



Welcoming Children to Schools

Education is a fundamental human right: Every child is entitled to it. It is critical to our development as individuals and as societies, and helps pave the way to a successful and productive future. Exclusion condemn millions of children, particularly deprived, to a life without quality education – and, therefore, to a life of missed opportunities.

CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS CHD) in partnership with Save the Children is implementing a project entitled, 'Stronger Voice to Excluded Children in Government & NGO Policies and Programmes' which is a multi-stakeholder project, on one hand protecting the rights of children in villages and mainstreaming them and advocating for their participation in policies and programmes of government and NGOs, on the other.

To educate and inform community members on the importance of education, increasing children's enrolment, school attendance and bring drop-out children back to school, a campaign entitled, "Mission Enrollment and Accommodation" was driven in 28 villages of six *gram panchayats* of Chittorgarh.



The Campaign – Glimpses of Activities

The purpose of the campaign was to welcome the un-enrolled and dropout children, admit them in schools and raise awareness among parents and villagers on the importance of education. After ensuring enrolment of all children who have completed pre-primary education in the AWWs, *Praveshotsav* was launched on July 14, 2011 from the village Ghatiyawali and continued for about two months.

The focus of the *Praveshotsav* was also to link the school with *Panchayati Raj Institutions* (PRIs) to ensure sustainability of such initiatives. The best part of this campaign was that school bags, slates, pencil, rubbers, erasers and other eatables could be mobilised from the PRIs of the six *gram panchayats* covered under the project.

The campaign also bridged the gap between the school and *panchayats*. Many headmasters while welcoming the newly enrolled children discussed the problems faced by them which could be easily resolved by community participation/support of the *Panchayat*. *Praveshotsav* concluded at Pataniya village on September 03, 2011.

Significance

- Total 202 students (girls & boys) joined schools which included both the dropout and irregular children. CUTS is regularly interacting with these children in schools on a weekly basis and also following the case on a fortnightly basis with their families so that they do not drop out again.
- Most of the people who participated in the *Praveshotsav* came to know about the mission because of the informal dialogue they had with CHD volunteers. Association of PRIs too helped in mobilising the local masses.

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Mainstreaming Disability in Development

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 was signed in July 2010. The duration of the project is of three years.

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 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 they can collectively ensure that their rights are protected. Once the PwDs are identified and provided with the basic facilities such as disability certification and mobility training, it is expected that their access to the services will be better and the system be more acceptable to them.

Need for Collective Action

The Centre organised several community meetings in all intervention areas under the project. The main aim of the meeting was to discuss disability issue. More than 30 participants attended community meetings. Disabled people can work and want to work face myriad barriers. They have fewer opportunities to develop skills and experience, face practical obstacles, such as inaccessible



transport, and often experience negative attitudes from employers. Concern is that disabled people will be considered able to work without any understanding of the challenges they will face or the support they need

to overcome those challenges.

Emphasis was laid upon preventive as well as curative treatment. Persons with eye problems were immediately referred to the nearest Ophthalmologist and follow-ups were done. Other issues such as government schemes, SHG formation of PwDs etc. were discussed. The disabled were sensitised to involve themselves in of mainstreaming into the development process. This initiative will have a long term impact on advocating for the rights of PwDs.

Development Schemes and Disability



The Centre organised a capacity building camp for PwDs. The objective of the camp was to build the capacity and develop their skills so that they can perform their daily routine work

effectively and without any support. Disabled were educated through poignant process. During the camp cultural activities were organised for their entertainment as well as to raise awareness about the country, state and nearby place and also some learning games were played.

Disabled towards Financial Inclusion

During the quarter 17 Self Help Groups (SHGs) were formed and their accounts were opened in banks. Nine SHGs were formed in Nimbahera block and eight in Chittorgarh. The purpose of SHG formation and record maintenance was explained to them.

One SHG of disabled person was formed few months back in Bari Village of Nimbahera block. The name of SHG is Bherunath and his account was opened in *Baroda Rajasthan Grameen Bank*, Bari. There are total 10 members in the group and during February 2011, loan of ₹375012 was given to the group which was equally distributed among all members (i.e. ₹37501 each). All members belonged to needy family and the loan was very useful for them. They utilised money for purchasing buffaloes, stitching machines, opening vegetable shops and agriculture purposes. Their income was raised by selling buffalo milk.

Nirmala, a locomotor disabled girl of 20 years, belonged to very poor family and there was no regular source of income at all. She was member of the SHG and purchased one stitching machine from the loan amount she got. Now she is earning average ₹1300 per month by stitching clothes.

Another locomotor disabled lady, Ganga Bai of 32 years purchased one buffalo and opened a vegetable shop from the loan amount. Now she is earning ₹500 per month by selling buffalo milk and vegetables.

Bus and rail passes were made available for Hajari Giri, who was blind and resident of Village Rooppura, Chittorgarh. Benefits of 'Indira Awas Yojna' were provided to four blinds. They got sanction of ₹50000 for house construction.



SHG Loan Mela – Achieving Financial Independence

SHGs of women in India have been recognised as an effective strategy for the empowerment of women in rural as well as urban areas to bring women together from all spheres of life to fight for their rights. Through SHGs, women can work on a range of issues. SHGs usually comprise women who voluntarily gather at a specific place for a specific purpose sharing a common interest or problem. An ideal SHG consists of 15-20 members. Small groups allow for participatory discussion, which may be difficult in a larger group with diversified interests.

