

Echoes of Change: When Communities Take Charge of Their Health A Community Maternal and Child Health Model in Tribal Telangana



Organisation: Indigenous Development Organization,
Authors: Ramavath Narendar, Kapil Sharma and Akash Kumar Panigrahi

Introduction

The **Gutti Koya community**, originally from **Chhattisgarh's Bastar region**, was forcibly displaced during the **Salwa Judum conflict**.



- Over **30,000 Gutti Koyas** resettled in remote forest regions of Telangana and Andhra Pradesh.
- In Telangana, they mainly inhabit Bhadradi Kothagudem, Mulugu, Jayashankar Bhupalapally, and Khammam districts.
- Lacking Scheduled Tribe status** in Telangana, they are denied constitutional protections.

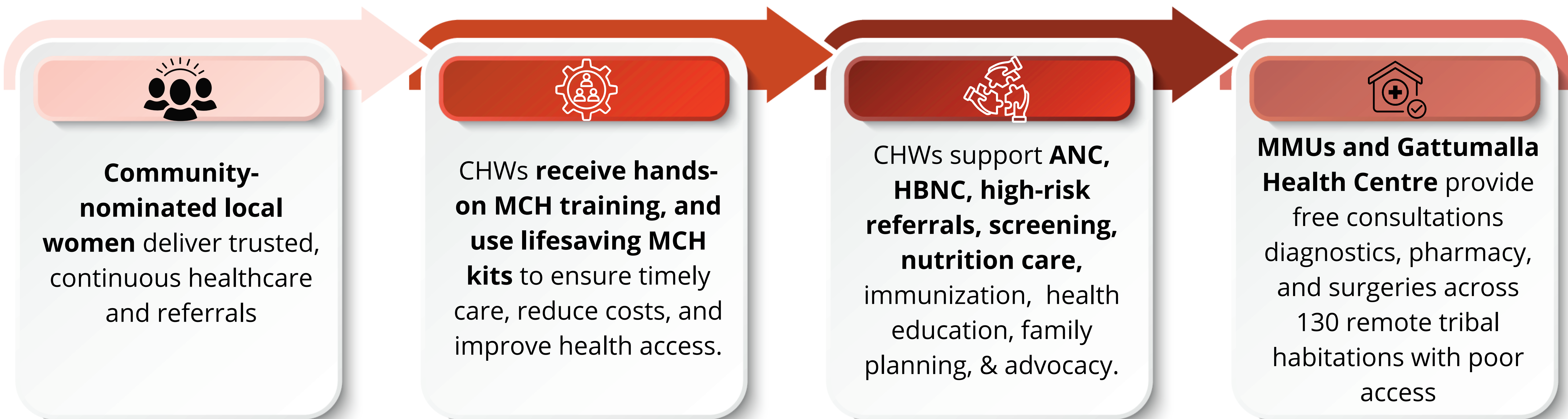


Objectives

- Train **CHWs** from **tribal hamlets** to deliver basic maternal, child, and primary care with ongoing support and supervision.
- Operate **Mobile Units** to provide essential health services in remote forest areas lacking regular healthcare access.
- Deliver **specialty care in gynecology and pediatrics** through fixed centers and referrals for high-risk remote cases.

