

# Rejuvenate India Movement (RIM) – Madhya Pradesh

**Site:** Chattarpur, Madhya Pradesh

**Years supported:** 5

**2018 Funding:** \$39,000

**Scope:** Improving rural child nutrition, education, health care and strengthening local self-governance **Coordinator:** Om Prakash Tiwari **Tele:** 9425768375 **Email:** optiwari.dev@gmail.com

## BACKGROUND

Severely malnourished children are a national disgrace in India with almost 5.7 million in Madhya Pradesh (MP) alone. In 1975 the Government of India initiated a highly ambitious nationwide service **ICDS** (Integrated Child Development Service) to improve the health and nutrition status of children, pregnant and nursing women. Food was to be supplied to the children through preschools called **Anganwadis (AWCs)** that would have to be established - one **AWC** per 1000 of population. A Supreme Court review in 2004 – almost 30 years later – found kids' malnutrition continued to be alarming, the government had not sanctioned enough AWCs and those in existence were often non-operational. **Corruption and abuse were rampant.**

With IFA's support during 2013 – 2017 **Rejuvenate India Movement (RIM)** has been conducting a pilot effort that has grown to cover 30 villages in MP having 60 AWCs impacting over 5000 children. **RIM** initially recruited and trained 10 **Samaj Shilpis (SS)** from these villages with this number growing to 20 in 2017. The **SS** rely on volunteers or Gram Mitras (**GMs**) from each village to help facilitate, sustain and perpetuate **RIM's** effort. **As of 2017 a total of 228 GM volunteers were active**, by itself an impressive achievement! The Samaj Shilpis also have been mobilizing women who have started participating actively in community meetings, School Development Monitoring Committees and in Gram Sabhas.

The Samaj Shilpis guide the local communities in demanding their due share from the government and ensuring effective delivery of all government services and benefits:

- Anganwadis operational and providing hot, mid-day meals for the children.
- Properly functioning elementary schools. - Properly functioning Primary Health Care Centers.
- Weekly provisioning of food to pregnant/nursing women - Other available government benefits

## ACHIEVEMENTS

**Services: In villages where RIM has been active since inception** most of the government services and benefits are now being delivered reasonably well. In all other villages, Anganwadis are slowly responding to the constant monitoring. They are now open during the scheduled times. The strengthening of the Mothers School Development Committees is having a significant positive impact on children's attendance, preparation of their growth charts and the quality of the mid-day meals.

**Additionally in 2017 the Samaj Shilpis were instrumental in saving the life of 37 severely malnourished children.**

**Health and Sanitation: Urmila Chobe** - a highly active **SS** - achieved and has maintained for her village 100% households with a toilet and perhaps more importantly "open defecation free" status. **Additionally, during 2017 a total 522 toilets were constructed by the efforts of SS.** Several other **SS** working on making their villages "open defecation free."

**Jagdish Adivasi** - another highly active **SS** - achieved and has maintained a "totally liquor free status" for his Adivasi village.

## **MGNREGA** (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guaranty Act)

Samaj Shilpis have been promoting and creating awareness of **MGNREGA** and were able to get 326 people access to **MGNREGA** work generating roughly around 712 days of work. Self-Help Groups (**SHGs**) and Micro Enterprise: About 65 **SHGs** are directly nurtured by the Samaj Shilpis with another 12 new **SHGs** formed. More than 100 women have started microenterprise activities.

**Agriculture:** is the main source of livelihood. **SS** and **GMs** are helping to organize **Kisan Sabhas** in their villages to provide information to the farmers such as: seed selection, sowing, irrigation, organic farming, crop rotation, crop residue & organic manure. In 2017 about 220 farmers received seeds from the Agriculture Department and 250 farmers linked with crop insurance. **With Community effort 500 trees were planted on common land.**



Agriculture dept. officer with the Samaj Shilpi

## Panchayat

In 2015 with **SS** support 7 of the 15 women who contested the Panchayat election won. It was quite a remarkable feat. **SS** continue to build on that success and maintain pressure on the villagers to continue to attend and take an active part in Gram Sabhas.

**In 2017 as a result of the RIM program the 19 dedicated Samaj Shilpis successfully mobilized almost \$16 in direct benefits to the villagers per \$1 of IFA support!** Under their continued monitoring and dedicated support: - Anganwadis are functional including hot mid-day meals for all school children - Regular health checkups are operational including weekly rations for pregnant mothers - Women are empowered and more active participants in group discussions and in Gram Sabhas.



**IFA has approved RIM's budget request for \$39,000 for expansion of the project for 2018-2019** with the targeted villages increasing to 40 and the number of Samaj Shilpis increasing to 30. It expects to impact a minimum of 5000 households and directly affect about 8000 individuals. **A minimum of \$12 in benefits are expected to be mobilized in 2018 per \$1 of IFA support.**

**This is the final year of the demonstration of the RIM project in Madhya Pradesh.** An overall report for the 5 year project is a key deliverable. There will be ongoing emphasis on strengthening women's participation in Gram Sabhas and the hope that the Gram Panchayat itself will take on effective, future implementation of the **Integrated Child Development Service**. It is hoped that additional training of **SS** and Gram Mitras during 2018 may lead to a reasonable level of sustainability after the end of the program. **IFA** is also encouraging **RIM** to try and get more media attention for its successes to build pressure for change on the Gram Panchayats not only in the target villages but in villages all across Madhya Pradesh. ♦