

JAN CHETNA MANCH, BOKARO

Newsletter No. 4

October 2015

Greetings again from **Jan Chetna Manch!** (Forum for Peoples' Awareness) We are based in the small village of Chamrabad in Jharkhand, India. In spite of the scenic rural and rustic surroundings and vibrant cultural diversity the area is still plagued by the problems of poverty, malnutrition, inadequate healthcare, illiteracy and corruption. JCM and its hardworking team continue to work for the betterment of the people of the area in the field of health, sanitation, education, micro-finance, environment and livelihood issues. JCM serves a population of over a 100,000 rural and needy people in the villages of the Bokaro district. Here are some of our activities from the last 6 months.....

Jyothi Gope gets his pension!

Jyothi Gope is an 80 year old man from the village of Koromtanj. He was not much helped by his children in old age, but he did get six hundred rupees per month pension – just enough to eat. Every two or three months the amount would come into his account. However suddenly, in January this year the money stopped coming, and he couldn't understand why. The bank told him that the money hadn't come, but the concerned government department told him that they had sent it! After running – or rather hobbling, since he has chronic arthritis – from pillar to post he came to one of the Help Desks set up by Jan Chetna Manch. They wrote several polite letters, but with no response. Ultimately they went to the local administration's office and angrily demanded a response. It was only then that the mystery was revealed. The money had indeed gone to Jyothi's account – another account that had been created in his name, unknown to him! A few months earlier government officials had made him sign a few papers, which were in English. This was to open a new account – in order to fulfill certain government targets.

Since then JCM has helped another twenty old and disabled villagers whose pensions have suddenly stopped being paid – for the same reason. Jyothi's case was an eye opener for us!



Jyothi Gope proudly sits outside his house

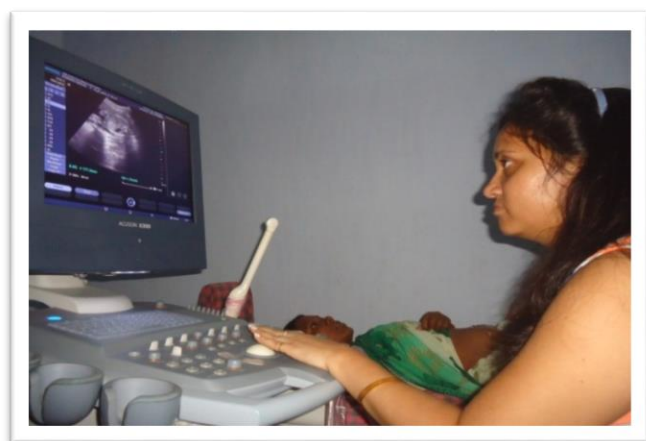


Asha Kumari helps elderly widows in the Sialjori Help Desk

JCM has set up twenty Help Desks in the villages of Chas and Chandankiari. These are run by educated villagers, usually young girls, who sit in a room – usually a government building – in the village once a week for a few hours. They help villagers fill up forms, write letters and applications, mainly to access government facilities such as pensions, birth certificates and so on. This programme is being generously supported by the **Paul Hamlin Foundation**.

Women's Health Centre Activities

Activity	April to September 2015
Number of consultations in WHC and outreach clinics	
Antenatal Check Ups	3344
Gynaecological problems	465
Infertility	142
Children	412
Immunisation	1068
Acupuncture	455
Mental health	404
Other	220
Total	6510
Number of women admitted in the WHC	
Normal deliveries	504
Cesarean section deliveries	50
Surgery (Sterilisation/hysterectomy)	22
Treatment for severe anaemia	33
Preterm/small babies	12
Other illnesses	220
Total	841



Dr Mahua Roy in the Ultrasound Clinic at JCM

Malaria in Pregnancy: A New Challenge

During the last 6 months 51 women with fever tested positive for malaria in the Women's Health Centre. Most of them were women in various stages of pregnancy. 37 women were detected with Falciparum malaria, which is the most deadly type, which is known in this area as 'brain malaria'. It also causes severe anaemia, which can be fatal for women in pregnancy. 17 women were admitted to the WHC and successfully treated.

Ultra sound clinic in JCM

JCM purchased an ultrasound machine with the award money donated by the **Edelgive Foundation** in 2011. Until Dr Mahua started to come last year it was used only for a few cases each week. On many occasions we still needed to send women to Bokaro for ultra sonography for various problems of women in pregnancy, and other gynecological problems. Since Dr Mahua has started to come to JCM few women need to go all the way to Bokaro. She is popular with patients and staff alike. During the last 6 months 619 women accessed this service.



Amit Kumar in the laboratory in JCM

Childbirth and the Community: The Unseen World of the Dais

JCM was a partner in the **'Jeeva Project'** (supported by **AYUSH Dept of Government of India**, and the **ICICI bank**) which was a study of indigenous birthing practices in India. The traditional birth attendants are known here as *dais*. A one day consultation was organised by us on the subject: 'Childbirth and the Community: The Unseen World of Dais', on 1st September 2015 to share the findings of the Jeeva Study. The meeting was attended by about 80 participants from the study area, which included *dais*, village 'doctors' (untrained) and elders, government health workers, field staff and health workers of JCM. All of the participants were in favour of supporting the demands of the *dais*, which was to support and involve them in the intra and post natal care of women. Since many women continue to deliver at home, and since the *dais* are the only care provider who attends the women after the birth – whether at home or in the hospital – they are still much needed in the community.

Elections of office bearers of the women's groups cooperative



Deepak patiently registers the votes for the elections

In July 2015 the elections of the office bearers of the women's cooperative was held. The cooperative is an autonomous body now, though it is still facilitated by JCM, and the staff helps them with the management of their financial affairs still.



Sandhya looks on as Anita translates for Bimla Devi



Dais and government health workers sit together during consultation



Uthani Mahato, President of the women's cooperative

The seven board members, though, are all women. The elections are held every three years, with as much fanfare as the elections for the national assembly. This year the post of President was won by Uthani Mahato, and the post of Secretary is held by Purnima Devi.



Joba Devi proudly takes her baby home

Joba takes her baby home

Joba Devi of Tekwara was hyper anxious during her pregnancy. Each month she would come for ante natal care and touch Lindsay's feet, begging for a successful outcome this time. During her last pregnancy her baby suddenly died in her womb in the ninth month, for reasons we never understood. This time she did everything she was advised: blood tests, ultra sonography, diet, rest, the lot! But we never really knew whether this would ensure her a healthy, live baby. Finally all our vigilance and her cooperation paid off – she had a healthy baby girl in June. The health programme of JCM is being generously supported by the **Jamshetji Tata Trust**.

Meanwhile in Koromtandr....

In Koromtandr the new building continues to grow, slowly and steadily. The entrance from the roadside has been constructed, joining together the health centre and office portions of the building. Thanks to friends from **Cadmores End Church**, the **RCOG Indian Liaison Group**, and other friends, the building continues to grow.



The entrance to the new building in Koromtandr

Do Contact Us

We'd love to hear from you! Get in touch via email (janchetnamanch@rediffmail.com) or by phone on (+919431128882).

We're always on the lookout for motivated, good hearted people to help us! We need all sorts of people to help us in the various activities we are involved with.

Please get in touch via email – the phones here rarely work!

A BIG Thanks!

Thanks to all our friends and well wishers in supporting our endeavors. This includes: The Jamshetji Tata Trust; Paul Hamlin Foundation; Global Green Grants; RCOG Indian Liaison Group, UK; friends of Cadmores End Church; without such support our activities here in Bokaro would be unable to continue.