



CUTS-Centre for Human Development (CUTS-CHD)

PACE

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A *Chaupal* Meeting under Universal Birth Registration Project in Progress

Giving Every Child the Right to Become a Citizen

CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS CHD), Chittorgarh, with support of Plan India and Indian Institute of Health Management and Research (IIHMR), Jaipur, implemented Universal Birth Registration (UBR) project in the Banera *panchayat samiti* and Mandalgarh and Suwan *panchayat samitis* of Bhilwara district from January 01 to June 30, 2006.

During April-June 2006, the Centre organised socio-cultural awareness programmes, birth registration awareness *chaupal* meetings, slogan writing, and birth registration workshops in addition to establishing contacts with officials related to birth registration mechanism under the implementation activities.

Moreover, effort was also made to make the birth registration mechanisms more active and firm. A total of 228 birth registration certificates of 182 children were distributed. Through the programme, CUTS CHD aims to ensure 100 percent birth registration in the villages. In the *Chaupal* meetings, CUTS' staff informed the village people, especially the farmers and women as to why the birth registration of each and every child was necessary, explaining the procedures to accomplish the same.

They answered to the simple questions of the women and elderly people who wanted to know the benefits of birth registration.

Civil Registration in India

In India, the national legal framework for civil registration is the 1969 Registration of Births and Deaths Act. The national authority for civil registration is the Office of the Registrar-General and Census Commissioner, under the Ministry of Home Affairs. In every state and union capital, the Chief Registrar of Births and Deaths is responsible for coordinating, synchronising and supervising the work of registration. The recording of vital events and the issuing of certificates are carried out at local level by 13,000 registrars and sub-registrars across the country.

The compilation of vital statistics is also decentralised, with the Chief Registrar of every state required to compile statistics based on registration data and submit these to the state government. Each state then provides a report to the regional office of the Registrar General, which compiles an Annual Vital Statistics Report for the entire country.

Source: UNICEF

CUTS Facilitates Birth Registration of 258 Children

CUTS CHD staff Ghanshayam Singh Chauhan and Madanlal Keer helped the villagers of Mahuakhurd, who were running from pillar to post in order to get their children's birth registration done.

The matter came to the CHUS' staff when they made contact with Secretary of the village, who informed that the lists of children denied of birth registration certificates, were prepared on the villages as well as school levels.

But the officials were not recommending the lists even though the Secretary visited the *Tehsil* office three times. Hence, the Secretary was very concerned because the listed children were not registered.

They approached the *Tehsil* office, Banera with a list of the children and discussed the matter with the officials. Thus, they facilitated the birth registration of 258 children and certificates were provided to their parents.

Unyielding Efforts Brought Results

Due to agricultural activities, the Secretary of the Sardanagar *gram panchayat* could not prepare the birth registration list.

CUTS' representatives encouraged him to prepare the said list, and due to the constant efforts, the Secretary distributed the birth registration certificates to 336 children in May 2006.

The first phase (January-June) ended on June 30, 2006. For the next phase (July 2006-June 2007), a new project proposal was submitted after a detailed discussion in the two meetings held at Pokhran (Jaisalmer) and IIHMR, Jaipur on June 13-14 and June 29, 2006, respectively.

The UBR programme was launched in Bhilwara in January 2006.

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SHGs Help Women Move Forward

CUTS CHD, with support from National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), is implementing the Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Bank Linkages project in Chittorgarh and Bhilwara districts with an aim to make women self-reliant and raise their living standard.

During the April-June period, the Centre helped establish 19 new SHGs, assisted in opening bank accounts of 27 SHGs, and helped 16 SHGs get bank loan to the tune of Rs 1,12,000 (US\$2,393). With this loan, SHGs initiated economic activities such as animal husbandry, retail business, and agricultural development. In addition, they saved Rs 65,000 (US\$1389) and deposited it in the banks.

