



Report on

Documentation Products

Case studies, photo stories, films

September-December 2014

Submitted to

**Odisha Health Sector & Nutrition Support
Technical and Management Support Team (TMST), Odisha
Government of Odisha (GoO)**

Submitted by



New Concept Information Systems Pvt. Ltd.
Plot No. 167/B, Forest Park
Ground Floor,
Bhubaneswar-751009
Tel: 0674-2596066
email: bbsr@newconceptinfosys.com

Emcpl

Ekjut Management Consultancy Private Limited
Registered Office:
House No. 304-C, Road 1A
Ashok Nagar, Ranchi-834002, Jharkhand
Tel: 0651-2243105
email: rajesh.ekjut@gmail.com; akumar.ekjut@gmail.com



Case Stories

5

Over 200 case stories have been collected under the Shakti Varta project, some of them have been selected and presented in this report.

Photo Stories

21

Provision for uploading and updating photo stories has been made in the Shakti Varta Resource Centre (SVRC)

Films

22

During this quarter films were edited and uploaded onto SVRC

Case Stories

Over 200 case stories have been collected from the Wave I districts under the Shakti Varta project, some of them have been selected and presented below.

1. Manorama Ganda, SHG (M) Facilitator, Tudipaja GP, Phulbani block

32 year old Manorama Ganda lives with her in-laws and two children in Budharani village of Tudipaja Gram Panchayat, Dudki Block. Her husband, Shivram Ganda is working in Maharashtra and living there for some years now. Though he visits from time to time, he is away most of the time.



Manorama joined the Shakti Varta programme as a Facilitator and has conducted meetings up to meeting 5 till now. Though her husband is very supportive of her work, her mother-in-law is not very happy about her going from village to village and conducting meetings. Also, the meager incentive she gets does not add any support. Her mother-in-law strongly discourages her from working as a facilitator. Objections from in-laws cannot be ignored as a small matter in conservative, rural Odia families. Her husband's absence adds to her hurdles. In spite of such obstacles, she is keen to conduct meetings and attend training sessions and sometimes she lies to her family members in order to do her work as a facilitator. Later on, she explains to her father-in-law who is a little more supportive regarding her work.

She fights a battle everyday to work as a facilitator as she herself has suffered a lot of health complications as depicted in the picture cards. Tears well up in her eyes as she shares her experiences with us. It has been 14 years since she got married. She was a young girl when she gave birth to her first child, a boy. She got pregnant again very soon. When the due date came, she suffered a great deal of pain and delivered a stillborn baby in the hospital. She was heartbroken. But her sufferings did not end and in the following years she had three more stillborn babies. In between, she also gave birth to a baby girl who is alive and 11 years old now. Though she has two children now who are healthy and thriving, she can never forget the four stillborn babies she had nurtured in her womb for so many months.

She recalls her own situation and everyday musters the courage to step out of her home and meet some young girls and women to discuss the health problems they have faced, are facing and might face in the future and to spread awareness in the community so that no mother has to see her baby's dead face again.

2. Sasmita Kanhar, SHG(M)facilitator, Katringia GP, Phulbani Block

22 year-old Sasmita Kanhar has joined the Shakti Varta programme as a Facilitator just three months back. She has studied up to class 9. Her husband, Keshav Kanhar is a farmer. They live in Pangapaju village of Phulbani block. She has been married for five years and has no children. She was a member



of Srram Sahayak SHG and was involved in various activities such as brick producing, potato cultivation and husk collection from rice mills.

She is a very shy person and was very nervous initially at the thought of becoming a facilitator and conducting meetings with community members. When Bhola, the Shakti Varta Block Coordinator (BC) for Phulbani block approached her to become a facilitator she turned down the proposal as she was very scared of speaking in front of people. But Bhola explained the programme to her and gave her moral support to realise that she could in fact do the job.

Sasmita is blessed with a very supportive husband. Keshav, her husband said, “If you have gone to school and studied something, then that education should not be in vain. You must utilise the education you have received to do good deeds.” With these inspiring words from her husband and some additional push from the BC, she agreed to become a facilitator for the Shakti Varta programme.

Her first Shakti Varta meeting was scheduled to be held in Katakari SV point, a village that she had never gone to before. Her husband was supportive and escorted her to Katakari. She talked to the Anganwadi worker there and with her support conducted her first meeting. Community members liked the stick game a lot. The BC also accompanied her and provided support during the power walk game. She now enjoys the games involved in Shakti Varta meetings and tells us that community members really liked the handwashing exercise. Now she sees eager participants in every meeting. With every meeting that she conducts, she is growing as a person. She has come out of the cocoon of shyness and stepped into a whole new world of confidence.

3. Baijayanti Digal, SHG(M) Facilitator, Gudari GP, Khajuripada Block

Baijayanti Digal has been working as a facilitator in Gudari GP of Khajuripada Block. She lives with her in-laws, husband and two children in Gudari GP. The hilly terrain and forest areas pose a challenge for travelling to the assigned Shakti Varta points. Sometimes it gets dark by the time she finishes a meeting. Her family members are not very happy about her travelling during late hours in such regions. The small amount of incentive that she gets as a facilitator also adds to her family's dissatisfaction.

While Baijayanti also acknowledges that traveling to distant and difficult SV points in the evenings can be very tough, she does not want to leave the programme. She hopes that the authorities will sort out these problems. She lies to her inquiring family members regarding her incentives and tells them that she is getting more than what is actually given. When asked why she has to do all these things just to be a part of the programme, she replies tearfully and describes the flashback she has.

