



## Giving a Voice to the Voiceless

*With more than a third of its population below the age of 18, India has the largest child population in the world. This backgrounder explores the level of health, nutrition, education and social security of children and government policy and action on child rights. India has made some significant commitments towards ensuring the basic rights of children. There has been progress in overall indicators: infant mortality rates are down, child survival is up, literacy rates have improved and school dropout rates have fallen. But, the issue of child rights in India is still caught between legal and policy commitments to children, on the one hand, and the fallout of the process of globalisation, on the other.*



**S**ave the Children – *Bal Raksha Bharat*, under the International NGO Partnership Programme with the Department for International Development (DFID) UK, has launched a project entitled, ‘*Stronger Voice to Excluded Children in Government and NGO Policies and Programmes (IPAP)*’ in three backward districts of Rajasthan, viz., Alwar, Chittorgarh and Bharatpur, in partnership with Alwar Mewat Institute of Education and Development (AMIED); CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS CHD), Chittorgarh; Prayatin Bharatpur; and Society for All Round Development (SARD), New Delhi.

The goal of the project is ‘*By 2012, socially excluded children (Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes) in Rajasthan have improved status with their voices being heard and recognised institutionally by formal and informal structures*’. The overall objective of the project is ‘*Socially excluded children (Schedule Caste and Schedule Tribes) in 28 villages of Chittorgarh district in Rajasthan benefit from the development programmes, policies and schemes of the government, donors and NGOs by the end of 2012*’.

The duration of the project is four-and-a-half years and will be implemented by CUTS CHD in 28 villages of six *gram panchayats* of Chittorgarh Block:

Gram Panchayat	Villages
Eral	Eral, Kheri Charnan, Chittori, Chittori Khera, Khardi Bavari, Rajpuria, Bidgas, Surajpol
Gatiyawali	Gatiyawali
Netawalgarhpachali	Netawalgarhpachali, Bherusighkhera, Gadwada, Keljarkhera
Samri	Samri, Medi Ka Amrana, Neem Ka Amrana, Dhani, Amarapura, Rel Ka Amrana, Nayakhera, Sindvadi, Bad Ka Amrana
Sawa	Sawa
Shambhupura	Shambhupura, Bamniya, Kesarpura, Patniya, Phalasiya

A formal project launch meeting was organised at the Centre on July 28, 2009. The occasion was graced by the presence of Suresh Sharma, Additional District Co-ordinator, *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan* (SSA); Satyanarayan Inani, Additional Block Coordinator, SSA; Kumar Bikram, UN District Convergence Officer; and Vinayak Mehta, District Programme Manager, National Rural Health Mission (NRHM).

Amit Chowdhury, Centre Coordinator welcomed the guests and briefed them about the project and its objectives. Ashish Tripathi, Programme Coordinator said that the project has a multi-stakeholder approach, aiming, on the one hand, at protecting the rights of children in villages and mainstreaming them and, on the other, advocating for their participation in policies and programmes of the government and NGOs. He also urged for collective efforts to protect the rights of socially excluded children.

The programme was formally launched by lighting of the lamp by chief guests. In their speech, the guests congratulated CUTS for making concerted efforts towards improving the condition of deprived children in the district and assured full cooperation in implementing the project. About 42 participants, including government officials, project staff and animators associated with this project attended the meeting.

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## An Approach to Empower Women

CUTS, in association with the *Baroda Rajasthan Grameen Bank* (BRGB), organised an Self Help Group (SHG) Loan Mela at village Singoli in Bhilwara district, on September 19, 2009. In this programme, 87 SHGs, formed under the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)-supported 'SHG Promotion and Bank Linkage Project', were credit-linked with BRGB and cheques of Rs 24,28,000 were disbursed to 450 SHG members. The loan amount varied from Rs 20,000 to Rs 300,000.

This occasion was graced by the presence of S K. Shaw, Regional Manager, BRGB; Navjivan Sharma, Recovery Manager; *Sarpanchs* of Singoli and Dhakadkhedi *gram panchayats*; and branch managers of BRGB Barundni, Mahua and Shyampura. The SHG members exhibited the paper plates, vermi-compost and rose nursery in which they had invested the amount of earlier loans. Members took a pledge to invest the loan money for productive purposes only and repay the loan on time.



