

JAN ABHIYAN SANSTHA

ACTIVITIES REPORT 2008 - 2010

Engendering Development

Jan Abhiyan Sanstha has been engaged in research and action in the state of Himachal Pradesh. JAS representatives have been doing this with the following objectives:

1. Analyzing what impact imaging of women in folk versions of epics, folk lore, folk songs, folk theatre and literature has on their self esteem and impressions regarding themselves
2. To analyze the socio-economic status and political and environmental contexts for women
3. To document all forms of violence against women in society in Himachal Pradesh and to analyze its impact
4. To document traditional knowledge of women
5. Conducting research that contributes to state policy by giving insights into gender relations in the area and the role of women in preserving folk lore and folk ecology.

Mobilizing women against development projects such as mining that affect their environment and livelihoods adversely.

Jan Abhiyan Sanstha has been conducting intensive research and has been involved in action in different parts of Himachal Pradesh regarding the impact of development projects:

A Report

The Case of Sunni in Shimla District and Karsog in Mandi District: Lafarge Cement Plant

EFFORTS HAVE LED TO THE QUASHING OF ENVIRONMENTAL CLEARANCE GRANTED TO LAFARGE CEMENT PLANT BY THE NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT APPELATE AUTHORITY.

The two *tehsil*, Sunni and Karsog are impacted by a Kohl Dam power project. The dam under this project is to be constructed a few kilometres beyond *Tattapani*. *Tattapani* is an ancient pilgrimage site with famous sulphur springs and a pilgrimage for people from Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, Haryana who visit for a holy dip during Makar Sakranti (in January) and Holi (the festival of spring celebrated on a full moon night in February-March). It will lose its hot water springs, along with the ancient *Narsingh* temple as the complete settlement will be submerged underwater of the Satluj, for construction of the Kohl dam. In village Thali in Karsog tehsil, Mandi district there are at least 100 households impacted by the Kohl dam project. In village *Shakrori* in Sunni nine families are directly affected by the construction of the dam. A new colony has been set up near Sunni town for the Kohl dam oustees who have lost

agricultural land to the project. They have been protesting that they have only got tenancy rights in the land which has been given to them in lieu of the land they have lost to the project. The state government has kept the ownership titles. Many of the shopkeepers/entrepreneurs in Tattapani have received the compensation and are happy with the money. However, the way the money got/is getting utilized is a matter of great concern. A small movement had build up around the kohl dam project which couldn't stop the project from happening and thereafter concentrated on ensuring suitable compensations in land and residential space for the affected and displaced communities.

Sunni tehsil in Shimla district and Karsog *tehsil* in Mandi district have the river Satluj flowing through and around most parts which render the soils fertile. The soils in the Shimla area of Satluj basin (this area falls in the Sunni *tehsil*) have different depths varying shallow to moderately deep in thickness. These soils are fertile having loamy sand to clay loam texture and the calcareous soils are only confined to limestone areas. The soils of Karsog *tehsil* of Mandi district have good drainage with very high fertility status. A large section of the land in Sunni and Karsog permits the cultivation of a variety of crops and vegetables thereby leading to crop diversity. The popular one year crop rotations under irrigated conditions in this area which stretches on both sides of the Satluj are maize-potato-potato, maize-peas-potato, soyabean-wheat, potato-wheat, maize-peas-peas, peas-fallow-wheat, tomato-tomato-cauliflower, cabbage-cabbage-cauliflower, Capsicum-cauliflower, and on unirrigated land are maize-wheat and maize-*jowar*. The important *kharif* crops are maize, rice, tomatoes, cabbage, capsicum, paddy, mash, potatoes, *kulth* (pulse) and the important *rabi* crops are wheat, *jowar*, peas, and *alsi*. A variety of fruits grow in the area including citrus fruits like lemon, and oranges, papaya, guava (*Psidium guajava*) *jamun* (*Syzium cumini*), *louquat* (*Eriobotrya japonica*), plums, bananas, walnuts, mangoes (*Mangifera indica*) and *daru* (*Punica granatum*). The region was sited for intensive agriculture extension activities by the department of agriculture¹.

