



PHRN NEWSLETTER

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Dear friends and colleagues,

We are glad to share our newsletter for the period July - September 2023. We continue to demonstrate our efforts toward our committed goals. Our team has shown their dedication in implementing projects on various themes across states, which is highly appreciated.

During this phase, we gained more experience through our ongoing projects in Odisha, Chattisgarh, Assam and Delhi. At the same time, we successfully completed Tejaswini project in Jharkhand. During these months our team members from various states participated in several workshops, training programs, and visits. These include participation in children's rights and sustainable development workshop, meeting on update of various projects, and exposure visit to creches in Rayagada. We also hosted students from Dr B R Ambedkar university as part of our internship programme. Our network group has also been part of ongoing India's 6th WBTi assessment.

In Odisha, rural creche initiative has been launched. PHRS celebrated World Breastfeeding Week under Odisha PVTG

Nutrition Improvement Programme. A state level awareness workshop was organized by PHRS. The creches in Odisha widely celebrated Poshan Mah in September. Between 23rd to 25th August, a refresher training and DCPMU meeting was conducted in Bhubaneswar. Under OPNIP interventions monthly PLA meetings have been initiated. PHRS has been continuously building the capacities of Nutrition Coordinators and Gram Panchayat Nutrition Assistants. Additionally, IFAD Design Mission members visited various districts in order to plan out the OPLEIP phase 2 programme

In Chattisgarh, under the TDH program, one-day training of PLA facilitators was organized on PLA modules and dietary diversity. Training and capacity building was also done on creches registers.

Through the various kinds of work happening in multiple states, PHRS has been able to identify the strengths and weaknesses, and gaps where there is work lying ahead to be fulfilled. Once again, heartfelt congratulations to the entire team for their endeavours in the past few months. Wishing us all more power to continue on this winning streak with hope, trust and a genuine intention for collaborative work. Thanks to all donors and partners.

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Capacity Building Workshop on Children's Rights and Sustainable Development

A three-day capacity building workshop was conducted by terre des hommes (tdh) in Sarvodaya Capacity Building Centre, Goregaon, Mumbai from 8th to 10th August 2023. Ms. Rishita Maiti, Programme Coordinator, and Mr. Poonam Chand Kurre, MIS officer attended the workshop on behalf of PHRS. The workshop and its outcomes helped in building the capacity and perspectives of the project team in a wide range of public health issues. It also gave the team an opportunity to connect with various organizations working on the ground level in states like Maharashtra, Chhattisgarh, Gujrat, etc. The workshop focused on the following themes- peace and non-violence, sustainable development, climate change, gender, child safeguarding, rights and entitlements, etc. The broad outline of the workshop on day one was to understand the concept of peace and non-violence; develop skills and perspective for sustainable development; and climate change actions. On the second day the concept of gender integration in projects, FCRA amendments, tdh five-year plan, and opportunities to achieve SDGs were discussed. On the last day, there was a panel discussion on child safeguarding, Uniform Civil Code, New education Policy, and Right to Pee.



Exposure visit to Rayagada

A three-day exposure visit to creches in Rayagada, Odisha was conducted from 31st July to 2nd August. Ms. Rishita Maiti, Mr. Poonam Chand Kurre, and Mr. Srikant Behra were part of this visit. It helped in getting a deeper understanding of the ground reality about crèches. The visit was led by the Rayagada district lead- Mr. Manas, and the block coordinator- Mr. Lucky. The purpose of the visit was to - to get first-hand exposure to the working and significance of crèches; to understand the daily routine and activities of a crèche worker; to observe crèche facilities according to the working protocols. The team visited creches in Tumbiguda, Dantilingi, Poligaon, Badnayakguda, Khambesu, Raikona, Kumbhikota, and Rupkana.