## Toward Financial Independence

Another SHG loan Mela was organised by CUTS in association with the BRGB in Chittorgarh, on September 26, 2009. In this programme, 50 SHGs, formed under the NABARD-supported 'SHG Promotion and Bank Linkage Project', were credit linked with BRGB and cheques of Rs 8,00,000 were disbursed to 125 SHG members.

The main guests who graced the occasion were S K Shaw, Regional Manager, BRGB; Pankaj Yadav, District Development Manager, NABARD; N K Sanadhya, Lead Bank Manager, Bank of Baroda, Chittorgarh; Anshu Bhatnagar, Project Director Integrated Child Development Services; S D Vaishnav, Manager, BRGB, Chittorgarh; N R Jaat, Manager, BRGB Shambhupura; and R K Sharma, Manager BRGB Ghataiyavali.

While addressing the SHG members, S K Shaw said that the loan money should be utilised for productive purposes so that it can be repaid in time. He also requested CUTS to help SHG members in better planning for investing money in livelihood alternatives like organic farming, mushroom cultivation, etc.

### Training Programmes for SHG Office-bearers

Training programmes for SHG post holders were organised with the support of NABARD in Suwana block of Bhilwara district. The purpose of the training was to orient SHG post holders on documentation and bank transactions. The good practices of conducting meetings and accounts maintenance were shared with them by Shiv Lal Prajapat of CUTS. He also highlighted the importance of conducting regular meetings of the SHG and proper maintenance of records. Three trainings were organised in three different places during August 23-26, 2009. Around 110 members attended the programmes.

### Reflections: Self Improvement

A Mini-retreat of the Centre was held at the CHD premises on August 13-14, 2009. The two-day event was divided into eight sessions. All the 18 staff members of the Centre attended the retreat. In addition to reviewing the ongoing projects, detailed discussions were held regarding the funding strategy, positive developments and the critical limitations.

### Climate Change: A Strategic Initiative

CUTS with the support of Ministry of Environment & Forests (MoEF) under the National Environment Awareness Campaign (NEAC) organised Pre-project planning workshop at CHD on August 04, 2009. The purpose of the workshop was to orient participants about the ill-effects of climate change and facilitate NGOs to apply for the project.

Anurag Bhatnagar, Block Forest Officer; Devender Mantri, Programme Co-ordinator, Rajasthan Renewable Energy Corporation Ltd. (RREC); and L S Pandey, Secretary, *Sarwa Mangal Grameen Vikas Sansthan* attended the meeting as resource persons and expressed their views on climate change. Participants from Udaipur, Rajsamand, Banswara and Chittorgarh attended the meeting.

### Animator Orientation

For enhancing the community participation in project planning and implementation and convincing the community to own the project, 28 local level volunteers, known as animators, were selected for the 'Stronger Voice to Excluded Children in Government and NGO Policies and Programmes' project. A two-day training-cum-orientation workshop for animators was organised at CHD premises on July 28-29, 2009.

The objectives of the workshop were to orient the animators about the project; build the capacity of animators on the relevant issues so that they can take up the responsibility in an effective manner; and assist the animators for preparing action plan for delivering the responsibilities given.

### Building Capacity on Child Welfare

A one-day orientation workshop for IPAP and IQEEP team on Child Protection and Child Rights was organised at CHD premises on July 24, 2009. The purpose of the workshop was to orient new and old staff about child protection and child rights. Amit briefed the participants on the need of recognising child rights as separate from human rights and various schemes and laws related to children in the country. He also discussed International Treaties, Covenants and Conventions related to protection of child rights.

### Assessing Quality in Education

A two-day orientation-cum-training programme for IQEEP animators was held at CHD on July 30-31, 2009. The purpose of the workshop was to review the progress of the IQEEP project and consolidate the learning, orient the animators on issues related to quality education and child protection.

### Powering Consumers

The Grassroots Interface Meetings (GIMs), under the Capacity Building on Electricity Reforms in Bangladesh, India and Nepal (RESA) project, were held in Chittorgarh, on July 18, 2009. The objective of GIMs was to reach out to the electricity consumers at the local level and enable them to appreciate the role that they need to play in regulatory reforms and transfer some of the key advocacy skills to them.

Amar Singh Kanawat, Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Chittorgarh; and S N Soni, Senior Executive, Electricity Board Ajmer Division expressed their views on electricity reforms and participated in the discussion with the participants on electricity problems and their redressal.

