

## **Pathfinder final report**

### **A. Background**

Women Development Corporation works under the aegis of the Department of Social Welfare, Govt. of Bihar and is one of the major departments working for the empowerment of women. The prime focus of WDC's is to women's empowerment through social, economic and cultural development of the poorest of poor women of Bihar. Presently WDC is working in 27 districts covering 165 blocks has formed 23,521 self-help groups of women having members of 2.5 lakhs. Building the capacity of women in the field of health especially reproductive health is an important concern and focus areas of WDC since larger part of money is spent on curative health. Hence equipping the community resource persons who are the part of the federation on reproductive health components would go a long way in changing the health seeking behaviour of individuals, families and communities and there by improving their quality of life. Majority of the women who are members of SHG are in the reproductive age group i.e 15-45 years. Cultural norms pressure women to prove their fertility coupled with lack of knowledge on maternal and child health issues and available reproductive health services. Since the recent NFHS data shows the poor reproductive health and empowerment status of women in Bihar, hence there is an urgent need for a strong pool of reproductive health leaders from among the SHG federation members, so that they can educate, motivate and mobilize other SHG members to change social norms and adopt healthy reproductive health practices. Developing such a resource in remote areas of Bihar would ensure a change in the existing practices and adaptation of healthier behaviour by the people.

Pathfinder International in existence for 51 years has extensive experience in designing, managing and implementing reproductive health, family planning and HIV/AIDS programs. Pathfinder International began working in India in 1999 to advance the reproductive health needs of underserved and vulnerable populations, particularly adolescent, who are often neglected because of lack of understanding of their special needs. In 2001 Pathfinder commenced execution of PRACHAR Project in Bihar. Pathfinder reproductive health program in Bihar invests in mobilizing and advocating to communities through influential citizens, gatekeepers, self-help group members and Panchayat members to obtain buy in for project activities and to build a supportive environment for changing social norms related to reproductive health as well as to ensure long term sustainability of changes brought about by the programs.

WDC made collaboration with Pathfinder International in 2009 to develop a cadre of women on reproductive health and family planning, who will share information to other self-help group members to develop their knowledge on reproductive health and family planning. The women who has got training has successfully share information during the self-help groups meeting and the knowledge & information of women has increased on reproductive health and family planning and they are practicing in smooth way to keeping hygienic during menstruation period, using of contraceptives method to keep gap between two issues and aware adolescent on reasons for spreading of HIV/AIDS and their preventive methods.

## B. Operational Areas:

The project executed in three districts covered six blocks mentioned below:

Sr. No.	District	Block
01	Jehanabad	Ghoshi
		Makdumpur
02	Gaya	Mohanpur
		Barachatti
03	Nalanda	Bind
		Asthawan

## C. Goal, broad objective and objectives:

**Goal:** Create a pool of effective communicators from among the self-help group members and coordinators by equipping them with requisite knowledge, attitude and skills for promotion of healthy reproductive health practices among their group members and community at large.

**Broad Objectives:** Train all resource persons of the federation in blocks along with 3-4 SHG members from each village under the federation so that they become effective behaviour change communicators on key family planning and reproductive health issues for other members of their SHG and their villages and begin to collectively think in their SHGs on reproductive health related livelihood projects.

### Objectives:

- Develop clarity on basic reproductive health technical information and their role as communicators of this information
- Realize that as empowered women they can bring about sustainable change in the community on issues related to maternal and child health, family planning and RTI/STI/HIV/AIDS and thus benefit the health and economic well being of individuals, couples and families.
- Acquire the knowledge that they need to perform their roles as communicators effectively
- Demonstrate conviction in the benefits of maternal & child health and family planning and the important role they can play in spreading the reproductive health messages
- Demonstrate skills in conducting effective group meetings and handling myths and misconceptions related to RH issues
- Demonstrate effective social and communication skills to create a supportive environment within the community towards family planning and RH
- Demonstrate skills in communicating effectively with couples on the importance of delaying the first child, spacing the second child by at least 3 years and motivating them to have small families
- Know about the various RH/FP and other related schemes and available services and disseminate this information

- Develop a plan of action for effectively conducting group meetings with SHG members and spreading awareness and information on RH issues among family and community members
- Identify a small set of RH related livelihood projects which the SHGs can take forward.

