



SANKALP

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Quarterly
Newsletter

By **Chhattisgarh
Agricon Samiti**



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मानविक रूप
से स्वास्थ्य
व्यक्ति के गुण

लक्ष एडवेलमेन्ट
मंडी, बंदरी

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EDITOR'S NOTE —●



The April – June 2023 quarter has been nothing but a delight for Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti. With the support and backing from our kind partners, in this quarter, we have launched the CHiRP project in Kabirdham district, hosted guests from 7 different states of India, set-up a small but strong MEL team, and did so much more!

We seek inspiration from the large cadre of volunteers, who contribute their time and energy for the betterment of their communities in their respective districts and enable us to do better every day. These volunteers have done some incredible work in the domains of health, education, nutrition, Mental Health, etc.; and we hope that you enjoy reading about all of those here.

Ananya Jha

CHiRP and Kavir Launch Event



Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti (CAS) organized the launch event of Central Highlands Restoration Project (CHiRP) in the economic zone of Kabirdham district on 20th April 2023 at Government PG College, Kawardha. Along with the launch of CHiRP project, the idea of "KAVIR" – the youth volunteer group and "KAVIR KISAN" – the farmer user group was also introduced to people of Kabirdham at large.

Our esteemed guests Mr. Job Zachariah, UNICEF Chief, Chhattisgarh; Mrs. Harma Rademaker, Landscape Manager, Commonland, Netherlands; Dr. Ravi Saxena, Associate Director, Research, IGKV, Raipur, CG; and Dr. Sanket Thakur; renowned Agriculture Scientist, inaugurated the event.

The logos of Kavir Volunteer group and Kavir Kisan – farmer group were launched. The dignitaries addressed the participants on different aspects of the CHiRP project in the following order:



Mrs. Rademaker talked about the need to tackle land loss, decreasing groundwater levels, and rising temperatures. She recognized Kavir volunteers and Kavir Kisan's as a significant step towards achieving harmony between nature and humans.



The goals for the "CHiRP" project in the economic zone were introduced by **Secretary Mr. Manas Banerjee** and **Program Coordinator Ms. Manisha Motwani**.



Dr. Sanket Thakur emphasized the importance of Sustainable and Regenerative Agriculture and living in harmony with nature.



Mr. Rajnish Awasthi, President, Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti introduced the Kavis Kisan Thiha program, which would provide farmers with soil testing facility, weather forecasts, and information on government schemes.



Associate Professor **Ravi R. Saxena** introduced the Crop Doctor app which has been developed by IGKV to assist farmers.



SBC Specialist, **Mr. Abhishek Singh** from UNICEF emphasized youth involvement in social change and commended the launch of Kavis.



Mr. Job Zachariah Chief, UNICEF Chhattisgarh highlighted KAVIR's focus on child nutrition, women empowerment, environment, mental health, and livelihood.



The event garnered the participation of 280 individuals, including farmers, volunteers, and dignitaries, who appreciated the initiative for restoration and development. Kavis Volunteers helped in the registration of all participants and escorted them during the event.

Some special guests who graced the event were Dr. H.C Nanda, Dean, Agriculture College Kawardha; Dr. Shubha Banerjee, Assistant Professor, Department of Plant Molecular Biology & Biotechnology, IGKV, Raipur; Mr. Soumyan Ranjan, State Head and Mr. Deepak Biswas, Business Development Facilitator from Samerth Charitable Trust; Mrs. Shubhra Thakur, Vice President, CAS, and several officials from Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kabirdham and the district administration.

Volunteers Registered Till 31/03/2023



Yuvoday - Highlights of the Quarter

13,780 Ayushman cards were made by volunteers	32 Poshan Vatika's were built.	55 malnourished children were admitted to the Nutrition Rehabilitation Center (NRC).	5,842 people were made aware of the importance of drinking clean water.	3,656 men, women and children were made aware of importance of Hand Washing.	1,687 pregnant women and new mothers were nudged for breastfeeding/institutional delivery and vaccination.
1,751 people were made aware of Mental Health.	1,625 adolescent and adult females were made aware of good menstrual hygiene	1,317 people were made aware of the causes and prevention of Malaria.	1,042 Mohalla classes were conducted in 639 centers for about 11 children in each class.	111+ classes taken by Volunteers in single teacher schools.	80 new people registered as Yuvoday volunteers.