Project update meeting

A project update and review meeting was conducted online on 21st August 2023. The project staff from Delhi, Odisha, and Chattisgarh participated in the meeting to give updates on the currently ongoing projects and research studies by PHRS. The group had a thorough review and discussion on the following projects-

1. Tejaswini - Socio-economic empowerment of adolescent girls and women in Jharkhand
2. Mobilization and Advocacy for Girl Child (MAGiC)
3. Strengthening Suposhit Godda, Breastfeeding and Complementary Feeding in Godda District, Jharkhand
4. Gender Nutrition: Equal access to sufficient and healthy food strengthens the food security of women and young children in north Chhattisgarh
5. Capacity Building to improve the health and nutrition status of women/adolescents from underprivileged community of Puri district
6. Mainstreaming creches to reduce malnutrition in Odisha
7. A study to determine the factors affecting treatment adherence for hypertension and diabetes in different contexts
8. Prevalence and causes of malnutrition among under-five children in selected geographies of India



Rural Creche Initiative

Public Health Resource Society has initiated a new project with support from Azim Premji Foundation titled: Rural Creche Initiative. The project formally started on 1st September 2023. The initial grant is for three years. The major components of the project are as follows:

1. Sustain the operation of 22 existing creches across three blocks of Rayagada district for the next three years (Rayagada Sadar block -10 creches, Kalyansingpur block -10 creches, and Bissamcuttack block - 2 creches).
2. Establish 40 new creches in villages where particularly vulnerable tribal groups (PVTG) reside in Kalyansingpur block of Rayagada district, Odisha.
3. Sustain the 31 existing creches located in three blocks of Malkangiri and one block of Kalahandi until a suitable local organization capable of seamlessly taking over creche operations is identified.
4. Provide technical support for operating & managing creches to other organizations in South Odisha and to SC & ST department, Government of Odisha for their creche initiative.

During this phase, scoping for new creches village has been initiated and the recruitment of creche supervisor is completed. The team from national and state office undertake a joint visit to understand the needs and possibilities of establishing creches in the shortlisted villages.

Internship programme

As part of its internship program, PHRS, Delhi hosted two students from Dr. B. R. Ambedkar University, Delhi. Ms. Amisha Sachdeva and Ms. Gayathri Arunachalam are currently pursuing their Masters in Public Health and completed their 41-day internship tenure with PHRS.



During this time they were part of various field visits, workshops, and assisted in data collection for study 'A Study to determine the factors affecting

affecting treatment adherence for Hypertension and Diabetes in different contexts'. They also developed concept note for their studies on 'LGBTQIA violence' and 'Empowering women's wellbeing: evaluating menstrual hygiene

Reviewing growth standards for India

WHO India country office invited PHRS to undertake an assignment to review WHO growth standards. This assignment emerged from a roundtable discussion held in Delhi on 15th February 2023. The objective of this assignment is to review the existing literature of country level growth standards and synthesize recommendations based on evidence and suggestions by the expert.

A Study to determine the factors affecting treatment adherence for Hypertension and Diabetes in different contexts

Between July-September, field visits for data collection were undertaken by respective team members in the state of Odisha, Delhi, Jharkhand, Assam, and Chhattisgarh. The data was collected by using patient survey tool for patients diagnosed with hypertension and diabetes. In addition, facility survey of health and wellness centers was undertaken, FGDs with ASHA workers, and interviews with MO was conducted across geographies.



WBTi second core group meeting

As part of the ongoing assessment of India's 6th World Breastfeeding Trends initiative (WBTi), a second core group meeting was conducted on 7th July 2023 at UNICEF, New Delhi. Ms. Shalmalee Aidoor, Dr. Dipa Sinha, and Ms. Rishita Maiti were part of this meeting on behalf of PHRS. The group shared preliminary findings and scores on the WBTi indicators, followed by brief discussion on each of the indicators. Dr. Arun Gupta from Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI) took the discussion forward followed by various prominent speakers such as-

Dr. Sameer Pawar, Unicef India; Dr. Gitanjali, NIFHW; Ms. Nupur Bidla, BPNI; Dr. Dipa Sinha, PHRS; Ms. Shalmalee Aidoor, PHRS; Dr. Jyoti Sharma, PHFI; Dr. Rita Patnaik, NIPCCD; Dr. Rita Patnaik, NIPCCD.



Webinar by Jan Swasthya Abhiyan

Jan Swasthya Abhiyan conducted an online session on 'National Medical Commission order to prescribe generic medicines- implications, responses and way forward' on 28th August. Dr. Vandana Prasad was one of the panelists in this meeting. The session was moderated by Dr. B. Ekbal, JSA CoConvenor. The other panelists were- Mr. Amitava GUHA (JSA CoConvenor), Dr. Anant Phadke (MFC- Member of JSA-NCC), Ms. Malini Alisola (Aidan, Member of JSA-NCC), Dr. Narendra Gupta (Prayas, JSA CoConvenor). Dr. Shakeel (JSA CoConvenor).

