

# देहात हाई जिंदे के (CHJK)

A Comprehensive Feminist Approach to Arresting Adverse Sex Ratio



**act:onaid**

## Background

Dhaultpur District of Rajasthan and Morena district of Madhya Pradesh lie on the border of these two states. This area is the Chambal ravine area once known as a hub of dacoits. The region is inhabited by the Thakurs (Gurjars and Rajput) who are known to be fiercely patriarchal and consider women to be the main

**Numerous girl children are killed before birth. According to Census 2011 there are only 914 girls for 1000 boys in India.**

keepers of honour. This resulted in the confinement of women within their household. A woman's value in such families is also associated to the number of male children they give birth to, as sons are supposed to be the carriers of the family name. Deep rooted patriarchy and hegemony embedded in the mindset of the region has manifested in the prevalent gender-based discrimination, domestic violence and more importantly the issue of declining sex ratio in these regions of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

In the year 2001-02, Prayatn - A Rights-Based Organization working on girls' education observed the prevalence of an alarming trend of declining sex ratio and gender based discrimination that was raised the community itself. In order to understand it better, they conducted a situational analysis on the issues of domestic violence and declining sex-ratio. This threw light on the poor educational status of the girl child and various expressions of violence against women. The underlying reasons were traced to the patriarchal mind set in the society such as fear of losing control on power, lack of participation of women in any of the decision making process, insensitivity among the male counterpart at all levels including administrative structures, deep rooted social evils like dowry, alcoholic spouses, indulgence in gambling etc. The health of a woman or girl-child was seldom given importance. It was observed that if any woman would give birth to a daughter then not only was the new-born killed but the mother was also subjected to further psychological and emotional trauma and distress.

During the study it was also seen that ultrasonography machines have been extensively used in the villages to determine the sex of the child. The desire to have more male children was actualised with the rampant sex-determination and sex selective abortion. The criminal act of sex selective abortion was carried out with impunity by both the doctor as well as the family involved in the act.



Based on the situational analysis conducted by the Prayatn, a project named "CHAHAT HAI JINE KI" (Will to Live) was conceptualized and launched in partnership with ActionAid in 2003 which is continuing.

Vision of the Project: The vision of the project is realization of a violence free society in which women and men enjoy equal rights and opportunities.

**Mission: Improvement in the sex ratio by bringing an end to the violence and injustice faced by women and girl children.**

## Strategies Guiding the Project

Understanding the volume and severity of the issue, the project was launched with multi-pronged strategies. At one level the focus was on making sure that policy makers and implementers develop sensitivity towards the issue and on strengthening the administrative will to ensure effective implementation of the Acts and laws related to women and girls. Secondly the emphasis was given to the support role holders like medical fraternity, police, judiciary, media, Panchayati Raj Institutions, Caste and community leaders to develop awareness and sensitivity towards the issue. And finally a very high importance was given to the community to develop community level systems and mechanism to combat gender based discrimination and declining sex ratio. With this understanding, advocacy, networking, alliance building and pressure building was done at the policy level, awareness generation and sensitization was done with the support role holders while the latter was coupled with capacity building at the community level.

## Project Working Approach:

CHJK believes that declining sex ratio is a symptom of the inferior status accorded to women at all stages of life. In her life cycle a woman faces discrimination, violence and violation of rights at all stages starting from before birth till old age. The life cycle approach aims to reduce the vulnerabilities of women at all stages as presented below:

**1<sup>st</sup> Stage: Pre birth** – In this stage the extreme form of violence takes place in form of Sex selection tests and girl foetus abortions.



**2<sup>nd</sup> Stage: Childhood (1 day – 9 years)**- In many regions it has been observed that the girl child is being killed by neglecting its health or by not providing proper health services. Discrimination in household nutrition distribution; denial of proper health care and education to girls are also widely prevalent. This has been identified as one of the reasons for the increase in cases of deaths of girls due to lack of basic health services.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Stage: Adolescents (10-18 years)** – This age group faces early marriage, are deprived of educational opportunities, drop out from schools, face domestic violence and sexual harassment within the house and in the community.

**4<sup>th</sup> Stage: Adult women (19 – 50 years)** - Denial of property / inheritance/ land rights; dowry harassment, domestic violence, pressure for sex selective abortions.

**5<sup>th</sup> Stage: Elderly women (50 years and above)** - Denial of property / inheritance/ land rights; financial scarcity, domestic violence and atrocities.

