

Centre for Health and Social Justice (CHSJ)
Second Annual Report
2006 - 2007

The Centre for Health and Social Justice (CHSJ) is a civil society institution working as a resource support organisation on issues related to health and social justice in its widest sense. CHSJ seeks to strengthen accountability of public health systems and health governance through research, resource support and advocacy.

The Centre for Health and Social Justice (CHSJ) was registered as a charitable Trust in March 2006 and it has been established to strengthen the claims of citizens to the many health related fundamental rights that have promised through the Constitution of India as well as those which have been identified through international human rights treaties. It has emerged from the growing concern of a group of public health practitioners and field based researchers on the difference influences which are shaping public health discourse and practice in India (and South Asia) today. The focus of the current activities of CHSJ has been the 8 states of the country that have been identified as the EAG states and extend across the center of India from Rajasthan in the west to Orissa in the east.

The Centre for Health and Social Justice is influencing the discourse and practice of public health through

- a) carefully documented evidence on the impact of policy intention and programme delivery on the lives of citizens, especially those who are the most vulnerable and marginalised.
- b) enhancing insights and skills among policy makers and practitioner to take leadership in a process of change which will ensure greater social justice
- c) engaging in discussion and dialogue with policy makers and civil society actors for advocacy on health

Mission - To promote human development, gender equality, human rights and social justice with specific reference to the field health, in its widest interpretation

Objectives

1. To build evidence on the impact of existing policies and programmes on the core health concerns of the marginalized, especially women.
2. To identify emerging issues and priorities for delivering accessible, quality health care services for women and other marginalized people
3. To strengthen advocacy for changes in health related policy and practice
4. To develop leadership and operational capacities for improved design, delivery and monitoring of quality, accessible health care services

Activities

This year was the first full year of activities of the organisation. The activities that were undertaken during the year were primarily of two kinds, those which CHSJ initiated and

implemented on its own, and those activities which were undertaken in collaboration with SAHAYOG.

Activities that were implemented independently included the following:

- ***Meeting the Health Needs of the Poor*** – This consultancy project was initiated in the two states of Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. The objective of this project is to initiate a Social Audit of the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in eight districts across these two states to understand the implementation of the NRHM in the context of people’s needs, their experiences and the provisions of the mission. This project is expected to be completed by July 2007.
- ***Developing an Abortion Policy for FPA India*** – FPA India, one of the premier reproductive health institutions in the country requested CHSJ to assist them in framing an institutional policy to address the issue of Safe Abortion, as FPA India is developing itself as a Centre of Excellence on the issue. This process has included a extensive literature review, meetings with key functionaries, observing clinics as well as a workshop with the Governing Body and senior management team of the organisation. The final document has been handed over to FPAI and it is expected that it will be soon adopted.
- ***Advocacy Training on Violence Against Women*** – CHSJ has initiated a process for providing training support to three OXFAM (India) Trust funded networks in Jharkhand and Orissa for developing a VAW related advocacy strategy. The first round of the three phase training process was started in March 2007.
- ***Hosting the National Secretariat of Advisory Group on Community Action on NRHM for implementing Community Monitoring*** – The Government of India has requested the Advisory Group on Community Action (AGCA) a standing committee under the mission to initiate the first phase of Community Monitoring in NRHM. The National Secretariat for implementing this one year project is being hosted jointly by PFI and CHSJ with CHSJ being responsible for coordinating the implementation across 8 states. This decision was taken at the meeting of the AGCA in late February 2007 and the process was initiated in early March by organising the first meeting of the task group on this project.

Activities that were implemented on behalf of and in collaboration with SAHAYOG were the following:

- ***Field based review of One year of NRHM in the EAG states*** – The National Rural Health Mission completed one year in April 2006. CHSJ in partnership with SAHAYOG and Population Foundation of India initiated a field based review of one year of NRHM in collaboration with Healthwatch Forum in the 8 EAG states (Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Chattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Orissa) where the health indicators are the poorest. The draft report was shared in a Stakeholder’s Consultation held in Delhi (26th and 27th July 2006).

- ***Advocacy Training*** – CHSJ collaborated with the Coalition on Maternal and Neonatal Health and Safe Abortion to organise a ten-day short course on Advocacy for Reproductive Health and Rights in September 2006. CHSJ also collaborated with SAHAYOG and Healthwatch Forum UP to conduct a training on Advocacy on Reproductive Health and Rights for organisations working in the EAG in November 2006.
- ***Research on Tracing Pharmaceuticals in South Asia*** – Researchers from the Centre along with SAHAYOG have been engaged in a collaborative study with researchers from the University of Edinburgh UK to study pharmaceutical practices around three key drugs — oxytocin (used for increasing labour pain), rifampicin (anti-TB drug) and Fluoxetine (anti-depressant). The project commenced commenced in October 2006. The study is to take place in two field locations in Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal and a field office for the project has been established in Kolkata from December.
- ***Using Information Technology for advocacy support*** - CHSJ has put up a website which not only describes the activities of the organisation but also includes a news, articles, discussion and other resources linked to public health, human rights and national and international policy. CHSJ is also involved in moderating an active list serv called Reprohealth_India. Important issues for discussion have been population policy, two child norm, coercive sterilization, failure of pulse polio, maternal health and the 11th five year plan and so on. The Centre also prepares a weekly news collation of health news which is shared on the list serv and is also archived on the website.
- ***Advocating for Reproductive and Sexual health and rights*** – CHSJ in collaboration with SAHAYOG has initiated a process of supporting advocacy action in the EAG states with a focus on Bihar and Jharkhand. It is supporting local organizations to develop an advocacy campaign on two-child norm in Bihar and is also in the process of initiating two studies on Maternal Health and Implementation of NRHM in Bihar and Jharkhand.