Biodiversity and agriculture being rich in the area, there are also strong associations between nature and culture. A few Panchayats like Reog on the Shimla side in the area are still the stronghold of near extinct folk theatre forms like *Kariala*; women in Sunni tehsil are the repository of traditional knowledge with regard to conservation measures, use of medicinal plants, agriculture and traditional cuisines. Of the various varieties of trees found in and around the village, the trees of *pipal*, *bargadh*, *tuni*, *kharak*, *simbal*, *khair*, *kikar*, *mango*, *jamun*, *amb*, *shehtoot*, *lukhath*, *kachnar* etc. are more common. Various plants with medicinal value are found in the Sunni region such as *akhrot* (*Juglans regia*), *bel* (*Aegle marmelos*), *ber* (*Ziziphus jujube*), *bichubutti* (*Girardinia hetrophylla*), *daru* (*Punica granatum*), *gulab* (*Rosa spp.*), *kachnar* (*Bauhinia verigata*), *kashmal* (*Berberies aristata.*), *kawarpatta* (*Aloe barbadensis*) *khajur* (*Phoenix sysvestris*), *mehndi* (*Dodonaea viscosa*), *pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*), *sisham* (*Dalbergia sisso*), and *tulsi* (*Ocimum sanctum*). These medicinal plants are useful in curing various illnesses such as digestive disorders, head aches, inflammation, pains, pimples, paralysis, cough and cold, fever and eye problems for infants, children and adults.

¹Richa Minocha. *Ecological and Cultural Dimensions in Development: A Study of Select Villages in Shimla District (India)*, Working Paper under construction, Asia Research Centre, London School of Economics and Political Science

Food trend is a dietary practice based upon an exaggerated belief in the effects of food or nutrition, health and disease. Traditional food cultures capable of sustaining life in specific environments have been tested, refined and distilled over thousands of years, producing a repertory of foods and processes for preparing them. The food consumption patterns in this area are such that there is little prevalence of illness and disease. There is much variety in food consumptions including many green leafy vegetables and pulses and the preparation methods are rich and varied. Fermented foods are common as also stems, leaves and flowers of various trees and shrubs such as *Bargadh (Ficus bengalensis)* and *Kawarpatta (Aloe barbadensis)* are cooked and used as food items. The leaves of *Kharak (Celtis australis)* when given to cattle results in increasing milk production.

The strong political will in favour of cement factories is further leading to their being planned in the area. In Sunni *tehsil* of Shimla district, Lafarge and Dalmia explored large tracts of fertile land for mining operations and memorandums were signed between these companies and the state government. This has led to widespread dissent among a significant proportion of the people as they are aware that this will lead to large scale environmental degradation including soil, water and noise pollution and will result in enveloping people's identities, cultures and minds. While the world bank is claiming that 70% of the hydro electric potential in Himachal's rivers mainly the Satluj, the Beas and the Yamuna is still untapped in the state, and the state government insists that the taxes coming from cement factories in Himachal and the income from power generation are providing much of the basis for the education and health related programmes and other development programmes like the ICDS (Integrated Child Development Scheme), the people's voices are going unheard and are seeking representation. While on one hand the resource base on which the traditional culinary and medicinal practices are based will be lost as a result of development projects on the other hand various respiratory and pulmonary diseases caused by inhalation of inorganic material such as silica, mica, coal, asbestos etc. will result as a result of the setting up of the cement plant.

Lafarge India Private Limited proposed to set up a cement plant of 3.0 MTPA capacity at DPF Ghanger village, Karsog *tehsil* in Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh. The plant site is proposed to be located near Tattapani village and the mine site is to be located near Alsindi village of Karsog *tehsil*. According to Lafarge's own estimate the plant site was extend across 0.2kms of the Satluj river and the mine site was to extend across 3.3 kms along the Satluj river². The Environmental Impact assessment report prepared by the Lafarge group claimed to have taken samples from within a 10 km radius of the study area. It further asserted that the soil quality in the region is low, a claim well refuted by the concern the Department of Agriculture has shown in the area for various extension activities. Also an NGO from Jaipur, Murarka who had joined hands with the Agriculture Department in the state for promoting organic farming had seen much potential in the region and had a couple of years back offered to buy the produce as it was being produced by organic means. Lafarge representatives are maintaining that they have got a study conducted by an NGO operating in Himachal which has brought out that the area is poor in infrastructure in terms of education, health, drinking water facilities etc. This claim too has no merit as

² Environmental Impact Assessment Report of 3 MTPA cement plant, 2 MTPA clinker and 3 MTPA limestone production, at Mandi District Himachal Pradesh, by Lafarge India Private Limited; prepared by B.S. Envi Tech (P) Limited Hyderabad.

