



PIB Mumbai and CBC Maharashtra, in Collaboration with UNICEF India, Organise Capacity-Building Workshop on Adolescent Health and Climate Change

Strengthening Outreach Through Credible Communication”: UNICEF Workshop Focuses on Adolescent Health and Climate Change

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The Press Information Bureau (PIB), Mumbai, and the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC), Maharashtra, in collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), organised a two-day capacity-building workshop on adolescent health and climate change on October 12 and 13 at the CBC Regional Office in Pune. A total of 45 officials from across the West Zone, representing Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Maharashtra and Goa, participated in the workshop.

The workshop aims to strengthen the communication skills of field officers to ensure that Government schemes and initiatives reach the masses effectively. It focuses on storytelling and other effective communication techniques to simplify key messages, improve public awareness and encourage community engagement on issues related to adolescent health and climate change.

Ms. Smita Vats Sharma, Director General (West Zone), Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, delivered the inaugural address. She emphasised that communication is a two way process and highlighted the need for diverse methods to share credible and authentic information with all sections of society. She stressed that capacity building enables field officers to exchange ideas, share best practices and strengthen outreach efforts.



Shri Sidharth Bodke, Additional Director General, PIB-CBC Maharashtra and Gujarat, set the context for the workshop. He encouraged participants to learn from experts and each other and apply the knowledge and skills gained to the programmes implemented by their respective field offices.

On the first day, Ms. Swati Mohapatra, Communication Specialist, UNICEF Mumbai, conducted a session on "Introduction to Outreach Communication". She highlighted that everyone is a storyteller and stressed the importance of tailoring stories to different audiences. The session covered communication tools, social media and successful outreach practices.



Officials presented initiatives undertaken in their respective states, including Vartalap and Interpersonal Communication Campaigns (ICOPs), and shared their recent experiences in communicating Government schemes. The session was led by Ms. Supriya Ghaytadak, Deputy Director, CBC Pune, and Ms. Nikita Joshi, Deputy Director, PIB Mumbai.

Dr. Ravindra Chaudhari, Assistant Director, Health Services, discussed adolescent health, mental health, non-communicable diseases and Government responses. Key initiatives covered included RKSK, Nasha Mukta Bharat Abhiyaan, the National Mental Health Programme, Tele-MANAS, Ayushman Bharat School Health and Wellness Programme, and Poshan Abhiyaan.

Dr. Mangesh Gadhari, Health Specialist, UNICEF Maharashtra, highlighted the need to prioritise adolescent well-being through awareness, early intervention and effective communication. The first day concluded with a roadmap discussion facilitated by Ms. Sharma and Shri Bodke.

On the second day, Dr. Sandeep Thacker, Environmental Health Specialist, Natural Resources Defense Council, discussed climate-related health risks, extreme heat, air pollution, early warning systems and preventive measures. Dr. Ritu Parchure of Prayas, Pune, highlighted community-level climate-health vulnerabilities, particularly among outdoor workers. Shri Anand Ghodke, WASH, CCES and DRR Officer, UNICEF Maharashtra, discussed climate risks affecting children, child-centred communication, Mission LiFE and Jal Jeevan Mission.



During group exercises, participants developed outreach strategies using slogans, skits and creative communication methods. Discussions covered drought, groundwater depletion, rising temperatures, mental health, depression, excessive screen time, social media addiction and parent-child relationships.



The workshop concluded with participants identifying ways to integrate these themes into PIB's Vartalap, CBC's ICOPs and other outreach programmes, strengthening effective, locally relevant public communication.

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