Partnerships:

The work of the organisation has been enriched by the partnerships that have been developed with a wide range of organisations at the state level, national level and internationally. SAHAYOG and Population Foundation of India are two of the strongest partners and supporters of the work of CHSJ. Other partners include Healthwatch Forum in UP, Bihar and Jharkhand; KSCD, Jan Swasthya Abhiyan, Task Force and Swadhikar Forum in Orissa; Jumav Manch, Jharkhand Women's Health Network and Jan Swasthya Abhiyan in Jharkhand; Jan Adhikar Manch, BVHA, Wada Na Todo, Hunger Project in Bihar; PRAYAS in Uttarakhand; PRAYAS in Rajasthan. CHSJ continues have close relationship with Jan Swasthya Abhiyan at the national level and has also developed relationships with the Wada Na Todo Abhiyan. CHSJ also maintains close relations with

human rights groups like Human Right Law Network. CHSJ has also conducted collaborative programmes with the Coalition on Maternal and Neonatal Health and Safe Abortion.

At the international level CHSJ has benefited from relations with the Population Leadership Programme of the University of Washington in Seattle, USA; Centre for Reproductive Rights, USA; Royal Tropical Institute (KIT), Netherlands; IPPF- South Asia Regional Office, New Delhi among others. Relations are also being explored with Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine for placing interns at CHSJ.

Financial Support

The work of CHSJ has been supported primarily through partnership agreements and consultancy contracts with SAHAYOG, Population Foundation of India, OXFAM (India) Trust and FPA India. The Government of India has also initiated a process of financial support for co-hosting the National Secretariat on Community Monitoring. The Packard Foundation (through Population Foundation of India) and Ford Foundation have also provisionally sanctioned two projects for which prior permission has to be obtained from the FCRA division of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India.

Staff

The staff position at CHSJ on 31st March 2007 was as follows:

- Abhijit Das – Director
- Sunita Singh – Programme Officer
- Gitanjali Priti Bhatia – Programme Associate
- Priyanka Roy – Programme Associate
- Soumita Basu – Programme Associate
- Anita Gulati – Administrative Associate
- Bhim Tudu – Office Assistant

Jayeeta Chowdhury , who had been working as Senior Programme Officer left for a one year sabbatical to complete her Masters in Public Health degree from the Royal Tropical Institute in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Acknowledgements

The staff and governing board wishes to acknowledge the unstinting support of all friends, well-wishers, partners and particularly our advisors without whom CHSJ would never been able to establish an independent identity in the first year of its operations. We have also benefited from the trust that Population Foundation of India has continued to reposed in a new organisation. We are grateful for the assistance that we have received from all staff members, coordinators and governing body of SAHAYOG not only for much needed financial and operational support but for their continued engagement and back up. We would also like to thank those who have provided and promised to provide

financial support to sustain our work and the encouragement to take on responsibilities and challenges which have seemed much beyond the capacity of a small organisation.

We need your continuing support as we learn and grow.

Governing Board

- Abhijit Das –Managing Trustee. Director of CHSJ and Clinical Assistant Professor School of Public Health and Community Medicine, University of Washington, Seattle, USA.
- Amar Jesani - Coordinator, CSER - Centre for Studies in Ethics and Rights. (An Institute of Anusandhan Trust). Expert in public health research, bioethics and human rights.
- Rajni Ved – Settler Trustee. Public health specialist. Consultant MSI International.
- Renu Khanna – SAHAJ, Baroda. Expert in public health management, research and gender.
- Satish Kumar Singh – Convenor of the network MASVAW (Men’s Action for Stopping Violence Against Women). Trainer and resource person on Men, Masculinities and Gender
- Subhas Mendhapurkar – Director SUTRA and trainer of gender and development. SUTRA is one of the first organizations in the country to work on issues related to gender and reproductive health.
- Usha Rai – Senior Journalist with an involvement in development, gender and health issues.

Advisors

- A R Nanda – Executive Director Population Foundation of India
- Amitrajit Saha – Public Health Specialist. Associate Director SRH, PATH.
- Jashodhara Dasgupta – Coordinator SAHAYOG an organisation working on gender equality and health rights . Expert on Gender and Citizenship
- Kavita Srivastava – Leading human rights activist. Associated with MKSS, Right to Information and Right to Food Campaigns and PUCL.
- Leila Caleb Varkey – Public Health Researcher.
- Mira Shiva – Public Health specialist and leading activist on drugs and trade related agreements.
- Narendra Gupta – Public health specialist. Coordinator of PRAYAS a community development and health NGO.
- Ramakant Rai – Child rights and health rights activist associated with Bachpan Bachao Andolan and Healthwatch UP Bihar.
- Sarojini N B – Coordinator of SAMA a resource organization on women’s health and rights. Women’s health researcher and advocate.
- Sharad Iyengar – Public Health Specialist. Secretary and chief executive of Action Research and Training for Health (ARTH), Udaipur

- Sundari Ravindran –Women’s health and rights researcher. Currently associated with the Achuyta Menon Centre.
- Suneeta Dhar – Gender and women’s rights expert. Currently associated with UNIFEM.