## Operational Strategies of Project:



After analysing the various efforts of the past in different parts of the country and also the rampant introduction of new technologies for sex determination and sex selective abortion, we decided to develop operational strategies using various instruments for change. The broad implementation strategies are as follows:

- i. **Organizing Women, Men, Girls & Boys:** It has been realized that unless there is a change in the attitude and behaviour of the community it is very difficult to stop the process of gender based discrimination and sex selective abortion. We understand that the decision of going for sex selective abortion is not taken in a day, rather it is a result of years of patriarchal conditioning which leads to it. With this understanding it has been realized that there is a need to organize each and every sub group with very clear and specialized intervention with them. In this regard capacity building efforts have been carried out with women and girls and sensitization and attitude and behaviour change efforts have been targeted towards men and boys.
- ii. **Networking and Alliance building:** The issue of declining sex ratio and female foeticide is widespread both in rural and urban areas. In order to continue the battle on the issue and to create pressure to put a halt on the entire process for necessary policy decision it is very important to have network strength. In this regard the Jago Sakhi Sangathan (Awakening Girls' Friendship Association) network has been formed in addition to allying with other groups who are working on similar lines.
- iii. **Government Collaboration and Advocacy:** In the process of sex selective abortion and gender based violence against women Government is the most important stakeholder especially for effective implementation of the laws related to rights of women. In India there are numerous laws prevailing to safeguard the rights of women and girls but due to poor implementation of these laws, rights of women and girls are denied. In order to ensure effective implementation of these laws necessary collaboration and advocacy efforts has been done with the government. In both the state advocacy efforts has been done for necessary policy implementation.
- iv. **Influencing the Medical Fraternity:** Medical fraternity in general is a negative force which affects our efforts to arrest the trend of adverse sex ratio. In the two states (Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh) approximately 2500 ultrasound clinics are serving a population of around 10 Crore. Though all doctors are not involved in sex selective abortion and female foeticide many are. In this regard it has been felt that there is a need to sensitize the medical fraternity with the help of the doctors who are not conducting sex selective abortion and willing to support our project.
- v. **Using Legal Instruments:** In India there are various laws to safeguard the rights of women and girls. In most of the cases due to lack of proper information women suffer, hence information on various laws related to women has been disseminated to them through various means. Apart from this Public Interest Litigation has also been utilized for effective implementation of Pre- Conception & Pre- Natal. Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994 (PCPNDT Act) in the states.



- vi. **Media Advocacy:** Media has the largest reach among the people. Media advocacy has been used to disseminate messages on gender based discrimination and female foeticide to the community and a larger audience. In this process sensitization of the media persons was also given importance.
- vii. **Research and Documentation:** Female foeticide and declining sex ratio is a complex issue which has many underlying causes and effects. Apart from this the scenario is also changing every day, which demands constant research and documentation to learn and share the learning with the larger world.

## Stakeholder wise strategic focus:

- **Women:** The whole focus of the project while working with women is towards increasing their capacities and understanding on various forms of discrimination and deprivation by organising them, providing them information and trainings on various related issues and subjects. Apart from this another focus is to increase women's access to entitlement based services so as to create importance in family/ society.
- **Men:** The initiative has focused on developing sensitivity among men towards women's issues through training and dialogue on issues like Gender, masculinity and property rights of women.
- **Adolescent Girls:** The focus of the project with adolescent girls has been to develop their understanding on various forms of gender based discrimination in the family and society, ability to identify it and deal with it. Preparing them to combat discrimination and violence and abuse through life skill development and self defence trainings were part of it.
- **Young Boys:** This is again another group who are promoters and actors in cases of violence and abuse against girls especially eve teasing and harassment. The project is working with this group to develop sensitivity towards women's and girls' issues through training and dialogue on Gender and Masculinity.
- **Children:** Generally the process of gender based discrimination takes place behind closed walls which is generally not visible to anybody. In order to make such discrimination public the project focused working with children through Bal Manch to make children understand the gender based behaviour in the society and in the family and expose the discrimination within the homes. The minor acts of gender based discrimination like when a son is given preference over the daughter for being sent to school, or given more food etc are dealt with.
- **Caste and Community leader:** In the Indian society the caste and community leaders maintains a very important position. General public respect their opinion and views and accept what they say. In many communities there are examples when a community collectively has taken a decision against social evils like child marriage, child labour, dowry, alcohol consumption, wherein these decisions are still followed after twenty years of development. The project is working with this group to develop their sensitivity and facilitate community decisions on the issue.
- **Panchayat Members:** Panchayats have been made responsible for many village based programmes and schemes. In order to increase the stake of women in the family as well as to promote participation in decision making, the project intervened with the panchayats to develop sensitivity to facilitate smooth implementation of schemes and programmes related to women and girls.
- **Administration:** If implementation of the PCPNDT Act is done effectively in all districts of the state , half the problem can be solved. The project has intervened with administration to pressurise the

effective implementation of acts and laws related to women and girls with special focus on PCPNDT, Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act 1971 (MTP) and Protection of Women Against Domestic Violence Act 2005 (PWDVA).