Sunni and Karsog have good schooling facilities upto higher secondary, where after most of the better off agriculturalists and business people are sending their children to Shimla or Chandigarh for further studies. Also Sunni has a full fledged hospital with 10 Beds capacity, x-ray and delivery facilities. There is provision for organizing quick referral services to Shimla and frequent eye camps are held on the hospital's premises. Hence Lafarge's claim in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report for the Alsindi Project that Sunni has poor infrastructure was strongly refuted. The downstream impact of drawal of 22 lakh litre of water from Satluj on population and the river ecology and fauna and on hydro power projects were not assessed in the Environmental Impact Assessment which Lafarge India got conducted.

Atleast 120 villages in Karsog *tehsil* of Mandi and 30 villages in Sunni *tehsil* in Shimla will be directly affected by the Project. Mining and associated activities generate dust, fly ash and other particulate matters resulting in loss of soil and water quality and leading to land degradation. Mining operations such as the operations involved in a cement factory have adverse affects on the micro flora and fauna of the region, leading to rapid extinction of most varieties. The villages in the area will be extremely adversely affected as its fertile lands will be rendered unfertile, the rich local culture including the traditional cuisines based on agriculture, the rich folk lore and folk music will all be lost. Diversity in terms of cropping patterns, flora and fauna and the ethnic diversity {*Rajputs*, *Brahmins* and *Lohars* (artisans) are the main occupants} which is the very essence of peaceful co-existence in these villages will be lost.

The area selected is very densely populated and is also significantly forested. A number of Demarcated Protected Forest's (DPF) come in the area including DPF Ghanghar, DPF Shil, DPF Alyas, DPF Kandha, DPF Bakaran, DPF Thaltu, DPF Mandap, DPF Talehan. Even the area within the mining site which does not have much fertile soil is surrounded on all sides with protected forests including Pheradhar Protected Forest (PF), Balhonr PF, Bakshar PF, Mahurikihal PF, Bag PF and Holpur PF. The forested area is rich in medicinal plants. There are vast stretches of *shisham* and *khair* trees, both medicinal species which will be felled for the project. Also the river Satluj in the vicinity of the project area will be polluted causing intense damage to the vegetation of the entire area. There are also vast stretches of private *ghasni* and some common grasslands from where 100% of the fodder for livestock comes. A majority of these are likely to be acquired by the project. As if this is not enough the proposed transport route is in the midst of the most agriculturally fertile villages. This will cause intense pollution by trucks and other vehicles. There are atleast 30 springs in and around the plant site which will go dry as a result of the project³. Memorandums were submitted by Jan Abhiyan Sanstha (JAS) a local NGO working in the area on behalf of village Shakrori which had earlier been proposed for development as a model village⁴. Also through the medium of JAS, DD news Shimla was brought around to do a story on the impact of the Lafarge plant on the region which was telecast on 6th January 2009.

³ Extracted from the memorandums submitted to the National Environment Appellate Authority, the State Government Himachal Pradesh through Jan Abhiyan Sanstha Himachal Pradesh and local residents from Shakrori Panchayat in Sunni tehsil and Thali, Shakra, Bagshyad, Balindi and Bindia Panchayats in Mandi district

⁴ Based on survey and research carried in village Shakrori by Jan Abhiyan Sanstha (JAS)

