



# Newcastle Disease Vaccine: Creating Sustainability through Commercial Delivery System

Making livestock vaccines and medicines easily accessible to smallholder farmers is a vital component of the value chain. If the vaccines are beyond reach, the farmers will not benefit and their livestock will suffer. In Mayurbhanj district of Odisha, India, local retail shops fill in the much needed gap by stocking and making readily available, essential livestock vaccines and medicines such as the Newcastle disease vaccine. Often, they are regular medicine shop owners, who are now finding that stocking vaccines such as ND vaccine is profitable. Furthermore, these retail shops have the required equipment such as storage to ensure the vaccines are not compromised.

Access to the vaccine and the build-up of new and more efficient commercial supply chains have been facilitated by the Bhodal Milk Producers Cooperative Society (BMPCS), a local NGO in partnership with non-profit, Global Alliance for Livestock Veterinary Medicines (GALVmed). In the initial days of the project, there were no retailers below the district level who kept and sold the ND vaccine; as a solution BMPCS tried to promote few vaccinators who could reach the remotest parts of the district.

Sanatan Soren 32, a vaccinator from Khanda Hari Village, Block Ras Gobindpur comes from a family of farmers. In 2011, BMPCS gave Sanatan and 4 other vaccinators from the nearby villages a small refrigerator to store vaccines.

This setup or “Vaccination Centre” was one of 8 centres that were established in order to streamline the distribution of vaccines in the region. Each vaccination centre would cater to 4-6 vaccinators, who would collectively pay the Rs 300 or US \$ 4 and 64 cents electricity bill for the refrigerator. However this approach soon ran into problems.

First came the problem of regular power supply. In the forested parts of Odisha, the period from December to February is locally known as Elephant season. During this period the government cuts off the day time electricity power supply in entire areas to prevent elephants being electrocuted. This meant that vaccines would expire even before they could be administered. What’s worse is that the Elephant season coincides with outbreaks of Newcastle Disease.

Another problem were licenses. The distribution of vaccines requires a license. The lack of license meant that the vaccination centres were technically illegal. This hampered any promotion of the operation and consequently the expansion of scheme as most vaccinators would never come to know of the centres. Also the entire income was dependent on the sale of a single vaccine and de-wormer unlike the medicine shops where a range of products are sold and small profits from the sale of each product are enough to meet the operational costs.

In 2012, BMPCS started to partner with local chemists to stock the ND vaccine. The chemists sold the vaccines at affordable prices to farmers and the results were incredible.

Trilochan Dhal, 48, runs the Jai Guru Dev Medical Store in Kosta, Suryapada a few kilometers away from the district headquarters of Baripada. He has been selling the vaccine for a few years now. He buys each vial at Indian Rupees 18 (30 US cents) and sells them at Indian Rupees 22 (35 US cents). He sells about 500 vials a month, earning a net profit of about Indian Rupees 2,000 (US \$32). It's a modest amount but it contributes to offsetting some of his monthly expenditures.

Initially Trilochan served only a few vaccinators, but as word spread his customers increased in number. Today he caters to some 40-50 vaccinators from the neighbouring villages and occasionally a few farmers. "I see the demand increasing further in the times to come," he beams when asked about the prospects.

Piyush Mishra, the Program Manager for BMPCS states "The regular awareness programmes helped in growing the demand while lower cost of the vaccine and easy availability further boosted sales".

This approach has yielded positive results. In Mayurbhanj, the number of retailers of the ND vaccine has gone up from six in 2012 to twenty seven in 2017. The total dosage of vaccines sales has also gone up from about 50,000 in the same period to between 250,000 to 300,000 currently.

Building sustainable vaccine retail chains has been a vital part of providing farmers with much needed services. The market continues to grow as retail shops earn profits from the sales. Many of the retailers also double as vaccinators. This points to a healthy demand for the ND vaccine and a sustained marketplace.



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