

E-NEWS

November-December 2010

Volume 4



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President's Message

Happy New Year 2011 from PREM, Mandiapalli village, Ganjam district in Orissa, India. In this issue of PREM E-News, we focus on child rights, child development and child participation. We always focus our resources and energy on children throughout the year, but as you'll read below, November and December are special months. We highlight the observance of several important dates in our annual calendar—Children's Day, World AIDS Day, World Toilet Day, and the anniversary of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child—and report on the various participatory and educational events that we facilitated in our program area. In our work, there is always the big question of where child rights stand when needs are unfulfilled, to which the only answer is that continuing to work together for child rights will strengthen the voice of the voiceless. Also in this issue, we are proud to receive our accreditation by the prestigious Credibility Alliance of NGOs in India, and our success story this month highlights a young woman from a PREM community who has completed her long-desired journey from student to teacher. I hope you will enjoy this issue of PREM E-News, and as always I welcome your feedback.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jacob Thundyil
President, PREM

Highlight of the Issue

Children's Day



On 14th of November Children's Day was celebrated at various preschool centres of PREM across its operational area. On this date—which is also the birthday of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru—children, preschool teachers, village volunteers, parents and PRI members came together to celebrate this important occasion and affirm the role of children in community development.

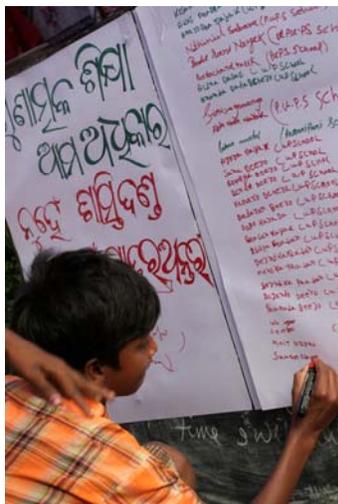
The main themes of this year's Children's Day were the importance of getting children's participation in their social and educational development, and ensuring the fulfillment of Child Rights in these communities. Different competitions were organized such as drawing, song, dance and games for the children.

This provided to present the inner potential of the children. The children were very active and had lots of fun, and they were provided with snacks and sweets to make them happy and fun.

At one of these celebrations—in Mohana block of Gajapati district



—more than 125 children representing 5 model schools came together to join PREM program staff in partnership with Plan India. The main objectives of this program were to encourage the children to realize their role in community development, to understand the significance of the children's day, to learn human values through interaction and to develop their leadership qualities and inner potentials.



The entire program was anchored by children. They addressed the gathering with a tribute to our former Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, his dedication towards the freedom of our nation, his active participation for the nation building and value of education in life. Children from different schools performed various cultural programs and folk dances and sang songs.

At the end of the meet all the children present pledged an oath to support Child Rights and fear-free schools. All children signed their names on a board to support the campaign Learn Without Fear, which is an initiative of PREM and Plan India. Community leaders, VEC members along with children committed to follow this campaign and will continue it in their school and communities.

The program was successful as children expressed their thoughts and ideas among different stakeholders. Communities are also committed to protect the rights of the children and the right to education in particular.



Notes from the Field

World Toilet Day



On 19th November PREM celebrated World Toilet Day in its operation areas. The Program Unit at PREM-Plan Chilika organized a district level meeting followed by a rally in Puri town. This year the project celebrated the day at the Field Office level in collaboration with the **Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS)** department. The main intention was to raise awareness among common people towards effective use of the toilet and its maintenance, hand washing, promotion of healthy and hygienic sanitary practices, and the construction and use of sanitary toilets to prevent water contamination.

School children along with their teachers from the program area, the PREM-Plan Program Manager, CPME officer, all of the sector-in-charges and other staff participated in the event, which also included the Executive Engineer, Assistant Engineer and Program Coordinator of the department of RWSS. The program began with an introductory talk by the PREM's Water, Environment & Sanitation (WES) coordinator, which was followed by a rally organized across Puri holding placards bearing related information, messages and chanting slogans. Later, the Executive Engineer of RWSS shared his perspectives on the relevant schemes and programs of the Government and responded to the queries raised by the participants. The Assistant Engineer and the Program Coordinator of RWSS focused on the various aspects of use and maintenance of toilets, including clean and hygienic sanitary practices. The PREM Program Manager



“Sanitation is a way of life. It makes our lives easy and safe through using toilets.”

