

VIDEO STORY NCD VACCINATORS IN MAYURBHANJ, ODISHA, INDIA

JAYANTI'S STORY

Protecting Chickens against Newcastle Disease, One village at a time

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| COMMENTARY |
| Baripada in Odisha province of India is one of those sleepy small towns that is fast waking up to the prospects of a burgeoning nation. |
| But, the town is surrounded by vast stretches of drought-hit farm-lands. This exemplifies the development challenge India faces due to nature's vagaries. |
| Yet, the predominantly aboriginal farming and gathering community regularly wakes up to hopeful mornings, as livestock management takes a better shape. What was often economically subsidiary, has now taken a decisive central role. And much of this has been possible due to the large-scale vaccination of backyard chicken for Newcastle disease, or Ranikhet disease, as it is locally known. |
| Today, more than fifty thousand small-holder farming families in almost four hundred villages of Mayurbhanj, depend on the services of vaccinators. They are clearly the foot soldiers of this initiative, working in a local business eco-system that functions on sustained demand. This has happened as a result of an initiative by Bhodal Milk Producers Cooperative Society, or BMPCS, supported by non-profit Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines -GALVmed. |
| Thirty two year-old Jayanti Mahanto is one of the nearly hundred vaccinators or Community Animal Health Workers, who have made this possible. |
| SOUNDBITE OF JAYANTI MAHANTO, CAHW |
| <i>"I am earning almost 7000-8000 rupees (\$ 100-115) per month. With this income I am supporting my brother's studies, looking after my ailing father and also building a new house. Now, I get better respect from the villagers. I am very happy with my income."</i> |
| Jayanti's family mostly has depended on farming and fishing. But lately, farming has not been profitable. Hence, she took up vaccination as a trade, this has been her main source of earning. |
| However, it took some time for people to understand the need for vaccination. But once they understood, they have followed the routine properly. In this locality, livestock management is mostly done by women of the households. Being a woman, it was easier for her to convince them. |
| SOUNDBITE OF JAYANTI |
| <i>"People came to know about vaccination through a video show. But, most people did not believe in it. When the birds did not die in 2-3 vaccinated</i> |

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| <p><i>villages, they became inquisitive. They asked me about birds in my house and my village. I informed them about vaccination and then the practice increased. In my village alone the number of birds have increased from 60 to 1800 in one year eight months.”</i></p> |
| <p>But like most vaccinators working with poor small-scale farmers, Jayanti has to keep the records herself. It is her duty to remind people about vaccinations.</p> |
| <p>Jayanti serves about fifty families in 10 villages. Being a woman, she needs help from her brother to provide security when travelling in the evenings. In what might be termed as an improvisation, Jayanti has convinced her relative to store her vaccine in their refrigerator. This saves her a lot of travel time, as she does not have to visit local stores often.</p> |
| <p>Vaccinations are mostly done in evenings, when the chickens are back from scavenging. These vials of lower volumes and can withstand heat for longer, have been introduced in the local market to cater to small-scale farmers with GALVmed’ initiative. Each vial cost a vaccinator seventy rupees or about one US dollar. A farmer pays two rupees or about three cents for each vaccination. Hence, with each vial a vaccinator can earn a profit of about one hundred rupees, that is, about one and a half US dollars. As vaccination is done along with deworming, the income goes up by another fifty percent. Most farmers pay in cash. Jayanti does about 2000 vaccinations every month. The whole process of vaccination has created a win-win situation for vaccinators and small-scale farmers.</p> |
| <p>SOUNDBITE OF GOVARDHAN, CAHW</p> |
| <p><i>“Vaccination has helped solve the unemployment problem to a large extent. But, it has actually helped the villagers more than us. They now benefit from chickens being alive.”</i></p> |
| <p>In the ecosystem a strong role is played by the seven medicine shops in the district that sell the vaccine. They sense an increasing opportunity in the vaccine trade.</p> |
| <p>BMPCS in partnership with GALVmed has steered the project in 2014 after the success of an initial pilot.</p> |
| <p>DR. SHASHANKA PANIGRAHI, SUB-DIVISIONAL VETERINARY OFFICER</p> |
| <p><i>“I am totally optimistic that with help of GALVmed, we shall have a bright future in checking poultry mortality”</i></p> |
| <p>The whole value chain is sustained as Most households in the locality now own four to five times more chicken than they had two years ago. No wonder then that successful foot soldiers are not willing to leave the trade anytime soon.</p> |