UPDATES FROM ODISHA

FoPL, awareness workshop in Bhubaneswar

S. N. Patnaik

A state-level awareness workshop on "High sugar, salt, fat (HFSS) pre-packaged food products and front of pack labeling (FOPL) in India" was organized by PHRN on 19th April 2023 at CYSD (Centre for Youth and Social Development), E-1, institutional area, Jaydev Bihar, Bhubaneswar, Odisha in association with breastfeeding promotion network of India (bpni) and Nutrition advocacy in the public interest (NAPi)

Looking into the increasing trend of the consumption of ultra-processed, high-fat, sugar, and salt food and the consequent burden of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in the country PHRS had organized this state-level consultation for a massive awareness among the citizens and to initiate a campaign against that in the state.



The workshop was attended by the following dignitaries/public health experts from the state.

1. Dr Vandana Prasad, National technical advisor, PHRS, Delhi (Chair)
2. Dr Vinod Kumar Patro, Professor – Community Medicine AIIMS, Bhubaneswar
3. Dr Pradeep K. Panda, Professor, Asian Institute of Public Health
4. Dr Amarendra Mohapatra, Sr Scientist, RMRC-ICMR, Bhubaneswar
5. Shri Gouranga Charan Mohaptra, State Convenor, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (JSA)

The major focus of the workshop was to bring a revision in the existing policy and legal framework to check the high consumption of HFSS and to check the entry of many national and transnational companies to produce, promote and market these products.

Besides, the speakers in the workshop highlighted the role of civil society organizations to come in a big way to campaign against this trend and playing a constructive role in putting pressure on various legislative bodies, administrative and legal systems to effectively implement the existing law, bring necessary amendments to the existing law, bring new legislations that can protect the consumers from the harmful effect of HFSS.



There was a technical session during the workshop under the chairpersonship of Dr. Vandana Prasad, technical advisor PHRS to respond to various questions pertaining to FoPL.

The workshop was attended by some of the representatives of state-level civil society organizations, Dr Rupa Prasad, ED, PHRS New-Delhi, the PHRN project team members from different districts including PHRN state PMU team members Sri Satya Patnaik, Ms Swati Das, Shahanawaz Khan, Ms Swagata Tarrafdar, Mr. Deb Dutta Rout, and some media friends.



Celebration of 'World breastfeeding week'

World breastfeeding week was celebrated by Public Health Resource Society with the active support of the Departments of Health & Family Welfare and Women & Child Development (ICDS), Government of Odisha in the project area and was also actively celebrated across all 17 MPAs of 12 districts under Odisha PVTG Nutrition Improvement Programme. This event aligns with the theme of the year, "Let's make breastfeeding and work, work" which emphasizes the crucial role of breastfeeding in the survival, health, and well-being of women, children, and nations.



Here are some key points from the event:

1. Theme and Objective: The event was centered on the theme "Protect Breastfeeding - A Shared Responsibility," which is aligned with the WBW-SDG 2030 campaign. The objectives of World Breastfeeding Week were communicated to the community members during the event. These included raising awareness about the importance of breastfeeding protection, highlighting breastfeeding as a public health responsibility, engaging individuals and organizations for greater impact, and initiating actions to improve public health through breastfeeding protection.

2. Community Engagement: The events took place in various crèche villages across Rayagada, Malkangiri, Koraput, Kalahandi and Nabrangpur. The district coordinator and block coordinators engaged with the community members through meetings and discussions to emphasize the significance of World Breastfeeding Week and the objectives behind its observance.



3. Discussion Topics: The discussions covered key concepts related to infant and young child feeding, such as early initiation of breastfeeding, colostrum feeding, exclusive breastfeeding, and complementary feeding. Additionally, the importance of the Infant Milk Substitute Act and its implementation for the protection of breastfeeding was thoroughly discussed.

4. Rally and Participation: After the discussions, participants took part in a rally with slogans and placards. This rally served as a platform to raise awareness about breastfeeding and its importance for the health and well-being of infants and mothers.



By organizing these events, PHRS demonstrated its commitment to promoting breastfeeding, creating awareness, and engaging with communities to enhance public health through effective breastfeeding practices.

Refresher training and DCPMU review meeting

From August 23rd to 25th, 2023, a significant three-day session unfolded at CYSD in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. This event marked a convergence of refresher training and a DCPMU review meeting, attended by esteemed individuals including Dr. Rupa Prasad and Vivek Goel from the National team, participants from PMU Rayagada, district teams, and representatives from the Odisha state team.



