

Sumitra, the ASHA of village Rampur, was concerned that a few families in the village were not bringing their babies for immunisation. So she decided to visit them in their homes and explain the importance of immunisation to them and the need to get their children immunised.

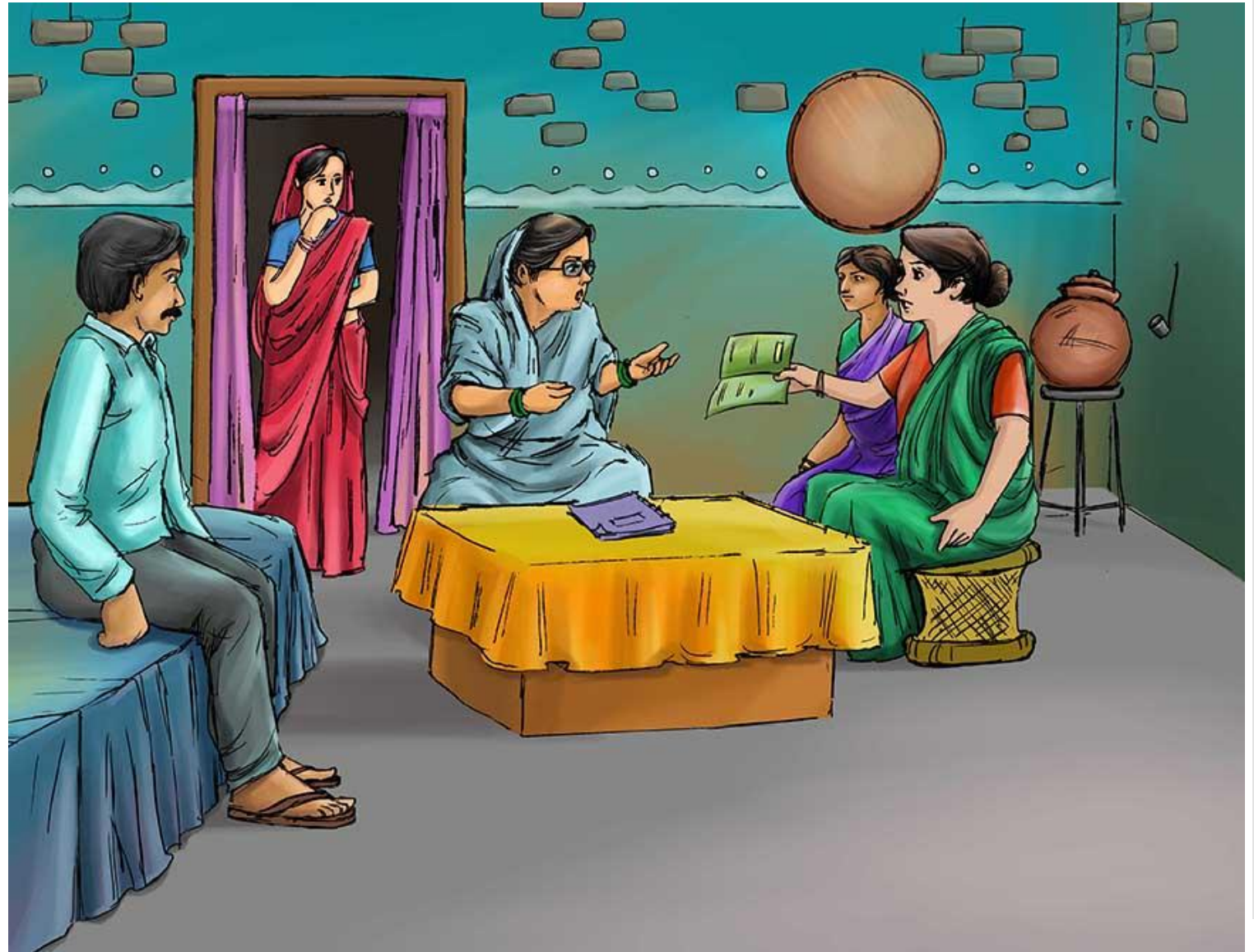


One of the houses she visited was that of Shanta, a lady with a 6-month-old baby who had never been immunised. When Sumitra discussed the need to immunise her son, Shanta said that her family did not believe in immunisation and that her mother-in-law and husband, Ramlal, would never allow her to immunise the child. Sumitra, in a very friendly and caring manner, explained to Shanta why immunisation was important and asked her to attend the VHN Day the following Wednesday along with her baby. Shanta promised to discuss this with her family.