--World Toilet Day participant from PREM-Plan Koraput.

discussed the past experience of working for sanitation development, and invited the gathering to work together for the cause. The school children participated in competitions like painting, essay writing and quiz test, and the winners received prizes. The children interacted with the officials of RWSS department and also demanded toilets for school and as well as village.

Similarly PREM-Plan Koraput celebrated World Toilet Day with events in 7 sectors, where participants included children from schools, PRI members, ASHA and anganawadi workers, ANMs, school teachers, VDC, PTA and WES committee members, hygiene educators and SHG members. PREM with the support of sector staff went to the nearby schools and interacted with teachers and children. PREM-Plan staff exhibited three

posters on WES messages prepared and supplied by Plan India to stop the spreading of water and fecal diseases. Children wrote a short essay on the need use of toilets and ill effects of open defecation. Finally, a rally was organized by all school children, teachers, SHG members and PREM-Plan staff to create mass awareness among the people in the community. This program sensitized the people as well as Govt. officials for better sanitation input in the community and also created awareness towards use and maintenance of the toilet.

Ongoing Initiatives

Fighting the Threat of HIV/AIDS

Keeping in mind local public health issues like access to healthcare and migration of youths to other parts of the country, PREM-Plan Chilika observed the **World AIDS Day** on the 1st of December, in collaboration with government health and ICDS departments across the program area. PREM and Plan India are committed to battling the threat of HIV/AIDS in vulnerable communities in Orissa.



The main objective of observing World AIDS Day was to remove fear, stigma and discrimination that are attached to this disease, and to sensitize people on preventive measures. Meetings and rallies were organized at all the sector level locations of PREM's area.



The youths, students, adolescents, SHG members, Asha workers, health and ICDS staff, PRI representatives, and PREM field staff participated in the program. The programs began with a rally across the main road of the block headquarters followed by meetings. Different competitions conducted among the participants on elocution, essay writing, painting and quiz, and gave away prizes to the winning participants thereafter. The BDOs, Panchayat chairman, Sub-Inspector of schools, BRC and CRC Coordinators, teachers, PRI members and officials from the health department attended the event. They were facilitated Question & Answer sessions between the health department officials and the participants to enhance the knowledge of the participants on health related issues and remedies.

PREM-Plan Koraput similarly marked World AIDS Day in 8 locations of 7 sectors, with school-level competitions and community rallies on the theme of **Universal Access and Human Rights**. Participants wore white cotton caps and red ribbons. After the rallies, meetings were held on the subject of the responsibility of communities to fight against the stigma of HIV/AIDS and to educate especially migrant labourers about the risks of contracting the disease. The participants promised to fight against the HIV/AIDS and take care of sick people and motivate them to attend health camps and ICTC centres.

PREM Program Activities

Education



A training-cum-orientation program was organized from November 18-20 for the project team of the **Edu-Leadership Program**—a partnership of PREM and NEG-FIRE. Held at PREM's vocational training centre in Chandragiri, the participatory training program included 14 field staff and 2 program management staff whose main focus was on Right to Education and Early Childhood Education. Participants became better

oriented on community participation in school governance like School Management Committee as per India's Right to Education (RTE) guidelines.

In the month of November a sensitization camp on **Early Childhood Care and Development** was organized by PREM at Adava sector. The participants included caregivers, SHG members, village volunteers, supervisors, sector staff and the ECCD coordinator. The main objective of the camp was to enhance knowledge on different components of ECCD among parents, caregivers, village volunteers and SHG members, and to encourage their involvement. The discussion covered topics such as pregnancy care and colostrums feeding, timely and full doses of immunization for children and mother, home-based care, ICDS provisions for mother and children, components of ICDS and criteria to open the ICDS centre, and the development milestones of children (Physical, Social, Language, Cognitive, and Emotional). The participation and commitment of the members was very positive and encouraging. The participatory method of discussion enriched the knowledge of the participants. They felt the importance of early age education for children through ICDS/ECCD centres.

