

CASE PRESENTATION

“Strengthening Village Committees which Undertake Planning, Promotion and Monitoring of Health Care Services by Broadening the Understanding of their Members on Various Aspects of Health through a Human Rights and Social Justice Approach”

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Presented by:

Chhaya Pachauli (ILDC 2019 batch)

Director, Prayas (India)

ABOUT PRAYAS

- Started in the year 1979 from a tribal village of Pratapgarh district in southern Rajasthan
- Works around socio-economic development of rural and tribal communities.
- Major focus on improving access to health care and health systems strengthening.



THE PROBLEM- Poor engagement of VHSNC members

- Most Village Health, Sanitation and Nutrition Committees (VHSNCs) in the state are dormant and inactive.

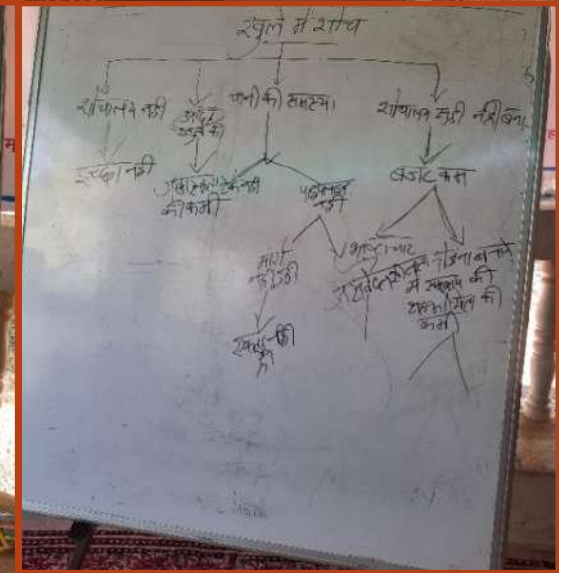
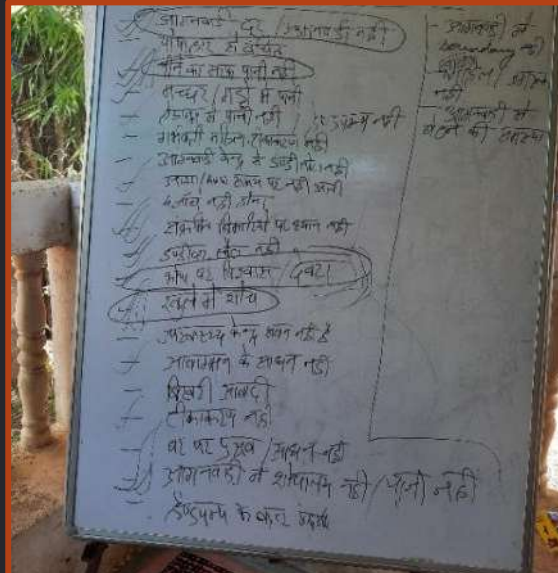
(VHSNC is a village level committee consisting of about 15-20 members including community members, village health workers, heads of local govt., village teacher etc which works towards improving health status of the village)

- Prayas has been working to activate these VHSNCs in the villages where it has its presence.
- Despite orientation of VHSNC members their engagement in village health issues remained low.

We realised that our orientation technique needed some change to make it more impactful !

LEARNING FROM ILDC

- Important to comprehend inter linkages among different rights and grassroots problems.
- 'Root Cause Analysis' as an effective tool where community members take the lead in identifying ground issues and their solutions.



WHAT WE DID ??

We made the following key changes in our orientation techniques :

BEFORE

- Health rights focus
- Theory based sessions
- Lecture based sessions
- Telling them what to do

AFTER

- ➡ Human rights and justice focus
- ➡ Real life experience sharing
- ➡ Interactive activities
- ➡ Deriving solutions together