In Chittorgarh, a total of 47 SHGs are being run, of which 14 SHGs are in Gangrar, eight in Bhadesar, 13 in Chittorgarh, six each in Kapasan, and Nimbaheda *panchayat samitis*. During April-June 2006, a total of 141 monthly meetings of SHGs were conducted where monthly collection of Rs 4,16,134 (US\$8892) was made. A total of 518 men and women are associated with these SHGs and 28 out of 47 SHGs have their bank accounts in operation.

Under the SHGs programme, CUTS CHD organised the project implementation and monitoring committee (PIMC) meeting on June 27, 2006, in which the progress of the project was evaluated and after having discussed recommendations to extend project extension till October 2006, were sent to the NABARD state office, Jaipur.

Mother NGO Project

CUTS, after being selected as the Mother NGO for Chittorgarh district by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, released an advertisement in the leading newspapers to select field NGOs and received applications from 15 organisations. To implement the activities under Mother NGO project, CUTS CHD discussed the project with District Reproductive and Child Health Officer, Chittorgarh and identified the proposed project area (non-serviced and small-serviced).

Survey on MDMS

Under the Participatory Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS), project of CUTS CART in partnership with World Bank on Mid-Day Meal Scheme (MDMS), CUTS CHD organised a debriefing meeting at, Chittorgarh, on May 11, 2006. Speaking on the occasion, TC Damor, city Superintendent of Police (SP) said that MDMS is very useful and important to help raise the education level, increase the enrollment rates and improve health and nutrition of children.

Rajendra Singh Shekhawat, District Collector, acknowledged that the survey conducted shows proper implementation of the MDMS, which



is a matter of satisfaction. However, its qualitative standard could be enhanced further through increased people's participation, he added. Sunil Kumar Jha, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO), *Zilla Parishad*, Chittorgarh, presented the implementation details of MDMS, and asked for the cooperation of the guardians, people's representatives and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) for better implementation of the project.

In the introductory session, CUTS' staff K C Sharma and Dudheshwar Kumar presented the key findings of the survey, such as:

- i) children like *Dal Bati* (a dish prepared with flour and other ingredients) and 92-95 percent of them do take meal in the schools;
- ii) about 72 percent parents agree that education level has increased with the MDMS;
- iii) about 77 percent guardians accept that health and nutrition among children have improved; and
- iv) 67 percent teachers say that due to the responsibility of implementing the project, their teaching work has been adversely affected.

Care for Mother and Child

CUTS CHD, with the support from CARE India, Bhilwara, is implementing 'Maternal and Child Health, Nutrition and Aids (RACHNA)' programme to provide quality maternal and child health services in 302 *Anganwadi* Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS) centres in Banera, Mandalgarh and Suwana *panchayat samitis* of Bhilwara district. The programme is being organised with support from Women and Child Development Department, Rajasthan government and Care India.

Under the programme, quality health services to mother and child have been provided in *Anganwadi* centres. The Centre managed to assess 164 *Anganwadi* centres and organised 40 meetings of mother and child day.

Besides, it also facilitated cross visits of weaker *Anganwadi* centres to the stronger *Anganwadi* centres and vice versa, *chaupal* meetings, fortnightly get together, and meetings with workers. Because of these ICDS efforts, *Anganwadi* centres at Banera, Mandalgarh and Suwan villages started opening on time, scheduled meetings as per the agenda, performed timely organisation of mother and child health and nutrition programme, started monitoring proper records of *Anganwadi* centres and brought changes in the behaviours of men and women.

Towards a Bright Future for Youth

Under the 'CHAYAN' Youth intervention programme being supported by CARE India, CUTS CHD organised 12 community-based friendly meetings, six meetings with *Anganwadi* workers, six community well-wisher group meetings, three school-based amicable meetings, and one nodal teachers meeting.

Through these meetings, CUTS CHD aimed to generate social awareness on HIV/AIDS, to mitigate the gender biases, to reduce child marriages, to develop awareness and knowledge among the youth through sports competitions and question-answer sessions, and to carry the message to the community through *nukkad nataks* (street plays) etc. People associated with the programme participated in the activities with utmost zeal.

