

FEBRUARY | EDITION #04

# NEWSLETTER

INSIDE CARD: RESPONSIBLE TOURISM



CARD



# PROMOTING RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

In collaboration with the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, CARD is enhancing safe tourism destinations across Madhya Pradesh by increasing women's involvement in the tourism workforce. This initiative aims to improve safety, confidence, and accessibility for women and solo travelers while promoting inclusive and sustainable tourism practices. Additionally, we are constructing home-stays further boost tourism. We are advancing tourism through two key phases:

**Promotion of Safe Tourism Activities:** We have trained over 700 women in various tourism-related roles. Furthermore, 3,200 girls from schools and colleges have participated in 60 days of structured self-defense training, fostering long-term confidence and safety awareness at the community level.

We are developing sustainable, community-driven, and culturally rooted tourism destinations. It promotes experience-based tourism by involving local communities, ensuring tourism benefits local livelihoods and cultural preservation. The mission encourages responsible travel to lesser-known destinations and fosters meaningful interactions between travelers and locals, creating inclusive, immersive, and resilient tourism models.



**Recognising the impact of this initiative, Ujjain was awarded the Best Self-Defence Initiative by the Madhya Pradesh Tourism Board, reaffirming the role of women-led safety interventions in shaping safer travel destinations.**

**Responsible Tourism Mission:** Under the initiatives we are promoting rural and community-based tourism, emphasizing vernacular architecture and authentic village life experiences. Through curated rural homestays, travelers engage with local communities and traditions. Digital marketing platforms like MakeMyTrip and Booking.com are used to enhance visibility and accessibility of these experiences.

The Rural Tourism Programme focuses on connecting rural communities with tourism for sustainable social and economic development while protecting local ecosystems and cultural heritage. This We have also promoted 50 home-stays in the following locations: Sulibardi, Bhilbarkheda, Gyanpura in Dhar, Undasa in Ujjain, and Babaiya Ryt & Bakori in Mandla.



# HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MONTH



## New Foundations Laid with APF Watershed Project in Dhar

January marked the formal launch of the APF Watershed Project in Dhar district, supported by the Azim Premji Foundation, focusing on internal preparedness through staff meetings, orientation workshops, and field assessments. Leadership engagement, including field visits by the CARD Chairperson, helped identify priority intervention areas and align teams on participatory watershed planning and sustainable natural resource management.

## Smart Schools Advance Digital Inclusion in Mohla

Education remained a priority, with three government schools transformed into Smart Schools in Mohla block under HDFC PARIVARTAN, benefiting 948 students through digital classrooms, improved sanitation, safe drinking water, and trained teachers.

## Faith and Community Drive Mahi River Revival



During the 29th Mahi River Panchkroshi Pad Yatra, CARD Dhar engaged with thousands of pilgrims to link river conservation with cultural and spiritual traditions under the Mahi River Revival Project. The team supported pilgrim welfare arrangements at Sardarpur and Minda, ensuring smooth coordination during the opening phase of the yatra. A key highlight was a street play (nukkad natak) at the Mahi Mata Temple, Minda, which creatively conveyed the importance of protecting the river's catchment area and promoting community-led conservation. By blending faith, culture, and environmental awareness, CARD transformed the pilgrimage into a platform for collective responsibility toward river rejuvenation.

## Shishu Ghar Initiative Begins in Madhya Pradesh



A major milestone was achieved with the inauguration of the first and second Shishu Ghars in Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh, under the support of the Azim Premji Foundation, marking the launch of structured institutional childcare services in the state. Alongside the inaugurations, the project made strong operational progress through recruitment of project staff and 10 caregivers, followed by exposure visits to Dhamtari, Chhattisgarh, to learn best practices in crèche management. Project staff underwent two-day orientations and regular review meetings, while caregivers completed a four-day residential pre-service training on childcare and caregiving practices. A dedicated project office was established in Dhar, and extensive fieldwork was undertaken across 41 villages, including community meetings and village assessments. In Phase 1, five villages were selected, with two centres currently operational (Sejwaya and Jamanda), while three additional centres are under renovation and will be inaugurated soon, strengthening the foundation for safe, reliable childcare services for working families.

# FIELD STORIES

## Republic Day Celebrated Across Locations



The month highlighted with Republic Day celebrations across CARD's project locations and head office, reflecting unity, collective responsibility, and commitment to national values. Community participation, children's rallies, and flag-hoisting ceremonies highlighted the spirit of citizenship and inclusion embedded in CARD's work.