Baijayanti got married in 2007. Her in-law's family works in a brick factory. Soon she became pregnant. When the delivery date approached, she started having pain and discomfort. When she told her mother-in-law and husband about it, they ignored her problem and said that the date has still not come and such things happen. She finally delivered her child under immense pain at home when no one was there. Her husband and mother-in-law were away at work. She was still squirming in pain as her placenta was retained. For hours she was lying on the floor alone with her newborn son. Then her husband came and she was finally taken to Phulbani hospital. Doctors at the hospital said that if she was brought

any later, then saving her would have been very difficult. Her mother-in-law took the matter lightly and said that these things are common and not a big deal.

Baijayanti remembers her own self during that time and vows to spread awareness among women in villages so that no pregnant woman sees such a day as she did. She is happy to be part of this crusade.

4. Sarojini Nayak, SHG (M) Facilitator, Pabingia GP, Phiringia Block

Sarojini Nayak is 38 years old. Her husband, Champeswar Nayak is a daily wage labourer. She has one son and three daughters. Two of her daughters have studied up to matriculation and the other children are still in school. She has six Shakti Varta points allocated to her. Saitingia village is one of them. She recounted an interesting experience from that village.

On the day she went to Saitingia to conduct meeting 2, she saw that no women were present. However, male members of the community were present. They had attended meeting 1 and liked it a lot. That is why they were looking forward to the next meeting. Since Sarojini was disappointed at the absence of women, the men decided to do something. They reassured Sarojini and went to get a loudspeaker which was available in the village at that time as there was a festival going on. They used the loudspeaker to make announcements in the village regarding the Shakti Varta meeting and urged women to attend.

There are five SHG groups functioning in the village. The men made sure that at least members of these self-help groups attend the Shakti Varta meetings. With this initiative, the meeting was a success. Women who attended the meeting also committed to attend the following meetings.

5. Purnotoya Kanhar, SHG (M) Facilitator, Dimiriguda GP, Phiringia Block

Pidiaguda is a small village under Dimiriguda Gram Panchayat which is approximately 12 kms away from the *Panchayat* office. Purnotoya Kanhar had visited the village two days prior to her scheduled meeting to inform community members about the meeting. When Purnotoya reached the meeting venue on October 9, 2014, no one was to be seen. She waited till 2 pm but the women had not yet come. Gurubari Mallik observed this and took a novel initiative to gather women for the meeting. She took a steel plate and went around the village banging it. Such a loud noise attracted everybody's attention and they started peeking from their homes. Then she took the opportunity to call them to attend the Shakti Varta meeting.

Gurubari is the president of Ganeshwar SHG functioning in the village. With her initiative, within 30 minutes 36 women and eight men gathered to participate in the meeting.

6. Sunita Nayak, SHG (M) Facilitator, Rotang GP, Phiringia Block

Sunita Nayak reports a very positive change in one of her Shakti Varta point villages named Putukipada. After she started conducting Shakti Varta meetings in Putukipada, community members especially liked the part about sanitation. There have been various campaigns related to open defecation. They had knowledge about open defecation and its effects on their health but were still continuing with the practice.

After Sunita demonstrated hand washing in the meetings, it triggered a sense that we are actually consuming nasty germs because of our unhygienic practices (not washing our hands, not using toilets are some of them). The Shakti Varta meetings acted as the final push factor among some community members and they decided to build toilets.

Sunita reports that two families have already built toilets and are using them and 6-7 families have started building toilets in their homes. She has informed the CDPO of Phiringia block about this. The CDPO has asked her to get pictures of household owners in front of the constructed toilets along with their identity proofs so that she can ensure they get incentives for toilet construction.

7. Gitanjali Mallik, SHG (M) Facilitator, Rotang GP, Phiringia Block

Dongarpada is a small village which comes under Rotang Gram Panchayat of Phiringia Block, Kandhamal. Villagers were dependent on two *chuas* (water bodies which are smaller than ponds and dug near rivers or canals). They would use both *chuas* to bathe, clean themselves, wash clothes and for cooking purposes as well. There is a tube well in the village. Villagers used tube well water for drinking purposes.

When Gitanjali conducted Shakti Varta meetings and demonstrated the hand washing exercise, that triggered something in the village. They saw the dirty water after using it to wash their hands with soap and realized that they have been using dirty water to cook their food and in the process are consuming filth. They talked with the facilitator and amongst themselves and reached a consensus that firstly, they will clean the *chua* water by adding bleaching powder and then use one *chua* exclusively for bathing and cleaning while using the other for cooking purposes. Then, they carried out their plans and cleaned up the water using bleaching powder and did not use the *chua* water meant for cooking for any other cleaning activities.

Before the Shakti Varta intervention, scabies was a very common ailment prevailing in the community. After the initiative of cleaning and segregating water sources for cleaning and cooking, there has been a gradual decline in the skin disease.

8. Nirmala Pradhan, SHG (M) Facilitator, Tudipaja GP, Phulbani block

There are two communities living in Budhadani village of Tudipaja village. The scheduled caste (SC) community lives in Padar Sahi and the scheduled tribe (ST) community lives in Majhi Sahi.

When Nirmala went to the village to inform people about the Shakti Varta meetings and to invite them for the first meeting, both communities, though willing to attend, declined to sit together (SC and ST communities sitting together was not agreeable to them). While many of them were showing signs of reluctance, some of them refused straight away to attend meetings if they had to sit together.



