

Best practice-2

Community Outreach programmes as a way of life: It has been a constant endeavour of CUH to look after the issues of local and national importance through our community outreach activities. The university has been involved in working with the community on thematic areas of food and health, environment and women empowerment. The university is committed to promote community led improvement in nearby adopted villages through various activities.

- Food security, health and Women empowerment: through nutrition week program
- Promotion of Community health: Awareness programmes and health camps
- Promotion of Swachh Bharat Mission- Environment awareness programmes, plantation drive

1. Objectives:

The objective of the community development programs is to create awareness in people about the government flagship programs in health, nutrition and environment. Further the department of Nutrition Biology is through its outreach programs identifies the occurrence of nutrition related health problems in the community. The overall objective of this practice is to disseminate information on these key thematic areas through rallies, play, lectures and other competitions.

2. The context

The key thematic missions of the Government of India are Swachh Bharat, Swasth Bharat therefore, the CUH is committed to fulfil the missions of these programs in the areas of Food & Health and Clean environment. Under Go Green mission, an optimum use of natural resources and maintaining a clean and green environment are necessary for sustainable future. Converting the semi-arid land of the university and nearby villages into clean and green areas is the need towards Sustainable Development Goals of United Nations. In this context, CUH has undertaken several activities and awareness programmes to promote the mission of green campus. On the similar lines, under Swasth Bharat mission, the Department of Nutrition Biology is involved in community activities for imparting nutrition education with the involvement of students

3. The Practice

CUH celebrates 'National Nutrition Week' each year from 1 September to 7th September to create awareness among the rural and urban community for their good health and well-being. The campaign was first started by the Central Government in the year 1982 in order to encourage good health and healthy living through nutrition education. The Food and Nutrition Board, Ministry of Women and Child Development, and other NGOs are working on nutrition week throughout the country. The main aim of national nutrition week is to enhance the nutritional awareness among the community through rally, lectures, road shows and many other campaigns to make a healthy nation. Different themes based on food and nutrition have been taken up each year: Life Cycle approach for better nutrition (2016), "Go Further with Food" (2018), Poshan ke paanch Sutra (2019) and Nutrition month in 2021. The NSS unit has also organised Blood donation camp each year. A special training on first aid training and health

diagnostic camps have also been organised. A workshop on “Achieving health through nutrition and fitness” was organised to create awareness among school children in respect to their nutritional status, detection of adulterants in foods and to monitor the Body Mass Index (BMI) of children aged between 10-18 years.

Besides this area of Food and Nutrition, the NSS unit of the university also organises various activities related to clean environment initiative. The university policy related to clean campus initiatives is already established. Various plantation drives and clean environment rallies, nukkad natak, awareness camps have been organised in the adopted villages. In campus, the university is using renewable energy like solar energy, installed LED bulbs and energy efficient equipments. The university is committed to preserve its Flora and Fauna. Moreover, the university organises various seminars/workshops etc. on environment-related issues.

4. The evidence of success

We were able to continue the ‘National Nutrition week’ successfully from 2016 onwards and the students are now able to carry out this programme on their own without much assistance from the teachers. A huge participation has been observed in these activities from the local community. The NSS through its various activities has oriented the students to understand the problems in local community and made them to design the problem solving outreach activities. The NSS has collaborated with many local bodies to cater to the needs of the local villagers. As the university is about 500 acres and is far from the city and the green initiative makes the students & staff to enjoy morning walk, games and sports, gym in pleasant atmosphere s

5. Problems encountered and resources required

Regarding the food and health initiative, the problems encountered include less response from the targeted population on the stipulated time and date, lack of awareness among First generation learners to adopt the newer scientific interventions and missing social interaction with the peers. The Green initiatives are always challenging in this semi-arid region because of harsh conditions of weather. Moreover, the maintenance of plants is difficult due to damage by animals. It also requires sufficient manpower to maintain them.

During the pandemic, as per the Government instructions, the institution was closed for a longer period due to the pandemic that has severely affected both the programmes, however all the activities have been resumed now. Nevertheless, the long-term sustainable effect of these initiatives depends on determination and assurance from all the stakeholders.