





Rooted In Odisha: Gram Vikas Brand Identity

Gram Vikas' refreshed brand identity is a visual echo of our deep-rooted commitment to Odisha. Inspired by the elegant strokes and curves of the Odia alphabet, the design evokes the enduring spirit of the communities we have been serving since 1979. It is a tribute to our shared journey of progress, with colours that pay homage to the state bird, the Neelkanth, symbolising the vibrancy and resilience of the people of Odisha.



Gram Vikas is a rural development organisation partnering with Odisha's marginalised communities, since 1979, to make sustainable improvements in their quality of life. We build their capabilities, strengthen community institutions and mobilise resources to enable them to lead a dignified life. More than 5 million people in 8000+ villages have advanced their lives through this partnership.

www.gramvikas.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Abbreviations	2
Guiding Principles	4
Message from the Chairman	6
Executive Director's Note	7
Partnerships	12
Coverage	19
Learning from the Past, Reading the Present, Planning for Future (LPRPPF)	22
The Gram Vikas Programme Landscape	24
Water Secure Gram Panchayat Programme	26
Safe and Dignified Migration Programme	58
Strategic Extensions	69
Gram Vikas Saathi	84
Gram Vikas Schools	88
Networking and Sectoral Contributions	93
Governance and Management	97
Thematic Areas	103
Planning and Monitoring	112
Communications	114
Human Resources	116
Administration and Facilities	127
Accounts and Finance	129

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AWS	Automatic Weather Stations
BSSK	Bandhu Shramik Seva Kendra
CESG	Civil Engineering Support Group
CPP	Community Professionals Programme
DOC	Documentation and Communications support area
EDRG	Enterprise Development Resource Group
FPG	Farmer Producer Groups
GP	Gram Panchayat
GPCC	Gram Panchayat Coordination Committee
GVS	Gram Vikas Saathi
HRDP	Holistic Rural Development Programme
ICFOSS	International Centre for Free and Open Source Software
ISA	Implementation Support Agency
JJM	Jal Jeevan Mission
LPRPPF	Learning from the Past, Reading the Present, Planning for the Future
MG	Management Group
MGNREGS	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme
MHP	Micro Hydro Power
MT	Management Team
ONORC	One Nation One Ration Card
PG/ FPG	Producer Group / Farmer Producer Group

PHC	Primary Health Centre
PMO	Planning and Monitoring support area
RCRC	Responsible Coalition for Resilient Communities
RMSG	Resource Mobilisation Support Group
SBSK	Shramik Bandhu Seva Kendra
SDM	Safe and Dignified Migration
SHG	Self-Help Group
SLT	Strategic Leadership Team
TPC	Thematic Programme Components
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
VANI	Voluntary Action Network India
VDC	Village Development Committee
VES	Vertical Electrical Sounding
VLM	Village Lekha Mitra
VPRP	Village Prosperity and Resilience Plan
VWSC	Village Water and Sanitation Committee
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WRTG	Water Resource Technology Group
WSGP	Water Secure Gram Panchayat

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

VISION

We envision an equitable and sustainable society where people live in peace with dignity.

MISSION

We aim to promote processes which are sustainable, socially inclusive and gender equitable, to enable critical masses of poor and marginalised rural people or communities to achieve a dignified quality of life.

VALUES

Gram Vikas operates on the foundational values of inclusion, equity, and dignity. Both individually and collectively, we at Gram Vikas are dedicated to cultivating an organisational culture that embodies and upholds these principles.

We are embedded in the community. Our actions are anchored in the evolving needs of our partner communities, with every outcome forged collaboratively, valuing their knowledge and trusting their capabilities. Motivated by solidarity over charity, we strengthen the collective agency of the communities to carve their paths towards dignified lives.

We have people at the centre. We value our team as our greatest asset, fostering a workplace prioritising continuous learning, growth, and professionalism. Honouring our core value of inclusion, we ensure equal opportunities for all team members, irrespective of caste, religion, gender, age, or orientation, and treat everyone with respect and dignity.

We are open, transparent, and collaborative. We champion open communication and growth, embracing new ideas, providing empathetic feedback, and having authentic, respectful discussions. We emphasise transparency and collaboration across all levels, valuing the diverse contributions and perspectives of our teams, communities, and stakeholders.

We are agile and resilient. In an ever-changing, volatile world, we embrace change and take risks, leveraging technology, and both new and indigenous knowledge to remain agile and ethical. Through continuous learning, acknowledging diverse voices, and fostering communities of support, we build resilience in our teams and systems.

THE MANTRA APPROACH

The five principles of the Movement and Action Network for Transformation of Rural Areas (MANTRA) approach form the basis for Gram Vikas's engagement with our community partners.



- **ALL-OR-NONE**

The 100% Inclusion process ensures that every single household, including the poorest and socially excluded, in the village participates and contributes to the programme. Besides serving equity, the “all-or-none” approach also creates a unique opportunity for the entire village to work together for a shared purpose.

- **SHARE COSTS**

The community contributes significantly to the capital cost and bears the cost of running and maintaining facilities. This inclusive stake-building ensures that people continue to care for the results individually and make demands on the village institutions.

- **TAKE RESPONSIBILITY**

People take responsibility from an early stage to generate consensus, mobilise local contributions, manage implementation, and operate and maintain the assets created. This paves the way for the long-term sustainability of the results achieved.

- **EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION**

The process promotes affirmative steps to ensure that women and poor people are included in decision-making at all levels. This enables their active participation in creating and sustaining solutions meant for them and equitable sharing of benefits.

- **FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**

Financial and institutional mechanisms are created to ensure that future generations continue to benefit from the results achieved. This ensures that resources are available for maintaining and upkeep of the infrastructure and facilities created.

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Gram Vikas has always believed that water should be readily available in toilets or near to toilets for sanitation to be effective. We promoted running water in toilets as non-negotiable, and the impact is clear: we have achieved almost 100% usage of these facilities.

Now that the Union Government also recognises that safe piped water is essential for a good quality of life, the Gram Vikas model of sanitation and water is gaining ground in Odisha and adjoining states.

A great deal of work has gone into the Gram Vikas model. I am grateful to my colleagues for their efforts in creating a holistic approach to water and sanitation.

Gram Vikas has been making a lot of headway in the areas that we are working in. The Governing Board has played a crucial role in directing the energies of the organisation meaningfully. My gratitude to each member of the Board.

The support from our donors has been phenomenal, and I look forward to even greater achievements in the coming year.

Joe Madiath





EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S NOTE

2023-24 marks the halfway mark in the fifth decade of Gram Vikas, during which we completed 45 years of work in Odisha. The Gram Vikas Decade V strategic approach, adopted in 2019, continues to guide our choices. Although the disruption caused by COVID-19 seriously affected the process, it has now stabilised. This year was one of consolidation for us.

In 2022, we initiated an exercise to reflect upon Gram Vikas's past work and its contribution to bringing about meaningful change in the partner communities, and to draw lessons to strengthen our future work. We completed the 'Learning from the Past, Reading the Present, Planning for the Future' (LPRPPF) exercise during the year. Details of the process and results can be found later in this report.

A SIGNIFICANT MILESTONE

After several years of experimenting and developing different components, we finally shaped the Water Secure Gram Panchayat (WSGP) programme. The first step was a three-year initiative, commencing in April 2021.

We implemented the programme in 27 Gram Panchayats across Gajapati, Ganjam, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, and Nayagarh districts, reaching 29,607 households in 769 habitations. Despite the challenges posed by the second wave of COVID-19 in 2021, we managed to kick-start the project by the end of the year. The project played a pivotal role in the evolution of the WSGP Programme. It laid the groundwork for a sustainable intervention by offering a flexible approach to designing individual components through a learning-and-action approach.



The project provided seven crore rupees in direct benefits to **7,500 households**.



It also secured safe drinking water for **14,305 households** and water for livelihoods for **14,352 households**.



Additionally, it facilitated access to social protection schemes for **15,000 households**.

The project established and strengthened self-governing village institutions and formed citizen platforms in eight Gram Panchayats.

Furthermore, it facilitated the establishment of three key innovations: the “Water Passbook,” the “Weather Forecast and Crop Advisory” system, and the “Gram Vikas Saathi” model of grassroots social entrepreneurs. The project initiated people-centric and local government-led water and natural resources development in 25 Gram Panchayats. It is set to expand to more Gram Panchayats, with confidence in the implementation processes and cost structures.

NEW INITIATIVES

In 2023-24, we introduced three new initiatives to strengthen our work. The Rural Crèche Initiative aims to establish community-based care centres for children aged seven to thirty-five months, improving young children’s nutritional and developmental status in villages. We envision the Gram Panchayat Coordination Committee (GPCC) will manage the crèches, turning them into a community-driven effort and strengthening the institution.

The Empowering Women Entrepreneurs (Swayamshree) project will enhance our involvement with women in the communities and provide better guidance for developing economic opportunities through producer collectives and micro-

enterprises. Collaborating with the Mission Shakti women's institutional network will reinforce our engagement with the local administration and government schemes.

We also launched the 'Localising Climate Resilience in the Eastern Ghats region of Odisha and Jharkhand' project to lay the groundwork for future pathways within the WSGP. The project aims to showcase community-managed climate resilience efforts in the Eastern Ghats region of Odisha and Jharkhand to influence state government policies and actions. It will allow Gram Vikas to better prepare for developing communities' capabilities to plan, design, implement, and monitor activities related to reducing the impacts of climate-related hazards and natural disasters, as well as enabling local governance systems to adopt processes contributing to short-term and long-term climate resilience for rural communities.

Carbon financing for afforestation projects

Carbon offset credits can provide rural communities with a valuable financial incentive for their efforts in planting and maintaining trees. Communities contribute to carbon sequestration, reducing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Gram Vikas has initiated a process to enable our community partners to generate and sell carbon offset credits from the carbon absorbed by their forests. This will reward their stewardship of natural resources and integrate them into global climate action efforts.

In the current phase, we expect to develop nearly 3,500 hectares of forests in Gajapati, Ganjam, Kalahandi, and Kandhamal districts, enabling the generation of carbon credits. Proceeds from the sale of carbon credits will accrue to the village development committees through Gram Vikas.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Democratising leadership and building systems for participatory decision-making and result-driven accountability at all levels of the organisation has been a critical focus of our organisational efforts in recent years. By delegating decision-making responsibilities through collaborative platforms, from grassroots teams to senior management, we are laying the groundwork for a more empowered and impactful Gram Vikas.

The Strategic Leadership Team (SLT) has been established to advance this agenda. It has a defined set of executive functions that are closely connected to the role and functions of the Executive Director. The identified strategic leadership functions are resource mobilisation, performance management, results management, trusteeship, and fiduciary accountability. The SLT consists of four members, each holding responsibility for different functions. The Executive Director is a member of the SLT as the chief functionary of the organisation.

Gram Vikas initiated focused work on communicating our work with the external world in 2018 with the establishment of a full-fledged Communications Team. Upgrading the Gram Vikas website, establishing a regular presence on social media, and strengthening internal capabilities and processes were part of the work undertaken. We conducted a comprehensive assessment of the work done during the five years from April 2018 to March 2023.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We owe what Gram Vikas is today to the unwavering dedication and hard work of my colleagues, along with the wisdom and guidance of the elders on our Governing Board. Equally important are our community partners – the men, women, and children of the villages – who have continuously placed their trust in Gram Vikas, seeing us as an all-weather friend and supporter. Their belief in us motivates us and holds us accountable to our mission. We sincerely appreciate their role in our journey.

We have also been fortunate to receive substantial support from the district and block administrations in our operational areas, and from the leadership of the Panchayati Raj institutions. Their partnership has been instrumental in our shared journey towards sustainable community development.

We are privileged to have the unwavering support of a vast network of donor partners, government departments and agencies, knowledge and technology partners, academic and research institutions, and implementation support partners. I extend my heartfelt thanks to all our partners for their continued commitment and collaboration, which has been crucial to our shared success.

I am honoured to present the annual report for 2023-24.

Libby T Johnson
Executive Director

PARTNERSHIPS

Gram Vikas has received invaluable support from a diverse network of partners, including organisations and individuals. Their contributions of financial resources, technical and managerial expertise, and assistance in developing human resources at both the organisational and community levels have been instrumental in our progress. We extend our gratitude to these partners for their unwavering support.

