



Creation of a society based on justice and free from poverty & exploitation

ANNUAL REPORT

2021 – 22



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CONTENTS

Action and Impact

1. Covid-19 Relief Support: Food & Medical Kits
2. Covid-19 Vaccination Drive
3. Promotion of Natural and Climate Resilient Agriculture
4. Promotion of Fisheries
5. Water Management: Borabandh
6. Forest Right: Land Patta

About the Organization

Outreach Overview

Our Governance

Our Bankers and Auditors

Our Development Partners

Our Publications

Executive Summary

Vikas Sahyog Kendra (VSK) has conducted several programs to ensure food and livelihoods of the rural and tribal people in Palamau, Jharkhand. During the period of 2021 – 22, we outreached our activities in 90 villages of Chhatarpur and Naudiha Bazar blocks of Palamau district. We have been focused towards Scheduled Caste (SC), Scheduled Tribe (ST) and Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTG) of the area. Our main objective was to support those families affected by Covid-19 pandemic for their food and medical support. The targeted communities of the rural households are facing a large number of socio-economic problems including poverty, drought, ground water depletion, lack of clean energy sources, crop failure, food & nutritional insecurity, unemployment, indebtedness and painful migration.

Several actions were taken to solve or reduce the problems; these are distribution of food packet and medicines under Covid-19 relief program and vaccinations to the rural people. Apart from that we have worked towards the promotion of natural and climate resilient agriculture, water management, fisheries, livestock management, ensuring of social welfare schemes, MGNREGA, FRA, business plan for the community based organization, training and skill development to youths and advocacy at block, district and state level.

As a result we achieved to mobilize the rural people, accessing of rights over land and natural resources, strengthening of local institutions, training to women and youths, construction of water bodies, promotion of sustainable and climate resilient agriculture, soil moisture retention, exposures to SHGs and CBO, conducted advocacy, clean energy solutions under Ujjwala scheme, solar irrigation system.

The hard and dedicated work of our team members transformed into a good result and sustainable impact towards food, health and livelihoods of the poor and marginalized people. Emergency food support and vaccination drive along with awareness generation helped to save the people from the pandemic. Similarly MGNREGA, FRA and Social Welfare Schemes supported in water management, land rights, promotion of natural and climate resilient agriculture and strengthening of community based organization.

Covid-19 Relief Support: Food & Medical Kits

Training Program: A training program was organized in Chhatarpur block of Palamau district to create awareness on the Corona pandemic. During the meeting we identified affected families of the area, conducted community level relief work and motivated people to ensure vaccination for self and community protection. This program was conducted by making coordination between the government and the enlisted organizations. The detail information shared in the training was about the corona test, use of mask, proper hand wash and sanitation, eating of fresh and healthy food etc. It was decided in the training meeting that the vaccination drive will be conducted by our staff and health assistants of the Community Health Center. Through the training method of house hold survey and identification of affected individuals was explained. All the trainees made aware on ensuring of the treatment and medicine to the infected people. At the end of the training role & responsibilities of staff/volunteers were discussed regarding awareness generation and relief work at *panchayat* and for the support center at block level.

Survey of the Affected HH: Survey was conducted in 30 *Dalit* (SC) and *adivasi* (ST) villages of five Panchayat under Chhatarpur block. A group of 10 people were engaged to identify the affected families. They gathered information by visiting village to village and talking to Mukhiya, ward member, Angan baadi sevika, women's group leader, community leader etc. In these villages a total of 700 corona affected families including pregnant women, lactating women, widows, old people, disabled, and helpless were identified.

Awareness Program: Awareness program was conducted on the prevention of corona infection and the measures to be taken during the pandemic period. Around 3000 people have been aware through posters, pamphlets and door to door meetings. During the awareness drive our volunteers distributed masks to the community people. Awareness on the use of masks, social distancing, hand-washing and sanitation use was conducted. Importance of fresh, healthy and nutritious food for building immunity was also discussed during the awareness program. Discussing about the symptoms of corona was one of the major topics of the awareness program. We also suggested to consult to the doctors immediately in case of any symptoms expressed.