### Review of Electricity Reforms

The three Sub-GIMs were held in Gangrar, on July 25, 2009; in Begu, on July 27, 2009; and in Badi Sadri, on July 29, 2009 respectively. The purpose of the meetings was to appreciate the role played by different stakeholders of the society in electricity reforms and pass on the advocacy skills to them. The meetings reviewed the measures taken by the electricity department and consumers to address the problems of electricity.

## A Major Initiative to Promote Girl Child Education

A Girl Child Education Promotion Campaign was conducted under the Save the Children – *Bal Raksha Bharat*-supported project 'Stronger Voice to excluded children in Government and NGO Policies and Programmes'. The campaign was launched to educate and inform community members on the importance of girl child education, increasing girl child enrolment, school attendance and bring dropout girls back to school in 28 villages of six *gram panchayats* of Chittorgarh block.

A meeting was held in the school to discuss the importance of educating girl child, which was addressed by Head Master and CUTS staff.



In the meeting, the goals and objectives of the project were also discussed. After this, the children took up a rally in the village with banners and colourful placards in their hands and raising slogans. These slogans were educative and short like '*Beti padhne jaayegi, parivaar sukhi banaegi*' (if a girl goes to study, the family will become happy) which helped in spreading the message in a short time. The rally passed through the route that covered maximum number of households in each of the villages. The use of *dhhol* to gather people made it more attractive and catchy.

During the rally, efforts were made to identify children who were not going to school or were irregular or have dropped out. The rally was launched on August 11, 2009 from the village Bad ka Amrana and it continued for about one month and concluded on September 11, 2009 in the villages Sawa and Dhani. The staff then called a meeting of the parents of the children who are not in school and would talk to them about educating their children. As a result of this campaign, 69 students joined the schools (40 girls) which include both the dropout and irregular children.

### Orienting Bal Panchayats

One-day orientation programme on life skills education on child's rights and role of *Bal Panchayat* and *Bal Sabha* for strengthening child forum under 'Improving Quality of Elementary Education Project' was organised at village level during August-September 2009. The purpose of this orientation was to develop the understanding of the children on child rights, life skills education and revisit the model of *Bal Sabha* and *Bal Panchayat* so that they can express their views on these topics during interface with village and *gram panchayat* level duty-bearers. 922 children from 28 villages benefited from this orientation.



## CHD REPRESENTATIONS

- Madan Giri Goswami attended a 'National Workshop on Capacity Building for Rural Entrepreneurship in the Drylands and Deserts', organised by Lokhit Pashu-Palak Sansthan (LPPS) in partnership with DRYNET, a European Union-sponsored initiative comprising 14 NGOs working on or supporting dryland issues and combating desertification in 20 different countries like India, Iran, Bolivia, Mauritania, South Africa, Turkey, etc., in Jodhpur, on July 11-12, 2009.
- Amit Chowdhury attended a national Conference on 'Making Medicines Affordable – Reaching the Unreached', organised by the District Administration, Medical and Health Department and Indian Medical Association in Chittorgarh, on July 29, 2009.
- Shiv Lal Prajapat attended the Regional Workshop on Micro-credit at Ajmer, organised by NABARD, on August 16, 2009.
- Ashish Tripathi and Satish Sen attended the Partners' Meet 2009, organised by Sightsavers' International in Jaipur, during September 09-11, 2009.
- Parth Joshi attended the State Level Master Trainer's Training for ASER 2009, organised by Pratham in Ajmer on September 23-25, 2009.
- Ashish Tripathi, Amit Chowdhury, Rehana Parveen, Shanti Lal Dangi, Sumitra Garg, Parth Joshi, Vandana Chouhan and Yogesh Parashar attended IPAP orientation workshop, organised by Save the Children-Bal Raksha Bharat in Jaipur, on September 10-12, 2009.

