



National Nutrition Month

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Celebrating Nutrition



Weight monitoring by AWW & PC



IGMPY Exhibit in Poshan Mela, Baran



VHSNC Meeting, Pratapgarh



Gram Sabha, Banswara



Recipe demonstration during Poshan Maah, Banswara



Every September, Poshan Maah (Nutrition Month) is observed throughout the country with various Jan Andolan (community outreach) events. This year's Poshan Maah sought to leverage Gram Panchayats by mobilising their personnel and involving them in nutritional initiatives.

The thematic focus was on 'women and health' and 'children and education', so activities pertaining to anaemia, promotion of indigenous toys for learning, gender-sensitive rainwater conservation at Anganwadi Centres, and child growth measurement among others were held. RajPusht's Block Programme Managers and Poshan Champions in Baran, Banswara, Dungarpur, Pratapgarh, and Udaipur districts supported these activities along with the identification of children suffering from severe and moderate acute malnourishment. They also provided counselling to pregnant and lactating mothers and their relatives regarding nutrition, pregnancy care, and childcare.

Poshan Maah Awardees

RajPusht's team members received appreciation from the local administration for their contributions to Poshan Maah and the government's maternity cash transfer schemes

District Awards



Dungarpur district team



Pratapgarh district team

Block Awards



BPM Krishna Baldev, Udaipur



BPM Brijesh Mathur, Pratapgarh



BPM Krishna Dangi, Udaipur



BPM Divakar Jharbade, Udaipur



BPM Raziya Bano, Baran



BPM Amit Chaurasiya, Baran



BPM Priyanka Kunwar, Banswara



BPM Devendra Sen, Banswara



BPM Bhupendra Shakyawal, Baran



BPM Irfan Khan, Banswara



BPM Piyush Kumar, Banswara

The Challenges We Overcame



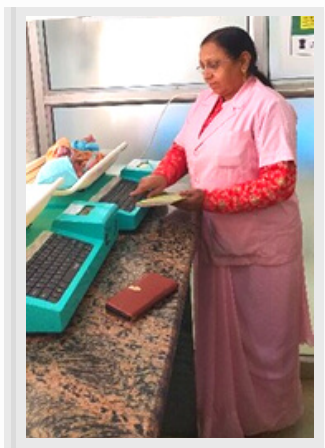
Sudhakar Dadhich,
District Programme Manager,
Pratapgarh

RajPusht installed Digital Weighing Machines (DWM) in labour rooms with high delivery loads across Pratapgarh in October 2020. Since then, it has been a tumultuous but rewarding journey. The experience of Pratapgarh District Hospital, with its 3 machines (2 in labour rooms and 1 in the operation theatre), is illustrative of this journey.

Between January–March 2021, 73% of the newborns in the hospital were weighed on DWMs. The figure fell to 63% later in the year and then rose to 80% in the April–June 2022 quarter. It is almost 90% now. The use of the Pregnancy & Child Tracking System (PCTS) ID also rose from 14% to 71% during this period. The PCTS ID contains all the details of the mother and child and the services they have availed. It facilitates easier follow-ups in cases of low birth weight. However, the path to these successes was strewn with challenges. There was much resistance to the new technology in the beginning. For those who were not tech-savvy, it presented a steep learning curve. Besides, the District Hospital has 16 deliveries a day on average, so the labour room staff are quite stretched. Often, they did not have the time to weigh the baby on the DWM or enter the 16-digit PCTS ID.

To remedy these problems, RajPusht's Block Programme Manager Vijay Patidar trained the staff on how to use the machine, sometimes as frequently as 2–3 times a week. While this improved DWM use, the results were far from spectacular. So, instead of the nursing staff, he trained Yashodas to operate the machines. Yashodas, part of the maternity ward team in the hospital, provide breastfeeding counselling and support the pregnant woman and her child before and after delivery. First, he instructed them on how to record the weight correctly. Then, he motivated them to register PCTS IDs. This initiative was a success—many Yashodas are now adept at operating the DWM and its mobile application.

Phool Kunwar, a Yashoda at the hospital, says, "I am proud that I learnt to use a digital machine and sync data using a mobile application at my age. I could barely use a phone earlier, but the support I received from Block Programme Manager Vijay Patidar helped me improve my skills and confidence."



Yashoda Phool Kunwar weighing
newborn using DWM

A problem with PCTS ID recording was that many women who came to the hospital for their delivery did not carry their Mamta cards. This card is a record of a woman's PCTS ID and the services her newborn and she have availed from pregnancy registration onwards. So, RajPusht's Block Programme Managers and Poshan Champions counsel pregnant women about the importance of the Mamta card and ensure that they carry it to the hospital during their delivery. They also work with ANMs to ensure that all women receive Mamta cards and PCTS IDs. More women are now aware of PCTS IDs and Mamta cards. Our success in these endeavours has motivated us to sustain and build upon the progress we have seen.



