

Entertainment for Better Health

The SIFPSA Experience with Folk Media

Documented by :

**J. S. Deepak, Executive Director, SIFPSA
Seema, Project Coordinator (IEC), SIFPSA**

सिफसा
SIFPSA



State Innovations in Family Planning Services Project Agency

January, 2004

Contents

Health Messages through Entertainment 3

Popular Folk Forms of Uttar Pradesh 5

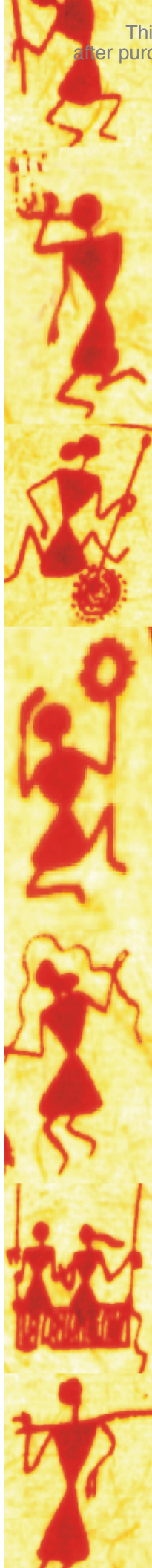
Capacity Building of Folk Troupes II

The Planning Process 14

Monitoring & Feedback 16

Reach, Effectiveness & Cost 18

Lessons Learned 23



Health Messages through Entertainment



One of the oldest civilizations of the world, India has a large, varied and rich tradition of performing arts. The state of Uttar Pradesh is also endowed with a wealth of theatrical history spanning many centuries. As in other parts of the country, theatre here brings together story-telling, mime, poetry, song, puppetry, magic, drama and dance in a multifaceted spectacle. The cultural diversity, the staggering number of religious and social organizations, agricultural practices, fairs, festivals and seasons account for an incomparable richness of folk traditions in Uttar Pradesh.

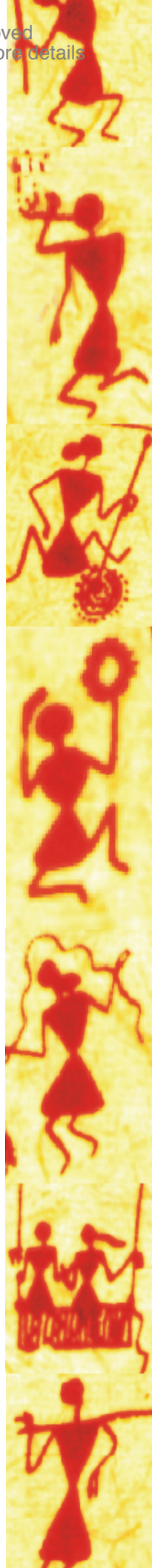
In spite of great variation in themes, variety in forms and multiplicity of styles, folk traditions continue to be a distinct category characterized by the overwhelming quality of spontaneity, an interactive style, a participatory

approach without an artificial barrier between the actors, performers and the audience.

In rural UP, folk performances are recognized as community events enjoyed by all sections regardless of economic class, caste or creed.

The importance of traditional media for health communication has been realized by SIFPSA. In a state where rural societies and communities are characterized by low literacy and limited access to technology, folk forms provide a special opportunity and comprise the principal medium of communication. Moreover, the entertainment value associated with these traditional forms, their ability to use local folklore, dialects, costumes and music and their immense popularity make them a powerful tool to deliver messages and an effective communication medium to reach out to the rural masses.

Uttar Pradesh is known for several region-specific folk forms. In the eastern part of the state *birha* is the preferred medium; the Bundelkhand



region is home to the tunes and tales of *alha*; *qawwali* springs from urdu speaking communities and is common in western UP; *nautanki*, perhaps the most widely admired folk form, is extremely popular in central and western parts; and *jadoo* or magic enthrals people across the state.

With its richness and regional variations, folk is probably the only medium which allows communication to be need-based, localized and region specific, thereby leaving a much greater impact. The challenge faced by this medium however lies in two areas : one, training the performers and building capacity in them to integrate messages with entertainment keeping the right balance and, two, tackling the logistics and organizational challenges of conducting performances in the field.

SIFPSA has over the years gainfully used different folk forms to effectively communicate family planning and reproductive & child health messages to the rural population. The popular folk styles such as *nautanki*, puppetry, *alha*, *birha*, *qawwali* and magic have been used in over 8500 performances at village level by about 100 trained troupes of these

folk forms. Such an extensive use of the folk medium in a development communication programme is perhaps unparalleled anywhere else in the country!

This document discusses in detail the features of each of the folk forms used by SIFPSA, their role in health communication, the process followed in the identification of troupes and the system of development of scripts to incorporate messages on health and family planning. Conducting folk performances on a large scale in remote villages, monitoring them and ensuring standards of the performances and clarity of the messages, along with the roles of NGOs and village *Pradhans* in coordinating this activity has been dealt with. An effort has also been made to give an estimate of the reach, effectiveness & cost of these performances. Finally, we have tried to document lessons learned, distilling eight years of experience of implementing this activity.



(J. S. Deepak)
Executive Director
SIFPSA

Popular Folk Forms of Uttar Pradesh

Folk forms showcase the culture of any state. The folk tradition in Uttar Pradesh is among the oldest and richest in the world and has managed to retain most of its distinctive features over the centuries.

The unique feature of folk arts, as opposed to the classical arts, is that there is emphasis on the feeling of belonging in the community, unity and enjoyment. It is more instinctive than technical as it comes from the heart rather than the mind. The beauty of any folk form lies in its simple construction and adaptability.