With a warm welcome, Shahnawaz Khan set the tone, introducing the team and their roles. Swagata Tarafdar took charge of time management and coordination. The day commenced with a refresher on malnutrition management, covering nutrition concepts and dialogues about terms like balanced diet, hunger, and malnutrition. Swati Das delved into the importance of the initial 1000 days and a life cycle approach. An engaging activity led by Swagata Tarafdar involved teams in classifying food items based on their nutrient content. Shahnawaz Khan took an insightful session on anthropometric measurements. Discussions on creche guidelines and protocols followed. Shahnawaz Khan emphasized the significance of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE), and his session showcased a commitment to age-specific early stimulation activities.



Vivek Goel led a session on administrative matters, setting a practical tone for the day. District teams shared updates on enrollment, nutritional status, and more. Decisions were made to enhance VHND participation and address nutritional challenges. From optimizing aesthetics to refining documentation processes, teams were aligned to the mission.

The three-day event concluded with Shahnawaz Khan expressing gratitude to the participants. The event witnessed active engagement, fostering collaborative learning and a shared vision for better communities.



Poshan Maah

Poshan Maah, celebrated in September 2023 in creche villages across Rayagada, Kalahandi, Koraput, Malkangiri and Nabarangpur districts, focused on promoting nutrition awareness. Various meetings were organized during this period to discuss essential topics such as food types, Infant and Young Child Feeding (IYCF) practices, the significance of tri-color foods, and the concept of food diversity (Go, Grow, and Glow foods) through participatory exercises. These meetings had active participation from pregnant and lactating women, adolescent girls, and members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs). In addition, 'Posana' rallies, supported by the community, were conducted to further spread awareness about the importance of balanced nutrition and healthy eating habits. This initiative aimed to empower the local community, especially women and adolescents, with essential knowledge about nutrition and its role in fostering healthier lives.



Rural Creche Initiative implementation update

In remote tribal villages, children aged 7 months to 3 years face a high risk of malnutrition, with limited access to vital services like Take Home Ration (THR) and immunization during Village Health and Nutrition Days (VHND). Parents often leave these children with older siblings or grandparents while they work, further hindering their development. To combat this issue, the Rural Creche Initiative was launched. It establishes community-based centers in partnership with civil society organizations and the Azim Premji Foundation. These centers provide day care services, ensuring proper nutrition, healthcare, and early childhood development for children under 3 years of age, seven days a week.

Handing over existing creches in Koraput, Nabarangpur, and Kalahandi to partner organizations has been a significant task. PHRS and APF representatives held meetings with partners and creche workers to facilitate this transition, sharing documents and eKalika access. Orientation sessions are planned for October 2023.

The program's initial gram panchayat selection relies on current presence and experience. The key objective is to improve coordination between Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) and the healthcare system. During the first phase, the team attended ICDS meetings and collected data on children aged 0-36 months to identify new creche locations. Scoping of new villages for setting up new creches are planned for October 2023.

OPNIP Update

PLA meetings in OPNIP villages

Monthly PLA meetings have been initiated in the villages having OPNIP interventions with an objective to reach out to and sensitize a greater number of community members on issues of health and nutrition. These have seen enthusiastic response from the mothers of the community attending these meetings, some of whom have been able to relate to the issues brought forward in the modules being transacted. Three modules have been transacted at the village level, currently.



Trainings

PHRS has been continuously supporting the ST, SC Development Department, Govt of Odisha in strengthening the capacities of the Nutrition Coordinators (NCs) and Gram Panchayat Nutrition Assistants (GPNAs) under the OPNIP. In this connection, state level refresher training of the NCs and GPNAs on health and nutrition themes was held during 20th-21st and 22nd -23rd July, 2023. PHRS team was represented by Swati Das, Swagata Tarafdar and Debadutta Rout. Sessions on the newly launched Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition programme and AMLAN- Anaemia Mukta Lakhya Abhiyan were taken by resource persons from the Women and Child Development Department and the Department of Health & Family Welfare Affairs, Govt. of Odisha. For cross learning, OPNIP teams from each of the MPAs also presented on schemes for children under various departments.