In November and December PREM organized four **Block-level Workshops on ECCD** at Daringbadi, Dharakote, Gunupur and Chikiti blocks. Around 300 people participated in these workshops with ICDS and education department officials. The main participants were concerned CDPOs, BDOs, ICDS (anganwadi) workers, block chairmen, BRCC, SI of Schools, ICDS supervisors, primary school teachers, village committee leaders, PRI members, and CBCD centre facilitators. The main objectives of this workshop were to strengthen the preschool components of ICDS in tribal pockets through providing Mother-



Tongue (MT) based early childhood education, and to build the linkage between the preschool and primary schools in tribal pockets for successful transition of the young tribal children. The main discussion points in these programs were availing the existing schemes and provisions of ICDS at the community level, particularly MT-based preschool education, regularizing nutrition and immunization programs, increasing enrollment, retention in the primary school level, community involvement in the preschool and primary school management, and highlighting the preschool and primary issues in the Polli Sabha and Gram Sabha meetings. At the end of the programs all the stakeholders realized the importance of the MT-based preschool education and they expressed their interest towards make the program successful.

Health

In November and December PREM organized a two-day **Peer Educators Training Program on HIV/AIDS** at Carrey Retreat & Study Centre, Gopalpur. A total of 130 people including peer educators and staff from seven sectors attended this training program. The main objective of the program was to disseminate the correct messages and information on HIV/AIDS as well as other STIs among the youth groups and the vulnerable communities. PREM believes that youth are very capable to educate themselves about STIs and help spread awareness among the vulnerable groups in their communities. Topics covered in this training period were reproductive health, sexual transmitted infections, and basic knowledge on HIV/AIDS. At the conclusion of the training it was decided that the Peer Educators will attend the village meetings to educate the community on prevention, control and protection measures towards HIV/AIDS and STI. They will organize health camps in collaboration with the Govt. health and ICDS staff for immunization of child and mother, as well as facilitate health checkups of children, pregnant women and sick people.

Livelihood



In November a two-day **Agriculture Training Program** was conducted for youth farmers to teach them new techniques of organic farming. The Agriculture Officer of Nuagada block was the resource person of this program. The topics were analyzed by the farmers such as low yield of paddy crops due to low fertility of the soil, capacity building of the farmers on land use patterns and crop rotation, lack of knowledge about government schemes and provisions, method of seed collection and treatment and pest control

through natural process, and the use of bio-compost and pesticide and method of preparation. The farmers understood and planned to use pest control through natural process in crop field. More emphasis was given on accessing agriculture and horticulture resources from the Govt. department. They also decided to follow up the activities such as demonstration on paddy crops on SRI method where water source is available during the Rabi season for a better result.

Child Rights

On November 20 the **International Day of United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Day** (UNCRC) was observed in 4 sectors i.e. Konark, Brahmagiri, Satapada and Krushnaprasad of PREM's operational area. The significance of this day is that children all

over the world gather in their communities to reaffirm and voice their support for the four United Nations Rights of the Child: the rights to Survival, Protection, Development and Participation. In PREM's various sectors where this day was marked with events, PREM distributed Oriya language booklets on the UNCRC among the children. Various competitions were organized such as debate, song, general knowledge and essay writing. The first, second and third-place winners of each competition were awarded with prizes. School teachers were also involved in organizing the competition.

The UNCRC program was also coordinated with the Children's Helpline International (CHI), which aims to promote the use of child helplines as a method to report a violation of their rights. The participating children discussed the reasons for contacting a child helpline, such as abuse and violence, difficult family relationships, psycho-social and mental health issues, homelessness, runaways, school-related problems, legal matters, commercial exploitation, discrimination, physical health, HIV/AIDs infected/affected children, differently-abled children, etc. The children also understood about the roles and responsibilities towards the society.

