



CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS CHD)

PACE

Participation and Action towards Community Empowerment
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Enactment of a play to disseminate information on HIV/AIDS

Chayan Youth Programme –Towards a Pleasant Future

CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS CHD), Chittorgarh, with the support of CARE India is implementing *Chayan* Youth Intervention programme – *Sukhad Bhavishiya Ki Aur* (towards a pleasant future) in six *kachchi bastis* (hamlets) of Bhilwara city.

During July-September 2006, the Centre organised 16 community-based friendly meetings – six with *Aanganwadi* workers, two with community stakeholders, nine school-based and three nodal teachers meetings.

Through these meetings, the youths were informed on various issues, including: creating social awareness on HIV/AIDS; lessening gender discrimination; checking child

marriages; providing information on HIV/AIDS via sports; reaching out to the community via *Nukkad Nataks* (street plays); enhancing knowledge through quiz programmes; and disseminating valuable information on the physical, psychological and social changes during the adolescent period.

It was very satisfying that youths supported various programmes under the *Chayan* Youth Intervention project and took part in quiz programmes and other cultural events with utmost zeal. Not only the exchange of information regarding the project activities are vibrating at the local level, but also the motivated youths are spreading the message to other adjoining areas as well. The project concluded on September 30, 2006.

Yuva Sammelan under *Chayan* Youth Intervention Programme

The Centre, in association with CARE India organised *Yuva Sammelan* at Bhilwara, on August 04, 2006, in which about 200 stakeholders participated, including workers and youths of 26 *Aanganwadi*, *Harijan Basti*, Ambedkar Colony, Kawankhera, Dadabari, Kollipara, Tilak Nagar etc.

The objective of the *Sammelana* was to share the problems, bottlenecks and learning experiences, including the possible solution among various old and new youth workers.

The Programme

'*Chayan* means choices' or 'options', which is designed to contribute to the Government of India's efforts to implement the National Population Policy and National AIDS Policy. *Chayan* promotes family planning, especially birth spacing and the prevention from reproductive tract infections (RTIs) and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV.

The objectives of project are:

- to help men and women to choose the number and timing of their children;
- to help men and women better protect themselves against RTIs and STIs, including HIV;
- to develop the six selected slums in demonstration sites in implementing the best practices of peer educators, community stakeholder groups and establish youth resource centres;
- to work within and out of school and college-going youths in selected colleges and schools based in and around the selected slums; and
- to facilitate the innovation and demonstration efforts of the project to develop new best practices, which would lead to behavioural changes among the youths and generate awareness on prevention of RTIs and STIs, including HIV.

Forthcoming

On the occasion of World Food Day, CUTS CHD, in association with the District Supply Office, Chittorgarh will organise a seminar on, 'Investment in Agriculture for Food Security' at Chittorgarh on October 16, 2006. There will be a discussion on 'Investment in Agriculture for Food Security' by the experts on agriculture and the district level government officials.

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Hamara Manch: Rural Girls' Empowerment Programme (RGEP)

CUTS CHD, with the support of Save the Children, UK is implementing *Hamara Manch* – Rural Girls' Empowerment Programme (HM-RGEP) in 45 villages of Chittorgarh and Bhilwara. During July-September 2006, the Centre organised a total of 209 *Bal Panchayat* meetings (children meetings), 90 *Bal sabhas* and 62 social justice and development *samiti* meetings on weekly and monthly basis. 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.

In the *Bal sabhas* 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 *Bal panchayats* etc. were discussed.

The Centre organised a one-day workshop on the role of voluntary organisations at Chittorgarh, on September 10, 2006 in which 26 representatives from 14 voluntary organisations participated. The participants raised concerns over the growing violence against the girl child and the adverse gender ratio and pledged to give this a leading priority in their work activities. They would also have a direct dialogue with the community on this matter to make it a campaign.

The Centre organised two-day *Bal Sammelans* at Chittorgarh, Rajasthan, on September 16-17, 2006. Narpat Singh Rajvi, Minister for Industries, GoR inaugurated the *Sammelan*. The meeting discussed the role of *Bal panchayats* in reducing violence against the girl child. A plan of action was prepared by *Bal panchayats* to organise a number of events including awareness rallies, slogan writing and debates with children, people's representatives, heads of the community and village-level community organisations. An awareness generating rally was also organised in which participants raised slogans on violence against the girl child to create awareness among the people to prevent child marriages and abortion of female foetus. Under the campaign, various competitions were organised and prizes distributed by Nupur Pande, Representative, Save the Children, UK. About 180 children including those associated with RGEP, *Savera* organisation, Ajmer; and Jaipur participated in the two-day *Sammelan*.