- **Police and Judiciary:** The focus of intervention with Police and Judiciary has been to increase access of women to Police and reduce the fear factor. Apart from this the focus has also been to sensitize the Police and Judiciary to treat the cases of atrocities raised by women with objectivity rather than rejecting them due to preconceived notions.
- **Media:** Media has a very important role in spreading the issue to wider public and formulating opinion. It can only be done if the media is adequately sensitized towards the issue and also develop an understanding about the underlying causes. Hence the project engaged with the media to sensitize them towards the issue and provide them more information on it.

## Achievements of CHJK from 2003

### I. Rights Consciousness among people:

Apart from tangible benefits the project also created a rights consciousness among people especially among women and children towards laws and acts and their basic fundamental rights. In this period of project implementation people became aware on following legal provisions and rights:

- Right to survival and Life : PCPNDT Act 1994
- Dowry Act
- Equality & Dignity : Article 14, 15, 16, 39, 51
- Right Against Violence : ASH Act 1997/ CEDAW 1979
- Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929
- Right to Education Act
- Right to Health (& Nutrition/Food) and control over body
- Human Rights : UNDHR 1948 & CRC 1990
- Protection of women from Domestic Violence Act 2006
- Right to information Act and its application
- MGNAREGA – provisions and implementation.

People were also trained in raising their voices against injustice and violence, identifying cases and registering First Information Report (FIR) in police stations and in the provisions of various schemes and programmes of state and central government for women and children.

### II. Impact at Policy Level:

- In Madhya Pradesh 11 Clinics were raided with the help of the district administration.
- 4 clinics were seized and FIR was registered against one because it was functioning without registration.

- In Madhya Pradesh a PIL was launched in the year 2005 against the clinics and the district administration, which was expanded to 8 districts in operation and awarded for the whole Madhya Pradesh in the year 2009.
- In the year 2006 a study on “Status and effectiveness of PCPNDT Act implementation in Rajasthan” was conducted and findings were shared with state.
- In 2007 the state government of Rajasthan accepted the findings of the study report and based on the recommendations a separate structure was developed in the state for implementation of the PCPNDT Act in Rajasthan and State level PCPNDT Cell was formed and State Level PCPNDT Cell Coordinator was appointed (who is a lawyer by profession and one of the fellows under the fellowship programme of AAI-Prayatn). The state then extended it to the districts.
- CHJK Legal Expert is a member of the state level committee for monitoring of the clinics in the state.
- Implementation of demands of PIL in the state i.e filling of form – F, registration of clinics, renewal formalities, monitoring of clinics etc.
- 90% of the births are being registered in the project area.
- 14 Govt. Doctors have been suspended as a result of public campaign.
- During a state level meeting of the Rajput Community in Morena, Madhya Pradesh, the leaders along with 5000 people and youth were encouraged to take oath not to practice sex selective abortion, gender based violence and dowry in Rajput community.
- Complaints against 8 medical clinics have been launched during monitoring by the state level committee.
- Legal Expert, CHJK is member of National level committee to ensure effective implementation of PCPNDT Act across nation.
- The initiative has demonstrated models of convergence with government structures thereby establishing Women Resource Centre and Mahila Salah evam Suraksha Kendra at Dholpur district headquarter.
- Formation of district level forum involving judiciary, police, administration, civil society organisation, media etc. to take up issues of Women.

### **III. Impact at Community Level:**

#### **Qualitative:**

- Facilitated evolution of district level networks (Dholpur and Morena) of people on the issue of gender based discrimination which have been registered.
- Facilitated identification and development of local leadership in the form of cadres (45 women cadres).