People from Majhi Sahi (ST) were adamant about not coming for meetings if the SC community from Padar Sahi would also be attending. Nirmala tried to convince them

regarding the power of unity. She informed them about the games that she was going to play with community members in the upcoming meeting. Finally, after much persuasion, the women from Majhi Sahi agreed to come if they were allowed to sit a little bit apart from the Padar Sahi women and not on the same rug. Nirmala realized that it is a gigantic task to make them sit together as the divisions along caste lines are too deep rooted. She agreed to their conditions and arranged for separate rugs for the two communities.

On the meeting day, the two communities came and sat apart from each other. Nirmala began the meeting and introduced the Shakti Varta programme. She conducted the stick game and explained its message of “unity is power”. Some women from both communities took the message to heart and when she asked for volunteers for the power walk game, they volunteered to play together in spite of coming from different castes and communities.

Nirmala says that while many still insist on sitting on separate rugs or taking a bath on returning from meetings, there are women who have understood the meaning of power of unity and now interact with women from other castes as their friends. The caste feeling is so deep rooted in our minds that it is almost impossible to uproot the feeling in just a couple of meetings. The fact that they are willing to come together for a meeting and play together is a big achievement for Nirmala. It does not matter if they take a bath after the meeting; the willingness to attend meetings together is a big achievement.

9. Mamata Digal, SHG (M) Facilitator, Pirikudi GP, Khajuripada Block

Bepangpaju village is a Shakti Varta point assigned to Mamata Digal. When she went there to conduct the first Shakti Varta meeting, she met a participant named Menaka Digal who she lives in the village with her husband, Indrajit Pradhana and one child. Mamata found out that Menaka was pregnant but had not registered herself with the *Anganwadi* centre.

Mamata explained about the services that pregnant women can avail of via the *Anganwadi* Centre from the government. The ASHA *didi* informed Mamata that this was Menaka’s second pregnancy and she had availed all the services during her first pregnancy. Mamata was surprised and decided to go to Menaka’s home after the meeting was over and talk to her about registering her name in the AWC.

Post the meeting, Mamata took the ASHA *didi* along with her and went to Menaka’s house. When they had a talk with Menaka, she revealed that she got pregnant soon after delivering her first child. She thought that it would cause embarrassment if she went to the ASHA and AWW to register for her second pregnancy. Mamata and the ASHA *didi* explained to her that while keeping a gap between children is important, availing services such as IFA tablets, checkups and getting adequate nutrition is also equally important and she should register her name in the AWC as a pregnant woman no matter what. Mamata also informed her about the MAMATA scheme under which she would get monetary help and also eggs and *chhatua* for her nutritional needs.

Menaka was seven months pregnant at that time. After being convinced by the facilitator and ASHA *didi*, she went to the AWC and registered her name there. The ASHA *didi* visited her regularly after that. Menaka delivered a weak baby girl on December 14, 2014 who weighed 1.8 kgs. If she would have registered during the initial stage of her pregnancy and received all medicines, immunisation and nutrition, then she could have delivered a healthy baby.

10. Chanchala Nayak, SHG (M) Facilitator, Balaskumpa GP, Khajuripada Block

Nuasahi is one of the Shakti Varta points assigned to Chanchala Nayak who works as a Facilitator in Balaskumpa *Gram Panchayat*. When she went to conduct the first Shakti Varta meeting in Nuasahi, a pregnant woman named Bidulata Majhi attended the meeting.

Though 20 year-old Bidulata lived quite near to the Anganwadi centre, she was yet to register her name as a pregnant woman there. Her husband Phinuel Digal works outside the district as a daily wage labourer. She lives with her in-laws in Nuasahi who are not very cooperative with her as Phinuel and Bidulata had a love marriage. After she attended the first meeting, somehow something struck her and she herself approached the Facilitator and asked for her help to get registered in the AWC as a pregnant woman. Chanchala was very happy to help her and took her to the AWC for registration. She registered and AWW *didi* asked her to attend the *Mamata Diwas* regularly. When she started attending the *Mamata Diwas*, the ASHA and ANM *didi* informed her about immunization and gave her the required vaccines. She received IFA tablets as well and started taking them. Chanchala also followed up with her regarding the staple food that she was entitled to get from the AWC. She found out that Bidulata was not taking *chhatua* and eggs from the AWC. Chanchala explained to her that having nutritious food is very important for her own and her baby's health. Since then, she has started taking the supplements.

When the delivery date came, Chanchala was by her side and helped her go to Phulbani hospital. She had a normal delivery and gave birth to a healthy baby boy who weighed 2.6 kgs. They have named the baby boy Rejoice. Rejoice is a month old now and weighs a healthy 5.1 kgs.

11. Pravasini Jani, SHG (M) Facilitator, Dutipada GP, Khajuripada Block

Raikhola is a Shakti Varta point assigned to Pravasini Jani who works as a Shakti Varta Facilitator in Dutipada *Gram Panchayat*. On October 18, 2014, she was conducting meeting 2 in Raikhola Anganwadi centre. The group was having a discussion on identifying various maternal health and neonatal health problems. Some women participants informed the facilitator about Sumati Jani, a woman who is pregnant but has not registered in the AWC. 21 year-old Sumati lives with her husband Ajit Jani in the village. Fellow participants also shared that earlier, Sumati had lost a child soon after its birth.

