



Pre-Primary Education Campaign 2010

Pre-primary education lays the foundations of a child's knowledge, skills and rules of behaviour that create pre-requisites for successful progress in daily life and school. Early childhood education provides a stimulating play environment for physical, intellectual, language, social and emotional development of the child. It prepares children for the primary and focuses on the holistic development of the child. In the 86th Constitutional Amendment and the Right to Education Act, right of children below six years of age to pre-primary education has been undermined.

The Pre-primary Campaign 2010 was launched by Narbada Bhambi, Additional District Education Officer (ADEO) in Eral and Rajpuriya villages of Chittorgarh, on May 14, 2010. The objective of the campaign was to identify children between 4 and 6 years of age and enrol them in schools during the new session and present an environment to children to develop a healthy mind through constructive activities and informal learning experiences.



More importantly, the outcome of the campaign would be used to mobilise support from teachers and parents to demand for one-year pre-primary class in school education with similar kind of facilities and incentives from the government.

Enhancing Early Childhood Education

CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS CHD) under the project '*Stronger Voice to Excluded Children in Government and NGO Policies and Programmes*' organised a Pre-primary orientation workshop at Chittorgarh, on May 01, 2010. More than 19 community volunteers participated in the workshop.



Ashish Tripathi welcomed all the participants and lamented on the present condition of Anganwadi Centres (AWCs) and stressed on the need of community participation in strengthening of AWCs so that they can impart better

Education for All: A Review

One review meeting of the Pre-Primary Education Campaign 2010 under the project '*Stronger Voice to Excluded Children in Government and NGO Policies and Programmes*' was organised at the Centre on June 22, 2010. More than 16 community volunteers participated.

Sumitra Garg of CUTS CHD made a presentation on how to effectively conduct the Mother and Child Health & Nutrition (MCH&N) programme. Shanti Lal Dangi discussed the importance of proper nutrition of children below six years of age. Piyush Baranwal, Advocacy Officer informed that 203 children have been identified in these villages, who will be enrolled in government schools during the new session commencing in July.

pre-primary education to children under six years of age.

Piyush Baranwal, Advocacy Officer stated that at present the AWCs are not trained enough to conduct pre-primary classes so one community volunteer for each of the 28 intervened villages would be supported by CUTS. The community volunteer will help the AWCs in effectively identifying the children and imparting pre-primary education to them.

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The Value of Self-Reflection: A Retreat

The Pre mini-retreat of CUTS CHD was held at the Centre on May 17 -18, 2010. It means “to review our past and consider our present in order to find out where are the shortcomings and plan a future accordingly for the best results”.

On the first day, the team discussed the Vision of CUTS and mission of CHD. The team also set a target for the year 2015 and deliberated on the major challenges and opportunities in achieving it.

Next day, the discussions were held under the guidance of George Cheriyan, Director CUTS International and Arti Joshi (special Invitee) in a participatory manner. Ashish Tripathi welcomed all the participants and thanked Arti Joshi for accepting the invitation at a very short notice.

He requested all to reflect critically on the functioning of the CHD and provide concrete suggestions to improve the methods of work. He explained that ordinarily, staff retreats are times for sober reflection and important for harmonising organisational perspectives (appreciative enquiry), and are best done when all cadre of the organisation are present. But for an organisation like CUTS having different programme and resource centres working on diverse areas it is not possible to involve all staff in this process.

Instead, all centres of CUTS have such pre-retreat meetings and the outputs from these meetings provide inputs for the main retreat of CUTS. The centre-wise pre-retreats help reflect on what we have been able to achieve and what we could not – and brainstorm on the reasons thereof, so that the organisation can shape its future better. It also provides an opportunity to all colleagues to contribute towards taking the agenda forward.



George Cheriyan, Director CUTS International explained the meaning of ‘Retreat’ and its relevance in setting the future direction of CUTS. He made a brief presentation on how CUTS ‘originated from a matchbox’ to become an international organisation of repute. He shared that CUTS has made considerable achievements in the last 25 years, and for the coming 25 years it has prepared a vision document ‘CUTS in 2034’. He said that CHD being the only centre of CUTS working directly at the grassroots has made a significant contribution in furthering the vision of CUTS and the same is expected for the next 25 years also.