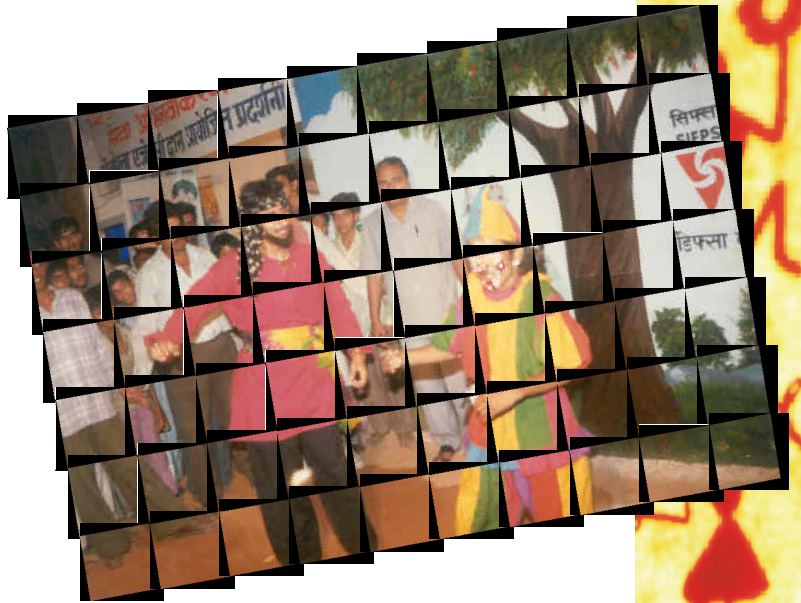
This section will focus on some of the popular folk forms of theatre like *nautanki* & puppetry, ballads like *alha & birha*, *qawwali* and *magic* which are popular in Uttar Pradesh and have over the years influenced behaviour patterns in rural communities.

THEATRE

Indian theatre is closely related to ancient religious rituals and seasonal festivities. It also has an imaginative, creative and accomplished tradition that is replete with acting, songs, drama and narrators.

In the medieval period, theatre was in a moribund state due to the socio-political and religious influences of the time. The downfall of the Mughals was responsible for the disintegration of the folk forms.

By the middle of the 19th century, almost all the forms of folk theatre had vanished, except for *jatra* (in Bengal), *tamasha* (in Maharashtra), *bhavai* (in Gujarat), *nautanki* (in Uttar Pradesh),



khayal (in Rajasthan), *naqal* (in Punjab), *maach* (in Madhya Pradesh), *ramleela* (in Uttar Pradesh), *yakshagana* (in Karnataka), *kloodiyattam* (in Kerala) and *raasleela* (in Uttar Pradesh). These are a few of the semi-classical and folk theatre forms which survive even today.

Theatre forms like *nautanki* and puppetry have played a significant role in the cultural and social processes of the last two hundred years. The performances provide a forum for fun and amusement in the daily lives of ordinary people. Even as it entertains, the traditional Indian theatre possesses the potential to regenerate and change society.



Nautanki

This roving theatre is a major attraction for village communities in Uttar Pradesh. Recognized by its broad character of recitational music and its communicative appeal, *nautanki* as a form is known for its lasting impact on audiences.

Originating from Mathura, the city of *raasleela*, *nautanki* has, in its own way, contributed to the culture of north India.

Nautanki does not require the elaborate arrangements of the modern dramatic performances. There is no stage or even a green-room for make-up. There is only a

simple wooden platform. *Nautanki* tests the skill and stamina of the artistes who are expected to perform for as long as six hours at a stretch! An hour before the show, the musicians of the orchestra begin to create the proper ambience for the performance. The artistes sing some religious or other songs connected with the play. After a brief introduction, the performance begins.

Puppetry

Puppetry is one of the oldest forms of entertainment. Besides entertaining, this visual art form is also used for conveying meaningful messages. Over the years, puppetry has developed into a powerful means of



communication and is today recognized as yet another potent non-conventional educative medium.

Puppetry offers a real challenge to the imagination and creative ability of the individual and of all the art mediums, it is probably the least restricted in its form, design, colour and movement and the least expensive of all animated visual art forms.

India has a rich heritage of puppetry which dates back to the 5th century B.C. The early puppet shows in Uttar Pradesh used doll puppets and mostly dealt with histories of great kings, heroes and political satire. Religious portrayals in puppetry were developed in south India with shadow puppets narrating stories from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. Besides religious themes, Indian puppetry also drew upon tales and messages from the *Panchatantra* and other mythological and historical epics.

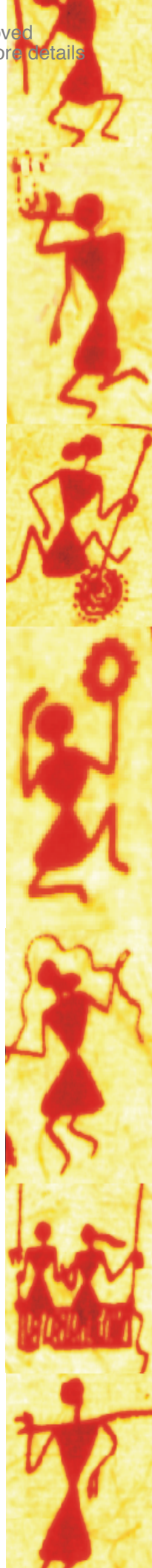
The puppet performances are a feast to behold. The doll puppets are abnormally stylized, symbolic, and colourful. Different types of puppets



are used in traditional puppetry. The differences exist not only in names, but also in form, structure and manipulation techniques. The different traditional forms are glove, rod, string, string-rod and shadow puppets. The local names given to puppetry vary from state to state within India.

Puppetry is perhaps the only art form which involves many activities like drawing and painting, wood carving and carpentry, plaster cast making, clay modelling, costume designing and preparation, story, script writing and dramatization, song and music composition and stage craft.

Today, most of the traditional puppet theatres have lost their popularity due to the influence of cinema and television. However, in its adapted form, this medium has gained tremendous popularity with educators and communicators to address social issues.