Pravasini talked with the ASHA *didi* and they decided to visit Sumati at her home. They then went to Sumati's house and talked to her about registering her name in the AWC so that she can avail of many services such as immunisation, regular health checkups, IFA tablets, *chhatua*, eggs and monetary assistance under the MAMATA scheme. Sumati was six months pregnant then. She showed reluctance in registering her name in the AWC. Pravasini and the ASHA then reminded her about her first child whom she had lost as it was a small and underweight baby. They told her that she had already lost one child and if she wanted to have a healthy baby this time, then she should avail all the entitlements provided by the government for pregnant mothers to ensure that no child dies.

She became emotional and realised that it is in our hands to save a life and not always in the hands of fate. If she would have taken adequate nutrition and care during her first pregnancy, then her baby would have been alive. She did not want her second pregnancy to end in that way and agreed to register her name in the AWC. Sumati is now regularly attending VHND days in the AWC and taking IFA tablets along with *chhatua* and eggs.

12. Sarojini Nayak, SHG (M) Facilitator, Pabingia GP, Phiringia Block

Magamunda is one of the Shakti Varta points assigned to Sarojini Nayak who works as a facilitator in Pabingia GP. A woman named ____ was one of the participants in the Shakti Varta meetings. At the time of meeting 1, she was pregnant for the third time. She also participated in the next meetings and then she shared that she lost her first child soon after its birth due to infection. Her second child is alive. In both cases, she delivered in her own home.

When her due date came this time, she did not opt for an institutional delivery and delivered her baby on December 16, 2014. However, there were complications and her placenta was retained. Sarojini and SHG members of the village were aware about her delivery and came to her house to enquire about her condition. When they saw that her placenta was retained and she was in a lot of pain, they quickly contacted the ASHA *didī*, Sanjukta Digal and informed her about ____ condition. ASHA *didī* called 102 ambulance service and they took her to Phiringia hospital. She and her newborn child were treated there and they are fine now.

This timely action of taking her to a hospital saved her life. She now realised the importance behind the message that institutional delivery should always be preferred as several unforeseen complications can be addressed in hospitals. These kinds of complications can take lives if not addressed in time.

13. Laxmi Rani Kanhar, SHG (M) Facilitator, Sadingia GP, Phiringia

Bandadani is the name of a small village which comes under Sadingia *Gram Panchayat*. It is situated 17 kms away from the *Gram Panchayat* office and has 236 populations. Laxmi Rani Kanhar is the Facilitator assigned to conduct Shakti Varta meetings in Bandadani SV point. Gajurghati is a tagged village to this SV point.

When Laxmi conducted the first Shakti Varta meeting in this village, participants especially liked the stick game and the message it relayed. Previously there were no Self-help Groups in the village. When Laxmi explained to them about how working together can help them immensely, they were very inspired and approached Laxmi about forming an SHG in their village. Laxmi was very happy to help them. With the Facilitator's support, they formed a new SHG comprising of 10 members and named it Ramadevi SHG. They now understand the power of unity.

14. Rajeswari Nayak, SHG (M) Facilitator, Balaskumpa GP, Khajuripada Block

Rajeswari Nayak works as a Facilitator in Balaskumpa *Gram Panchayat* which comes under Khajuripada block. When she went to conduct the first meeting in the Shakti Varta points assigned to her, she found that the stick game was liked the most in all meetings. After conducting the game, she explained the message that it sends to participants. She told them that by staying united they can help each other. They can form SHG groups and start saving money and in case of need, they can help each other financially as well. They can take a pregnant woman to hospital on their own in case the ASHA is not available. These messages impressed the participants a lot and inspired women in these villages to form SHGs. They then approached Rajeswari about forming their own SHGs.

Rajeswari was more than happy to assist and she helped form five SHGs in Balaskumpa, Khaligudri and Barikumpa villages. Two SHGs were formed in Balaskumpa village whose names were Maa Barala Devi SHG and Maa Tarini SHG with 12 and 10 members respectively. One SHG named Om Shanti Om SHG has been formed in Khaligudri village with 10 members and two SHGs have been formed in Barikumpa village named Dolagobinda SHG and Maa Santoshi SHG with 15 members in each group.

15. Baijayanti Digal, SHG (M) Facilitator, Gudari GP, Khajuripada Block

When Baijayanti conducted meeting 1 in Dadapaju village, she explained to the participants about the power of unity through the stick game. She explained to them that if they stay united and support each other, then their collective power will be immense. They can access financial help as well as moral support. Baijayanti explained to them that if they unite and save money by forming SHGs, then in case of medical emergencies, they could help fellow community members as well. If a pregnant woman needs to be taken to a hospital in the absence of the ASHA, then they can take care of that. This message affected the participants a lot and they approached the facilitator about forming a new SHG. Baijayanti helped them to form a new SHG named Maa Narayani SHG with 10 members. Now the members are confident that they can have some financial independence and can help someone in need.



16. Kuni Digal, SHG (M) Facilitator, Pabingia GP, Phiringia Block

Kuni Digal (37 years) lives with her husband and three children in Pabingia. Her husband Haven Swor works as a postman. When Kuni went to Nedi Sahi, a Shakti Varta point assigned to her to conduct the first meeting, she saw that the quality of life in that village was lacking in every aspect.

There was absolutely no awareness about health, hygiene and SHGs and no SHGs were functioning in Nedi Sahi. Kuni took the help of the AWW and organised the first meeting. In the meeting, she tried to make the participants realise the power of unity with the help

of the stick game. The participants liked the game a lot and also understood that if they form an SHG, then it would aid them in every aspect of their life, be it financial, emotional or moral.