ACTIVITIES IN BRIEF

Campaign against Child Marriage

CUTS CHD with the support from United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) and Rajasthan State Woman Commission, organised, 'Social Awareness Campaign against Child Marriage' in 30 extra sensitive villages of Chittorgarh district during April 15-May 15, 2006. The objectives of the campaign included: to sensitise the community on the ill-effects; to create awareness on laws against child marriage; to discourage people from child marriage; and to create a compact environment against child marriage in the area. In this month long campaign, different stakeholder i.e. *panchayat raj* representatives, community leaders, religious leaders, media representatives, people related with judicial mechanism and community organisations, provided active collaboration.

Akshay Tiritiya (an auspicious day) fell on April 30 this year and because of the blessings associated with the date, a number of child marriages were supposed to be held on this day. Hence, all activities under the campaign were concluded by April 29 and on this day, a workshop was organised with PN Khandelwal, the District and Session Judge as the chief guest. Under the campaign, CUTS CHD organised a number of events, including: cultural programmes, *chaupal* meetings, awareness rallies, workshops, seminars, slogan writing, workshops, and distribution of resource materials. These attempts were made for the elimination of child marriage and make people aware about its demerits.

Protect Forest Resources

On the occasion of World Environment Day, CUTS CHD along with Environment Managing Committee, Pemadiya, Nimbahera, initiated a forest visit and tree protection commitment. To actualise it, a team visited the nearby forest and observed the biodiversity and pledged for protection and afforestation by tying a cord round the trees.

In addition, awareness rallies and seminars were organised by *Bal panchayats*, SHGs and consumer information centres to mark the occasion.

Hamara Manch: Empowering Rural Girl

CUTS CHD organised *Bal sammelan* (children meetings) and social justice and development *samiti* meetings on weekly and monthly basis as part of the project implementation activities undertaken in 45 villages of Chittorgarh and Bhilwara districts during April-June 2006. These meetings discussed the activities related to the girl child education motivation campaign, especially the environment awareness plantation campaign 2006, initiated every year in July and August to promote girl child education. A detailed plan of action was prepared, after in-depth deliberations that focused on carrying out a survey of the girl dropouts

In the *Bal sammelan* and *Bal panchayat* meetings, issues such as life skills, education, nutrition, initiative against violence on girl child, social evils and gender disparity, care for health, protection and conservation of environment, and the activities and responsibilities of *Baal panchayats* etc. were discussed.

Peter Skyes Roy, the country Director of Save the Children, (UK), Kashinath, a senior accountant and Priyadarshni, Zonal Director, Jaipur,

and Nupur Pandey, Programme Officer, participated in *Bal panchayats* of Kamalpura village under Banera, *panchayat samiti* of Bhilwara district and Bilol village of Chittorgarh, on May 25, 2006. In these meetings, they discussed impacts of the project with activists of social justice and development committees of the villagers.

World No Tobacco Day

On the occasion to mark the World No Tobacco Day, CUTS CHD organised a seminar at the Centre on May 31, 2006, under the chairmanship of PN Khandelwal. The seminar aimed to discourage the use of tobacco in any form by showing its ill-effects. PN Khandelwal informed the audience that tobacco use is one out of the five leading causes of death and one out of every 10 young men is addicted to tobacco.

According to Khandelwal, "even today, we spend 10 percent of our income on tobacco". It was further elaborated that smoking is the major cause of heart attack and heart-related diseases, brain haemorrhage and cancer etc. Thus, people were requested not to use tobacco and also discourage others.