- Facilitated development of community based systems and mechanisms to stop gender based discrimination and violence against women and girls.
- Mass campaigns to ensure education to all the girls.
- Mass campaigns to stop sex selective abortion, gender based violence, discrimination, ensuring right to food of women and girls.
- Ensure implementation of schemes and programmes for women and girls through government - community interface and WRC.
- Efforts to remove fear of police from women through MSK and JSS members and cadres in MSK.
- Community monitoring of violence cases and collective action.
- Evolution of a people's organisation from village to district and inter district level, which has also been registered under societies registration act.
- Evolution of community based systems and mechanisms to stop sex selective abortion and gender based discrimination and violence.
- Caste/community based decisions to stop sex selective abortion, violence against women and dowry. (Rajput, Kushwaha, Gurjar and Meena).
- Community monitoring process to monitor the pressure for sex selective abortion process within the family.
- There is a significant increase in the number of adolescent girls attending schools and education.
- Community based systems and mechanisms to stop child marriage, use of alcohol, gambling, school monitoring.
- Significant reduction in sex selective abortion process and community watch groups are in place.
- Girls are getting equal opportunities for education at least up to secondary level.
- Significant reduction in the death rate among the girl children due to health issues.
- There is a significant reduction in the gender based discrimination. Issues are raised in Bal Manch (BM) meetings also.
- Significant decrease in the number of child marriages.
- Girls have started reporting, responding and confronting the eve teasing cases through self defence and collective approach.
- Girls have started discussing these issues within their forums and also with family members
- Girls are also going outside for higher education and also in the public arena locally.
- Significant reduction in the cases of domestic violence through community collective and community based decisions.



- There is a significant reduction in the cases of dowry death and dowry cases are being reported now.
- Access and control over resources like food, clothes and money have increased. (*Money earned by women from MNREGA is being used by them for their purpose only – 59 cases*)
- Now women are actively participating in the panchayat meetings and also serving as Panch, Ward Panch and Sarpanch.
- There is a significant increase in protest against violence and discrimination against women and girls due to close community monitoring and support mechanism.



### Quantitative:

- In the project target villages a total of 3285 cases of violence and abuse against women has been reported and addressed by the project with the help of JSS and Women Support Centre in Police Station.
- In 63 families the incidences of sex selective abortion was identified and prevented by the JSS members and project team members.
- 182 women have been linked with the government schemes for widow pension scheme.
- 12 cases of rape were raised in the community and taken to the police and fought till decision was taken.
- 6 cases of property right were raised and possession of land was given to women.
- 258 cases of child marriage have been stopped by the project with the help of the JSS and children's collective.
- 4612 children have been enrolled in the formal school out of which 3226 girls have been enrolled with the help of the JSS members and children's collective.
- In 114 villages the JSS members have facilitated improvement in the quality of midday meal through regular monitoring and supervision.
- 1253 women have been linked under the Janani Suraksha Yojana and got the benefit.
- 381 women have been benefited under the old age pension schemes.
- In 39 villages community based systems and mechanisms have been formed against alcohol consumption, gambling, child marriage, child abuse, gender based discrimination and sex selective abortion.

- In almost all the villages the JSS is regularly monitoring the quality of education by visiting the schools.
- In 153 JSS members are in school management committees.
- 168 girls are pursuing higher education due to motivation and support of the JSS members and project team.
- 129 drop out girls has been enrolled under the KGBVs in the project area.
- 2611 BPL cards have been sanctioned with the efforts of the project and team.
- In the implementation of MGNAREGA more than 10,000 people were registered for employment under the scheme through filling job cards
- In two districts (Jhalawar and Karouli) 3 social audit process were facilitated under the MGNREGA.
- The active members of the Adolescent girls' forums (AGG) who have received WENLIDO (basic self defence training), now have been recruited as constables in Police.

## **Evolution of Community based Systems and mechanisms:**

Prayatn put a major emphasis on the factors responsible for the direct and indirect violence on women and children and tried to promote development of community based systems and mechanisms involving women and girls as well as the broader community.

### **Jago Sakhi Sangathan**

The concept Jago Sakhi Sangathan worked as a magic wand attracting women from their respective communities to come together on a platform not only to discuss and resolve the problems within and outside the community but also to gain awareness about their rights which they had been unaware of until the launch of the project. The Jago Sakhi Sangathan members were furnished with training on diverse subjects like violence against women, social and legal rights and duties, gender-sensitization, and their role in the panchayat etc. This generated better understanding and awareness among the members. They were now to a great extent empowered and their leadership qualities nurtured. These changes in their attitude and knowledge led to their being accepted at the Gram Sabha, Panchayat meetings. The Jago Sakhi Sangathan were equipped to approach the government and the administration at block, district and state level and so did they as and when required.