MAGIC

India has been known as the 'land of magic' with a magic tradition which is almost as old as her civilization. The magicians of India have amazed audiences all over the world for centuries. Stories about the magic of these street performers have become legendary.

Magic has an air of discipline and dignity. It is the art of creating illusions



agreeably. Anything can happen in the world of magic. Many magic performances show a beautiful girl cut into two halves under the bright lights, on the open stage! In the famous 'rope trick of India', the magician climbs up the taut rope amidst a crowd of spectators and disappears into thin air in broad day light. Lately, the Uttar Pradesh countryside is witness to a number of troupes which

conjure condoms from the pockets of men in the audience!

Having the power to fascinate everybody right from the age of eight to eighty-eight, magic has been found to be a very effective medium to communicate social messages integrated with magical tricks.

BALLADS

Music is a celebration of life. It permeates the core of India, from the rhythmic chants of the tribals to the sonorous ballads of eastern India. The cultural diversity creates endless varieties of folk styles and each region has its own particular style. Music is an indispensable component of social functions such as weddings, engagements, and births. There are also many songs associated with planting and harvesting. In these activities the villagers routinely sing of their hopes, fears and aspirations.



Folk music with its popularity among the rural masses, has been widely used for delivering messages on social issues. Within UP, the popular regional forms of folk songs are *aloha* from Bundelkhand region and *birha* from eastern UP.



Bundelkhand has been famous not only for its gallantry but also for its rich culture and men of letters. The well known poets of ancient India, Veda Vyas, Balmiki, Tulsi Das and the brave warrior queen Laxmibai belong to this region and have made great contributions through their writings and deeds.

In this region folk songs are heart rendering and full of melody. They have been kept alive for generations by a remarkable oral tradition of community singing.

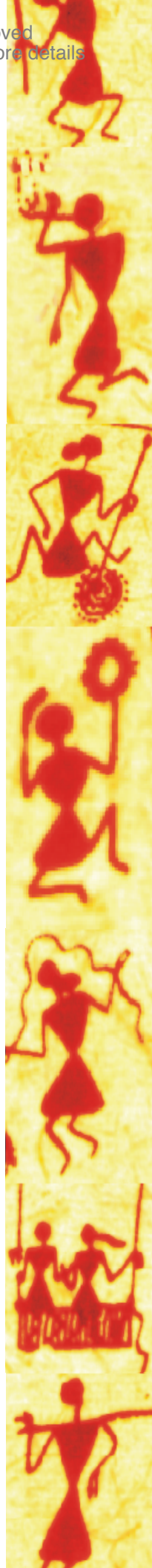
Alha

Among a variety of folk songs sung on different occasions, *aloha*, the chivalry songs are the most popular for their war themes, tunes and way of singing. *Aloha* contains the

description of fifty-two heroic battles and exploits of the warriors - *Alha* and *Udal*. These Bundeli folk songs and *ballads* are simple, rich in symbolization and have the power to sway the audience.

Birha

Birha is one of the most popular folk song forms of eastern Uttar Pradesh. It traces its origins to the devotional songs composed in praise of a local female deity Bhiula Devi. This singing style is remarkable for its simplicity and adaptability.





QAWWALI

The *qawwali* is a traditional urdu devotional song. For centuries it has been inspired and propagated by the Chisti school of sufism.

The word *qawwali* is derived from the Arabic word 'qaol' which means "axiom" or "dictum". The *qawwali* is closely linked to the spiritual and artistic life of northern India. The origins of *qawwali* probably predate the birth of Muhammad.

The performance of a *qawwali* is typically a group activity. This is different from a classical performance which revolves around one person. Within the group situation, there is

one main vocalist or *qawwal*, and a group of supporting vocalists. The audience too is considered a participant in this event. Along with musical accompaniment, a simple



clapping of the hands provides a rhythmic support in a *qawwali* performance.

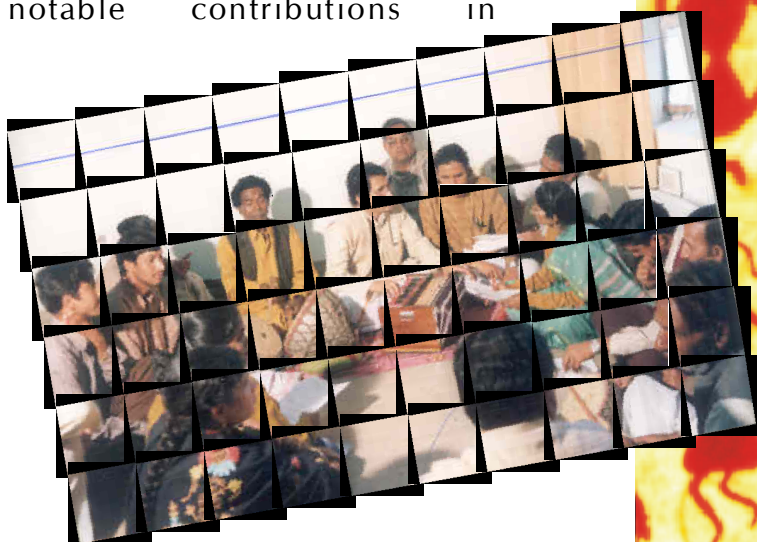
Capacity Building of Folk Troupes

A unique characteristic of folk performances is their emphasis on enjoyment. At the same time they are simple and adaptable. However, weaving family planning and reproductive & child health (RCH) messages into these folk forms can be quite challenging. Each folk form requires creation of exclusive scripts by experts in the field, keeping in mind the various messages that need to be communicated and myths dispelled regarding immunization, neo natal care, breast feeding, safe delivery, age at marriage, family planning and HIV/AIDS.

Realizing the potential of folk media in reaching the hitherto inaccessible rural audiences, SIFPSA decided to integrate messages on family planning and RCH with various types of folk forms popular in rural Uttar Pradesh. The troupes performing those forms were identified too. In order to bring uniformity in message content and effective message delivery, all the selected troupes undergo rigorous training which includes development of scripts. Training is done by an

expert agency, *Brij Lok Madhuri* contracted by SIFPSA.