DONOR PARTNERS

The following partner organisations provided financial resources for our work during 2023-24:

Name of the Donor	Project Supported	Period of Support
Axis Bank Foundation	Rural Livelihood Project in Ganjam and Kandhamal	Ongoing from 2022
Azim Premji Foundation-Philanthropy	Enabling Water Secure Gram Panchayats in Gajapati, Ganjam, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, and Nayagarh	Completed in 2023
Azim Premji Foundation-Philanthropy	Rural Crèche Initiative	Ongoing from 2023
B1G1, USA	Support for water and sanitation and afforestation projects in Odisha and Jharkhand	Ongoing from 2017
Bajaj Finance Limited	Project SAMRUDHI- Livelihood Enhancement through Water Management and Safe and Dignified Migration in Ganjam and Gajapati	Ongoing from 2022
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and Reliance Foundation	Swayamshree - Empowering Women Entrepreneurs Project	Ongoing from 2023
charity: water USA	Increasing Access to Improved Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Services in Odisha and Jharkhand	Ongoing from 2018

Name of the Donor	Project Supported	Period of Support
Deloitte Foundation	Water and Livelihoods Secure Gram Panchayats Programme in Jharsuguda, Sundargarh and Gumla	Ongoing from 2022
Economic Law Practice	Renewable Energy Access in Maligaon in Kalahandi	Ongoing from 2022
HDFC Bank Parivartan	Holistic Rural Development Programme in Bolangir	Ongoing from 2022
HVS Foundation	Drinking water support for Phatkimahul in Kalahandi	Completed in 2023
ICRISAT	Expansion of Sunflower Areas in Rice Fallows in Ganjam & Introduction of promising climate-resilient new pigeon pea varieties in Odisha	Ongoing from 2022
InterGlobe Aviation Limited – IndiGoReach	Community-led Ecological Restoration for Sustainable Development with the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Approach	Ongoing from 2023
InterGlobe Foundation	Community-Owned Social and Agroforestry in Kalahandi	Ongoing from 2018
International Action, Italy	Project: RAKSHAN- A better future for the children of Kandhamal	Ongoing from 2023
Japan Star Corporation	Project Sujal - Community-managed Water Quality Management cum Improved WASH Initiative in Odisha and Jharkhand	Ongoing from 2022
PwC India Foundation	Project for Water and Livelihood Security in Gajapati	Ongoing from 2022
Rainmatter Foundation	Localising Climate Resilience in the Eastern Ghats region of Odisha and Jharkhand	Ongoing from 2023
Responsible Coalition for Resilient Communities (RCRC)	Facilitating Integrated Farming Clusters in Gajapati	Ongoing from 2022

Name of the Donor	Project Supported	Period of Support
SBI Foundation	Gram Seva - Integrated Village Development in Kalahandi	Ongoing from 2022
SBI Foundation	Vibha - Rural Electrification Project in Kalahandi	Completed in 2023
SBI Foundation	Sahayog - Support to projects of Youth for India Fellows	Ongoing from 2022
Wipro Cares	Water Secure Initiative in Khurdha	Ongoing from 2022

21 individuals directly donated to Gram Vikas, and the Benevity Causes Portal and the UK Online Giving Foundation aggregated individual donations from around the globe.

Sunlit Future, Auroville, coordinated support from the Grundfos Foundation (Poul Due Jensens Fond), Denmark, to implement solar-based drinking water projects and provide technical and material support for our renewable energy work.

The State Bank of India—Youth for India (SBI-YFI) Fellowship programme enables young people from across India to live, work, and learn in rural Odisha.

Rang De P2P Financial Services Pvt Ltd. and the Collective Goods Foundation provided valuable credit support to community partners.

GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS AND AGENCIES

- Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Empowerment, Government of Odisha
- Department of Mission Shakti, Government of Odisha and Odisha Livelihoods Mission
- Panchayati Raj & Drinking Water Department, Government of Odisha
- Planning & Convergence Department, Government of Odisha

IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS

- Banabasi Seva Samiti, Kandhamal, for implementation of Project Rakshan.
- Centre for Migration and Inclusive Development, Perumbavoor, Kerala, is our long-standing knowledge and implementation partner for the Safe and Dignified Migration programme.
- Jagruti supports the implementation of the Rural Livelihoods project in the Daringbadi block of Kandhamal district.
- Social Shapes Foundation, New Delhi, co-implements the Vikalp programme for children and young adults in villages in Jharsuguda and Gajapati districts.



KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY PARTNERS

We have benefited from technical and knowledge support from numerous organisations and individuals. This support has been instrumental in building staff and community-level capabilities and establishing the technical and operational systems that underpin our work.

- ACWADAM for facilitating work on groundwater management, support for action research, training, and policy advocacy.
- Agratas Global Biz for training and handholding support for the microenterprise development programme.
- AguaClara Reach for designing and deployment of Hydrodoser.
- ALT-EEF for facilitating the All Living Things Environmental Film Festival.
- Anvic Systems as the technical partner for capacity building and technology demystification on use of Vertical Electrical Sounding (VES) technique.
- Athulya Performance Facilitators for staff capacity building.
- CEF Engineering for installation of Nitrate Treatment Systems in Bolangir, maintenance, and capacity building of staff.
- Centre for Grower-centric Eco-value Mechanisms (C-GEM) for knowledge back up in the carbon offset credit efforts.
- Desi Technology, Bhubaneswar, for support in renewable energy applications.
- EMULUS Consulting LLP, Gurgaon, for support in building a comprehensive technology platform for results monitoring and reporting.
- Fair Climate Fund (FCF), for the market linkages for the Clean Development Mechanism
- Group Relations India support for building staff capacities
- Indian School of Development Management, Noida, support for recruitment of young management trainees.
- INREM Foundation, Anand, Gujarat, support for work in water quality management and surveillance.
- International Centre for Free & Open Source Software (ICFOSS), Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, support for installation of automatic weather stations.
- Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Gajapati, Ganjam and Kalahandi districts, support in capacity building for farm livelihood activities.
- LEAD India, New Delhi, support for leadership capacity building for staff.

- Life Circle, Hyderabad, support for Geriatric Caregiver training.
- Listeners Collective, Bengaluru, for support in building staff capacities.
- Montfort Social Institute, Hyderabad, for facilitating the selection process of the Strategic Leadership Team.
- Public Health Resources Society for knowledge and training support for the Rural Crèche Initiative.
- Pro Sports Development for knowledge and training support for the sports for community development efforts.
- Project Bala for knowledge and training support for work in menstrual health.
- Public Health Resource Society for knowledge and training support for the rural crèche initiative.
- Skymet Weather Services for support in weather forecast information.
- The Goat Trust, Lucknow, for support in developing a programme on goatery.
- TREE Society, Bengaluru, supported the management capacity building for staff.
- UNICEF Odisha State Office for supporting work related to water, sanitation and hygiene, and with children and adolescents.
- Waste Warriors for knowledge and training support in solid waste management.
- Watershed Organisation Trust for supporting in weather forecast and crop advisory.

ACADEMIC AND RESEARCH PARTNERS

- Azim Premji University, Bengaluru, for collaboration in multiple streams of capacity building, research, and recruitment of young management trainees.
- Development Innovations Lab, University of Chicago, for the India In-Line Chlorination Pilot Study.
- Emory University, Atlanta USA, our longstanding research partner helping develop internal capacities for diversifying programmatic interventions and creating evidence of the work.
- Nous Consulting for the detailed documentation of the Learning from the Past component of the LPRPPF exercise.

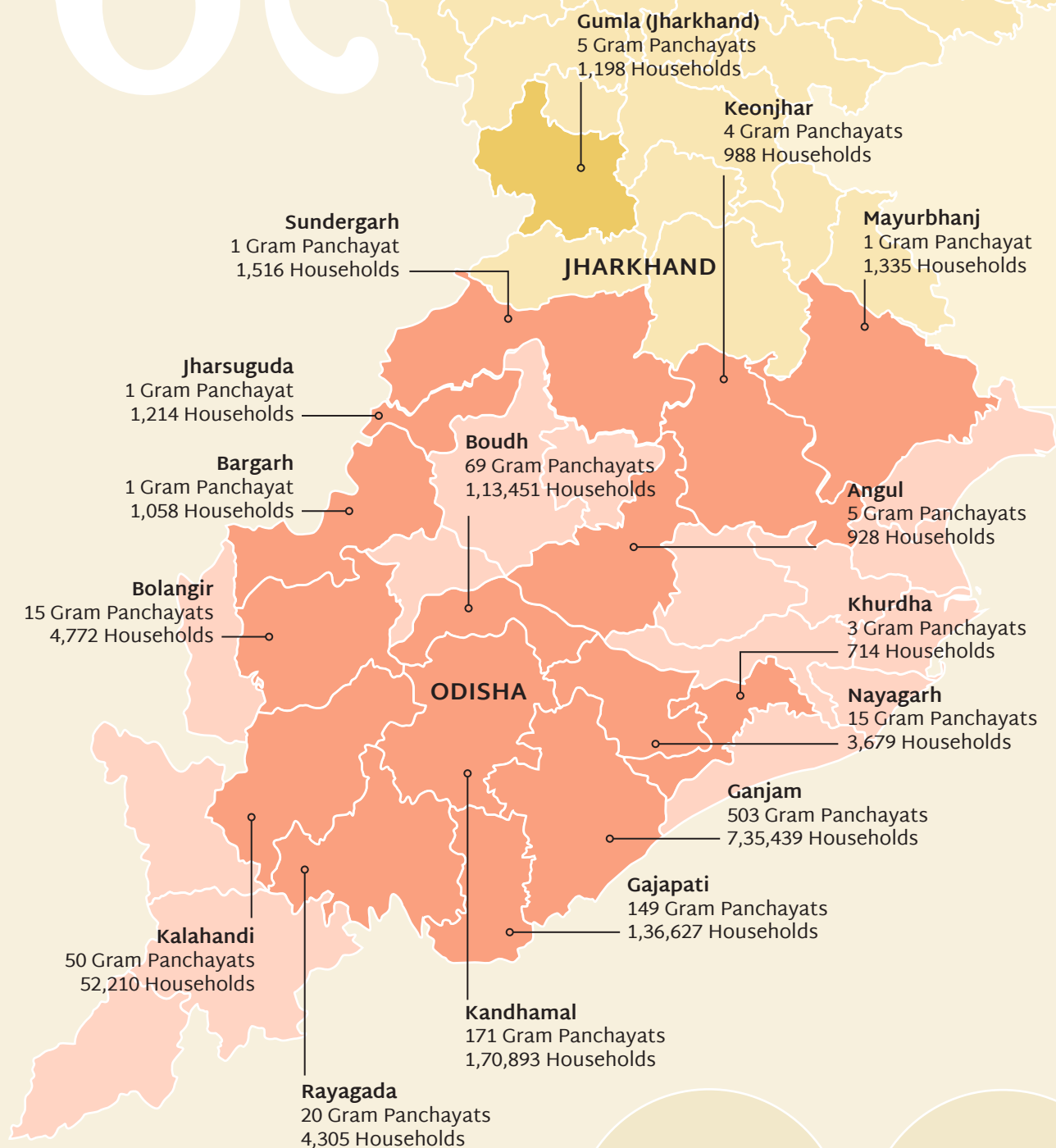
INDIVIDUAL RESOURCE PERSONS

- A diverse group of individuals, each contributing their unique expertise, supported our work during the year.
- Arun K Nanu supported the development of the community sports programme.
- Beena Govindan supports the Village Institutions and the Sanitation and Health thematic teams with planning and capacity building.
- Bhawana Luthra and Sri. Pradyut Bhattacharya facilitated the selection process of the Strategic Leadership Team.
- Chinmaya Misra supports the Water Management Group with project management.
- Jayapadma R V supported the finalisation of LPRPPF study documents.
- Kailash Pandey has supported the creation of weather information-based crop advisories.
- Priya Pillai has anchored Gram Vikas' strategic communications functions since 2018.
- Samu John supported the financial inclusion capacity building activities in the Safe and Dignified Migration Programme.
- Vartika Jaini was the co-facilitator for the LPRPPF exercise.



COVERAGE

Gram Vikas' work in 2023-24 reached 12,30,327 households in 8812 habitations in 1012 Gram Panchayats of 70 blocks in 15 districts of Odisha and one district in Jharkhand.



Total Gram
Panchayats
1,012

Total
Households
12,30,327

INTENSIVE PROGRAMME COVERAGE

The coverage of our intensive programmatic interventions expanded significantly.

March 2023

140,000
households

in 196 Gram
Panchayats



March 2024

305,000
households

in 335 Gram
Panchayats



We are conducting intensive work in 12 districts of Odisha and one in Jharkhand.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH COVERAGE

The 'Community Outreach Coverage', implemented in our role as the Implementation Support Agency for Jal Jeevan Mission, engaging with



1,158,396
households across
7,688 revenue villages in
898 Gram Panchayats



spanning **46 blocks**
in six districts
of Odisha



Padmini Gamango in her vegetable farm in Halapanka, a Gram Vikas partner village in Jeerango Gram Panchayat in Odisha's Gajapati district.

LEARNING FROM THE PAST, READING THE PRESENT, PLANNING FOR FUTURE

In 2022-23, we initiated the “Learning from the Past, Reading the Present, Planning for Future” (LPRPPF) exercise with these objectives:

- Solidify Gram Vikas’s credentials as a pioneering organisation in multiple intervention areas.
- Amplify the actions and results that serve as the foundation for Gram Vikas Decade V.
- Showcase a comprehensive methodology for measuring and documenting the long-term impact of organisations on rural communities.
- Develop strategic guidelines to aid the effective implementation of key programmatic interventions, encompassing programme design and expansion, inputs for effective resource mobilisation, and organisational development strategies.

THE FOUR PHASES OF LPRPPF

We divided the exercise into four phases. The first phase involved framing the Gram Vikas hypothesis about how change occurs. We completed this through a workshop with Gram Vikas staff and associates in July-August 2022.

The second phase delved deeper into the hypotheses and questions raised during the initial workshop. We achieved this through a review of secondary material and community-level interactions, leading to the development of terms of reference for three studies in December 2022.

The third phase focused on locating and recording evidence and narratives surrounding Gram Vikas’s contributions through past programmes, aiming to understand how we enabled long-term social change among our partner communities in Odisha. We commissioned three studies by independent agencies to achieve

this. Nous Consultants conducted the first two studies, while the Social Shapes Foundation conducted the third. These studies took place from February 2023 to February 2024.

- **Study 1:** Examined the outcomes of Gram Vikas's efforts in bringing intergenerational change through the Education programme, primarily focusing on Gram Vikas schools.
- **Study 2:** Explored the outcomes of Gram Vikas's efforts in nurturing self-managed systems through the Water and Sanitation programme.
- **Study 3:** Assessed Gram Vikas's contribution to enhancing production systems in remote rural Odisha.