Yuvoday Kondanar Champs – Highlights of the quarter

5,065 people were made aware of Mental Health.	211 people were made aware of Anemia and its prevention.	2,026 Ayushman cards were made by volunteers.	1,669 people were made aware of the ill effects of Substance abuse.
361 school going children were made aware of ill effects of Substance	143 adolescents were educated on menstrual hygiene practices.	3 children were made Child Protection leaders in their respective schools.	

BijaDutir - Highlights of the Quarter

4814

people were made aware of different aspects of Mental Health.

52

malnourished children were admitted to NRC.

1350

people were made aware of Anemia and its prevention.

881

people made aware of Malaria and its prevention.

582

volunteers participated in the weekly volunteer training workshop.

113

BijaDutir volunteers joined BijaDutir clubs.

95

new volunteers joined BijaDutir.

1649

people from the SMC, adolescents and other community members were reached to promote health and healthy habits in adolescents.

819

pregnant women and new mothers were reached out to promote good nutrition during pregnancy, vaccinations, breastfeeding, and institutional delivery.

Manobal Highlights of the Quarter

25

malnourished children were admitted to NRC.

5430

people were made aware of different aspects of Mental Health.

853

children were made aware of correct handwashing practices.

81

new volunteers joined Manobal.

315

individual sessions were held with primary school teachers on Social Emotional learning (SEL) in children

289

Household and Anganwadi visits were made to promote and ensure that children and adolescent girls are taking healthy and nutritious

144

people were made aware and helped in getting connected to different social security schemes.

CAS team participates in the Grassroots Actions on Community Inclusion Conclave



Our knowledge partners, Bapu Trust for Research on Mind and Discourse, Pune had organized a conclave in April 2023: "Celebrating Grassroots Actions on Community Inclusion: A Learning Festival".

Chhattisgarh Agricon's team participated in the 2-day conclave at Pune. Program Coordinator (MH and CP) Ms. Danish K Hussain was part of a discussion Panel on innovative awareness strategies for psychosocial health and inclusion, where she presented CAS's awareness methods and strategies for Mental Health. She also presented one of the case study stories amongst others.

The team also participated in a cultural dance event and display of the IEC material. CAS's work in the domain of mental health and inclusion, and the quality of the IEC material was highly appreciated by all the attendees. This was a great learning and sharing experience for the team.

UNICEF India CFS Jalpa Ratna – visits Kondagaon

In April 2023, UNICEF India's CFS Jalpa Ratna Ma'am accompanied by UNICEF Chhattisgarh Chief Mr. Job Zachariah, CP Specialist Ms. Chetna Desai, SBC Specialist Mr. Abhishek Singh, and other consultants visited Kondagaon. They were welcomed by Program Coordinator Danish K Hussain, District Coordinators Mr. Ashok Pandey and Yogesh Purohit and team.



They also met District Collector, IAS Mr. Deepak Soni and discussed the Aao Baat Kare and Manthan programs.



In the collectorate office, they met the volunteers of Yuvodaya Kondanar Champs, and narrated their stories of volunteerism for community mental health and well-being. She appreciated the "Aao Baat Kare" community mental health program which is running in the district and the spirit of volunteerism.

MHPSS learning visit at Kondagaon



witnessed and/or participated in different activities such as Human size- Snake and Ladders, Tug of war, Ghoda Badam chai, the stress relief dance- Shammi Dance, etc.

Post the field visit, the visitors met with the volunteers who shared different stories of change. On the next day a feedback session was held in the presence of District CEO Mr. Prem Prakash Sharma, where all visitors appreciated the

program and suggested on different areas of improvement.

In April, Specialists, consultants, officers, and partners of UNICEF from 7 different States/UTs – Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Andhra Pradesh, and Delhi visited Kondagaon district to witness and learn from the ongoing “Aao Baat Kare” community mental health program based on the Mental Health and Psychosocial Support (MHPSS) Model.

A total of 20 people participated in the learning visit hosted by the members of UNICEF Chhattisgarh and Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti's team.

Firstly, they were welcomed by UNICEF CP Specialist Ms. Chetna Desai and CAS's Secretary Mr. Manas Banerjee. All the visitors were briefed about the concept and work of the “Aao baat Kare” program running in 3 districts of CG. Thereafter, the visitors were divided into three teams for the field visit to villages – Badebendri, Banjugani and Rajagaon.

