh district.

Good Governance through Consumer Awareness Campaign (GGCAC)

This project, an in-house initiation of CHD, is being implemented in the entire 14 blocks of the Chittorgarh district. The project aims at creating awareness among the consumers of the district thereby it can facilitate the process of good and transparent governance. Since the last one year, regarding their rights and responsibilities, through consumer resource centres (CRCs) in all the 14 this project has been aiming at sensitising and empowering the consumer groups with information blocks.

Objectives of the MDMS Project

- To analyse total budget planned and sanctioned by Central/State Government for 'Mid-day Meal Scheme' with a view to ensure its proper utilisation;
- To study and anticipate problems that might be faced during its implementation and to measure its contribution towards achieving education for all, ensuring food security and addressing malnutrition among children, especially of poorest/marginalised sections and the girl child;
- To assess how far the existence of formal mechanism of public accountability is guaranteeing accountability on the ground level;
- To work towards building transparency and actual accountability in the public expenditure process;
- To know the perception of the common people and executing agencies from state level to *gram panchayat/school* level about the implementation of the scheme;
- To empower the target groups through awareness building on, and demystification of, the public expenditure process and to ultimately build an informed and 'critical-minded' society that can make transformation in the public expenditure process, and in specific contribute towards the improvement of the Mid-day Meal Scheme in the state; and
- To enhance, through this process, the capacity of the implementing organisation and other stakeholders in the Public Expenditure Tracking.

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Bal Sammelan (Children's Consultation & Fair)

CUTS-CHD, in association with Save the Children, UK, organised a *Bal Sammelan* (Children's Fair) on the theme, 'Our Initiative against Violence on the Girl Child' to mark the International Child Exploitation Opposition Day and International Child Rights Day at Banera village in Bhilwara district, Rajasthan, on November 19-20, 2005.

In the inaugural session, Kamla Mali, the Block Pradhan (head of block council) of the Banera Panchayat Samiti (village council) said, "Any kind of injustice, atrocity, maltreatment or discrimination against girls is a not only a sin, but also a social curse. If no effective steps are taken to counter injustice, atrocities and discrimination committed against the girls, then the country will have to pay a very heavy price for it, and the girls of this country will never forgive us".

Srinivas Tripathi, *Tahsildaar* of Banera, expressing his views, said that it is the moral duty of the society and the government to protect and foster the child rights under all circumstances. While addressing the event, Development Officer of Banera, J P Shrimali said that various

government projects and programmes are being conducted in order to protect the rights of the children and their development, but the benefits of these programmes and projects will reach them only when the society becomes aware and sensitive.



Participants at the *Bal Sammelan*

Dhanna Singh Rawat, the centre coordinator, in his speech, said that in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child and at the same time promote gender equality and equal access to services, including basic education, a forceful social movement is necessary.

In the second session, children in small groups, debated on various subjects, such as violence against the girl child causes and solutions,

restrictive elements in the development of child, views and perceptions of society, and special rights of girl child etc. In addition, children also presented various cultural programmes on child rights, gender discrimination, violence against girl child, expectations of children from the society, child marriage, a social curse and abortion of foetus as a social crime etc.

In the two-day programme, more than 135 children and social workers participated.

CHD, in association with Save the Children, UK, organised another *Bal Sammelan* (Children's Fair) under the 'Rural Girl Empowerment Project' on December 26-27, 2005 at *Shanvliya Dham* Bhadeshar.

The children in small groups, debated on various subjects, such as violence against girl child: causes and solutions; restrictive elements in the development of child; views and perceptions of society; and special rights of girl child etc.

The main objective of the programme was to create awareness in the community regarding child rights and to provide the children with a platform to display their skills.

Yuva Sammelan (Youth Meeting)

CUTS-CHD is implementing 'Youth towards healthy future/ *Yuva Sukhad Bhavishya Ki Aur*' (Youth Intervention Project) in the city area of Bhilwara with the support of Care India. Under the programme, a *Yuva Sammelan* (Youth Meeting) was organised on October 30, 2005. About 500 people participated in the event, which included youth, men, women and children.