Motivated by all this positive information, participants expressed their interest in forming new SHGs in the village. Kuni then helped them to form two new SHGs. The names of the newly formed SHGs are Maa Tulasi and Anandmayee SHG with 10 members each. Right now, they are concentrating on saving in their new SHGs.

17. Sarojini Nayak, SHG (M) Facilitator, Pabingia GP, Phiringia Block

When Sarojini went to conduct the first meeting in Mesripada village of Pabingia GP, she found that no SHG had been formed or was functioning in that village. However, she went on to conduct the meeting and explained about the power of unity through the stick game and power walk game. She told them that if they always stand by each other, then they can ensure that everyone receives what they are entitled to. In this way, we can ensure integrated development of the community.

Participants really liked the message and asked her how could go about it. Sarojini suggested that they should form SHGs so that they can save money for now and help fellow members in case of financial need. Participants expressed their interest in forming two new SHGs and asked for the Facilitator's help. With Sarojini's help, they formed two new SHGs. The names of these SHGs are Penjipanga SHG with 10 members and Shantimayi SHG with 13 members. Currently these SHGs concentrate on savings activities.

18. Jayashree Behera, SHG(M) Facilitator, Dudki GP, Phulbani Block

Jayashree was born and brought up in Niali, a tahsil in Cuttack district. She married into a family in Phulabani and has been living in Dudki GP for 11 years now. Jayashree used to work in the Anganwadi Centre but after having children she quit working. When the Shakti Varta programme started in Kandhamal, now that her children are grown up she chose to work as a facilitator.

Jayashree shared the story of a participant of her SV point Dubagada of Duduki Gram Panchayat. The participant's name is Tapaswini Nayak. She is 20 years old and has been married for 4 years. Tapaswini's first pregnancy ended in a miscarriage. Soon she conceived again and gave birth to a baby boy in November 2013. Though she had delivered in a hospital (Phulbani Hospital), she came home soon after delivery. Due to insufficient mother's milk, her family was giving boiled water and milk to the baby. Jayashree was not a facilitator at that time but she knew about newborn health (from her AWC days), she requested them not to give anything to the baby other than his mother's milk. The baby did not survive and closed his eyes when he was just five days old.

Tapaswini got pregnant again after a couple of months. This time Jayashree convinced her to go to the hospital for the delivery and asked her to save some money so that she could stay in the hospital for at least 5 days and ensure that any unforeseen complications could be handled by the doctors. Tapaswini did not want to risk losing her child again so she took the advice seriously. In December 2014, Tapaswini started having labor pains. Her family members contacted the ASHA and facilitator and they called the 108 ambulance. By the time

the ambulance reached, Tapaswini had already given birth to a baby boy. But they still chose to go to Phulbani Hospital. The very next day the baby developed Jaundice. While they were at the hospital the child's jaundice was treated which wouldn't have been possible if they were at home. Tapaswini is now giving her baby just her breast milk and nothing else. Both the mother and son are doing well now. She is very thankful to Jayashree for her precious advice because of which after suffering from 2 losses she has a healthy baby.

19. Manorama Ganda, SHG(M) Facilitator, Tudipaja GP, Phulbani Block

Manorama shared a very emotional experience about one of her meetings. It was in Sutaguda SV point. She was conducting meeting no 2. When Manorma showed the picture card related to prolonged labour, an elderly woman broke into tears. Manorama consoled her and asked her the reason for getting so emotional. The elderly lady then shared her daughter's story who has got married in Minia village. When her daughter was pregnant for the first time she had prolonged labor pain. Despite the long hours of pain, her mother in law did not let her go to a hospital and insisted on having a home delivery. She finally delivered at home. Though her baby is fine but she suffered a lot of pain and is still suffering from any complications as a result of that. The elderly lady shared that her daughter currently pregnant for the second time. She said now that she has learnt about possible complications that can arise if we do not take a pregnant woman to hospital despite her suffering from prolonged labor pain, she will now ensure that her daughter do not have to go through that hell again.

She immediately took decision that she will bring her daughter to her own home and take her to a hospital when delivery time comes. She has now brought her daughter and her child to her home and taking adequate care of her health. She has ensured that this time her daughter do not have to suffer and have a safe delivery.

20. General Increase in Hand Washing Practice

All our Shakti Varta facilitators report a general increase in hand washing after the Shakti Varta intervention. Nirmala Pradhan, SHG(M) Facilitator of Tudipaja GP says, "women used wash their hands with mud or ash after defecation. Now, I see them using soap to wash their hands. I observe them doing this at the time of bathing in the village pond." Some community women said that their children have learnt hand washing in their schools and are now insisting on washing hands at home before and after eating. Seeing them washing their hands was providing motivation to the women. But with their busy days it was overlooked as something not important. However, after Shakti Varta meetings when facilitators demonstrated the exercise and showed them the dirty water they are consuming as a result of not washing hands, it provided that extra push and now they wash their hands regularly.



Sarojini Nayak, SHG (M) Facilitator for Pabingia GP and Sunita Nayak, SHG (M) Facilitator for Rotang GP echoed similar observations. They shared that communities in Bengespadar village of Pabingia GP and Jargipadar village of Rotang GP especially took a liking towards the hand washing exercise and are now washing their hands before handling food and after defecation.

21. “I want my unborn child to be healthy”

Bidulata Khura(25 yrs,SC), Kondha Gotiguda village, Rayagada

Bidulata has a 4 year old daughter and is currently 7 months pregnant. This is her third pregnancy. Her first pregnancy ended up in a miscarriage at 5 months. Her family's main occupation is working as daily wage labor. Her mother is the Anganwadi helper in Kondha Gotiguda village. She got to know about Shakti Varta from her mother. She is not involved in any SHG and is completely dependent on her mother and living with her.