CUTS's Initiative on Safe Motherhood

CUTS CHD, in association with UNICEF and Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association (SUMA) organised safe motherhood campaigns during April 1-18, 2006 in Chittorgarh. The campaign was inaugurated on April 11, 2006, in which Rajeshwari Meena was the chief guest. Other distinguished participants included Vaid Smita Vajpayee from CHETNA, Ahmedabad and Praveen Gupta, an official from health department, and health workers, social workers, people's representatives and representatives from non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

Under the campaign, CUTS CHD implemented various activities related to safe motherhood, including: advocacy with media; awareness rallies; *chaupal* meetings, socio-cultural programmes; and meetings with community stakeholders in Udiapur, Banswara and Chittorgarh districts. Health check up centres were opened on the *Aanganwadi* and primary health centres where 122 pregnant women and mothers were examined and immunised. Iron folic acid tablets were also distributed besides disseminating vital information to women for taking necessary precautions before, during and after childbirth, which also include care for infants.



Vaid Smita Vajpayee speaking on the occasion of Safe Motherhood in Chittorgarh

CHD REPRESENTATIONS

- During April 03-07, 2006, Madanlal Keer participated in the planning meeting of the Safe Motherhood Campaign (April 11-17) organised by CHETNA, Ahmedabad and outlined the activities of CUTS CHD under the campaign.
- On April 04, 2006, Madan Giri Goswami participated in a meeting related to social awareness campaign against child marriage 2006 (April 15 to May 15, 2006) organised by Rajasthan State Woman Commission and UNICEF, Jaipur.
- On May 22, 2006, Dhanna Singh Rawat took part in the planning meeting under the Mother NGO Project organised by the Directorate, Medical, Health, Family Welfare & Ayurved, Jaipur.
- From June 12-14, 2006, Dhanna Singh Rawat and Madanlal Keer participated in the Partners' Meeting to review and develop future plan of action under the UBR project organised by Plan India at Pokhran (Jaisalmer). In the meeting, CUTS CHD representatives shared the achievements, challenges, problems and experiences under the UBR project and outlined the future implementation details.
- On June 17, 2006, Madangiri Goswami participated in a two-day meeting on Safe Motherhood Alliance organised by CHETNA, Ahmedabad. The objectives of the meeting included: to increase the capacity building of organisations to work actively on issues related to mother's health; to assess the overall work done in this area in Rajasthan; and to discuss the further plan of action.
- On June 29, 2006, Madangiri Goswami took part in public hearing organised by Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL), which called the meeting to secure environmental acceptance.

VISITS

- On April 11, 2006, Vaid Smita Vajpayee of CHETNA, Ahmedabad, paid a visit to the Centre to take part in Mother Safety Day.
- On April 23, 2006, six stakeholders from Alternative Institution, Barmer visited the Centre and received information about various programmes, including SHGs and *Bal panchayats*.
- On May 03, 2006, Sneha Sidham from Plan India and Nutan P Jain and Nahar Singh from IIMHR, Jaipur visited villages of Banera *panchayat samiti* to know about the UBR programme. They also paid a visit to the Centre to secure information CUTS CHD's efforts in the field of social development.
- On May 11, 2006, JVR Murthy, World Bank (Mumbai branch) paid a visit to the Centre to discuss PETS project along with George Cheryan, KC Sharma and Dudheshwar Kumar.
- On May 16, 2006, George Cheryan and RK Sharma from CUTS Jaipur facilitated a mini Retreat, organised at CUTS CHD, in which CUTS' staff from Chittorgarh and Bhilwara attended the mini Retreat. In addition to discussing the critical issues, future plan of action was also finalised.
- On May 25, 2006, Peter Skyes Roy, the country Director of Save the Children, UK Kashinath, a senior accountant, Priyadarshni, Zonal Director, Jaipur, and Nupur Pandey, Programme Officer participated in *Bal panchayats* of Kamalpura village under Banera *panchayat samiti* of Bhilwara district and Bilol village of Chittorgarh. In these meetings, they discussed impacts of the project with activists of social justice and development *samities* and other villagers.
- On May 26, 2006, 11 members of the MSW, Udiapur spent whole day in the Centre to get complete information related to the organisation of *Bal panchayats* and its activities.

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)



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