

# **JAN CHETNA MANCH**

# **BOKARO**

**Annual Report 2016 – 2017**



**Chamrabad, Chandra, Chandankiari, Bokaro, Jharkhand, 828134**

**Registered under Societies Registration Act, 21/1860**

**Registration No.918, 2006-07, Jharkhand**

# **JAN CHETNA MANCH, BOKARO**

## **(Forum for People's Awareness)**

*'Jan Chetna Manch, Bokaro' is registered under the Societies Registration Act, with its activities based in the Chandankiari and Chas blocks of the Bokaro district, in the state of Jharkhand. Its mission is to help improve the lives of the poorest and weakest section of society, particularly women. It believes that women's empowerment, in particular, is the key to improve the lives of the most impoverished.*

*Most of the activities of JCMB are of an ongoing nature such as health care, nutrition, and facilitating women's self help groups. No new activity or project was initiated this year, however most of the programmes underway have grown.*

*In our endeavour we have been helped by many organisation and individuals. In the sphere of women's health the Sir Jamshetji Tata Trust has continued to support us for the critical health services for women in the Women's Health Centre, the community health programme and the nutrition support for mothers-to-be and their children. The mental health programme has been made possible due to the partnership with the Central Institute of Psychiatry in Ranchi.*

*Partnerships with the Department of Health and Family Welfare of the Government of Jharkhand, through the local health administration, continue. Through these we are enabling women to access financial support under the 'Janani Suraksha Yojana' programme, and also to provide quality sterilisation operations for poor women.*

*The Paul Hamlyn Foundation supported JCMB for the first half of the year in its endeavour to improve the functioning of the local self governance system – Panchayati Raj – through the strengthening of women's self help groups.*

*The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists supported JCMB through the voluntary help of doctors and the donation for helping our activities.*

*We wish to thank all these organisations, as well as countless individuals, friends and well wishers, for their continued support.*

**Bipin Mahato**  
*Secretary*

*July 2017*

## Women's Empowerment

*The empowerment of women has been the main agenda for **Jan Chetna Manch, Bokaro** since the beginning. Whether in the spheres of health, livelihood, education, or any other aspect of life, without women taking an active and participatory role, their lives will not much improve.*

*The first women's self help group was set up over two decades ago in Chamrabad village in Chandankiari block, even before **Jan Chetna Manch, Bokaro** was registered. By March 2017 the total number of these SHGs is 487. Over seven thousand women sit together every week to pool together their meager savings of 5, 10 or 20 rupees. The cumulative savings of all these women is 2.61 crores Rupees. Although savings and credit are the main activities, these groups have been much more than money lending groups. The very act of sitting together has facilitated women's participation in other activities too: from accessing health care, taking up cases of women's sexual abuse to demanding better implementation of government services and so on.*

### The Chetna SHG Cooperative



*Women's self help group meeting*

*For many years the federation of the women's groups was under the umbrella of **JCMB**, however now it has outgrown us, and they have set up their own cooperative, known as **Chetna SHG Mahila Swabalambi Sahkari Samiti Ltd.** Members of the SHG groups are mostly share holders of this cooperative, each holding a share valuing Rs. 100. As on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 the total number of share holders of the cooperative is 7036. The share holders elect a Board consisting of 7 Directors whose tenure is three years. The Board conducts the activities of financial and organizational management, though **JCMB** provides a helping hand to the groups and the cooperative.*

*Apart from being a loan provider to its members, the cooperative is a strong grass roots women's organization which provides support and leadership in their struggles against various social issues.*

## Strengthening *Panchayati Raj* Institutions (PRI) through the women's SHGs

**JCMB** has always emphasised that women's self help groups (SHGs) were a means to an end, and the end is empowerment. The denial of entitlements under the *panchayati raj* (local self government) system has been increasingly raised by the SHG members in the last few years. **JCMB** undertook various activities in the last three years to increase the awareness of SHG members, and various other stakeholders. The purpose was to fight against the rampant corruption, lethargy, inefficiency and ignorance at various levels and strengthen the *panchayati raj* system. Drama programmes, wall writing, meetings, setting up village help desks, and the formation of pressure groups are some of the activities undertaken.



Meetings with PRI representatives....

