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Strengthening Social and Behavior Change Communication to address Child Marriage and Violence against Children in Jharkhand



संपर्क

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT
A collaborative effort of XISS and UNICEF



Sampark III

Presents

A Comprehensive Report on

Strengthening Social and Behavior Change Communication to address Child Marriage and Violence against Children in Jharkhand

Editors:

- ✦ Dr Joseph Marianus Kujur SJ, Director
- ✦ Prof Anant Kumar, Project Head
- ✦ Mr Aditya Raj, State Project Coordinator
- ✦ Mrs Yoshita Ravi, Documentation Officer



Xavier Institute of Social Service

Dr Camil Bulcke Path (Purulia Road),

Ranchi- 834001, Jharkhand

Tel: 0651- 2200873

Email: xiss@xiss.ac.in | Web: www.xiss.ac.in

Sampark: <https://sites.google.com/xiss.ac.in/sampark-III>

ABOUT XISS



Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS), Ranchi, is a premier Management institute offering two-year full-time Post Graduate Diploma courses in Management. The students are offered specialization in Human Resource Management, Rural Management, Marketing Management, and Financial Management programs.

Over the years, the institute has developed its own distinct identity, as a center of excellence. XISS has stood the test of time and continuously ranked among the top-notch b-schools in the country.

Vision

We envision a center of academic excellence towards creating a sustainable society with peace, justice, and reconciliation.

Mission

- To become a leading management school in India by offering a portfolio of academic, research, social involvement, and outreach programs.
- To create leaders with conscience, compassion, competence, and commitment to sustainable development and empowerment of the marginalized.

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This document is an outcome of the Sampark program (a joint XISS-UNICEF collaborative effort). The content in this report has been obtained and derived from sources believed by XISS to be reliable. We also clarify here that XISS does not claim the data as its achievement or result of the intervention. The Sampark program was an initiative to support the government's flagship programs and development schemes and administration in improving health, nutrition, child protection, and various other programs. It also aimed at mobilizing CSO's efforts towards supporting the government in achieving results for children.

PRELUDE

Communication is an essential component of Social and behavioral change that promotes positive behavior change. Effective communication has the power to shape the perceptions and attitudes of people through persistent and convincing messaging, advocacy, and examples. Communication in SBCC catalyzes behavior change by raising awareness, shaping attitudes, motivating individuals, reinforcing behaviors, and fostering dialogue. It is pivotal in creating a supportive environment that encourages and sustains positive behavior change.

The Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS) and the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) collaborated to establish the Sampark program to provide technical support to district administration by placing qualified and skilled human resources. The Social and Behavioral Change Communication – District Project Coordinator (SBCC-DPC) developed, designed, and supported in implementation of district-level communication plans in the district in collaboration with the line departments. The program also included community involvement, interpersonal communication, and the media to spread knowledge and encourage behavior change.

The program has been effective in raising community awareness and involvement in supporting (i) health initiatives like Measles and Rubella, (ii) Nutrition – Poshan Abhiyaan such as Poshan Pakhwada and Poshan Mah, SAAMAR Abhiyaan creating awareness of the nutritional aid. The focus of phase III was on child protection i.e., ‘Ending Child Marriage’ (ECM), ‘Ending Violence against Children’ (EVAC), and other programs despite challenges. Additionally, the program helped create a pool of skilled communicators who can assist future initiatives of a similar nature.

This report presents an overview of the third phase of the Sampark program, including information on its execution, effects, and challenges. Overall, this report emphasizes how important it is to have good communication to support child protection, nutrition, and health initiatives.

FOREWORD

Communication has always been a catalyst of change. It serves as a bridge that connects individuals, communities, and organizations, enabling us to raise awareness, foster understanding, and mobilize collective action toward creating a more equitable and just society. In this rapidly evolving landscape, where social issues persist, effective communication becomes an indispensable tool in driving positive social change. It empowers marginalized voices, amplifies their stories, and sparks conversations that challenge the status. Through open dialogue, empathy, and education, we can break barriers, dismantle stereotypes, and build bridges of understanding that transcend differences. The importance of communication in addressing social issues cannot be overstated. It has the power to shape public opinion, influence policy decisions, and inspire grassroots movements. By leveraging various communication channels, including traditional media, digital platforms, and community engagement, we can create a ripple effect that ignites change at both the individual and community levels. To bring such approaches, ‘Social and Behavior Change Communication’ (SBCC) interventions play a crucial role in addressing social issues and driving societal transformation. These interventions aim to promote positive behavior change, shift social norms, and empower individuals and communities to address various challenges.

The Sampark (phase III) has served as a call to action, urging individuals, organizations, and policymakers to recognize the transformative potential of communication in addressing social issues. This phase (February 2023-January 2024) focuses on child protection - Ending Child Marriage (ECM), Ending Violence against Children (EVAC), Poshan Abhiyaan and Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn Child and Adolescent, and Regular immunization (RMNCH+A &RI) by employing evidence-based approaches, SBCC interventions to raise awareness, educate and engage individuals and communities in meaningful dialogue through targeted messaging, community engagement and the use of various communication channels.

I extend my gratitude and appreciate Dr Anant Kumar and his team, the State Project Coordinator, Mr Aditya Raj, the Documentation Officer, Mrs Yoshita Ravi, and the cohort of 12 young SBCC DPCs for their contributions to this phase. I would also like to thank Assistant Director, Dr Pradeep Kerketta SJ, Finance Officer, Fr Claber Minj, Dean Academics, Prof Amar Eron Tigga, Dr. Rajshree Verma and UNICEF Jharkhand, for their encouragement, guidance, and time to the program and supporting capacity development of the team from time to time.

Together, let us harness the power of communication to challenge social norms, promote equality, and create a world where every individual can thrive and fulfill their potential. As the present report embarks on the journey towards a more equitable and compassionate society, by working together, we can create a future where social issues are not just discussed but actively addressed, leading to a world that is fair, just, and inclusive for everyone.

Dr Joseph Marianus Kujur, SJ

Director, XISS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to acknowledge and thank Dr Kaninika Mitra, Chief of Field Office-UNICEF, Jharkhand for this collaborative partnership with XISS, Ranchi, and her proactive support and encouragement in implementing this project. We would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the District Commissioners, Shri K. N. Jha, Secretary DWCD&SS, officials of the Department of Women, Child Development and Social Security (DWCD&SS), Jharkhand State Child Protection Society (JSCPS) team for their continued support in implementing this project.

We extremely value the 12 Deputy Commissioners for their unwavering assistance and direction to our SBCC-DPCs during the period. Key results of the 'Ending Child Marriage' (ECM) and 'Ending Violence against Children' (EVAC), RMNCH+A, and RI (Reproductive, Maternal, New child, plus Adolescent and Regular Immunization), Nutrition – Poshan Abhiyan programs could not have been accomplished without their guidance and cooperation. We also acknowledge the assistance of Deputy Development Commissioners (DDCs), Civil Surgeons (CS), District Social Welfare Officers, (DSWO), District Child Protection Officers (DCPO), and District Program Managers (DPMs Health) and other important officers whose support and belief have helped this program succeed in achieving its goals.

We are appreciative of the efforts and support of the UNICEF Jharkhand Office, especially Mrs. Priti Srivastava, Child Protection Specialist; Mr. Danish Khan, Former SBCC Specialist; Mr. Gaurav Kumar, Child Protection Officer NUNV; Mr. Mrityunjay Nayak, Nutrition Consultant, and the entire team for understanding and positively responding to the need of the hour for the interventions.

I am thankful to Fr. Joseph Marianus Kujur, SJ, Director, XISS for his constant support and guidance to the program team. I am also thankful to Prof Amar E. Tigga, Dean Academics, and Fr Claber Minj, SJ, Finance Officer, Dr Rajshree Verma for their support and time in the successful implementation of the program. Special thanks to Mr Aditya Raj, State Project Coordinator, for the project's successful management, implementation, and coordination. I also thank Mrs Yoshita Ravi, the Documentation Officer of the program for documenting and managing the knowledge of the program outcomes. We also thank Md Ashraf, the Accountant for maintaining the financial records related to the program.

I would like to appreciate and acknowledge my team's effort at districts, the 12 SBCC-DPCs whose tireless and unconditional efforts have harnessed the desired results, which contributed to the district and state's overall performance. Finally, my acknowledgment goes to members of civil society, front-line workers, volunteers, staff at the district level, and the friends of the media for their constant support.

Dr Anant Kumar
Project Head

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANM	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife
ASHA	Accredited Social Health Activists
AWW	Anganwadi Worker
BDO	Block Development Officer
BPM	Block Program Manager
CDPO	Child Development Protection Officer
CHC	Community Health Centre
CMAM	Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition
CMPO	Child Marriage Prohibition Officer
CO	Community Organization
CRP	Community Resource Person
CWC	Child Welfare Committee
DCPO	District Child Protection Officer
DCPU	District Child Protection Unit
DEO	District Education Officer
DPC	District Project Coordinator
DPM	District Program Manager
DRCHO	District Reproductive & Child Health Officer
DSWO	District Social Welfare Officer
ECM	Ending Child Marriage
EVAC	Ending Violence Against Children
FIR	First Information Report
FLW	Frontline Workers
ICPS	Integrated Child Protection Scheme
IDSP	Integrated Disease Surveillance Program

IEC	Information, Education & Communication
IMR	Infant Mortality Rate
JLKP	Jharkhand Legal Knowledge Partnership
JSCPS	Jharkhand State Child Protection Society
JSLPS	Jharkhand State Livelihood Promotion Society
JWSHGF	Jharkhand Women's Self-Help Group Federation
KGAV	Kasturba Gandhi Avasiya Vidyalaya
KGBV	Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalaya
LS	Lady Supervisors
MMR	Maternal Mortality Rate
MOIC	Medical officer-in-charge
MR	Measles & Rubella
MTC	Malnutrition Treatment Centre
NGO	Non-Government Organization
PCMA	Prohibition of Child Marriage Act
PHC	Primary Health Centre
POCSO	Protection of Children from Sexual Offences
RMNCH+A & RI	Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn Child and Adolescent plus Regular Immunization
RUTF	Ready-to-use Therapeutic Food
SAM	Severe Acute Malnutrition
SBCC	Social and Behavior Change Communication
SHG	Self Help Group
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VAC	Violence Against Children
WCD	Women & Child Development
XISS	Xavier Institute of Social Service

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MESSAGES OF THE DISTRICT OFFICIALS

“XISS-UNICEF’s collaboration with the district administration of West Singhbhum in Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC) was instrumental in shaping a comprehensive district communication plan. This meticulously crafted plan not only guided our direction but also fostered seamless coordination among a diverse array of stakeholders, including district-level officials, block-level authorities, PRI members, and representatives from various CSOs.

The strategic approach of the SBCC-DPC in addressing societal issues was truly transformative. Through unwavering dedication and strategic interventions, noteworthy progress was made in reducing instances of child marriage and ending violence against children within our community. During Poshan Maah 2023, the SBCC-DPC initiatives sparked heightened monitoring and active engagement within the community. This surge not only highlighted the success of the initiatives but also demonstrated the profound impact of their work at the grassroots level.”



Sri Ananya Mittal, I.A.S.
Deputy Commissioner,
West Singhbhum.



Smt. Nancy Sahay, I.A.S.
Deputy Commissioner,
Hazaribagh

“A contribution to the district’s communication plan targeted at ending child marriage and violence against children has come under the Sampark project, Phase - III. The SBCC-DPC’s assistance included planning the Surakshit Bachpan Khushaal Jeevan campaign, and awareness campaigns, and directing block-level training and awareness initiatives. Expect further continued support with the same degree of commitment and dedication.”

SBCC - DPC under the Sampark project, Phase - III, has contributed to the district’s communication plan aimed at ending child marriage and ending violence against children. The support involved programs and initiatives among school children and teachers, facilitating block-level training cum awareness programs, and providing support during Poshan Maah activities.



Shri Naman Priyesh Lakra, I.A.S.
Deputy Commissioner,
Giridih



Shri Shekhar Jamuar, I.A.S.
*Deputy Commissioner,
Garhwa*

“SBCC-DPC played a pivotal role in preparing the district’s communication plan aimed at eradicating child marriage and ending violence against children. SBCC-DPC efforts in facilitating District and block-level training cum awareness programs have been instrumental in disseminating information to the community. His involvement in events such as Health Mela, Poshan Maah, the Ending Child Marriage campaign, and other district programs has further showcased his proactive approach to community engagement. Beyond his specific project responsibilities, he has also willingly extended his support to district administrative tasks whenever required. SBCC-DPC’s versatility and readiness to contribute beyond the scope of his role have been valuable assets to our team.”

