

# **SPANDAN SAMAJ SEVA SAMITI**



## **ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14**

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### PREFACE

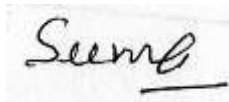


Spandan Samaj Seva Samiti has been proactively involved in curbing the malnutrition prevailing among the Korku U5 children. Over the years the realization has dawned that malnutrition is a multifaceted issue and hence Spandan has adopted a “layered” model that not only seeks to alleviate the present suffering of malnourished children but attempts to address underlying factors as well. It includes helping the victim families to access more food and nutrition entitlements, tide over peak hunger times and diversify their diets and revert back gradually to traditional crops and millets that once was the backbone of community nutrition. With it nearly gone the malnutrition has gnawed at their susceptible children. The pilots have been started to show a way for appropriate care of children below 3 years. The efforts at preserving their endangered language has focused upon research in oral traditions and use the knowledge and information so gauged into developing appropriate Behavior Change Communication materials, Preschool learning materials and dissemination of cultural heritage information to younger generation. The work has received a fillip due to material support received from GOONJ and through Joy of Giving support. We could reach out directly to nearly 600 food insecure families through various project interventions and direct support.

The initiated process has generated community participation and that of women in particular. The women leadership has developed and flourished and collectivism reinforced to achieve feat in volunteerism.

The layered model of Spandan has surfaced social changes. The community initiatives has set in a system that has helped many children recover at home through non-institutional care and lesser referrals to hospitals, the malnutrition is gradually being demystified among the community and Korku farmers have begun to revert back to traditional crops like maize and paddy. A beginning has been made and we hope a significant change in near future...

I am grateful to our Donors, Team and Supporters that have made it possible to carry on with our Mission to eradicate malnutrition among Korku tribe children and ensure their Household Food Security and conserve their language and aboriginal culture.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Seema', written on a light-colored rectangular background.

**Seema Prakash**

**Secretary**

## **COMMUNITY BASED MALNUTRITION MANAGEMENT**

The Program early tracks malnourishment among U5 children across 100 villages. The Frontline workers use age, weight and height criteria to determine the nutritional status according to WHO charts. The symptoms of sickness and edema are also observed. The children are categorized in two categories according to being infected or non-infected. The infected children with multiple infections only are referred to Nutrition Rehab Centers and their mothers motivated to take the kids to NRCs. Rest of the malnourished children are admitted in the program. Regular home visits, mothers' counselling, health checks and medicine support follows. The child remains in the program till fully recovered. The family with malnourished children is earmarked as a beneficiary family and extended other support that enhance their access to food, nutrition and livelihood. A mobile app is being used to track the growth and advise the mothers on a regular basis. This reduces paper work and helps in easy access to information and its analysis for further interventions.

The CBMM is a joint effort of frontline workers and the mobile unit that visits and diagnose and medicate the children along with identification and follow up of Pregnant and Lactating mothers. . This year more than 1000 malnourished children and 2000 P/L mothers were so attended by the Team. The follow up of pregnant and lactating mothers was also done and they were counselled for vaccination and utilize ante and post natal care protocols. The number of personal care visit by Mobile team exceeded 10,000 this year.

This effort has been supplemented by regular health camps in strategic locations to enable ones with no or distant health facilities can be outreached with medical care. 16 such Health Camps could benefit 1552 persons including men, women and children with diagnosis, medical advice and medicines.



## **COMMUNITY CRECHES**

This is an innovative program that caters to nutrition, health and care needs of children below 3 years and ones belonging to daily wage earning mothers who often do not have time to resources to take care of them. It is an established fact that malnutrition catches up in this age and grows most vociferously often causing irreparable damages to physical and cognitive growth of the children. Crèches are principally a community care that is intended to set a precedence for policy planners and other CSOs on adequate care for most vulnerable age and they do not have any such government facilities in the neighborhood. It is only when they are able to walk say after three years that they begin attending Anganwadi centers. Presently they receive just Take Home Rations that is barely enough.

08 such crèches are being piloted. They are run in a village home with sufficient space to accommodate 15-20 children. Usually it is the house of the Crèche workers, the women identified from the community itself. The children stay in the centers for whole day when their mothers are off to field or other wage earning works. They are cared and fed thrice and kept busy through play way activities and timely sleep and toilets etc. The children are weighed and diagnosed monthly to monitor their growth.