During the field visit each team visited a primary school and interacted with the Aanganwadi workers, PRI members, Teachers, students, and community members. The visitors also





Advocacy Document for “Aao Baat Kare”

The impact of the MHPSS learning visit was such that the news of “Aao Baat Kare” program reached the Deputy Commissioner of Ministry of health and family welfare. UNICEF – CG office and its implementing partner Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti were asked to submit an advocacy document on the same. The advocacy document was prepared and submitted to Ministry of Health and Family welfare, GOI which would further be presented at the G-20 summit.

National Dengue Day: 16 May 2023

On National Dengue Day Rally was organized to spread awareness against dengue by Health department Bastar in collaboration with Yuvoday. The rally was inaugurated by Hon'ble Collector Bastar Shri Vijay Dayaram K. About 70 volunteers participated in the rally along with the other departments from Bastar district administration.

In Bijapur district, volunteers spread awareness on Dengue in different Anganwadi centers and PHCs by talking about it and posting posters in public places.



World Environment Day: 5 June 2023



On 5th June, Volunteers from Bastar and Kabirdham celebrated world environment day by planting trees in community lands and nearby places. In Bastar, Yuvoday volunteers and the community members planted 90 trees while Kavir volunteers and the community members in Kawardha planted – 5 trees.

The team from Kabirdham also made a small video for promoting the environment day on social media.

Menstrual Hygiene Week



The volunteers and supporting teams of Yuvoday, Yuvoday Kondanar Champs, BijaDutir, Manobal, and Kavir celebrated the Menstrual Hygiene Week by raising awareness on good Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM) practices amongst all. A total of 1304 people were reached and made aware of good MHM Practices in the month of May.

Many volunteers also participated in UNICEF's Red Dot Challenge and showed their support for Menstrual Hygiene awareness by painting a red dot on their palm and posting a picture on their social media handles.

Virtual talk on Menstrual Hygiene and Mental Health

2 online workshops were held on different days of the Menstrual Hygiene Week. One workshop was for BijaDutir volunteers, wherein CAS's Program Coordinator (MH & CP) Ms. Danish K Hussain and UNICEF CG's Consultant Dr. Neha Singh talked about Mental Health, Menstrual Hygiene Management, and the taboos related to Menstruation. About 45 BijaDutir volunteers joined in the live session.

Another online workshop was conducted for Yuvoday Kondanar Champs volunteers on Mental Health and Menstrual Hygiene Management. It was conducted by Program Coordinator Ms. Danish and Block Coordinator Mr. Ayaz Khan. About 45 Kondanar Champs volunteers joined this online session too.





Yoga Day: 21 June

Yoga Day was celebrated by volunteers in Bastar, Bijapur, Kabirdham and Kondagaon. They celebrated Yoga Day by participating in district administration's celebrations or conducting Yoga for the community members.



Village level meetings: Community Mental health



As part of the "Aao Baat Kare" community mental health program, Community meetings were held in 30 villages of Kota block of Bilaspur and Tokapal block of Bastar to promote and reinstate positive mental health in the community.

A few days before the meeting, Manobal and Yuvoday volunteers from those villages

went from door to door to distribute invitation cards, invited all community members on the scheduled dates & time and gave them a basic leaflet on Mental Health.

Men, Women, Anganwadi workers, Mitnins, Teachers and children all participated in these village level meetings. Several activities like Shammi Dance, Udan Chhoo Tali, Uncha Pahad etc. were conducted which made the meeting interactive and fun.

These meetings were held between 25th May and 20th June. A total of 3001 people attended these meetings, while through the door-to-door invitations and IEC material we 8134 people, 4902 people were reached through WhatsApp and Bulk SMS.



USAID team visit - Kondagaon



In June, a team from USAID, Delhi and UNICEF Chhattisgarh visited Banjugani village of Kondagaon, wherein they met the volunteers and community members. They appreciated the Community Mental Health Program: Aao Baat Kare, and the contributions of volunteers and engagement with the community.

Guests included Tamara Abu Sham SBC Specialist, UNICEF; Mohan Khanna- Senior SBC Advisor with USAID; Shalini Prasad – SBC and Wash Specialist, UNICEF; Abhishek Singh – SBC, UNICEF CG.