“SBCC-DPC has made significant contributions to documenting and creating comprehensive reports, as well as formulating and monitoring robust district communication plans on Ending Child Marriage (ECM), Ending Violence against Children (EVAC), INAP, Poshan Maah, and Surakshit Bachpan Khushhal Jeevan Abhiyan in the Palamu district. SBCC-DPC technical support and strategic guidance have played a pivotal role in raising awareness among the target population. Moreover, SBCC-DPC has been actively involved in facilitating district and block-level training and orientation programs, demonstrating his commitment to successfully executing initiatives in the district. Best of luck to him, and I look forward to future collaboration with XISS-UNICEF.”



Shri Shashi Ranjan, I.A.S.
*Deputy Commissioner,
Palamu*



Md. Shahid Akhtar
*Deputy Development Commissioner,
Pakur*

“SBCC-DPC has shown outstanding leadership in leading initiatives to End Child Marriage (ECM) and End violence against children. In his capacity, he played a pivotal role in the formulation of a comprehensive district communication plan dedicated to ending child marriage and ending violence against children. His proactive engagement in various activities in mobilizing and monitoring such as Poshan Mah, and diverse ECM and EVAC initiatives, has been instrumental in the remarkable success of the campaign. SBCC – DPC’s unwavering support has had a lasting positive impact on the effectiveness of our initiatives. His commitment and dedication have been evident in every aspect of the project, showcasing a deep understanding of the issues at hand and a keen ability to mobilize communities effectively. Looking ahead, we express our anticipation for SBCC – DPC’s sustained commitment to our shared mission.”



Shri. Abhijeet Sinha, I.A.S.
Deputy Development Commissioner,
Dumka

“UNICEF collaborated with the XISS to promote the abolition of child marriage, and the prevention of violence against children received significant support. SBCC–DPC supported various activities and flagship programs. The district government emphasized the Savitri Bai Phule government scheme scholarship on International Girl Child Day, to maximize the impact of all its schemes across adolescent girls of all ages. DPC’s dedication, sincerity, and dutifulness towards her responsibilities were appreciable. The support, organizing, and coordination through different stakeholder’s teams in conducting a 15-day awareness campaign

on ending child marriage and ending violence against children titled, “Surakshit Bachpan Khushaal Jeevan” campaign, concluded successfully. SBCC-DPC’s contribution to the orientation of PRIs, SHGs, and to CSOs. Keeping ahead these qualities forever, wishing her all the best for future endeavors.”

“I express my gratitude to the SBCC-DPC, Sampark III Project for playing a pivotal role in our collaborative efforts to combat child marriage, enhance child protection, and prevent measles and rubella. Her steadfast commitment to orchestrating impactful campaigns and fostering community engagement has significantly contributed to our shared objectives. SBCC–DPC’s dedication to creating a safer and healthier environment for children is truly commendable. As the DDC, I look forward with optimism to the ongoing collaboration, believing that our joint initiatives will continue to make substantial progress in ensuring the well-being of children in our district.”



Sanjay Sinha, I.A.S
Deputy Development Commissioner,
Godda



Shri Anilsan Lakra, I.A.S.
Deputy Development Commissioner
Jamtara

“With great pleasure, I want to express that SBCC-DPC, has been an immense support to the district administration. His efforts in raising awareness have not only informed the communities but also shifted their perspectives. He has provided invaluable assistance in ECM, EVAC, and Poshan-Maah has significantly improved planning, execution, implementation, and monitoring at the district level. I appreciate his dedicated effort towards social behavior change in the community and I extend my best wishes for all your future endeavors.”

“SBCC-DPC, Chatra under *Sampark-III* has performed an exceptionally decent job with his responsibilities. Apart from this, he supported the District Administration in Poshan, SAAMAR Abhiyan, and DMFT with his contribution and work, SBCC-DPC and District Administration got tremendous results. Looking forward to his active support in the next phase”

Shri Utkarsh Kumar Gupta, I.A.S

Deputy Development Commissioner, Chatra



Shri Kumar Tarachand, I.A.S
*Deputy Development Commissioner,
Deoghar*

“UNICEF collaborated with XISS young professionals on SBCC to promote the ending child marriage and the ending violence against children along with additional support to the Health Department during the Measles and Rubella Campaign in the Deoghar district. As part of the effort, communication plans for the Measles and Rubella Campaign and ECM & EVAC were developed for the district which included advocacy, community meetings, and capacity building of stakeholders. SBCC-DPC supported the district in the implementation and supportive supervision of these activities. Additionally, he also supported monitoring of ‘Aapki Yojna Aapki Sarkar

Apke Dwar’ appreciate his efforts and expect the same degree of commitment from him in the future as well.”

“I am writing to express my sincere gratitude to SBCC-DPC, Jamtara for the *Sampark* project (Phase-III) for his exceptional dedication and outstanding contributions to the Measles-Rubella campaign, ECM & EVAC in the district. His dedication to this initiative was commendable. These efforts are crucial in raising awareness, fostering understanding, and driving tangible actions toward ending these detrimental practices in our community.

I extend my deepest gratitude for your exceptional work and dedication. His contributions have been instrumental in shaping and advancing our efforts toward a safer and more nurturing environment for our children.”

Dr A. B. Prasad

Civil Surgeon, Jamtara

“To mobilize the community of Measles and Rubella vaccine skeptics, SBCC-DPC, and XISS-UNICEF project accomplished an admirable job. The support provided him in the preparation of the communication plan, advocacy activities with various stakeholders, religious leaders, PRI members, and local leaders, and supportive supervision had a favorable effect on the campaign. We anticipate continued support from him with the same degree of dedication”.

Dr Shiv Chandra Jha

Civil Surgeon, Deoghar

“I appreciate the role and responsibility played by SBCC-DPC, under the Sampark phase - III project under XISS-UNICEF. His active involvement and valuable support were instrumental in ensuring the success of the Measles and Rubella campaign in Giridih District. His contributions in data presentation during district task force meetings, and on-site monitoring have significantly guided and directed the campaign. His commendable efforts and dedication in ensuring the campaign’s proper implementation are praiseworthy. I express my sincere gratitude for his invaluable support and proactive engagement in the Giridih district under Sampark phase - III of XISS-UNICEF.”

Dr Shiv Prasad Mishra

Civil Surgeon, Giridih

“To mobilize people regarding Measles and Rubella vaccination, SBCC - DPC, XISS-UNICEF project accomplished an admirable job. The support provided him in making a route chart for the led van and its monitoring, mobilization of refusal area people, Meeting with Religious leaders, and supportive supervision had a favorable effect on the campaign. We anticipate continued support from him with the same degree of dedication.”

Dr Bhagwat Marandi

Civil Surgeon, Pakur

“Advocacy with religious and community leaders will be critical to improving the dissemination of positive information and messages about MR vaccination and the Intensive Mission Indradhanush Program (IMI) 5.0 and having an impact on community interventions, particularly in tribal and inhospitable areas. In collaboration with the Health Department DPM, SBCC - DPC has developed an IEC (Posters and Banners) in the regional language Santhali.

With the help of SBCC - DPC the pocket areas were identified from all the ten blocks where more focus is required in terms of raising awareness and motivating people to get jabbed. The other participants were the PRI members (Mukhiya, ward members, *Rojgar Sewak*, etc.), CDPOs, *Sahiya*, *Sevika*, NGO partners such as PRADAN, Lahanti, Aio Ai Dari, Jan Jagriti, BPMs of JSLPS, Block coordinators of Tejaswini, religious leaders, private hospital representatives, local influencers, teachers were present. This contribution has been a great success.”

Dr B.P. Singh

Civil Surgeon, Dumka

“In the context of XISS-UNICEF, Sampark phase - III in the Hazaribagh district, I am writing to express my profound gratitude for the outstanding devotion and commitment proved by SBCC - District Project Coordinator, Hazaribagh, in the areas of child protection and nutrition. DPC has played a vital role in ensuring the safety and welfare of children in the district. The successful implementation of several child protection, and nutrition, including meetings, events, workshops, and campaigns, has been made possible by his broad experience and strategic direction. I sincerely value DPC’s outstanding work and admirable district-level support under XISS-UNICEF, Sampark - III.”

Smt. Indu Prabha Khalko

DSWO, Hazaribagh

“I am writing to convey my sincere appreciation for the exemplary dedication and commitment shown by SBCC - District Project Coordinator, in the domain of child protection, Poshan Abhiyaan, and SAAMAR Abhiyan within the framework of XISS-UNICEF, Sampark- III in the Giridih district. He has played a vital role in ensuring the safety and welfare of children in the district. His extensive expertise and strategic guidance have been instrumental in effectively implementing meetings, events, workshops, and campaigns. I wholeheartedly appreciate his invaluable contributions and commendable support at the district level under XISS-UNICEF, Sampark – III.”

Smt. Alka Hembrom

DSWO, Giridih

“SBCC-DPC during the 11-month duration of the XISS-UNICEF project (Phase III). The SBCC-DPC expertise in Social and Behaviour Change Communication played an indispensable role in architecting a comprehensive district communication plan. This meticulously crafted plan not only served as our compass but also facilitated seamless coordination with a spectrum of stakeholders, including district-level officials, block-level authorities, and representatives from various CSOs. One of the most striking outcomes of their efforts was witnessed during the observance of Poshan Maah 2023. The SBCC-DPC’s initiatives sparked an upsurge in awareness and active engagement among community members. The depth of my appreciation extends to the SBCC-DPC for their unwavering dedication and unparalleled expertise. Their pivotal role significantly contributed to the triumph and positive outcomes achieved by our project.”

Smt. Suman Singh

DSWO, West Singhbhum

“I am pleased to provide this testimonial for SBCC – DPC has been an outstanding contributor to the initiatives undertaken by our department in the Palamu district. As the District Social Welfare Officer, I have witnessed his exemplary dedication and commitment to the cause of child protection, Poshan, and other campaigns conducted under the XISS-UNICEF, Sampark - III. SBCC- DPC has been pivotal in successfully preparing and executing communication plans, monitoring frameworks, and reporting mechanisms related to the programs and strategies designed. His active involvement, extensive expertise, and strategic guidance have played a crucial role in ensuring the effective implementation of various programs, and we have achieved commendable outcomes in many ways, specifically in “Surakshit Bachpan Khushal Jeevan Abhiyan “ and Poshan Maah. His collaborative spirit fosters a positive and productive working environment, enhancing the overall success of our endeavors at the district.”

Mrs. Neeta Chauhan

DSWO, Palamu

SBCC- DPC चतरा द्वारा जिले के सभी विभागों के साथ समन्वय बनाकर अच्छा कार्य किया गया। इनके द्वारा समाज कल्याण विभाग अंतर्गत समर अभियान, पोषण अभियान, बाल विवाह रोक-थाम के कार्यों के साथ-साथ विभाग के अन्य कार्यों में भी सहयोग किया गया इनके सहयोग से विभाग के विभिन्न कार्यों में अच्छे परिणाम मिले, आशा करती हूं कि परियोजना के अगले चरण में इनका सक्रिय सहयोग विभाग को प्राप्त होगा।”

इस कामना के साथ।

श्रीमती सूरज मुनि कुमारी

जिला समाज कल्याण पदाधिकारी, चतरा

“Social and Behavioral Change is an important component for the success of any government program and to bring awareness in the community. It plays a vital role in changing the perception of the community towards social norms like Child Marriage, Child Abuse, etc. It aims to empower them to follow positive practices, SBCC-DPC of project Sampark (XISS- UNICEF) supported the district administration in fighting such social norms. His efforts in promoting IEC to End Child Marriage and Violence at the grassroots level are satisfactory. Additionally, he supported the monitoring of the Poshan Mah and other departmental works as well. We expect more support from him in the future with dedication and commitment.”

Smt. Runnu Mishra

DSWO, Deoghar

“The sixth Rastriya Poshan Maah is being celebrated by the Ministry of Women and Child Development throughout September 2023. The focus of the Rastriya Poshan Maah initiative is to comprehensively address malnutrition using a life-cycle approach in sync with Mission Nutrition 2.0. The SBCC DPC in the District benefitted from the systematic planning, monitoring, and review system district level for Poshan Maah. Information on themes covering key elements of the pillars of the mission—namely, convergence, training, capacity building, Poshan Tracker Too, and program activities—was collected.

Smt. Anita Kujur

DSWO, Dumka

“We are delighted to share our appreciation for SBCC- DPC’s exceptional service as the SBCC District Project Coordinator within the Sampark project, phase III, at XISS - UNICEF Garhwa district. His integral role in formulating the district’s communication plan to combat child marriage and eliminate violence against children has been instrumental in the success of our endeavors. His initiative-taking efforts in orchestrating District and block-level training cum awareness programs have played a pivotal role in disseminating vital information within the community.

Noteworthy are his contributions to events such as Poshan Maah, Ending Child Marriage Campaign, and VHSND Monitoring. We express our sincere gratitude to DPC and eagerly anticipate his continued involvement with our team, confident that his expertise and dedication will further enhance the success of our initiatives.”