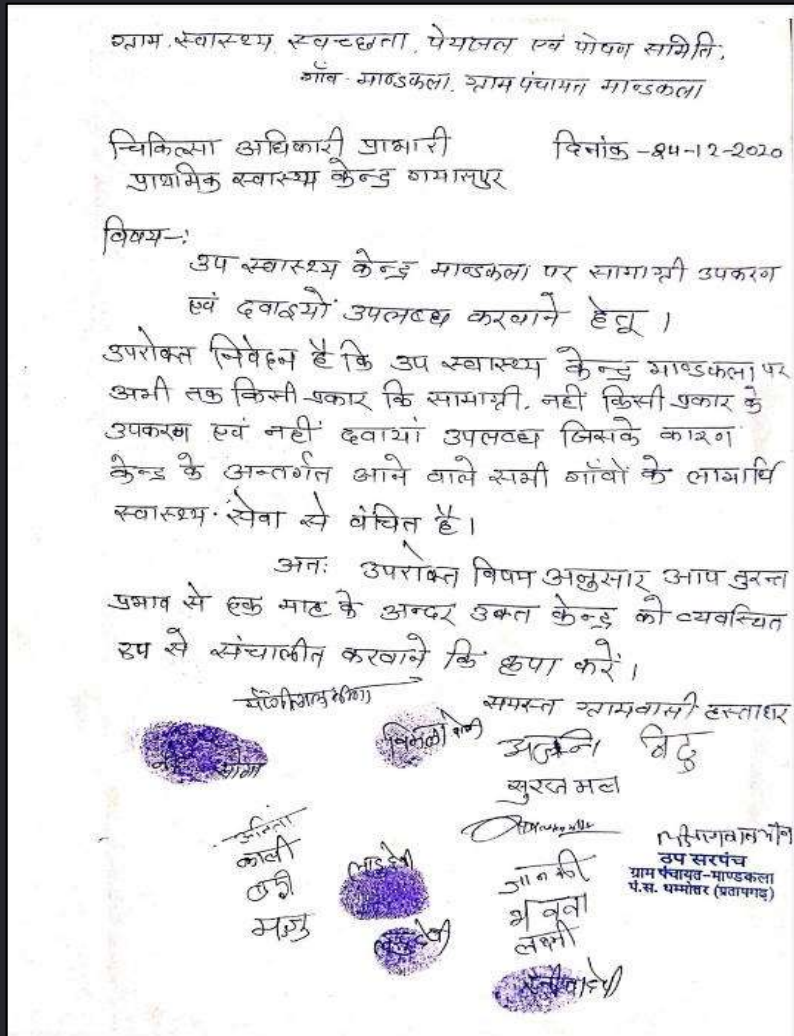
IMPACT

- Provided VHSNC members a broader perspective on 'rights' making them more sensitised about 'justice'.
- Participants could relate to the health sessions better and were more participative.
- They would open up better about the ground problems and were more vocal about their demands
- More regular VHSNC meetings and active community participation.



SUCCESS STORY 1:

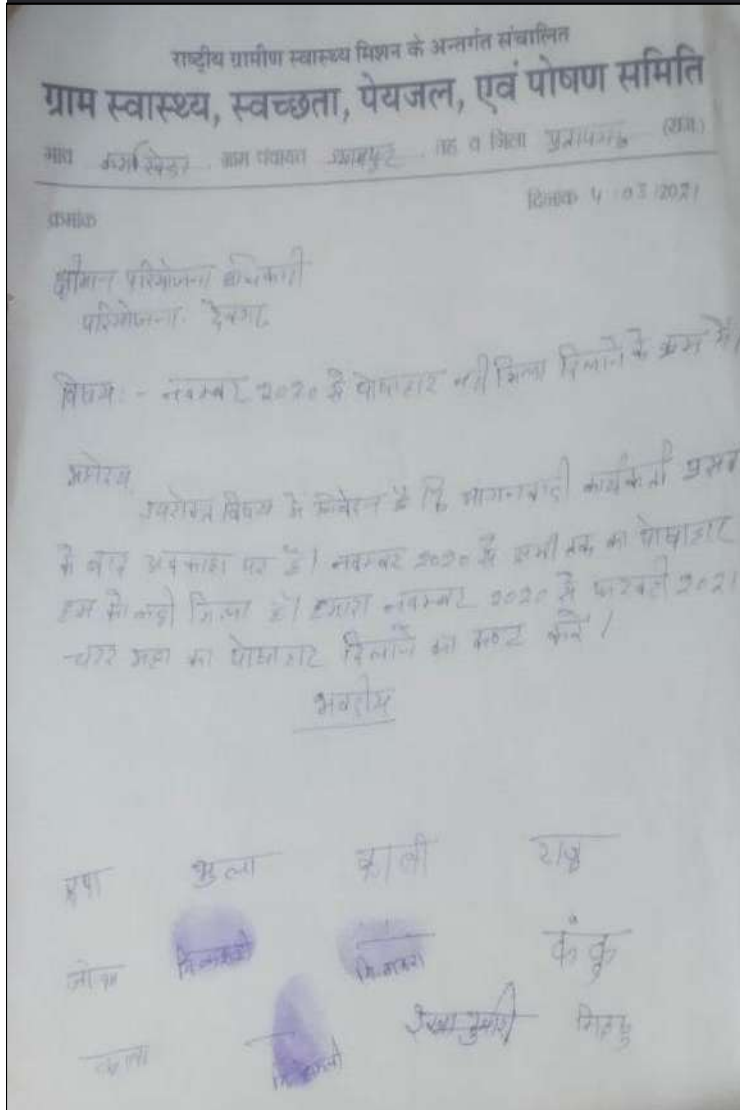
Advocacy for essential health services –Village Mandkalan



- The VHSNC of village Mandkalan took note of the fact that health care services in their village was suffering because the village health facility (Sub Health Centre) lacked required medicines, health equipments and furniture.
- Members of VHSNCs drafted a letter addressed to the relevant govt. authority demanding that essential supplies and equipments be provided at the health facility.
- After a few follow ups the department procured the required items for the sub health centre.

SUCCESS STORY 2:

Advocacy for supplementary nutrition –Village Karmakheda



- In a meeting held on 4th March 2021 in village Karmakheda, VHSNC members raised the issue that the distribution of supplementary nutrition from the village 'Anganwari Centre' to pregnant and lactating women as well as children up to the age of 6 years had remained suspended since November 2020 as the Anganwari Worker went on maternity leave.
- After discussion with community members the committee sent out a letter to the relevant govt. authority demanding that the distribution of supplementary ration be immediately resumed in the village.
- Soon after this the Lady Supervisor (the district in charge of the department) herself came over to the village to distribute ration to the eligible women and children.

LESSONS FROM THE CASE

- Don't underestimate the capacities of a community group. Given the right orientation they can achieve much more than our expectations.
- Plan your training module and sessions carefully to yield maximum results. Don't force things, let ideas evolve organically through discussions/exercises.



CHALLENGES

- Slow response from the bureaucracy on the demands raised by the VHSNCs sometimes demotivates the members.
- Different political affiliations among the community members cause divisions in advocacy measures sometimes.



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Thank you !