### **Mechanism for the dissemination of information developed at the community level:**

Women in the village community started working full-time on issues of gender-based discrimination, violence against women and sex-selection through the platform of Jago Sakhi Sangathan. Women in the village also started coming out of their houses and keeping the problems they faced before the JSS meetings. The JSS members would go and meet the family members, impart information, advice and counsel them and subsequently resolve the problem.

For the effective implementation of the PCPNDT Act, the JSS built a mechanism in the form of pressure groups that are vigilant about what happens in the community, especially regarding health of the women.

Accordingly, JSS members conduct sessions for the newly married couples in the village against the evils of sex selection and female feticide, guiding and counselling them in the process. The women who are expecting are asked to get themselves registered at the Anganwadi and avail the services provided by the Anganwadi. Sometimes the women may face certain barriers to access to the Anganwadi, during which the pressure groups working at the village level help the women to get themselves registered. And if such a woman is harassed by her in-laws or husband then the family too are counselled.

### **Mechanisms developed for Monitoring**

There are various Community Based organizations like the JSS, Adolescent Boys' Group, Adolescent Girls' Group and Bal Manch which have been formed. The members of each of the following groups work in coordination with each other on the various issues encountered at the village level.

JSS monitors the implementation of PCPNDT Act at the community, block and district level. If any case is brought to the notice of the community they immediately bring it to the notice of the Jago Sakhi Sangathan members and they meet the family to create pressure and provide support to the women. The doctors in both private and government sections are kept under pressure for effective implementation of the act. JSS members also keep record of all the women who are in their pregnancy. A birth record is also maintained. Thus, there are various mechanism created to foster growth and development and to curb any kind of social evil at the grass root level. The Community Based Organization has shown their prowess to tackle problems erupting due to lack of awareness and vested interests.

The Bal Manch keeps a watchful eye on the number of school going children and if any irregularity or a dropout is found they immediately enquire about the cause and counsels the child as well as the related parties at the Bal Manch meetings and help the child continue her/his education. The Bal Manch is also vigilant about the occurrence of child marriage. And if any such marriage is taking place, they act in order to stop it by counselling the girl child and the boy child and with the help of JSS approach the parents of the respective children to prevent the child marriage.

### **Prohibition of Alcohol:**

Alcoholism had been a topic of discussion since the formation of community based institutions (Jago Sakhi Sangathan, Adolescent girl's forums, Bal Manch) in the project area. This was reckoned as the biggest trouble in the village because it had its severe effect on the whole family. It increased manifold the incidents of wife beating, led to loss of money earned through hard toil, disturbed children, high drop outs in school and increase in child labour.

The JSS members discussed alcoholism and its causes and effects at their meetings. The effect on women and children, their well being, development, education came out clearly. In different meetings this was also deliberated upon with the children and their collective (Bal Manch). There were revelations which highlighted the emotional and psychological effects of alcoholism on tender minds. Cases of physical assault by the father under the influence of alcohol were recorded.

Various meetings on the subject were conducted which lead to introducing a penalty. The penalty was decided to be imposed on both sellers and consumers of alcohol in the villages. They agreed on an amount of Rs.2100 for sellers and Rs.1100 for consumers of alcohol. A prize money was also been allotted for informers of any kind of alcohol related activity in the village. Apart from this a social control method of boycott of people who indulged in these activities was also planned.

A committee was formed (involving JSS members) to regulate the implementation of this new norm. They were assigned the tasks of monitoring, meetings, imposing penalty and collection of money. It was decided to use the penalty collection as village development fund to be used for development activities of the village. Initially there was lot of opposition from the consumers and the dealers. Nevertheless, the village people, JSS members and Bal Manch stood together forcing them to step back. As a result there is considerable decrease in buying and selling of alcohol in the villages. This also is having a positive reflection on marital relations and improved status of women and children in the community.

### Prohibition of Gambling:

The people's initiative in many villages in Dholpur and Morena has been a breakthrough in putting a social check on the problem of gambling which was largely impacting women and children. Gambling in villages was a routine and widespread activity. Every evening the landless labourers, workers in the sandstone mines on their way back home would play cards and bet money. The place chosen for this activity was either under a tree or a common place or outside a shop in the village.