Smt. Poornima Kumari

DSWO, Garhwa

“I am writing to convey my sincere gratitude for the outstanding devotion and hard work that SBCC - District Project Coordinator, Hazaribagh, has demonstrated in the field of child safety within the context of XISS - UNICEF, Sampark - III. Her consistent work has been essential to supporting our programs and guaranteeing the well-being and safety of kids throughout our region. Her vast knowledge and tactical direction have been invaluable in conducting a range of child protection initiatives, such as conferences, events, workshops, and campaigns. These programs have successfully tackled important concerns and promoted children’s fundamental rights throughout the Hazaribagh district. The cooperative methodology and shrewd leadership exhibited by DPC have greatly enhanced our efforts, yielding concrete and constructive consequences in protecting kids from risks.”

Sanjay Prasad,

DCPO, Hazaribagh

“I am writing to express my deep appreciation for the remarkable dedication and commitment exhibited by SBCC - District Project Coordinator within the framework of XISS - UNICEF, Sampark - III, in the domain of child protection. DPC’s unwavering efforts have been pivotal in fortifying our initiatives and ensuring the safety and welfare of children across our district. His extensive expertise and strategic guidance have played a crucial role in successfully implementing various child protection activities, including meetings, events, workshops, and campaigns. I wholeheartedly acknowledge DPC’s invaluable input and commendable contributions to the project. I extend my best wishes to him for all his future endeavors.”

Shree Jeetu Kumar

DCPO, Giridih

“I wish to express my sincere appreciation for the fruitful 11-month collaboration with SBCC-DPC, The SBCC-DPC’s pivotal role in devising a robust district communication plan remains paramount. Their expertise in social and behavioral change communication ensured not only well-crafted interventions but also their effective implementation.

The SBCC-DPC seamlessly orchestrated coordination among diverse stakeholders, including the line department’s district-level authorities, block-level officials, and NGOs/CSOs. Her commitment and strategic approach were particularly evident in addressing critical issues such as ending child marriage and terminating violence against children. Their dedicated efforts yielded a noteworthy decrease in instances of child marriage and violence against children within our scope.

“I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the SBCC-DPC for their invaluable technical guidance and collaborative ethos. Their contributions have unequivocally fortified our child protection initiatives within the district.”

Smt. Punita Tiwary

DCPO, West Singhbhum

“I am delighted to express my sincere appreciation for the outstanding contributions of, SBCC-DPC Palamu, during the 11-month duration of the XISS-UNICEF project (Phase III) 2023 in Palamu district. His dedication and expertise played a pivotal role in ensuring the success of our project, and his contributions consistently exceeded our expectations. We are incredibly grateful for his remarkable efforts, and we look forward to the opportunity to work with him again in the future.”

DPC’s contributions were instrumental in documenting, writing reports, and formulating robust district communication plans. His expertise in social and behavioral change communication ensured that our interventions were well-designed and effectively implemented.

I was impressed by SBCC-DPC’s dedication and strategic approach to critical issues. I want to thank the UNICEF and XISS team for their invaluable technical assistance and collaborative attitude, and I wish DPC all the best in his future endeavors.”

Shri Anuj Kumar

DCPO, Palamu

“I extend my deepest gratitude to the SBCC - DPC of the XISS-UNICEF *Sampark* III project for their pivotal role in our collaborative endeavors to combat child marriage, strengthen child protection, and prevent measles and rubella. Her unwavering commitment to orchestrating impactful campaigns and fostering community engagement has been invaluable. The dedication to creating a safer and healthier environment for children is truly commendable. I eagerly look forward to the continuation of our joint efforts, confident that together we can make substantial progress in ensuring the well-being of children in our district.”

Shri Ritesh Kumar

DCPO, Godda

“We are pleased to express our gratitude for the outstanding contributions of SBCC - DPC, his noteworthy contributions extend to organizing events such as the Ending Child Marriage campaign, as well as coordinating competitions such as paintings, rangoli, essay writings, quizzes, etc. Additionally, he has demonstrated effective collaboration between different government departments, fostering coordination in areas such as education and health. Beyond his project-specific responsibilities, Mr. Kumar’s willingness to extend support to district administrative tasks reflects his versatility and readiness to contribute beyond the defined scope of his role. We extend our best wishes to him for his future endeavors and eagerly anticipate his continued participation as a valuable member of our team.”

Shri Ashok Nayak

DCPO, Garhwa

“I would like to express my sincere appreciation to SBCC-DPC of the XISS-UNICEF Project for its support in our efforts to promote the end of child marriage and combat violence against children. His commitment to creating a safer and healthier environment for children is commendable and we are looking forward to continuing our co-elaborative efforts in the future as well.”

Smt. Meera Kumari

DCPO, Deoghar

SBCC-DPC Chatra द्वारा किए गए कार्य सराहनीय है। इन्होंने सभी विभागों के साथ समन्वय बनाकर बाल विवाह एवं बाल हिंसा is District Communication Plan के माध्यम से अच्छा कार्य किया है। आशा करती हूं की परियोजना के अगले चरण में भी इनका सहयोग इसी तरह से प्राप्त होगा।”

श्रीमती अरुणा प्रसाद

जिला बाल संरक्षण पदाधिकारी, चतरा

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PROGRAM

Impactful presence in 12 districts of Jharkhand through qualified and experienced development professionals

Technical support in planing, designing, and implementing 12 districts specific communication plans for Ending child Marriage and Violence against Children

Support in reaching hard-to-reach areas and vulnerable population groups

Capacity building of functionaries and stakeholders at the block and district level

Support in flagship programs of state and central government on Measles and Rubella, Poshan Pakhwada and Poshan Mah programs

Coordination and teamwork with district administration and line departments for executing campaign activities

Leveraged government resources through different schemes & programs

15 days district wide campaign on ECM & EVAC - "Surakshit Bachpan, Khushaal Jeevan"

Human Interest stories, reports, and documents for the districts

Supported various other programs like Viksit Bharat, Sarkar Aapke Dwar, and Block Health Mela

Strengthened the collaboration between administration, line departments, and CSOs in the districts

Identified and felicitated to the girls and families as 'Champions' who have waved off the social issues of child marriage and violence

BACKGROUND

An Introduction to SBCC

Social and Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) is a strategic approach that utilizes communication to bring about positive changes in attitudes, behaviors, and social norms. It is an important tool for addressing various social issues, promoting health and well-being, social issues such as child marriage, violence against children, education, and driving sustainable development goals. SBCC recognizes that behavior change is not solely dependent on the availability of information or resources. It acknowledges the complex relationship of individual, interpersonal, and societal factors that influence behavior.

By understanding these dynamics, SBCC aims to create an enabling environment that supports and motivates individuals and communities to adopt healthier and more desirable behaviors. Health interventions that incorporate practicing hygiene, getting vaccinated, or adopting healthy eating habits and WASH too. These interventions often utilize various communication channels, including mass media, interpersonal communication, and community engagement, to reach their target audience, which can effectively convey health messages, raise awareness, and influence attitudes and beliefs related to health behaviors. This approach recognizes that behavior change is not solely dependent on knowledge but is also influenced by social and cultural factors. SBCC integrates into child protection issues, it deals with raising awareness on child rights, and prevention, to educate communities and relevant stakeholders on promoting positive parenting practices and ensuring their overall well-being.

It requires collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, healthcare providers, community leaders, and civil society organizations. It involves developing targeted communication strategies, utilizing various channels such as mass media, community engagement, and interpersonal communication, and continuously monitoring and evaluating the impact of these efforts.

At its core, SBCC is guided by the principles of audience-centeredness, participation, and evidence-based decision-making. It emphasizes the importance of understanding the target audience's needs, beliefs, and values to tailor communication messages and interventions effectively. By involving the community in the design and implementation of SBCC initiatives, it ensures ownership, relevance, and sustainability.

SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL MODEL FOR CHANGE



Source: Adapted from C-Modules: A Learning Package for Social and Behavior Change Communication

LEVELS OF ANALYSIS AND INFLUENCE: WHERE IS THE TIPPING POINT FOR CHANGE?

Circles	Self and Level of Influence
Self	At the center
Interpersonal	Partners, families, peers
Community	Organization, services, products, leaders, providers
Enabling Environment	Policy/legislation, politics/conflict, Economics, religion, technology, natural environment, leaders of government, NGOs, private sector
Cross-Cutting Factors	Determinants of Behaviors

* These cross-cutting factors (determinants of behaviors) are applicable at all Levels of Analysis and Influence. They motivate behaviors of all "actors" within each Level. These cross-cutting factors include knowledge, perceptions, attitudes, beliefs, skills, social norms and gender roles, among

Figure 1: Socioeco-logical model

SBCC draws upon a wide range of communication approaches and channels, including mass media, interpersonal communication, community engagement, and digital platforms. It leverages behavior modeling, social mobilization, and advocacy to create impactful messages and facilitate behavior change. The application of SBCC is diverse, spanning various sectors such as health, education, gender equality, environmental conservation, and social justice. It has proven effective in addressing issues like maternal and child health, nutrition, family planning, and hygiene promotion. In summary, SBCC is a dynamic and multidimensional approach that harnesses the power of communication to drive positive social change. By understanding the complexities of human behavior and engaging with communities, SBCC empowers individuals and catalyzes collective action toward a healthier, more equitable, and sustainable future.

The socio-ecological model of Change is a framework that recognizes the complex interplay between individual behavior, interpersonal relationships, community factors, societal norms, and policy influences in driving social change. It emphasizes the importance of addressing multiple levels of influence to create sustainable and impactful transformations.

At the individual level, the model acknowledges that behavior change is influenced by personal factors such as knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and skills. Interventions targeting individuals focus on increasing awareness, providing education, and enhancing personal agencies to promote desired behaviors.

Moving beyond the individual, the model recognizes the significance of interpersonal relationships. Family, friends, peers, and social networks play a crucial role in shaping behavior. Interventions at this level aim to strengthen social support systems, promote positive role modeling, and encourage healthy communication and relationships.

The community level encompasses the physical and social environment in which individuals live. Factors such as community norms, cultural practices, and access to resources can either facilitate or hinder behavior change. Interventions at this level focus on community mobilization, creating supportive environments, and fostering social cohesion.

The societal level acknowledges the broader social and cultural norms that influence behavior. These norms can either reinforce or challenge existing practices. Interventions at this level aim to shift societal attitudes, promote social justice, and advocate for policy changes that support desired behaviors.

Lastly, the policy level recognizes the role of laws, regulations, and institutional practices in shaping behavior. Policy interventions aim to create an enabling environment by implementing and enforcing laws, regulations, and policies that promote positive change.

By considering and addressing these multiple levels of influence, the socio-ecological model of Change provides a comprehensive framework for understanding and implementing effective strategies to drive social change and create a sustainable impact.

SBCC uses Elements of Communication Strategy

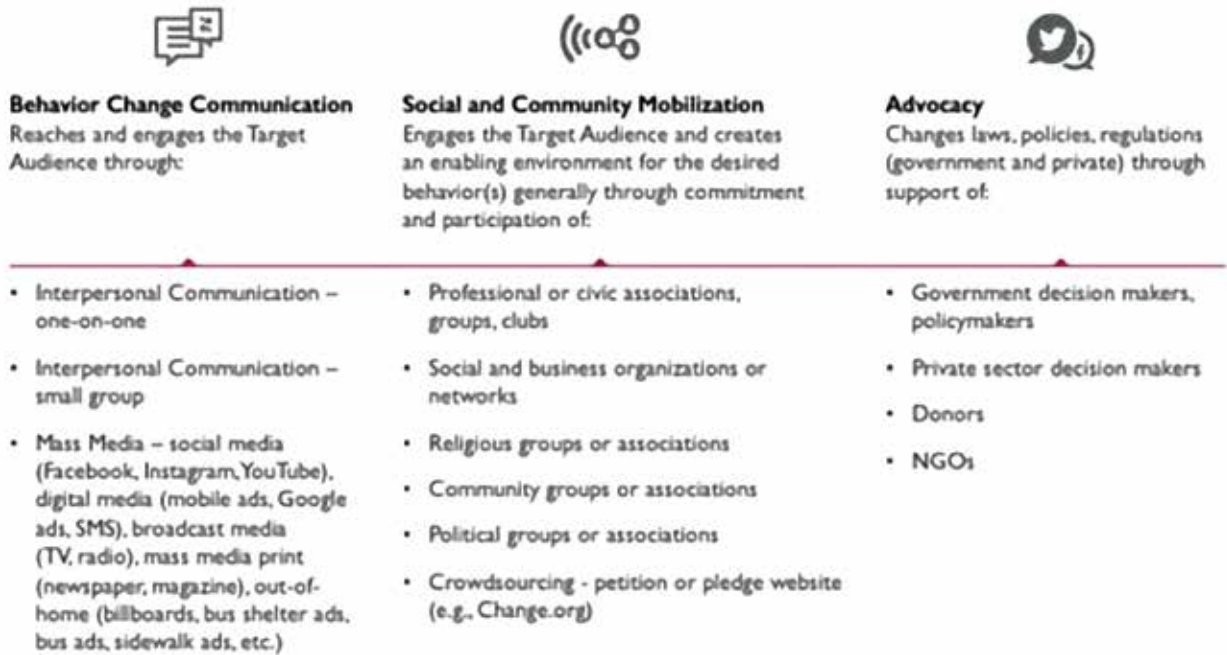


Figure 2: Elements of Communication Strategy

SBCC (Social and Behavior Change Communication) utilizes elements of communication strategy across various channels, including interpersonal communication, mass media, social and community mobilization, and advocacy.