Appeals were filed under section 11(1) of the National Environment Appellate Authority Act (NEAA) 1997 by Pratap Singh Thakur of Panchayat Bagshar vide appeal No. 34 of 2009 and by Reva Singh from Panchayat Bagshar and Harinder Verma from Panchayat Shakrori vide appeal No. 35 of 2009 against order no. J-11011/24/2007- IA II (I) dated 8th June 2009 of Respondent-I i.e. Ministry of Environment and Forests (MoEF) conveying “Environmental Clearance” (EC) for setting up of Integrated Cement Plant at Village DPF Ghanger and Captive Limestone Mine at village Alsindi, tehsil Karsog, Mandi district by M/s Lafarge India Private Limited, with a prayer to quash the Environmental Clearance (EC). The appeals were heard by J.C. Kala, Member, National Environment Appellate Authority New Delhi on 13 the May 2010. The Authority inspected both Mining and Plant sites on 22-24th June 2010 and held discussions with people of the area. In its 30th August 2010 judgment the NEAA taking into consideration all the relevant aspects stated in its report that it is convinced that on environmental and social considerations it is neither desirable to mine the Telehan village nor to put up the cement plant at Ghanger. Accordingly the Environmental Clearance for setting up of Integrated Cement Plant was quashed.

A memorandum drafted by JAS representatives on behalf of communities submitted to the Member Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Forests, Expert Advisory Committee (Mining Projects), New Delhi

We submit this memorandum as representatives of communities who are going to be affected by the setting up of Lafarge India Private Limited cement plant of 3.0 MTPA capacity at DPF Ghanger village, Karsog tehsil Mandi district of Himachal Pradesh. The proposed region is just across a bridge on the Satluj from Sunni. Atleast 120 villages in Karsog tehsil of Mandi and 30 villages in Sunni tehsil in Shimla will be directly affected by the Project. The area selected is very densely populated and is also significantly forested. A number of District Protected Forest's come in the area including DPF Ghanghar, DPF Shil, DPF Alyas, DPF Kandha, DPF Bakaran, DPF Thaltu, DPF Mandap, DPF Talehan. All the demarcated protected forests and other areas are rich in medicinal plants. There are vast stretches of *shisham* and *khair* trees, both medicinal species which will be felled for the project. Also the river Satluj in the vicinity of the project area will be polluted causing intense damage to the vegetation of the entire area.

There are also vast stretches of private *ghasni* and some common grasslands from where 100% of the fodder for livestock comes. A majority of these are likely to be acquired by the project. As if this is not enough the proposed transport route is in the midst of the most agriculturally fertile villages. This will cause intense pollution by trucks and other vehicles. There are atleast 30 springs in and around the plant site which will go dry as a result of the project.

Except the villages within the shaded mine site (as shown in the map in the EIA) where fertile lands and water is scarce, the entire area not only around the project site but upto Durgapur in the Shimla side and almost the entire Karsog block will be adversely affected by the Lafarge project. Therefore Lafarge's contention that how are people in Sunni and Shimla concerned is wrong. More than 20 *Panchayats* will be directly impacted negatively by the project. Agriculture is the mainstay of 80% of the people in the area.

The Environmental Impact assessment report prepared by the Lafarge group claims to have taken samples from within a 10 km radius of the study area further asserts that the soil quality in the region is low, a claim well refuted by the concern the Department of Agriculture has shown in the area for various extension activities. We refute the claim by Lafarge that the area is poor in infrastructure in terms of education, health, drinking water facilities etc. - a claim which has no merit as Sunni has good schooling facilities upto higher secondary, where after most of the better off agriculturalists and business people are sending their children to Shimla or Chandigarh for further studies.

Mining and associated activities generate dust, fly ash and other particulate matters resulting in loss of soil and water quality and leading to land degradation. Mining operations such as the operations involved in a cement factory have adverse affects on the micro flora and fauna of the region, leading to rapid extinction of most varieties. The village Shakrori will be extremely adversely affected as its fertile lands will be rendered unfertile, the rich local culture including the traditional cuisine based on agriculture, the rich folk lore and folk music will all be lost. Also diversity in terms of cropping patterns, flora and fauna and the ethnic diversity (Rajputs, Brahmins and Lohars are the main occupants of Shakrori) which is the very essence of peaceful co-existence will be lost.

Agriculture is the mainstay of all the communities in the village and plants and trees have a special significance, ecological, cultural, religious and medicinal in the lives of the people. A hydro electric project in its vicinity (Kohl Dam) is changing the character of Sunni and Shakrori, further the cement factory will have a very direct impact on Shakrori polluting the river Satluj and leading to the drying of the water sources. As per the government of India policy mining operations are not allowed where they may lead to the drying of springs.

