

Society for Community Health Awareness Research and Action

Annual Report 1996-1997

256, 5th main, I block Koramangala
Bangalore

1. Introduction:

The Society entered the sixth year since its formal registration in April 1991. It was a year of consolidation' and a year of transition. While continuing many of its ongoing functions, a new thrust on 'Health policy research' and generation of action perspectives, from interactive research at different levels including grassroots' action, was an important development.

2. Organisation and Team:

i. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:

CHC is governed by the Society and its Executive Committee, which during this year consisted of Dr. C.M. Francis (President), Fr. Claude D'Souza (Vice President) and members Dr. Mohan Isaac, Dr. V. Benjamin. Dr. H. Sudarshan took over as treasurer from Mr. Arumugham. Dr. Ravi Narayan took over as secretary/coordinator from Dr. Shirdi Prasad Tekur who then continued as a member of the committee since it was felt that it would be a good precedence to support continuity in governance by having the immediate past coordinator on the EC each time.

ii. STAFF CHANGES:

Mr. Xavier Anthony resigned as Accounts In-charge in June 1996. Mr. V.J. Jaimon rejoined CHC in June 1996 after a long sick leave (due to accident) and left CHC in October 1997 to join M.Phil programme at NIMHANS. Dr. S.P. Tekur handed over coordinatorship in June 1996 and became a Consultant to CHC on Training and Networking. Dr. Ravi Narayan took over as coordinator from June 1996. Dr. Thelma Narayan proceeded on special study leave from November 1996 till December' 1997. Mr. Mahadevaswamy joined CHC in June 1996 as a Library Assistant. Mr. M. Kumar rejoined CHC as Accounts and Establishment officer from July 1996. Dr. Madhukar Pai joined as Research Associate in January 1997 and Drs. Devadasan and Rakhal Gaitonde joined as Research Associates in March 1996. Ms. Nalini Gururaj proceeded on special extended leave to accompany her husband to USA

3. CHC activities by Objects

A) Creating awareness in all its dimensions and related areas

CHC facilitated and participated in orientation sessions in the following areas:

Rational Drug Use / Drug Policy

- a) At Workshop on Rational Drug Use conducted by CHAI - Secunderabad at Bangalore in July 1996 (CMF/SPT/ARS)
- b) At workshop on Rational Drug Use organised by DAF-K in collaboration with CHC, for NGOs in Bangalore in February 1997.

Holistic Healing

at Montfort College, Bangalore (SPI).

Health as a Fundamental Right

Dr. C.M. Francis delivered the Sri Ramakrishna Memorial Human Rights lecture as part of Human Rights Day under the aegis of Peoples' Union for Civil Liberties (PUCL) and Citizens for Democracy - Karnataka.

Women's Health

- I. Dr. Shirdi Prasad Tekur presented a paper on 'Overview of Elements which make for a Women Sensitive and Holistic Health Care System' at a workshop on 'Population issues and Women's Health' organised by VOICES at Hyderabad
- II. Session on 'Women & Health' at Montfort College (SPT)
- III. Session on 'Women & Health' at meeting organised by Mahila Dakshata Samithi (SPT)

Orientation to Community Health / Health Situation in India

- I. To brothers of St. Camillus in September 96 (CMFIRN/SPT)
- II. To Medical Mission Sisters in Mundakayam and Bharananganam in November 1996 and February 1997 (CMFIRN)
- III. To grass root workers at ICRA Workshop in February 1997.

Alternative Systems of Medicine

- I. To workers at Prakruthi, Mulbagal
- II. To field level workers from PVOH scheme projects organised by St. John's Medical College (Dept. of Community Health)
- III. To Medical Mission Sisters at Thellakom (SPT)

Miscellaneous

- I. On 'NGO movement' to Postgraduates at M.S. Ramaiah Medical College (SPT)
- II. On 'Health and Consumer Protection' at Symposium organised by CREAT/ICRA in December 1996 (SPT)
- III. iii. On 'Patients' Rights' session organised by CREAT in March 1997

B) Training Programmes

- I. The Community Health orientation programme for senior and Junior scholasticates at Jyothisadan was completed in February 1997.
- II. A week's orientation course in Community Health was organised at Shanthi Sadhana in November 1996. .
- III. A 10 day course on Promotional Health and prevention of Disability for teachers from Primary School in rural Karnataka, organised by Divine Light Society for the Blind, Whitefield.
- IV. Community health orientation and follow up training for animators of rural projects linked to Centre for Non formal and Continuing Education, Bangalore.
- V. Two continuing education programmes for Postgraduates of local medical colleges was held in February 1997 and March 1997 and the areas covered included Rational Drug policy, Rational Therapeutics, Ethics, Alternative Systems of Medicine, Treatment of Malaria.

- VI. Training in 'Child to Child' approach was conducted by SJ. Chander for all members of the Street Children Network in collaboration with Dr. Veda Zachariah and team of Sanjivini.

This was followed up by a workshop for the Staff of the Ragpickers Education & Development Society, Bangalore.

