

JAN CHETNA MANCH BOKARO

Annual Report 2015 – 2016



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 a registered society, based in Chandankiari, Bokaro, 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 have continued to increase throughout the year. The demands for better health care, nutrition, setting up women's self help groups, and accessing government programmes are growing.

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. Although the financial support for the mental health programme from the Trust ended this year, the principal activities involved remain. This has been 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 continues to support JCMB 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 Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies, Sree Chitra Tirunal Institute for Medical Sciences and Technology, has allowed JCMB to continue to pursue research on women's health issues, namely post partum contraception.

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists also continues to support JCMB in many ways – through the voluntary help of doctors and the donation for helping our activities.

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

Bipin Mahato
Secretary

July 2016

Women's Empowerment

Jan Chetna Manch, Bokaro has worked for women's empowerment since its inception. In the spheres of health, livelihood, education...without women taking an active and participatory role, programmes will not improve their lives.

The self help groups were set up, not only for providing much needed loans to poor women and their families, but as a mechanism for bringing women together. Every week nearly eight thousand women sit together for a couple of hours, making financial decisions. The act of sitting together has facilitated women's participation in other activities too: taking up cases of women's sexual abuse; demanding better implementation of government services and so on.

Although the women's SHGs now have their own organisation, an autonomous women's cooperative with its own office bearers, it is still closely connected to JCMB. The programmes that JCMB takes up are invariably channelled through the SHGs – they remain an invaluable stepping stone to the community.

One such activity is the growing frustration and demand for the better implementation of the programmes of the local government under the 'panchayati raj'. Due to rampant corruption and mismanagement the poor are often denied their rightful dues. Ranging from birth and death certificates to widows pension, poor people fail to get their entitlements.

The women's groups, with the help of JCMB, organized a demonstration and meeting in front of the block office in Chandankiari in April. Around two thousand members of the women's groups and many elderly people (who were frustrated with the pension scheme) and MNREGA workers attended the rally.



Anti-corruption rally in Chandankiari

Strengthening *Panchayati Raj* through the women's SHGs

The *panchayati raj* (local self governance) system is still weak in Jharkhand. Although elections were held a few years ago – after a gap of nearly 30 years – the benefits and entitlements that were supposed to reach the poor through the system are still largely unmet. JCMB has endeavored to help the poor – through the women's SHGs – to access these programmes.



Pressure group meeting



Help desk in Sialjori, Chandankiari

This was the third and final year of the project funded by Paul Hamlyn Foundation. Along with the activities undertaken during the last two years we also set up some groups of beneficiaries like MNREGA workers and pensioners. Very often the pension of an elderly, widowed or disabled person is stopped due to negligence, corruption of the concerned staff. Similarly the guarantee of getting 100 days work for a rural unemployed is not fulfilled due to the same reason. Furthermore, the rate of pension, wages of the MNREGA workers needed to be increased. Individually MNREGA workers or pensioners cannot fight against such injustice. JCMB initiated associations or pressure groups of these people and filed petitions and appeals to the concerned authorities. We also set up Help Desks in every *panchayat*, where volunteers would help ordinary villagers to file petitions or fill up forms for pension, ration cards and so on.

As an off shoot of our activities on strengthening of the SHGs, a spontaneous campaign against alcoholism and the related malpractices have gained ground. In several villages demonstrations and protest marches were held involving thousands of village women.

Women's Day Celebrations

On International Women's Day, many members of the SHGs came together to celebrate the occasion. This meeting is an annual event, and eagerly looked forward to. This year groups nearer to Chas, at Ramdih, requested the SHG cooperative to host the meeting. However on the night of the 7th March a huge storm hit the area – bringing down hundreds of houses, uprooting trees – and flattened the 'pandal' (tent) erected at the site.

Early next morning JCMB's team began to inform all the groups that the meeting was off. Most of the groups hire jeeps, tempos, cars, even buses to come to the event, often paying an advance to secure the booking. However, the general mood was still in favour of only a postponement – not a cancellation. So on 18th March, the 'pandal' was re-erected at Chamrabad-Korkotta. Around three thousand women came, and participated in the songs, speeches and sports events.

Most of the JCMB staff and volunteers are involved in the programme – as helpers and participants. It is a festive occasion, with most of the women wearing their best outfits...It is also a time for all the women SHG members to reconnect, forget their household duties...



JCMB's Community Health Workers ready to go...



One of the 'swasthya sakhis' enjoying the fare...

The 'swasthya sakhis' – the village health guides – always put together a skit for the event. This year they focused on malnutrition amongst children. The role of men was well enacted by the women, to show that women's empowerment is also crucial for the health and well being of children. Due to the huge popularity of the sports events of the previous year, games were organised again this year.