Children's Helpline International (CHI) is the leading global member network of child helpline working to protect the rights of children. CHI builds and strengthens new and existing child help lines to improve quality of services for the children and advocates on behalf of children at all governance levels.

Governance



PREM organized **Sensitization Programs on Governance** at the school- and youth-club level, at two upper primary schools of Adava, one upper primary school of Mohana, one upper primary school of Gilakuta and one upper primary school of Rayagada sector. The subjects covered were the provision of grants of Sarva Sikhya Abhijan (SSA) for the schools, need of other resources for schools, rights of children, formation of school cabinets and the importance of children's participation in school programs. After the sensitization meeting the teachers expressed their interest to form school cabinets to enhance leadership qualities of children.

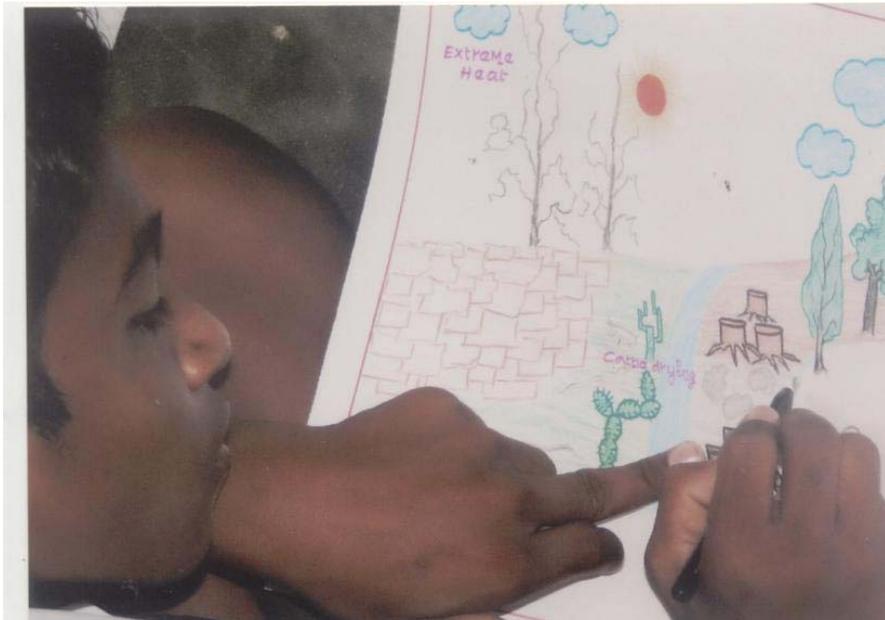
The school children were informed about their rights and need of participation in school management. They realized their roles and responsibilities towards protecting their rights.

PREM in collaboration with Plan India organized a **Block-level Workshop on Child Protection** at the sector office of Gumma in December. The objectives were to capacitate the village children clubs, to interface the children club leaders with government officials, PRI members, block-level officials and other stake holders for information and their development activities, and to emphasize among all the various provisions of government to ensure protection right of the children. Besides the children's club representatives, other participants included



the block chairman of Gumma, CDPO of Gumma, ICDS supervisors, a journalist from Samay daily newspaper, school headmasters, Sarpanchas of CP cells and Sarpanchas of other panchayats. The workshop focused on the government (ICDS and NRHM) facilities and systems in place to protect a child from birth to its adolescent age, and the role and responsibility of all the stakeholders in this regard. The children's club members addressed the group, telling about some of the children's issues that exist in their area—such as negligence, abuse, and lack of education and good health care—and a few of the success stories. Children's club members were very happy to participate in the village as well as Panchayat-level meetings to address their concerns. They also took oath to be watchful enough to control the child-related issues in their areas.