She said, “I came to this meeting to learn something. I want to teach my daughter and make sure my unborn child is born healthy. I learnt a lot from this meeting and I cannot wait to attend the next. I will definitely attend the next meeting.”

She said she learnt to keep a hygienic environment at her home. To wash her hands with soap before serving and eating food so that she and her family stays healthy. She also added that she will now cover food items to avoid flies sitting on food which might make her family and her sick.

22. “Picture cards brought Flashbacks of my pregnant self”

Surjya Palkia (25 yrs,SC, Kondha Gotiguda village, Rayagada

Surjya has studied till 9th standard. Her parents married her off when she was 15. She is the mother of three children, two sons and a daughter aged 7, 1 and 4 respectively. Her husband is a vegetable vendor in the local market.

She was informed about the SV meeting from the AWW helper. Her family is supportive of her decision to go and attend the meetings. She did not attend the last meeting but her mother in law attended it. This time her mother in law could not attend the meeting because she went with her son to help him with his work.

Surjya has been pregnant 6 times. Her first child was prematurely born at 7 months and could not survive. In her third pregnancy she gave birth to her baby on time but the baby was severely malnourished. Two weeks after birth the baby died (most probably due to SID). During her 5th pregnancy she went to Bissam Cuttack hospital because her baby was not moving in her belly. The doctor did an ultrasound and noticed very little fluid. She was asked to come for a monthly check up until delivery. She had labour pain in time but had an obstructed labour. The doctors used the vacuum to pull out the baby, but the baby did not survive. Now she has had a family planning operation done. Her mother in law encouraged her to get the operation done.

She said, “I learnt a lot in this meeting. After seeing the picture card I could visualize me in those conditions. I will definitely go to the next meeting and call my neighbours and friends to attend the meeting as well.”

23. I will either find a way or make one

Mrs. Surusuta Bag, Bolangir District Federation Secy

I was born and brought up in Burla, Sambalpur but I got married in a family who live in a remote village (Sialbahili, Jhankarpali GP, Bolangir sadar block). We did not have a toilet in my in-law's house. All the members including women had to go to open field to attend nature's call. As a newlywed bride I found it very difficult as I was not accustomed to it. One day in the afternoon I went to the field to attend nature's call. To add to my embarrassment, I saw my husband's cousin brother standing there in the field attending to the grazing cows. I didn't know what to do so that he goes away. I hesitated and asked him what he was doing there. He looked at me and shot the question back at me to know what business I had in the field. I was so ashamed to answer the question, I turned around and came back home. After I reached home I was determined not to go the field ever again for defecating. But in order to do that I needed an alternative. I saw a shallow pit in our backyard. An idea struck my mind and I dug it deeper. Then with the help of a wooden slab I made a temporary toilet. I started using that toilet after that and stopped going to the field. Seeing me all the women in our house also used that toilet. After noticing this, my husband decided to build a toilet in our house. Now we have a toilet and all the members in our family do not go to open field for defecation.

24. Eager participants

Mrs. Sampati Saa, SHG Member Facilitator, Hirapur GP, Loisinga Block

I (Sampati Saa) would like to share a story of a 28 year old participant of my SV meetings. Arati Pradhan had been pregnant twice and both the time she delivered in Bolangir Block Hospital. But she used to take discharge from the hospital soon after giving birth. Unfortunately she lost her babies both the times after a few days due to unknown reasons. She and her mother in law both attended Shakti Varta meetings (meeting 1 to 3). She is currently five months pregnant. After attending the meetings they are now aware of various problems related to pregnancy and newborn health. Through the picture cards she is now aware of several common ailments. Women of the community are sharing each other's experience during the meeting which also adds to the information pool. By all this she is now aware and careful about her current pregnancy. She is now attending VHND (Mamata Divas), and consulting ASHA along with regular antenatal checkups to ensure birth of a healthy baby. In each meeting she is learning some useful information regarding maternal health and child health. She and her mother in law are now eager and happy to attend Shakti Varta meetings.

25. Be the change you want to see

Padmini Barik, SHG Member Facilitator, Mandal GP, Belpada Block

Before I joined Shakti Varta, I used to spend evening free time by watching television. After I joined Shakti Varta I found all the information so interesting that now in the evenings when I am free, instead of watching television I read the Facilitator Handbook. I have a son who studies in Class 9th. Earlier he was not paying that much attention towards studies. But now seeing me, my son has also started taking his studies seriously. Now he is concentrating on his studies. I am very happy because of this positive behaviour change in my family.

On 22nd July 2014, I had a SV meeting in Junapada village. During the meeting I came to know about Menaka Rana, a lady of 50 years who was suffering from diarrhea since the previous night. After the meeting I talked with the ASHA and went to see Menaka. I found her in critical condition and asked the family members to take her to Belpada CHC or Kantabanjhi CHC. I immediately called an ambulance and sent Menaka to Kantabanjhi CHC.