A public hearing was organized by the State Pollution Control Board and the Department of Forests, Himachal Pradesh on 4th December 2008, where many of us had to agitate first and refuse to have the public hearing under Lafarge banner. We (the opposition) finally managed to speak our case after the Lafarge banners were removed. However, the issues raised by us in the Public Hearing have not been reflected in the minutes of the Public Hearing.

Before the public hearing various representations were sent to the Chief Justice, Himachal Pradesh, the Secretary Pollution Control Board, the Secretary, MoEF, the District Commissioners, Shimla and Mandi, the Chief Minister, Himachal Pradesh with signature campaigns and Panchayat resolution copies.

We once again reiterate that this activity will have devastating environmental, social and health impacts. We hope that the Expert Committee will look into our concerns and take an appropriate decision in the matter. We place our demand before the EAC that activities like Cement plant and limestone mining are detrimental to the Himalayan Environment and people and should not be set up in ecologically sensitive areas like ours

Report of activities initiated under the FORCES programme in Himachal Pradesh

FORCES is a national network with twelve state partners working on the issues of early childhood care and development (ECCD) focusing on children under six. Currently the secretariat is with the Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS) New Delhi. National Forces had initiated expansion of network in H.P. through collaboration with Jan Abhiyan Sanstha. The FORCES programme was initiated in Himachal Pradesh with a workshop. The Workshop was organized on the Status of the Young Child in Himachal Pradesh (under six age group) by JAS (Jan Abhiyan Sanstha), Himachal Pradesh and National FORCES (Forum for Crèche and Child care Services), New Delhi at the Agricultural Co-operative State Training Institute (ACSTI) at Shangti near Shimla on the 22nd of June 2008. Those present at the workshop included Vasanthi Raman, Savitri Ray, Indrani Mazumder and Awadhesh from National FORCES, Richa and Sonia Khan from Jan Abhiyan Sanstha, Lalita Rana and Tulsi Ram from other NGO's in Himachal Pradesh, Panchayat and Mahila Mandal members, *Anganwari* workers and ANMs.

It emerged from the workshop that female foeticide was an issue of grave concern in Himachal and the state should consider its problems in an absolute context rather than always comparing it to other northern states in India and calling it favourable relatively. Decreasing trend is observed not only in the overall child sex-ratio but also in the rural/urban differentials in the state. In 1971, census district Chamba and Kinnaur were the two districts where both the total as well as the rural juvenile population sex-ratio was more than 1000. In district Chamba, even in the urban areas the female to male ratio in the 0-4 age group was 1000, during 1971. After 1971 not even a single census, and district has shown the sex-ratio in favour of females. The intent of the Pre Natal Determination Test Act is to prevent the misuse of foetal sex determination, but instead of focussing on the agency that conducts the test, the focus is on foeticide itself. In Himachal the need is not only to sensitize couples but also on ensuring that licences of clinics and doctors against who complaints are registered for conducting sex determination tests are taken away and not restored. The overall sex ratio in districts like Kinnaur and Shimla are low revealing that Himachal can not throw all blame on adjoining states like Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. Folk songs still sung widely in different parts of Himachal convey that the situation of women is not as good as it seems specially if one sees it in an absolute and not a relative context. Also [Indiastats.com](http://indiastats.com) shows that the growth rate of violence against women is on a rise.

Also certain imbalances exist in the state in that the budget allocation for the child is a small fraction of the total budget. Most of the expenditure on the child was on the 6-14 age group and the main component for the allocation was education, followed by child development, child health and child protection. Considering the crucial importance of the initial years and the significance of child protection it is important that certain recommendations be made for proper provision and allocation of budget for the child in the state. ICDS being the only integrated government programme for the children in the under six age group, the Himachal Pradesh government has plans to universalise it. With the opening of all the proposed Anganwari Centres the total strength of the Centres would go upto 18,594 in the State. However the state lacks the necessary infrastructure in terms of structures and training facilities for anganwari workers and due consideration should be given to this fact. It also emerged during discussions that only Mandi and Chamba were included from Himachal for survey of

Anganwari centres for compiling the FOCUS report. The study had revealed that caste based problems existed in Mandi and Solan and underweight children were found in significant numbers in Chamba. There was hence a need to conduct survey in other districts of the state.