The final phase provided a framework for future planning and strategic insights for Gram Vikas. As part of this, we held a three-day convening exercise, followed by a strategy workshop for Gram Vikas, between 13 and 16 July 2023 at Mohuda.

COLLABORATIVE VISIONING

Thirteen experts from diverse backgrounds convened to discuss “What will it take to have 1,000 water and natural resources secure Gram Panchayats in Odisha?”. The schedule began with field visits and community interactions, providing a first-hand understanding of the people and the context of villages facing various natural resource and livelihood challenges. Through deliberations over one and a half days, the group developed the features of a water and natural resources secure Gram Panchayat and explored potential collaborations to achieve this.

A 1.5-day strategy workshop followed, with 13 professionals joining the group – from the consultant teams who had undertaken the studies and Gram Vikas's management team members. The three studies were presented and discussed. Gram Vikas's current strategic approach was also presented, and the group provided input on its critical aspects.



The three studies were completed by February 2024. We are currently preparing the reports for publication. Once the English version is published, we will translate the summary into Odia for wider sharing and engagement. The inputs from the convening and strategy workshop have informed the final shape and structure of the Water Secure Gram Panchayat Programme.



THE GRAM VIKAS PROGRAMME LANDSCAPE

Our work is built to respond to the complex challenges faced by our rural community partners in Odisha and Jharkhand. We understand that creating a dignified quality of life in these areas demands multidimensional actions, designed and implemented through robust, participatory processes. We see ourselves as catalysts and facilitators, demonstrating how knowledge and technology can unlock solutions to these pressing problems, even in diverse socioeconomic and biophysical contexts.

Gram Vikas has identified five critical sets of challenges that it aims to address:

- **CHANGING CLIMATE**

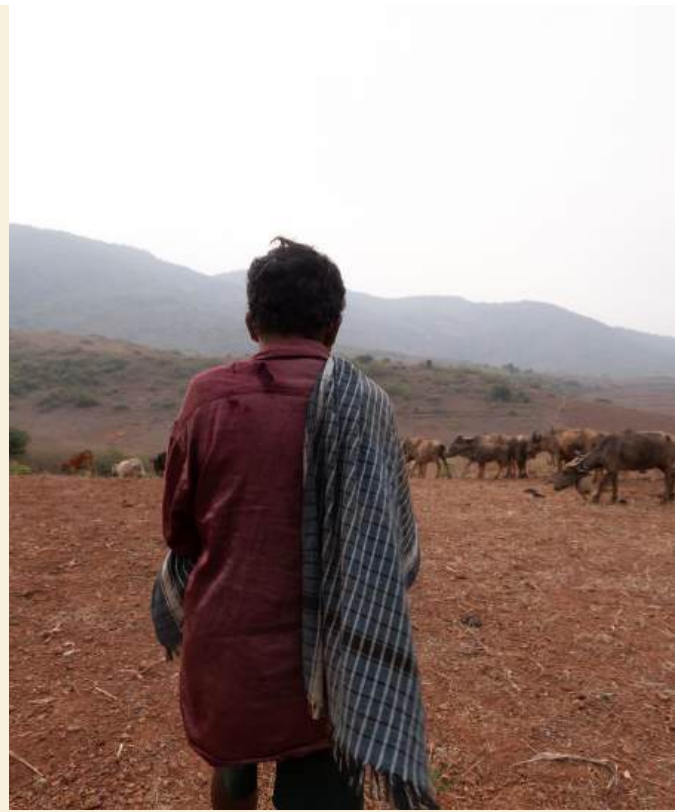
The growing gap between water demand and availability for domestic and productive uses, coupled with the adverse impacts of climate change, threatens both livelihoods and the sustainability of water sources. Communities are increasingly vulnerable to water scarcity, natural disasters, and the disruption of traditional farming practices.

- **BARRIERS TO HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

The lack of access to safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for all households pose a threat to public health. Deteriorating water quality and increasing environmental pollution due to solid and liquid waste further exacerbate these risks.

- **LIMITED MARKETS AND TECHNOLOGY**

Producers have limited capabilities and face significant barriers to accessing knowledge, markets, and new technologies, hindering their ability to earn a reasonable livelihood and use data-based decision-making systems for resource governance.



- **GAPS IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE**

Community institutions and local governments face capacity constraints that impact their ability to collaborate, engage citizens in governance, access resources from Panchayati Raj Institutions, and manage water equitably. These challenges are compounded by evolving community dynamics and the need for effective inter-generational leadership transitions.

- **INEQUITY AND EXCLUSION**

The most vulnerable populations struggle to access natural resources, perpetuating a cycle of poverty and inequality. Women are often marginalised in community and local government decision-making processes, while youth and children lack opportunities for meaningful engagement.

Two key programmes, the Water Secure Gram Panchayat (WSGP) Programme and the Safe and Dignified Migration (SDM) Programme, form the core of Gram Vikas's work with our community partners.

We have also undertaken additional projects of strategic significance to address the specific needs of our community partners and enhance our organisational capabilities to better deliver our core work.

WATER SECURE GRAM PANCHAYAT PROGRAMME

The Water Secure Gram Panchayat (WSGP) programme is a community-led initiative that enables effective water resource management and building resilient, sustainable, and gender-equitable institutions. The approach empowers rural households to improve their health and economic outcomes.

The Gram Panchayat, acting as a federation of its constituent habitations, is the unit of implementation. The programme envisions uniting all households in the habitations within a Gram Panchayat to manage their water resources effectively and strengthen the capacities of the local governance system to support this goal.

Gram Vikas developed the WSGP programme based on four decades of experience working with rural communities and understanding how climate change, shifts in state policy, and market conditions impact the life and livelihood security of those in remote parts of Odisha. The approach and strategies have evolved over the past three years since the programme's inception in 2020.

We articulated the key characteristics of a Water Secure Gram Panchayat through extensive community dialogues, collaboration with local governments, and expert consultations.



FEATURES OF A WATER SECURE GRAM PANCHAYAT

The features form a generalised, minimum set of conditions for a Gram Panchayat to be labelled water secure.

Households have access to safe drinking water and sanitation.

Land and water resources are managed effectively.

Producer collectives enable improved production and increased income from farming and allied occupations.

Technology and data are leveraged for better use of physical and natural resources.

Vulnerable households have access to institutional mechanisms for social protection and participate in development processes.

Women, youth, and children contribute to and influence local development decision-making.

In each Gram Panchayat where Gram Vikas partners under the WSGP programme, the village community will determine its own definition of water security. This localised definition then guides the design and implementation of the programme, ensuring it truly meets the community's needs.

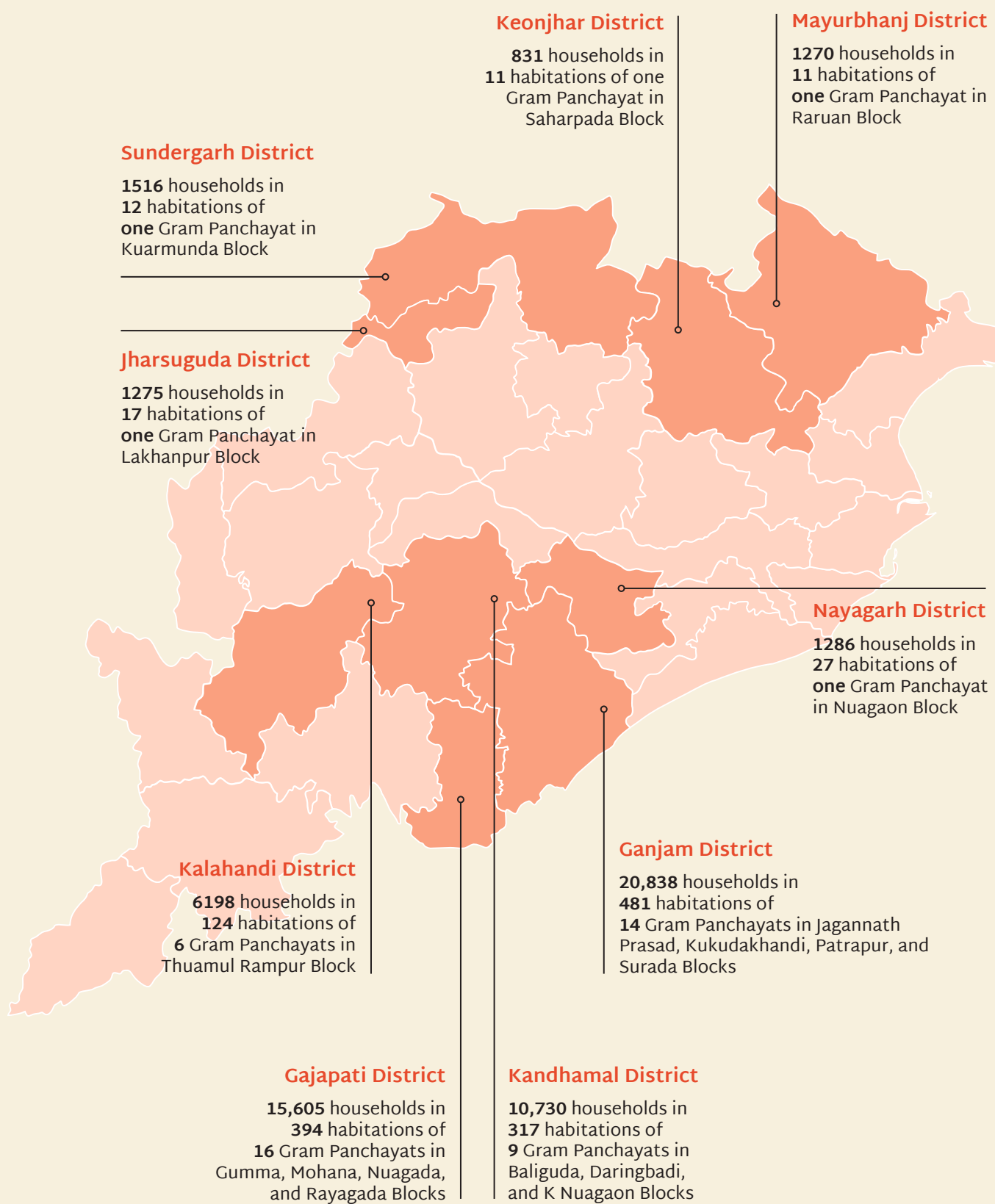


COVERAGE OF WSGP

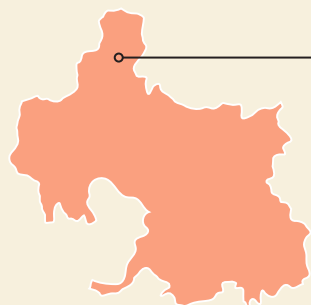
The implementation of the WSGP Programme commenced in April 2021. As of March 2024, the Programme has expanded to 51 Gram Panchayats, encompassing 60,500 households, across



WSGP COVERAGE IN ODISHA



WSGP COVERAGE IN JHARKHAND



Gumla District

951 households in
13 habitations of
one Gram Panchayat
in Raidih Block

We initiated the work in 25 Gram Panchayats in April 2021 and expanded it to an additional 26 Gram Panchayats in April 2022.

WSGP PROGRAMME PILLARS AND ACTIVITIES

The Water Secure Gram Panchayat (WSGP) concept is comprehensive, considering the various interconnected factors that contribute to water insecurity. The WSGP programme's activities and results are built on four key pillars -



WSGP: COUNTING THE WAYS WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Sustainability of Water

11,300
water sources
mapped



4,400+
acres of land
restored



2500
acres of new
trees planted



Safety of Water

28,000+
households
with functional
household taps



894
villages with water
quality tested



16,000+
households raise
backyard nutrition
gardens

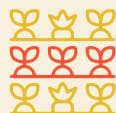


Prosperity from Water

4,900+
farmers supported
through producer
groups



2,000+
households grew
a second crop
for the first time



3800+
farmers use
weather advisories
to prevent crop
losses



Equity and Resilience

1,200+
villages created
prosperity and
resilience plans



3,400+
households
received social
protection benefits



759
village development
committees
have women in
leadership





SUSTAINABILITY OF WATER

Adequate water must be ensured for communities' drinking, domestic, and productive needs. Village communities and local governments require technical skills and financial resources. Hydrogeology principles and IT tools should be simplified and accessible to all. Key outcomes include year-round drinking water availability, increased tree cover, higher water levels in wells and springs, and the use of water passbooks for decision-making at farm, village, and Gram Panchayat levels.

Water Availability

A comprehensive mapping and inventory initiative has covered 11,300 water sources, with 6,000 of these under regular monitoring to track seasonal fluctuations. Within 51 Gram Panchayats, 6,429 sources have been identified as crucial for drinking water, and encouragingly, 64% of these (4,088) are perennial, ensuring year-round supply for household needs. In 603 villages, all available drinking water sources are perennial.

This year, 146 wells across 86 villages and 62 springs in 51 villages demonstrated increased water levels and discharge, respectively. Villages strategically prioritised these sources based on their importance for drinking water, livestock, and irrigation. This positive change is largely attributed to source-shed development work, including detailed hydro-geological assessments to determine catchment areas, the feasibility of plantations, and soil-water conservation measures.

Tree plantations and soil and water conservation measures, such as staggered contour trenches and field bunds, were implemented across 4,437 acres of catchment area in 252 villages. Additionally, 2,561 acres were dedicated to horticulture plantations and 683 acres to indigenous forest species, further contributing to water security and ecological balance.

