

Maternal Health in five blocks of Bhagalpur: Status Analysis

Bhagalpur is one of the least developed districts of Bihar, which is again one of the most densely populated states of the country where 81 percent of the total population is rural. The baseline survey¹ conducted by AIPAD in 2014 in the five blocks of Bhagalpur revealed that around 70 percent of the women in the study area opted for institutional delivery while around 60 percent of the women had received benefits from the Janani Suraksha Scheme (JSY). The status of full immunization was around 28 percent across all categories. Access of toilets was found to be low among the respondents, with 78 percent reporting open defecation. Instances of maternal death and infant death were also captured in the five blocks.

Enhancing access to health service delivery is one of the key focals of the project and AIPAD has been trying to eradicate the

deep seated issues concerning maternal and child health through its technology based Health Cube (currently running in 3 blocks), community meetings, advocacy, liasoning with the health department, regular meetings with the ANMs and generating awareness and concerns. The core strategy that AIPAD has adopted is empowering the frontline health workers and activating the citizens to engage with the public health system. AIPAD has been engaging with the government system at multiple levels (local, district, state, and national) to address the gaps in the public delivery system. The project has been successful in addressing the issues, as not a single case of maternal mortality has been recorded in the panchayats using health cube device. Health services are being delivered at the remote locations, women are informed about institutional and safe deliveries,

News Feed

Bihar schools set to have 'Safe Saturday' for students : The Bihar government is set to launch a school safety programme from January 2018, where the students will be trained in disaster management at their schools every Saturday. The programme has thus been named **"Safe Saturday"**, and is a part of Chief Minister's **"School Suraksha Karyakram"**. (To know more, follohttp://www.dnaindia.com/india/report-safety-comes-first-bihar-schools-set-to-have-safe-saturday-for-students-2560631w :)

ICDS Data for the benefits received (2017)

Block Name	No. of Aanganwadi Centres	Take Home Ration (INR)	Poshak (INR)
Jagdishpur	121	10890	4840
Kahalgoan	301	27090	12040
Pirpanti	219	19710	8760
Sanhoula	166	14940	6640
Shakund	213	19170	8100
Total	1020	91800	40380

and VHSND services are regularly operationalied. Yet there is a lot that needs to be done.

AIPAD recently conducted a small study in which the HMIS² data of all the five blocks from APRIL-July 2017 was studied and

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1. A quantitative cross-sectional approach was adopted for the study. A household survey was thus conducted as part of the study employing a structured interview schedule as the research instrument and the overall sample was distributed among 994 households and 35 villages from the project blocks.

2. Health Management Information System (HMIS) data was collected by our team from the respective blocks and a comparative graph was made. Percentage of each indicator mentioned below was calculated by using expected level of achievement (ELA) of each month given by government and then calculating the percentage actually achieved in 4 months.



the results were analyzed. The objective of this comparative analysis was to understand the health situations in the respective blocks and the reasons therein. The study was conducted so as to serve as a reference for measuring change incidental to the implementation of the project. Apart from that, analysis of the data would provide an understanding and a vivid picture of persistent health concerns in the field area despite the numerous efforts from the government and civil society. Findings of which are mentioned below:

- **Percentage of women received 4 ANC checkups:** It was found out that out of the total population of the blocks, 43 percent of the women received 4 ANC checkups in Pirpainti block, Kahalgaon 47 percent, Sanhaula 56 percent, Jagdishpur 49 percent and Shahkund 46.60 percent.
- **Percentage of Institutional Deliveries conducted:** From the study, it was found out that 78 percent of women in Pirpainti block had institutional delivery, 46.50 percent delivered in Kahalgaon, 54 percent in Shahkund, 71 percent in Jagdishpur and 64 percent in Sanhaula. It can be seen that Pirpainti has the highest percentage of institutional delivery because the Referral Hospital in Pirpainti is equipped with all the

necessary facilities and is performing very good in terms of providing the health services.

- **Percentage of Home Deliveries conducted:** It was found out that 53.50 percent of women in Kahalgaon had home delivery, 36 percent in Sanhaula, 22 percent in Pirpainti and 29 percent in Jagdishpur and 46 percent in Shahkund. It can be seen that Pirpainti has the lowest percentage of home deliveries and Kahalgaon has the highest.
- **Percentage of Still births in Public hospital:** 1.80 percent still births had occurred in Pirpainti, 1.5 percent in Kahalgaon, 1.4 percent in Shahkund, 1.7 percent in Sanhaula and .80 percent in Jagdishpur. It can be seen that Jagdishpur having the lowest percent of still births. There is a strong linkage between home deliveries and still births as women delivering at home face a lot of challenges and there is a huge risk for the infants as well as the mother.
- **Percentage of Full Immunization:** It was found out that 90.50 percent of children had full immunization in Pirpainti, 73 percent in Kahalgaon, 93 percent in Sanhaula, 73.7 percent in Shahkund and 89 percent in Jagdishpur.

We can clearly see that Sanhaula block has the highest ANC check ups recorded while Pirpainti has the least. In case of institutional deliveries, Pirpainti has the highest and Shahkund has the lowest. Referral Hospital in Pirpainti is equipped with proper infrastructure, specialist doctors and medicines to tackle maternal emergencies and therefore institutional deliveries occur here in large numbers, whereas it is not the same scenario in hospitals of other blocks. In case of home deliveries, Kahalgaon has recorded the highest percentage and Jagdishpur the lowest. Also, in case of still births, Pirpainti has the highest percentage and Jagdishpur the lowest. Kahalgaon (73 percent) and Shahkund (73.7 percent) have the lowest percentage in terms of full immunization.

