

Story to Inspire ASHAs

Meenakshi was a Community Health Worker in her village. She came from a poor family so even though she was good in studies, she couldn't continue her education beyond 9th standard. She had always been a shy girl, but was polite and thoughtful.

When a local NGO began a Home-based Newborn Care Project, they interviewed many girls in her village looking for a CHW. They picked Meenakshi. Meenakshi herself couldn't believe it. At the beginning she didn't have the self-confidence, and wondered if she would really be able to do the job.

Right from the beginning when Meenakshi started visiting women in their homes, something happened to her. She became very interested in the women. She enjoyed talking to them and hearing their stories and discussing their concerns. They liked her too. They appreciated her politeness, and realized that her show of concern came from her heart. What at first was just a chore – visiting every house – became something she looked forward to every 2 months.

After some time, Meenakshi attended a delivery in the middle of the night where the baby had difficulty breathing. Meenakshi cleared the secretions just as she was taught, and the baby gave out a big cry.

In another house she helped a woman who had a very small preterm baby. With Meenakshi's help and patience, the mother learnt how to take care of and feed the little one.

As the months rolled by, Meenakshi felt stronger. The villagers came to respect her. Her self-confidence grew. She knew she still had a lot to learn but she felt she was making a contribution to the health and happiness of families in her community.