I also discussed with the AWW (1) Kishori Thakur, AWW (4) and ASHA Sabitri Nina and visited individual house to spread awareness in the community to fight against increase cases in Diarrhea but it was difficult to make them aware to take preventive measures to stop the increase of diarrhea burden as in between 22nd July to 5th August 9 persons had come under the trap of diarrhea which included a mother of 6 month baby and 5yrs child named Laxmi Rana, a pregnant women name Rebati Budek, two brothers of 5yrs & 10 yrs Anil and Sunil Barge, wife of Sradhakar Rana, son of Bhiti Rana, a couple Bideshi Rana & Ullashi Rana and also a 1yr old girl Sana Rana. ASHA didi referred all to CHC Belpada and CHC Kantabanjhi. I thought and rushed to the village temple where a mic set is available for festivals. With the help of the mic I announced the messages to villagers on using precautions to prevent diarrhea. I also coordinated with ANM didi and started pouring bleaching powder in wells, ponds and tube wells to make the water contamination free. This timely action was able to control an outbreak of diarrhea in our village.

26. A Ray of Hope: Addressing Social Inequalities Through Shakti Varta Meeting

Premalata Majhi, Bankel GP, SHG(M) Facilitator

Ranabandha village, in Bankel Gram Panchayat, Muribahal block, has a population of 583. There are two dominant castes in the village: the Dora caste belonging to the SC (Scheduled Caste) community and the Gouda caste of the OBC (Other Backward Castes) community. There had been a long-running conflict between the communities due to a land dispute, resulting in a huge social and communication gap among them. They would never participate together in any social event, such as marriage parties, funerals or any other gathering, which further aggravated the situation. There was not even any individual interaction among the community members.



The facilitator learned of the situation when she made a transect walk with the AWW. She strongly believed that both the communities could come together, discuss their problems, participate in each other's social gathering, and provide support to each other. She joined forces with the AWWs to discuss with the communities the purpose of their visit, the Shakti Varta (SV) programme, its aims and objectives, and how this programme would benefit them. She talked to the elders of both the communities, and persuaded them to sit together and attend the meeting. She also convinced the SHG members to attend SV meetings.

Both the communities' members agreed to attend the SV meeting. On the appointed date she conducted the meeting where members of both communities participated. She observed that adolescent girls were actively involved in the meeting, especially during

Power-walk game. At the end of the meeting, an old lady of the community sang a song and all the participant danced enthusiastically.

It is small initiatives like this one that lead to social inclusion and empowerment.

27. Oath of Change

Anandini Sahu, Pandamunda GP, Patnagarh Block, SHG (M) Facilitator

I was conducting Shakti Varta meeting number 3. When I showed the picture card related to prolonged labour, many women identified that they and their near and dear ones have faced similar problems. Participants of the meeting said generally their family members neglect women in these conditions and do not take them to the hospital in time. The women group present in the meeting took an oath on that day to not let this happen anymore. They said that they will intervene with the families where such instances are occurring and convince them to take women to the hospital immediately.

28. United We Stand, United We Fight

Chandini Kanher, SHG (M) Facilitator, Mansapali, Loisingha block, Bolangir

Mansapali is a small village located just 12 km away from Loisingha block and 32 km away from district headquarter. This village has 87 households and a population of 365. Mainly tribal community dominates the village's population. The main source of livelihood of the villagers is agriculture and wage labour.

Chandini Kanher works as a SHG Member facilitator for Shakti Varta programme. Padmini Deep is a community member of the village. She lives with her two daughters, a son and her husband, Benjamin Deep in the village. She is a regular participant of Shakti Varta meetings that Chandini Kanher conducts. On 16th of September 2014 DFID team visited Mansapali to observe a Shakti Varta village meeting. Padmini Deep was also present in the meeting on that day. She had never missed a single Shakti Varta meeting since the day it started. By the time the meeting ended, it was already 7 in the evening. When Padmini got back to her home, her husband was fuming with rage as it was late and already dark. He angrily screamed and yelled at her and even beat her up in anger as dinner was getting delayed because of her attending meetings.

The very next day SHG members were having a meeting in the village. Padmini with her resilient spirit attended the meeting and shared previous night's events with the members. All the members decided to do something about it rather than keeping mum and counseling the wife. They went and talked to Benjamin. They condemned his behavior and explained him that they will not tolerate such actions against a woman in the community any more. Benjamin apologized and promised not to repeat such actions ever again.

The women SHG members recalled stick game after this incidence. They could realize the power that lies in unity as they stopped a wrong doing by standing together.

29. Impact of Shakti Varta, A Success Story

Rosalini Barik, SHG (M) Facilitator, Sadeipali GP, Bolangir Block

Kamalini Udurukulia around 30 years old and her husband Bablu Udurkulia are living in Chantiapali of Gandharel village, which comes under Sadeipali Grampanchayat of Bolangir Sadar Block of district Bolangir.

Kamalini belongs to a very poor family. So, kamallini and her husband have been working as wage labourers in construction work like house building.

Few years ago, Kamalini had got pregnant twice. During pregnancy she never took any pre-caution, like consulting the doctor, taking nutritional foods, taking rest etc., and she continued to go to the work site and continued working as well as lifting heavy weights. Both the times she got pregnant in the 7th & 8th running month of pregnancy she miscarried.

Between this, the 'Shakti Varta a PLA process with SHG' was started in Bolangir district aiming to reduce the IMR and MMR. Like the other GPs and village of the district this programme also started at Chantiapali in which Kamalini became a regular and active participant. When Shakti Varta started Kamalini was pregnant for the third time (at 6 months pregnant).

Kamalini participated in PLA meeting nos. 1, 2, 3 regularly and actively participated by practicing all the points very seriously. She made changes in her behaviour and she imbibed some positive practices. She has with her the Registration at AWC, attending VHND / 4 times health checkups, eating nutritional foods and she is reducing her time at the work site and taking rest as well as taking sufficient care for herself and the fetus.