Having rich experience of over three decades, *Brij Lok Madhuri* is an organization known for promoting performing folk arts at the national and international level. Besides making sustained efforts to revive the vanishing folk culture in India and propagating it abroad, it has made notable contributions in



disseminating socially relevant messages through folk forms. Its chief functionary, Pandit Ram Dayal Sharma, who is an artist of international acclaim, has numerous awards and citations to his credit. As

a composer, actor and singer he has contributed to numerous theatre productions.

Brij Lok Madhuri possesses professional expertise in the areas of script writing, props & costumes, production and training. Using their panel of script writers and master trainers, SIFPSA has developed a number of scripts and has provided training to over 100 troupes from various forms such as *nautanki*, *qawwali*, *alha*, *birha*, puppetry and magic.



The Training Workshop

SIFPSA has conducted four training workshops since 1999. These workshops have developed the capacity of performing troupes in several spheres. The last one was held from 15-25 December, 2003.

The training workshop involves a complete orientation of the troupes based on the objectives of the SIFPSA project, sensitizing them to the nature of the messages required. These capacity building workshops are not only a training ground for troupes but also an opportunity to integrate them into the SIFPSA communication campaigns, while retaining their

individual styles.

Designed as a residential training programme, the module for each form is spread over two days, thereby

providing adequate scope for group work, interactive sessions, rehearsals of message delivery and development of scripts. The participants are usually bubbling with creativity and work hard, practising their scripts and roles late into the night.

The scripts are usually spun around story ideas that are rich in entertainment value and interspersed with family planning and health messages. The scripts also ensure the standardization of messages, their quality and the duration of the performances. The workshop provides an opportunity to the participants to work upon the scripts

and encourages improvisation by adding the flavour of local dialects and folklores. Through a participatory process of group work, the scripts are modified, refined and finalized for use in the field. Finer details such as tunes, *ragas*, costumes and props are discussed for each script. Emphasis is laid on striking a balance between entertainment and education.



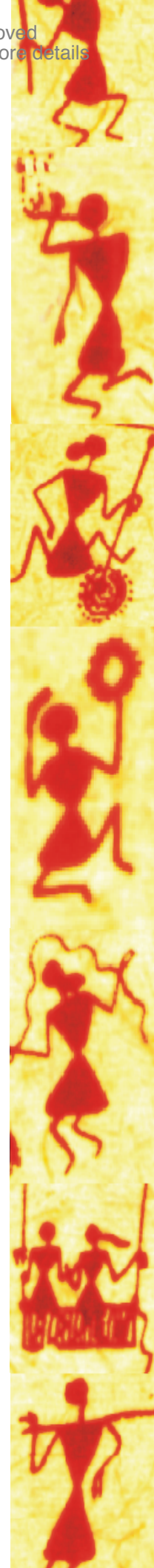
Without limiting their creativity, the magic troupes are made to use their imagination and apply different concepts and tricks of script presentation. Similarly, puppetry troupes share their ideas to present a particular message in various creative forms.

The resource persons ensure one to one interaction with the performers

to understand their potential and individual constraints. The workshop helps groom them into the correct rhythm and style, under the guidance of experts and specialists for accurate message delivery. The sessions on scripts, tunes, costumes and props are followed by practice on each script for which participants from different troupes are drawn together. This not only ensures participation by all the troupes but also fosters the spirit of competition and learning from each other.

By the end of day two, it is ensured that their presentations are refined, the basic messages are accurately included in their scripts and a variety of optional messages are given to them. The scripts are also set to music and basic props required for the performances firmed up.

In a nutshell, it is a training programme with a difference. Not only do the participants learn from the expertise of the trainers, but they themselves bring in a tremendous variety of rich experiences that adds value to the workshop.



The Planning Process

The folk media implementation has followed a systematic planning process involving various activities like selection of troupes, development of scripts, the logistics of conducting folk shows, the use of NGOs and village *Pradhans* as local facilitators for folk troupes, monitoring and feedback. Some key steps are detailed below :

Troupe Selection

Based on their specialization folk troupes are registered by the Director of Information, UP and the Song & Drama division of Govt. of India for various categories like *bhajans* (devotional songs), *alha*, *qawwali*, puppetry, magic, *birha*, small composite troupes, large composite troupes, drama and *nautanki*. These agencies also fix the fee per performance to be paid to the troupes. SIFPSA selects troupes from amongst those with registration in *nautanki*, magic, *alha*, *birha*, *qawwali* and puppetry as these forms are preferred by the target audiences in UP.

An audition is carried out aided by experts and two key members of each short listed troupe attend a 2-day workshop where they undergo a

rigorous script development exercise.

The selection process keeps in mind the need for having troupes from different parts of the state so that they can be assigned performances near their home base. This reduces time and cost on troupe movement and also ensures that troupes performing in a particular district use the dialects, costumes and folk lore of that particular region.

Route Mapping

Villages with a population size of 2000 to 5000, remote location and limited reach of mass media are selected. This is done in close

Various Stages in the Planning Process



collaboration with the block medical officer, the district health information officer and any NGO which may be operating in the area.

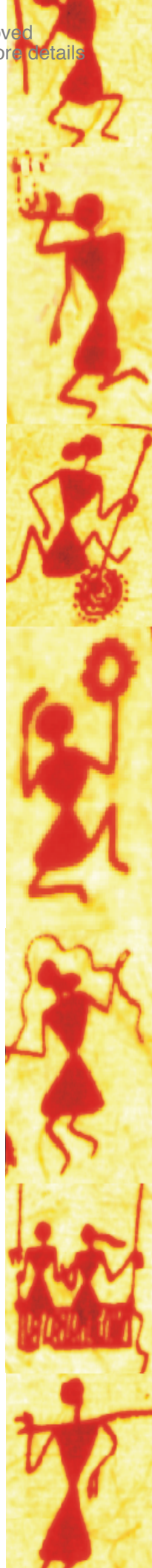
Route planning of folk performances is done centrally at SIFPSA. The list of the villages selected is compiled on a standardized format with logistic details like location of the village, road connectivity and the distances between villages. This is used to allocate villages to each troupe and develop a rough route plan. This plan is shared with NGOs, which are used as local facilitation and monitoring partners and their inputs obtained on the plan and also on the suitability of the particular folk form, dates of festivals and local conditions.

