Success story and Stakeholder meeting - Report

Health watch with prominent and committed personalities is one of the major initiatives under the QIPHS project. We were successful in forming Health Watch for each of the three health centres coming under the project. Health watch formed for CHC Vellanikkara and PHC vaniyampara has started functioning effectively. Health Watch at Irinjalakuda is yet to become active as there is some delay caused due to the opposition from some corners with vested interest. This report is about a successful intervention emanated from Health Watch Vaniyamapara which has ensured the effective utilization of the funds allotted for the development of PHC Vaniyamapara.

The story:

Primary Health Centre Vaniyampara has now elevated as Family Health Centre under the ARDRAM project implemented by Government of Kerala. When a primary Health Centre is transformed to Family Health Centre, government through NHM allotted Rs. 14 Lakhs for the development of the hospital as specified in the ARDRAM Project. Based on the elevation of the hospital to FHC, Nirmithi Kendra a governmental agency under Housing Department of Kerala was entrusted to prepare a plan for the development of PHC Vaniyamapara. The proposed developmental activities approved by NHM were shared by Vice President of Pananchery Grama Panchayath Mr. K.A. Aboobacker with Health Watch members. Mr. Joy Poovathingal, Mr. R. Rajendran and Shaji Mundekkattil who are leading the activities of Health Watch at Vaniyamapara requested the Vice President to convene a meeting to discuss in detail the finalized plan for the hospital before starting the work and he agreed for the same. Mean while Mr. Joy Poovathingal contacted the Nirmithi Kendra Officials and enquired about the plan for the PHC Vaniyamapara and confirmed the same. On 17/11/2019 2.30 p.m a meeting was convened at the hospital premise to discuss the approved plan for the hospital. Vice President Mr. K.A. Aboobacker, Mr. N. Vijayankutty local member from the area where the hospital is situated, Officials from Nirmithi Kendra, Engineer from NHM, Medical Officer, Health Inspector and members of Health Watch were present during the meeting. The proposed plan for the hospital was thoroughly examined by the health watch members. On a close perusal of the plan they found that approximately 7-8 lakhs is only required for the implementation of the approved plan but on the contrary sanctioned budget for the plan is Rs. 14 Lakhs. This disparity was pointed by the health watch members and a detailed discussion took place during the meeting. Some major changes were proposed in the plan by health watch members and the same was accepted by the Panchayath and Nirmithi Kendra Officials. It includes the following;

a) The original plan proposed for the construction of a new building for the Lab and the roof of the building was designed as truss work. Now after the meeting the plan has changed and the building will now have concrete roof.

b) The original plan had no provision for toilet for the use of patients who will avail the service from the new lab. Based on the discussion it was decided to bring necessary changes in the plan so that the patients who will use the Lab can make use of toilets of existing building through a separate entrance.

c) Based on the discussion it was decided to extent the frontage and waiting area for patients.

d) In addition to the change in the plan the effective intervention from the Health Watch has also resulted in removing a natural rock and an old water tank which remained as stumbling
block for the expansion of the hospital for many years. Because the rock and the water tank could not be easily removed from the land as it required permission from different governmental agencies and nobody took serious steps for its removal fearing of false complaints from opposite political parties. Now the issue has been permanently resolved as the Health Watch consisting members from different political parties reached to a consensus and decided to remove the rock and water tank from the land.

e) Removal of soil from the land was also a headache as it required permission from various governmental departments. Since the superintendent of Vaniyampara Rubber Estate Ltd. Mr. Rajendran being a member of health watch permitted to dump the soil in the rubber estate adjacent to hospital.

To conclude, the Health Watch formed for the development of PHC Vaniyampara has proved to be an effective initiative in bringing significant changes as envisaged under the project.