All the money earned through a day's toil in the mines was lost; even loans with high rate of interest was taken with a hope that someday a big fortune could be earned if luck favoured. This hypothetical anticipation gradually brought them to the brink of poverty, indebtedness, family violence and turmoil. Women and children bear the worst brunt and face physical and verbal abuse in the cases of loss of money due to gambling. The effect of such a family environment and parenting has a detrimental effect on the gentle psyche of children also.

Children especially girls were compelled to quit studies, and start working early. It was recorded that the children of workers either dropped out or absentees in the school. These children with an exposure to work environment in an early age were open to drinking, chewing tobacco and gambling. As a result, childhood is gone astray in money betting and playing cards. It is a vicious cycle resulting in poor quality and distressed intergenerational life situations.

Gambling as an evil in the villages was talked about in the village forums. An urgent need was felt to regulate this practice. To begin with, children engaged in gambling were identified by the JSS, Adolescent girls' forums and Bal Manch. In a meeting, organized oath was taken by the children that they would never involve in gambling again. It was also decided that parents would be informed of children who were still found to be indulging in gambling. PRAYATN also arranged for sports material to be distributed for children so that children engage in creative and gainful pursuits.

After several deliberations in the meetings a system of penalty was proposed. Imposing penalty as a practice has its origin in the people's belief to control and check individual behaviour and is a system to ensure adherence to social norms and ensure conformity. The JSS has taken the responsibility to oversee the execution of this decision.

### Prohibition of Child Marriage:

Akshaya Tritiya is a big day in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. On this day, several marriages are solemnized. What is unique about these states is that many young boys and girls are also married on this day. It is considered that getting married on this day is auspicious and augured luck for the married couple.

Marriage in such a young age pushes girl children into a vicious cycle of pregnancy, high maternal, infant mortality and an inter-generational cycle of malnutrition.



The issue of children's marriage and its ill effects were discussed in meetings and also through campaigns. However still the incidences of child marriages were taking place in hidden manner. The JSS took the issue very seriously knowing the ill effects of child marriage and continued the discussions in their respective village meetings. As the matter was illegal and also harmful for the children especially for girls most of the community members supported the cause however the challenge of who bells the cat was always there.

Understanding the limitations the JSS members with the help of Prayatn team members organised a series of meetings wherein all the members agreed to the ill effects of child marriage, but also shared their helplessness to stop the whole process. It was suggested that if it is accepted within the village then obviously nobody would do this act. The concept of community based systems for putting halt on this act was also discussed; the way it was done for alcohol and gambling. People appreciated the impact of those systems and also admired that such systems would work to stop child marriages also. Selected members within the community were given the responsibility to develop some mechanisms to stop child marriage and were requested to present it in the next meeting. The community members did well their part of job and came out with the suggestions that child marriage should be banned in the village and suggested the following steps:

- First selected members from the JSS and community would meet the family to know the fact and the situation.
- Second, the moment it was confirmed that the family was going to conduct child marriage they would be reminded about the ban on child marriage in the village and also all the legal acts and provisions as well as the ill effects of child marriage.
- Third step, if the family was still determined to conduct the marriage, they would be threatened that no other villager would attend it.
- Fourth, if the family was still to proceed with the marriage they would be threatened of boycott from the village and community;
- Fifth step, if the family is still determined to do the marriage the village committee will inform the police about the marriage to stop it.

It has been four years since such community based systems and mechanisms have been introduced, which has resulted in a very significant decline in incidence of child marriage, recorded in the project villages.

## Conclusions

- CHJK has approached the problem of declining (under 6) sex ratio in the perspective of violence against women which has its roots in the patriarchal attitudes.
- Bringing about change in deep rooted patriarchal attitudes needed a multi-pronged approach which was aimed at various stakeholders in the family, community and polity.
- These stakeholders included women, adolescent girls, boys, men, caste and community leaders, Panchayati Raj Institutions representatives, medical fraternity, district and state administration, police & judiciary and the media.
- The project has used different strategies with regard to these stakeholders such as sensitisation and awareness building, capacity building, advocacy, networking, Public Interest Litigations (PIL), providing legal awareness, pressure building and community monitoring in an organic manner.
- As part of the wholistic design of the project it approached declining child sex ratio in relation with a number of other related problems faced by girls and women, such as alcoholism which enhanced violence against women and impoverishment, child marriage which affected the health of girls, girls education.
- The project followed a life cycle approach aimed at tackling the problems faced by women at different stages in life.
- The project owes its success to the deep commitment and involvement of the activists involved in it and the confidence of the community they could earn as a result of their previous and ongoing work.

