

Jan Chetna Manch

Bokaro

Annual Report 2009 - 2010



**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 continues to work to 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.

The demands from the community have continued to grow – in the field of health, micro credit, livelihood.... JCMB has tried to respond to these needs in ways that the poor are not mere recipients of charity, but are active participants in the changes they seek to bring about.

In our endeavour we have been helped by many organisation and individuals. In the sphere of women's health the **Sir Dorabji Tata Trust** has supported us for another year. This support has been crucial for the expansion and running of the women's health programme and the health centre in particular. The **Tzedakah Trust** enabled us to provide much needed support to women during the difficult time of pregnancy and childbirth. The **Department of Health and Family Welfare of the Government of Jharkhand**, through the local health administration, continues to provide us with financial support to enable payments under the 'Janani Suraksha Yojana' programme.

Advocacy around the issue of maternal and neonatal health has been part of JCMB's mandate for years. We recognise that the services we provide can never be a substitute for the government health system. The **International Women's Health Coalition** supported our attempts to push the maternal health agenda with the community, health care providers and the district authorities.

The health, hygiene and sanitation programme, supported by **WaterAid India**, has greatly enhanced our work in the sphere of health. New activities have been undertaken through this project, such as low cost latrines and the repairing of tubewells, with obvious benefits for the health and well being of poor families.

Similarly our work with farmers, to improve agriculture and the environment, has obvious fallouts for the health status of the rural population. The introduction of new methods of farming, the cultivation and propagation of herbal medicines, and improved water harvesting, was supported by a grant from the **Niwano Peace Foundation**.

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

Satyaban Bose
Secretary

July 2010

Women's Self Help Groups

JCMB continues to facilitate women's self help groups, and their federation, the 'Chetna SHG Mahila Swabalambi Sahakari Samiti Ltd', a registered cooperative. It is through the SHGs that most of the activities of JCMB are channeled: health, livelihood training, water and sanitation. The groups are an effective grass roots rural women's organization, much needed to challenge gender discrimination as well as poverty problems. By March 2010 the federation had almost 8000 members, with total savings of Rs.96,00,000, and the cooperative had over Rs.3,00,000 as share capital.



Women's Self Help Group meeting

This year the annual general meeting – 'sammellan' – was held in Mahal – with groups of women coming from far flung villages of Chas and Chandankiari blocks....Chotitanr, Dabarbahal, Bodua.

These groups hired buses, trekkers and all other types of vehicles, at their own expense, to reach the venue. This yearly event is a much valued programme, with almost every group participating in it.



Women's Health Programme

The centre's second storey was finally completed and equipped and was fully functioning by the end of this year, with the help of the grant from the 'Sir Dorabji Tata Trust'. The inauguration took place in February 2010 with the support of the Deputy Commissioner of Bokaro, Shri Satyendra Singh. The following day the operation theatre was inaugurated with the help of Drs Saurav Das, Rita Saha, Sheela Kundu and Debashish Bannerjee.



The 'formal' inauguration, and...



...the actual inauguration.

The number of women and children accessing care from the 'Women's Health Centre' continues to grow. Outdoor clinics are now held on 3 days a week. The number of deliveries has also increased enormously this year, from 223 last year to 324.

The donation from the 'Tzedakah Trust' has enabled us to provide 'chana sattu' to poor women in pregnancy from the 7th to 9th month. Along with antenatal care this has helped improve the nutritional status of women. Nowadays severe anaemia and hypertension at the time of delivery are rare.

Women who access delivery care at the health centre are also eligible for payment under the 'Janani Suraksha Yojana' programme. JCMB has been accredited as a site for institutional deliveries, and we are also provided with the finances for distribution. Unfortunately the payment from the health authorities reaches us several months after the delivery has taken place.



Women with JSY cheques

Water and Sanitation

The issue of water and sanitation was taken up intensively, in campaign mode, in 10 'panchayats' this year, with the help of WaterAid India. The promotion of low cast latrines was taken up in these areas. Latrines in the villages of Chas and Chandankiari, even amongst the not-so-poor are rarely found. Less than 4% of the rural population had access to a latrine. It is an issue of priorities as well as poverty – 13% rural households had a mobile phone and 17% had some motorized vehicle! JCMB managed to facilitate 100 villagers to construct latrines this year.

JCMB also ventured into several new activities under this project: repairing and installation of hand pumps, the construction of toilets for the disabled, pits for the disposal of solid waste, and soak pits for the safe disposal of waste water accumulated around hand pumps.



Water testing with school children

All these activities have been undertaken through the women's self help groups. Group leaders are often members of the

'Village Water and Sanitation Committees' that we have helped to set up in the focus villages.



Girls toilet at school

All these activities have led to a decrease in the number of diarrhea cases in the last year. Diarrhea was a major killer of villagers every monsoon season in the past, and a major cause of indebtedness – as seen by the loans taken from the SHGs. Now such loans are rare, and deaths almost unheard of.



Women SHG members with their new hand pump

Agriculture, livelihood and the environment

The promotion of medicinal plant cultivation, organic farming and the utilization of barren land was taken up with the help of a grant from the 'Niwano Peace Foundation'

JCMB felt that farmers in the area needed exposure, since some new methods of agriculture have been introduced in nearby areas of Purulia and even at Petrobar in Bokaro district. Farmers visited water harvesting and saw SRI (System of Rice Intensification) in these areas.

The renovation of 3 ponds, which are used for irrigation, was also undertaken this year. Since this area is drought prone, particularly during the past 2 years, water conservation is a much felt need for agricultural production.



'Farmers' Fair' was organized by JCMB for the first time this year. More than 3000 farmers attended the fair, many bringing their vegetables, fruits and medicinal plants for demonstration.

The women's herbal medicine cooperative continues to grow. Much of the products are marketed through the health centre, and the women's SHGs. An acupuncturist also visits the health centre once a week, whose treatment also includes many herbal preparations such as massage oil, sciatica syrup, tonics and so on.



came for training and experience in childbirth care.

Advocacy, Research & Training

As part of JCMB's focus upon maternal and neonatal health, advocacy and research on this issue continue to be undertaken.

Meetings with traditional birth attendants, 'dais' and with village medical practitioners 'RMPs', were organized. The main focus of these meetings was the need to refer women fast, the dangers of oxytocin injections and the rules of the 'Janani Suraksha Yojana' scheme. This project was supported by a grant from the 'International Women's Health Coalition'.

The 'swasthya sakhis' are an integral part of the women's health programme and continue to come for training each month. Many of them now receive the government's ASHA incentive when they accompany women during childbirth. There are now 40 such community based women in the villages of Chas and Chandankiari, and there is considerable demand for expanding this next year.



Dr Dinesh Singh with village 'doctors'



Community health workers in the making from Uttarakhand

Training of community health workers and midwives continues to be one of the important activities of JCMB. This year 8 women from the 'Springs of Joy – School of Midwifery' (Ranchi) and 4 from the 'Phulyar Samiti' (Uttarkashi)