Zila Panchayat CEO Mr. Prem Prakash Sharma also met with the team there. They discussed about the volunteer's activities of Yuvoday Kondanar champs and their participation in Viklang Shivirs, Anemia Mukht Bharat Abhiyaan, Nasha Mukti Abhiyaan etc.



Kavir Kisan Trainings and Exposure Visits

After having formulated the Kavir Kisan group, a number of training sessions were organized for different user groups as per the need and the crops that they sow. This was made possible due to the MoU signed between IGKV and CAS, and the different partnerships signed with IISR and large local farmers. Through this MoU, we have made an effort to bridge the gap between the agriculture scientists from IGKV and farmers of Chhattisgarh; and through different trainings and exposure visits we aim to provide the right kind of exposure to Kavir Kisans to enhance their skills not only on better cropping patterns but also inculcate sustainable practices.

Training on Sugarcane cultivation for Kavir Kisans at IISR, Lucknow

A total of 15 Kavir Kisans from Kabirdham, Chhattisgarh went for a 3-day long exposure visit to Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research, Lucknow.

They had sessions by different agriculture experts on:

- Increase in Sugarcane Production – by Dr. A.K. Sah.
- Identification and promotion of improved sugarcane varieties – by Dr. Alok Shiv.
- Sugarcane plantation techniques and integrated nutrient management – by Dr. Manoj Kumar Tripathi.
- Enhanced agricultural technology of co-cropping in sugarcane and increase in income by cultivation of coarse grains – by Dr. A.P. Dwivedi.
- Integrated Pest Management and Biocontrol Laboratory Tour, by Dr. Arun Baitha. During the session they were introduced to sustainable and environmentally friendly approaches.
- Various agricultural machinery and their performance to reduce the cost in sugarcane farming – by Dr. Sukhbir Singh.



Training on Trichoderma Culture

Trichoderma, a beneficial fungus that promotes plant growth and helps suppress diseases. It can be used for seed treatment and nursery management, resulting in improved production. Two training sessions were organized on this topic at Kavir Kisan Thiha's in Jarti and Domsara villages.

Dr. Anil Kothstane, a renowned scientist from Indira Gandhi



Agricultural University, provided valuable information to Kavir Kisans regarding the production and benefits of Trichoderma culture. He told the farmers how to look for symptoms of chickpea wilt disease and highlighted the effectiveness of Trichoderma culture in reducing its incidence. Dr. Kothstane also discussed the use of Trichoderma culture for rice seed treatment and nursery management. A total of 81 farmers attended the training sessions.

Training on Cotton cultivation at Bemetara



As a pioneering progressive farmer of cotton cultivation, Farmer Rajveer Singh shared his personal experience as a farmer from Kabirdham with about 15 Kavir Kisans. Rajveer Singh has been involved in cotton farming in Chhattisgarh for the past eleven years. He is currently engaged in cotton farming on 135 acres of land.

He started with 4 acres of cotton cultivation in the first year and expanded it to 7 acres in the second year, and further increased to about 35 acres of land in the third year. With the success of cotton farming, he has also ventured into paddy and sugarcane cultivation, which also proved to be profitable. He told Kavir farmers on the right timing and techniques for cotton farming that are suitable for the weather and climate of Chhattisgarh.

Training on Alternate wetting & Drying and Direct Sowing

A one-day training program was organized in June at Domasara village, on direct sowing of rice and sequential water filling and drying method for water management. Dr. H.L. Sonboir, agriculture scientist, IGKV explained direct sowing techniques, offering benefits such as water savings, labor reduction, and increased income. He also discussed sequential water filling and drying, which conserves water and reduces methane emissions. Farmers were advised to maintain a diary to record effective seeds, medicines, and fertilizers, along with proper timing for watering and fertilizing. A total of 51 people benefitted from the training.



Training on Pest management in crops



A one-day training program on pest management was held in Kawardha, organized by Dr. Gajendra Chandrakar, a senior scientist at IGKV. The training emphasized the negative effects of excessive pesticide use, using cow dung manure to maintain soil fertility, Natural indicators to identify pesticide use, and traditional practices like using green manure. A total of 84 farmers attended the training.

Training on Seed Treatment with Trichoderma

After the training on Trichoderma and its uses, another training was organized on specific use of Trichoderma for seed treatment.

Dr. Anil Kotasthane taught 34 Kavir Kisans how to do seed treatment with Trichoderma culture for paddy cultivation. He also told them about its impact on yield.