Surakshit Ham Surakshit Tum Abhiyan: This program was conducted in all the aspirational districts including Palamau from June 2021. The main objectives of “Surakshit Ham Surakshit Tum Abhiyan” were to build capacity of the Front Line Workers on “Home care of patients” and “Proper use of oxygen concentrators” as well as community mobilization on the vaccination drive.

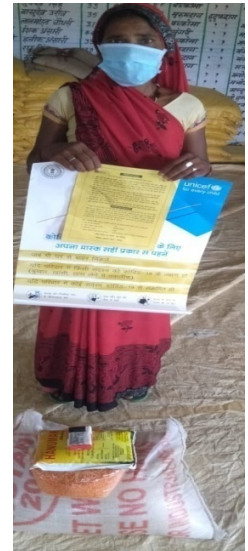
Food and Medicine Support: We worked towards the distribution of food & medicine kits among 805 people of the selected blocks. The kit included rice, pulses, mustard oil, masks, soap, Paracetamol-500, and Zinc Tab 50 mg.

Case Story – I

Phulwa Kunwar is the wife of Late Amrit Bhuinya of village Itakdag in Chhatarpur block. She is a widow for the last 12 years facing extreme poverty and painful helplessness in the poor rural society. All the 6 children of Phulwa Devi including 4 daughters and 2 sons are married. She is living alone in her village in an ordinary thatched mud hut. After the coming of Corona pandemic and subsequent lockdown the economic condition of Phulwa became worst. She was suffering from different kind of diseases. This year when vaccination program was started and a team of health workers visited her village to conduct vaccination drive, Phulwa was one of the persons who get vaccinated. After vaccination she faced several complications. The volunteers of VSK admitted her to Chhatarpur government hospital for proper treatment. She recovered the diseases after a long suffering. She was one of the beneficiaries who got food and medicine kit through the volunteers of Vikas Sahyog Kendra.

Case Story – II

Sayyeda Bibi is the wife of Late Azam Miyan of village Murumdag in Chhatarpur block. Her husband passed away 15 years before. It was her bad luck that she lost her single son 5 years back. She is living alone in her home as no one in her family in this old age to look her after. She is very poor facing various problems including mental illness; she has lost her one eye too. She is not in such a condition to earn her livelihood. Sometimes her neighbor used to help by food and clothe. During the survey our volunteers selected her and provided food kit and medicines. She has received both doses of the corona vaccine.



Distribution of food & medicine kits among the rural people

Annual Report 2021 – 22

Covid-19 Vaccination Drive

This is under the Arogya Jharkhand Civil Society Network (AJCSN) a total of 14 NGOs participated in the vaccination drive including Vikas Sahyog Kendra. VSK for senior citizen and for above 18 years of age which covered 84 villages and confirmed average 88% vaccination to 49678 people of above 18 years in 14 panchayats of Chhattarpur block in Palamau district.

Objective

1. Focused intervention on Covid-19 vaccination in a campaign mode in hard-to- reach area of Chhattarpur block to increase vaccination numbers at least 80% in target area.
2. Ensure that community based Covid-19 response mechanism get established at the community level safeguard from third and subsequent COVID waves.
3. Support Arogya Civil society network (AJCSN) to engage actively with government Department for Covid response, Coordination of timely availability of vaccine supply to achieve at least 80% vaccination.
4. Faceplate community participation, ownership and accountability over public health response in the area.

The government has allowed panchayat bhavan to administer the Covid-19 vaccination drive in two to three phases to complete it by the end of March 2022. The inoculation turnout at panchayat bhavans was pretty good. Response in the early phase was disappointing due to the lack of proper awareness among the rural people. VSK conducted door-to-door awareness campaign with the slogan given by government “Har Ghar Dastak, Tikakaran Ahiyan” to make the vaccination drive more successful.