This route plan including the data sheet fixes the movement for the troupes as well as the people monitoring the performances. The route plan is shared with the district programme managers, NGOs, *panchayats* as well as the troupes. If the troupes are not able to perform on the pre-decided dates because of inclement weather, unwell team members or some unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances, the route plan continues to be followed and the villages left out are covered on new dates, in consultation with all the stakeholders.

Coordination Meeting

The coordination meeting with NGO partners and folk troupes has been found to be extremely useful and has become an important feature after the first phase of implementation in 1999. In addition to the finalization of the route plan, the NGO representatives are also oriented on quality issues like stage lighting, sound system, choice of venues, pre publicity and minimum standards for each troupes. They are told to identify performance points keeping in mind the comfort levels of the women viewers and weaker sections. They are briefed about the system of monitoring and given standard monitoring formats. The payment of fees to the troupes was routed through the NGOs before the SIFPSA district offices or PMUs were established. This is now being handled by PMUs.

While ironing out various logistics issues, these meetings also trigger the feeling of ownership of folk performances among NGOs, which in turn helps in efficient implementation. This has ensured that before the troupes reach the village, the community is informed and mobilized and arrangements for the performance made by the NGO. Where NGOs are not working, this responsibility is assigned to the village *Pradhan*. Information also spreads by word of mouth as well as through announcements by beat of drums and during religious congregations.



Monitoring & Feedback

In order to ensure good quality of performance and standardization and accuracy of message delivery, SIFPSA has established a system of monitoring folk performances in rural areas. The purpose of monitoring is also to provide support to the event, trouble shooting at the local level and gauging the audience response in terms of comprehension, recall and understanding.

More than a third of the performances were monitored by SIFPSA & PMUs. The contribution of PMUs, NGO partners and SIFPSA officers has been crucial in monitoring the folk media intervention. Feedback is also sought from the performing troupes.

Special semi-structured monitoring formats have been developed for four kinds of monitoring:

daily monitoring done by the supervisors of SIFPSA NGO partners

detailed periodic monitoring by senior functionaries of the NGO partners

monitoring and trouble shooting by SIFPSA and PMU officers

monitoring of performance quality by experts.

The monitoring is fairly detailed and covers the following aspects which are important ingredients of a successful performance.

Pre-publicity efforts undertaken by the NGO such as use of public announcement systems, drum beaters, door to door visits by volunteers

Involvement and support of village influentials, opinion leaders, *panchayat* members

Suitability of the venue selected for all sections of the village community

Stage, power supply and sitting arrangements made by the NGO

Quality of sound system, costumes, musical instruments used by the troupes

Message delivery, flow of messages, their linkage with services & local service providers

Size, composition and reaction of the audience and its involvement

Capacity of the troupe to hold audience attention

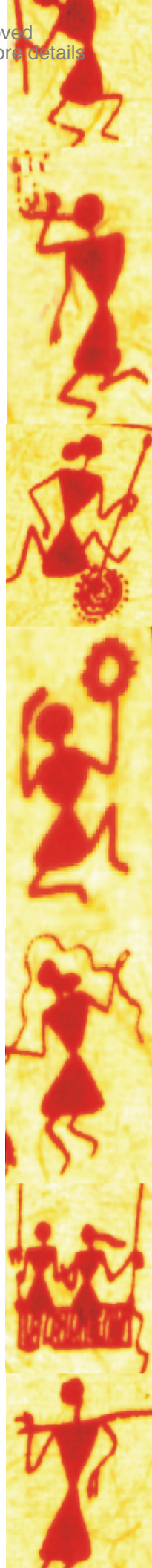
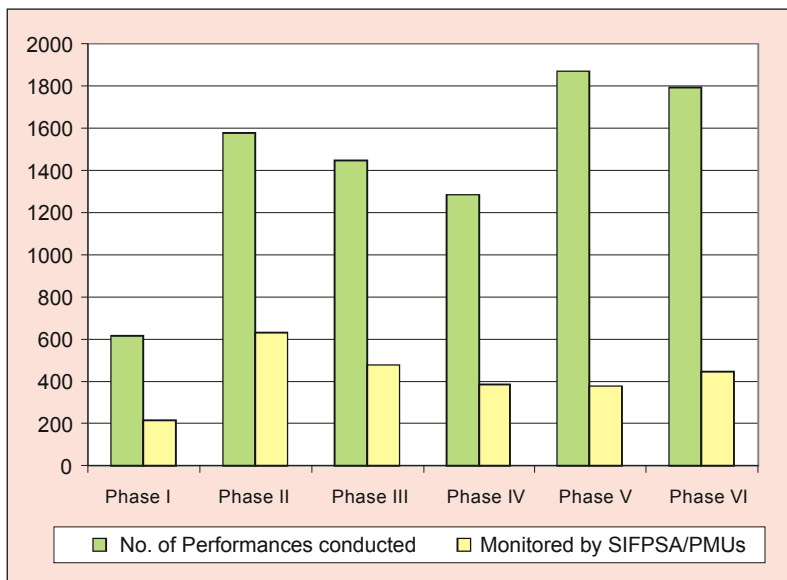
The performances monitored by NGO partners, PMUs and SIFPSA officers provide valuable inputs for improvement and their management in subsequent phases.