Narpat Singh Rajvi, Minister for Industries, GoR delivering the inaugural address at the *Bal Sammelan*

SHGs: Growing from Strength to Strength

CUTS CHD, with the support of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), is implementing a Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Bank Linkages project in Chittorgarh and Bhilwara districts of Rajasthan, with an aim to make women self-reliant and raise their living standard. During July-September 2006, the Centre helped 49 SHGs of Banera *panchayat samiti* in receiving bank loans. So far, 87 out of 100 SHGs have been provided with bank loans, which is Rs 7,01,000 (US\$15,509).

A meeting of 'Project Implementation & Monitoring Committee' under the project was organised at Bhilwara, on September 05, 2006. In this meeting, Hari Singh Shekhawat, Assistant Manager, NABARD; Bhajan Lal, Rajasthan *Grameen* Bank; J S Chaudhury, the Bank of Rajasthan Limited, Bhilwara; Kailash Agarwal, the Central Cooperative Bank; and Shashi Prabha, Madangiri Goswami, and Ganga Dadhich from CUTS participated. The bank officials present in the meeting promised to help SHGs in getting loans from the banks.

In the *panchayat samiti* Mandalgarh, the bank accounts of 100 SHGs have already been opened in various banks, out of which 21 SHGs have been assisted to get bank loans of about Rs 1,99,000 (US\$4,402). Further, 27 applications have been submitted to different banks of other SHGs, which are under consideration.

Mother NGO Project

CUTS, after being selected as the Mother NGO (MNGO) for Chittorgarh district by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW), Government of India (GoI), released an advertisement in the leading newspapers to select field NGOs and received applications from 15 organisations.

To implement the activities under MNGO project, CUTS CHD discussed the project with District Reproductive and Child Health Officer, Chittorgarh and identified the proposed project area.

Out of the 15 applications, four voluntary organisations have been selected to work as field NGOs on health services in the area.

Film on Marble Slurry Dumping

In Chittorgarh, about 120 machines operate for marble cutting, which produce approximately 6.5 lakh litre marble slurry. The marble businessmen dump the slurry in the nearby fields causing water and air pollution in the area. In order to put pressure on the government and to create awareness among people towards water pollution, Vikram Singh, the film producer and a social activist from Cine Arts India, New Delhi, arrived at CUTS CHD, during August 03-04, 2006.

He was at the Centre to understand the problems of slurry dumping and visited the location to obtain first-hand information on CUTS' efforts before making a film on the subject.

Early Marriages and Premature Pregnancy

CUTS CHD, in association with *Umang Dhauran Reen* and Centre for Health, Education, Training and Nutrition Awareness (CHETNA), Ahmedabad, organised various activities on the theme, 'Early Marriages and Premature Pregnancy' in the Banera *panchayat samiti* of Bhilwara district in August and September 2006. The objectives of these activities were to generate social awareness on the issue. The activities included youth *sammelans*, awareness meetings with SHGs, community leaders to make them aware of the dangers of early marriages and premature pregnancy, slogan writing and other cultural programmes etc. Under the activities, CUTS CHD also brought out a brochure, '*Jago re jago, sab jago*', which was sent to *Umang Dhauran Reen* Network, Ajmer and CHETNA, Ahmedabad.

Under the *Srijan* programme and with the support from *Umang Dhaura Reen*, World Youth Day was organised on the theme, 'The role of youth in early marriages and premature pregnancy' in Bhilwara, on August 12, 2006. Zakir Beg, Udai Lal Samdani, Prahlad Roy Vyas, Tara Ahluwalia, Om Prakash Vyas and Shashi Prabha participated in the programme. The speakers provided information on the adverse effects of early marriages and premature pregnancy on the young generation (both boys and girls), including its legal provisions. On this occasion, the local youths pledged that they would not only prevent early marriages but also convince others to eschew it. The World Youth Day celebration helped in reaching out to the youth with a purposeful message.

Legal Literacy Campaign

Under the *Hamara Manch* – RGEP, legal workshops were organised at Banera and Gangrar, on September 07-08, 2006, respectively. In both the legal workshops, Julie Swarnkar of Women Protection and Advisory Committee, informed the participants about the Child Marriage Prohibition Act and Labour Act.

Towards the end of the workshop, the children took part in group discussions in which the future plan of action was prepared whereby mitigation of violence against the girl child was given top priority.