S. No.	Gram Panchayat	Above 18	1 st dose	2 nd dose	% 1 st dose	% 2 nd dose
1	Charai	3437	3418	3175	99	92
2	Chiru	3001	2854	2762	95	92
3	Dali	3938	3822	2915	97	74
4	Hulsam	3031	2949	2415	97	80
5	Hutukdag	3882	3871	3483	100	90
6	Kalapahad	4318	4224	3753	98	87
7	Kawal	3779	3739	3454	99	91
8	Khodi	3273	3264	3067	100	94
9	Munkeri	4260	4132	3491	97	82
10	Murumdag	4106	4106	3774	100	92
11	Naudiha	3030	2965	2635	98	87
12	Rudwa	3221	3215	3069	100	95
13	Sildag	2419	2316	2205	96	91
14	Udaigarh	3983	3884	3321	98	83
Total		49678	48759	43519	98.2	88

Community response on vaccination drive:

Case – I: Misconception about the Vaccination

People of SC community of village Lewad of Chhatarpur block was hesitating to come forward for vaccination as they were feared that the Covid vaccine will either lead to impotency or sickness or kill us.

Govind Ram and Rajesh Kumar, Social Mobilizers of Vikas Sahyog Kendra, arranged meeting with Mukiya, Ward Member, Sahiya and Sevika as well as build confidence among the people that the vaccine is completely safe. As a result a large number of people come forward to take their doses.

Case – II: Vaccination in Remote Area

Primitive tribal people of remote villages of Hulsom and Chipu in Chhatarpur block were missing even their first dose because of hilly undulated remote area. It was very difficult for the vaccination team to reach there. Mandip Singh and Manki Yadav from Vikas Sahyog Kendra helped the team as well as convinced the tribal community to take the vaccine.



Promotion of Natural and Climate Resilient Agriculture

Situation Analysis:

Modern agro-practices or chemical agriculture is based on the use of agro-chemicals such as fertilizers, synthetic pesticides and herbicides, besides, improved seeds (high yielding varieties, hybrids and more recently genetically modified seeds, mechanization and other cultivation tools, abundant water for irrigation, other technological outputs such as growth hormones etc. As we know that the modern agriculture improved our affordability of food, increases the food supply and ensured the food security but it was far from safeguarding the future. It damaged soils, expensive and needless farming inputs, water-intensive and water-polluting, lethal and ecologically harmful farming practices not good for agricultural advancement and to public health.

Our government and policy makers have not bothered to look deep into the issue of farming distress. All the talk is of loan waivers, MSP, contract farming and the like, which are simply cosmetic remedies. The small farmer struggles for livelihood and existence, battling in vain against the avalanche of negatives associated with the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides. Eighty-six per cent of farmers in India are small or marginal farmers. Chemical farming puts farmers into debt and fertilizer companies into profits. The huge fertilizer subsidy barely touches the small farmer. It is the manufacturer who benefits. FAO confirms that Chemical Agriculture is associated with “Farmers indebtedness for inputs and suicides.” These small and marginal farmers took credit from banks and private money lenders. The non-repayment of credit led to an agricultural crisis and farmers’ suicide. Other reasons for the farmer’s suicides and agricultural crisis are poverty, crop failures, distress, lack of awareness on new technologies, inadequate debt, and marketing of produce, the high interest of non-institutional credit, natural calamities, climate change and depletion of water levels. Apart from that the chemical based agriculture has leads several environmental problems such as soil erosion, contamination of groundwater, soil salinity, soil toxicity, reduced crop diversity and global warming.

Natural Farming System:

There is a way out of the vicious cycle of drought, debts and declining soil fertility. The natural-organic farming system shows a remedial way to combat the situations. The UN’s Report on the Right to Food states that agro-ecology is capable of delivering sufficient yields to feed the entire world population and ensure that they are adequately nourished.