Water Security Planning

Village-level water security planning enabled 334 villages to map their existing resources and create plans to meet their domestic and livelihood water needs. Each of these villages developed resource maps to identify critical water sources requiring immediate treatment.

The programme mobilised over ₹1.9 crore, facilitating soil and water conservation efforts in 130 villages. Additionally, funds from other donor projects supported the treatment of 4,437 acres of land in the catchment areas of 252 villages.

Gram Panchayat-level training on groundwater management and watershed principles equipped 355 community youth, with 57 subsequently enrolling as Jala Bandhu. This training encouraged 160 village communities to establish and regularly update village groundwater level registries, fostering active monitoring of groundwater sources and discussions in village meetings.

Five villages participated in a pilot of the Water Passbook activity to assess its feasibility, test its utility, and establish protocols. Two villages are actively using and updating the passbook, showcasing its potential for community-level water resource management. We have yet to test the passbook with any Farmer Producer Group.

In 337 villages, skilled community cadres are now actively involved in water source mapping and groundwater monitoring. These cadres play a vital role in gathering reliable monthly data on the health of local water sources. This data, along with the cadre's expertise, is crucial for expanding the passbook programme to the remaining villages.



A Remote Adivasi Village Alleviates Water Stress with Smart Groundwater Management

“It’s reassuring to know that the mapping of all water sources in our village is complete,” emphasises Subhash Gouda, a farmer and Secretary of the Village Development Committee (VDC), in Poiguda village in Sindhipadar Panchayat of Kalahandi district. Subhash is also a member of Maa Lankeshwari Krushak Utpadaka Goshti, a Farmer Producer Group (FPG). “Understanding the capacity of each water source is crucial, given the recurring water scarcity we face during summers. This knowledge will enable us to proactively manage our water resources and prevent future water crises.”

Recognising the availability and sustainability of water sources is paramount for communities, particularly in areas grappling with water scarcity. Water Security Plans (WSP), developed at both the habitation and Gram Panchayat (GP) levels, are vital for facilitating efficient resource management initiatives. These plans are not only essential but are also community-owned and managed, ensuring their effectiveness.


During a community meeting in Poiguda, Akhil Sunani, a farmer and the President of another FPG, Maa Lankeshwari Krushak Utpadaka Goshti, in the village, explained the significance of the water sources.

“Our village primarily relies on two critical water sources: the Jena Jharana, which supplies water to every household through a piped water system, and the Bhimamaska Jharana, mainly used by farmers for crop irrigation and livestock. Protecting these two sources is paramount, as our survival depends on them.”



Participatory groundwater management is an essential component of Gram Vikas's Water Secure Gram Panchayat (WSGP) programme. This approach involves engaging the community in overseeing, regulating, and sustainably planning groundwater usage through effective aquifer management. The Village Development Committee (VDC) leads the planning initiatives within each habitation. They collaborate closely with the Gram Panchayat Coordination Committee (GPCC). The GPCC represents the federation of all VDCs in Sindhipadar Gram Panchayat to ensure the efficient pooling of resources at the GP level.

Bhanumati Majhi, President of the Kanyakumari SHG in Poiguda village, highlights how ongoing meetings with Gram Vikas have helped the 66 households in the village collaborate and recognise water as a shared community resource. This collective understanding has been instrumental in addressing the village's water security concerns and aspirations, ultimately paving the way for the development of a comprehensive water security plan for the entire community.



SAFETY OF WATER

Improving health and nutrition relies on safe water, sanitation, and hygiene practices. Drinking water must be free from contamination by human activities and geological factors. Strengthening technical and managerial skills is essential, especially among women and children. Key outcomes include functional tap connections, toilets, and private bathing spaces for every household, effective village-level water quality management, and efficient wastewater management.

Access to Safe Water

Programme monitoring data reveals that 56% of households in the 51 Gram Panchayats now have access to safe drinking water either at home or nearby. 433 villages have achieved 100% coverage of Functional Household Tap Connections. 28,038 households in WSGP areas now access drinking water through taps at home, while 19,699 have access close to their homes through standposts as part of village piped water supply systems.

In villages where Gram Vikas supported the construction of piped water supply systems, the introduction of household water metres has significantly improved accountability at the village level. The Village Development Committee can now effectively monitor and address any demand-supply gaps, especially during periods of reduced yield at the water source. The use of water metres has also streamlined user fee collection, making it transparent and easily understandable through the VDC's implementation of slabs and tariff systems.

In many villages with piped water supply systems, the existing electric power sources proved unreliable or erratic. Additionally, the reduced yield of the primary water source, particularly during lean months, posed a challenge. To address these issues, we introduced solar pumping systems as a secondary source of drinking water in these villages. This year, we installed these systems in 91 villages across 61 Gram Panchayats. A cadre of 91 trained village-level youth now assists the VDC in the regular and preventive maintenance of these systems, ensuring a swift response in case of breakdowns. They handle maintenance calls and act as first responders when preventive maintenance is required.

Access to Safe Sanitation

Programme monitoring data reveals that 28% of households in the 51 Gram Panchayats have access to both a toilet and a bathing room. An additional 50% have access to a toilet only. In 248 villages, 100% of households have a functional toilet.

To ensure that 100% of households gain access to their own toilet and bathing rooms, we provide support for planning and estimation. Trained Estimators surveyed each household to assess the current state of sanitation infrastructure and prepared estimates for constructing new toilet and bathing room facilities, repairing existing ones, or repairing existing toilets and retrofitting bathing rooms. Once the estimates were complete, field teams and village-level volunteers held village-level meetings to motivate and organise households to carry out the necessary work. The initial focus was on repairing existing units and retrofitting where households already had a toilet. The volunteers helped organise masons for the work and arrange the necessary local materials. During the year, 1,080 households undertook repair and retrofitting work, and 82 households constructed new toilets and bathing rooms.

Our work on solid and liquid waste management has led to significant changes in waste disposal practices. We have successfully promoted source segregation of waste, discouraged the use of non-degradable waste, and encouraged the use of greywater for growing fresh greens for self-consumption. As a result, 2,073 households now practise source segregation of waste, and 57% of households have adopted backyard gardening using greywater.



Households Meet their Nutritional Needs through Effective Grey Water Management

Indu's daily errand to the market to buy vegetables for her family has stopped after she began growing a backyard garden. She and her three children enjoy fresh, nutritious vegetables by efficiently utilising domestic wastewater.

Indu Maharana, 48, lives with her two daughters and son. An agricultural labourer, she is also a member of Maa Bhagabati Self-Help Group (SHG). K.Gundiribadi, located in Gayaganda Gram Panchayat of Jagannathprasad block in Ganjam district, is home to 41 families, predominantly Adivasis.

Ten years ago, Indu's husband, Krishna Maharana, passed away, leaving her with the sole responsibility of supporting the family, including her three young children. With just four acres of land primarily cultivated for paddy, sustaining the family throughout the year proved challenging. Given the irregular employment opportunities as agricultural labourers in the village, it was difficult to earn an income. Even when Indu managed to find work, earning a wage of ₹200 was insufficient to provide adequately for her family, let alone cook fresh vegetables daily for her three children.

In 2012, with support from Gram Vikas, K.Gundiribadi village got a piped water supply system. Every family in the village has access to improved water and sanitation facilities. Gram Vikas has initiated various developmental initiatives in the village, including strengthening village institutions, livelihood programmes, and water, sanitation, and health projects.



Gram Vikas conducted an awareness programme in collaboration with the SHG members to promote solid waste management through sanitation and health programmes. During these sessions, the Gram Vikas team elucidated strategies for managing wastewater from household bathing areas and encouraged the establishment of backyard gardens utilising wastewater.

Inspired by the programme, Indu took the initiative to cultivate vegetables on a 0.5-decimal plot of land behind her house. Her backyard garden now boasts brinjal, lady finger, bitter gourd, green chilli, pumpkin, and bottle gourd. Indu's children get a daily diet of fresh green vegetables from their backyard garden, thus promoting a healthier lifestyle. The garden has helped Indu save money she would have otherwise used to buy vegetables from the market.

Indu expresses her contentment, saying,

“I am delighted to cook nutritious food for my family as fresh vegetables are readily available from our garden. I am saving money as I do not need to buy vegetables from the market. I also distribute some fresh produce to neighbours nearby.”

Sarojini Jani, a member of the Maa Gunadei Self-help group, echoes her sentiments, acknowledging the positive impact of Gram Vikas's initiatives. She, too, has leveraged wastewater for her nutrition garden, earning ₹400 from selling lemons grown in her garden.



Water Quality Management

We established Water Quality Surveillance and Management (WQM) systems in 669 villages, complete with trained village cadres and regular water quality monitoring. The WQM system involves four steps: selecting and training the village cadre, conducting pre- and post-monsoon water testing, sharing the results with the community, and implementing appropriate remedial measures to address any issues. We conducted water quality testing before and after the monsoon season in 894 villages and shared the results with the communities. In 453 villages, we found traces of contamination, primarily bacterial. We implemented remedial and/or mitigation measures in 117 villages, successfully resolving the water quality problems.

Adivasi Youth Champion Clean Water and Sanitation in their Communities

Young Adivasi women and men, trained as Village Institution Service Providers (VISPs) by Gram Vikas, are spearheading a movement for improved water quality, hygiene, and nutrition in their local communities across Odisha. These dedicated individuals, with a passion for community development, having passed Class 10 and able to use smartphones, are transforming their villages from the ground up.

Sanpyari Beg, a VISP trained in water quality testing and a graduate who coaches young school students after school, facilitated a session in Sundergarh district's Madatola village. "Results from the water testing in our village showed bacterial contamination in the tube well water. I appealed to the residents to prevent stagnant water and garbage near the well," she explains.



“Stagnant water breeds mosquitoes, leading to diseases like malaria and dengue, and it also contaminates the groundwater.”

Meanwhile, in Tetrabahal village in Dumerjore Panchayat, the arrival of household-level water supply in 2021 brought new opportunities for sanitation and hygiene. Sunil Lakra, a 28-year-old VISP, has been instrumental in driving change. “I have been raising awareness about water quality and reminding residents to keep their surroundings clean. I visit every household in the village, encouraging them to segregate the waste into biodegradable and non-biodegradable waste,” he says.

A daily wage labourer in the horticulture department, he worked closely with the residents, SHGs, and Child Club and Adolescent Group members for a clean village. Sunil’s constant engagement has inspired the residents to maintain dustbins at home and stop throwing garbage in open spaces. “Now, every household has two dustbins for waste segregation, and we have five community dustbins for collection.” The village now has five community dustbins placed at five locations. Every household gives segregated garbage to the two Safai Mitras who visit daily.

Sunil and Sanpyari’s tireless efforts, alongside those of other VISPs, demonstrate the power of youth leadership in creating healthier, more sustainable communities.





PROSPERITY FROM WATER

Household economic benefits are crucial for sustaining long-term water-smart behaviours. Practical and intelligent use of water and natural resources can strengthen livelihoods. Producers need institutional, financial, and technical support to engage with markets, improve production systems, and build climate resilience. Women's roles in ensuring livelihood security must be recognised and developed. Key outcomes include producer collectives managing market and resource linkages, increased household income from farming, allied activities, and non-farm enterprises, women's leadership in collectives, and the use of weather and crop advisories to reduce waste and costs.

Producer Collectives

The programme supports 391 farmer producer groups with 4,976 members in 51 Gram Panchayats, with 34% female membership. 177 Producer Groups have a woman as an office-bearer (President or Secretary), and 39 groups are entirely run by women.

The group formation follows a five-step approach: land-based cluster mapping, group formation based on land proximity, share capital contribution, opening a savings bank account, and crop planning for the current and upcoming seasons.

These groups report a Gross Cropped Area of 6,456 acres. 1,609 farmer households have increased their cropping area, and 2,026 households have cultivated a second crop during the non-monsoon season for the first time, covering 648 acres of land. 2,996 farmer households within the Producer Groups have reported an average increase of ₹775 in annual household earnings. The increase in earnings ranges from ₹224 in Gajapati district to ₹1,162 in Ganjam district.

Improvements in Farm and Off-farm Activities

We established tool banks on a cluster basis, allowing producer group members to use farm tools on a pay-and-use model. The tool banks introduced equipment like power tillers, reapers, and weeders. The generated revenue will maintain the implements and ensure the system's sustainability. We established nine tool banks in total.

We linked 238 producer groups with various schemes to access benefits such as input supplies (seeds, fertilisers, and saplings) and farm equipment (tools, machines, and storage equipment). 266 producer groups reported reduced costs for production inputs, such as procurement of seeds, fertiliser and pesticides, and logistics due to collectivisation. Similarly, 253 producer groups reported increased income from produce sales through better prices and reduced logistical costs, also attributed to collectivisation.

We promote improved goatery and fisheries through Producer Groups. A three-step approach strengthens goat-based livelihoods: improved habitat, adequate feeding, and timely disease control and management. 183 villages have adopted improved animal husbandry practices, and 1,630 households involved in animal husbandry have reported increased income. Through trained village-level volunteers, we have vaccinated 100% of goats in 37 villages and promoted improved goat shelters in 28 villages. We have also utilised community ponds to promote fisheries. We supported Producer Groups with input costs and facilitated their access to knowledge and resources from the Department.



The Remarkable Journey of a Resourceful Farmer

Lochan Behera, a 47-year-old marginal farmer from Chindaguda village in the Bangomunda block, epitomises the farmers of this region. With a 4-acre land, he cultivates paddy and cotton. Due to low rainfall and limited irrigation solutions, farmers like him have encountered water scarcity, leading to reduced crop yield, lower produce quality, and increased vulnerability to pests and diseases.

