

Celebrating 25 Years of Community Health Journeys.....

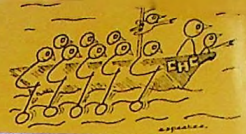
1984 - 2009



Community Health Cell

Society for Community Health Awareness, Research and Action
(SOCHARA)

CHC's journey in Community Health



The Community Health Cell is a professional resource group in community health and public health, rooted in civil society. It has spearheaded community health action; innovative training; networking; and policy action research in community health and public health since its inception in January 1984. The Community Health Cell (CHC) is the functional unit of Society for Community Health Awareness Research and Action (SOCHARA), which is a registered Society since June 1990.

(see website www.sochara.org)

The CHC has attempted to bring to the fore a broader 'community' as well as a 'social determinants' perspective to health. This has been crystallized into the concept of a "Paradigm Shift" which envisages a move from:

- the bio-medical to the socio - community model;
- individual to community focus;
- people as patients or beneficiaries to people as equal participants;
- providing to enabling and empowering;
- drugs and technology to educational and social processes;
- professional control to demystification, and social control.



The objectives of SOCHARA are:

1. To create an awareness regarding the principles and practice of community health;
2. To promote and support community health action;
3. To undertake research on community health and development;
4. To evolve educational strategies in community health;
5. To dialogue with health planners, policy makers and implementers; and
6. To establish a library, documentation and information centre in community health.



Towards a people's movement for health



- **Bharat Darshan:** A year long travel around India visiting various innovative health and development projects (1982)
- **Convenorship of medico friends circle (mfc) and editing the mfc bulletin:** An opportunity to support a national network of health activists and action initiators (1984-86)
- **Community Health Vision - the ' RED REPORT ':** The report of the first two years experiences defined the axioms of a COMMUNITY HEALTH APPROACH, and evolved a radical agenda for community health awareness, research and action (1987)
- **Networking with other National Associations and Networks:** CHAI / VHAI / CMAI / DAWN / AIDAN / DAF-K / ACHAN / FEVORD-K (1983 onwards) and AIPSN / NAPM / HRFDL / PUCL and others in later years
- **National People's Health Assembly:** Participated in the mobilisation and organisation of the first National Health Assembly at Kolkota. The Indian People's Charter for Health was endorsed (2000). CHC actively supported the second National Health Assembly in Bhopal (2007)
- **Global People's Health Assembly :** Participated in the mobilisation and organisation of the first People's Health Assembly at Savar, Bangladesh. The Global People's Charter for Health was endorsed (2000)
- **Jan Swasthya Abhiyan (JSA):** CHC has been a member of the National Coordination Committee and the National Working Group of the JSA (the Indian Chapter of the People's Health Movement) since its inception (2000 onwards)



- **Asian Social Forum:** Participated in the Asian Social Forum and facilitated workshops on the Alma Ata Silver Jubilee, on Tobacco control, Environmental Health, and People's Health Movement - PHM (2003)
- **Global Secretariat of People's Health Movement (PHM):** CHC hosted the Global Secretariat of PHM and supported in the organisation of the second Global People's Health Assembly, Cuenca, Ecuador, in 2005; the Global Health Watch-1 (GHW) and the International People's Health University (IPHU) (2003-2006)
- **International Health Forum & WSF, Mumbai :** CHC organised the health forum before the World Social Forum (WSF) and participated in the workshop on people's health issues at the WSF, Mumbai (2004)
- **Links** with community based organisations, people's groups, unorganised sector groups and trade unions. CHC has links with numerous such groups in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu to support community health action, training and advocacy (on going)
- **JSA State Secretariats:** CHC presently hosts the state JSA Secretariats in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu (ongoing)



- **Medical Pluralism:** CHC has been exploring the challenges and opportunities for promotion of synergy and integration of alternative systems of medicine with primary health care and public health systems (1990 onwards)

- **Vector Borne Diseases:** CHC has participated in various initiatives to promote community oriented action for control of vector borne diseases particularly malaria and dengue at community and school levels (1997)