**D. Preparation done before training:**

- A series of meeting organized with collaborating agency to decide the selection criteria of cadres, training modules and schedule of training program.
- The cadres have been selected based on criteria. Cross checking of selected cadres has been done by the district project managers and nodal persons of district
- The training module developed by the pathfinder has discussed with WDC and also tested in the field and fine tune done accordingly
- The pedagogy of the training finalized after discussion with WDC and based on area context

**E. Process Adopted:** First of all one day orientation training of federation staff's (CCs, CRPs, CEO, FDE and President) organized at the federation level to develop understanding why Reproductive Health & Family Planning Training for self-help group members, what is its important and how it will reduce the vulnerability of mother and child mortality rate. Emphasis has also been given to create positive environment among the selected cadres regarding training programs to be organized for 05 days with the support of Pathfinder International

**F. Methodology:** - The methodology adopted for the five days training programs were lecture, group discussion, story telling and demonstration.

**G. Training program imparted:** five days training programs organized for selected members. In one batch, the number of participants was 20. Details of training programs:

Sr. No.	Districts	Block	Unit	No. of participants
01	Jehanabad	Goshi & Makdumpur	06	120
02	Gaya	Mohanpur & Barachatti	06	120
03	Nalanda	Bind & Asthawan	06	120
<b>Total</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>06</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>360</b>

Before organizing the training program, well preparation done and training organized in effectively manner. Help of different relevant posters; pump let's also were taken during the training. In each batch training two training kits have been provided to impart training in the self-help group meetings.

## **H. Follow-up Mechanism**

**H.1 Strategy Adopted:** The members who became trained on reproductive health and family planning are mostly from Phase-I groups. In Phase-I, 100 groups have been formed. It has been worked before starting the training program that trained women will impart informal training at least two groups including her groups except Bind block of Nalanda district. So, each trained women has to cover two groups. They have been informed at the end of training programs. The cluster coordinators will provide handholding support to the women in the initial phase and later on they will share information with other groups members during the meeting independently.

**H.2 Information sharing with self-help group members:** 60 women trained in each federation in 05 days on

- What is reproductive health
- Family planning-What is, cycle of family planning, how family planning reduces death of child and mother, Use of contraceptives to keep space between two births, myths and misconceptions about use of contraceptives
- Breastfeeding and immunization
- Sexually transmitted diseases/HIV/AIDS-mode of transmission and their preventive measures.
- Care of mother and child after delivery
- About ANC and PNC
- The participants also aware about how to conduct group meeting, while sharing information and messages on reproductive health and family planning

The trained women are sharing information in her group and other groups in monthly meetings on a regular basis and documenting meeting minutes in a prescribed format made available by the Pathfinder International. Use of flip book and demonstration for use of condoms proved to be beneficial to enhance the knowledge of rural women on family planning and reproductive health. In the initial period, the cluster coordinator and federation staff's provided hand holding support to the trained women in conducting group meetings and sharing information. Later on, the members have developed confidence among themselves and started conducting meetings in groups independently. Like wise in all six blocks group meetings on reproductive health and family planning conducted by the trained members and the process is going on and enhanced the knowledge of rural women. 360 trained women shared information in 550 groups and enhanced knowledge of 6990 group members on reproductive health and family planning.

## **H.3 Impact of the program:**

- Self-help group members became aware about the negative impact on health if girls are married before 18 years.

- Earlier women had in their mind regarding family planning means to stop the birth of child through operation. After execution of programs, they have developed understanding regarding family planning means-One should think marriage after 21 years or 18 years, couple to be decided when first child has to come and at least three years gap to be maintained in giving birth of second child.
- Myth and misconception about the use of contraceptive pills or condom has reduced among the women. Women are using contraceptive method to avoid the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases or maintain gap between two children.
- The awareness among women on personal hygiene has increased. Earlier mostly women used unhygienic clothes during the menstruation period. Now women became aware about it, most of them either used clean clothes or sanitary napkins during the menstruation period.
- The women became aware about the mode of transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, HIV/AIDS and their preventive measures. They have also awared their husbands about it.
- The women became aware about the importance of institutional delivery to avoid the risk of mother and children. They are giving focus on institutional delivery with the help of ASHA.
- The women became aware about the importance of anti-natal and post-natal care. They are approaching government health centres for anti-natal and post-natal care.
- The women became acquainted with knowledge of correct use of condom.
- The women became aware about the importance of immunization.