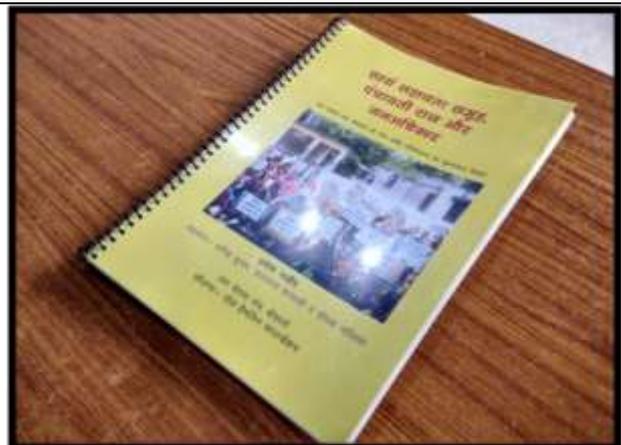


.....and with 'mukhiyas'

At the end of the 3 year project an external evaluator, Mr. Umesh Nazir, conducted a detailed assessment of the programme and prepared a report which was disseminated among the elected representatives – the *mukhiyas* and the *panchayat samiti* members and other NGOs in Bokaro district.



Sharing of experiences with Bokaro-based NGOs



Report of JCMB's experiences of PRIs & SHGs

### Women's Fight for Access to Water in Beldih Village



Women using the pond for many purposes



....and boys using it for fishing too

The Beldih pond is located in the Chandankiari block, and is used by the whole village, particularly the women – for bathing, washing clothes, pots and pans. The pond was owned by feudal landlords during the first half of the last century, but after the 'zamindari' system was abolished in the 1950's it became government property. Several times the pond was auctioned to local fishermen for fish cultivation.

However, unknown to the villagers, the erstwhile landlords connived with a few corrupt officials, and managed to secretly re-acquire the pond. One day they came with bulldozers to fill up the pond and reclaim the land for sale. When the village women came to know about this, they quickly organised meetings of the SHG members and arranged to oppose the plan. When the erstwhile owner came to start filling up the pond, the women lay in front of the bulldozer to protest. Not only was the plan illegal, it was environmentally harmful. As a result of their peaceful protest the plan was shelved and the pond was saved.

### Women demand their entitlements from the government ration shop

'Lakshmi Mahila Mandal' is a small SHG of ten members formed seven years ago. It is based in Sitanala village in Chandankiari. As a result of JCMB's campaign to increase the awareness about their rights and responsibilities under the Panchayati Raj, led by group member Shubhadra Devi, the SHG members protested against the corruption in the local government ration shop, under the Public Distribution System. The dealer used to give only 3.5 kilos of rice to each person, and sell the remaining amount at a good profit in the local market. As a result of their activities the dealer has had to increase the amount given to poor families to the full 5 kilos per person.



Shubhadra Devi with her SHG members

### Women protest against violence against women



SHG members protest against violence against women

Another protest by women SHG members was against the attack on one of its members, and 'swasthya sakhi' (health guide), Ribhuti Devi. She was attacked by drunkards after she tried to intervene to stop them misbehaving with village girls. So severe was the attack that she almost died. She lost a lot of blood and had to have a steel plate inserted in her broken arm. Around two thousand SHG members took part in a huge demonstration in front of the local police station demanding the arrest of the culprits.



..... outside the police station



Ribhuti shows where her arm was smashed

### Women's Day Celebrations 2017



Every year **JCMB** helps to organise the annual conference of the women's groups on 8<sup>th</sup> of March, on the occasion of International Women's Day. This year, however, 8<sup>th</sup> fell on the day of the monthly mental health clinic, and lots of patients from nearby areas come to our health centre on that day, so the meeting was held on 7<sup>th</sup> March 2017. The venue was the Binod Bihari Stadium, Ramdih, in the Chas block of Bokaro district. Last year JCMB had planned to hold the meeting there, but due to a huge storm, the tent was blown away in the night. As a result last year's meeting was held elsewhere. This year there was no such disruption and the celebration went on smoothly with usual fan fare of songs, drama, dance and sports events.

## The Health Programme

Health activities, along with women's empowerment through the SHGs, have been taken up since the inception of JCMB in the mid '90's. Over the last two decades the range of health activities has grown, responding to the needs and demands of the women and their families.

- **Training of health workers**

Training of all levels of health workers remains a priority for JCMB. At the community level all of the health activities are implemented and represented by around 60 swasthya sakhis (health friends), who are selected by the SHG group members, and trained regularly on a range of health issues: pregnancy, delivery and postnatal care; menstrual hygiene; first aid and treatment of minor illnesses; herbal medicines; nutrition and mental health problems.

### Training of the swasthya sakhis



**Ballika Devi** demonstrates her skills during a training programme in first aid. All of the 'swasthya sakhis' have first aid kits to deal with minor cuts and injuries.