Natural farming is to let nature play a dominant role to the maximum extent possible. Hence, no-till, farm biodiversity, integration and symbiotic farm components and protection of soil cover all have a place in this method of farming. Crops are grown by using different factors in nature such as, sunlight, shadow, cow urine, cow dung, organic composts etc. Farmers are not required to purchase anything from outside therefore; it is called 'Zero Budget Farming'. Production cost for farmers goes down by using traditional seeds with the farmers, natural crop nutrients, and natural insecticides. Thus, there is no need for farmers to take loan for sowing. Farmers become self sufficient and self reliant by using this technique. Similarly the organic farming is a method of farming system which primarily aims at cultivating the land and raising crops in such a way, as to keep the soil alive and in good health by use of organic wastes (crop, animal and farm wastes, aquatic wastes) and other biological materials along with beneficial microbes (biofertilizers and biopesticides) to grow and protect the crops for increased sustainable production in an eco-friendly pollution free environment.

Government of India has also launched National Organic Farming Projects (Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana-PKVY) and Mission Organic Value Chain Development for North Eastern Region (MOVCDNER) to promote organic farming. According to the Indian Organic Sector, Vision 2025, the organic farming has the potential to generate a revenue of ₹50,000 crore per annum and more. The need of the hour is to switch priorities and subsidies from chemical to organic farming as shown by the State of Sikkim. Andhra Pradesh government has also launched a 'Zero Budget Natural Farming Project' to phase out chemicals by 2024. The government should divert the undeserved subsidies from the chemical farming sector to the organic farming sector and assist/train farmers across the country to make the transition to organic farming practices and thereby enhance their livelihoods, and protect their lives.

Initiative by Vikas Sahyog Kendra in Palamau District:

Palamu district, located in the western part of the Jharkhand, is one of the drought prone districts of the State where agriculture is characterised by low productivity and subsistence and marginal farming. Majority of the rural population still depend on agriculture with very little nonfarm employment opportunity. The percentage of main workers to total population of the district is 22.73, the percentage of cultivators to total population of the district is 10.04, the percentage of agricultural labourers to total population is 9.08 and others including artisans is 3.66.

Mono-cropping is generally practised in the district due to lack of irrigation facilities and agriculture is mostly based on the monsoon. The main Kharif crops grown are Paddy, Maize, Arhar and Pigeon-peas.

Maize is cultivated in the uplands and paddy on medium and low lands. Black gram and wheat are grown in some areas during the Rabi season. As irrigation facilities are limited, cultivation in summer is rare and is confined to growing vegetable, cash crops in areas having irrigation facilities. The district falls under erratic rainfall zone and hence receives monsoon rains during June to September. The average annual rainfall of the district is less than 1200 mm as it comes under the rain shadow part. More than 80% of the precipitation is received during the monsoon months. The district is characterized by warm climate in March to June and later on there is a gradual decline in temperature from October onwards to December. During winter season the district records temperature between 16 to 18 degrees centigrade and during summer the temperature increases up to 41 degrees centigrade. The total geographical area of the district is 524690 ha. Of this forest area is 226850 ha, current fallow is 78000 ha, cultivable wasteland 9960 ha apart from 31590 ha is under barren and unutilized land. Soil fertility is an aspect of the soil-plant relationship. Fertility status of the soils is primarily and importantly dependent upon both the macro and micronutrient reserve of that soil. Continued removal of nutrients by crops, with little or no replacement will increase the nutrient stress in plants and ultimately lowers the productivity. The fertility status of the soils mainly depends on the nature of vegetation, climate, topography, texture of soil and decomposition rate of organic matter. Optimum productivity of any cropping systems depends on adequate supply of plant nutrients. The soils occurring in different landforms have been characterized during soil resource mapping of Jharkhand on 1:250,000 scale and three soil orders namely Entisols, Inceptisols and Alfisols were observed in Palamu district. Alfisols were the dominant soils covering 53.9 percent of TGA followed by Entisols (21.5 %) and Inceptisols (20.0 %). The climate of the district is suitable for dry land horticulture including vegetable and fruit crops and in recent years steps have been taken to motivate the people to take up this activity. There are inspiring accounts of villages converting to multilayer organic farming and transforming rural lives. Cultivation of multiple crops will be a profitable to the farmers. Multiple crops are taken in a single land area instead of single crop to fight natural calamities. Natural calamities like heavy raining, floods, droughts, delay in raining, heavy cyclones, floods, hot and cold waves, hail storm, only one crop bears the loss, sowing other crops, intercrop pattern, generating income for the farmer. Traditional seeds are