Climate Change



With the objective of sensitizing tribal children on burning environmental issues, PREM and its partner Council of Social Action (CoSA) organized a **Children's Drawing Competition on Climate Change**. Drawings from different perspectives of climate change including the causes, how human activities increases the concentration of Green House Gases, particularly the carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, its consequence on the

earth and on human being and how to stop the climate change were drawn by the children. Prizes and certificates were distributed to the 15 selected children in a function organised at PREM office at its Mandiapalli headquarters.

Attending as chief guest at the function, the sub-collector of Berhampur, Dr. Ajit Kumar Mishra, stressed on the need for sensitizing this issue among the children, and he praised the efforts of PREM and CoSA working for combating climate change at grassroots levels. Highlighting the issue, Dr. Jacob Thundyil, the President PREM, discussed the promotion of environmental consciousness among the people. Mr. Sankar Narayan Beg, Coordinator of Eco-clubs in Ganjam, talked about the involvement of Eco-clubs in the awareness building programs, and Dr. Purushottam Sahu highlighted causes and solutions on climate change. Mr. Santosh Kumar Patnaik facilitated the program and extended vote of thanks to the guests. The competition sensitised the children about this burning issue and their role in protecting the mother earth.

Success Story

A Student Becomes a Teacher



Eloni Sabar walks hand-in-hand with Mrs. Jongsma of The Netherlands during a visit to the village of Tambegorjang.

Ms. Eloni Sabar, a sponsored child of PREM, works as a preschool teacher—in one of PREM's CBCD centres—in her village Tambegorjang, Gumma sector of Gajapati district. Since she was a child Eloni has dreamed of becoming a teacher in her village, where most people in this remote indigenous community had no education or literacy a generation ago.

After completing her secondary school education with the support of PREM and Plan International, Eloni with PREM trained to become preschool teacher. She showed an incredible amount of determination and will to become a

teacher and learn about early childhood education.

When PREM in partnership with Bernard van Leer Foundation opened a preschool centre nearby Eloni's village, the community selected her to become the centre's first teacher, basing their decision on her talent, interest and involvement for the children.

"I am very thankful to PREM as well as my sponsors who continue to support me for the integral development of myself, my family and community," said Eloni Sabar. "I am also thankful to PREM for giving me this chance to work as a preschool teacher through which I can contribute to the development of the children in my community."

On November 4, Eloni was able to share her success with her longtime sponsors, Mr. and Mrs. Jongsma of The Netherlands, who through Plan International and PREM have sponsored Eloni since she was a little girl. Mr. and Mrs. Jongsma visited Eloni and her family in Tamgegorjang and saw firsthand how the determination of this young woman has led to success for herself and her community. Eloni was very happy and satisfied by their visit.

"We are really impressed by the work and results of PREM. You can feel the positivity and team spirit within the staff who we spoke to. It is very clear to us that our money is spent in a very good way. The village where we went was very distant any there have never been visitors other than PREM people. Our visit seemed like the event of the year for them and also for Eloni who walked hand in hand with us. We felt so honored for this and to know more about the work of PREM."

--Statement from Mr. and Mrs. Jongsma, sponsors of Eloni.

PREM congratulates Eloni Sabar for her success and commitment working for the development of the children.

PREM Family News

PREM receives Accreditation

Recently PREM received its accreditation certificate from the **Credibility Alliance** for the period 2010 to 2015 after a 3-month accreditation process. By gaining this distinction, PREM has demonstrated the greater transparency and better governance of the organization as verified by an independent external agency.

The Credibility Alliance (CA) is a consortium of voluntary organizations committed towards enhancing accountability and transparency in the voluntary sector through good governance. It is an initiative that emerged from within the NGO sector in India. As an organization CA aspires to build trust among all stakeholders through improving governance within the voluntary sector. Credibility Alliance is akin to a professional body that will set norms or standards of governance. For more information visit <http://www.credall.org.in/>.



Quote

"Children are a wonderful gift . . . They have an extraordinary capacity to see into the heart of things and to expose sham and humbug for what they are."

-- Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa, Social Activist and 1984 Nobel Peace Prize Winner

PREM E-News

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