Interventions

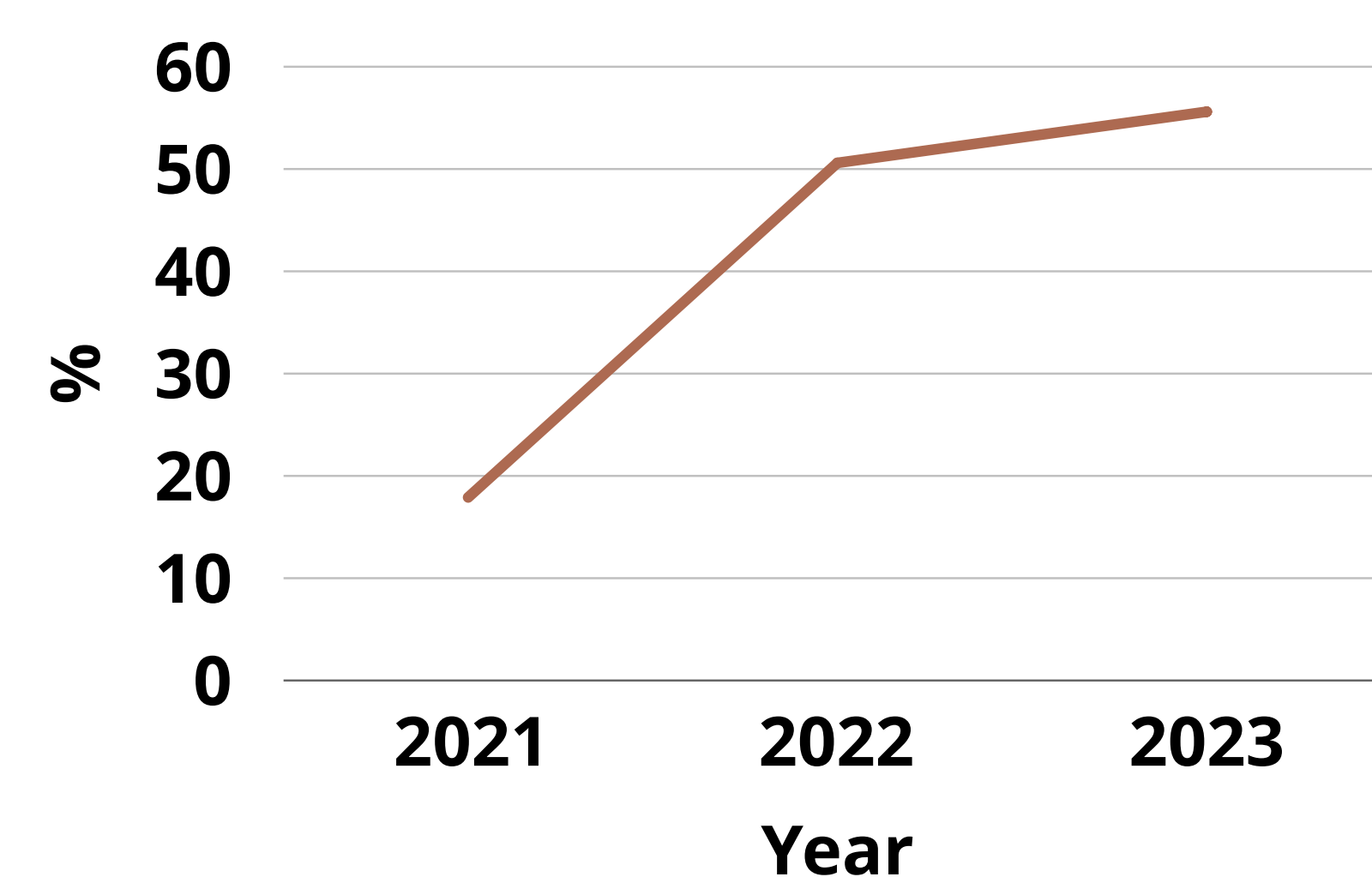
Charitable hospital and 77 CHWs deliver free healthcare to 20,000 people across 100+ tribal villages in Bhadradi, Telangana.



