

FOR GENERATING DEMAND FOR ROUTINE IMMUNIZATION IN INDIA

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Background

Demand generation is a community-oriented process to enhance access and utilization of childhood vaccination services.¹

Myths and misconceptions in communities around routine immunization result in vaccine hesitancy and reduced vaccine uptake.^{2,3}

Objectives

Co-create demand for routine immunization with the community in Mewat, Haryana.

Introduce Social Behavior Change Communication (SBCC) strategies across intrapersonal, interpersonal, institutional, community, and policy levels of the Socio-Ecological Model (SEM) to effectively generate vaccination demand.

Methods

We designed activities for three SBCC approaches:

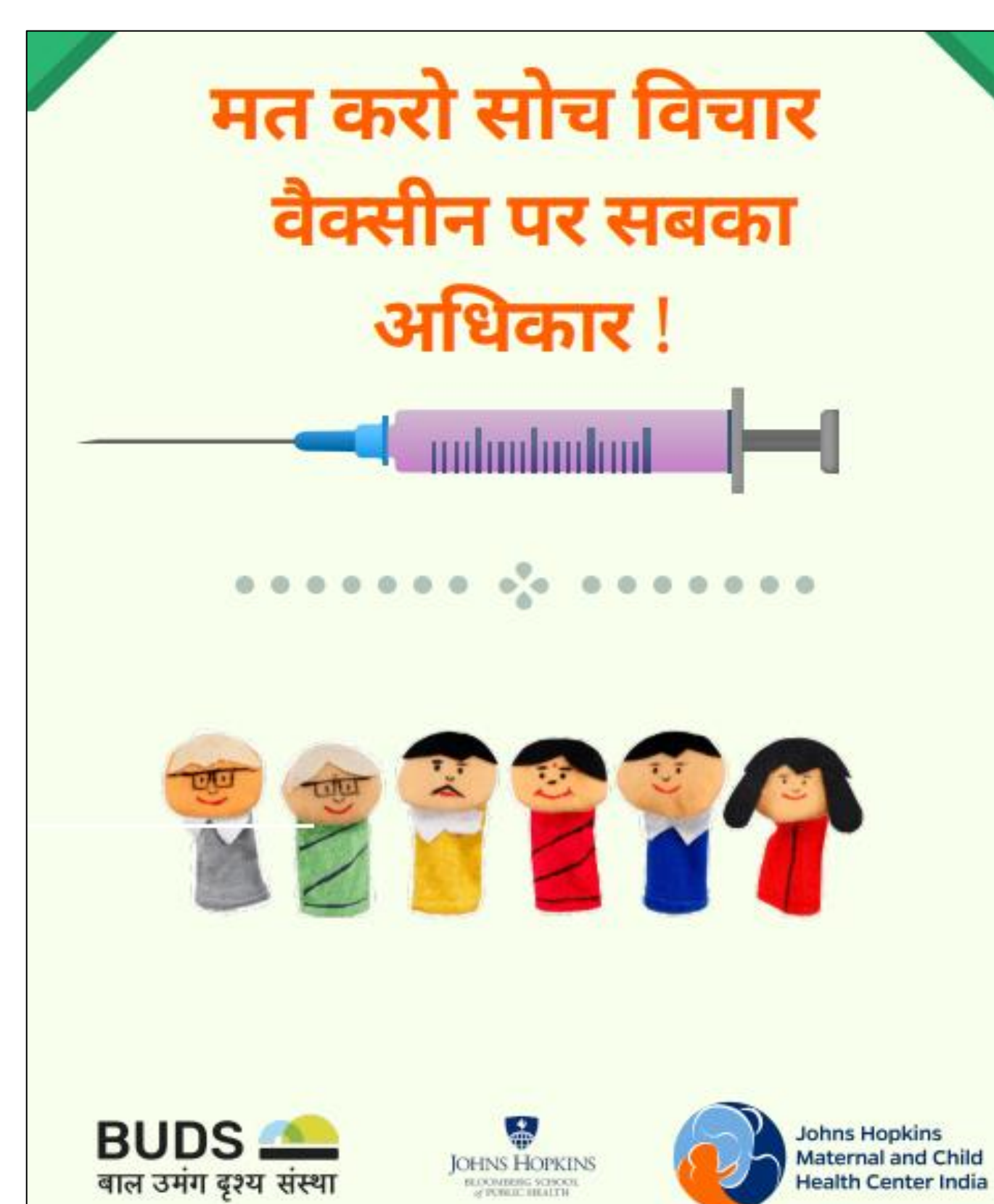
- Advocate for vaccine benefits
- Build confidence in vaccine safety
- Overcome barriers to vaccine access

We evaluated these approaches using qualitative methods (interviews and focus group discussions) to capture multi-sectoral participants' experiences of the SBCC strategies.

Conclusion

Deep community engagement and ownership bring about actionable ways to effect behavior change to increase vaccine confidence and vaccine demand that can lead to demonstrable improvements in vaccine uptake.

Figures



Co-created campaign materials: posters and slogans



SBCC activities: Bike rally (left) and community mobilization (right)

Results

SBCC activities encouraged a two-way dialogue to discuss beliefs and practices and myths and misconceptions around childhood immunization.

Co-creation of campaign materials- slogans, posters and role plays along with community mobilization enhanced the collective community understanding about the significance of routine immunization.

Improvement in male participants' awareness levels about their role in accessing vaccination.

A male community member in the audience said,

The frontline health worker informs us about the routine immunization date but doesn't ask us our concerns about childhood immunization. Puppet show helped me to realize that all these years what I was believing in was a myth about vaccination! Now I understand why every child should be vaccinated.

Community engagement brought about new ideas for enhancing vaccine uptake in the community such as inclusion of vaccine education in schools, and having immunization rights as a priority election topic.

A teacher from Khadkari village in Mewat stated,

A study staff explained through a poster that we all are equally accountable for immunization of a child. In my opinion, such information should be given in schools. The government should add a chapter on childhood immunization and reproductive health in the school curriculum for adolescent boys and girls.

References

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