Team Trainings

Training on Institution Building for Kabirdham Team



A training was organized at CASHO for the Kabirdham team. Mr. Manas Banerjee, Secretary, Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti trained the team through an interactive session. A round of discussions were held on what is an institution, and how to enhance the competence of Kavir Kisan and Kavir volunteers.

The team was able to reach on a common understanding, on what an institution is? and emphasized the importance of shared values and objectives.

Mr. Banerjee also highlighted the importance of formulating and complying with rules as an institution, and why it is necessary.

Along with that, he also went on to discuss the goals for the year, that includes providing training to Kavir farmers and Kavir volunteers to build their capacity, thereby increasing sustainable farming practices and traditional agriculture of Kavir Farmers. The focus was on maintaining the fertility of the soil, improving water management, ensuring optimal water utilization, reintroducing fruit-bearing trees, and plants in the villages, promoting self-reliant agriculture, increasing agricultural productivity, and reducing costs.

Social Media for Social Good : 30 June 2023

UNICEF Chhattisgarh, Directorate of Public Relations (DPR) and Alliance for Behaviour Change, Chhattisgarh organized an event on the occasion of world social media day – 30th June. Many influencers, government officials, SBC champions, volunteers and development professionals and consultants participated in the event, with the theme - "Social media for Social good."

The event was inaugurated by Mr. Job Zachariah, Chief, UNICEF Chhattisgarh wherein he spoke about the power of social media and why we should harness it to its full potential for social good.

Two panel discussions were also held on "social media for behavior change" and "social media for social issues" respectively. A total of 8 panelists from different sectors contributed to the enriching panel discussion.

Only 20 people were carefully chosen after thorough media monitoring to be felicitated for their usage of social media platforms for social good, from across Chhattisgarh. 12 out of those twenty were from volunteer groups – Yuvoday, Kavir, Yuvoday Kondanar Champs, BijaDutir and Manobal.

IAS Mr. Saumil Choubey, director of Directorate of Public Relations (DPR), Chhattisgarh spoke about taking the social responsibility towards social media.



List of volunteers felicitated

Banmali Tiwari	Yuvoday
Lalo Kawasi	Yuvoday
Jayanti Patel	Yuvoday
Rajendra Yadav	Manobal
Samakka Tinge	Bijadutir
Jyoti Kadi	Bijadutir
Rukmni Telam	Bijadutir
Kundan Vargem	Bijadutir
Omprakash Patel	Kavir
Ranjana Jhariya	Kavir
Sukman Netam	Yuvoday Kondanar Champs
Sikandar Khan	Yuvoday Kondanar Champs



STORIES AND EXPERIENCES

"Panthak" changed my Behaviour



I am a teacher at the primary school of Rajagon village, Kondagaon. For many years, I have been working as a teacher and a strict one, but I have always tried to give my best at my job. However, I had never really given a thought about the social and emotional development of children and our responsibilities towards them.

Until one day, when a girl who introduced herself as the block coordinator and some volunteers of Yuvoday Kondanar Champs visited our school. They gave me a book named "Panthak" and told me that we would like to talk to all the teachers at the school from time to time and conduct some activities over the course of the next few weeks.

They started to visit from time to time and spoke to us about, how Teachers play a major role in the social and emotional development of a child, numerous emotions that children have, and how to understand them and try to deal with them in a gentle and caregiving manner.

These sessions made me realize that my duty as a teacher is so much more than teaching them math and science. I used to scold children who were hesitant to speak or those would behave badly; the children used to be fearful of me and tagged me as the strictest teacher at school. However, now I try to understand the reason for their behavior. I don't put them on the spotlight and scold them in front of the entire class, but rather try and understand their feelings.

I have realized that with younger children when I give them the space to open to me, they are more free and happier, and thus learn better. Punishment is important to instill discipline but understanding, caregiving and safe environment is essential.

Panthak sessions have taught me an important lesson for life and I not only apply it on children at school but also on my children at home.

Narendra Jain
Teacher,
Rajagaon, Kondagaon

STORIES AND EXPERIENCES

Volunteering for Happiness



Samakka Hails from Gorla village of Bhopalpattanam, Bijapur. She is one of 5 children in her family. When her mother was expecting Samakka, she had hoped for a boy as they already had 2 girls. Being one of the middle children she often felt unattended.

