

Kamar (PTG)-Mitanin Convention Report

19th March, 2012

Chhura Block, Gariyaband District

In order to understand the status of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PTGs) in the state, an initiative has been taken by State Health Resource Center (SHRC) and Public Health Resource Network (PHRN) jointly to bring out the various issues related to their health and accessibility to government services. This initiative intends to empower the PTG community and PTG Mitanins to articulate their issues and then plan accordingly. It would also help to formulate recommendations for a comprehensive PTG Health and Nutrition Policy.

The implementation of the project includes a survey done on the accessibility of the PTGs on health and nutrition services. A convention at the block level would also be organized seeking participation from the PTG community and Mitanins block and district level officials including the officials from the PTG development agencies and members from the local organizations.

Rather than implementing the project on a wider scale since the start, pilot phase of the project was conducted in three PTG blocks of the state, Chhura (district Gariaband) being the first block to hold a PTG-Mitanin convention. The PTG found in this block is Kamar. The technical support was provided to the local Non Government Organizations (NGOs) working within the block for survey and advocacy. The local organization supporting the study in the PTG block was Lok Aastha Samiti.

The survey covered 218 PTG families in the block. The issues like Public Distribution System (PDS), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGA), livelihoods and ownership of land, availability of health and other social services were covered.

During the survey it was found that the community has multiple income generating sources, daily wages and dependency from the forest products being the major ones. 85% of the families surveyed had ration cards and all of them reported as receiving 35kg of grains. Around 80% of the families interviewed said that they have job cards being made under MNREGA, out of which 94% got work under this government scheme. The survey revealed that only 34% of the respondents have been enrolled under Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna (RSBY) and none of them have received treatment under the scheme. Only 7% of the families said that they have been benefitted under Janani Suraksha Yojna (JSY). Around 89% of the families responded that the government decision to ban sterilization in PTGs is not right and said that the decision must be withdrawn now. The Indira Awaas Yojna has benefitted only 31% of the interviewed population. 44% of families had submitted claim form under the Forest Rights Act out of which only 5% received land pattas. Even some issues related to the ownership to the land were brought to notice during the survey.

The PTG-Mitanin Convention was organized on 19th March 2012 in Chhura. The findings of the survey were presented during the convention. Apart from the participation of the PTG community, PTG Mitanins and Mitanin Trainers (MT) various government officials and people from different organizations also took part in the convention. The Additional CEO, senior officials from the Collector's office, Executive Director SHRC Mr. JP Mishra and State Convenor PHRN Ms. Sulakhana Nandi participated in the convention.



Some of the issues brought to notice by the PTG community and the Mitanins during the convention are as follows:

- Removing ban on sterilization among the PTGs
- Distant Anganwadis due to which children are unable to visit the centers regularly
- Demand for selection of Kamar Mitanins in Kamar hamlets
- Lack of regularity in immunisation in many PTG hamlets
- PTG community not able to participate in decision making process of the Kamar Development Agency
- Instances of corruption by the Kamar Development Agency as discovered through use of RTI
- Ownership to the land is a big problem
- No training being given to the farmers in order to make them aware about the various methods to increase the agricultural yield
- Non availability of irrigation



The Kamar Mitanins were felicitated by the gathering. Mr. Mishra appreciated the active involvement of the Mitanins in the health department and how they have become an integral part of the system. They have proved to be an important link between the government and the community so as to make people realize the importance of their health and make them aware about the various health related services being provided. He applauded their dedication for continuously striving for improvement in the health status of the community without any self interest.

The Additional CO present at the convention in Chhura said that he would try to address all the problems being discussed at the convention. He also mentioned that he would discuss the matter of sterilization in PTGs with the higher authorities and bring out a solution as early as possible.