It was also discussed that displacement was on a rise in Himachal with government policy preferring industry and the potential for hydro power projects and cement factories being exploited much. Displacement has adverse effects on children's upbringing as it results in loss of flourishing agriculture based sub-cultures and livelihoods. Also there is a need to strengthen facilities and develop positive community attitudes for mentally challenged children in Himachal Pradesh so that more parents are encouraged to bring forth their children to get them assessed for abnormalities. Facts such as that there were work pressures and unfilled posts of supervisors in the ICDS department in the state, there were few incentives for CDPOs as promotions did not come up for them easily, the anganwari workers were paid very less compared to the job responsibilities that they had were raised and discussed.

In the end there was consensus that we will not advocate public-private partnership in improving infrastructure for ICDS as in that we will be getting the World Bank and other agencies to push their development agenda which is not in favour of the communities at the grass root level and that we should insist that effective implementation of the ICDS is the government's responsibility.

Shakrori Meeting: November 2008

A FORCES Meeting was organized by JAS on the 10th of November at the Anganwari centre in village Shakrori in Sunni tehsil in Shimla district. Vasanthi Raman, Programme Director FORCES presided over the meeting. Richa, Promilla and Nagnu Devi from JAS, Monika from Himachal Gyan Vikas Samiti, three Anganwari workers and two helpers were present at the meeting.

The background and objectives of FORCES and the need to expand the network to Himachal Pradesh was highlighted. It emerged that there were various issues in Himachal which demanded immediate interventions such as the declining sex ratio and displacement due to development projects. Both issues concerned children as the juvenile sex ratio was falling at an alarming rate and the rural-urban differentials were very low in Himachal Pradesh. Also displacement is affecting children's growth as it is forcing them to adjust to changed food patterns, cultures etc. The status of Anganwari workers was expressed as a matter of concern at the meeting. They were selected from families which had income less than Rs. 3000 a year, also there is a condition that no member in the household has to be in a government job at the time of her selection. She is paid Rs. 1200 a month, which is obviously not enough to sustain a household.

The participants expressed relief that the ordinance regarding transferring Asha's tasks on to Anganwari workers was being withdrawn and said that new Ashas should be selected. Anganwari workers said that there was no problem in getting the food supplies for the centres but there was a lot of work as they had to provide pre-school education and after 1 o' clock go checking on the health of mothers of the children

who came to the Anganwari centres as also other mothers. They said that they didn't have proper apparatus for measuring infants although it had to be done on a regular basis at the Anganwari centres.

The Pradhan of the Panchayat Shakrori said that the task of supervision of work under NREGA was on her and it was being carried out effectively in the five wards of her Panchayat. The people were so happy with the work and wages and the other facilities they were getting under NREGA that agriculturalists were not finding labour for their fields. Activities under NREGA started in the Panchayat in May 2008, one phase of the Kuhl (water channel) had been constructed and metalling of a road was underway. In the year 2009, levelling of fields/land improvement of the fields of the scheduled caste households as also tank construction was to be undertaken; this was under a guideline from the District Commissioner's office and was not because the scheduled caste families were not well-off. Also it was discussed that the females were getting better assessment under NREGA. Some women however said that overall women were still not getting their due as they had to perform numerous tasks including taking care of livestock, fields and home apart from rendering labour. The discussion carried on for some time on the situation of women in Himachal and the issues that FORCES could raise for generating awareness, also it was expressed by a participant that in China women were being given work points for their household tasks and their work was assessed in the economic assessment of GDP, something there was a need to stress should be done in India.

Meetings held between February 2009 and June 2009

The idea was to cover as many parts of Himachal as possible and to have meetings with Anganwari workers, CDPOs', Panchayat representatives, mothers, Primary health centre and community health centre workers and community at large. Although the general belief is that the ICDS programme has been working suitably in Himachal there are various problems such as remoteness which prevents some children from being included as also the supplies from reaching in time; very few of the Anganwari workers have received a training; the increase in number of Anganwari centres has been adopted in policy but is an uphill task with no suitable infrastructure or manpower; special efforts are required for migrant and disabled children in the state. The juvenile sex ratio is falling at an alarming rate and the rural-urban differentials in sex ratio are very low in Himachal Pradesh. Also displacement is affecting children's growth as it is forcing them to adjust to changed food patterns, cultures etc.