Interpersonal Communication: SBCC recognizes the importance of one-on-one interactions in influencing behavior change. It employs trained communicators or community health workers who engage directly with individuals or small groups to deliver tailored messages, provide information, and address any concerns or misconceptions.

Mass Media: SBCC leverages mass media platforms such as television, radio, print media, and online channels to reach a large audience. It strategically designs and disseminates messages through these channels to raise awareness, educate, and promote behavior change on a broader scale.

Social and Community Mobilization: SBCC actively engages communities and social networks to foster behavior change. It involves community leaders, influencers, and organizations to mobilize collective action, encourage dialogue, and create supportive environments that reinforce desired behaviors.

Advocacy: SBCC recognizes the importance of advocating for policy changes and creating an enabling environment for behavior change. It collaborates with stakeholders, policymakers, and influencers to advocate for supportive policies, resource allocation, and social norms that align with the desired behavior change objectives.

By utilizing these elements of communication strategy across interpersonal communication, mass media, social and community mobilization, and advocacy, SBCC aims to create a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to effectively promote behavior change at individual, community, and societal levels.

The context of the Jharkhand State

Jharkhand known as, “The land of forests” is a state in Eastern India. The state shares its border with the states of West Bengal to the east, Chhattisgarh to the west, Uttar Pradesh to the northwest, Bihar to the north, and Odisha to the south. It is the 15th largest state by area, and the 14th largest by population. The state has a population of around 33 million people (Census of India, 2011).

Despite being renowned for its mine reserves, the state of Jharkhand has earned the disrepute of having the highest percentage of underage girls getting married. According to the latest demographic sample survey by the Union Home Ministry, the percentage of girls getting married before attaining majority is as high as 5.8 in Jharkhand. (The Sample Registration System Statistical Report, 2020). Child marriage and violence against children are significant issues in Jharkhand. According to reports, (youngarenalitigators/2016/10/child-marriage-evil-continues) Jharkhand has one of the highest rates of child marriage in India. The prevalence of child marriage is influenced by various factors, including poverty, lack of education, and social

norms. Child marriage is a concerning issue that has implications for various aspects of a child's well-being, including their nutrition. In the context of Jharkhand, where child marriage rates are relatively high, there is a correlation between child marriage and malnutrition.

Child marriage often leads to early pregnancy, which can have detrimental effects on the health and nutrition of both the mother and the child. Young girls who get married early are more likely to experience complications during pregnancy and childbirth, resulting in higher rates of undernutrition among both mothers and their children. Furthermore, child brides often face limited access to education and economic opportunities, which can perpetuate the cycle of poverty and malnutrition. They may lack the knowledge and resources to make informed decisions about their health and nutrition, as well as that of their children. Addressing child marriage and its impact on malnutrition requires a comprehensive approach. This includes implementing and enforcing laws that prohibit child marriage, promoting girls' education, improving access to healthcare services, and empowering communities to challenge harmful social norms. Efforts to combat child marriage and malnutrition should involve collaboration between government agencies, civil society organizations, and communities to ensure the well-being and rights of children are protected.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) growth charts, 11.4% of children aged 0-59 months in Jharkhand are severely wasted owing to malnutrition (WHZ-3 of the median). Jharkhand's basic nutrition services, particularly SAM therapy for children, were severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. But Jharkhand also implements specific interventions targeting nutrition, such as the provision of iron and folic acid supplements, deworming programs, and breastfeeding promotion. Additionally, nutrition-sensitive interventions like agriculture and livelihood programs, women's empowerment initiatives, and sanitation campaigns are implemented to address the underlying causes of malnutrition.

Violence against children is a grave concern in Jharkhand as well. Cases of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse have been reported, highlighting the need for effective measures to protect children from such harm.

The table provided contains information about the percentage of women aged 20-24 years who were married before the age of 18 years in different districts of Jharkhand. The table below includes data from different sources such as NFHS-5, NFHS-4, and NCRB 2022.

Districts	Women aged 20-24 years married before the age of 18 years		Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (Total) (Col.38+41+44+47+50+53)	Juveniles Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act (Total) (Col.57+Col.58)
	NFHS-5 (%)	NFHS- 4 (%)	NCRB 2022	NCRB 2022
Jamtara	50.5	43.9	28	0
Deoghar	49.2	52.3	4	0
Godda	48.5	63.5	24	0
Giridih	45.6	52.6	10	0
Pakur	43.4	41.1	13	0
Dumka	43.1	47.4	42	0
Koderma	42.5	50.4	31	0
Sahibganj	39.9	37.7	46	0
Hazaribagh	38.6	40.8	62	0
Palamu	35.4	39.9	46	1
Latehar	32.2	47.1	26	0
Chatra	31.7	49	18	0
Garhwa	31.3	58.8	75	2
Dhanbad	28.3	29.9	134	0
Bokaro	26.3	30.6	45	0
Ramgarh	25.1	27.7	31	0
West Singhbhum	24.4	21.6	35	0
Lohardaga	21.9	28.5	13	0
Khunti	21.7	27.8	28	0
Gumla	20.9	24	52	0
Ranchi	20.9	27.8	50	0
East Singhbhum	19.8	26.1	27	0
Saraikela Kharsawan	19.2	32.2	20	8
Simdega	15.9	14.7	24	0

SBCC in Jharkhand

SBCC in Jharkhand state also adopted the involvement of local leaders and influencers to promote ECM & EVAC through changing behaviors and encourage communication uptake. Community leaders, religious leaders, and other trusted individuals were engaged to help convey accurate information about ECM & EVAC. Ending Child Marriage is a very complex issue to deal with. This deep-rooted issue requires a comprehensive approach to address. Therefore, the project emphasized propagating awareness and sensitizing quality education for both girls and boys and on skills training, and economic opportunities as well as support programs that enhance their self-esteem and decision-making abilities. Another impetus was to strengthen and enforce laws that set the minimum age of marriage, rights, punishment, and overall growth and development of girls and boys.

To address the sensitive issue, it requires various stakeholders and strategies to be part of. Promotion of education and awareness programs that teach children, parents, caregivers, and communities about child rights, child protection, and the consequences of violence. This can include school-based programs, community workshops, and media campaigns. Supportive efforts for safe environments for children, both at home and in institutions such as schools and childcare centers. This involves promoting positive parenting practices, providing counseling and support services for families, and implementing anti-bullying measures in schools.

Training and capacity-building programs for professionals working with children, including teachers, healthcare providers, law enforcement personnel, and social workers. Raising collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organizations, community leaders, and other stakeholders to develop coordinated strategies and interventions. This can include sharing resources, and best practices, and conducting joint advocacy efforts. Strengthening legal framework that fosters enforcement and enhanced existing laws and policies that protect children from violence, such as the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO – 2012) and the Juveniles Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act. Ensuring strict implementation and accountability for offenders.

In addition, media people also make an important place for awareness and sensitization. Their role must be involved and sensitized to ensure that accurate information about the deep-rooted issue - ECM & and EVAC was being disseminated to the community. This included working with local newspapers, television, and radio stations, jingles, WhatsApp messages, posters, video bites, and wall paintings to provide accurate and timely information about the harmful effects of the issues.

To understand the impact of their SBCC activities, the district's administration also conducted regular follow-ups and reviews of the programs. This helped them to identify areas where their efforts were most effective, and where they needed to adjust better to reach their target populations.

Sampark Program

Sampark program was initiated with the vision towards the pillars – ‘communicate, connect, collaborate, and coordinate, as the name itself says to unite. It started during the COVID-19 pandemic period that the program began. The program is a collaborative effort of XISS and UNICEF Jharkhand. The technical support to district administrations in Jharkhand for the activation and strengthening of SBCC activities under different government programs and social issues. It provides technical support to the district administrations through planning, implementing activities, coordination, liaisoning, monitoring, and engaging multi-sectoral stakeholders to regularize government programs and direct initiatives.

Sampark III

The program’s commitment was to bring social, and behavior change communication and get a positive practice of all social taboos from society. Following the successful completion of the first two phases, Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS) and UNICEF, Jharkhand continued their partnership and responsibility for eleven months, 2023 - 2024. To offer technical assistance for strengthening the SBCC in 12 districts to address ingrained social issues such as Ending Child Marriage (ECM), Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC), and maintaining the need-based COVID vaccination program and routine immunization and support, coordination with government flagship programs, nutrition mission - Poshan Abhiyan and RMNCH+A.

The team of 12 experienced and well-qualified young professionals were deputed as District Project Coordinators (DPCs) under the leadership of Deputy Commissioners. A letter was provided by the state government for DPCs to the DCs to take support from the team and work in coordination with line departments. The coordinators initiated the communication plan for ECM & EVAC for the promotion of creating awareness, sensitization, and campaign activities throughout the district administration multi-sectoral level – line departments likewise – education, health, rural development, and social welfare. The DPCs played a pivotal role in terms of planning, advocacy, coordination, and implementation of activities with proper reporting of documentation.

The current partnership was built upon the results and achievements of the last two and continues to gain from the networks, rapport, and capacity-building efforts.

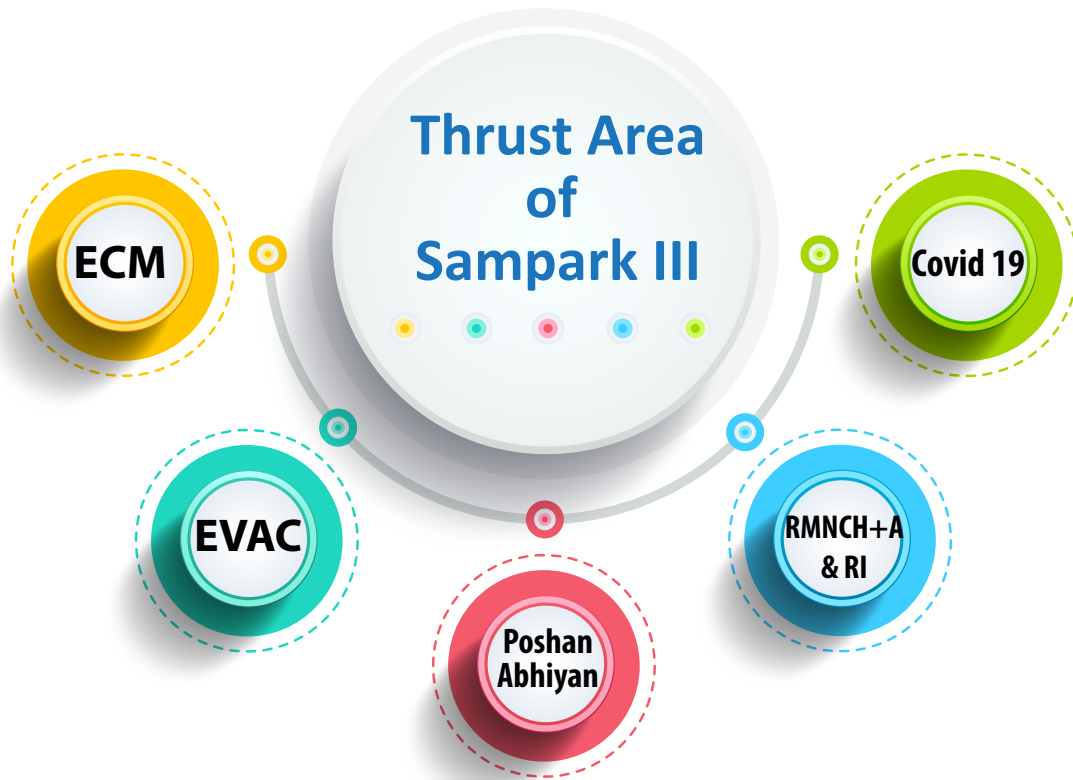


Figure 3: Thrust Area of Sampark III

Phase III of the *Sampark* program focused on the thrust areas in the outline of child protection – ‘Ending Child Marriage’ (ECM) & ‘Ending Violence against Children’ (EVAC) have been the priority, in supporting all flagship programs of the government like Poshan Pakhwada & Poshan Mah in Nutrition Poshan 2.0, Measles & Rubella in health initiatives - RMNCH+A & RI and other assigned tasks by district administration.