PLA Training of Trainers (ToT)

Training of trainers for module numbers 4 and 5 of the PLA content was undertaken in two batches at Bhubaneswar during 28th-29th and 31st Aug-1st Sept 2023. NCs and GPNAs from all the MPAs were present. The modules on childhood illness and food diversity were transacted. NCs and GPNAs also gave a glimpse of their experience of conducting the PLA meetings at the villages. NC of BDA Mudulipada, Rohini Turuku mentioned how some of the SHG members present at the village level PLA meeting, after listening to Soni's story, came forward to take up the responsibility to sensitise parents of adolescent girls, in their village, against marrying off their daughters before they attained 18 yrs of age. They also declared that they would counsel these adolescent girls on matters of health and nutrition, and against underage marriage and underage pregnancies.



Visits

IFAD Design Mission Members Visit

IFAD Design Mission members visited various districts in order to plan out the OPLEIP phase 2 programme. In this connection, one team visited the new PVTG villages of KKDA Lanjigargh, (Kalahandi), LSDA Puttasingh, (Rayagada) and SDA Chandragiri, (Gajapati), to get an understanding of the situation in the newly identified PVTG villages. Swati Das also accompanied the team.

OPNIP Evaluation Study

A short study to evaluate the OPNIP has been commissioned by IFAD. Ms. Lakshmi Durga Chava, World Bank consultant, undertook a week long visit, during 23rd-29th Sept, 2023, as part of the evaluation study. She visited four MPAs to understand the functioning of the creches and also interact with the mothers who have been sending their children to the creches.



UPDATES FROM CHHATTISGARH

Training of PLA facilitators

On 23 September 2023 A one-day training program was organized at the Resource Centre in Chaupal, Lundra Block, and District of Surguja, as part of the Gender and Nutrition section of the TDH project.



The training aimed to equip 30 PLA facilitators and 3 block coordinators with knowledge and skills related to dietary diversity survey tool and PLA modules- Social determinants of

malnutrition, and Understanding food and nutrition. The training was successful, with active participation from 36 attendees. Despite a slight schedule adjustment for the virtual presentation, the sessions proceeded smoothly, and participants gained valuable insights and skills.

Training on Creche-Related Register Management

All 8 PLAs (Participatory Learning and Action) and 1 Block Coordinators from the Lakhanpur Block convened at the Jagarnathpur Chaupal Resource Centre for a training session focused on creche-related register management, growth chart measurements, and health card child listing register procedures.



During this session, comprehensive guidance was provided on the essential steps and protocols to adhere to when handling various documents related to Creche facilities. The active engagement and participation of the attendees yielded valuable insights into Creche operations, making the session highly productive and beneficial for both PLA and Block Coordinator members.

STAFF NEWS

SL. No.	Name	Designation
The following colleagues have joined PHRS		
1.	Srikant Behra	Project Coordinator, Ambikapur
The following colleagues have left PHRS		
2.	Rajesh Sriwastawa	Senior Programme Coordinator, Ranchi
3.	Satya Narayan Patnaik	Senior Programme Coordinator, Bhubaneswar
4.	Abhi Nayak	Programme Coordinator, Koraput
5.	Gayatri Prasad Deo	Block Coordinator, Koraput
6.	Manoranjan Bissoyi	Block Coordinator, Nabrangpur
7.	Pranab Kumar Mukhi	Block Coordinator, Nabrangpur
8.	Tanya Lamba	Research Coordinator, New Delhi
9.	Mazahir Husain	Project Coordinator, Ambikapur

Public Health Resource Network (PHRN) is a growing network of individuals and organizations with the perspective of strengthening technical and management capacities to take action towards the common goal of 'Health for All'. Its main objective is to contribute and strengthen all efforts directed towards the goal of 'Health for All' through promotion of public health, social justice and human rights related to the provision and distribution of health services, especially for those who are generally left underserved. PHRN is currently working directly in the states of the states of Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Odisha and has contributed to the on-going work of strengthening public health systems in other states through its partnerships with other institutions. Public Health Resource Society (PHRS) is the core group that has initiated the network. PHRS is a national level organization that is registered in Delhi under Societies Registration Act 1860 (Act XXI). It comprises of a small group of members and full timers that provides leadership to the network as well as functions as its secretariat. PUBLIC HEALTH RESOURCE SOCIETY K 65, Hauz Khas Village, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016 Contact No.: 011 26868118, 011 42576337 Email: delhi@phrnindia.org Website: www.phrnindia.org