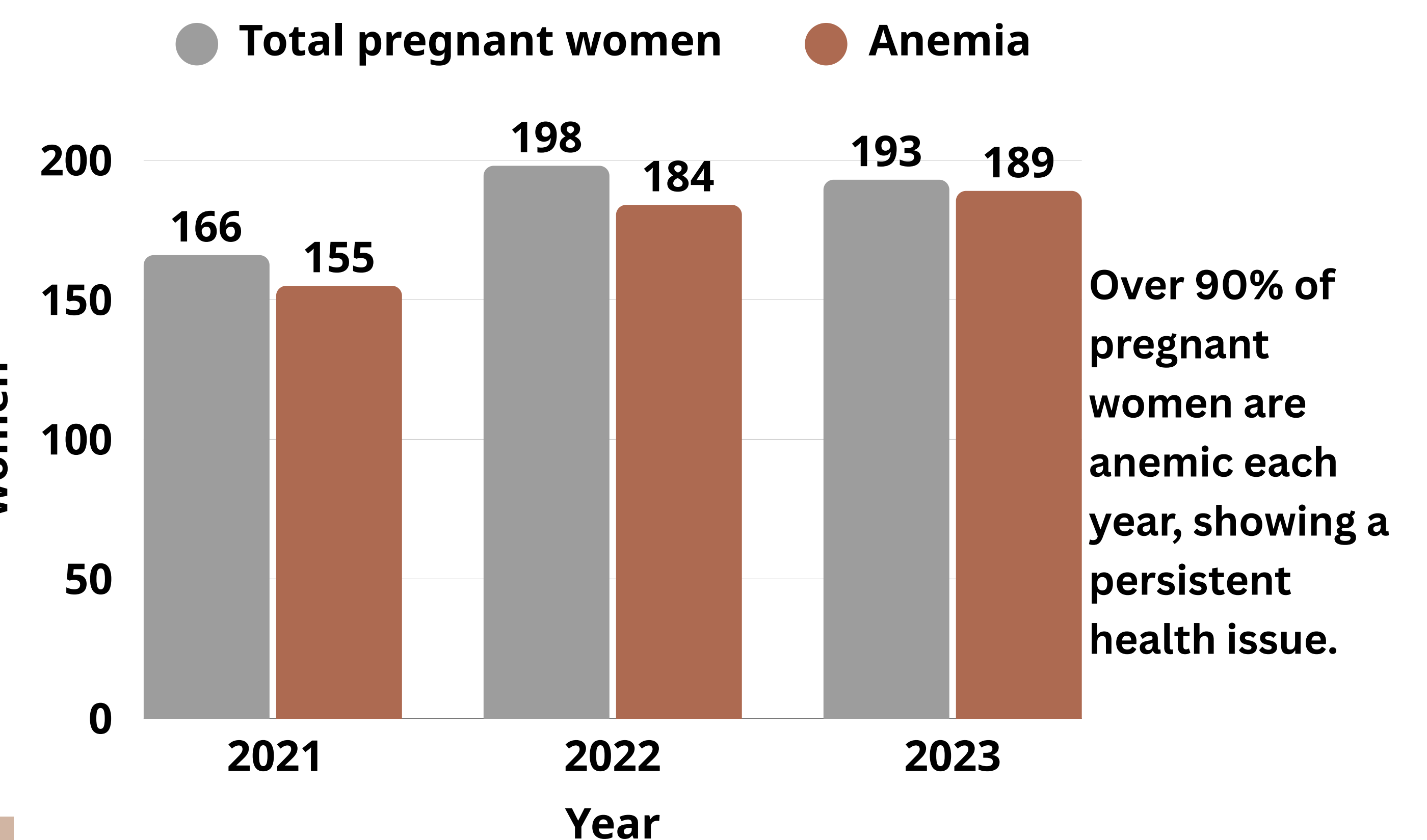
Findings so far

Data reflects CHW work across 33 hamlets since 2021.

- IMR in Kothagudem peaked at 158.4 in 2022—5 times the national average.
- Despite a decline in 2023, IMR remains significantly high.



Institutional deliveries increased from 39 in 2021 to 144 in 2023, indicating reduced home births.



Over 90% of pregnant women are anemic each year, showing a persistent health issue.

Conclusion & Way forward

- CHWs have emerged as **key drivers of tribal healthcare**, bridging access gaps and improving maternal and child health outcomes.
- Despite challenges like poor connectivity, low literacy, and limited funding, their **community-rooted approach shows lasting impact**.
- The way forward lies in **scaling CHW deployment, sustained support, and integrating them into formal health systems**.

Milestones in Community Health Outreach