- vii. Training for 46 local volunteers of the Bharata Jnana Vignana Samithi was arranged for 3 days preceded by 6 meetings with village elders in the area. These were conducted by SPT as a resource person.
- viii. VIII. SPT continued his inputs into the Herbal Medicines courses' at CHAI, Secunderabad.
- ix. IX. Drs. SPT, CMF participated in Continuing Medical Education programme for Alumni of S1. John's from Rural areas. They covered the areas of 'Alternative Systems of Medicine' and 'Medicine and the Law' respectively.
- x. SPT took sessions on Acupressure at the Community Health workers course at St. John's.
- xi. Follow up of field level workers training at RORES, Srinivasapura and Prakruthi, Mulbagal continued.
- xii. Community Health training programme for Anganawadi workers and lay persons was held at Palakkad for Sathya Sai Seva organisation in October 1996.
- xiii. CHC participated in the planning process of the following course:
 - a) Community Health Management Course 7 CHAI, Secunderabad

C) Understanding Research and Evaluation

1) Tuberculosis Control (Dr. Thelma Narayan's Ph.D Project)

- I. The key Research project for the year was the continuation of the qualitative-interactive field project on Public Health Policy Analysis of TB Control in India. TN and her research assistant, C. Mallu completed most of the data collection by November 1996 and TN returned to Health Policy Unit of LSHTM to undertake analysis of data and write up her thesis.
- II. CHC hosted a meeting in Bangalore for all those involved in TB and its control to dialogue with a TB expert group set up by VHAI to review the RNTP programme.
- iii. TN wrote a short paper on 'Involvement of Voluntary Sector in TB Control' for the 51st National Conference on TB and Chest Diseases.

2) Malaria Control (RN) - Identifying issues of Concern and Alternatives for Action

- a. CHC's involvement in Malaria Control at Karnataka State level was a combination of study-reflection-action initiatives in the typical CHC style and was coordinated and facilitated by the evolution of a Study-Reflection-Action Group (SRAG) which consisted of members of academic, Government and research and NGO institutions in Bangalore.

The initiatives included:

- I. Meetings of the SRAG at CHC; Malaria Research Centre; Ashirvad; Regional Office for Health & Family Welfare; and Action Aid, Bangalore.
- II. Orientation workshop for Voluntary sector in Bangarpet (Kolar District of Karnataka) in May 1996.
- III. Orientation workshop for Voluntary sector 111 Banawara (Hassan District 111 Karnataka) in June 1996.
- IV. An interactive - community based investigation on Community Dynamics 111 Malaria Control at Kamasamudram PHC.

- V. Review of Malaria Policy Documents (recent).
- VI. Meeting of Veterans' in Malaria Control in Karnataka at Malaria Research Centre, Bangalore.
- VII. Local Action plan workshop in Bangarapet for Voluntary sector in January 1997.
- VIII. Participation in 3rd National Seminar on Malaria and other Tropical Diseases organised by Bangalore University and UGC in February 1997.
- IX. Update on Malaria for institutional NGOs in Bangalore rural and urban district in March 1997.
- X. Participation as resource person in seminar on Insecticide treated Mosquito Net trials in India organised by CARE/ODA in Bhubaneswar.
- XI. A 3 day training in Innovative methods in Health Education for Malaria by Dr. Uma (a CHC Associate) in Bangarapet.

b. Malaria Expert Group (VHAI)

At National level, CHC facilitated the Malaria Expert Group process initiated by VHAI in April 1996. RN was the chairperson of the six member group and an interactive process was initiated, which included meetings in New Delhi (April 1996 and March 1997) and Bangalore (August 1996). About 44 other experts, field activists, policy makers, trainers and project leaders joined the process as reference groups. The report entitled 'Towards an Appropriate Strategy for Malaria Control Issues of Concern and Alternatives for Action' was completed in February 1997. A preliminary communication from the report was presented at the 3rd National Seminar on Malaria and Tropical Diseases in Bangalore in February 1997. It was finally presented before the Policy Makers of NMEP, MRC, VCRC and others March 1997 at VHAI, New Delhi. The report is being published by VHAI late 1997 and will be used for lobbying purposes. A companion volume to the report bringing together the edited originals of all the contributions received is near completion as well.

3. Others

- TN was invited as a Resource person for a Review of research data collected projects in India on the 'Effects of Privatization and Current Economic Policy on Health Care costs of the Marginalised. The meeting was in Ahmedabad hosted by UNNATI - Organisation for Development Education, Ahmedabad.
- SPT undertook a review/evaluation of Child Survival projects of CMAI.
- RN was invited to participate as a resource person in a Review of the Raj Gandhi Mission for Diarrhoea Control in Madhya Pradesh in February 1997.

d. Networking and Solidarity

- The CHC facilitated Community Health Forum meeting was held a few times this year and the topics included TB Control Policy (Prof. D. Banerji/Dr. Mira Shiva International Funding Agencies and policies (Prof. Gill Walt, HPU-LSHTM Emerging Scenario in India (see later report).
- SPT supported VHAK as an Executive member during the year.
- TN and VB continued to support INSA as members of the Governing Body.
- CHC continued to support the evolving CHAI-Karnataka action plan and provide resource persons for many of its meetings.
- Drs. V. Benjamin and Shirdi Prasad Tekur and A.R. Sreedhara actively supported Drug Action Forum of Karnataka in all its meetings and initiatives. These include CMEs for postgraduates and workshop for voluntary sector projects.
- CHC supported medico friend circle in the organisation of its annual meeting of the Primary Health Care Cell at VGKK, BR Hills in October 1996. VB, MK and SJ attended the

meeting.