Lochan had invested in a borewell for irrigation with support from the Odisha Lift Irrigation Corporation. This allowed him to grow tomatoes, leafy greens, and other seasonal crops. But challenges like low yields, unpredictable rains, and pests made meeting his family's financial needs hard.

Lochan was part of a group of 25 farmers who had taken part in an exposure visit to Balisahi village in Ganjam district organised by Gram Vikas. This was part of a plan to introduce Pointed Gourd cultivation in Bangomunda. The visit reshaped his perspective.

“The structured farming, modern techniques, and evident prosperity in Balisahi were inspiring. Their Pointed Gourd fields, thriving with minimal water and advanced farming practices, painted a picture of what’s possible. The farmers in Balisahi and its neighbouring village, Dalaka, are experts in cultivating Potol (Pointed Gourd). They have adopted modern farming techniques, reducing farming costs and dependence on rain for cultivation. Their fields are well-organised, and the plants appear healthy. The farming community in these villages enjoys prosperity, evidenced by their well-constructed houses and widespread ownership of bikes. I was thoroughly impressed by what I saw”.



Gram Vikas continued to provide technical support to the farmers. Insect traps/pheromone traps were introduced to safeguard crops against insect infestations. They received training in preparing a fish tonic, which enhances the strength of flower buds and prevents them from falling off prematurely after flowering.

In February 2023, Lochan sowed Pointed Gourd roots in 0.3 acres, strictly following guidance on spacing, trellising, mulching and organic fertilisation. By June, three months later, he reaped a harvest of 6 quintals, earning about ₹30,000. Lochan highlighted the significant financial boost and security he attained through Pointed Gourd cultivation.

Farmers irrigate the plants once a week, and by implementing mulching across the entire field, moisture is conserved for the plants while effectively deterring weeds and pests. With its extended harvest period and market prices ranging from ₹40 to ₹150 throughout the year, depending on the season, farmers can earn a substantial income beginning as early as the first three months.

Inspired by his early achievements, Lochan aims to dedicate a whole acre to Pointed Gourd farming, hoping for a more significant income increase. He shares, “I reflect on my past farming practices, primarily cultivating cotton and cinnamon on my land. I used to spend significant sums on hiring labour for ploughing after each vegetable season, typically every four to five months. I also noticed that when I took up cultivating a new vegetable, it demanded more frequent watering, leading to increased water consumption. Additionally, controlling pests, weeds, and fungal infections required the consistent use of fertilisers.”



Solar-powered Irrigation

The implementation of solar-powered irrigation pumps across 35 villages has been transformative, enabling farmers to cultivate a second crop beyond the traditional rainfed rice and thereby significantly improving their livelihoods. The introduction of nine portable and 10 ground-mounted solar pumps has not only created irrigation facilities for approximately 150 acres of land, but has also instilled confidence in farmers and addressed the long-standing challenge of inadequate irrigation in the region. This shift towards multi-cropping represents a significant step towards greater agricultural productivity and financial stability for the farming communities.

Success with Solar-Powered Irrigation: The Story of Padmi Village

In Padmi village, under Greenbadi Gram Panchayat in Kandhamal District, farmers previously faced limited options for irrigating their crops. Only two out of thirteen families, whose land was near a water source, could farm year-round. The rest were restricted to monsoon-season farming, leaving their households to financial instability. This issue came to light during a village-level planning exercise conducted by Gram Vikas.

The formation of the Asar Alok Farmer Producer Group, comprising all 13 farmers in the village, marked a turning point. They developed their own irrigation plan and discussed it with Gram Vikas staff.





Gram Vikas facilitated the installation of a solar irrigation pump for the group. The pump draws water from a nearby perennial spring, storing it in a tank for irrigating upstream lands that previously depended solely on rainfall.

Consequently, these farmers have diversified their crops, cultivating bananas, green peas, chillies, aubergines (brinjals), and tomatoes across ten acres of land. Two farmers even earned ₹10,000 each from cultivating chillies, which fetch a market price of ₹1200 to ₹1400 per kilogram. Encouraged by their success, the farmers have also planted potatoes, onions, and tomatoes for the Rabi season, further enhancing their financial security.

With renewed optimism and the ability to sustainably cultivate two crops a year, the farmers now envision a future of financial self-sufficiency. Bipiya Pradhan, an enterprising farmer from the village, praises the transformative impact of solar-powered pumps, saying, “Solar-powered pumps have changed our lives, bridging the gap in our household finances and freeing us from the necessity of daily wage labour.”



Weather and Crop Advisories

In collaboration with service providers, we have installed 14 automatic micro weather stations (AWS) across villages in Bolangir, Gajapati, Ganjam, Kalahandi, Kandhamal, and Nayagarh districts. These stations provide crucial weather and crop advisories to 3,803 farmers and 22 Producer Groups in 84 villages. The impact of these advisories is evident, with 550 farmers and all 22 Producer Groups reporting cost reductions through preventive crop protection measures. Additionally, 61 dedicated village-level volunteers actively update village weatherboards, ensuring this vital information reaches the community.

Improving Agriculture with Micro-Weather Stations

Gram Vikas has partnered with Skymet Weather Services to install micro-automatic Weather Stations (AWS) in two locations within the Bolangir district. These stations benefit over 300 small and marginal farmers by providing weekly local weather forecasts and crop advisories. This information helps farmers cope with weather events such as unseasonal rain, and cloudy or foggy conditions that typically lead to pest and disease infestations in crops.

The AWS is an automated version of the traditional weather station, enabling measurements at shorter intervals from remote areas. It typically consists of a weather-proof enclosure containing the data logger, rechargeable battery, telemetry, and meteorological sensors, with an attached solar panel or wind turbine mounted on a mast. The system reports in real-time and stores data for later retrieval.



Each installation covers a 12 km radius. Farmers receive regular updates and forecasts on crucial meteorological parameters every seven days, including rainfall, humidity, wind patterns, and soil moisture levels. The crop advisory provides farmers with information on how to care for seasonal crops based on the weather forecast. This timely and accurate information empowers farmers to make informed decisions about their agricultural activities.

A village volunteer, known as the Pani Pago Mitra and selected by the Village Development Committees (VDC), relays the weather forecast to the farmers. They write it on the village weatherboard, usually located on a wall in selected public places, and also share the forecast through the Farmer Producer Groups' (FPGs) WhatsApp groups. The AWS in Kapilabhata Panchayat of Bangomunda block benefits 2,513 people in nine villages, including 238 farmers from 20 FPGs. The second AWS in Sikachhida Panchayat of Bolangir block covers 745 households in seven villages, including 108 farmers from nine FPGs.

Babulal Behera, 35, a member of the Sri Jagannath FPG of Malpada village, says,

“Earlier, farmers harvested their crops without knowing when it would rain. The forecasts they received were through mediums like radio, newspapers, and television, which were inaccurate. Last year, the weather advisory predicted rains for two consecutive weeks, which saved the farmers from losing their paddy harvest to rot. Farmers usually leave the harvested paddy in their fields as they arrange for a tractor to carry the crop later. Because of timely updates, they were able to plan better.”

Lakshmikanta Behera, 38, a farmer from Malpada village and Secretary of Srikrushna FPG, believes the weather advisory is a blessing to everyone in his village. Lakshmikanta is making bricks to build his house. Knowing the weather forecast allows him to make informed decisions about scheduling and managing his workforce. Chitan Majhi, 32, a member of Maa Garen FPG of Putupada village, says, “This weather advisory helps not only farmers but everyone in the village to schedule social gatherings or arrange functions.”



EQUITY AND RESILIENCE

Village communities and local governments need the capacity to plan and manage equitable access to water and natural resources, prioritising the most vulnerable households. Women, youth, and children should have meaningful roles in development decisions, and citizens must engage effectively with local governments. Key outcomes include village and GP-level water security plans, VPRPs as the foundation for Gram Panchayat Development Plans, increased access to development funds and social protection for vulnerable households, stronger women's leadership, and institutional platforms for women and youth to participate in local development.

Local Development Planning

The village community creates Village Prosperity and Resilience Plans (VPRPs), which are structured five-year plans outlining their demands for village development. Gram Vikas facilitated the development of VPRPs in 1,246 villages. The village community created these plans, keeping the priorities of vulnerable households in mind and addressing the developmental and aspirational needs of the people. The plans will form the basis for Gram Vikas' work and streamline resource mobilisation processes. The VPRPs of 314 villages have been submitted and approved in their respective Gram Sabhas.

Access to Social Protection Schemes

We identified 8,170 households in the operational Gram Panchayats as eligible for, but not receiving, various social protection schemes and entitlements. We have connected 3,444 (42%) of these identified households, and they have started receiving benefits such as pensions, farmer IDs, and MGNREGS job cards. Efforts are ongoing to ensure the remaining households also receive their entitlements. While progress in Social Protection Schemes and the Forest Rights Act (FRA) has been slow, it remains significant.

Women's Leadership in Community Institutions

In 759 (93%) of the 812 villages with active Village Development Committees during the year, a woman holds an office-bearer position, either as president, secretary, or both in some cases. Furthermore, 15 of the 18 Gram Panchayat Coordination Committees formed have a woman as an office-bearer.

Institutions for Youth and Children

Bal Sabha, village-level children's groups, have formed in 311 villages. These groups focus on building life skills, general engagement in village-level matters, and issues related to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH). 5,927 children participate in these groups.



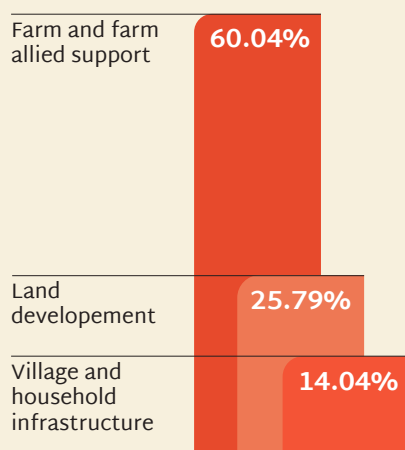
LOCAL RESOURCE MOBILISATION

Local resource mobilisation is a key aspect of our work with community partners. Gram Vikas provides technical and facilitation support to village institutions to raise monetary and material support from the government and other organisations. Gram Vikas field teams, along with the Village Development Committees, collect and maintain information about local resource mobilisation. The Village Lekha Mitra (VLM) cadre of accounting-auditing service providers conducts a certification process to confirm the actual amounts mobilised.

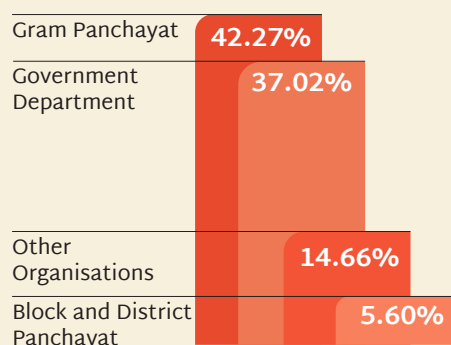
The certification process has been completed in 14 of the 48 GPs where resource mobilisation occurred during the year. Of the total ₹2.76 crore reported as mobilised, the VLM has audited and certified details of ₹73.16 lakh from the 14 GPs. The audit and certification process is underway in the remaining 34 GPs, where ₹2.03 crore was claimed to have been raised. As evidenced in the 14 GPs, where field staff claimed ₹53.42 lakh was mobilised, the actual amount was ₹73.16 lakh.

We anticipate that the final figures for resource mobilisation will be close to ₹3.50 crore once we complete certification in all 48 GPs.

Resources mobilised by purpose



Resources mobilised by source (In ₹ lakh)



A Village Development Committee's Initiative Paves the Way to Village Prosperity

The village of Tarava and its surrounding areas in Gumma block, Gajapati district, regularly experienced water shortages during the summer months. The Akanurba pond, a shallow half-acre pond, served as a crucial water source for the village but would dry up by February or March each year. This prevented farmers with land adjacent to the pond from cultivating crops. The village church organised a biennial feast in March, attracting over 50,000 people from the region. Many visitors stayed in the village for a few days, creating an even greater demand for water during this time.

To address this issue, the Tarava Village Development Committee (VDC) discussed the matter with Gram Vikas and sought their support to deepen the pond. They presented a plan that would enable people to wash clothes during summers and irrigate approximately 60 acres of cultivable land surrounding the pond. The Gram Vikas team advised the VDC members to submit a written application to the Sarpanch of Tarava, requesting funds under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) for the pond's renovation.

The VDC members approached the Sarpanch with their application. The Sarpanch included this on the agenda for the next Gram Sabha, where Nazir Gamango, the Tarava VDC President, spoke on the issue. He urged the Gram Panchayat to prioritise the release of funds for the pond's renovation. The elected panchayat members, leaders, and members from eight villages under the Tarava Panchayat attended the Gram Sabha.



After two months, the Tarava VDC received funds in its account from the Panchayat, and work began shortly after under the MGNREGS. Men and women from every household in the village contributed their labour on the site for 30 days. Once the digging and deepening were complete, the VDC constructed steps on two sides of the pond for men and women to wash their clothes or access the pond to fetch water for their cattle and goats. The work was finished just before Christmas that year.

The Sarpanch of Tarava Panchayat inaugurated the renovated pond on Republic Day in the presence of VDC leaders from the eight villages, PRI members, Panchayat Samiti members, and the Gram Rozgar Sevak of Tarava Panchayat.

At the event, the Sarpanch commended the proactive approach of the Tarava village VDC members, who took the initiative to renovate the pond for the benefit of farmers, residents, and visitors.