Ending Child Marriage and Ending Violence Against Children

ECM & EVAC focused on sensitization and reaching the most vulnerable and hard-to-reach areas, Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act 2015, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act 2012, the Commissions for Protection of Child Rights Act, 2005, the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, Mission Vatsalya has been the roadmap to achieve development and child protection priorities aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. It emphasizes child rights, advocacy, and awareness along with strengthening the juvenile justice care and protection system with the motto to ‘leave no child behind’.

The Strategy developed by UNICEF reflects on the impact of the public health crisis on VAC. The three key areas of EVAC Strategy are aligned. So, keeping this in the project’s objective, we strategized into :-

1. Creating an enabling environment for multi-sectoral response
2. Systems-strengthening across justice/law enforcement, social service, education, and health sectors
3. Social Behavioral Change Communication (SBCC) and adolescent and youth empowerment
 - DPCs have supported planning, designing, and implementing district-specific communication plans by leveraging the collaboration of relevant line departments, State Rural Livelihood Mission, and Civil Society Organizations.
 - The program also created evidence-based advocacy by Building an ecosystem through periodic reviews of the implementation of DAPs, multi-sectoral meetings & and campaign activities at district, block, and panchayat levels.
 - The strengthening of the system was built up by sensitization meetings at district and block level officials, and stakeholders.
 - Creating a pool of trainers as subject matter experts from district to block level. Awareness at all levels infuses the sense of destructiveness of child marriage and violence to foster a conducive environment for children to prosper.
 - The strategic use of various platforms and opportunities is leading to a more informed, aware, and sensitized society like campaigns, community groups, rallies, organized events, fairs, and festivals.

POSHAN ABHIYAAN

Poshan Abhiyaan, also known as the National Nutrition Mission, is a flagship program of the Government of India aimed at improving the nutritional status of women and children in the country. Sampark III supported the Poshan Abhiyaan which focuses on addressing malnutrition, stunting, undernutrition, and anemia among women and children.

Providing accessible, affordable, and accountable quality health care to its people, particularly in the remote and difficult areas, has been priorities in this phase. The Saksham Anganwadi and Poshan Abhiyaan to develop practices that nurture health, wellness, and community from malnutrition. Behavioral change at the individual and community level is an important component of achieving the desired goals of a Kuposhan-mukt Bharat.

Poshan Pakhwada was supported in the districts in March for 15 days. Similarly, in September Rastriya Poshan Maah, was coordinated. The implementation of communication plans and budget planning involved by the DPCs in Poshan Pakhwada and Poshan Mah.

RMNCH+ A AND RI

RMNCH+A Strategy is unique as it recognizes the fact that maternal and child health cannot be improved in isolation and needs to be effectively weaved with adolescent, family planning, and nutrition-based interventions. The 'Plus' within the strategy focused on a continuum of care with linkages between the interventions targeted at various stages of the life cycle from newborn to reproductive age, with a focus on adolescence as a distinct life stage.

The Sampark program supports reproductive, maternal, newborn child, and adolescent and regular immunization where DPCs had to support the Measles & Rubella campaign and time to time orient in health centers, aanganwadi, and on the specific occasion of the health initiatives.

The program planned, supported and coordinated the Measles and Rubella campaign for its communication plan, IEC materials disbursement, and awareness generation activities. They also supported the vaccination and any awareness to provide for Covid 19 as needed.

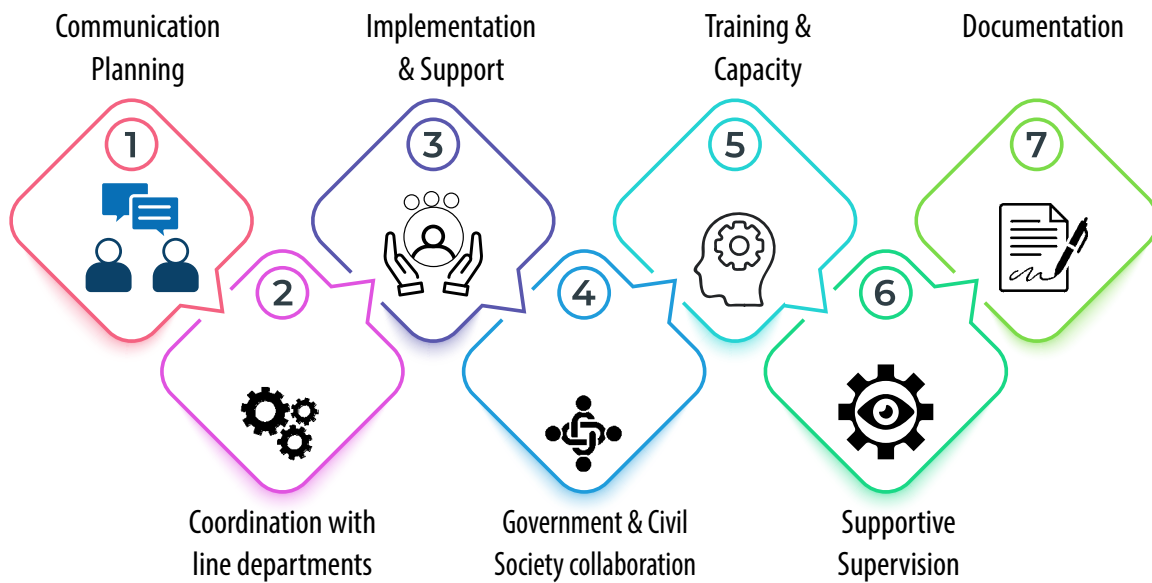


Figure 5: Pillars of Sampark III

The outputs and targets of the program are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Time-bound). Considering the importance of the situation and role of SBCC in the programs of welfare, the resulting strategy was developed to meet the goals through district communication plans, dissemination of wider messages to the intended target population, capacity building of stakeholders (direct or indirect), improved vaccination coverage throughout the eligible groups, strengthening the planning and monitoring of RMNCH+A and child protection activities through campaign approach. It is all intended to support the administrations and department concerns in meeting their targets through developing a sustained behavior change. As this is the third phase of the partnership, the first and the second phase was focused specifically on COVID-19 as well as flagship programs of the government of India as JJM & RMNCH+A. The promotion of CAB and the promotion of vaccines were the core areas of support.



Figure 6: SMART approach to outputs & targets

Our impactful presence



Figure 6: Interventional Map of Jharkhand State

The Sampark program covered 12 districts out of 24 as shown (in yellow). The districts are Garhwa, Palamu from the Palamu division; Chatra, Hazaribagh, and Giridih from the North Chotanagpur Deoghar, Dumka, Pakur, Godda, Jamtara, and Sahibganj from Santhal Pargana division and W. Singhbhum from the Kolhan division. The districts were selected on the following parameters:

- High and increasing prevalence of child marriage districts.
- Tribal, OBC, SC dominated districts.
- Districts with the most hard-to-reach areas.

Sampark III followed the same implementation process as it adopted in the last two interventions but with more effective control and execution. After the signing of the agreement, a detailed and rigorous recruitment selection was carried out. In this, the SBCC DPCs who worked well in the first phase were given preference. After the selection process, a comprehensive orientation and induction process took place where the cohort was oriented on the SBCC, child protection topics, and Mission Vatsalya. Alongside that, the letters and communication were sent to district administration from DWCD&SS. The program then moved forward to the interventions/ activities led by the SBCC DPCs wherein, the DPCs re-established the rapport with the district officials, communication plans development, support in capacity building monitoring, and documentation at the district level.

At the state level, the State Project Coordinator and the project team continuously followed up with the coordinators. Weekly/monthly meetings, progress tracking, and performance reviews were carried out. Proper feedback was given to the DPCs for improvement, effective delivery of work, and efficient management of the district expectancy. Monthly and quarterly reports were prepared and shared with the UNICEF team. The quantitative reports were also collected in a bifurcated manner for each component. The online Google Sheets were the medium to report every month.

Box 1 : Brief Outline of Sampark I

Sampark program's first phase report was prepared and submitted in 2021, documenting the technical support SBCC-DPCs have extended to the district administration.

- Impactful presence in 21 out of 24 state districts (excluding W. Singhbhum, Giridih and Ranchi). SBCC-DPCs directly worked with Deputy Commissioners and Civil Surgeons.
- Some of the key highlights and outcomes of the first phase are as follows
 - ✦ A multi-sectoral district-specific communication plan for all 21 districts was prepared and implemented.
 - ✦ Identification and listing of orphaned children because of the COVID outbreak.
 - ✦ Strengthened coordination among the departments.
 - ✦ Coordinated events and programs like Mission Kartavya, Gram Samvad, and Har Ghar Dastak-I.
 - ✦ Reduced cases of data pendency in the districts.
 - ✦ Micro-level data management

Box 2: Brief Outline of Sampark II

Sampark program's second phase report was prepared and submitted in 2022, documenting the technical support SBCC-DPCs have extended to the district administration.

- Impactful presence in 14 out of 24 districts of the state (excluding Hazaribagh, E. Singhbhum, Ranchi, Bokaro, Gumla, Khunti and Sarai Kela Kharsawan). DPCs directly worked with Deputy Commissioners and Civil Surgeons.
- Some of the key highlights and outcomes of the first phase are as follows
 - ✦ A multi-sectoral district-specific communication plan for all 14 districts was prepared and implemented.
 - ✦ Identification and listing of vaccination's location to the hard-to-reach area.
 - ✦ Strengthened coordination among the departments.
 - ✦ Coordinated events and programs like Jal Jeevan Mission, Intensified Mission Indradhanush Mission (IMI 4.0)
 - ✦ Reduced cases of data pendency in the districts.
 - ✦ Micro-level data management

OUR SUPPORT AND EFFORTS

The Sampark program has played a significant and distinct role in supporting the district administration in strengthening and sensitizing communities on ECM and EVAC, Poshan Pakhwada, Poshan Mah and Measles and Rubella, social mobilization activities, and other health program activities. This section discusses the various initiatives and efforts taken by the Sampark team in the program to support the district administration.

Placement of young professionals to districts as SBCC-DPCs

Through the rigorous selection process, XISS placed a cohort of young professionals as SBCC-DPCs at the district level to support the district administration in various communication activities of the government. These human resources were placed under the able leadership of DCs in each district and worked with the departments concerned. These coordinators have provided much-needed assistance to the district administration in the implementation of these programs. They have worked closely with the district authorities to identify the areas that need improvement and develop strategies to address them.

Guidance and Mentoring

Quality control mechanisms are one of the key focus areas of the program. A significant contribution of XISS was the continuous guidance and mentoring provided to the District Project Coordinators (DPCs) for the effective execution of deliverables and expectations. The state team and faculties associated with the program regularly guide and mentor the DPCs. This included counseling, improving standards, and working closely with average-performing coordinators.

Capacity building and Cross-Learning Opportunities

UNICEF provided orientation and cross-learning opportunities to the DPCs to enhance their knowledge and skills and develop their knowledge and expertise on child protection subjects. The DPCs have been trained in various aspects of the programs, including planning, implementation, monitoring, documentation, case writing, professional ethics, working with the government, etc. by XISS and UNICEF. The training has been tailored to meet the specific needs of each district, and the DPCs have been given the necessary skills to carry out their responsibility effectively. The cross-learning opportunities have enabled the DPCs to interact with their counterparts in other districts and learn from their experiences. This has helped the DPCs to identify best practices and adopt them in their districts.

Regular Review Meetings

XISS has conducted regular review meetings (weekly/quarterly/annually) to assess the progress of the programs and identify areas that need improvement. These meetings have been attended by the DPCs and led by the State Project Coordinator. The weekly Progress Check Meetings (PCM) with the DPCs were around 35 meetings during the period.

The quarterly review meetings were around 4 meetings, which used to be jointly with UNICEF and XISS team members. The discussions have been focused on identifying the challenges faced by the DPCs and developing strategies to address them. The progress check meetings have ensured that the programs are implemented according to plan and have yielded the desired results.

Other Supports

XISS, with the support of UNICEF, has given DPCs and all other support like IEC materials and letters/guidance from states. This has enabled the DPCs to carry out their responsibilities effectively and efficiently. The IEC materials have been used to raise awareness among the population about the importance of child marriage and violence programs. The letters from states have enabled the DPCs to interact with the state authorities and seek their support whenever necessary.

OUTCOME OF THE SUPPORT

The result section serves as the core component of a report where the key support is presented. In the pages ahead, the key results of the support have been outlined, which the reader will find interest in knowing elaborately about the key deliveries.

Input, Output & Outcome

The Sampark program adopted a strategic and focused approach in extending technical support to the district administrations in ECM and EVAC interventions has resulted in measurable, effective, and visible change at the district level. The 11-month-long program has delivered some meaningful intended outcomes which is the result of inputs supplied. The figure below illustrates the change that took place.