The objectives of SHGs are to socially, economically and culturally empower women; help women gain independence and security; build self-confidence and self-esteem; offer opportunities for education and self-improvement; offer community development activities which are planned; and improve the lives of individual.

The Centre is implementing a project in Bhilwara on micro credit for poverty alleviation to ensure socio-economic development and enhance livelihood security in rural areas with the support from the 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. CHD has formed 400 SHGs in Bhilwara.

The Centre in partnership with Baroda Rajasthan Grameen Bank (BRGB) organised a loan mela at Broondhani village, Mandlagrah block, Bhilwara, Rajasthan. More than 200 participants from 55 SHGs attended the event. More than 325 SHGs have been credit linked. In the event, loan of ₹50,000 was disbursed to SHG members.



Chittorgarh Viklang Manch

The meeting of Executive committee of *Chittorgarh Viklang Manch* promoted under CBR project was organised at CHD on May 24, 2011. As per the decision taken during previous meetings, the *Manch* has started fund raising and printed receipt books and collected member's fee from PwDs and donations from other persons.

During the month, they have collected ₹2400. Forms were filled by them of disability certificate and other schemes. Three handicaps got jobs under National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme due to their efforts. In future they are planning to raise more funds so that the *Manch* becomes economically strong. The *Manch* is planning to link PwDs with vocational courses so that they can get a suitable job.

VHSC Training Programme

The Centre with the support of Health Department, Chittorgarh and Pratapgarh is organising training of Village Health & Sanitation Committees (VHSC) in Chittorgarh and Pratapgarh districts of Rajasthan



to raise awareness in the village about available health services and entitlements; develop a Village Health Plan based on an assessment of the situation and priorities of the community; maintain a village health register and health information board and calendar; analyse

key issues/problems pertaining to village level health and nutrition activities and provide feedback to relevant functionaries and officials; present an annual health report to the *Gram Sabha*. 101 VHSC trainings were held in Chittorgarh and Pratapgarh districts respectively during June 2011.

Grassroot

Consumers in Action

Consultations and involvement of media has been on the forefront of all activities implemented under the project and to give it more focus in the second year of the Grassroots Reachout and Networking in Rajasthan through Consumer Action (GRANIRCA) project, district-level consultation workshops for media were organised in the project districts.

A Media Workshop was held at Chittorgarh on August 23, 2011. The main objective of the workshop was not only to sensitise media representatives, both from print and electronic on consumer protection issues and discuss the possible intervention to strengthen and take the consumer movement effectively to common masses, but also to showcase the past, present and future activities being implemented under the project and enlighten them with the key findings that emerged from this year's research work done through a survey among consumers.

More than 34 participants including media persons (print & electronic), consumer activists and CUTS representatives attended the workshop.

CHD REPRESENTATIONS

- CUTS CHD participated in three eye camps organised by Gomabai Netralaya and Bhagwan Mahaveer Manav Sewa Samiti in Chittorgarh during October-December 2011.
- Madan Lal Keer attended a one day regional consultation organised by *Aide et Action* at its office in Chittorgarh on April 15, 2011.
- Ashish Tripathi and Madan Lal Keer attended a meeting on *Shuddh ke Liye Yuddh* organised by District Supply Office at Chittorgarh on April 21, 2011.
- Vinod Jain and Pradeep Bhatt attended a one-day workshop on Child Marriage organised by *Nehru Yuva Mahila Mandal* at *Panchayat Samiti* Akola on April 23, 2011.
- Ashish Tripathi made a presentation on 'Situation Analysis of Eye Care in Chittorgarh' at the District Health Society meeting in Chittorgarh on May 23, 2011.
- Vinod Jain, Kishan Lal Bharti and Mohan Lal Meghwal attended a seminar on Right to Education (RTE) organised by Rajasthan RTE Consortium at Ravindra Manch, Jaipur on June 10-11, 2011.
- Kishan Lal Bharti attended a two-day Training of Trainers to encourage the marketing of non PDS items under Public Distribution System organised by Rajasthan State Food & Civil Supply Corporation Ltd. Jaipur during July 21-22, 2011.
- Vinod Jain and Shanti Lal Dangi attended a one-day Project Consultative Group Meeting at Save the Children Office, Jaipur on July 26, 2011.
- Madan Lal Keer attended a four-day workshop on PCPNDT Act organised by Centre for Advocacy & Research at Jaipur during July 25-28, 2011.
- Madan Lal Keer and Vinod Jain took part in Block Health Mission meeting at Secondary School Samri, Chittorgarh on August 29, 2011.
- Pradeep Bhatt attended a four-day training programme on ASER survey, organised by PRATHAM Rajasthan at Sitapura, Jaipur.

VISITORS

- Meeta Sharma, Finance Officer and Sandeep Soni, Finance and Support Services Assistant from Save the Children visited CUTS on June 09, 2011 to review the accounts related to IPAP and for a follow-up visit on June 28, 2011.
- Prabhat Sinha, Programme Manager, Sightsavers visited CUTS CHD to review the CBR project activities and for making plan to strengthen eye healthcare system of government hospitals.
- Amit Chowdhary, State Advocacy Coordinator, Save the Children, Jaipur visited the field of IPAP to review the progress and discuss bottlenecks of the project to achieve its objectives.

MEDIA

