

# HEALTH EDUCATION OUTREACH – INDIA

## Sharing Good Health Practices with 12 Villages in Bihar



### LOCAL CONTEXT

**BIHAR**, one of the poorest districts in India, has a population density of 689 people/km<sup>2</sup>.

The conditions and practices of personal hygiene, disease prevention, and cleanliness, as well as maternal and infant health, are not conducive for good health.

This situation is due to a number of factors:

- The lack of knowledge and practical experience of the villagers regarding good health practices
- A high level of illiteracy in general and especially among women (94%),
- Chronic economic poverty discourages any family initiative to improve conditions.

### PROJECT STRATEGY

Link a preventative health education program with the existing curative health services at the Shechen Clinic to promote the development and maintenance of better health in the local population:

↘ The program is compatible with the basic medical care provided by Shechen Clinic's Mobile Clinic.

↘ Propose a complete and integrated health and hygiene education program to the population of the 12 villages served by the mobile clinic

**Project Manager:** Karuna-Shechen via the Shechen Clinic and Mobile Clinic in India

**Location:** 12 villages, Bihar, India

**Sector:** Health and Hygiene

**Direct Beneficiaries:** 8,500 people (1,900 families)

**Annual Budget:** \$36,000 USD

### PROJECT GOALS

- Develop awareness in the 1,900 families in the region of the causes of disease and how to avoid them,
- Shift attitudes within the family as well as the community towards health.
- Provide long-term health education and medical follow-ups.

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In 2010, Karuna-Shechen, through the Shechen Clinic, launched a health and hygiene education program in 12 villages, for a renewable three-year period. The program provides:

#### ↘ Practical advice concerning:

- Maternal and infant health
- Hygiene and personal cleanliness
- Child malnutrition
- Care of the elderly

### DIRECT BENEFICIARIES

The 8,500 people (1,900 families) of the 12 villages:

- 45% children
- 35% women
- 20% men

### EXPECTED RESULTS

#### Hygiene and personal cleanliness:

- Reduction of the prevalence of skin diseases (38%) caused by poor conditions of personal hygiene in the villages.

#### Maternal and Infant Health:

- 100% of pregnant women identified and immunized.
- 100% of children below the age of three identified and immunized.
- 100% of mothers to breastfeed exclusively for the first six months (to help avoid young infant diseases).
- Official training, at the Shechen Clinic for 12 midwives from the 12 villages.

#### Fight Against Malnutrition:

- 250 children who have acute malnutrition will be treated medically and nutritionally for one year until complete rehabilitation.

#### Care for the Elderly:

- Elderly people made to feel useful to the community
- Supervision of their diet

## STRATEGY FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PROJECT

- Select and train three Village Coordinators and 12 Family Advisors to implement the program in the 12 villages.
- Present the program to the village chiefs as well as to the other recipients.
- Carry out a survey in the villages of all social and demographic information.
- Create, in each village, six groups who are trained to help implement the program.
- Convey regular instructions to each group (each group is responsible for 10 houses).
- Home visits by the coordinators and selected "relay women" to discuss health subjects.

## RESULTS ACHIEVED SINCE FEBRUARY 2010

- 70% of the villagers understand what are the causes of basic diseases and the ways in which they can be prevented.
- 60% of the population puts the methods and knowledge that they learned in the program into daily practice:
  - Utilization of public garbage cans distributed by the Shechen Clinic.
  - Digging holes to dispose of solid biodegradable waste.
  - Identification of a site outside the village for burning refuse.

## FUNDS NEEDED

**Karuna-Shechen is raising funds for the annual functioning of the health and hygiene education program in Bihar.**

**Annual Operating Budget: \$36,000 USD**

*To receive more information about this project, please contact one of Karuna-Shechen's branches.*



## PROJECT MANAGER: KARUNA-SHECHEN

**Karuna-Shechen is a humanitarian organization that implements health and education projects in the Himalayan region.**

**Founded and directed by Matthieu Ricard and inspired by the ideal of compassion (*karuna*) in action, the organization is deeply rooted in the traditions and values of the communities it serves.**

**Since 2001, Karuna-Shechen has initiated and developed 111 projects in India, Nepal and Tibet, propelled by the conviction that access to basic health care and education is a right for all.**

**[www.karuna-shechen.org](http://www.karuna-shechen.org)**

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