- **Tobacco Control:** CHC has played a major role in advocacy around tobacco control and helped to conceptualise and initiate the Consortium For Tobacco Free Karnataka - CFTFK (1999 onwards)

- **Community Health Approach to Tackle Alcohol Related Problems (CHATA):** CHC was involved in evolving a community based initiative for alcohol control in two urban slums of Bangalore (2001-2004)

- **Community Health Environment Survey Skillshare (CHES):** CHC co-initiated with many organisations, the CHES process of sharing and learning skills in studying environmental and worker's health issues using simple health surveys by diverse groups (2001 onwards)

- **Community Health response to Disasters:** CHC has responded to most natural disasters in India since its inception, the latest being the tsunami disaster. An innovative project for community



development in a post disaster situation is being facilitated in Tamil Nadu (2004 onwards)

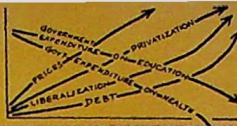
- **Denial of Right to Health Care:** CHC coordinated the South India Regional Public Hearing for the four southern states in collaboration with JSA and the National Human Rights Commission (2004)

- **Right to Primary Health Care Campaign:** CHC is facilitating a major campaign in 18 districts of Karnataka in community capacity building and community action to realize their Right to Health Care (2006 onwards)

- **Community Monitoring:** The CHC teams, in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu are involved in facilitating the pilot project of Community Monitoring and Planning under the National Rural Health Mission (2007-2008)



Policy initiatives



- **Health Policy for Mission Hospitals:** CHC team members were resource persons for health policy initiatives of CHAI (1989) and the Commission for the Health Care Apostolate of the CBCI (1990) where the Mission hospitals went beyond a 'caring' role to defining an 'enabling' societal role
- **Appropriate Malaria Control Strategy:** CHC chaired a VHAJ expert group on malaria to build an appropriate malaria control strategy based on civil society experience (1996)
- **South Asian Dialogue on Poverty and Health:** CHC facilitated this dialogue in collaboration with the International Poverty and Health Network, WHO of which it was a founding member (1999)
- **Karnataka Task Force on Health and Family Welfare:** CHC was a member and resource group for the Task Force set up by the Chief Minister, Karnataka (1999-2001)

- **State Health Policies:** CHC facilitated an Integrated State Health Policy committed to the principles of Primary Health Care and Public Health in Karnataka (2002) and Orissa (2004)
- **WHO Advocacy Circle of PHM:** CHC was one of the co-initiators of this circle which advocated people centred issues with WHO at the annual WHO assemblies and other events (2002)
- **Involvement at the National Policy level:** CHC members have been on various committees and task forces of the Planning Commission, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) (2004 onwards)
- **Centre for Public Health and Equity:** Since 2007, SOCHARA has been evolving a new unit to focus on public health policy and advocacy and public health education





- **Training at the grassroots:** CHC team members have been involved in training grass roots workers and others working in the field on Community Health and the paradigm shift ever since its inception (1984 onwards)
- **Community Health Trainers Dialogue:** CHC brought community health trainers of the voluntary sector in India together often to build collective perspectives and enhance the 'working together' ethos of this sector. The Dialogue evolved a statement of shared concern and collectivity on challenges for a National Education for Health Policy (1991)
- **Women and Health :** CHC was involved in training of trainers for 'Building capacities of Women's groups on Women's Health' in six districts of Karnataka (1999-2001)
- **Life skills education for health:** CHC was involved in a series of training programs in life skills education and prevention of addictions for a number of urban poor groups (2001-2005)

- **Socio-Epidemiological Perspective in Public Health:** CHC has been involved in initiatives to introduce community perspectives and social determinants in teaching in medical colleges, public health courses, International and Health Research scientific fora (2001 onwards)
- **Community Health Fellowship Programme:** CHC has always provided space for young professionals and activists to explore the various perspectives of community health which was formalised into the Community Health Fellowship Scheme - CHFS (2003 - 2007) and evolved into the Community Health Learning Programme - CHLP (2007 onwards)
- **Health and Human Rights module in English and Kannada:** CHC offers short courses in two languages on 'Health as a Human Right towards realising Health for All' (2007 onwards)





