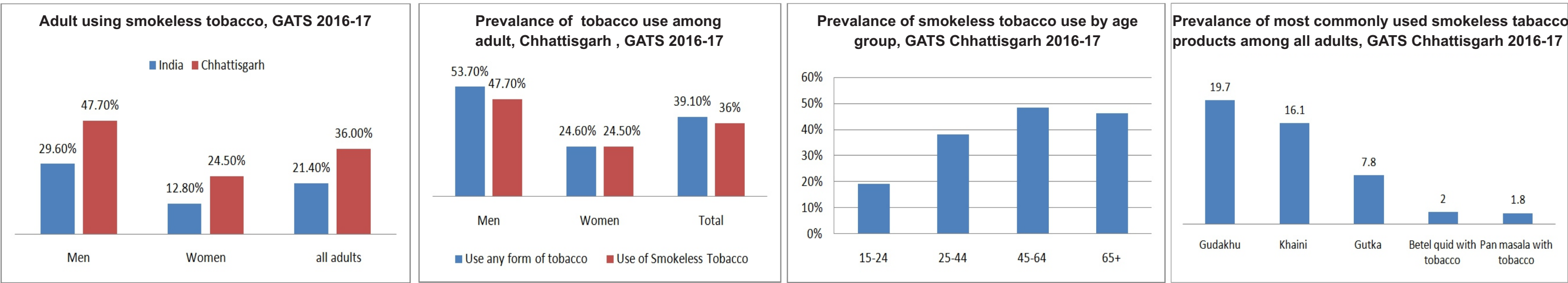


# Designing a Community Health Worker based Strategy to Promote Community Action Against Use of Smokeless Tobacco

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Use of smokeless tobacco is a big problem in central-eastern and north-eastern regions of India. 36% of adults in Chhattisgarh state consume smokeless tobacco, compared to the national average of 21%. Chewing of tobacco products, locally known as '*Gutkha*', is a common form of tobacco-use, reported for 16% adults. An even bigger problem is of oral-application of tobacco, reported for 20% adults. A tobacco-product known as '*Gudakhu*' is commonly used for brushing teeth, including by pregnant women. Understanding the above evidence from Global Adult Tobacco Survey 2016-17 was the basis for formulating a response in form of community action in Chhattisgarh.



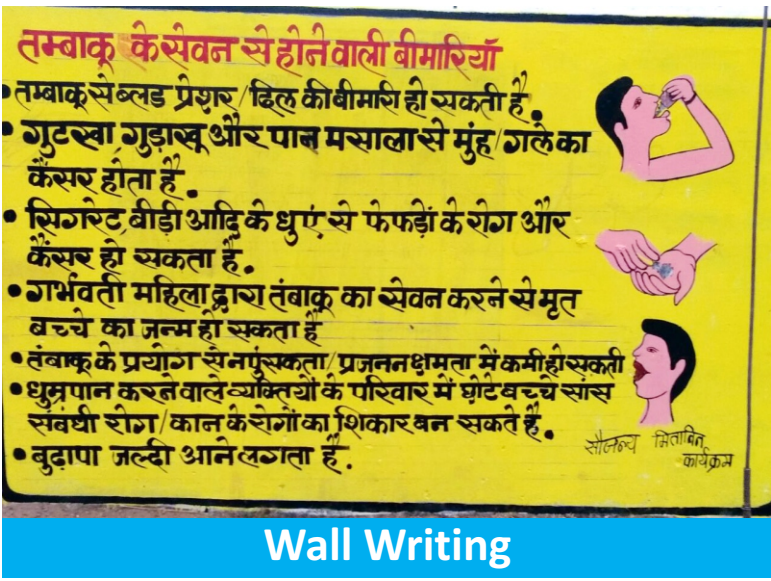
Chhattisgarh has a community-health-worker (CHW) program since 2002 with 70,000 CHWs called Mitans. They also lead community health committees in villages and in urban-slums. The community action strategy was designed based on the understanding - a) Awareness needs to be increased on harmful effects of smokeless tobacco and the innocence around use of oral-application products needs to be broken b) While there is enough communication about cancer, linkage between stroke and tobacco needs to be communicated. Registers maintained by CHWs with community reported causes of mortality could be used to make it more visible c) Focus on school children and putting collective pressure to reduce sale of tobacco near schools and demand accountability from government authorities d) Focus on women as CHWs interact frequently with them. A start could be made with CHWs quitting tobacco-use themselves.



Dialogue with Shopkeeper



Discussion with School Children



Wall Writing



Awareness Rally



Awareness Rally



Street Theatre

Mitanin CHWs and community health-committees used creative ways to communicate including street-theatre, discussions in schools, community meetings and graffiti. Public dialogue events were used to demand accountability from officials and elected representatives. Under the campaign, community meetings were held in 15438 villages and 3029 urban slums, street theatre was organized in 8914 villages and 1803 slums, wall writing was done in 15245 villages and 2949 slums and discussion with school children was done in about 13000 schools. The campaign was able to catch public imagination. A formative evaluation shows the initial results to be very encouraging, both in raising awareness and in changing behavior, of people and local-government.



Demanding Accountability



Community Meeting



Quitting Tobacco Use



Using Humour to Communicate

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