**Lakshmi Murthy** from **Vikalp**, Udaipur came with her team to conduct 2 highly interactive and much appreciated workshops with all the 'swasthya sakhis' in November. The focus of the workshop was reproductive and menstrual health. The women were also taught to make reusable sanitary napkins, known as 'Ugerpads'.



The health activities of JCMB are being implemented by local village women. Each year new trainees are selected, and trained in various subjects, from basic anatomical knowledge to complications during pregnancy and childbirth.



Dr Jyothi Unni with the OT team

**Dr Jyothi Unni** has been helping us at JCMB for several years. In the winter months she not only conducts many gynaecological and obstetric surgeries, but has been a guide and mentor for the health centre team. This year she came for a few days in June only for upgrading the skills and knowledge of the operation theatre (OT) team.

- **Women's Health**

*Women's health has always been high on the agenda for **JCMB**. It was the lack of quality care for themselves that led the SHG members to demand health services for women. The Women's Health Centre in Chamrabad provides rural women with important health services during pregnancy and childbirth; contraception and sterilisation operations; treatment of gynecological illnesses and infertility.*

*The WHC has a team of well trained local health workers, with the help of medical professionals largely from Bokaro. We also continue to be fortunate to receive the voluntary expertise and support of doctors from afar. From Seattle (USA) **Drs Ashok Shroff, Mary Shroff and Murali Sivarajan**; from Kolkota **Drs Pusan Kundu, Madhusudan Saha, Manu Uttam**; from Pune, **Dr Jyothi Unni**.*

#### Glimpses of the Women's Health Centre in Chamrabad



*Swasthya sakhis helping women during childbirth*



*Exhausted contented mother after a job well done*



*Operation theatre team in action*



*Time to go home, family size doubled!*

- **Nutrition & Children's Health**

*For the last few years the issue of malnutrition – amongst women during pregnancy initially, but now amongst babies and children – is also being tackled. This has been one of the most difficult issues, and cannot be addressed by merely doling out nutritional supplements. For women, we have been providing protein-rich roasted gram flour ('channa sattu') along with a whole package of quality pre natal care for many years now. We are now providing this supplement to women post partum, in an effort to improve the health and well being of women after they have delivered. Post natal care is rarely provided, or even considered a felt need in the community. We are providing post natal care, counseling for contraception and immunisation, and providing nutritional supplements at the same time.*

*Stunted and wasted growth in Jharkhand is rampant. This is not only due to poverty, but also due to lack of awareness and gender discrimination – for the girl child as well as lack of empowerment of the mother. Often women do not have the time to feed their own child. A multi-pronged effort has been initiated during the last 3 years to address this issue. This involves street theatre (or rather village theatre, since there are no 'streets!'); door-to-door counseling; providing health care for sick children; providing nutritional supplements for severely malnourished and vulnerable children; and subsidised treatment for poor, sick children. Over 400 children were identified by screening with mid upper arm circumference (MUAC) tapes as falling in the 'red' zone (dangerously low weight). More than two-thirds of these children are girls. They are provided food supplements (a mix of grains, pulses, oil and sugar), minerals (iron), de-wormed every 6 months, and weighed each month.*



*Drama programmes – 'nukkar natak' – was undertaken in 24 villages during the year. The drama focuses on many of the unhealthy 'modern' food practices; stresses the need for spending on vegetables and pulses rather than tonics and vitamins; and spending on prevention rather than cure. Irrational health care treatment was also included in the health messages.*

*Rakhal Kalindi of Simulia came from an extremely vulnerable family. His father is a poor, landless basket maker, of the lowest caste. Crippled by leprosy his hands couldn't even weave the bamboo baskets needed to earn and feed his family. Rakhal's mother is the main breadwinner of the family, and she had little time to look after her child. With frequent bouts of illness, Rakhal became weaker and weaker, and was on the verge of death when he was admitted. Within less than 2 weeks, he was well on the way to recovery.*