Finally on her due date, 20.11.2014 Kamalini gave birth to a healthy (2.8 kgs.) baby girl at the district head quarter Hospital, Bolangir. Now both mother and child are doing well.

Shakti Varta and the PLA process have brought a smile to Kamalini's face. She hopes that this PLA process will be helpful to save the lives of more mother and children with a great effort.

30. The Rainbow Baby

Jagyanseni Danta, SHG (M) Facilitator, Jamut GP, Gudvela Block

Gambhariguda is a small village of Jamut GP under Gudvela Block of Bolangir Dist. having population of 424 and is tribal community dominated. The inhabitants of the village mainly depend on agriculture, collection of NTFP from forest and daily wage earned on labor for their livelihood.

Hema Suna (25 years), wife of Sri Arjun Suna lives in the village with her four family members. Her pregnancies ended in miscarriage within 1st three month till her last (3rd) pregnancy. Ms. Hema was suffering from Sickie Cell and jaundice .During the village meeting of Shakti

Varta in Gambhariguda while she was pregnant for the fourth time; she came in contact with the Facilitator, Jagyanseni Danta and regularly attended the meeting starting from 1st to 3rd meeting. The facilitator in person give her information about mother and child care during the period of pregnancy .Taken into confidence by the facilitator Jagysaseni Danta, Srimati Suna used to attend VHND at the Anganwadi Center and was taking IFA capsules regularly. She took medical care in a timely manner on the advice of the facilitator. She attended CHC Gudvela for the delivery but doctors referred her to Dist. Headquarter hospital due to excessive labour pain and bleeding. She gave birth a baby in the Dist. H.Q. hospital and to her surprise, the delivery was normal. Both mother and child are in good health. After suffering from so many losses, Hema never thought she would be able to hold her child in her arms. Her dream is now very much real and she is now a mother of a healthy baby.

31. Her Sixth Child Lived

Jagyanseni Danta, SHG (M) Facilitator, Jamut GP, Gudvela Block

Belgaon is a small village of Jamut GP under Gudvela Blocks of Bolangir Dist. having population of 263 and 164 HH and ST dominated. The main source of livelihood of the habitants is Agriculture and collection of NTFT from the forest. The village is situated in the bank of river Rahul. The Villagers of Belgaon face lot of problem during rainy season, especially health facilities. There is AWW center in the village but worker of the centre is from nearest village of Biramunda. ASHA is not available in the village.



28 year old Gouri Majhi lives with her family in the village of Belgaon. Her husband Gokul Majhi's main occupation is agriculture and collection of NTFT during non-agricultural season. Gouri had been pregnant 5 times. In her first 4 pregnancies she had 2 still births, one instance of twins and 1 deformed child. None of them survived to see the light of day. Due to superstition and shame from the society she was not able to express her difficulty to others. During pregnancy she did not go for check-up or get advice from the doctor.

During the month of July 2014, Gouri was pregnant for the 5th time, she attended the Shakti Varta village meeting and during the village meeting Ms. Jagyaseni Danta came to know of the heart wrenching story of Gouri. After the meeting was over, the facilitator visited her home and motivated her about taking care during the period pregnancy and requested to Gouri participate in the village meeting and VHND. Gouri was at the driving end of depression and desperation at that time. She and her family desperately wanted this baby healthy and they were willing to do whatever it required.

Due to regular encouragement from facilitators and AWW, Gouri attended the VHND session at Anganwadi and ensured health check-up regularly during the pregnancy as well as took guidance of the doctor. Last month Gouri gave birth to a baby under normal conditions and now, after a month post birth, both the mother and child are healthy.

Photo Stories

Provision for uploading and updating photo stories has been made in the Shakti Varta Resource Centre (SVRC), the screen shot below has photo-stories from a training session of the State Resource Pool.

The picture stories can be viewed by visiting www.src.shaktivarta.org in the following section
- Training Materials >> Programme Training >> Phase III and Phase IV >> SRP Trainings

The screenshot displays the Shakti Varta Resource Centre website. The header features the SVRC logo, a navigation menu (HOME, ABOUT SVRC, SHAKTI VARTA WEBSITE, OTHER RESOURCES), a search bar, and a language selector (English | ଓଡ଼ିଆ). The left sidebar contains links to REFERENCE VIDEOS ON HNWASH, FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS, TRAINING CALENDAR, TRAINING MATERIALS, and GOVERNMENT SCHEMES & SERVICES. The main content area shows the breadcrumb trail: You are here: Home >> Training Materials >> Programme training >> Phase III and Phase IV >> Images. Below this, a section titled 'Images' lists five photo stories from Day 1 of training:

1. Day 1- An energiser round
2. Day 1- Bolangir Team during group work
3. Day 1- Devjit Mittra addressing the participants
4. Day 1- Kandhamal Team during group work
5. Day 1- Kandhamal Team group presentation

An 'Announcements' section on the left lists recent updates, including MIS Software installation and team review meetings.

Films

During this quarter the following films were edited and uploaded onto the SVRC:

- Wrapping Video
- Doll Making
- Identify General Danger Signs in New Born Baby

The screenshot below shows the films listed in the SVRC and also of the video being played. All the films are also downloadable for use in the training sessions and field.

The films can be viewed by visiting www.src.shaktivarta.org in the following section - Training Materials >> Programme Training >> Phase III and Phase IV >> Short Session Wise Videos