BLOCK MAP OF PALAMU DISTRICT, JHARKHAND



more immune to diseases and are not easily get affected by insects. Therefore, it becomes easy for farmers using multi crop pattern to fight natural calamities.

Vikas Sahyog Kendra (VSK) is working towards food & livelihood security in the drought affected remote *Adivasi* and *Dalit* areas of Palamau. The major activities conducted by the organization are promotion of sustainable agriculture, multilayer intercropping, and promotion of climate resilient crops such as millets, tubers, fruits and local vegetables. The VSK is also focused towards water management, land development, accessing of forest land, social & food security schemes for the poor families.

The present report is based on a pilot project on natural & organic farming which was implemented in Hutukdag and Bisaipur villages of Chhatarpur block in Palamau district. A total of 100 farmers have cultivated different kinds of vegetables, maize, millets, gram, sesame, paddy, urad and arhar followed the natural-organic farming method in more than 75 acres of land. Most of the farmers are of tribal communities having small land holding. The farmers used traditional seed varieties of all the crops as the varieties are time tested and adaptable to the local climatic condition as well part of food diversity and culture of the local community.

The farmers used different organic formulations as pesticides and fertilizers such as beejamrit, cow urine, jeevamrit, compost, vermicompost, neemashtra etc. All the plant based herbal formulations are low cost and effective in improving the soil fertility, controlling insect-pests, improving moisture content of the farm soil. These biological inputs are free from toxicity and harm.

The natural-organic farming required less number of seeds, low water for irrigation and free from chemical inputs. Multilayer mix cropping system increased the crop diversity and reduced the crop failure risk. The multi cropping system also helped in controlling the insect-pests attack.

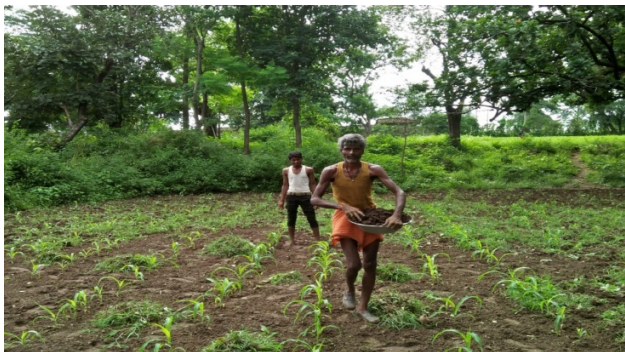
Crops	No. of Farmer	Farm Land (Acre)	Yield / Per Acre (qt)	% Yield Increased
Maize	24	10.85	18.4	60
Maize + Red gram	29	8.7	828	20
Finger Millet	36	7.5	7.68	41
Red gram + Sesame	57	40.82		
Black gram	26	8.24	-	-
Vegetables	24	25.0		



Preparation of Jeevamrit, Beejamrit and Neemshtra



Preparation of vermicompost and Beejamrit



Growing maize and arhar



Sesame and millet crops



Multi layering technique of growing vegetables



Raising vegetable nursery



Progress in the fisheries an alternative source of livelihood



Impact of Borabandh: Expanding farm land for Kharif and Rabi crops

Impact of Borabandh

Earlier farmers of Hutukdag and Bisaipu villages were growing paddy in the nearby areas of bandh in 3 acres of land. After the building of borabandh the farmers are growing both rabi and kharif crops including paddy, wheat and different types of vegetables in 7 acres of lands.