- **Neonatal health**



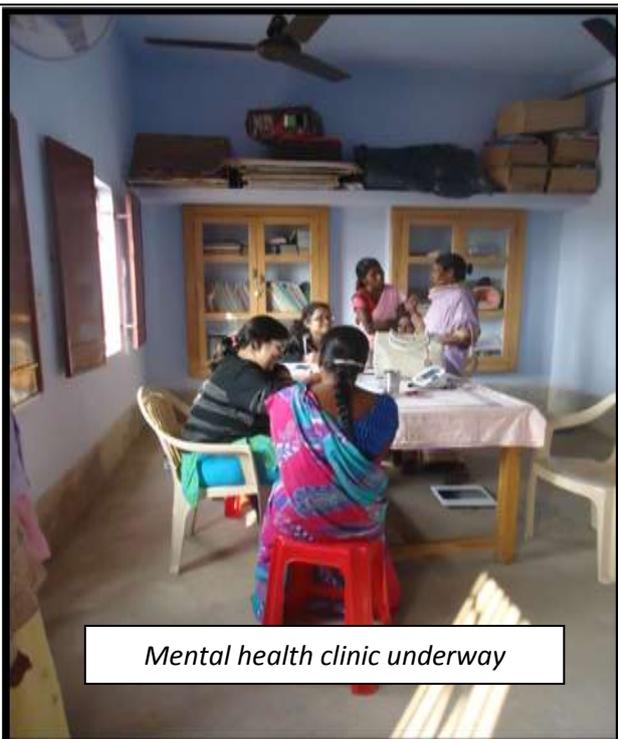
Extra small hats and socks for our extra small babies

*Due to our involvement in childbirth it became inevitable that the problems of the neonates would need to be addressed by JCMB. The health team now helps small, mostly preterm babies of poor families, to survive. In the past most of these babies would have died, since families cannot afford to pay for the long term stays needed in neonatal care units of tertiary level hospitals. Last year 28 such babies were helped.*

*In order to improve the services for these small neonates two of the health centres nurses were sent to the **Institute for Child Health** in Kolkata for training.*

*This year we also received the help of a group of women in Kolkata, facilitated by our friend and well wisher **Sandhya Srinivas**, who made and sent extra small woolies for our wee babies.*

- **Mental Health**



Mental health clinic underway

*The mental health programme of JCMB hinges strongly on the partnership it has established with the **Central Institute of Psychiatry, Ranchi**.*

*Each month a team of mental health professionals visit the Women's Health Centre in Chamrabad and provides much needed services to around a hundred patients each month. Patients with various types of mental illnesses and epilepsy are treated.*

*Many of the patients also receive follow up visits by JCMB's Community Health Workers, and families are counselled to support these patients and continue the treatment.*

## Health services at a glance: 2013 to 1017

Health Service	Numbers 2013-14	Numbers 2014 - 15	Numbers 2015-16	Numbers 2016-17	Total last 4 years
<b>Outdoor patients at Health Centre &amp; Outreach Programmes</b>					
<b>Total number of consultations in health centre &amp; outreach programmes</b>	<b>11584</b>	<b>12771</b>	<b>12705</b>	<b>13918</b>	<b>50978</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women registered for antenatal care</li> </ul>	1149	1443	1332	1435	5359
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children and immunisation</li> </ul>	1687	1949	2181	1462	7279
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acupuncture</li> </ul>	1106	1245	913	825	4089
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ultrasonography</li> </ul>	588	889	1120	1088	3685
<b>Nutrition programme</b>					
Pregnant women given 'chana sattu' during pregnancy	149	191	362	588	1290
Babies / children given nutritional supplements	170	220	254	400	1044
Women given free iron sucrose injections for severe anaemia in pregnancy	19	51	90	47	207
<b>Indoor Admissions at Women's Health Centre</b>					
<b>Total indoor admissions</b>	<b>909</b>	<b>1355</b>	<b>1534</b>	<b>1542</b>	<b>5340</b>
Deliveries total	604	850	961	893	3308
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal</li> </ul>	569	795	895	845	3104
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cesarean section</li> </ul>	35	55	66	48	204
Deliveries referred to a higher centre	26	35	23	26	110
Gynecological Surgeries (other than Cesarean sections)	6	5	10	12	33
Sterilisation operation for women	44	95	151	130	420
Minor operations (D & C, etc)	63	79	83	105	330
Pre-term/small babies kept in baby care unit	8	28	28	28	92
Other illnesses (typhoid, dysentery, malaria, pre-term labour, anaemia etc)	158	263	278	348	1047
<b>Investigations undertaken in laboratory</b>					
<b>Total number of investigations</b>	<b>7111</b>	<b>10910</b>	<b>11853</b>	<b>16771</b>	<b>46645</b>

## Progress in Koromtanj building

*Four years ago JCMB and the SHG Cooperative purchased a plot of land in Koromtanj in order to expand its activities. The land is around 3 kms away from the existing health centre in Chamrabad. The ground floor of the new building has been completed. JCMB decided, however, to complete both stories of the building before shifting its health activities there. With the new (and forgotten but traditional!) techniques of building that have been acquired by the local masons and bricklayers – from rat trap bond, arches, rendering the walls with lime instead of cement – it was decided to go ahead and build another floor. It is currently being used for training programmes, accommodating guests and interns.*



*The verandah, all painted and ready for use*



*Dr Murali and Vijayendra inspect the new dining room*