Meetings with anganwari workers, pregnant and lactating mothers, community and elected representatives were conducted as well as meetings with supervisors, CDPOs, and other officials.

Activity Sheet

	Activities details	Number of meetings/workshops/field visits held	Output/result
1.	Meeting in revenue village Pangi, Kinnaur district with <i>Anganwari</i> workers (February 2009)	1	The <i>Anganwari</i> workers complained that as the village had a remote location, supplies for the <i>anganwari</i> centres were not sent upto the village and had to be lifted from the district headquarters
2.	Meeting in Deothi (March 2009)	1	Low salaries are a problem
3.	Meetings in Shimla urban (April 2009)	5	
4.	Meeting held with <i>Anganwari</i> supervisor and CDPO, Sunni tehsil headquarters, Shimla district (May 2009)	1	The CDPO and supervisor stressed that a number of private schools were cropping up in the area and people were led by promises regarding their children's future. A significant number of 3-6 year age group were being sent to these schools.
5.	Meeting with <i>Anganwari</i> workers and <i>Mahila Mandal</i> members in village Shakrori, Shimla district (May 2009)	1	The <i>Anganwari</i> workers complained that there was too much work and too little pay. They said that services in <i>anganwari</i> centre were good because there was very good co-operation from the <i>Mahila Mandal</i> and the <i>Panchayat</i> . The <i>Anganwari</i> workers didn't say much for the other senior ICDS representatives.
6.	Field visits in village Chaba and village Gharyana, Jevry, Shimla district (May 2009)		The <i>Anganwari</i> workers in village Chaba said that they didn't have proper infrastructure for their centre and those in Gharyana complained that there was a lot of problem for getting leave from work even if there were pressing circumstances. In Jevry there were problems related to children going to private

			schools and different nutrition has to be organised for 0-3 and 3-6 age group
7.	Field visits in Tattapani, Mandi district (May 2009)		Discussions with <i>Anganwari</i> workers and young mothers
8.	Meeting with CDPO, other ICDS staff members and <i>Anganwari</i> workers in Karsog, Mandi district (May 2009)	1	The <i>Anganwari</i> workers got a good opportunity to share and discuss their problems and concerns with the ICDS representatives
9.	Field visits in Thali, Karsog block, Mandi district (May 2009)		Discussions with <i>Anganwari</i> workers and young mothers
10.	Meeting in Basantpur (June 2009)	1	Problems regarding organising data
11.	Meeting in Kandaghat, Solan district with <i>Anganwari</i> workers and other ladies (June 2009)	1	The <i>anganwari</i> workers complained of too many work related pressures
12.	Meeting in Baror (June 2009)	1	Problems related to utensils and furniture

It emerged from the meeting with *Anganwari* workers in Pangi, Kinnaur that remoteness was a problem and even though the children came, the major problem was lifting supplies to the village as government did not pay the rates that porters demanded and mostly the *anganwari* workers had to arrange to lift the rations themselves from the district and block headquarters. Some of the workers who came for the meeting had already received training where as almost half were still awaiting a formal training. There are five *anganwari* centres in Pangi revenue village, one each in Khonta, Rantendan, Then Pangi, Ragben, and Pangi main and there are four Primary Schools including one each in Lower Pangi, Khonta, Then Pangi, and Pangi Khas.

The *anganwari* workers expressed some concerns against the Kashang I Hydro-electric project which had resulted and was further resulting in people losing their lands. While earlier buckwheat including opla and phafra were cultivated to a large extent, the main crops cultivated now are *rajmah* and apple, there by reflecting the trend towards commercialization of agriculture and a reduction in crop diversity. A few families have also suffered loss of *chilgoza* and *chuli* trees, with one particular family having lost a whole jungle of both *chilgoza* and *chuli* to the Kashang I HEP. Cropping patterns in the village have changed drastically. Earlier while there was mono-cropping in the Kanda areas (where land has been acquired by the project for construction of dam) all of barley, buckwheat and local varieties of *Rajmah* were being cultivated. However now there is hardly any cultivation there. The average family size in the area is 5.3. Most of the people are dependent on agriculture and

only a very few are in private or government jobs. While a significant proportion of the elderly are illiterate, the new generation is receiving education and some of them have been sent to Shimla and Solan and other parts of Himachal to live with relatives and study. The female to male ratio is 0.93:1. The traditional livelihood bases will be disrupted with the coming of the project and the women and the children are the most vulnerable groups.