He expressed his pride that a village under his Panchayat had taken the initiative to improve and develop their community by following official procedures, submitting a written application, and requesting funds through the MGNREGS.



Building a Water Secure Gram Panchayat: The Case of Kaptapalli GP in Nayagarh District

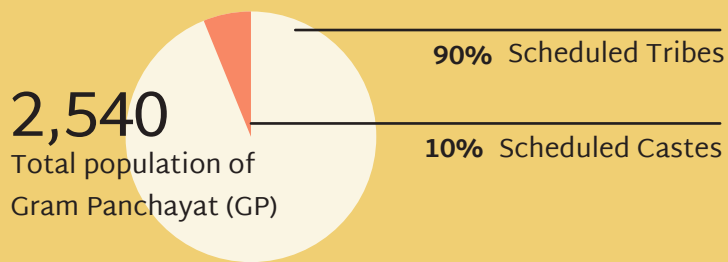
The village of Kaptapalli, nestled within the Nuagaon block of Nayagarh district, encompasses



26
Habitations



635
Households



In a bid to ensure water security, Gram Vikas launched the Water Secure Gram Panchayat (WSGP) Programme in the GP in April 2021.



Review and course-correction

A review conducted in October 2023 revealed that while individual components of the WSGP in Kaptapalli Gram Panchayat had progressed satisfactorily, there was a lack of a cohesive understanding of the overall impact at the GP level. To address this, the team decided to focus on strengthening the following key areas:

- Comprehensive planning at the village level and identifying priority areas for interventions.
- Establishing stronger interaction with the Gram Panchayat.
- Ensuring intensive follow-up for the implementation of planned priorities.

From November to December 2023, the Gram Vikas team, with the support of Village Development Committees and village-level volunteers, undertook comprehensive village-level planning across all 26 villages of the GP.

Engagement with the Gram Panchayat

The Gram Vikas field team maintained consistent engagement with key stakeholders, including the Sarpanch, Ward Members, Panchayat Executive Officer (PEO), Anganwadi workers, and Community Resource Persons. This ensured their support for the smooth execution of VPRP planning and discussions within the Palli Sabha. During the camp, the team assisted the PEO in collecting data on individual forest rights claims and identifying eligible beneficiaries who had been excluded from the Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM).

By the first week of December 2023, village-level meetings had been organised across all 26 villages, encompassing 635 households.

On December 16, 2023, the Gram Panchayat convened a meeting where the data and demands from the VPRP and WSGP plans of all 26 villages were presented. The Gram Vikas team supported the Gram Panchayat Committee in preparing the Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP), consolidating the various individual and community-level demands approved by the Palli Sabha. These included demands for public goods and services, community resources, and individual work demands for the most vulnerable households identified during the camp.

The finalised GPDP was then presented at a special Gram Sabha held on January 17, 2024. This meeting also served as an opportunity to gather any remaining demands from the community.

RESULTS ACHIEVED

Increased access to safe drinking water and sanitation in the village



- Repair of existing Functional Household Tap Connection (FHTC) Schemes, benefitting 98 households in three villages
- Augmentation of existing FHTC Scheme in one village to ensure that all households have an FHTC
- New Piped Water Supply Systems set up in four villages benefitting 88 households
- The existing water supply system is being extended in one school, benefiting children from more than three villages.
- Pre- and post-monsoon water quality tests were conducted for all drinking water sources in 22 villages, and the results were shared.
- WQM cadre selected and trained in 22 villages to monitor water quality in the village.



Better discharge of wells, springs, and other water sources

- Water source inventory, identifying and mapping all water sources, was completed in 25 villages, with details of 174 water sources.
- 23 critical sources identified in three villages were taken up for source-based treatment. The treatment will directly benefit 55 households and ensure water security for the whole village.
- Jala Bandhu and village-level volunteers were identified and trained to provide technical support to the village communities.



Households earn better income from farming and allied activities

- Four Farmer Producer Groups were formed with 56 farmers in two villages for increased knowledge sharing and collective action.
- 251 farmers were trained in an Improved package of practices to increase crop yield and productivity, and 236 farmers continue to follow the new practices.
- A new irrigation facility was constructed in one village, benefiting 18 households and irrigating approximately eight acres of land.
- 64 self-help groups of women supported, reaching out to 566 women.



Access to social protection schemes

- Existing Village Development Committees (VDC) were strengthened and reformed in 12 villages, and 14 new Committees were formed.
- Adolescents were organised into Kishori Kishor Samuh in eight villages, with 48 men and 54 women actively participating.
- Activities were taken to strengthen children's participation in community matters through Bal Sabha in 12 villages, with 74 boys and 79 girls.
- Leadership development and organisational strengthening training programmes were undertaken to cover 156 persons in the villages.
- Inclusion of 93 persons eligible for pensions, MGNREGS job cards, and ration cards.
- Processing of Farmer ID applications of 444 farmers.
- Individual Forest Rights applications of 463 households verified and submitted for processing.

SAFE AND DIGNIFIED MIGRATION PROGRAMME

The Safe and Dignified Migration (SDM) Programme focuses on regions where opportunistic migration is a key livelihood option. It empowers communities to benefit from informed and dignified migration. The programme contributes to the overall social and economic development of remote areas and enables stronger coping mechanisms for the impacts of climate change.

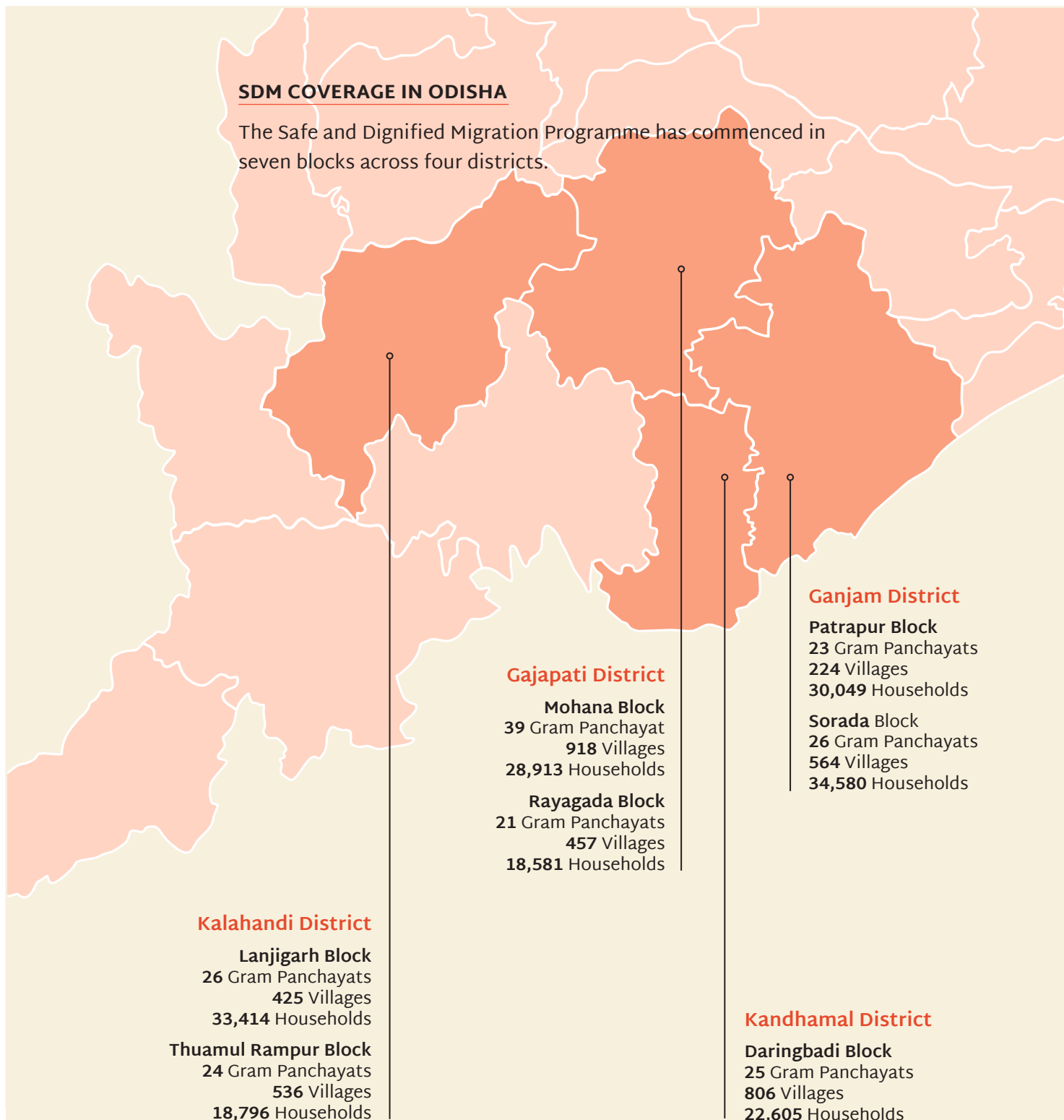
In the Eastern Ghats region of southern and south-western Odisha, changing climate patterns increasingly affect people's lives and livelihoods. Increased access to education and information creates aspirations among the younger generation to move beyond farming and other primary sector occupations. Consequently, migration for work is both a coping mechanism and an aspirational livelihood choice.

The SDM Programme is dedicated to supporting village communities, ensuring that migration is a consciously chosen livelihood option. It respects the worker's and the household's decision-making process, recognising that making migration safe and dignified requires seamless coordination between source and destination through a corridor approach.

The Programme plays a pivotal role in creating opportunities. It facilitates the investment of remittance incomes and establishes local income-earning opportunities for migrants and their dependent families. These investments can foster stronger local economic development processes, creating more employment and diversifying income opportunities locally.

SDM COVERAGE IN ODISHA

The Safe and Dignified Migration Programme has commenced in seven blocks across four districts.



184

Total Gram
Panchayats

3930

Total
Villages

1,86,938

Total
Households

SDM PROGRAMME PILLARS

The Safe and Dignified Migration programme's activities and results are built on three pillars.

**OCCUPATIONAL
SECURITY**



**FINANCIAL
SECURITY**



**EMOTIONAL
AND SOCIAL
SECURITY**



OCCUPATIONAL SECURITY

Occupational security involves a household's ability to choose whether or not to migrate, access grievance redressal mechanisms and social protection for workers at their destination, and pursue skill development for improved income opportunities.



Support Systems in the Migration Corridor

The Shramik Bandhu Seva Kendra (SBSK) in source areas in Odisha and the Bandhu Shramik Seva Kendra (BSSK) in destination areas provide support services to migrant workers and their households. SBSK operations began this year in Sorada and Patrapur Blocks of Ganjam, Daringbadi Block of Kandhamal, and Rayagada and Mohana Blocks of Gajapati District. A new BSSK opened in Nettoor, Ernakulam district, Kerala. The BSSK in Perumbavoor, Ernakulam district, continued its operations. 7,486 migrant workers registered to access various services through these centres.

The Bandhu Telephone helpline received 52 grievances during the year. These grievances concerned unpaid wages, medical and death-related cases, and unfair labour practices, such as forced labour. Of these, 16 have been resolved, resulting in workers receiving a total of ₹3,05,350 as settlement from their employers. The helpline enabled labourers in a bonded situation in Tamil Nadu to register a case. Eleven workers were rescued, including four from Kandhamal. In this case, the employer also released ₹35,000 of pending wages.

Access to Social Protection Schemes

The Bandhu Shramik Seva Kendra resource centres enable migrant workers in Kerala to access various social protection schemes. 404 migrant workers enrolled in life or health insurance schemes at their destination. 70 workers renewed their registration under the Inter-State Migrant Workers Welfare Scheme, while 77 people registered on the e-Shram portal. 32 people enrolled in the One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC) scheme. Additionally, 25 children from migrant families enrolled in schools in Kerala. The Government of Kerala discontinued the AAWAZ scheme for migrant welfare, reducing the social protection opportunities available to workers. Furthermore, the SBSK in Odisha facilitated the enrolment of 200 workers in the Prime Minister Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana and Prime Minister Suraksha Bima Yojana.

Migrant Registry at the Gram Panchayat Level

We have completed initial data collection in 25 Gram Panchayats in Thuamul Rampur, Daringbadi, Surada, Rayagada Mohana, and Patrapur. The Migrant Registry contains source and destination-level information about migrants, including contact details, work details, employer information, and contacts of local police stations. Once complete, we will hand over the registries to the respective Gram Panchayats for regular maintenance and updating. The registries will serve as a directory for Panchayati Raj Institutions during emergencies, disasters, and pandemics.

7,486

workers registered for support services



₹3,05,350

in employer settlements for workers



404

workers insured at destination



FINANCIAL SECURITY



Financial security pertains to the ability and willingness to use mainstream financial institutions and instruments, make productive investments with remittance income to ensure viable income sources at home, and the enhanced role of women dependents in ensuring household income security.

Access to Banking Services and Financial Savings

9,342 people attended financial literacy sessions in the source villages. These sessions promoted the use of formal banking systems, savings and investments, and income and expenditure tracking. We supported 459 workers in opening bank accounts.

Productive Investments from Remittances

The Programme supported the establishment of 122 new micro-enterprises in sectors such as goatery, poultry, food service businesses, tent-houses, kirana shops (small grocery stores), and flour mills. In addition to investments made by the entrepreneurs, we provided seed capital totalling ₹12.6 lakh to 53 enterprises. We also supported 25 existing enterprises to strengthen or expand their businesses by linking them with various government schemes.