In addition to using semi-structured formats as monitoring tools, informal interviews with the women of the target group, family influentials and village leaders gathered for the performance are also conducted by the monitoring officers. These provide valuable insights about qualitative

issues such as likeability of the performance, comprehension and credibility of the messages which is used to improve the scripts being used by troupes.

Feedback on arrangements, messages, delivery styles etc is shared with the troupes and the NGO partners instantly and corrective actions taken for the future performances. Also, SIFPSA has applied learnings from the previous phases which has resulted in continuous improvement in the performances and greater impact.

Monitoring of Folk Performances



Reach, Effectiveness & Cost

As an enter-educate approach, the folk media initiative has proved its potential to carry messages down to the village level and in involving people through a popular community event. Such occasions being rare in villages, the response of the audience has been enthusiastic and there has been a demand for more, and at times, repeat performances. The performances have attracted audiences from all age groups and socio-economic strata. Both men and women have attended them.

For the performers it has been an immensely rich experience of being a part of SIFPSA health campaigns. Some speak of the facilitation by officers and NGOs which helps take care of logistics issues while others find the interaction with, and involvement of, the audiences very encouraging. The review of data and analysis of monitoring and feedback formats from 2100 performances has given some interesting feedback and many rare insights. Some relating to attendance & composition of audience, crowd mobilization, choice of venue, duration of performances, delivery of messages and audience response are summarized below.

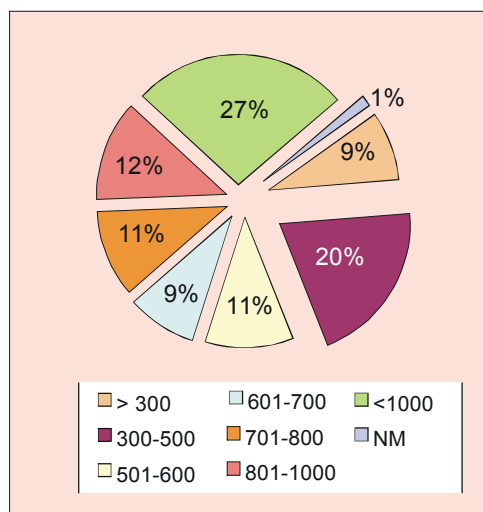
Attendance

About 27 percent of all performances were able to draw an audience of 1000 people or more. Only about 9 per cent performances attracted crowds of less than 300. The proportion of those who form the family planning target audience, among the crowd, varied to a large extent. In 10 percent of performances, more that 70 percent of the audience comprised the target group. In 96 per cent of the performances, opinion leaders were also present.

Crowd Mobilization

The mobilization of the crowd to attend the performances was facilitated in 93 percent venues by

Attendance at Folk Performances



Source : SIFPSA Monitoring

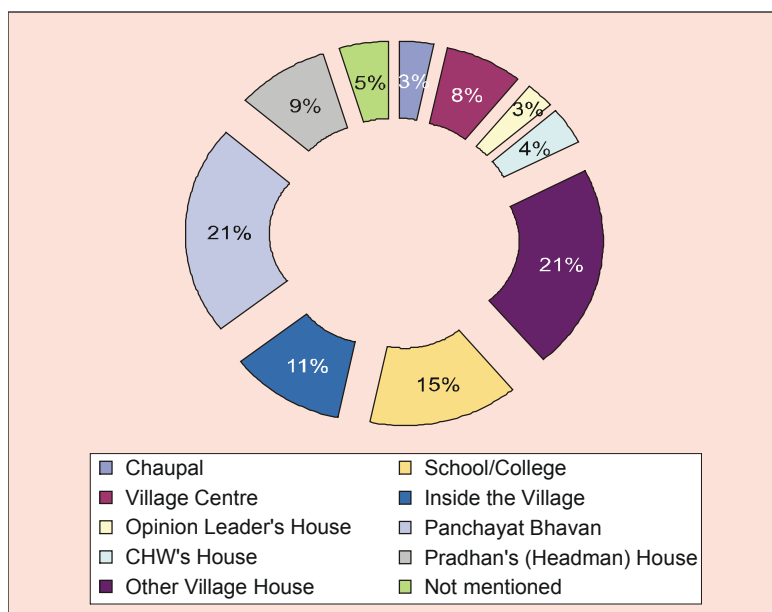
repeated announcements inviting people to the performance. In 88 percent of the cases the troupes played instruments, sang songs or danced to attract people.

Venue

The selection of the venue has been the responsibility of the facilitating NGO, and the community health worker in particular, in consultation with the village community. The criteria for venue selection have been laid out to ensure that it is a suitable place where all sections of the community, especially the women would not hesitate to come.

Hosting performances appeared to be a matter of pride for the villagers and important persons in the village vied to host them in their own homes. About 12% of the performances were held at headmen’s houses. Sometimes, the grassroots workers also held performances outside their homes, and often requested an important person in the village to host them so that women could sit in their porch or on terraces. More than 30% were held at public venues like school (14.6%), community house (11.0%) and chaupal (3%). By and large the venues selected were neutral places and not based on caste and religious considerations.

Venue of Folk Performances



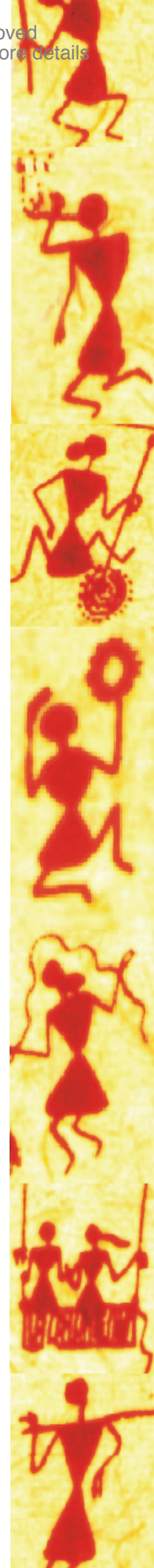
Source : SIFPSA Monitoring

The above chart shows that 21% of the performances were held inside the village and 21% in private houses.

usually performed two scripts at each place and this was generally the case for *nautanki* troupes.