## District Administration Reviews HDFC-Supported Interventions in Mohla



District Collector Mohla, Smt. Tulika Prajapati, IAS and CEO Zila Panchayat, Smt. Bharti Chandrakar, IAS, visited project activities implemented under HDFC Bank's PARIVARTAN program in Mungadih, Birjhotola, and Somatola villages. They reviewed millet based bakery units through FPO, solar powered drinking water system, dal mill entrepreneurship initiatives, smart school, and custom hiring centre.

## Community Mobilisation through Cultural Outreach and Awareness



Community participation was enhanced through street plays (nukkad natak) organized in various Gram Panchayats as part of the GDPD and Mahi River Rejuvenation Project. The performances used relatable stories to motivate villagers to engage in Gram Sabhas and address issues like water, sanitation, and infrastructure. Cultural programs along the Panchkroshi Yatra route emphasized the ecological and cultural importance of the Mahi River and its restoration efforts. These initiatives boosted public awareness and reinforced collective decision-making and shared responsibility in local governance and watershed renewal.



## Awareness Drive Launched to Prevent Child Labour in Dhar

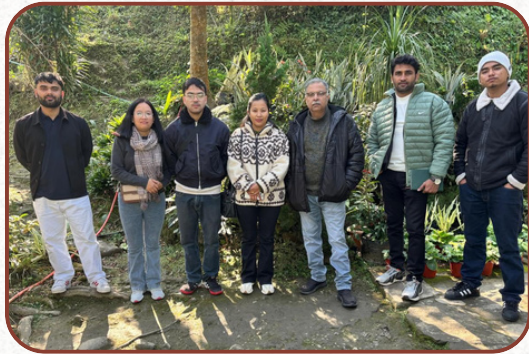
Under the ChildFund International-supported project, CARD flagged off an awareness vehicle in Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh, to promote the prevention of child labour. The initiative was inaugurated by District Women and Child Development Officer Ms. Sunita Chauhan, along with Mr. Manoj Mishra from CARD.

The mobile awareness campaign aims to sensitise communities on child rights, the importance of education, and the need to protect children from exploitation. The event witnessed active participation of CARD staff, with key support from team members involved in the preparation and coordination of the campaign.



# PROJECT PROGRESS

## Project Team Orientation Strengthens Horticulture and CSR Understanding in Sikkim



A two-day orientation programme for the CARD Sikkim project team was organised at Nirmal Farm, Baramangwa (Darjeeling, West Bengal) under the Integrated Community Development Project. The programme focused on building practical knowledge on nursery establishment and post-harvest management of horticulture crops, while also strengthening communication skills and understanding of CSR frameworks. The orientation enhanced team preparedness for effective field implementation and community engagement.

## Integrated Livelihood Promotion Advances through ABF Interventions



Under the Axis Bank Foundation-supported Integrated Development & Transformation through Livelihood Promotion project, steady progress was recorded across Chachaura block, Guna district. Crop demonstration activities were strengthened through timely input support and regular field inspections. Agroforestry plantations, mustard crop demonstrations, and natural resource management works were reviewed directly at farmers' fields, enabling teams to provide technical guidance and course corrections. Stone bunding activities continued across villages, improving land quality while simultaneously generating local employment with transparent and timely wage payments.

## Welcome Kits Distributed to DNT Women Trainees



CARD distributed welcome kits to women trainees from De-notified, Nomadic, and Semi-Nomadic Tribes (DNTs) and Self-Help Groups during a SEED Scheme skill training programme at Village Jogikhedi, Tehsil Ghatiya, Ujjain district. The programme focused on linking skill training with employment and self-employment opportunities, particularly in tailoring, while encouraging women to explore sustainable livelihood pathways under the DNT Project.

## Chairman Reviews Project Progress in Chachaura

On 24 January 2026, the Honourable Chairman visited Chachaura block, Guna district, to review progress under the Axis Bank Foundation-supported Integrated Development Project. The visit included a staff meeting and field interactions to assess ongoing activities and provide strategic guidance for effective implementation. The Chairman also interacted with Gram Panchayat representatives, strengthening coordination and community-level governance.



# HEALTH, NUTRITION & EDUCATION



## Safety and Preparedness Enhanced through Fire Safety Training

To ensure a secure environment for children, fire safety training was conducted for caregivers and staff associated with the Shishu Ghars. The training covered emergency response, use of fire extinguishers, evacuation techniques, and basic first aid measures such as CPR and safe lifting practices. Extending the training to all staff members helped strengthen overall preparedness and reinforced a culture of safety and responsibility.

## Promoting Adolescent Girls' Health and Hygiene in Umaria

On the occasion of National Girl Child Day, CARD organised a health and hygiene awareness programme for adolescent girls in Umaria district, Madhya Pradesh. The session focused on menstrual hygiene, nutrition during menstruation, sanitation practices, and the importance of iron intake to prevent anaemia. Through interactive discussions and visual aids, girls were encouraged to view menstruation with dignity and confidence. The initiative strengthened awareness around adolescent health and reinforced the importance of informed practices for long-term well-being.