Increasing Women's Role in Economic Activities

We helped women start 13 group enterprises and trained 351 people (291 women) in enterprise development. The training covered topics such as understanding the main features of a business, types of businesses, business viability, customers and competition, cost and profit, capital, and the business environment. We also organised two skill development programmes for 48 people.

9,342

people gained financial knowledge



₹12.6

lakh seed capital
disbursed



351

people trained in
enterprise development



From Migrant Worker to Village Spice Entrepreneur: Building Dreams at Home

Maheshwar Nayak is a 30-year-old resident of Kalima village in Gocha Panchayat in Surada block of Ganjam district. He recalls the moment that changed his life. “Entrepreneurship training has completely transformed my journey,” he says. “I was once a migrant labourer, but today, I am a proud entrepreneur. The happiness I feel is beyond words. I used to travel to Kerala to earn a living, but now I can run a business here in my village. My income has doubled, my confidence has soared, and I am hopeful. There are challenges, but I am determined to keep pushing forward.”

Maheshwar’s story is one of perseverance and determination. His father was a marginal farmer who cultivated a small portion of land to support the family. Having no other means of earning, he could not support Maheshwar financially for his studies. Maheshwar dropped out of school after Class 8 due to his family’s financial constraints. When he was 18, he migrated to Kerala as a daily wage labourer to support his family. He would return home once a year during the kharif cropping season to assist his parents in cultivating paddy on their small plot of land. After marriage and raising a family, his earnings in Kerala were barely enough to cover the expenses of his wife, three daughters, and a son.



In January 2024, Maheshwar returned to his village after another stint in Kerala. Then, he attended a village meeting organised by a Gram Udyog Mitra, who discussed potential business opportunities with members of self-help groups and village residents. The meeting focused on identifying profitable businesses that could thrive locally with minimal investment. Maheshwar listened intently, realising he no longer wanted to be a migrant labourer. Starting his own business near his home sparked a new sense of purpose.

Gram Udyog Mitra (GUM) are local business development service providers selected and trained by Gram Vikas to manage and support the rural micro-entrepreneurs in their local areas. They are trained and certified by Gram Vikas to counsel prospective entrepreneurs to attend the Entrepreneurship Development Programme Training, which they conduct in their areas. They help prepare a business plan and facilitate skill training for entrepreneurs. They provide six months of handholding support to enterprises.

Encouraged by the discussion, Maheshwar got selected for the Entrepreneurship Development Programme, which set him on a



path of learning and growth. On February 11, 2024, he began his journey. The comprehensive training covered various business aspects, from selecting the right enterprise to managing finances and communication. Inspired by the training, Maheshwar set up a business buying dry spices such as chilly, cumin, mustard seeds, and turmeric in bulk and reselling them in smaller packets.

The initial days were challenging, and the profits were minimal. However, Maheshwar's determination and the lessons from his training, especially the importance of good communication, propelled him forward. Gradually, his business began to flourish. As his experience grew, so did his customer base. Maheshwar expanded his business to areas like Baliguda, Daringbadi in Kandhamal district, and Sorada in Ganjam district. He even started supplying spices to student hostels, adding other essential items like dry food, soap, and stationery to his product line.

Maheshwar's venture is a successful enterprise today, earning him ₹40,000 to ₹50,000 monthly. He dreams of further expanding his business by purchasing a small flour mill to grind and pack spices like chilli and pepper to sell quality spices. He has saved money for this investment and is prepared to take a loan if necessary. His success has brought financial stability to his family and a sense of pride and hope.

Reflecting on his journey, Maheshwar says,

“Entrepreneurship development training has changed my life. I went from being a migrant labourer to an entrepreneur. I started my spice business with just ₹15,000 as my initial capital. It's growing, and I'm ready to take it to the next level with more resources and capital.”



EMOTIONAL AND SOCIAL SECURITY

Emotional and social security pertain to the ability of women and children to manage emotional consequences of migration, access to social security benefits for dependents, and ability of children from migrant households to continue education.

Social Security Support for Women and Older People

In 138 villages, the Programme has enabled all women from migrant households to become members of self-help groups. During the process, 28 new groups were formed, 67 were revived, and 30 women were added to existing SHGs.

Emergency Assistance

During the year, 12 emergency cases were reported through the resource centres or the telephone helpline. Of these, 11 were cases of death in Kerala where support was needed for cremation or repatriation of the mortal remains. The BSSK in Kerala and SBSK in Odisha coordinated with various local government stakeholders and other non-government organisations to enable this. In Kerala, support was provided to facilitate the post-mortem of the deceased, obtain necessary documents, and arrange logistics for transportation. In Odisha, the work included facilitating logistics from Bhubaneswar airport to the deceased's village and obtaining support from the Government for cremation and other related expenses.

138 villages,
women from migrant households join SHGs



95 SHGs,
formed or revived



92%
of emergency cases supported



Self-Help Groups Help Forge a Path to Sustainable Self-Reliance

Self-help groups (SHGs) have positively impacted women in our partner villages. Regular meetings to discuss various issues and consistent saving within the group have become standard practices. The groups have helped women to reduce their reliance on moneylenders for immediate cash needs. The Odisha Livelihoods Mission has further supported these groups through various schemes. The women, demonstrating their growing empowerment, have taken on leadership roles in preparing the Village Prosperity and Resilience Plan (VPRP) for their villages.

Gram Vikas supported the strengthening of SHG activities in the remote villages of Ankuli, Buratal, and Tumba Gram Panchayats of Patrapur block in Ganjam district. In 2023-24, 468 members from 102 SHGs across 63 villages attended 15 training programmes. In 23 villages, all women are now part of an SHG after Gram Vikas supported the formation of nine new groups.

Women can now navigate various government schemes to uplift their families financially and mobilise resources from government and private entities. They have collaborated with the Tumba Development Agency (TDA), Gram Vikas, and the Odisha Livelihoods Mission (OLM) to target water, forest, and livelihood development. Noteworthy examples include bee farming in Upper Buratal, Lower Buratal, and A. Gauduni, goat farming in Andaanda, Guruda, Thanagaon, Bhaliyaasahi, and Daleibil, and chicken farming in Puriasahi, all facilitated by SHG members.

Subhasini Karjee, President of Maa Banadurga SHG in Gaida village under Ankuli Panchayat, affirms,

“We no longer rely on loans from the sahukar (money lenders). Instead, we provide internal loans to members in need from our savings. Our group typically disburses internal loans amounting to ₹40,000 for higher education, agriculture, and house construction.”

Gitanjali Naik, President of Maa Tarini SHG in Lower Buratal village, acknowledges that these trainings have instilled confidence, fostering regular meetings with OLM, identification of social and economic challenges within the group, liaison with various governmental and private entities for resource mobilisation, and the ability to maintain transparent financial records.



STRATEGIC EXTENSIONS

We are implementing several projects of strategic significance, addressing the needs of our community partners and building our organisational capabilities. These projects cover various thematic areas and span across villages in the districts where Gram Vikas has chosen to focus as part of its Gram Vikas Decade Five strategic approach.

COMMUNITY-OWNED AND MANAGED WATER AND SANITATION

Gram Vikas supports villages undertaking community-owned and managed integrated water and sanitation activities, providing three taps to each household. It directly supports villages not included in the Jal Jeevan Mission to ensure functional household tap connections for all. These are typically remote and small habitations. The community contributes approximately 20% of the piped water supply system's cost through labour and materials, with the remaining cost mobilised as grants.

During the year, piped water supply work commenced in 60 villages. In 45 villages, new piped water supply systems were established, while existing systems were augmented or revived in 15 villages. To address unreliable power and low water yield from springs, we installed solar pumping systems in 91 villages across 61 Gram Panchayats. Trained local youth assist in maintaining these systems, ensuring prompt repairs and regular upkeep.

We provide non-financial support to households for building household toilets and bathing rooms. Trained Estimators surveyed each household to assess the current status of sanitation infrastructure and prepare estimates for the household. These estimates covered the extension of toilet/ bathing rooms to new families, repair and maintenance of existing facilities, or repair of toilets and retrofitting of bathing

rooms. Field teams and village-level volunteers motivate and organise households to undertake the necessary works. The volunteers helped organise masons for the work and arrange required local materials.

During the year, 1,080 households undertook repair and retrofitting work, and 82 households constructed new toilets and bathing rooms.

IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT AGENCY FOR GOVERNMENT OF ODISHA FOR JAL JEEVAN MISSION

In July 2021, the Panchayati Raj and Drinking Water Department of the Government of Odisha appointed Gram Vikas as the Implementation Support Agency (ISA). The ISA's role is to support the formation of Village Water and Sanitation Committees and the preparation of Village Action Plans in all villages within the Gajapati, Ganjam, Kandhamal, and Boudh districts of Odisha. A team of eight Gram Vikas staff members and approximately 200 village-level volunteers worked intensively to achieve these results.

The team formed Village Water and Sanitation Committees (VWSCs) and developed Village Action Plans (VAPs) in 7,666 villages across 892 Gram Panchayats in the four districts. Of these, 7,326 Committees have opened bank accounts. Work is ongoing to complete the bank account openings for the remaining 259 villages. The team has also prepared Gram Panchayat Action Plans for 892 GPs and completed District Action Plans for all four districts.



Basudha Rath: Sensitising Odisha's Villages on Water Issues and the Jal Jeevan Mission

As the Implementation Support Agency for the Jal Jeevan Mission, Gram Vikas worked with 892 Gram Panchayats in four districts of Odisha to build the institutional base for implementation, participatory planning, and awareness generation.

The Basudha Rath was an innovative strategy used to generate awareness about the Jal Jeevan Mission and water issues. Three vehicles equipped with digital screens, loudspeakers, and power backups covered more than 21,385 kilometres over six months. A 24-minute video, based on Odia folk narrative forms in Kui, Saura, and Odia languages, was the primary medium of communication.

The communication covered critical aspects of the Jal Jeevan Mission, including its objectives, processes, institutional mechanisms, and expectations from the user communities. It focused on water quality surveillance, source sustainability, and the judicious use of water.

The route plan for the vehicles was prepared in consultation with Rural Water Supply and Sanitation department officials at the district level. Panchayat Samiti and Gram Panchayat-level elected representatives and officials led and facilitated the screenings at the village level.



The Basudha Rath reached more than **4.8 million people** in 7,675 villages across the four districts, generating great interest and enthusiasm.

The Basudha Rath Sparks Change: Chikarada's Water Triumph

In 2021, the village of Chikarada, headquarters of its Gram Panchayat in Rangeilunda Block in Ganjam district, established a piped water supply system under the Basudha-JJM scheme of the Government of Odisha. This promised relief for 679 families, who would no longer have to rely on distant sources and the arduous labour of women and girls carrying water. However, the system faltered soon after its launch, forcing villagers to return to their old ways. The water flowed irregularly.

In 2022, Gram Vikas, supporting the Jal Jeevan Mission as the Implementation Support Agency, helped establish a Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC). Though progress was slow, the VWSC represented a crucial step towards reliable water access for Chikarada.

August 2023 marked a turning point for Chikarada. The arrival of the Basudha Rath, with its captivating videos and informative leaflets, significantly increased awareness among the villagers. They began to understand the importance of safe water practices and sanitation, leading to improved health and well-being in the community. The screenings also empowered the Village Water and Sanitation Committee (VWSC) by clearly outlining their crucial roles and responsibilities.

The VWSC took decisive action following Basudha Rath's visit. In a village meeting, they proposed assuming full responsibility for managing and maintaining the water supply system and collecting a monthly fee from each household to fund it. They met with department officials to request repairs for the damaged main pipeline and encouraged residents to fix individual leaks. To ensure water quality, the committee also appointed someone to oversee regular testing.

The initiative has reduced the village's dependence on the Gram Panchayat and ensures regular water supply. It has fostered a sense of ownership and pride within Chikarada. With the burden of water scarcity lifted, the community can now focus on education, economic opportunities, and a healthier future.

The impact of the Basudha Rath extended far beyond Chikarada, inspiring communities across the four districts to take charge of their water resources. For example, in Tilakpanga village in K Nuagaon block of Kandhamal district, Debaki Pradhan, President of the Village Committee had this to say:

“The Basudha Rath video screening was a turning point for our community. It brought us together and emphasised the need for reusing wastewater to grow vegetables in our backyards. Inspired by this, every household started a vegetable garden, using even the smallest patch of land to grow vegetables like eggplant, tomato, okra, bottle gourd, and green chilies. A Committee member has volunteered to take charge of the water supply. Since then, the supply has been consistent. The collection of the monthly maintenance fee from each household has also restarted. Residents refused to pay earlier, but they are now happily contributing.”



SWAYAMSHREE - EMPOWERING WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS PROJECT

The three-year “Empowering Women Entrepreneurs Programme” began in October 2023. The project aims to empower up to 200,000 women entrepreneurs across 30 Blocks in 4 districts: Bargarh, Gajapati, Ganjam, and Kandhamal. It builds upon the foundational work of the Department of Mission Shakti, Government of Odisha, to promote the economic empowerment of women’s collectives. It seeks to bridge gaps by using an enterprise development approach to build sustainable women-owned enterprises.



Project implementation commenced in October 2023 in 106 Gram Panchayats across five blocks, reaching nearly **80,000 women** who are members of **7,935 Self-Help Groups**.

The project has a dedicated implementation team. The State team, comprising a Programme Lead, Finance Lead, and Monitoring Lead, operates from Berhampur. There are three District management teams. Block-level teams, with Block Programme Leads and Cluster Coordinators, now operate in the five blocks. Micro Enterprise Mentors, with extensive experience in the National Rural Livelihoods Mission, provide on-the-ground support to the Cluster Coordinators and women entrepreneurs.