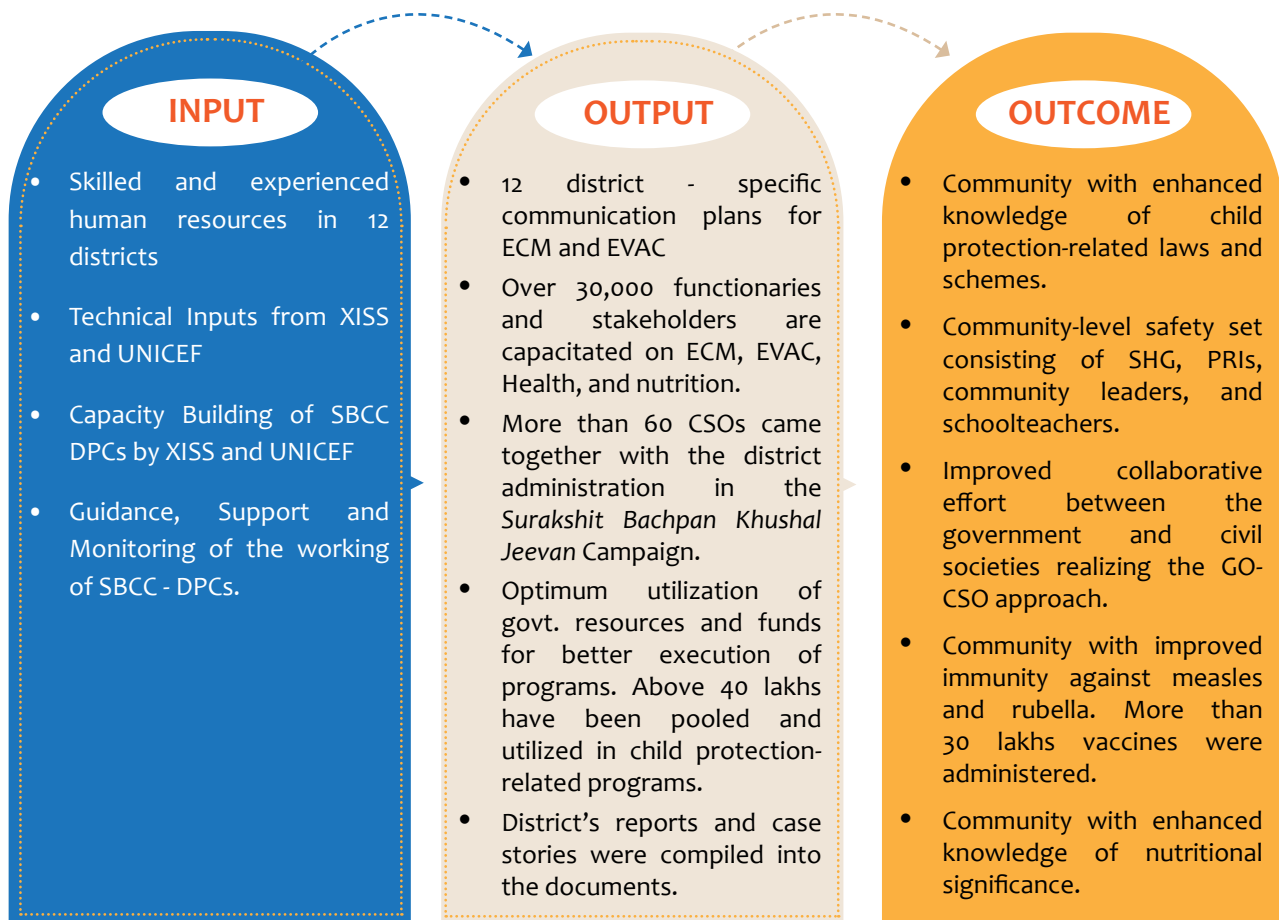


Figure7: Input, Output & Outcome of Sampark III

Key Strategies and Output adopted in ECM & EVAC

❖ Communication Planning

The role of the SBCC DPC in preparing a communication plan in the districts was focused on

facilitating the development and implementation of effective communication strategies. The SBCC DPC worked closely with various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and community members, to identify communication needs, set objectives, and design targeted messages and activities.

The SBCC DPC conducted situational analyses to understand the local context, assess existing communication channels, and identify key audiences. Based on this information, they developed a comprehensive communication plan that outlines the goals, target audiences, key messages, communication channels, and monitoring and evaluation mechanisms under the leadership of DC, DSWO, DCPO, and other line departments concerns. Therefore, the approved and signed 12 communication plans of the districts were the most achievable work in phase III, especially for fund leveraging.

❖ **Identification and Partnership with Civil Society Organizations**

Child marriage and violence against children are very deep-rooted and sensitive issues to deal with. Through situational analysis, DPCs were able to identify CSOs that were fighting against child abuse and child marriage and working directly for the cause. The CSOs partnered with the administration to work on one objective as it is not easy to work single-handedly. Therefore, 66 CSOs collaborated and worked together.

❖ **International Girl Child Day celebration**

The DPCs initiated an awareness activity on the importance of “International Girl Child Day”. The day is celebrated on 11th October every year. This time, the DPCs supported the district in planning and organizing the event distinctly. The large-scale program encompassed various activities arranged in the 12 district’s schools and other locations like quiz competitions, poster making, speech, rangoli making, a street play addressing child marriage, a fashion competition, and the distribution of certificates to individuals who contributed to preventing child marriages.

A significant workshop was also held to raise awareness against child marriage. A signature campaign was launched and a *Jagrukta Rath* was flagged off child violence, a mobile outreach vehicle moved door to door to inform about schemes and benefits – ‘*Savitri Bai Phule Kishori Samridhi Yojana*’. It was focused more on the education and rights of a child and promotion upon advocating for an end to child marriage, and violence against children.

❖ **Surakshit Bachpan, Khushaal Jeevan - 15 days campaign on ‘Ending Child Marriage & Ending Violence against Women and Children**

In all the 12 interventional districts, XISS and UNICEF have planned a 15-day intensive district-wide campaign on the issue of ECM and EVAWC named “Surakshit Bachpan, Khushaal Jeevan”. This campaign was a part of the district communication plan developed by the DPCs and endorsed by the district administration. The campaign further intensified the effort to promote child marriage and child violence-free society. The campaign was supported by the Secretary DWCD&SS and JSCPS.

The purpose and objective of the campaign were multifold- to orient PRIs, CMPOs, and other stakeholders, and sensitize media people to disseminate correct information and be aware. Secondly, to Involve the SHG and DLSA to run the campaign. Thirdly, orienting school students, teachers, and parents about child violence – POCSO (2012) and child marriage – PCMA (2006). Fourthly, identifying girls from most marginalized communities who can be linked to the *Savitri Bai Phule* scheme. Also, to felicitate children and parents as ‘ECM champions’ who discouraged child marriage and child violence and have continued education despite adverse circumstances.

Before the campaign, preparatory training cum planning sessions were provided by the UNICEF and XISS state team to build a district resource team for the smooth conduct of the campaign and to actively support during and after the campaign in building the capacity and understanding of the district stakeholders on these issues. There was a total of 35 participants including 12 DPCs, members of DCPU, and JSLPS gender CRPs from the interventional districts.

The activities were rolled out in the following segments:

- ✓ VC/ Online Orientation meeting - The online meeting was rolled out on 30th October, 23 chaired by the Secretary, Dept. of WCD, GOJ where districts officials of 12 districts, UNICEF, XISS, JSLPS team members participated as an inaugural, introduction, and orientation of the campaign – “Surakshit Bachpan Khushaal Jeevan”. Further, the CMPO online orientation was conducted on 3rd November 2023. CMPOs such as BDOs, PRIs, etc. of the districts were oriented in the detailed orientation session.
- ✓ Coordination/ Consultation Meeting with CSOs – The coordination cum consultative meeting with the civil society organizations working towards the common issue of ending child marriage and violence against children. The meeting brought smoothness and managerial coordination of the campaign’s activities.
- ✓ Media Sensitization – The pivotal activity of the campaign was to sensitize media people to know the correct, clear, complete information to disseminate, share, and make aware to the community so that the end to child marriage and violence against children is stopped at a certain level and sensitive issues can be dealt more prominently. During the 15 days of the campaign, all the newspapers, videos of district officials and tweets, and Facebook posts of DCs have created momentum in the 12 districts. There were more than 120 media houses during the coverage of the campaign.
- ✓ Identification of girls who have not been enrolled in Savitri Bai Phule Kishori Samridhi Yojana- In the 12 districts, the DPCs through the district team identified around 80,000 girls who have benefitted from the scheme. In the 12 districts, schools have participated in the campaign and thousands of children became aware of the POCSO (2012) as well as the PCMA (2006). The number of boys was 25274 and girls were 37085 in the 12 districts. Identification of such children or families who wave off the social issues of child marriage and violence has been recognized and facilitated by the district officials calling them “Champions”. The total

no. of champions identified in 12 districts was more than 200 girls and boys.

In the successful execution of the campaign, district child protection officers, the UNICEF, Child Protection Unit, XISS state and district team, JSLPS team, and other CSOs played a significant role. It was a commendable achievement in creating awareness and sensitization in the districts. The initiative has brought fruitful results and this visionary initiative in the 12 districts gave rise to social change. Thus, the support, coordination, and involvement of the campaign's success was seen when there was teamwork.

Nutrition for all : Together towards a healthy India

Poshan Pakhwada was celebrated on the theme, "Nutrition for All: Together Towards a Healthy India". According to the official statement, this year's Poshan Pakhwada will center on spreading the word about "Shree Anna" as a superfood to combat malnutrition. All the activities during the Poshan Pakhwada were focused on the promotion and popularization of Shree Anna or millets for nutritional well-being through different events, activities, and campaigns.

Poshan Pakhwada emphasized the nutritional status of women and children between the age of 0-6 years. The program uses technology, convergence, community involvement, and a targeted approach to reducing levels of undernourishment, anemia, and low birth weight in children. It also places special focus on adolescent girls, pregnant women, and lactating mothers, providing a comprehensive approach to addressing malnutrition in the nation.

Poshan Pakhwada began in all the blocks of the districts. The program sought to change behavior by organizing community-based events, involving local leaders and advocacy, and Jan Andolan (or people's movement) through convergence and ensuring broad public participation in the district. It was implemented according to the district administration. The district administration had planned several regional events to commemorate Poshan Pakhwada in different parameters from support, coordination, liaisoning, advocacy, and social mobilization.

In coordination with lady Supervisors, the DPCs developed a district-specific nutrition chart. A chart that would comprise the food ingredients that are easily available and accessible, this chart would not be limited to Poshan Pakhwada and would be used for later purposes also. The chart included millets that are easily available and affordable like *Ragi* and *Bajra* which have high nutritional value. This program enabled local millet production and consumption to address nutritional deficiency challenges. The benefits of various millets and the recipe were also shared with the FLWs, who were instructed to share this information with the women, particularly pregnant and lactating mothers, during their home visits.

A meeting with the District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO) and the SBCC-DPC to discuss monitoring child nutrition and other welfare programs in the district. It includes essential updates on the district's social and behavioral change communication (SBCC) program interventions. It aims to educate and empower communities on the importance of nutrition and other aspects of child welfare. The focus of this year's Poshan Pakhwada was to activate Gram Panchayats for Poshan. All planned activities will revolve around the efforts of the *Sarpanch* and the Gram Panchayat at the village level.

During the occasion, participants stated that traditional foods such as *jwar*, *bajra*, *sawan*, *tangun*, *maduwa*, and *kodo* should be included in the daily diet. During the four meetings, 30 members of the community were contacted and informed about the situation. To assist with the capacity-building program, DPCs along with the district administration, health and ICDS teams, and field-level workers (FLWs) have all been mobilized. They will participate in a weekly one-hour virtual technical session to improve their knowledge, skills, and overall understanding of the PFs related to community health and nutrition.

It was a great success for the program and all over the districts, the women had satisfaction on their faces as they became aware of new things about millet, nutritional aid, and the benefits of adding to their meals.

Poshan Mah: Nurturing Jharkhand's Health, Knowledge & Empowerment

“Poshan Mah” which occurs in September month is known as “Nutrition Month”. This campaign aims to raise awareness about the importance of nutrition, especially among women and children, and promote the adoption of healthy eating habits and lifestyles. Poshan Mah 2023 involved various activities, programs, and initiatives at the national, state, and community levels to address malnutrition and improve the overall nutritional status of the population.

Several sensitization activities took place focusing on key themes related to nutrition. Millions of people participated in these activities thereby initiating the chain of greater awareness, knowledge, and understanding of the topic. Within the main theme, there were campaigns on several sub-topics, that mobilized people to become pro-plane. Activities related to nutrition awareness were carried out across the districts.

The SBCC in the districts benefitted from the systematic planning, monitoring, and review system for Poshan Maah. It supported in identifying challenges related to Poshan in the district and developing effective strategies to mitigate them. Further, by collaborating with the line departments' local authorities they aimed to create a healthier and more nourished community.