The finding of the study gives a clear picture that the health situations over the years have improved but there is still a lot to be done. AIPAD is doing it's bit in combating the serious issues

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Stakeholder's Speak

☞ Toilets are essential for our healthy being because they protect us from various diseases. Before eating food, we should wash our hands with soaps to avoid any kind of infection and contamination. We should never defecate in open and keep ourselves and our surroundings clean.☺

Neha Kumari, Class 7

concerning maternal health, but still we can see high percentage of home deliveries, still births, lack of awareness about ANC checkups and resistance towards immunization. Reasons for persistent issues around maternal health in regions like Bhagalpur can be explained as follows:

- **Home deliveries** The persistent pressure on increasing the institutional deliveries numbers and the incentives being given to pregnant women under Janani Suraksha Yojana has led to a sharp increase in institutional delivery (from 39% in 2005-06 to 79% in 2015-16)³, yet there is again a huge percentage of women who are delivering at their respective homes like 55 percent in Kahalgaon which is a huge number. The reasons of home deliveries can be many such as lack of health facilities with requisite infrastructure, unhygienic environment, lack of doctors, shortage of trained medical personnel including nurses and midwives, accessibility to the hospitals and high out of pocket expenses for deliveries.
- **Poor Infrastructure and Lack of accessibility** Women delivering in these public hospitals are often unsatisfied by their experience and even

after delivering in the hospitals, they suffer from complications and infections as a study conducted by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation says that even though 64 per cent of women opted for institutional deliveries in Bihar, half left the public health facility within eight hours of delivery, and one fourth left within four hours, owing to institutional gaps in staffing, equipment and hygienic practices. Even the public health institutions such as the PHCs, CHCs and other health centres still lack basic infrastructure and are mostly in dysfunctional state. Irregular opening of these institutions, absence of doctors and nurses, lack of sufficient beds and inadequate supply of medicines are some of the reasons for existing health scenario in rural areas like Bhagalpur.

- **VHSNDs inefficient services** The Village Health and Sanitation Committee (VHSC) are responsible for village-level health planning and monitoring and are formed within the overall framework of the Gram Panchayat (village council). AIPAD is actively involved in regular monitoring of the functionality of the VHSNDS and its services. But the

services under VHSNDs especially in places like Bhagalpur are often lacking behind and in most of the remote locations they are not even functional. Important activities such as ANC checkups and immunization services therefore are affected resulting in higher numbers of maternal and child mortality.

- **Resistance against immunization among minority population** There are a lot of cultural and religious barriers that Muslim communities in particular have against immunization and therefore are quite resistant. Though it is a deep seated issue, but AIPAD team has been aggressively working on this interventions with the communities especially in Sanhaura block which has 93% of immunization rate.

We are in need of a comprehensive and holistic approach to women's health focusing on good nutrition, safe contraceptive options, healthy pregnancies and safe deliveries for every adolescent and adult in the state. Strong governance and political support are essential to build a robust health system. Only then we would be able to achieve the noble mission of 'Leaving no woman behind'.

3. Annual Health Survey 2015

AIPAD Through The Lens



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सुल्तानगंज विधायक ने किया सूचना केंद्र का उद्घाटन

संबंध सूत्र, शाहकुंड : जब तक आम लोगों में कार्य के प्रति दायित्व का निर्वाहन मिश्रा पूर्वक नहीं आया, तब तक कोई भी कार्य चाहे सरकारी हो या गैरसरकारी, में परदर्शिता संभव नहीं है। ये बातें शनिवार को दरियापुर पंचायत भवन में निदान के सूचना केंद्र के उद्घाटन के दौरान जदयू विधायक सुबोध राय ने कही। विधायक ने कहा कि सरकार के द्वारा लोगों को सुलभ तरीके से लाभ मिले। इसके लिए सरकार ने कई गैर सरकारी संस्थानों को प्रोत्साहित करने की जिम्मेदारी दी है। इसके तहत लोगों को सामाजिक सुरक्षा, पेंशन, आंगनवाड़ी, प्रधानमंत्री आवास योजना, स्वास्थ्य सहित अन्य कई जनकल्याणकारी योजनाओं की जानकारी सूचना केंद्रों पर दी जाएगी। इन योजनाओं का लाभ भी दिलवाने का प्रयास निदान के कर्मियों के द्वारा किया जाएगा। मौके पर विधायक के मुखिया आनंद कुमार ने जागरण के सूचना केंद्र का उद्घाटन करते सुबोध राय को प्रशिक्षण के दौरान विधायक सुबोध राय ने कहा कि सूचना केंद्र के खुलने

सूचना केंद्र का उद्घाटन
शाहकुंड। प्रखंड के दरियापुर पंचायत भवन के पास विधायक सुबोध राय ने सूचना केंद्र का उद्घाटन किया। उन्होंने कहा कि सूचना केंद्र के खुलने

सूचना केंद्र का विधायक ने किया उद्घाटन
मौके पर विधायक सुबोध राय ने कहा कि सूचना केंद्र के खुलने



Inauguration of Soochna Kendra & Soochna Cycle at Jagdishpur Block by MLA of Sultanpur Mr. Subodh Rai



1st Floor, Khemka House, 11 Community Center, Saket, New Delhi-110017, (INDIA)
 Phone : +91-11-46034800 • Website : www.khemkafoundation.net
Editorial Team : Shubhra Singh - s.singh@thenabhafoundation.org
 Vimmi Lekhi - v.lekhi@khemkafoundation.net • Anuja Tripathi - atripathi@khemkafoundation.net

Kindly like and share the Project Khemka Rameswar Lal AIPAD page on face book



304, Maurya Tower, Block-C Maurya Lok Complex, Patna-800 001, (Bihar) INDIA
 Phone : 0612-2220772, 2220773 • Website : www.nidan.in

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