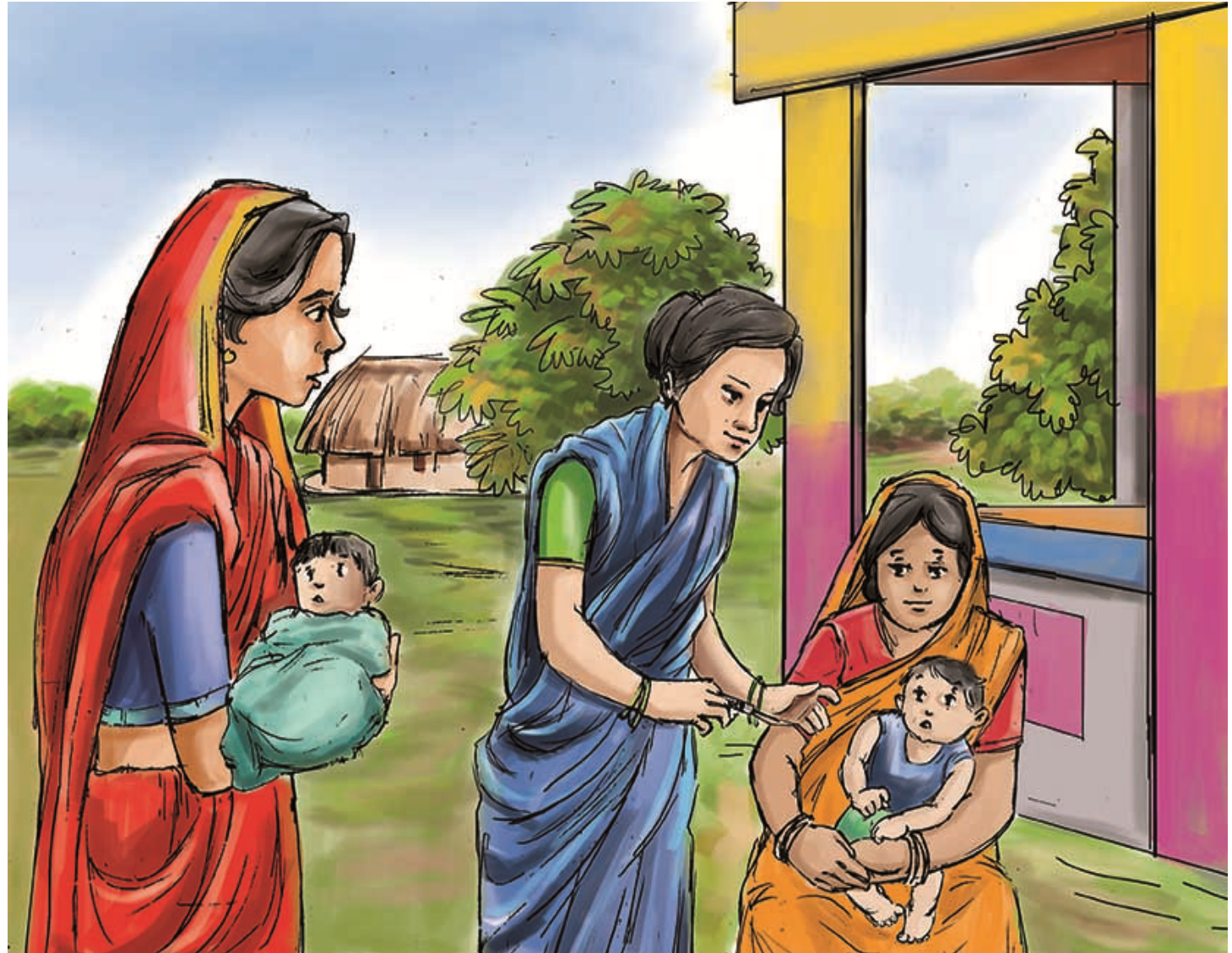




On VHN Day, Sumitra noted that Shanta had not brought her baby for immunisation and so, after the session, she took the AWW to Shanta's house and was fortunate to meet both Ramlal and his mother. She explained to them too the need for immunisation. After much persuasion, they agreed to immunise the child.