**The impact of the program could be justified through case studies.**

#### **CASE-I**

**Name- Smt. Kamla Devi**

**Name of SHG: Rajrani**

**Age- 55 years**

**Village-Utarthu**

**Panchayat-Utarthu**

**Block-Bind**

**Distt-Nalanda**

Smt Urmila Devi participated in five days training program organized near Utarthu village. He developed understanding on reproductive health and family planning and shared information with her group members during group meeting. One of the members of group Smt. Kamla Devi, her daughter in law was pregnant. He heard about benefits of anti-natal and post-natal care of pregnant women, after coming home, he decided to bring her daughter in law at Primary health centre for Anti-natal care. Her daughter in law had given three tetanus injections and paid attention of her diet. After nine month her daughter in law gave birth healthy girl child. She also paid attention on post natal care of mother as well as children. She is happy with her young grand daughter.

## **CASE-II**

**Name: Smt. Pramila Devi**

**SHG: Kamli Swablamban self-help group**

**Age: 30 Years**

**Village: Tajnipur**

**Panchayat- Tajnipur**

**Block-Bind**

**Distt-Nalanda**

Smt. Pramila Devi participated in five days training programs organized by pathfinder International on reproductive health and family planning. She actively participated in five days training programs thinking that rural areas women are facing lots of problem regarding health aspects. She thought that if women will develop knowledge on health aspects than they could keep away from diseases by adopting preventive and curative measures. Her husband is working in Delhi as worker in factory. He used to visit house every after five to six months. In the month of September-2009 her husband came from Delhi. In the night when her husband tried to make sexual relation, she suggested for use of condom because she just completed her menstruation cycle. She did not want to other child. Her husband was agreed with her words and made sexual relation by using condom.

## **CASE-III**

***Name of group: Swyamsidhha Laxmi Self-help group***

***Village- Onda***

***Po-Onda***

***Block-Asthawan***

***Distt-Bind***

Cluster coordinator-Smt.Manju Devi participated in five days training programs organized by Pathfinder International with the support of Women Development Corporation on reproductive health and family planning. After getting training, she made aware members of Swyamsidhha Laxmi Self-help group about the benefits of use of sanitary napkins. How sanitary napkin is useful keeping in view of hygienic point of view. She made aware that generally women use dirty clothes during the menstruation period, which create many problems. First of all, Smt. Sanju Devi and Sona Devi used sanitary napkins during the menstruation period and she also motivated to other women for use of sanitary napkin. Now almost all members of groups are using sanitary napkin of low cost during the menstruation period. They are also motivating their relatives and other members for use of sanitary napkins during the menstruation period.

## **CASE-IV**

***Name of Self-help group: Devi Mukhyamantri Nari Self-help group  
Group formed in the year-2009  
Village-Molana Bigha  
Panchayat-Onda  
Block-Asthawan  
Distt-Nalanda***

Smt. Manju Devi is working as cluster coordinator and looking after Devi Mukhyamantri Nari Self-help group formed in the year-2009. In the meeting, she made aware to the group members about use of contraceptives to keep distance between two children or temporary arrangement to stop the birth of children. He also clarified the myth and misconception about use of contraceptives. Smt. Mangli Devi and Mona Devi, group members of Devi Mukhyamantri Nari Self-help group are using contraceptives to avoid the further issue of child. Presently Mona Devi has five children—three boys and two girls. She said to cluster coordinator, earlier I was not aware about the use of contraceptives. If I would have been aware earlier about the use of contraceptives than I would have been not five children. The other members, who are not part of self-help groups, also knew about the benefits of use of contraceptives and they are approaching to office bearer to be part of self-help group.

**I. Challenged face:** As we are aware that our society is rich in culture and society do not allow to speak about sex related issue in open place. The training programs in all six blocks of three districts conducted in closed premises, where trainer and trainees felt comfortable to discuss on reproductive health and family planning related issues. First day of training, participants were feeling shy to open on reproductive health and family planning topics but the trainers created conducive environment to feel comfortable. Like wise the trained members also faced some sort of problems in demonstration of condom but the demonstration work has been done in closed house along with self-help group members.

**J. Recommendation/Suggestions:** No denying the fact that training programs organized very effectively in all six blocks with the help of experienced and erudite trainers of Pathfinder International. The content of the training was developed after series of meeting with WDC concern and based on field relevance. The Pathfinder committed that they will provide support in follow-up process, if support is sought from the federations. They provided the support to the federation staff's as well as at field level. It must be replicated in other areas too.

**K. Conclusions:** With the help of Pathfinder International, WDC has developed 360 community cadres on health aspects. The community cadres are sharing information with self-help group members on reproductive health and family planning and enhancing their knowledge. The confidence has developed among the group members and adopting health related best practices to keep healthy and mentally sound.