Detailed convergent action plans were developed for execution. activities calendar was prepared and implemented to make the awareness campaign successful and impactful. The campaign was designed to establish an effective communication strategy that effectively promotes healthy eating habits and addresses malnutrition-related issues. To reach out to the broader community, especially at Anganwadi centers, nutrition rallies and Prabhat Pheri (morning processions) were organized throughout the districts. An online Jan Andolan Monitoring Dashboard was published for recording the ground-level Jan Andolan Activities.

The Dashboard acted as a force multiplier during the entire month. It ensured healthy competition between aspirational districts in the state and in the country, provided a monitoring mechanism at all levels, and ensured nudges whenever and wherever required. The active implementation of mission activities, following a long period, required actions across multiple departments, development partners, and communities. Information on themes covering key elements of the pillars of the mission—namely, convergence, training and capacity building, ICDS-CAS (now

POSHAN Tracker Tool), and program activities—was collected from the Department of Women, Child Development and Social Security (DWCD&SS) and Department of Health. Additionally, information on Jan Andolan and interventions undertaken by various line departments were collected to glean insights on behavioral change and IEC advocacy.

Measles & Rubella Campaign

India has intensified and expedited its primary elimination efforts in response to the September 2013 resolution of the South-East Asia (SEA) Regional Committee, which established the target for measles eradication and rubella/congenital rubella syndrome (CRS) control by 2020. Targeting children between the ages of one and five, the Measles-Rubella (MR) vaccine introduction campaign has been implemented. The recommendation was made by the National Technical Advisory Group on Immunization (NTAGI) in June 2014. An organized mass vaccination effort that is conducted periodically (every 3-5 years, based on the accumulation of vulnerable cohorts) and is informed by surveillance data particular to a country is known as a follow-up campaign. There are pockets of unprotected children, regular immunization coverage, and vaccine effectiveness all play a role in how frequently a vaccination is administered.

The support from seven districts engaged in the Measles and Rubella campaign from the project. They were Sahibganj, Jamtara, Godda, Dumka, Deoghar, Giridih, and Pakur. The District Project Coordinator (DPC) took the key role in the campaign with other stakeholders, departments, and district administration. For this, an orientation meeting was conducted to orient the teams about the activities to fill the communication plan at the block level – district level, and finally submission in the state. The DPCs had the responsibility to facilitate, coordinate, and monitor the workflow. Helping the team members to fill the plan on time. Checking the plan and if modification was required, it was reworked and completed on time.

The IEC materials were dispersed and displayed at various locations such as schools, religious places, and health centers. The DPC regularly coordinated and visited places to monitor, to facilitate the MR campaign importantly in the form of rallies, preceding, meetings, religious activities, health centers, and schools. Through microphones and projectors, awareness was spread all over the districts to get the children vaccinated. Supported the district with the mobile audio–video vans by UNICEF to spread awareness about the MR Campaign. All the MOICs have been instructed to make an advanced micro plan. MOICs

- The DPCs supported the rallies by the districts and the proper use of the megaphones & and jukebox, monitoring the vaccination site IEC materials, checking the vial of the vaccine and their proper marking of the date and time while opening, ensuring all the children take some food before the vaccination, and checking the proper ventilation of the rooms. The seven DPC engagement in the campaign’s activities has brought the result into lots of improvement in the social and behavioral change communication of the community which is the core objective of the Sampark III.

CHALLENGES

Challenges are an inevitable part of any project. They arise due to numerous factors such as resource limitations, time constraints, technical complexities, and external influences. Identifying and addressing these challenges is crucial for the successful execution of a project. This phase also faced challenges and tried to overcome some. It is worthwhile to mention some of the key obstacles that came across the way in this journey.

Leveraging funds and resources

Securing funds from the concerned line departments and schemes/programs delayed the planned activity and their ability to effectively implement program initiatives on time. Sometimes, it was difficult for DPCs to convince line departments to allocate sufficient resources for activities. Coordinating with multiple line departments, each with its mandates and priorities had also been time-consuming. The limited IECs and allocated budget for them made the task uphill.

○ Coordination and collaboration

Addressing child marriage and violence against children requires collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, community leaders, and civil society organizations. Coordinating and aligning the efforts of these diverse stakeholders was challenging, especially when there were differing priorities and approaches. Local staff and infrastructure also made coordination difficult in conducting activities.

○ Traditional practices

Traditional cultural norms and practices also made significant challenges in efforts to end child marriage and violence against children. Deep-rooted beliefs and resistance within the community also hindered progress in changing mindsets and behaviors. Overcoming cultural barriers requires a comprehensive approach that involves community engagement, awareness campaigns, and targeted interventions to address cultural norms that perpetuate child marriage and violence.

However, despite the challenges and bottlenecks, the program has successfully achieved its outcomes with the support of the state department, district key officials, and UNICEF. Also, the impactful presence and rapport of the DPCs with the built network have accelerated the effort in the direction of desired results.

OPPORTUNITIES

Child protection is a critical aspect of ensuring the well-being and safety of children in society. It encompasses a range of measures and interventions aimed at preventing and responding to various forms of abuse, neglect, exploitation, and violence against children. The need to prioritize child protection arises from the recognition that children are vulnerable and require special care and support to thrive and reach their full potential. Ending child marriage and Ending violence with children initiatives in the districts present significant opportunities for positive change.

Ending child marriage is crucial as it protects children from the harmful consequences associated with early marriage, such as limited access to education, increased health risks, and perpetuation of poverty. By focusing on this issue, we can empower young girls and boys to pursue their education, develop life skills, and make informed choices about their future.

Similarly, ending violence with children is essential for creating safe and nurturing environments for children to grow and thrive. This includes addressing various forms of violence, such as physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. By implementing effective strategies and interventions, we can protect children from harm, promote their well-being, and ensure their rights are respected.

In the journey ahead, there is an opportunity to collaborate with various stakeholders, including government agencies, civil society organizations, and communities, to create comprehensive solutions. To foster the strengthening of systems will be the focus. Regular functioning of the systems, follow-up, and examining how systems are managed will be the next set of opportunities to deal with.

Jharkhand stands among the top states having a high prevalence of child marriage, the effort further needs to continue. This also must align with the global goals of 2030 (Target 5.3 aims to eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early, and forced marriage). This target prioritizes the dignity of children and their right to live free from violence and fear. Our sincere efforts in this direction will be the most loved gift to the children of our nation.



WAY FORWARD

To move in the correct path or direction that should be taken to achieve a desired goal or outcome in various contexts, the communication strategies that have been employed in the program have brought significant changes in the Sampark phase III. The support of SBCC-DPCs provided by the partnership of XISS and UNICEF Jharkhand has acted as a promoter to foster and strengthen the interventions of child protection, nutrition, and Health & RI's communication strategy, widespread reach of information, awareness, local-level communication, and engagement of all stakeholders from top to bottom.

Active involvement of DPCs in the review meetings of the district and regularly advocated the need for interventions involved in the initiatives taken in this phase. The program has successfully achieved all the programmatic targets. The SBCC DPC's involvement was publicly appreciated and felicitated in notable events. The districts and thus the state have achieved in contributing to the change, transformation, and awareness of the social issues to combat from the state.

To summarize, the effort through Sampark III has shown the way that through a concentrated, strategic, and collaborative approach, change and sensitization can be brought forward. The XISS has evolved from its roots in social service to become a dynamic institution that combines management education with a deep commitment to social development. As an institution of principles, we remain committed to our continued effort for the betterment of the people of Jharkhand and the nation.

THE TEAM



Dr Anant Kumar

Project Head & HOP – Rural Management, XISS

Mr Aditya Raj

State Project Coordinator, XISS

Mrs Yoshita Ravi

Documentation Officer, Sampark (III)

Project Advisory & Support

✦ **Dr Joseph Marianus Kujur, SJ**
Director, XISS

✦ **Fr Claber Minj, SJ**
Finance Officer, XISS

✦ **Dr Amar Eron Tigga**
Dean Academics, XISS

✦ **Dr Rajshree Verma**
Assistant Professor, XISS



**SBCD District Project
Coordinators**

**ANKIT KUMAR
CHATRA**

**SHUBHAM GUPTA
DEOGHAR**

**JYOTSNA HEMBROM
DUMKA**

**KUMAR SHUBHAM
GARHWA**

**GANAURI VISHWAKARMA
GIRIDIH**

**NEHA KUMARI
GODDA**

**PRASHANT KUMAR
JAMTARA**

**KUMAR AKSHAY
PAKUR**

**MD TABREZ ALAM
PALAMU**

**GAURAV KUMAR
SAHIBGANJ**

**RAJ NANDANI
HAZARIBAGH**

**REKHA KUMARI NAYAK
WEST SINGHBHUM**

Photo Gallery



बाल विवाह से आजादी अभियान की दिलायी गयी शपथ
लुधियाना। बाल विवाह से आजादी अभियान के तहत सोमवार को प्रखंड कार्यालय परिसर में शपथ ग्रहण समारोह का आयोजन किया। बीडीओ संजय कुमार प्रखंड, अंचल एवं बाल विकास परियोजना कार्यालय के पदाधिकारियों व अभियानियों को बाल विवाह से आजादी अभियान के तहत शपथ दिलायी। बीडीओ ने कहा कि बाल विवाह का सीधा असर न केवल लड़कियों पर, बल्कि उनके परिवार और समुदायों पर भी होता है, जिस लड़की की शादी कम उम्र में हो जाती है, उसके कुशल से निकल जाने की संभावना बढ़ जाती है, मौके पर मानिक चंद्र दास, महिला शैक्षणिक चंदन सिंह, बीपीआरओ केसी दास, प्रखंड नाज़िर राजाराम रविदास.



Photo Gallery





“सुरक्षित बचपन, खुशहाल जीवन”

बाल विवाह एवं महिला, बाल शोषण मुक्त जिला जागरूकता अभियान

31 अक्टूबर, 2023 - 14 नवंबर, 2023

जिला प्रशासन द्वारा आयोजित कार्यक्रम



टीम फोन नं. 152/1000

STORIES OF CHANGE

Imlie Marandi: A Sahiya Didi's Giant Leap in Eradicating Measles & Rubella

An inspiring case story comes from the remote village of Bara Dumria panchayat in the Masliya block of the Dumka district. It is 15 kilometers away from the block office. Because of the low literacy rate, there is a minor lack of awareness among the population of this town. Health professionals in the district were facing difficulty vaccinating children aged 9 months to 5 years, in these rural enclaves because some, notably women farmers and agricultural laborers, are reluctant to receive the Measles and Rubella (MR) vaccination.

When Imlie Marandi, (Sahiya), from the area, noticed that it was critical to enlist the support of key influencers. She arranged a gathering of local influencers and officials to address the issue. Members of Panchayati Raj members, local government officials such as the District Reproductive and Child Health Officer (DRCHO), medical officers, mukhiya, and other locally elected representatives.

Influencers and senior officials gathered at the Community Health Centre (CHC) to plan the next steps. They organized community meetings in the village to increase transparency and trust in the system. Dr. Sariful Haque, the Medical Officer in Charge of (MOIC), answered the community's vaccine-related questions and described the importance of the vaccine and protocol following vaccination. He also saw about ten students who were suffering from fever and vomiting.

The mobilization efforts of SBCC-DPC, NGO Pradan volunteers, Tejaswini volunteers, and frontline workers resulted in the vaccination of everyone eligible for the vaccine dosage. This takes three sessions to complete at that school. However, training modules in social communication and community mobilization for Sahiya, ANM, and Anganwadi have been developed with the assistance of NGOs, and UNICEF. They are conversant with cell phones and have basic digital skills. They were shown how to administer the immunization.

"I had visited a household in Bada Dumria village to administer the vaccine shot to children aged 9 months to 15 years. But I was told that they did not want to take the jab. Their hesitancy makes our job difficult. Along with my team, I pursued after them and found them on the farmland. It took half an hour to convince and vaccinate them," Imlie Marandi said. To explain the vaccine, IEC



Imlie Marandi : A Sahiya didi

modes such as a UNICEF mega box announcement and an audio-visual van were exhibited. We also notified the community that those who received immunizations were well and that post-vaccination fever usually goes away in a day or two. This resulted in a significant increase in the number of children receiving immunizations.

UNICEF made contributions to the creation of training materials and the implementation of the volunteers' training program. To prevent message distortion, a self-training and learning video and message guide were created. The development and dissemination of messaging on topics like half an hour observation isolation were too given. The department received assistance from UNICEF in creating the customized appeal



Sujata kisku mobilizing the community.

that was sent to each volunteer. They provided management assistance to the MR vaccination centers, following MR standards, they conducted household visits and counseling sessions with the community. Multimedia communication van, miking, and wall writings have been widely used to spread the message. Our teams are regularly in contact with them and will ensure their vaccination whenever they become eligible. That means almost 100% of vaccination has been completed.