## Education and Child Rights Promoted through Awareness Drives

Child-focused awareness activities gained momentum during the month through education rallies and public awareness programmes organised in collaboration with ChildFund International. Celebrations of International Education Day and Republic Day-linked rallies engaged children and communities in discussions on the Right to Education, the importance of schooling, and child protection. These activities encouraged children to become active voices for their own rights while strengthening community commitment toward education.



## Strengthening Anganwadi and ICDS Services for Nutrition Delivery



CARD strengthened Anganwadi and ICDS services across Sikkim and Madhya Pradesh by improving frontline capacity and centre-level infrastructure to support child nutrition and early childhood care.

Exposure visits and training sessions enhanced Anganwadi Workers' understanding of Poshan Tracker, Aadhaar Shila, and ECCE, strengthening growth monitoring, documentation, and child-centred service delivery. In Sikkim, the installation of solar panels at ICDS centres improved centre functionality, lighting, and learning environments.

These efforts are helping Anganwadi centres function more effectively as community hubs for nutrition, early learning, and child well-being.

# TALK AROUND HEAD OFFICE



## Academic Exchange and Learning at Head Office

The Head Office hosted an academic exposure visit for MSW second-year students from MVP Samaj College of Social Work, Nashik. Students gained insights into CARD's development approach through presentations, a documentary screening, and interactive sessions with senior leadership, making the visit a valuable learning experience.



## MANAGE-CARD Refresher Training Strengthens Millet-Based Agri-Entrepreneurship

The National Institute of Agricultural Extension Management (MANAGE), in collaboration with CARD, organised a Refresher Training Programme on "Value Addition in Millets for Economic & Nutritional Security" from 27-31 January 2026 under the AC&ABC Scheme. The programme strengthened participants' technical and entrepreneurial capacities, highlighting millet-based value addition, processing, and enterprise development for climate-smart agriculture, nutritional security, and sustainable livelihoods



## Celebrating Unity and Values through Republic Day

The 77th Republic Day was celebrated at the CARD head office with pride and unity. The flag-hoisting ceremony, attended by leadership, staff, families, and AC&ABC trainees, reflected shared values of togetherness, responsibility, and commitment to nation-building.



## Team Bonding and Reflection during Head Office Retreat

A one-day team outing for Head Office staff was organised at a nearby resort, providing an opportunity to unwind, connect beyond the workplace, and engage in informal interactions. The experience strengthened team bonding, boosted morale, and reinforced collaboration, reflecting CARD's commitment to a positive and healthy work culture.

# STORIES THAT ECHO

**“Now we plan our work instead of only working hard.”**

“Earlier, we followed traditional practices without fully understanding how our land and water resources were changing. Through meetings, field visits, and discussions under the watershed project, we learned why conserving soil and water is important for the future. Now, we plan together as a community where water should be stored, how land can be protected, and how farming can become more sustainable. This approach has given us confidence that our efforts today will benefit our children tomorrow.”

**– FARMER, APF WATERSHED PROJECT, DHAR**



**“Skill training has given me confidence and a new identity.”**

“Before joining the training, I was limited to household work and unsure whether I could earn an income. The skill training helped me learn practical work and also showed me how skills can be linked to real employment and self-employment opportunities. Today, I feel confident in my abilities and more involved in decisions at home. This training has not only improved my skills but has also changed how I see my future.”

**– WOMAN TRAINEE, SKILL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

**“The Shishu Ghar allows us to work without worrying about our children.”**

“For working parents like us, leaving young children at home was always a concern. Since the Shishu Ghar started in our village, our children are cared for in a safe and clean environment. They receive attention, supervision, and a structured routine, while we are able to go to work with peace of mind. This support has made a real difference to our daily lives and sense of security.”

**– PARENT, SHISHU GHAR PROJECT, DHAR**





## From the Editors' Desk

Dear Readers,

It brings us immense joy to keep you engaged with the stories we gather from the field. Our efforts truly find meaning when they resonate back through our communities.

As always, this edition brings you voices and experiences rooted in real work on the ground, woven together around a single monthly theme. This month, as we mark World Tourism Day, we found the perfect opportunity to share the initiatives CARD has been undertaking to promote responsible, inclusive, and community-led tourism.

Thank you for being an integral part of our journey—by reading, reflecting, and staying connected. We deeply value hearing from you and sharing the stories that matter.

We hope you enjoy this edition and continue to return, month after month, to explore more stories from the field.

Warm regards,

The Editors



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Come volunteer, visit us, or simply reach out. We'd love to connect!

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