Madan Giri Goswami, Senior Programme Officer made a presentation on the history and rationale of CHD and also discussed its mission and approach. This was followed by a brief update on present programme areas of CHD and its projects by Madan Lal Keer, Block Officer. Ashish Tripathi facilitated the discussion on the expected opportunities and challenges in the next five years (2010-2015) to develop the Strategic Business Plan of CHD for 2015.

Rural Women Empowerment through Microfinance

A Loan Mela was organised by the Centre at village Singoli, Bhilwara on May 08, 2010. K Muralidhar Rao, Chief General Manager, National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD); S K Shaw, Regional Manager, Baroda Rajasthan Gramin Bank; H S Shekhawat, District Development Manager, NABARD participated in the event. On this occasion, 10 SHGs promoted under SHG Promotion and Bank Linkages project were credit linked with BRGB Shyampura Branch.



Welcoming the guests and participants, Ashish Tripathi, Acting Centre Coordinator, CHD presented the highlights of the SHG Promotion and Bank Linkages project. S K Shaw emphasised on the need of linking SHGs to livelihood options so that the credit could be utilised in a judicious manner and loan could be repaid back on time.

H S Shekhawat congratulated women for coming together to be a part of SHG movement. K Muralidhar Rao lauded CUTS’ efforts in promoting the SHGs of poor women with an aim to empower them by facilitating availability of credit from banks. He said that this is the high-time for CUTS to promote cluster level federations so that this structure could continue to support the SHGs beyond project period and provide sustainability to the initiative.

Grassroots Consumers in Action

In view of complexity of the market place and technology and impact of liberalisation, the consumer needs to be protected. In past, there was a system of barter and consumers did not have to choose from a large range — the allocation of resources was simpler. However, the situation has changed considerably. With the growth and dominance of the market place, consumers' interests and protection have taken a back seat.

To raise consumer awareness at the grassroots by strengthening the capacity of net-workers in Rajasthan, the first phase of Public Interface Meetings (PIMs) under 'Grassroots Reachout & Networking in Rajasthan through Consumer Action' (GRANIRCA) project was conducted in Chittorgarh, on June 10, 2010. The objective of the PIMs was to propagate the rights and responsibilities of consumers at the grassroots and initiate a dialogue with the people, in between the people and redressal agencies and among buyers and sellers.

Sushila Jeengar, *Zila Pramukh*; Mithhulal Jaat, *Up Zila Pramukh*; DC Jain, Additional District Magistrate; Shyam Sundar Sharma, District Supply Officer; Kumar Bikram, UN-District Convergence Officer, networkers and consumer activists from all blocks of Chittorgarh participated in the meeting.

DC Jain stated that there is a dire need to strengthen the Consumer Forum at the district level so that speedy redressal could be ensured to consumers. Mitthulal Lal Jaat opined that it is important for the consumers to remain united so that they can collectively raise issues against erring producers and service-producers. As an informed consumer, it is our responsibility to bring these issues to light so that others do not fall prey to fraudulent or unfair trade practices.

Up Coming Project

New Project on 'Community Based Rehabilitation'

With the goal that 'No person in Chittorgarh district remains needlessly blind and those with irreversible blindness or low vision should have the same rights and access to services as their sighted counterparts' CUTS CHD has partnered with Sightsavers to implement Chittorgarh District Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) project, the MoU of which is expected to be signed by third week of July. The core strategy of the project jointly developed by CUTS and Sightsavers is to strengthen the ongoing government initiatives so as to ensure that persons with disabilities (PWDs), children with specific needs and the persons with curable eye diseases have a better access to the services.

The project is intended to make PWDs aware about their rights and responsibilities and mobilise them into groups so that collectively they can ensure that their rights are with protected. Once the PWDs are identified and provided the basic facilities like disability certification and the mobility training it is expected that their access to the services will be better and the system will also be more acceptable to them.