- CHC supported the evolving Community Based Rehabilitation Forum in the initial phase till it developed its own independent facilities.
- TN attended the AIDAN national workshop in Delhi in September 1996

e). Dialogue with Policy Makers and Policy evaluators

- The Malaria Expert Group report was presented to senior Policy makers of the Malaria Programme in the country on 6th March at VHAI. An interactive dialogue on the key suggestions and policy recommendation of the group was held.
- CHC supported the Memisa-India Partnership workshop at Secunderabad to evolve state level plans for Orissa, West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh (Drs. CMF & RN facilitated the meeting along with Dr. Sukhant Singh of CMAI).
- RN was invited as resource person to help the planning of the Rajiv Gandhi Sanitation Mission in Madhya Pradesh to be launched in the State shortly.
- Dr. CMF assisted the Karnataka Government in finalising of an essential Drug list.

f). Open University Commitment

CHC has been a reference point and support to large number of individuals seeking peer support, interactive dialogue, support to self study and self learning and information and advice on Community Health and Development issues and actions.

1. This activity has grown qualitatively with a more diverse range of visitors and requests. Apart from Health and development activists and staff of other projects the requests from journalists; NRI professionals returning to India seeking options; researchers and doctoral students exploring social/health issues relevant to voluntary sector have increased.
2. Four individuals seeking specific support have evolved short term research associate ships with CHC:
 - => Dr. N. Devadasan, ACCORD-Gudalur (Health Practice Researcher)
 - => Dr. Madhukar Pai, CHAD, CMC-Vellore (Malaria Review)
 - => Dr. Rakhal Gaitonde, KMC - Chennai (Integration of Alternative Health Systems)
 - => Dr. Anand Zachariah, CMCH - Vellore (still being explored (Alternate Health Systems, Health and Culture)

G. Sustainability review

The process of CHC review has been progressing gradually.

1. A survey of emerging concerns and unmet needs in Community Health Action has been completed and is being analysed.
2. A one day meeting on 'Emerging Scenario' was held in October 1996. The Resource persons were Dr. M.K. Bhatt (Political), Dr. Darshan Shankar (Culture), Ms. Vasavi (Sociological); Prof. Hasan Mansoor (Human Rights); Fr. John Vattamattom (Values). 40 Associates attended.
3. iii. The Field Training review and Management review were completed and the reports have been sent to all the Society members and 10 Reviewers for comments and suggestions.
4. The 12 year overview Research review and the Scenario survey will be completed soon and also circulated.
5. A review workshop involving an interactive dialogue with Society member and reviewers will be held in 1997 as soon as all the sub theme reports are circulated and the comments received.

The review is a participatory exercise designed to evolve a framework of future action and development of CHC for the next phase 1998-2001.

h). Library and Documentation

The CHC Library has grown as in the past and we have streamlined its organisation further

- => A card index has been completed.
- => Computerization is going on.
- => A CHC publication list for the first 12 years 1984-96 has been compiled and is available on request.
- => A reference section has been started for key policy reports and books.
- => CHC is participating in Libdoc networking meeting organised by CED Bangalore and others.
- => The Library and Documentation Unit continued to be used by an increasing number of associates and visitors.

i). Administration

The administrative framework of CHC/Society has been strengthened during the year by

- Appointment of an Account cum Establishment Officer
- Computerizing the entire Accounting System.
- Introducing mid-term audits and review.

j) Staff Development

- I. Jaimon attended the Regional Training Course on the Prevention of Drug Abuse and Alcoholism organised by T.T. Ranganathan Clinical Research Foundation, at Madras, from 19-8-1996 to 25-8-1996.
- II. Nagaraja Rao joined "First Office" - a 4 months Computer Course in March 1997, to gain knowledge of the latest version of Windows 95.

k) In conclusion

1996-97 has been both a year of transition as well as an year of consolidation and CHC has been gradually evolving a new clarity and framework for the next phase of its development which will begin with new leadership during the year 1997-98 - when Dr. Thelma Narayan, the coordinator designate takes over.

On reaching the completion of its 12th year, CHC looks back with satisfaction on the multi-dimensional nature of its involvement, and looks forward with confidence to the challenges ahead in the years to come. The ongoing consolidation project will continue to draw lessons and perspectives from the past, to inform and enthuse the future.