About the Organization

Vikas Sahyog Kendra (VSK) is a non-government organization registered in Jharkhand. The organization evolved from a massive campaign on drought proofing campaign (*Sukha Mukti Abhiyan*) to conserve water resource in Palamau district, in the early nineties. The Campaign was anchored by *Pani Chetna Manch*, a forum comprised of civil society organizations, dynamic social activists, farmers, researchers, engineers, women and youths.

Majority of the founder members of VSK were associated with the *Sukha Mukti Abhiyaan* where they contributed in the creation of 140 water-harvesting structures in severely drought affected 125 villages of Palamau district.

This had demonstrated local water management as an effective alternative to the building of large dams. *Pani Chetna Manch* transformed into Vikas Sahyog Kendra as a registered organization in 2000. Since its formal registration, VSK has been working in three districts – Palamau (Daltonganj/Medininagar), Latehar and Garhwa in Jharkhand.

VSK works with a mix of rights based approach with development initiatives to secure access to natural resources, public investments and welfare benefits that contribute to livelihoods of *Adivasis* and *Dalits*. The approach comprises of organizing and capacitating the primary stakeholders into common interest groups, establishing their specific advocacy forums at multiple levels to collectively access resources and provide technical support.

Vikas Sahyog Kendra is a non-government organization, established by a group of young and dynamic activists of technical and social backgrounds. The organization is actively engaged in organizing marginalized farmers & tribal communities at village to state level with adequate representation of women and youths in realizing their rights and entitlements in accessing land & livelihood resources and scaling up their skills.

VSK has worked on several programs at state, district, block and panchayat level emphasizing the issues of lands and livelihoods rights of poor and marginalized communities. It has been addressing the problems and issues expressed by the deprived people in rural areas with special focus on rights and development of *Adivasi*, *Dalit* and Women.

VSK has alliances with various national and state level networks like Revitalizing Rain-fed Agriculture Network (RRAN), MGNREGA Watch, MGNREGA Consortium, Right to Food Campaign, Jungle Bachao Andolan, Jharkhand Van Adhikar Manch, Right to Life with Dignity, Gram Swaraj Abhiyan and V B Net Foundation.