## VISITORS

- Shashi Srivastava, Welfare Officer, Rajasthan Rajya Samaj Kalyan Board, along with members of DNGO visited CHD on August 17, 2009. She briefed about various schemes of the Board and invited proposals.
- A 75-member team, including 35 children and 35 animators from Mahan Seva Sansthan, Udaipur, visited CHD on August 29, 2009 to see the work done by CUTS in increasing the participation of children in betterment of their school education and other services at the village level. Visitors took active participation in the Bal Panchayat meeting and interacted with its members.
- Rajiv Nagpal, Programme Coordinator from Save the Children – Bal Raksha Bharat visited CHD on September 03-05, 2009. The purpose of his visit was to review the progress of IQEEP and IPAP. He visited villages Raghunathpura, Lalji ka Khera, Bilola and Bamniya and interacted with Bal Panchayat members, school teachers, animators and community members. He interacted with the IPAP and IQEEP team members to understand their level of understanding of the project goals, objectives and strategy.
- An Exposure visit of IQEEP project partners was organised at CHD on September 13-14, 2009. B R Patnaik (State Coordinator) and Rajeev Nagpal (Programme Officer) represented SCBR in the visit.
- Anil Datt Vyas, President and Namrata Sharma, Secretary, Arunoday Sansthan, Bari Sadri, Chittorgarh, visited CHD on September 23, 2009. The purpose of the visit was to handover the MoU to CHD and know the further process for giving bank guarantee in the name of CUTS so that the field work in MNGO project could be started.
- Naveen Tripathi, Founder and Chief Executive, Mercury Marketing and Corporate Communications, along with his two team members, visited CHD on September 29, 2009. The objective of his visit was to shoot a documentary on implementation of Mid-Day Meal for CART. He visited the primary school, Oodpura to shoot the documentary and also interviewed Additional District Education Officer, Narbada Bhambi, and Block Education Officer, Harishankar Goud.
- Kailash Singh Deval, Secretary, HELP Sansthan, Pratapgarh visited CHD, on September 29, 2009 and discussed the progress of MNGO project.

# बांग्लादेश, भारत एवं नेपाल में विद्युत सुधार प्रायोगिक परियोजना

**न्यूज सर्विस**  
उदयपुर, 18 जुलाई। विद्युत कम्पनियों एवं उपभोक्ताओं के मध्य में आपसी संवाद का अभाव है। इसका लिए उपभोक्ताओं को अपनी जागरूकता बढ़ाकर निरंतर विद्युत कम्पनियों से अधिकारियों चाहिए। इस प्रबल सम्भावना दलाल, जोनल विद्युत निगम

**द्वितीय चरण की धरातल स्तरीय बैठक सम्पन्न**  
श्रीप्र ही पंचायत स्तर पर विद्युत फ्रीडर स्थापित किए जाएंगे। उन्होंने बताया कि विभाग का प्रयास रहता है कि सामान्य अभियन्ता एवं 20 तारीख तक अधीक्षण अभियन्ता अपने कार्यालय में शिकायत न्यायमक अ

**बच्चों ने निकाली रेली**  
बालिका शिक्षा को प्रोत्साहन देने के लिए अभियान हुआ शुरू  
विद्युत, 11 अगस्त। राज्य के सभी तालुका व ब्लॉक में बच्चों के बीच बालिका शिक्षा को प्रोत्साहन देने के लिए अभियान हुआ शुरू। बच्चों ने निकाली रेली।

**समारोह को संबोधित करते बैंक प्रबंधक एस के शो**  
समूह में लोन लेकर महिलाएं हुई आत्मनिर्भर: शो  
बरेली, बैंक से समूह में लोन लेकर छोटे व्यवसाय शुरू करवाया। बैंक प्रबंधक एस के शो

**स्वयं सहायता समूहों को दिए ऋण**  
कटपुड़ा एवं बरेली राजस्व निगम बैंक के समूहक सहायता के अंतर्गत समूहों को ऋण दिए जा रहे हैं। कार्यक्रम में बैंक के अधिकारियों, विद्युत निगम के अधिकारियों और समूहों के सदस्यों का भाग लेना था।

**गुणात्मक शिक्षा में सभी की भागीदारी**  
चित्तौड़गढ़, 21 सितम्बर (प्रेस)। बच्चों में गुणात्मक शिक्षा को बढ़ावा देने में समुदाय की सहभागिता बढ़ाने के लिए विद्यालय विकास एवं प्रबंधन समिति के सदस्यों को दक्षतावर्धन के लिए दिवसीय प्रशिक्षण का आयोजन किया गया।

**पर्यावरण जागरूकता आज की महती आवश्यकता**  
जलवायु परिवर्तन विषय पर कार्यशाला  
है, इसके लिये हमें जनभागीदारी से जून-जून को पर्यावरण संरक्षण के लिये

**पर्यावरण जागरूकता आज की महती आवश्यकता**  
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है, इसके लिये हमें जनभागीदारी से जून-जून को पर्यावरण संरक्षण के लिये