- **The Bhopal Disaster aftermath:** CHC team members were involved in the mfc action and research response to the Bhopal tragedy. CHC undertook an epidemiological overview of the situation and of the research challenges in Bhopal (1985 onwards)

- **The Health Policy Delphi:** CHC conducted a research study using the Delphi method to predict the evolving economic, social, political and cultural challenges, the future health scenario and the potential role of the civil society sector in health (1992). The CHC team conducted the Golden Jubilee study of the Catholic Health Association of India (CHAI) (1991-1993)

- **Study on Medical Education:** A CMAI and CHAI supported project exploring social relevance and community orientation of medical education in India which led to reports on innovative ideas, feedback from graduates on curriculum change and an annotated bibliography (1993)

- **Understanding the Policy Process:** One of the co-initiators of CHC did a comprehensive public health policy review using the National TB programme as a case study for a doctoral thesis which became the inspiration for CHC to engage with state health policy advocacy and focus on the social determinants of health (1998)

- **Evaluation of CHW Training Programmes:** CHC coordinated two evaluations of the Jan Swasthya Rakshak Scheme of Madhya Pradesh (1997 and 2001)

- **Global Forum for Health Research:** One of the co-initiators of CHC has been the civil society representative in the Global Forum for Health Research Foundation Council. CHC has been making regular inputs into the annual global research fora (2001 onwards)



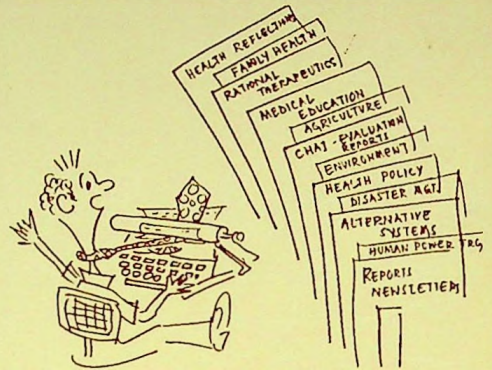
- **Understanding Global Public Private Initiatives (GPPIs) :** CHC team participated in a global study facilitated by WEMOS on GPPIs using the Indian experience of the Global Alliance to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (GAELF) as a case study (2004)

- **SHRC and Mitandin Evaluation:** CHC organised an external evaluation of the State Health Resource Centre (SHRC) and the Mitandin programme which were health sector reform initiatives in Chhattisgarh state (2005)

- **Researchers Encounter at People's Health Assembly:** CHC and the PHM Secretariat hosted by it, helped organise a Researcher's workshop at the University of Cuenca, Ecuador on people's centred research before the 2nd People's Health Assembly (2005)

- **Research on Comprehensive Primary Health Care :** The CHC team is the Asian Hub for the multi-continent study on 'Revitalisation of Health for All - Learning from Comprehensive Primary Health Care' facilitated by University of Ottawa - Canada, University of Western Cape - South Africa and PHM (2007 onwards)

CHC Library and Information Centre (CLIC)



The CHC Library and Information Centre (CLIC), is a resource centre in the area of community health, public health, health policy and development. CLIC has an extensive collection of books, journals, newsletters, health education materials (posters, CDs, slide sets and pamphlets), resource files, paper-clippings, and magazines/reports/booklets by NGOs, Governments and international bodies. The Centre also has some rare books from the personal collection of senior health professionals.

CLIC produces a monthly newsletter 'Health Roundup', a bibliography of the new arrivals of books and lists out articles related to community and public health appearing in various journals and magazines.

CLIC is a treasure house of information on health topics for scholars, health workers, activists and media.

CLIC encourages all to use its resources as per the CLIC rules and regulations.

Please contact CLIC at clic@sochara.org for placing requests and further information.

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