On the occasion, young boys and girls staged two plays, '*Hamari Gudiya*' (Our Darling Daughter) and '*Savdhan*' (Be Alert). Through the play, '*Hamari Gudiya*', the audience were informed of the social ills like child marriage, gender discrimination, while '*Savdhan*' depicted how lethal diseases, such as HIV/AIDS spread and what measures and precautions people can take to eschew from them. A signing programme, 'Youth Idol', was also presented. Other cultural programmes included Turban Wrapping competition among girls and Make up competition among boys. Babulal Pandit, the councillor of the area awarded the winners.

The Coordinator of the project, Gauri Rani, explained the objectives of the CHAYAN. In his address, the Programme Officer lauded the efforts of CHD in conducting such a programme in the village.

RACHNA Programme

CUTS-CHD, in association with CARE, India is implementing Reproductive and Child Health Nutrition and AIDS (RACHNA) Programme, during October 15, 2005 to March 31, 2006. The Project Launch meeting was organised at Bhilwara, Rajasthan, on October 15, 2005.

The objectives of the project are to improve the quality and coverage of maternal and child health services in Mandalgarh and Suwana blocks of Bhilwara district and to engage and strengthen the local government bodies for community engagement process.

CHAYAN – Youth Intervention

This project is being implemented under the Reproduction and Child Health (RCH) Programme. It focuses on sexually transmitted disease (STD), HIV/AIDS prevention and increased knowledge about contraception and birth spacing etc. The project is being implemented with the support of CARE India.

The project aims to eradicate the misconceptions regarding HIV/AIDS, and to educate towards good and healthy living. Under the project, a network of youth, peer educators, parents, community heads, and doctors is prepared.

Survey for Evaluating Educational Scenario in Rajasthan

The Pratham Rajasthan, Jaipur, is conducting a survey to evaluate the present status of education in Rajasthan under their Annual Status of Education in Rajasthan (ASER). CUTS-CHD is entrusted with the task of conducting the survey in Chittorgarh district.

According to Dhanna Singh Rawat, the CHD Coordinator, the survey will be conducted in the 20 villages of Chittorgarh district with the help of 40 volunteers. CHD organised a two-day meeting of the volunteers on November 25-26, 2005. In the meeting, Devi Lal Lakhijanara and Indu Khanna of *Pratham Rajasthan* briefed the objectives, media and *modus operandi* of the programme.

In the survey, a set of questionnaires will be asked, which include:

- What percentage of children can read and solve arithmetical problems?
- How many villages have primary and middle schools?
- Do the schools have an adequate number of teachers? Are they attending the schools for teaching purposes?
- What is the status of basic facilities, such as classrooms, toilets and drinking water for which the funds are provided by the Government?
- Did the students receive books on time?
- Are the students getting fresh food?
- Did the schools get the fund for this and is the fund being spent properly?

Based upon these facts and figures, survey application will be prepared on the district, state and national levels.

Women Empowerment

CUTS-CHD is implementing this project in Bhilwara district of Rajasthan with the support from National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). The objective of the project is to empower the women from poor and the marginalised sections of the society, so that they could achieve better status, get easy access to loans and savings for the future. The project aim to build about 200 self-help groups (SHGs). During the period, a total of 162 SHGs were formed, out of which accounts of 83 SHGs were opened in various banks.

In Chittorgarh district, a total of 47 SHGs are running. During the months of October and December these SHGs organised regular meetings and collecting money to spend on developmental projects. During this period, *Mahakalika* SHG from *Gangrara panchayat samiti* received a loan of Rs one lakh and *Jai Jogania* SHG from *Mandalgrah Panchayat samiti* received a loan of Rs 70, 000. With this money, there women are planning to initiate a viable business.

World Mental Health Day

On the occasion of World Mental Health Day and National legal Aid week (10 to 15 October), a one-day workshop was organised in the premises of CUTS-CHD, Chittorgarh, Rajasthan, on October 15, 2005. The theme of the workshop was 'Legal and Social support to mentally retarded persons'.

The meeting was held to discuss the ways to reduce the number of increasingly growing patients of mental illness because of tension and stress in the society and to disseminate the right information to mentally ill people about their rights and related laws.

AIDS Awareness Programme

CUTS-CHD, in association with CARE India and District Health Department, Chittorgarh, organised 'AIDS Awareness Programme' at Bhilwara, Rajasthan, during December 1-15, 2005.