Girl Child School Enrollment

The Centre organised a campaign for 'Girl Child School Enrollment and Education Promotion Programme' in Chittorgarh and Bhilwara districts of Rajasthan, from July 01-15, 2006. First, the identification of girls, who were denied school education was carried out followed by direct contact with the parents and guardians.

Under the campaign, wall writing, education awareness, *chaupal* meetings, education awareness rallies and meetings with school teachers etc., were conducted and efforts were made to raise awareness on education in the community.

Also, by organising the girl child enrollment programme in the selected villages, the Centre made an effort to connect the girl child to schools with the cooperation from villagers, people's representatives, education and administrative officials.

Due to this campaign, a total of 147 children in Chittorgarh and Bhilwara districts were enrolled in the schools, including 77 girls and 70 boys. In addition, committees consisting of social workers, people's representatives, teachers and community leaders were formed to take care of retention of the enrolled students.

RACHNA

Reproductive and Child Health Nutrition and AIDS (RACHNA) Programme of CARE India, Bhilwara is working on providing quality maternal and child health services in 302 *Anganwadi* ICDS centres in Banera, Mandalgarh and Suwana *panchayat samities* of Bhilwara District.

The programme was organised with the support from Department of Women and Child development (DWCD) and CARE India. The project concluded on August 31, 2006.

The Centre performed an assessment of around 68 *Anganwadis* and organised 10 mother and child days. Cross-visits, *chaupal* meetings, fortnightly meetings and the meetings with Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) volunteers were also organised. Because of these efforts, *Anganwadi* centres at Banera, Mandalgarh and Suwana villages started opening on time, scheduled meetings as per the agenda, organised regular mother and child health and nutrition programmes, monitored proper records of *Anganwadi* centres and brought changes in the behaviour of men and women.

The Role of People's Representatives

With an aim to present and share the experiences with people's representatives, district officials and the people associated with 'Land and Water Management', the Centre organised a two-day *samvaad* workshop at Chittorgarh, on August 21-22, 2006.

In the *Samvaad*, group discussions/panel



Participants at the *Samvaad*

discussions were organised and personal experiences were shared. Through a puppet show, presentation on the related topics on environment conservation, importance of water and its conservation, was communicated to the participants.

PN Khandelwal, District and Session Judge, Chittorgarh, graced the occasion as the chief guest while Rajeshwari Meena, *Pradhan*, *Panchayat samiti*, Chittorgarh also participated. This *Samvaad* was organised marking the conclusion of the project on 'Land and Water Management Leading towards Biodiversity Conservation' with the support of UNDP/GEF/SGP.

CHD REPRESENTATIONS

- On July 01, 2006, Seema Yagnik participated in a training workshop jointly organised by the Department of Medical and Health, Chittorgarh and PAHAL Institute at Panchayat Samiti, Gangarar.
- From July 31-August 05, 2006, Manoj Dixit, Madan Giri Goswami and Madan Lal Keer participated in the 'training of trainers' (ToT) workshop held under the Mother NGO project.
- During August 24-25, 2006, Shashi Prabha attended a meeting on 'The Role of NGOs in Safe Motherhood' organised by Safe Motherhood Campaign at Legislative Assembly, Jaipur.
- From August 25-27, 2006, Madan Giri Goswami attended the outreach meetings held under the GRANITE project, at Bharatpur and Barmer respectively.
- From September 11-15, 2006, Madan Lal Keer attended a five-day training programme on HIV/AIDS, organised by the Society for Promotion of Youth and Masses (SPYM), at New Delhi, India.
- On September 17 and 28, 2006, Shashi Prabha participated in a meeting entitled, 'District Health Improvement Committee' organised by the Rajasthan Health Development Project, Chittorgarh at the Department of Medical and Health, Chittorgarh, Rajasthan.
- On September 19, 2006, Shashi Prabha participated in the Villagers' Health Committee meeting organised by the Medical and Health Department.
- On September 21, 2006, Madan Giri Goswami participated in the two-day Mother NGO meeting organised by Health Department at Health Centre, Jaipur, Rajasthan.

VISITS

- On July 21, 2006, 60 members from Gramodaya Samajik Sansthan (GSS) visited the Centre to get information related to the organisation and the activities of Bal panchayats, social justice and development samities of village Raghunathpura, Panchayat samiti, Chittorgarh.
- During September 03-04, 2006, Vikram Singh, the film producer and a social activist from Cine Arts, New Delhi visited the Centre to obtain detailed information on marble slurry pollution.

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:

- 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)



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