The project is intended to influence and involve various stakeholders on the issue of social inclusion which will take the mainstreaming initiatives forward. The duration of the project is of three years. It will raise awareness and create demand of the eye care services in Chittorgarh district and project implementing partner established linkages with eye hospitals like Gomabai or government hospital will help continuing the eye care work in the district.

Evaluation of the MNGO Project

One meeting with Field NGOs (FNGOs) under the Mother NGO (MNGO) Chittorgarh and Bhilwara project was held at the Centre on May 11, 2010 to discuss the progress of the project and the challenges faced during the effective implementation of the scheme.

It was revealed that non-release of funds was the biggest obstacle and due to its shortage only less budget activities were being conducted by FNGOs. It was also discussed that there was no dedicated person from the Health Department responsible for monitoring the work under this project. Therefore, MNGOs and FNGOs face difficulties in getting the physical and financial reports verified, which results in delay in release of funds.

Ashish Tripathi stated that he is in regular contact with Archana Sharma, NGO Coordinator, National Rural Health Mission, who has informed him that the funds for the last financial year have already lapsed and will be released after May 15, 2010 when the budget for current financial year will be received by the department.

CHD REPRESENTATIONS

- Madan Lal Keer participated in an orientation workshop on Child Protection Policy at Save the Children in Jaipur, on April 17, 2010.
- Ashish Tripathi and Madan Giri Goswami met Chairman of Chittorgarh Kendriya Sahkari Bank (CKSB) Chittorgarh on June 03, 2010 to discuss the possibility of jointly organising one *loan mela* for about 70 SHGs linked with different branches of CKSB.
- Madan Lal Keer participated in the Annual Meeting of Scientists Consultative Committee of Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) in Chittorgarh, on June 04, 2010.
- Ashish Tripathi, Piyush Baranwal, Vandana Chauhan, Shanti Lal Dangi, Rehana Parveen, Parth Joshi and Sumitra Garg participated in a three-day training on 'Social Exclusion and Advocacy' organised by Save the Children in Jaipur, on June 14-16, 2010.
- Ashish Tripathi and Madan Giri Goswami met Ajeeta Sharma, Deputy Director, Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD), Chittorgarh on June 17, 2010 to brief her about CUTS' activities and discuss the progress of SHG's work in Chittorgarh.
- Madan Lal Keer attended the meeting of District Health Society, in Chittorgarh, on June 18, 2010 to review the progress of health related schemes in the district.
- Ashish Tripathi attended the meeting of Rajeev Gandhi Social Security Mission in Chittorgarh, on June 18, 2010. The objective of the meeting was to review the progress of various schemes of Department of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- Shanti Lal Dangi along with five children participated in a two-day Orientation Workshop on Child Protection Issues in Jaipur, during June 28-29, 2010.
- Piyush Baranwal and Madan Lal Keer attended a three-day Residential Training Cum Orientation Workshop on Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan organised by Save the Children in Jaipur, on May 03-05, 2010.
- Ashish Tripathi and Madan Giri Goswami attended one meeting of Bankers and NGOs organised by NABARD, in Bhilwara, on May 08, 2010.
- Piyush Baranwal and Parth Joshi participated in a District Level Consultation on Child Marriage organised by DWCD in Chittorgarh on May 14, 2010. Piyush made a presentation on the efforts made by CUTS through children's collective in preventing child marriages.
- Madan Lal Keer and CUTS networker Kanhaiya Lal participated in one consultation on Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act organised by Seva Mandir at KVK Badgaon, Udaipur, on May 22, 2010.

VISITORS

- Pankaj Tiwari, Programme Coordinator, Shiv Shiksha Samiti Ranoli, Tonk (one partner of Save the Children) visited CHD on April 21, 2010 to know the status of Child Protection Policy at CHD.
- Pankaj Yadav, Assistant General Manager, NABARD Chittorgarh visited the Centre on April 26, 2010 and interacted with the members of five SHGs promoted by CHD. He discussed the problems faced by SHG members in accessing credit from Bank and stressed on the need of effective record-keeping.
- Prabhat Sinha Programme Manger, Sightsavers North West India Area Office Jaipur visited CHD on May 03, 2010 to finalise the activities and budget of Chittorgarh Community Based Rehabilitation Project with CHD staff.

MEDIA