70% children regularly attending the crèches showed steady growth over months. The mothers have been elated and have continued visiting the center either to breastfeed, spend some time with kids or help out the care worker in some errands. In one of the villages namely Gadhdiyakheda , the women mustered wood and contributed voluntary labor to erect a hall for the crèche.



## **BACKYARD GARDENS**

Korku tribe community has a very simple diet that by no measure can be called adequate as far as micronutrients intake is concerned. Most of the poor families are hardly able to buy vegetables or poultry or meat as their purchasing power is meagre. Consequently backyard gardens have been promoted. As most of the traditional Korku homes have a backyard, they are being encouraged to grow them using the water from washing clothes or bathing that often flow waste.

This year the initiative began with nearly 50 families earmarked as most insecure e.g. ones with acute malnourished children, those landless or compelled to migrate temporarily or physically challenged or widowed or single women. Many of them had vegetables and they could feed it to the kids and couple of families also had surplus to sell.

## **REVIVAL OF TRADITIONAL CROPS**

As has been noted on timeline of Korku food and nutrition history, somewhere there appears a close relation between changed food and farming practices and rise in malnutrition. Way back in 70s the change began to take place most widely. The Korku farmers began to shift to growing of soybean in place of traditional crops and millets like maize, sorghum, and tribal millets like *Koda*, *Kutki*, and *Sawa*. Paradoxically soybean was grown but not consumed. This led to increasing household hunger as most of the poor families began facing hunger times lasting for two to three months. A sustained campaign was organized to sensitize the community on this pitfall. At the same time soybean crops failed for 2 years in tandem leading to excessive debt on farmers. The campaign relied on Korku history and folk tales highlighting how the traditional crops and millets were gifted to them exclusively by their deities and how in past times they had enough to eat and face food

crisis. The campaign also motivated those still growing them to contribute a handful of traditional millet seeds that can be further disseminated.

Nearly 400 farmers willing to shift back to traditional cropping were also assisted through provisions of maize seeds. Similarly the collected millet seeds were distributed among the interested ones. 50% farmers despite excessive rainfall still had encouraging crops. Many more are now interested to revert back to

traditional cropping. Presently there are 20 Seed Banks operating and reaching out to 200 farmers who can borrow seeds and return little added to make the Bank grow.



## **GRAIN BANKS**

This mechanism began since past 2 years when it was becoming evident that many families face acute food crisis at least 2-3 months every year. They are therefore compelled to borrow grains from rich farmers or money lenders at exorbitant interest rates or distress migrate temporarily. To offset this 30 Grain Banks have been established and are community managed. It has 450 members. . Each of these grain banks began with community contribution as per their might and a complementary support from the Organization by way of a grain container and 100 kilograms of grains. Each of the banks have functioned well with no defaulters. Needy families have borrowed and refunded the grains with little added. This year they could transact 40,000 kilograms of grains and still had 15,000 kilograms of grains in excess. The utility of the Grain Banks could be perceived by the fact that some of the grain Banks have been christened after Korku deities' name and the family keeping the Grain Bank have not misused it any way. Collective decisions have also been taken when poor and needy families were assisted during marriage festival at home or a family whose land was washed off during rains.

## **IMPROVING LIVELIHOOD**

A process has been set in to develop the land and water resources of marginalized families. It is being done voluntarily by the families and they are incentivized by some grain and clothing support. 50 families have been so motivated to undertake their field development by way of erecting farm boundaries by is idle stones lying in and around their fields or check the soil erosion by stones plugging the water run off points. Similarly some 10 ponds and streams were identified wherein water could be conserved for longer time through erecting the sand bag check dams. These have been very useful measures to develop the lands leading to increased crop yields and water being conserved lasted long for cattle and nearby fields.