Even though her parents made all the efforts, she never felt the love that she desired. Therefore, she diverted her energy on her studies. Even in times of grave distress, she did not quit her studies and thus used to be a good student. However, during her teen year things changed and somehow, she fluked class 12th.

All these patterns in her life and a major setback in the 12th boards was a triggering point in her life. She was struggling to keep her sanity and the times were really testing her patience.

This is when she got the opportunity to become a BijaDutir volunteer. Slowly she started helping people- with malnutrition, Anemia awareness and preventing children from being school dropouts. Through BijaDutir she found a purpose of being helpful to her community. This helped her gain confidence, and satisfaction. While she continued to work as volunteer, she also cleared her 12th boards. She is now in her 2nd year of college, and proudly posts about her work on social media channels. Recently she has also received an award "Social Media 4 Social Good" on social media day by Alliance for Behaviour change, CG and UNICEF.

Samakka Tinge

Volunteer
BijaDutir

BLOGS

Channelizing Youth Energy for social change



Youth energy is a powerful force that can be harnessed to drive positive change in our society. It can be used to create new opportunities, solve problems, and develop innovative solutions. However, if not channelized properly, this energy can also lead to negative outcomes. That is why it is important for us to channelize youth energy positively so that young people can use their potential and skills in a constructive manner.

By channelizing youth energy, we can help young people develop their leadership skills and build strong communities. We can also encourage them to take part in social initiatives that benefit the public at large. This will enable them to make a meaningful contribution towards the development of our society and help create a better future for all of us.

Young people have the potential to create social change, but they face many challenges along the way. These

challenges include limited access to resources, lack of support from adults and peers, and a lack of knowledge about how to create meaningful change. However, there are also opportunities for young people to make a difference in their communities. Through education, advocacy, and collaboration with adults and other youth organizations, young people can work together to create positive social change. With the right support and resources in place, young people can be empowered to make an impact on their communities.

Community-based programs are a powerful tool to engage young people in society and inspire them to become agents of social change. These programs offer an opportunity for youth to be empowered and gain the skills, resources, and support they need to make a positive impact on their communities. Through community-based initiatives, young people can learn how to work together, develop leadership skills, and build relationships with other members of their communities.

Additionally, these programs provide meaningful opportunities for the youth to express themselves through creative activities such as art projects and music performances. By participating in these activities, young people can learn how to use their voices for positive social change while also having fun.

Mr. Manas Banerjee

Secretary,
Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti

BLOGS

Mental Health and Children Well-being for Future Success



In today's fast-paced world, mental health of the children is a growing concern. The well-being of our young ones is crucial for their development and success. Pressure from academics, social interactions, and technology can impact their mental well-being. Good mental health allows children to focus, learn, and engage effectively. Conversely, poor mental health can hinder their academic performance and social interactions. Recognizing signs of distress and providing support is crucial.

Promoting positive mental health for children in communities is essential for their overall well-being and development. Some key factors that contribute to fostering positive mental health in children within communities:

Supportive and Nurturing Environments: Creating a safe, caring, and inclusive environment at home, school, and in the community is crucial. Children thrive when they feel loved, valued, and supported by their families, teachers, peers, and community members.

Education and Awareness: Raising awareness about mental health and providing education on emotional well-being can help children

and those around them understand and normalize their feelings.

Social Connections: Encouraging positive social connections is vital for children's mental health. Participation in sports and other extracurricular activities can provide opportunities for children to develop friendships, build social skills, and feel a sense of belonging.

Emotional Skills Development: Teaching children Social Emotional Skills can equip them with valuable tools to manage stress, cope with challenges, and build healthy relationships. Emotionally intelligent children can recognize and express their emotions effectively, as well as empathize with others.

Healthy Lifestyle Habits: Encouraging healthy habits such as regular physical activity, nutritious diet, sufficient sleep, and limited screen time can positively impact a child's mental health. These habits promote overall well-being and contribute to a better mood and cognitive functioning.

Addressing Bullying and Discrimination: Creating zero-tolerance policy for bullying and discrimination in schools and communities is crucial. Promoting a culture of respect, acceptance, and empathy helps protect children from the negative impact of these experiences on their mental health.

By addressing mental health early on, we can prevent long-term negative outcomes and set children on a path towards a fulfilling and successful life. Together, let us prioritize the mental well-being of our young ones and create a supportive environment where they can thrive.