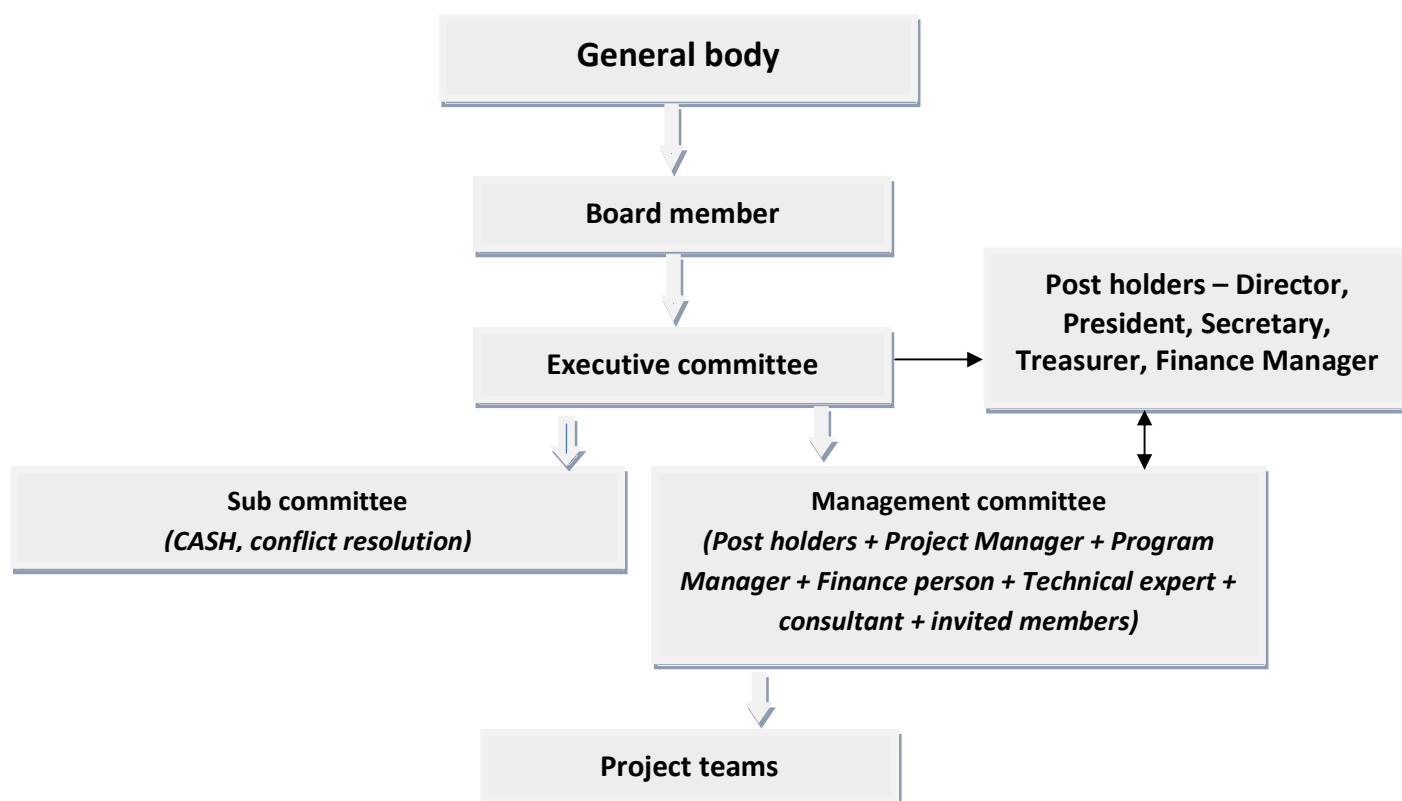
Outreach: VSK is working in two districts i.e. Palamau and Latehar by covering 12000 households of 120 villages in 3 blocks.

Vision

Creation of a society based on justice and free from poverty and exploitation.

Mission

Enabling the vulnerable and voiceless communities to assert rights and develop their capacity.



Banking:

Bank and Branch Address	Account Type	Account No. & IFSC Code
State Bank of India Daltonganj Bazar, Dharamsala Road, Daltonganj, Palamau, Jharkhand	General Main Account	10801935917 SBIN0001221
State Bank of India	FC Main Account	10801935906
ICICI Bank Seva Sadan Road, Daltonganj	FC Utilization Account	073701001653 ICIC0000737

Auditors: Rajesh Brij Mohan & Co.
Chartered Accountants

Police Line Road, Daltonganj-822101
Palamau, Jharkhand
Mob. 94311 93219, 9661021602
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Vikas Sahyog Kendra

Vikas Sahyog Kendra (VSK) works for the livelihood enhancement of marginal communities through natural resource management especially from land, forest and water. We also work for entitlement guarantee, especially from government schemes and services. Our prime activities include 1) Water resource management. Through this activity we develop participatory village development plans with special focus on water. We also work on monitoring and advocacy for construction of water harvesting structures through MGNREGS and other line departments. We work on data collection and research analysis with respect to rainfall, ground water level, soil moisture etc. This analysis is shared with community members which is used for crop water budgeting. We work for 2) Land resource development and augmentation. Through this activity we promote non-pest and non-chemical management based practices. We also work for 3) promotion of sustainable agriculture practices. Through this various agronomic and improved agriculture and nutrition based practices like millets and vegetable kitchen garden is promoted. We also work for 4) promotion of income generating allied activities including livestock health especially of goat and backyard poultry and fisheries in inland water bodies. We work towards 5) Farmers' institution building. As part of this we are promoting Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) and farmer's club. We also work for 6) ensuring rights, entitlement and improvement of local governance system. As part of this we work for strengthening of Gram Sabha and better implementation of government social security schemes and services including Forest Rights Act and MGNREGA.

Head Office

Vikas Sahyog Kendra

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