Duration

Performances in most cases continued for two hours, and in 19 percent of the performances duration was for more than 3 hours. Each troupe was given three scripts to rehearse and perform. They



Message Delivery

An important feature of folk performances is that they provide a forum to interact with the audience and to respond to their queries while performing. The feedback shows that

98 percent of the troupes could create a rapport with the audience

90 percent cases, the audience queries were responded to by the troupe & NGOs.

Display of IEC materials

In order to reinforce messages from SIFPSA campaigns which are ongoing at any given time, the troupes are provided with IEC materials to be displayed on the stage. In 97 per cent performances campaign posters were displayed, and in 90 per cent cases the performers wore campaign badges.

Audience Response

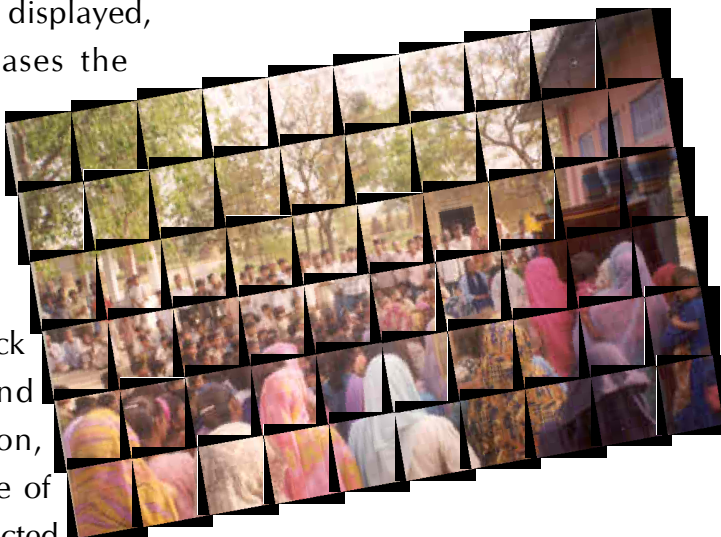
In order to get a feedback on performance and message comprehension, responses from a sample of the audience were collected on the day after the performance with the help of the local health worker.

This exercise was tried out for five different scripts. The folk forms covered include *nautanki*, *qawwali* and puppetry and respondents included 57 per cent men and 43 per cent women. The purpose was to get a feedback and response of the community to the folk performances.

Viewership

Relation with respondent	Percentage
Only Self	13.1
With Spouse	41.3
With Children	55.0
With Mother/In-Law	21.9
With Father/In-Law	15.6
With Brother/In-Law	30.0
With Sister/In-Law	19.4

It is apparent that in about 87% of the cases, performances were watched in



company of family members. In a large number (41%), the respondents

were accompanied by their spouses and in 55% cases with children. This reinforces the experience in the field that children formed a large section of the spectators. The children were there for the entertainment irrespective of their comprehension, which serves as a crude indicator that the performances were entertaining.

Around 96 percent of the target audience stated that they liked the performance and 99 percent expressed their desire to see a similar performance again. Around 99 percent also stated that they would ask others, both family and friends to watch the performance when it happens next.

Message Comprehension

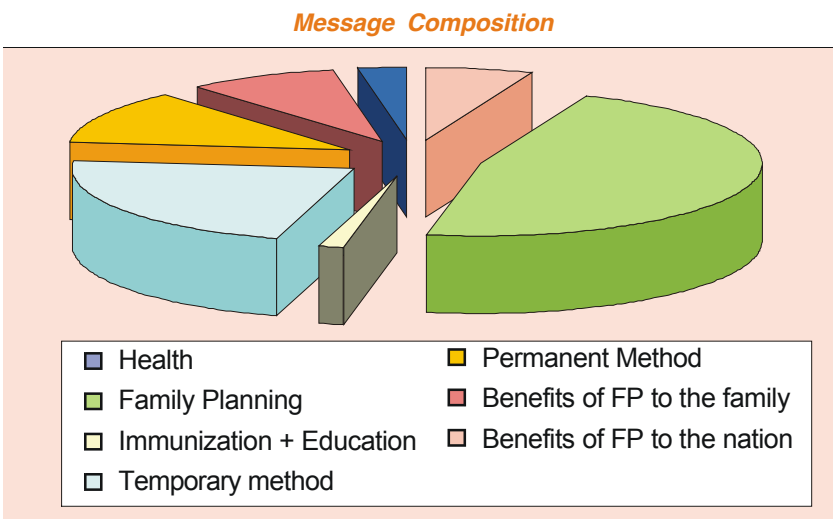
The audience could also comprehend the messages on health

and family planning. 43 percent said that the messages were on temporary family planning methods and 16 percent mentioned health messages.

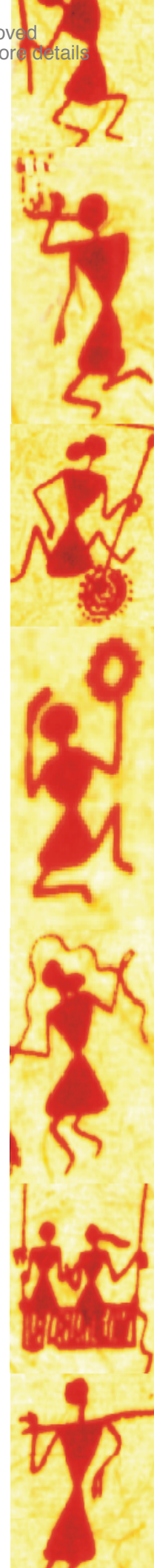
Cost

Since inception SIFPSA has spent an amount of Rs. 1400 lacs on information, education & communication (IEC) activities. Of this Rs. 194 lacs has been spent on folk media which accounts for 14% of the IEC spend.