Ms. Danish K Hussain

Program Coordinator (MH and CP)
Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti

BLOGS

The Shift from Self Sufficiency to Dependency How Farmers Lost Their Agrarian Heritage



In the not-so-distant past, our country's farmers thrived on a sense of independence and self-sufficiency that defined their agrarian heritage. They took pride in nurturing their lands, using traditional practices, and deriving sustenance from their hard work. A strong bond with nature and a deep understanding of the soil guided them through generations. However, as time went by, this once-sturdy foundation began to erode, and farmers found themselves increasingly dependent on external factors for their livelihoods.

Farmers were habituated of using seeds saved from their previous harvests, meticulously selecting, and preserving the best ones. This process ensured that crops adapted well to the local environment, leading to higher yields and a sustainable farming ecosystem. But as hybrid and genetically modified seeds entered the picture, the agricultural landscape underwent a transformation. The promise of increased productivity and pest resistance enticed farmers to adopt these commercial seeds, rendering them dependent on seed corporations that controlled the availability and pricing of these seeds.

Similarly, farmers once owned cattle, which served as invaluable assets to their farming practices. These animals provided not only milk and meat but also a source of natural fertilizer through their manure. However, with the advent of mechanization and modern transportation, farm machinery replaced cattle, leading to decreased reliance on these invaluable creatures. Consequently, farmers became reliant on chemical fertilizers to enhance their crop

yields, which came with harmful environmental impacts and the need to buy expensive inputs from agrochemical companies.

In the past, a farmer's entire family would toil together in the fields, reinforcing family bonds and instilling a strong work ethic in the younger generation. It was a way of life that instilled values, as well as distributed labor effectively. Today, however, with the proliferation of industrialization and urbanization, the allure of city life has drawn the younger generation away from farming. As a result, labor shortages have become a prevalent issue, pushing farmers to hire outside workers, which increases their financial burden and dependency on hired labor.

The modern era has brought convenience and innovation to the agricultural sector, but it has also introduced challenges that our ancestors never had to face. We've become comfortable with the idea of quick fixes and shortcuts, sacrificing the wisdom and sustainable practices of our forefathers in the pursuit of immediate gains. The excessive reliance on external inputs has not only diminished the quality of our soil and water but also made us vulnerable to fluctuations in the market and corporate control over essential resources.

However, all is not lost. The call for sustainable and regenerative agriculture is gaining momentum, urging farmers to reclaim their independence and adopt practices that preserve the environment and strengthen their economic position. Our Project on Landscape Restoration in Kabirdham District is one such initiative. To restore the autonomy that once characterized our farming communities, we must return to our roots. We need to promote agroecology, knowledge-sharing among farmers, and government support that incentivizes sustainable practices. By valuing our agricultural heritage and embracing modern technologies that support rather than exploit the land, we can usher in a new era where farmers regain their independence and secure their future, once again becoming the stewards of the land that they always were meant to be.

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BLOGS

Knowing child rights for child protection



It is every child's right to lead a life free from abuse, exploitation, neglect, deprivation, and prejudice. To make this a reality, Indian government, and other bodies such as the UN have formulated/ adopted and administered several child protection laws; and yet the situation does not seem ideal.

The question of the hour is that- do we as a community know our rights, our children's rights and the laws related to their protection? Or are we so ignorant that knowingly or unknowingly we are also becoming guilty of violating these rights.

In childhood and adolescence, the child is in the learning phase of life, during this time he/she takes the good and bad experiences with him for life. Child-related challenges include rising child mortality, with most deaths from diarrhea and

starvation, malnutrition, child abuse, lack of educational opportunities, and child abuse. And as parents/caregivers and responsible citizens of our country and respective communities, it is our duty to create such an environment in which the life of children is safe and fear-free.

A significant number of children are affected by problems such as child labour, malnutrition, trafficking, molestation, early marriage, domestic violence, sexual assault, internet violence, etc. Such children are negatively affected by all forms of violence, abuse, and exploitation for the rest of their lives, the impact of which is not only physical but also deeply psychological.

For this, along with contemplation, many efforts, changes, and awareness are needed. In health, sanitation and other areas, the way information and facilities are being made available to the people through programs, campaigns, camps, and publicity, in the same way people must be made aware of their rights and responsibilities, the violation of these rights and information about how to get help must be told. Legal aid must be made free, accessible, and smooth for all.

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