'Swasthya sakhis' performing their drama



The Secretary of JCMB, Bipin Mahato, presents the prizes of the sports competitions

Health Services at a glance from 2013-14 to 2015-16 (April to March)

Health Service	Numbers 2013-14	Numbers 2014 - 15	Numbers 2015-16
Outdoor patients at Health Centre & Outreach Programmes			
Total number of consultations in health centre & outreach programmes	11584	12771	12705
• Women registered for antenatal care	1149	1443	1332
• Children for immunisation	1687	1949	2181
• Acupuncture	1106	1245	913
• Ultrasonography	588	889	1120
Nutrition programme			
Pregnant women given 'chana sattu' during pregnancy	149	191	362
Babies given weaning food	170	220	254
Women given free iron sucrose injections for severe anaemia in pregnancy	19	51	90
Indoor patients at Health Centre			
Total indoor admissions	909	1355	1506
Deliveries total	604	850	961
• Normal	569	795	895
• Cesarean section	35	55	66
Deliveries referred to a higher centre	26	35	23
Gynecological Surgeries (other than Cesarean sections)	6	5	10
Sterilisation operation for women	44	95	151
Minor operations (D & C, etc)	63	79	83
Pre-term/small babies kept in baby care unit	8	28	28
Other illnesses (typhoid, dysentery, malaria, etc)	158	263	450
Investigations undertaken in laboratory			
Total investigations	7111	10910	11853



Cesarean operation underway



Women recovering post operations

The Health Programme

The health programme at JCMB continues to grow, providing much needed care and treatment to poor women and their families. The table above gives an idea of the range of services provided.

A relatively new programme for JCMB is the nutrition programme, being funded by the Jamsetji Tata Trust since mid 2014. It has been, and continues to be, an enormous challenge for us to implement the programme. For one there are huge numbers of children who are underweight, and malnourished. In this area severe malnutrition is not common, but most children – even in families that are not very poor – are not growing up healthy. Most children fall ill frequently, are given poor quality treatment, and are not given nutritious food in the right amount or frequency in order to catch up. JCMB soon realised that simply providing nutritional supplements was not adequate to address this problem, but has focused on a multi-pronged approach: training 'swasthya sakhis' to help families prevent illnesses in the first place (clean drinking water, hand washing, etc); providing timely and adequate treatment of illnesses; stressing the importance of frequent and small meals – not only the twice a day porridge made with the powder provided by the programme.

Our older activity, the care and treatment of women during pregnancy and childbirth, for which JCMB has become well known in the area, continues to grow. Nearly one thousand women delivered at the health centre during the year, with most women having a normal delivery. Our cesarean rate is still less than 7%. No woman has died during childbirth until now in the health centre. This has been achieved for several reasons: good quality antenatal care (timely treatment of anaemia or hypertension); screening at the time of admission (very high risk pregnancies are advised to go to a 'higher centre'); strict adherence to evidence based protocols by the nurses; and a referral system in place (emergency fund available 24/7, ambulances on hand).



Twins in JCMB....not an unusual sight



One of our small premature babies

The mental health programme has also continued to grow, providing treatment to large numbers of villagers who would have had to either go all the way to Ranchi or resort to local non qualified practitioners in order to address their problems. The Central Institute of Psychiatry continues to send teams of mental health professionals each month. The table below shows the rapid increase in the number of patients accessing such care. The mental health programme was also supported by the Jamsetji Tata Trust.

Total Number of Mental Health Patients seen during Monthly Clinics: April 2015 to March 2016				
Month	Number of Patients with Common Mental Health Problems	Number of Patients with Serious Mental Health Problems	Number of Patients with Epilepsy	Total number of patients
April	6	29	23	58
May	3	21	23	47
June	7	26	28	61
July	12	23	29	64
August	16	33	34	83
September	16	39	36	91
October	26	38	31	95
November	0	0	0	0
December	21	36	36	93
January	23	40	41	104
February	23	39	41	103
March	13	47	56	116



CIP team in Dhara Mela January 2016

Research and advocacy for women's health issues

Concluding the study that JCMB was a part of, the **Jeeva Project**, (supported by the AYUSH Department of the Government of India and IFIG) a dissemination workshop was held in Chandankiari in September 2015. Many traditional birth attendants – known locally as 'dais' – attended the meeting. Many other villagers who took an active interest in the study also came. Many 'dais' expressed their frustrations and sadness that their skills were not being recognised or utilised. In the push for 'institutional' deliveries, the government has sidelined the 'dais' by creating a separate cadre of village health workers, the 'sahaya'. However the 'sahayas' are much less knowledgeable about childbirth than the 'dais', so the 'dais' are still called for helping women during and after delivery. Many 'dais' complained that 'we do the work, the 'sahayas' get the money!'



A traditional birth attendant addresses the meeting



The 'dais' in the audience listen attentively

Training, volunteers & visitors

JCMB has been fortunate to have the support of many skilled and dedicated people. During the year we were visited by Dr Rachana Dwivedi, from UK – who taught our health workers the need of early screening for cervical cancer, and also conducted a camp which examined almost 30 women. Later on in the year Drs Jyothi Unni, Ashok Shroff and Mary Shroff (from Pune and USA) came to help our operation theatre team upgrade their skills as well as provide much needed surgical treatment to women in need of operations. Finally Neil May (from UK), with his experience and skills in building technology, trained our local builders in more eco-friendly ways of rendering our building in Koromtanr.



April 2015 Dr Rachana Dwivedi, a gynaecologist /obstetrician from UK. She taught our health centre nurses the need for early detection of cervical cancer, and helped organize a colposcopy camp in the health centre. Dr Dwivedi is also a member of the Indian Liaison Group of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, which has also supported JCMB's activities.



JCMB has a tradition of providing training to health workers from other organisations, especially those based in Jharkhand, in areas where the health situation is as bad – if not worse – than here. This year two young women Sajeda and Firoza came from Sahebganj, from an organisation called United Mill Forum.

They spent 2 months with JCMB mainly to learn about care during pregnancy and childbirth. They are working in an area which is more than 2 hours away from a tertiary level hospital.

Progress in Koromtanj building



Praying for water in the well at Koromtanj



Fortunately water was found a-plenty



Natural colours used in rendering of the walls in the verandah and bathrooms