## **REVAMPING ANGANWADIS**

Considering the fact that Anganwadi Centers are the only institutional care facility available for children below six years but often does not attract children to stay very long and thus miss out some or all six intended services to be provided. We began implementation of the concept of *Child Friendly Anganwadi*. The Anganwadi Centers are given a facelift through whitewash and cleaning of its surroundings. Then each center is equipped with toys and recreational materials and clothing for the children. This enhances the retention time of children at the centers and thereby receive timely supplementary nutrition, vaccination and preschool and health checks. We have also tried to make the preschool more interesting by introducing Teaching-Learning materials developed in Korku language. This is also intended to conserve their language. This year 30 Anganwadi were so revamped.

To sustain the interest of mothers and children, we have been organizing periodic events called *Anganwadi Diwas*. It is celebrated as a day of fun that has some food and snacks, games and sports and an occasion to impart some important health & nutrition information. 25 such events were organized during this year.

The other activities in Anganwadi Centers include Sock Puppetry, FGDs with mothers, Role Plays and use of wall comics to involve mothers in discussions and learning about better care and feeding of their children.



## **BEHAVIOR CHANGE COMMUNICATION**

This undergirds all the initiatives and focus on effecting positive deviation in knowledge, attitude and practices. This is being done through Training, community meetings, mothers' meetings, Training of grassroots service providers and so on.

A range of communication materials like wall comics posters, leaflets, booklets and charts were developed relying more on aboriginal Korku language.

Some thematic training was done for community opinion leaders and frontline staff. The themes included Social Audits in MGNREGA, Theater Training, Public advocacy, Nutrition and Malnutrition Management, Menstrual Hygiene and Migration and Labor Laws.

The staff also were exposed to Pradan's program on poultry at nearby Kesla Block in Betul district. It inspired them to rethink the livelihood programs and imbibe new ideas of managing and sustaining income generation programs.

The raised awareness and increased access to information about various public Food & Employment schemes, the community leadership was strengthened and it was demonstrated through their venturing to grievance redressal forums organized by the Administration. Many cases of food and employment rights violation were presented and could be redressed.

The community also participated in developing Micro Plans of their villages through mapping and listing the resources in their neighborhood and wage employment opportunities that could also develop livelihood resources.



## **PRESERVATION OF KORKU LANGAUGE & CULTURE**

This has been an ongoing process that includes research into oral traditions and observation of their aboriginal traditions. The documentation is being done. A range of information has been collated regarding the language, festivals, traditions, folk songs and tales and historical heritages. The information has been used extensively in the development of BCC materials. The information has also been inputted into development of preschool materials in Korku language and are being used in Anganwadi centers. Wall comic posters, Leaflets and booklets have also been developed to disseminate vital cultural heritage information to present generation. The preparations are on to develop a Lexicon on Hindi-Korku language.

## **JOY OF GIVING SUPPORT**

This year the employees of Glenmark Pharmaceutical mobilized resources during the Joy of Giving week to address the Food & Nutrition needs of the malnourished Korku tribe children. The support was extended to 800 children in form of a package of evening ration containing rice, pulses, jaggery, oil, nutritious mix, biscuits and groundnuts. The support was aimed to complement a part of daily nutrition needs of the malnourished children. The support could provide 600 calories and 10 grams of protein daily. The support for nearly six months witnessed steady weight gain for 70% children. This plugged a big gap in the daily nutrition intake of the child that is seldom filled by the family being poor.

## **CLOTH FOR WORK**

This is also an ongoing process where the families are motivated to undertake voluntary work towards development of land or water assets or repair of some rural amenities like roads, hand pumps or well. The family receives clothing support as an incentive. This year too deepening of wells, construction of sand bag check dams and farm boundaries were undertaken. The children of Anganwadi, Crèches, and Hostels received clothing and material support that has not only met the clothing need but has prompted them to be regular and thereby access education, nutrition and health benefits.