The programme aimed at social mobilisation in order to promote awareness about HIV/AIDS among the youth and the community. More than 50 people, including young men attended the programme. The attendees were informed about the safety norms to fight the dreadful diseases like AIDS and HIV.

'National Consumers' Day'

CUTS-CHD, in association with District Supply Office, Chitatorgarh, organised a seminar on consumer health and safety to mark the 'National Consumers' Day', at Chittorgarh, Rajasthan on December 24, 2005.

The aim of the seminar was to inform and sensitise the consumers to be aware of their rights to health and safety and other consumer right so that they could fight against the social crimes like adulteration, counterfeiting and spurious products. Other issues linked to consumer protection, such as the need to revamp current consumer protection laws were also discussed.



Seminar on National Consumer Day

Speaking on the occasion, Additional District Collector Rajendra Singh Shekhawat, the Chief Guest said that it was the basic right of every consumer to live a secure and healthy life and for this they should be

protected against products, production processes and services, which are hazardous to health or life. The consumers should be given the facts about a product and to be protected from misleading advertising and labelling. CUTS-CHD Coordinator, Dhanna Singh Rawat said that the consumers should be given a choice to select from a range of products and services, offered at competitive prices with assurances of satisfactory quality and effective redressal mechanism to receive a fair settlement of just claims, which include compensation for misrepresentation, shoddy goods or unsatisfactory services.

REPRESENTATIONS

- During December 7-11, 2005, Ghanshyam Singh Chauhan, Chandrakala Purohit, and Balkishan Ahir participated in the life skill and child right training programme at Jaipur.
- On December 12-14, 2005, Dhanna Singh Rawat attended the State Level Consultation organised by the Centre for Advocacy and Research (CFAR) and IFES on 'Strengthening Civil Society Responses against Sex Selection' held at Udiapur.
- During December 13-18, 2005, Madangiri Goswami attended the sixth WTO Hong Kong Ministerial
- On December 21-23, 2005, Dhanna Singh Rawat and Manoj Dixit attended the training programme under the mother NGO scheme organised by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare Gol, at state institute of Health and Family Welfare, Jaipur.
- On December 27-29, 2005, Madangiri Goswami took part in the meeting on Safe Motherhood Advocacy Rights organised by CHETNA, Ahmedabad at Indian Council of Social Sciences Research, New Delhi.
- On December 29-30, 2005, Dhanna Singh Rawat and Devendra Paliwal attended the two-day meeting on Universal Birth Registration organised by Plan India, New Delhi, at Jaipur to finalise project and plan on universal birth registration project in Bhilwara.

FUTURE ENDEAVOUR

Launch Meeting of Universal Birth Registration Programme

CUTS-CHD, in association with Plan India, New Delhi and Indian Institute of Health Management Research (IIHMR), Jaipur will be organising a launch meeting of 'Universal Birth Registration Programme,' in Bhilwara district of Rajasthan, India, in January 2006.

The Project will be implemented through awareness generation and strengthening of procedures relating to birth registrations of Banera, (intensively) Mandalgarh and Suwana (extensive) blocks of Bhilwara district. The project envisages involving Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs) in the entire process and to provide them with a realistic and implementable strategy. The monitoring work will also be assigned to the PRIs so that the target groups would have a sense of involvement.

PUBLICATIONS

CUTS-CHD has been engaged in the publication of resource and information materials since 1991. The aim is to disseminate information on issues of people's concern at the grassroots level and to support its interventions by providing knowledge-based modalities. Some select publications are:

Books and Training Manuals

- *Soochna Hi Shakti Hai* (Information is Power)
- *Logon Tak Nyaye* (Justice for People)
- *Sasakt Nari Sudrid Samaj* (Empowered Women Robust Society)
- *Jaiv Vividhta Ke Samvaahak Guni* (Traditional Healers are the agents of Bio-diversity)
- *Alakh Jaga Hai Gaon-Gaon* (Awakening in the Rural India)
- *Khuli Khidkian Khule Darwaze* (Open Windows and Open Doors)
- *Samooch Ki Kahani Mahilaon Ki Zabaani* (The Success Stories of SHGs by the Women Members: In Process)