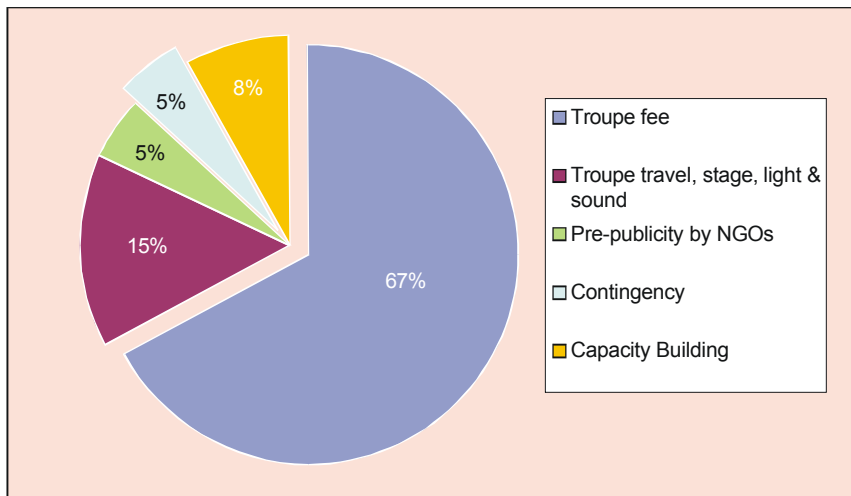
The outlay on folk media can be broken up into a number of categories like cost of training, fees of troupes, travel, stage, light & sound arrangements, expenses of troupes, expenditure by NGOs on pre-publicity and contingencies. The break up of these expenses is given in the chart.



Of the total cost, 67% was performance fee of troupes, 15% was spent on their travel, stage, light and sound arrangements,



Folk Media Expenditure - Categorywise Breakup



8% on capacity building, 5% on pre-publicity by NGOs and another 5% for contingent expenditure.

The average cost of each of the 8500 folk performances in the six phases

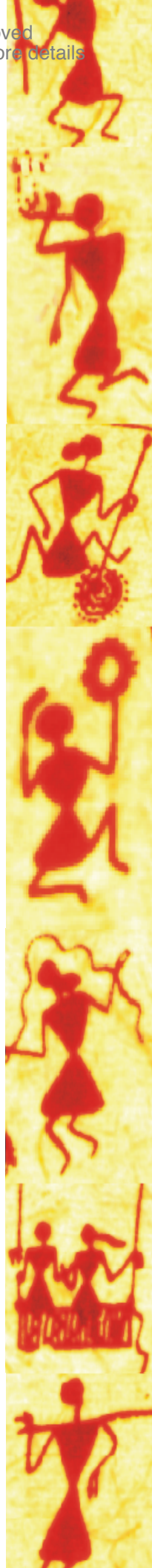
of folk intervention from 1999 to 2003 works out to about Rs. 2300/- and the average number of people witnessing a performance was about 475.

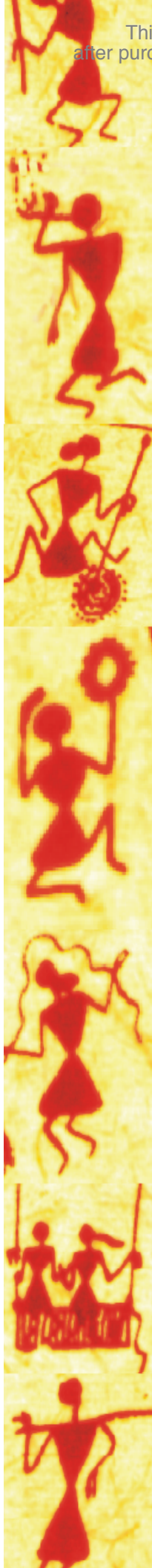
Lessons Learned



Some of the main lessons learned are :

1. **Regional preference for style :**
It is important to keep in mind the regional preference while planning the schedules of performances. For instance, *birha* is not liked by audiences in western Uttar Pradesh who relate better to a *nautanki* show.
2. **Decentralized planning :**
Involvement of PMUs and NGO partners who have better knowledge of ground realities in logistics planning is very useful.
3. **Location / venue :** Central place, within the reach of all communities, ensures better attendance. Role of NGO partner in venue selection is important.
4. **Time :** Performances need to be organized in the evening when people are free from their daily chores.
5. **Pre-publicity :** Proper publicity of the performance, a day before, is imperative for crowd mobilization. Entrusting this responsibility to the NGO partner helps in publicizing the occasion and bringing people to the venue of performance.



- 
6. **Balance of entertainment & education :** Ensuring the right balance of entertainment and messages is crucial for a successful performance. The right mix of entertainment to attract and hold the audience without diluting the message content depends on the skill of the troupe.
 7. **Sensitivity :** Since folk is a sensitive media, it needs to be used with caution so as not to inadvertently hurt any community, caste, creed or gender.
 8. **Period / phasing :** The need for detailed campaign planning in terms of content and timing can not be ignored. For instance, if a campaign is held in the months of harvesting when rural folks are busy, it does not have the desired result. Similarly, monsoon, peak summers and festival seasons too have to be avoided.
 9. **Linkages with services/ service providers :** If the campaign is not backed by availability of the services in the area, it loses relevance.
 10. **Introduction of Service Providers :** Calling the local NGO volunteer, *dai* or auxiliary nurse midwife (ANM) to the stage and introduction to the audience is invaluable for increasing self esteem of the providers.
 11. **Pradhans ineffective for pre-publicity :** While keen to attend performances, *Pradhans* did not take adequate interest in publicity and thus crowd attendance in non-NGO areas (where pre-publicity was to be done by *Pradhans*) was lower than average.
 12. **Suitability of Folk Forms :** *Alha* performances were found to be the least suitable for message incorporation. *Alha* also scored low on popularity with audiences. Therefore, *alha* troupes were discontinued after the third phase in 2000.