A teacher's quest to keep girls in school to prevent child marriage.

Most child marriages take place in distant rural communities where customs and customary rules predominate, poverty is widespread, and youngsters have few options other than marriage.

Sujata Kisku is a 27-year-old lady from the village of Thurku, Dumka. She teaches mathematics to primary school students. If asked, what she lived for, she would respond without hesitation: 'Girl's education'.

Sujata Kisku grew up in Thurku, a remote village surrounded by forest, where child marriage is widespread, and children rarely finish elementary school. Sujata was one of the fortunate few who attended university and went on to become a teacher. She now lives a few miles away, but she visits home regularly to raise awareness about child marriage and to question the village's bell. She participated in the yearly campaign to end child marriage, this summer with Foundation Gramjyoti, a women's rights group and Girls Not Brides member. Sujata drove from village to village with scores of volunteers and local activists, knocking on doors to inform people about the legal rights of women and girls.

Sujata tells us about her job and why she is so determined to eliminate child marriage and see

girls thrive as the campaign visits his home village. Sujata says, “When I finish my studies, I plan to return to my village and make a difference.” Assist with school renovation and to educate as many people as possible. I believe that with a strong education, we can all work towards our goals. I was fortunate to be able to continue my education after finishing primary school, but I had to leave my community and travel to a much larger city to do so. What I observed was a completely different world, one in which women and girls were educated and rewarded for their accomplishments.

It made me recognize that the responsibilities imposed on [women in my village] - wives, mothers - prevented them from reaching their full human potential. It didn't feel right. This is the aim I've set for myself, and with God's help, I'll be able to achieve it. *I'd want to take this time to urge or beg any parent reading this to let their children, particularly girls, attend school. Those who have been fortunate enough to attend school should endeavor to share what they have learned with family, friends, and anybody else they may reach out to. We must acknowledge that “education is the best gift any parent can give to their child.”*

Girls in Thudku have only one destiny: marriage and motherhood. Underage marriage is not unusual; it is not a problem; it is simply what people have done for centuries. It also occurs when girls are denied the opportunity to further their education. They may complete primary school if they are lucky, but they rarely go on to further school. The secondary school is located a distance from the settlement, and students must walk there. Boys occasionally make the voyage, but parents are usually too concerned about their daughters' safety to allow them to do so.

Fathers also tell me that their job is done once their daughters reach marriageable age. They will have succeeded as parents if they can find them a suitable husband. They will fail if she stays at home alone. They see her as a burden. An educated girl understands her rights and how to exercise them. She is not only aware of societal issues, but she also can speak up against them. When it comes to her marriage, she will be prepared to defend her right to marry when and who she wants.

She further added,” That is why I share my tale with them. I explain that I come from a rural hamlet cut off from the rest of the country, and that I come from a low-income family, but that this hasn't stopped me from pursuing a career as a teacher, and it shouldn't stop them either. I encourage them to be ambitious and to dream big. We have far too many young people who do not work, do not plan to marry, and have poor expectations.

TESTIMONIALS OF THE DPCs

“I had the honor of serving as the SBCC-DPC, overseeing a transformative district-wide communication strategy. Together with district and block-level officials, alongside proactive NGOs/CSOs, our joint efforts aimed to tackle complex societal issues such as ending child marriage, ending violence against children, and crucial aspects of health and nutrition during “Poshan Maah 2023.”

Our approach surpassed mere planning; it acted as a catalyst for tangible change within our community. The collaborative synergy generated an unprecedented impact, notably reducing in ending child marriage occurrences and instances of violence against children. Our focus on health and nutrition during “Poshan Maah 2023” also led to remarkable achievements.

This journey toward success was defined by meticulous planning, dedicated execution, and unwavering commitment. The combined efforts of govt. officials at the district and block levels, complemented by the dynamism of various NGOs/CSOs, laid the foundation for our accomplishments. Through strategic communication initiatives and community engagement, we observed a significant drop in child marriage instances, marking a monumental stride in protecting the rights and future of our children.”

Rekha Kumari Nayak, SBCC- DPC, West Singhbhum

“I have been fortunate to work with a team of visionary and supportive leaders who have instilled in me a sense of purpose and the drive to positively impact people’s lives. I take immense pride in contributing to developing communication plans, monitoring frameworks, and reporting mechanisms for the diverse programs and strategies designed. The project’s focus on SBCC, advocacy, coordination, and monitoring through collaboration with various stakeholders has been a game-changer in our district. Initiating a monitoring group and incorporating the Ending Child Marriage (ECM) and Ending Violence Against Children (EVAC) agenda in different meetings have brought us closer to the noble goal of ending child marriage and violence against women and children.

I am grateful to the District Commissioner, SP, DDC, DSWO, DCPO, POIC, CWC members, CSOs, and other district officers and stakeholders for their unwavering support and guidance. Your support has been instrumental in completing the Sampark Phase-III project in Palamu district. I am proud to have been part of such a transformative project and eagerly anticipate witnessing further positive outcomes.”

Md. Tabrez Alam, SBCC – DPC, Palamu

“Working as SBCC-DPC in Pakur district for Phase 3 of the XISS-UNICEF Project has been an enriching and transformative experience for me. During this phase, I delved into various government programs aimed at ending child marriage and violence against children, such as

Savitri Bai Pule Yojana, CM Kanya Dal Yojana, and Mission Vatsalya, which focuses on providing care and protection to children in need.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to the district administration and their officials, particularly DC Sir, DDC Sir, CS Sir, DRCHO Sir, DSWO Ma'am, and DCPO Sir, for entrusting me with the opportunity to work at the grassroots level. Their support and involvement in various departmental activities have provided me with invaluable insights into how different departments function. This exposure has significantly contributed to the enhancement of my managerial skills.

I would also like to extend my thanks to XISS, especially Director Dr. Father Joseph Marianus Kujur, our Project Head Dr. Anant Kumar, State Project Coordinator Mr. Aditya Raj, and Documentation Officer, Mrs. Yoshita Ravi. Their unwavering support throughout the entire project phase has been instrumental in my professional growth. I eagerly anticipate a continued association with XISS soon and look forward to contributing to upcoming projects.

Kumar Akshay, SBCC- DPC, Pakur

“I am delighted to express my sincere gratitude to the collaborative efforts of Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS) and UNICEF for granting me the opportunity to contribute to the Sampark-III project. This initiative allowed me to support the district administration in implementing social behavior change within the community, specifically focusing on ECM & EVAC alongside various line departments. I effectively coordinated with these departments to ensure the seamless execution of the communication plan. The continuous support from government officials has been invaluable, providing guidance and enhancing my skills, ultimately enabling me to successfully lead the project in the district. I extend my heartfelt thanks once again to the XISS and UNICEF team for entrusting me with this opportunity and contributing to the success of the project.”

Prashant Kumar, SBCC- DPC, Jamtara

“The transformative power of nourishing young lives has deeply moved me in my rewarding journey focused on nutrition and child-related issues in XISS-UNICEF Sampark Phase - III. With the creation and application of long-term, health-oriented plans, I have had the honor of making a major contribution to the overall health of many kids. Each day brings new challenges, met with unwavering determination and a passion to make a difference. Whether it's designing nutritional programs, educating caregivers, or advocating for policy changes, every aspect of this work is driven by a shared vision – ensuring that every child can thrive. Being part of projects that leave a lasting imprint on the next generation's lives is both an honor and a responsibility. It's a journey that transcends the confines of a job, becoming a heartfelt dedication to building healthier, happier futures for children everywhere. As I reflect on our impact, I am inspired to continue this meaningful work, knowing that each effort contributes to a world where every child's potential is nurtured and realized.” Hoping to get more chances in life to work on such projects.”

Raj Nandini, SBCC – DPC, Hazaribagh

“As the SBCC DPC for Godda district under the Sampark III program, my journey was marked by formidable challenges, insightful learnings, and significant achievements. Navigating cultural sensitivities and engaging diverse stakeholders, I spearheaded campaigns against child marriage, child protection issues, and measles-rubella prevention. The challenges underscored the importance of nuanced communication and strategic collaboration with the district administration, teaching me the power of empathy in addressing sensitive topics. Our collective efforts yielded tangible results, including a notable reduction in child marriages, heightened awareness of child protection, and improved vaccination coverage. This experience has reinforced my commitment to collaborative advocacy, leaving an indelible mark on the path toward building a safer, healthier future for our children.”

Neha Kumari, SBCC - DPC, Godda

“In the Sampark project phase - III, XISS - UNICEF collaboration, I had the opportunity to serve as the SBCC - DPC in Giridih. Engaging with various stakeholders like the Deputy Commissioner, District Social Welfare Department, Education Department, Panchayati Raj Department, Jharkhand State Livelihood Promotion Society, Health Department, and Civil Society Organizations working on Child Protection, Nutrition, POSHAN, and RMNCH+A in Giridih encouraged my confidence in handling multiple stakeholders simultaneously. This experience allowed me to gain valuable contextual knowledge in child protection, nutrition, and Poshan Abhiyaan from the state team and the district administration.

I am grateful to the entire XISS - UNICEF team in Ranchi and the Giridih district administration, especially Deputy Commissioner Shree Naman Priyesh Lakra (IAS), for providing significant opportunities, including involvement in the district administration’s crucial work like preparing for the Honorable Chief Minister’s visit and leading flagship campaigns like Viksit Bharat Sankalp Yatra. I’m satisfied with the progress made in Giridih during my tenure and confident that initiatives like the SAMPARK Project can bring substantial improvements in the lives of these children. Together, I believe we can create a safer and brighter future for our children.”

Ganauri Vishwakarma, SBCC - DPC, Giridih

“I extend my sincere appreciation to XISS for allowing me to contribute to the SAMPARK III project. This experience has been invaluable, providing a platform for substantial learning and skill enhancement. The guidance received from XISS has been instrumental in successfully executing various project activities. Throughout my assignment under DC Garhwa, I had the privilege of acquiring valuable managerial skills, contributing to my professional development. Working on this project facilitated interactions with both government officers and community members, imparting insights into effective community engagement and large-scale project management. I am grateful to the XISS family for this enriching opportunity, and I express my eagerness to continue collaborating with XISS in future endeavors. This experience has been pivotal in my professional growth, and I look forward to contributing further to the organization’s objectives.”

Kumar Shubham, SBCC- DPC, Garhwa

“Working on the third phase of an XISS-UNICEF project has been a tremendous honor. The XISS-UNICEF Project has expanded my knowledge and strengthened my existing skill set. Working on two distinct aspects of the project in the third phase, RMNCHA+, ECM, and EVAC, was a learning experience for me. The primary goal of this project is to reach as many people as possible by promoting the benefits of vaccination. It was difficult to develop and implement a communication strategy for RMNCHA+, ECM, and EVAC via district and block task force platforms. A district-specific communication plan includes a timetable for implementation and monitoring. I worked closely with the district administration to assist with the planning, execution, monitoring, and reporting of need-based communication interventions. Along the way, I’ve gained invaluable knowledge and experience. I will be eternally grateful to those who believed in me and allowed me to grow as a person and as an employee.”

Jyotsna Hembrom, SBCC -DPC, Dumka

“I am delighted to express my sincere gratitude to the collaborative efforts of Xavier Institute of Social Service (XISS) and UNICEF for granting me the opportunity to contribute to the Sampark project. This initiative allowed me to support the District Administration in implementing social behavior change within the community, specifically focusing on ECM & EVAC alongside various line departments. I effectively coordinated with these departments to ensure the seamless execution of the communication plan. The continuous support from government officials has been invaluable in providing guidance and enhancing my skills, enabling me to successfully lead the project in the district. I extend my heartfelt.

Thanks once again to the XISS and UNICEF team for entrusting me with this opportunity and contributing to the success of the project.”

Shubham Gupta, SBCC- DPC, Deoghar

“I got to learn a lot from this phase of the project as this phase was completely new for me because I was working with the Health Department in the 1st and 2nd phases. This time I got an opportunity to work more closely with the Social Welfare department and District Administration. I got a lot of support from all the officials while working in ECM and EAWC and got much appreciation from the administration as well. Apart from this I have supported the District Administration in SAAMAR Abhiyan, Poshan Abhiyan got to learn many things and however we have managed to come up at a respectful rank in the state. Apart from all this, I got an opportunity to work as a temporary DMFT member for Health and Social Welfare for almost 1 year, through this I got to explore and learn many things about district administration Chatra.”

Ankit Kumar, SBCC- DPC, Chatra





“ *Child marriage leaves childhood dreams in pieces. Let's fight child marriage together!* ”



Xavier Institute of Social Service

Dr Camil Bulcke Path (Purulia Road),
Ranchi- 834001, Jharkhand

Tel : 0651- 2200873

Email : xiss@xiss.ac.in | **Web :** www.xiss.ac.in

Sampark : <https://sites.google.com/xiss.ac.in/sampark-III>