## STORIES OF CHANGE

*“The tribal women of Langoti village were highly distressed over the potable water as they had to fetch it from far. They approached the Panchayat but it did not act. The women decided to do something on their own. One of them offered the land in her field and women picked up the tools to dig the well voluntarily. Menfolk ridiculed but they kept on. After having dug for some 12 feet they encountered hard rocks. They once again*



*approached the Panchayat but one again to no avail. They had no resources to blast the rocks. The women decided to gird their loins and break the rocks. After having cut the rocks for some depth they struck the water. They kept on till they could and had enough water. Now they face the challenge of girding the well. Their commitment to a cause caught wider attention and many media including India Today projected it as a positive and inspirational story. Panchayat now has come forward to complete the well by digging it further and concretizing the well.”*

*“Ramprasad from village Patalda is a marginal farmer and has his field lying at the edge of dense woods and hillocks. Every year the rains would wash away the fields and erode the soil. Couple of years back Ramprasad could not even rent his land. He happened to visit a Project training and could learn about the Cloth for Work initiative. He approached the organization to mend his field. The family decided to volunteer. They picked up the idle stones and stacked it on the places where the water runoff and erected the boundary wall. Soon they had farm bunding done and field prepared. Till past two years Ramprasad and his family had plentiful crops. They had enough to eat and sell some. Ramprasad could repair his hut and buy a pair of bullocks. He could also send one of his son to a good school nearby. For all this voluntary work Ramprasad and his family received clothes and grains as incentive. Ramprasad was motivated and he with his neighbors erected a sandbag check dam across the stream that has conserved the water longer for cattle and some irrigation of nearby fields.*

*“Shrikrishna son of Munnibai from village Chadida aged 24 months has 3 more brothers and 2 sisters apart from the parents. The family of 7 has to struggle to make the ends meet. It lives in a thatched home and has 3 acres of unirrigated land that hardly produces enough grains to feed the family for the year. They have to seasonally distress migrate to earn the livelihood. The employment opportunity under public employment scheme too was not enough for the family. Sreekrishna was admitted to Konku-Puchiku project in September 2013. The child weighed 7.300 kilograms and thus moderate acute malnourished (MAM). The project team regularly visited the family, counselled the mother on better care and feeding and also provided the JOG support. The Ambulatory care provided the diagnosis and treatment of sicknesses the child had seasonally. Now the child weighs 10.200 kilograms while the MUAC improved to 13.2 centimeters. The child has graduated to normalcy.*

## **FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

Considering the experience and learning gained from the intervention and interaction with the community following directions seems imminent:

- The Community Based Malnutrition Management program to lay more emphasis on assessing the malnourishment according to WHO standards of underweight, stunting and wasting using age, height and weight as indicators.
- Community crèches to be standardized in functioning, reporting and nutritional assessment of children.
- The health of mothers and Adolescent girls to receive more attention.
- The Backyard Nutrition garden to be grown in plastic gunny bags and use organic manure and pesticide. The production to be primarily used for consumption by mothers and children and surplus to be sold for livelihood. The marketing linkages to be explored.
- The possibilities of goat - rearing as viable income generation program to be explored.
- The promotion of revival of traditional crops to be carried forward with facilitating more farmers to begin with and set up traditional seed banks at strategic locations from wider dissemination.
- The generated information on Korku language and culture to be collated into first Korku-Hindi lexicon.
- The community to be made more aware of their entitlements under Food Security Act and MGNREGA II to access more of food and employment benefits.
- The campaign to demand inclusion of Korku tribe in PTG category to be made more wide and effective.



## THE FINANCIALS

The Financial Analysis of the organization fro past three years :

Rs, YE March 31	2011	2012	2013	
<b>Income Statement</b>				
<b>Income</b>				
Domestic Sources	1,740,950	4,713,826	3,415,718	
Foreign Sources	1,254,001	651,495	1,698,356	
Interest/Dividend/Others	12,009	142,020	178,174	
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>3,006,960</b>	<b>5,507,341</b>	<b>5,292,248</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>				
Programme Expenses	1,331,482	4,248,489	4,694,090	
Fundraising Expenses	0	0	0	
Admin Expenses	490,817	451,301	495,715	
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>1,822,299</b>	<b>4,699,790</b>	<b>5,189,805</b>	
<b>Surplus/(Deficit)</b>	<b>1,184,661</b>	<b>807,551</b>	<b>102,443</b>	
<b>Balance Sheet</b>				
<b>Assets</b>				
Fixed Assets	152,631	132,169	114,760	
Current Assets	1,541,040	1,669,053	1,388,906	
Investments	0	700,000	1,100,000	
Accumulated Deficits	0	0	0	
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>1,693,671</b>	<b>2,501,222</b>	<b>2,603,666</b>	