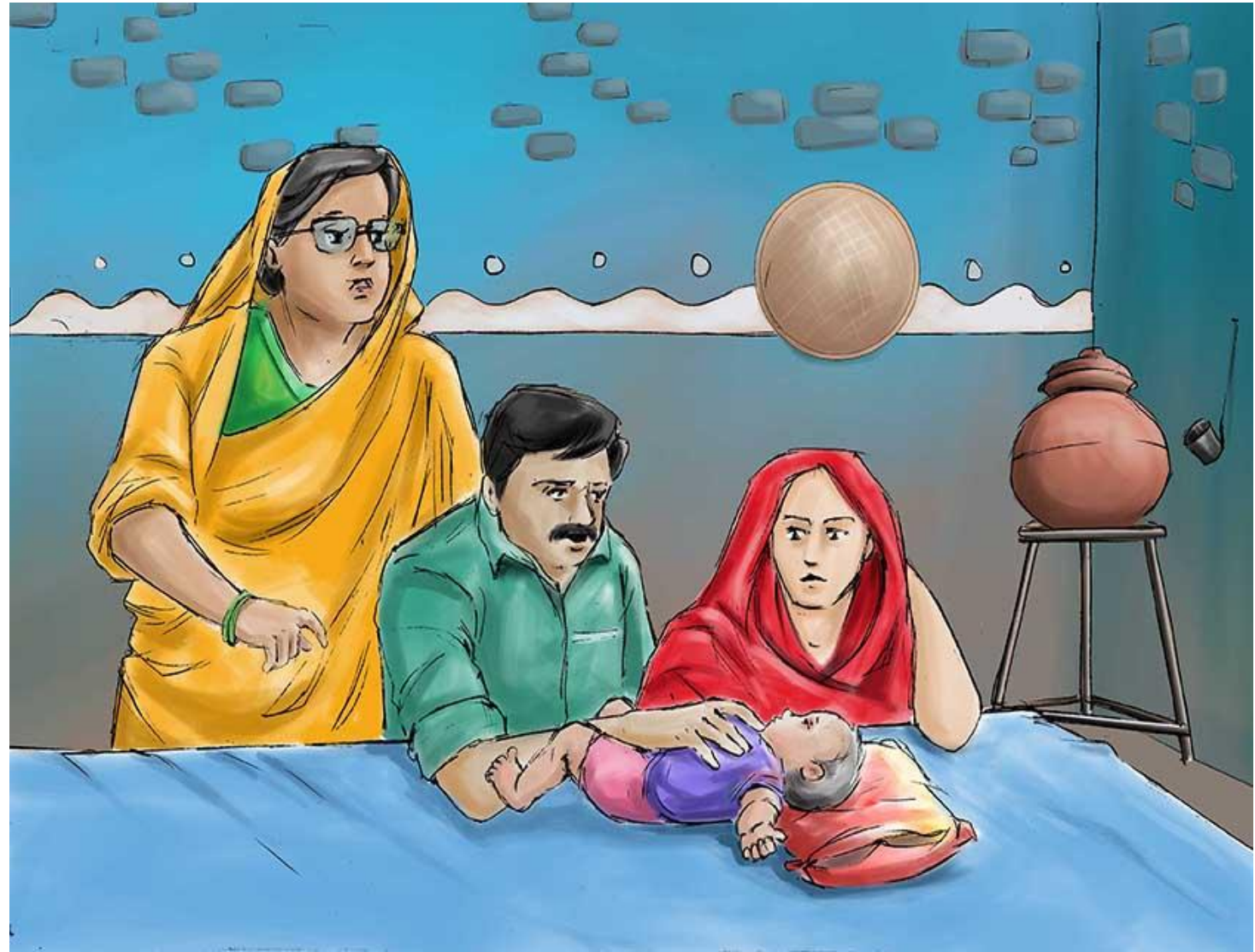
As the ANM was still in the village they were able to administer the first doses of polio and DPT as well as BCG. Sumitra was very happy. She told Shanta and her family that they should bring the baby for the second dose of vaccines the next VHN Day the following month.





A week later, Sumitra visited Shanta's house to find out how the baby was and also to remind them to bring the baby for the second dose. Shanta's mother-in-law complained that the child was restless after immunisation and had fever all through the night. Sumitra explained that it was normal for some babies to get fever after immunisation and that there was no cause for concern.

On the next VHN Day, Shanta did not come to the PHC.



Sumitra sent the AWW helper to Shanta's house again, but she refused to come since her family was against any further immunisation since the child had fever the previous time and they had also heard that it could cripple the child. The child, thus, missed the second dose. Sumitra then decided that the only way to ensure that the child got immunised was to convince Ramlal. She spoke to the Sarpanch and also to two of Ramlal's neighbours who were his friends.





Together they had a long discussion with the family informing them that all the children in the village were being immunised and that there had been a marked reduction in diseases. They also told the family that it is the right of every child to get immunised and that parents should not be guilty of not taking care of the health of the child.



Both Ramlal and his mother were convinced and even accompanied Shanta to the PHC where the child received the second dose of vaccines. Since then the parents have been very careful and have ensured that the child receives all vaccinations, including against measles, and Vitamin A prophylaxis. Shanta now actively advocates on the need to get babies immunised.