In the meetings held at Sunni and Shakrori, Anganwari workers said that there was no problem in getting the food supplies for the centres but there was a lot of work as they had to provide pre-school education and after 1 o' clock go checking on the health of mothers of the children who came to the Anganwari centres as also other mothers. They said that they didn't have proper apparatus for measuring infants although it had to be done on a regular basis at the Anganwari centres. The Anganwari workers and the Panchayat and Zila Parishad representatives expressed concern that with the coming up of the Kohl dam and the Lafarge and Dalmia cement plants in the vicinity, the entire character of Sunni and Karsog will change. A lot of contentment was expressed by Panchayat representatives and community members regarding the working of NREGA.

The Child Development Project Officer, supervisors and Anganwari workers of the ICDS programme for Sunni tehsil, Basantpur block participated in the meeting. The CDPO revealed that the ICDS programme in seven sub blocks was being conducted under her supervision including Sunni, Basantpur, Jalog, Thaila, Mandari, Madhorghat and Naldehra. The programme covered beneficiaries as shown in the table below:

Sl. No.	ICDS Block	Pregnant women	Lactating mothers	Children			Adolescent girls	Handicapped children
				0-1	1-3	3-6		
1	Sunni	60	54	49	160	124	39	0
2	Basantpur	44	42	40	133	142	44	0
3	Jalog	40	66	60	176	236	40	4
4	Thaila	46	47	47	138	163	36	2
5	Mandari	27	37	33	156	142	37	2
6	Madhorghat	33	45	46	166	137	34	1
7	Naldehra	109	75	73	262	284	88	3

The CDPO and supervisor stressed that a number of private schools were cropping up in the area and people were led by promises regarding their children's future. A significant number of 3-6 year age group were being sent to these schools. Proper supervision and meal facilities should be initiated in these schools according to the CDPO. Also some participants emphasised that there was no provision for the children of migrant labour in the Anganwari centres and the provisions need to be extended to them.

In the field visits and meetings with Anganwari workers and helpers at Thali they stressed that they didn't have a room to run the anganwari centre and it was this problem that was forcing parents to send their children to private schools instead. In the meeting at Karsog with Anganwari workers and young mothers it was brought out that as many as 24 camps were organized during 2008-2009 for generating awareness

regarding reproductive child health. The Anganwari workers at Kandaghat expressed satisfaction with the ICDS programme but insisted that their salary was too little. Field visits in Basantpur revealed that there were technical problems with the ICDS programme as although they are asked to maintain data for the 0-6 years age group, the age for entering primary school for children was five years and this overlap resulted in a lot of problems. Field visits in Tattapani, Chaba, Gharyana, Jevry, Jashi were conducted and although all the anganwari workers expressed low salaries as their main problem, the other problems were cited as having to feed the 0-3 age group on one feed and the 3 to 6 age group on another, also they complained that often the cylinders had to be organized by the community and the anganwari workers.

Field visits and meetings in Mashobra and Deothi brought out that most of the Anganwari workers were still awaiting their training and were unhappy about their low salaries. Surveys in different Anganwari centres in Shimla urban brought out that the attendance was relatively lower in urban areas as in the rural areas.

Lessons Learnt

The important lessons learnt over the last one year are that the initiation of the FORCES programme in Himachal Pradesh can lead to suitable implications for policy and workshops and meetings which lead to interactions between anganwari workers, other ICDS representatives and young mothers can also be very useful for improving the overall functioning of the programme in the state. There are a number of shortcomings in the state with the implementation of ICDS and efforts have to be made to improve the programme. Also often while talking about the falling female to male ratio, it is the convinced talking to the convinced, more committed efforts are needed to improve the situation in the state.

Further Work Proposed

In the next year we are interested in holding meetings in the tribal and remote parts of Himachal Pradesh including one more trip and a meeting with officials and Anganwari workers in Kinnaur, one trip including survey and meeting in Chamba, one including survey and meeting in Lahaul and another including survey and meeting in Spiti. Also the interaction and advocacy initiated in the non tribal districts of Shimla and Mandi needs to be continued in the next year. Among non-tribal districts activities need to be initiated in Solan.