

## Spreading Smiles- The story of Sharmila and Shymal.

It is believed that when a person is blessed with a child the child tends to make the person a better one. Any parents would go to any extent to help the child grow and live a happy life. However not everyone is blessed. Some are fortunate to meet at least the minimum basic needs however poverty at times deprives one from leading a healthy life and the lack of development in the area too adds to the pitiable condition one has to go through.

Tripura- The third smallest state of the country being surrounded by one international border of Bangladesh. Tripura was also the only independent princely state that was ruled for centuries by the Tripuri Dynasty. Tripura has witnessed the repatriation of the ethnic communities especially the Bru communities. The state over the years has witnessed many violence and imbalance and has equally been trying to fight the wrong.

In the State of Tripura lies a district named North Tripura within which lies a village called Pumatila under



Dasda Block. A landless couple who earn their livelihood depending on seasonal agriculture which they plough on someone else's plot and otherwise they work as daily wage labour. Khagen was the name of the head of family who was also a father of two children. Sharmila, 5 years old daughter was the apple of the eye of her father and every day he would try to bring something for the children within whatever he could afford. One night Sharmila's body was burning with fever and on the unfortunate night it rained heavily. The plight of the poor couple was so that they could not go to the nearest PHC at that odd hour of the night as the **nearest PHC was 13kms** away from their house and **the Sub centre nearest to his home too was approx. 4 Km** away.

Khagen could think of nobody, but Mr. Shymal Tripura who was the CHV of the village. Khagen rushed to Shymal's home about whom he had come to know during the CCMD that he had attended. Khagen along with Sharmila reached the CHV's home. Shymal immediately conducted the test using RDT kit. Within 30 minutes Sharmila's result was out and was found to be positive. Sharmila was then given ACT-AL with PQ.75.

Upon completion of the full treatment Sharmila today breathes happily and plays cheerfully along with the peers of her age. Shymal kept a tab and consistently followed up on the health and status of the child. Also during House Visit Shymal had seen a positive change and that is the whole family now uses the mosquito net.

Being one of the intervention village the impact of BCC was seen to bring the change in the behaviour and practice of the people living in the area. The effort of the team is highly appreciated.

Khagen expresses his gratitude to **VHAI** along with **National Vector Borne Disease Control Program and Caritas** India for all their support. He says *"Thankfully we have a friendly messenger in our village because of whom we can access to treatment and medication so easily. Thank you for reaching out medical support in such remote areas and making us believe that there is still good in this cruel world."*

**The team of VHAI takes immense pleasure in sharing the story with the PR's and the rest of the world.**