PC Manisha Tank counselling a
mother regarding complementary
feeding, Pratapgarh



Block Chief Medical Officer felicitates
students and ASHA during VHSNC
meeting, Pipliya village, Pratapgarh



Quarterly Review of PMMVY &
IGMPY led by the District
Collector, Baran



ANM using RajPusht's job aid to
counsel a pregnant woman on
MCHN Day at Arniya, Banswara



Training in Participatory Learning
& Action technique for ASHAs,
Ralewan, Baran

PC of the Month

Rekha Menaria has been working as a Poshan Champion with RajPusht since 2019. She oversees about 50 Anganwadi Centres in Udaipur's urban regions and visits about 10-12 homes each day, registering, counselling, and monitoring mothers and children. Rekha has surpassed her registration and counselling targets and ensured that 80% of the mothers in her catchment area have received at least 1 instalment of the benefits provided by maternity cash transfer schemes.

Shyam Shrivastava, District Programme Manager, Udaipur, says, "Rekha has established strong connections with the community. She has also developed strong relationships with government frontline workers and enthusiastically participates in community events at Anganwadi Centres. Such is her knowledge and outreach that people have started calling her *Doctor Didi*."

A significant challenge in urban areas is locating beneficiaries. Rekha explains, "People live in rented houses and move often. There is seasonal migration to and from surrounding villages. They change their phone numbers frequently. So, it can be difficult to find families on subsequent visits. I give my number to people so they can reach out to me in case they move. I also coordinate with Anganwadi Workers and ASHAs to identify beneficiaries."

Working as a Poshan Champion has been a learning experience for Rekha. "Earlier, I was quite shy. I could not express my opinions freely nor talk to strangers. But now, I converse with all kinds of people and explain maternal and child nutrition concepts to them, regardless of their background or literacy level," she says.

Her job has had its rewards. "I feel happy when pregnant women with low haemoglobin or inadequate weight gain make progress after my counselling sessions," says Rekha. It is also gratifying to reach out to people who might not have had support otherwise. Recently, I met a deaf-mute woman. I shared health and nutrition advice with her husband, while she flipped through my job aid. Her husband then explained it to her and she imbibed messages from the illustrations in the job aid as well."



Training of ASHAs at Community Health Centre, Talwara by BPM Chandraveer Singh, Banswara



Poshan Champion Prakash Damor counselling a mother, Dungarpur



Sarpanch Roopi Bai talks about IGMPY during Gram Sabha, Udaipur



Training of ASHAs by Block Programme Manager Vishal Prajapat, Dungarpur



Child weight monitoring by Poshan Champion Bhupendra Vaishnav, Shahabad, Baran

The Importance of Pregnancy Care



*Gyanendra Vishwakarma,
District Programme Manager, Dungarpur*

Babli Dendor has been living in an eight-member household in Chitri village, Dungarpur district, since her wedding in 2017. Two years later, she became pregnant, but it ended in a stillbirth. Traumatized by the experience, she steadily lost weight till she was just 35 kg.

In March 2021, she again became pregnant. It was then that she reached out to Sangeeta Patidar, RajPusht's Poshan Champion in the region, whom she had once met at the Anganwadi Centre in her village.

"I learnt a lot from Sangeeta," says Babli. "Earlier, I didn't know about the importance of a proper diet or weight gain during pregnancy. We have a farm where we cultivate wheat and soybean and a kitchen garden to grow vegetables like bottle gourd, brinjal, and tomato. We also have a buffalo, whose milk I regularly drink. Along with these, my family also bought fruits and vegetables from the market as Sangeeta had emphasised dietary diversity."

"I also did not know how important it was to rest during pregnancy. During my first pregnancy, I worked in the field and at home, so it was hectic. Sangeeta told me to rest for 2 hours during day and not overexert, so I stopped going to the field. She also explained these things to my husband and in-laws," adds Babli.

Sangeeta says, "While I monitored and counselled Babli as per the schedule triggered by RajPusht's Poshan Champion app, I met her often since she lives close to the petrol pump where I fuel my scooter. She also called me a couple of times for advice."

Babli's Mamta Card, a document to monitor pregnancy and child health and provide healthcare and nutrition advice, bears testimony to the diligence with which she followed recommended pregnancy care practices. She got four antenatal checkups—in May, July, August, and October—done at her Anganwadi Centre. Between her first and fourth antenatal checkup, her weight increased from 40 to 49 kg. On 6 December 2021, she gave birth to a boy weighing 3.4 kg. "I am happy that my baby was born healthy, especially after what I went through during my first delivery," says Babli.

Eating a diverse, adequate diet and sufficient rest increases the chances of the ideal amount of weight gain during pregnancy: 10 to 12 kg. This reduces the likelihood of low birth weight and premature delivery. Regular medical care through ANC checkup helps identify and remedy risks and complications. Thus, RajPusht's Poshan Champions, along with Anganwadi Workers, ASHAs and ANMs, have been counselling women, their families, and communities to follow a proper diet along with the recommended pregnancy care and childcare practices.



Poshan Champion Sangeeta Patidar counselling Babli Dendor (left); Babli Dendor in her kitchen garden (right)