



BEHAVIOUR SCIENCE INCREASED COVID-19 VACCINE COVERAGE IN BIHAR

IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT IN PARTNERSHIP WITH JEEVIKA

Background

To combat the rising cases of COVID-19, the Government of Bihar introduced free COVID vaccines in the state. However, the uptake of this life-saving technology was slow due to misinformation and a lack of trust in the vaccine. To tackle this, JEEVIKA, an initiative of the state government, that supports nearly 1 million Self Help Groups (SHGs) with over 10 million members, partnered with the Centre for Social and Behaviour Change to find a behavioural science-informed solution to increase vaccine coverage in rural Bihar.

Applying Behaviour Science to build an effective communications kit

With these behavioural insights, we worked with JEEVIKA, Applied Wonder and XBillion Skills to design print materials and develop storylines for exclusive video content in collaboration with Bihar's health and nutrition teams and district teams to promote (i) the uptake of COVID-19 vaccines, (ii) mask-wearing, and (iii) social distancing and handwashing in May 2021.

Behaviour science played a crucial role in supporting the final stretch in the fight against the pandemic. CSBC recommended a two-pronged strategy to build an impactful Social and Behaviour Change Communication Campaign for the SHGs.

- **The Rational Approach:** Enabled women to take their own decisions when provided with correct information about the vaccine and the virus.
- **The Emotional Approach:** Shared a dramatic story highlighting the risk of death for her family when not vaccinated.



PRINTED TOOLKIT: 1 Flipchart and 4 Leaflets
TRAINING VIDEOS: Motivational and Instructional
EDUTAINMENT VIDEOS: Vaccine uptake and Mask-wearing



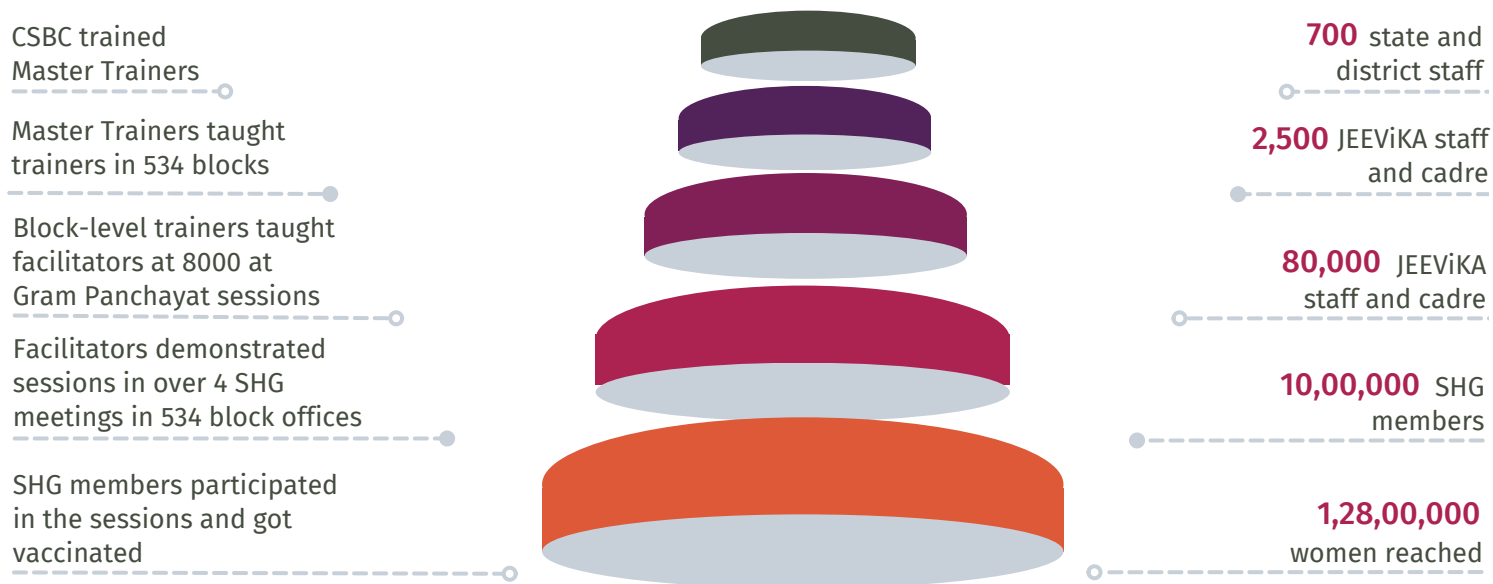
10 million women
reached through the programme



1.8x times
more likely to get vaccinated

Training and implementation

Using the communication kit, JEEViKA and CSBC adopted the cascade training model to reach as many beneficiaries as possible and encourage timely vaccination. We led the training of the master trainers, who further trained at the block levels. The block level trainers further trained at the Gram Panchayat level, followed by the SHG facilitators and members training. The model helped achieve the last mile and ensured that women are equipped with the right knowledge and know-how.



Cascading Training Model with JEEViKA

KEY FINDINGS

We evaluated the programme by comparing locations with early roll out and late roll out over two time periods and found that the intervention nearly doubled the probability of SHG members getting a vaccine.

About CSBC

The Centre for Social and Behaviour Change, Ashoka University, is a leading institution in India, driving behavioural change for people and communities in need. We advance the science and practice of behaviour change, harnessing cross-disciplinary expertise in nutrition, sanitation, maternal health, family planning, and financial inclusion.

About the Behavioural Insights Unit

To introduce a novel paradigm of behaviourally informed policy design and implementation in India, NITI Aayog partnered with us in 2019 for instituting the Behavioural Insights Unit (BIU) of India. As the first BIU in South Asia, we shoulder the dual responsibility of introducing behavioural insights to the mainstream policy narratives and carefully deconstructing the Indian policy ecosystems for the rapidly growing behavioural science community worldwide.