RURAL CRÈCHE INITIATIVE

The Rural Crèche initiative addresses the needs of children aged 7-35 months in remote villages across Gajapati, Kandhamal, and Kalahandi districts. It provides a platform for children under three to access proper nutrition, healthcare, and Early Childhood Development interventions. The crèche serves as a community-based centre where parents can leave their children while they work. It offers daycare services for seven to eight hours a day, six days a week.

As of March 2024, 12 crèches actively operate in four villages in Gajapati, six in Kandhamal, and two in Kalahandi, with a current enrolment of 124 children. Work is underway to establish 38 more crèches.

HOLISTIC RURAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

The Holistic Rural Development Programme (HRDP) is currently in its second year in Bolangir district. The project covers 3,305 households across 20 villages, benefitting over 13,000 people.

This year, the HRDP facilitated the creation of an additional 4,700 cubic metres of water storage capacity through the repair and renovation of farm ponds and dug wells, benefitting 95 farming households. Ten solar irrigation systems were established, enabling irrigation for approximately 60 acres. This benefitted 50 farmers who were able to take up additional vegetable cultivation, leading to an increase in income.

Five women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) received support to start micro-enterprises in weaving, mushroom cultivation, nursery raising, and fish farming. The Sabuja Lahari Farmer Producer Organisation launched in March 2023 with 357 farmers as members in the Bangomunda cluster of Bolangir district, which consists of 12 villages.

GRAM SEVA PROJECT

The Gram Seva project operates in five villages within Lakhbahali GP of Lanjigarh block in Kalahandi district, encompassing 383 households and 1871 individuals.

This year, the project focused on establishing micro-enterprises and launching a health service initiative. A farmer producer group in Rughaguda initiated a dal processing venture with the aim of branding and selling processed pulses. Backyard poultry, featuring a new chick variety called Suneli that suits local conditions and market demand, was introduced to five women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs).

The Prerana centre in Rughaguda successfully trained local girls in tailoring, with five trainees subsequently starting their own businesses. In March, an ambulance service launched to provide free emergency medical care in two panchayats benefit patients travelling from Bengaon PHC to district hospitals.

WATER SECURE INITIATIVE IN KHURDHA

The Water Secure Initiative is currently in its second year, covering six villages across two GPs in Khurdha District. Its focus is on ensuring water security within the operational villages. The project encompasses 269 households.

The piped water supply system in Phirikinali is now operational, and work has begun in the second village, Shyamsundarpur. Water conservation efforts, including land development, have commenced in all six villages. Additionally, Village Prosperity and Resilience Plans have been completed in all six villages, while aquifer mapping and hydro-geological surveys have been finalised in two villages.

REVIVAL OF THE KARNIBEL MICRO HYDRO PROJECT

In 2009, Gram Vikas assisted the Karnibel village community in Tala Ambpadar Gram Panchayat of Thuamul Rampur block in Kalahandi to establish a 10kW standalone micro hydro power generation system (MHP). This power plant supplied electricity to fulfil the household and livelihood energy needs of 22 village households. The MHP operated effectively until 2016, providing basic electricity for 12 hours a day, even after the village connected to the regular electricity grid in 2012. Heavy rains in 2016 damaged the intake weir and penstock pipes, causing the project to cease operation.

Efforts to revive the defunct MHP plant commenced in November 2020. Due to reduced water flow in the Trunja Jharan stream, which feeds the power plant, it can no longer operate at its full 10 kW capacity. A plan was devised to refurbish the micro-hydro plant and integrate it with a solar photovoltaic (PV) system. This ensures a consistent power supply during periods of low water flow in the summer or when sunlight is scarce in the monsoon and winter.

Lights On in Karnibel: A Story of Shared Determination

Karnibel, a village nestled across a stream, grapples with limited access during the monsoon season. Despite the challenge of manually hauling heavy equipment to the worksite, the villagers' unwavering resolve saw the micro-hydro project through from start to finish.

Dhoba Majhi, a 56-year-old farmer, vividly remembers the backbreaking task of carrying heavy batteries uphill to the pump house – a journey of roughly 800 metres that felt far longer. “My friend Burjang and I had to pause every 10 minutes,” he recalls. Similarly, young farmers Nilanchal and Nakula, despite the physical strain, dedicated over six hours to transporting solar panels and inverter batteries, fuelled by the hope of consistent power for their village.

The community's active participation proved vital to the restoration. Guided by technical experts, they constructed a gabion structure upstream to prevent silt from obstructing water flow to the pipes, built a forebay tank, and installed V-shaped steel plates to monitor water flow.



For Shanti Majhi, a housewife and Maa Durga Self-Help Group (SHG) member, the 24/7 electricity is a dream come true. “Earlier, when we got electricity, it came and went,” she says, recalling how her children struggled to complete their homework by the dim light of a kerosene lamp. Like Shanti, many in Karnibel eagerly awaited the day the plant would start working again, bringing with it the promise of a brighter future.

Rupang Majhi, a 33-year-old farmer and Karnibel Village Development Committee (VDC) member, speaks of the relief the project has brought. “During the rainy season, our village would be in darkness for an entire month. We finally have respite from the unending darkness.”



VIKALP – ENABLING YOUNG PEOPLE TO ASPIRE AND ACHIEVE

Gram Vikas and the Social Shapes Foundation implement the Vikalp Programme. It empowers children and young people aged 10-24 in remote Odisha villages to make informed choices about their education and careers. The Programme provides on-site guidance and mentorship through trained local mentors who lead learning groups through exercises, exposure visits, and awareness sessions.

Key Programme Components



Work with adolescents and young people to enable them to make informed education and livelihood choices, and support them in exploring and building a better future.



Develop young leaders in villages and Gram Panchayats who can drive the social and economic development agenda for their households, villages, and communities.



Foster digital awareness, comfort, confidence, and literacy among adolescents and young people so they can use technology to advance various village institutions.

Learning Groups are organised at the village level in three age groups: 10-14, 15-19, and 20-24. Trained Learning Group Officers, trained and supervised by the Social Shapes Foundation, facilitate these groups.

Activities

Detailed activity plans are developed at the Learning Group level based on in-depth interactions with parents and scholars. The activities include:

- Support for enrolment in higher education
- Preparation for competitive exams for jobs
- Preparation for scholarship exams
- Building basic digital and computer skills
- Support for job applications
- Re-engaging students who have dropped out of school
- Building community leadership
- Improving parent-child engagement

Programme Rollout

The Programme began in Lakhanpur block of Jharsuguda district in October 2021. It expanded to Rayagada block of Gajapati district in April 2023 and Patrapur block in Ganjam district in November 2023.

As of March 2024, it operates in 42 habitations across

5

Gram Panchayats in three districts



897

children and young people participating
in 67 learning groups



Deepak Sabar, Laxmipur, Gajapati

Sixteen-year-old Deepak Sabar from Laxmipur village achieved a 70% pass in his Class 10 exams. He dreamt of attending the prestigious BJB College in Bhubaneswar and sought help from a private coaching centre in Jerang near Koinpur to apply for Class 11. However, Deepak discovered he had mistakenly applied to the wrong college and for Commerce instead of his preferred Arts stream.

Panicked but resolute, Deepak turned to his village's Vikalp Learning Group just before the admission deadline. With guidance from the Learning Group Officer, he reapplied for the Arts stream at BJB College. The group provided vital practical and emotional support, enabling Deepak to overcome his initial setback.



His father, Salka Sabar, later visited the group to share the joyous news of Deepak's successful admission. **"If it weren't for the Laxmipur Learning Group's help, Deepak would have missed the admission date. My son will leave for Bhubaneswar, and we are very happy for him."**

Iswar , Lakhanpur, Jharsuguda

Seventeen-year-old Iswar, a dedicated Class 10 student residing in Lakhanpur Village, Jharsuguda district, Odisha, excels in his studies and aspires to become a Mechanical Engineer. He actively supports his family, both marginal farmers who cultivate rice and vegetables, in agricultural work after school. While Iswar's father completed Class 10, his mother has never attended school. Understandably, his parents are apprehensive about supporting his engineering dream due to the financial burden. Iswar himself feels overwhelmed and anxious about the entire process, unsure how to prepare for the entrance exams and navigate the online application and testing procedures.



Through biweekly learning group meetings with Vikalp mentors, Iswar has gained invaluable knowledge about various colleges, examination patterns, and online application processes, boosting his confidence. He acquired essential MS Office and Internet skills at these meetings and is now actively preparing for the engineering entrance exams.

Chandra Munda , Mundapada, Jharsuguda

At 23, Chandra Munda's journey with Vikalp began as a scholar in 2022. Living with her parents and three siblings, her father farms while her mother manages the household. Vikalp's weekly learning groups gave Chandra the confidence to apply for several online jobs. Her perseverance led to her selection as an Anganwadi worker in Junian village, Lakhanpur. Chandra's dreams extend beyond this role, aspiring to become a schoolteacher. Vikalp has equipped her with knowledge, skills, and the courage to pursue her ambitions.

The Learning Groups are more than support systems—they are lifelines for rural youth, offering a platform for dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collaboration. These groups are not just committed to empowering youth from remote areas. They are the backbone of this empowerment, enabling them to make informed decisions about their future. By fostering a strong sense of ownership and responsibility, these Learning Groups are nurturing vibrant, inclusive, and resilient rural communities.



Empowering students is crucial in cultivating a generation of motivated, independent learners equipped to navigate the ever-changing world. When students have a say in their education, they become more engaged and invested in their learning journey. Through initiatives like these, the Social Shape Foundation ensures that rural youth are not just participants in their education but active architects of their futures.

GRAM VIKAS SAATHI

Gram Vikas actively promotes local human resources to work on various programme components. We train young men and women from the villages in specific thematic areas and provide support for them to work in their localities. We refer to this cadre as Gram Vikas Saathi (GVS).

We envision the Gram Vikas Saathi as a social entrepreneur trained in specific technical areas and management. The Saathi will gain technical capabilities relevant to their rural communities. In all cases, the Gram Vikas Saathi may also aspire to and work towards an active political role, initially as elected representatives in Panchayati Raj Institutions.



GRAM VIKAS SAATHI FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

We launched the Gram Vikas Saathi Fellowship Programme in 2023-24 as the formal mechanism to identify, select, train, and deploy these human resources. The GVS Fellows undergo a rigorous curriculum with mandatory thematic and optional general courses ranging from leadership, enumeration, content creation, digital literacy, spoken English, and technology. The Fellowship seeks to build on the entrepreneurial spirit displayed by the Saathi and build a network of well-connected social change advocates who can provide specific local services to address local issues.

The Fellowship acts like a social change incubator, where the Saathi learns to use enlightened self-interest to do social good. It gives them an opportunity to test their mettle in the real world while continuously building their skills. It also provides the Saathi opportunities to share a space with like-minded entrepreneurs to learn and develop with them. This will be the basis for the network approach that Saathi will use later.

The Fellowship has four main components:



Capacity Building: Training and capacity-building programmes on different thematic areas and life skills like Spoken English, Digital tools, Leadership Development, and Entrepreneurship Development.



On-the-Job Training: Building necessary technical skills and knowledge while working as service providers for Gram Vikas projects.



Certification: Certification upon completion of the fellowship in the respective specialisation based on the assessment of fieldwork and practical knowledge.



Support for Continued Engagement: The GVS will receive support to establish themselves as service provider enterprises. On completion of the Fellowship, they will work as service providers to Gram Vikas, the village and GP institutions, government agencies and other organisations in their area.

DETAILS OF GVS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME

During 2023-24, we launched the GVS Fellowship Programme in seven thematic areas. We initially identified a total of 207 individuals from the operational villages. Of them, 137 continue to be part of the Fellowship programme as of 31 March 2024.

Gram Yojana Saathi

24

Number of
Fellows



Core Areas of Work

- Prepare the VPRP
- Identify vulnerable households
- Support GPCC in engaging with the Gram Sabha
- Facilitate access to social security schemes for eligible individuals
- Provide technical knowledge and facilitation on social security schemes to VDC and GPCC

Village Lekha Mitra

7

Number of
Fellows



Core Areas of Work

- Audit local resources mobilised and VDC Accounts

Jala Bandhu

43

Number of
Fellows



Core Areas of Work

- Provide water and natural resources planning and management support to VDC and GPCC
- Manage plant nurseries
- Act as a technical cadre for MGNREGS, Jal Jeevan Mission, etc. Train service providers for VDC and GPCC for surveying water sources
- Conduct aquifer mapping and Water Security Planning

Pravasi Mitra

7

Number of
Fellows



Core Areas of Work

- Provide knowledge support to migrant workers and households
- Act as a technical cadre for Gram Panchayats to maintain the Migrant Registry
- Act as service providers for occupational and financial security activities
- Liaise with source and destination agencies for grievance redressal

Gram Udyog Mitra

26

Number of
Fellows



Core Areas of Work

- Provide business development support to rural entrepreneurs, including business plans
- Provide market and financial linkages for rural enterprises
- Act as the technical agency of the Gram Panchayat for enterprise development

Poshan Mitra

10

Number of
Fellows



Core Areas of Work

- Provide technical and knowledge support to VDC and GP for water quality management, WASH systems, and Nutrition.

Yuva Saathi

20

Number of
Fellows



Core Areas of Work

- Provide services to children and young people
- Build their soft skills and civic awareness
- Help them access educational and upskilling opportunities
- Facilitate access to digital tools and services

GRAM VIKAS SCHOOLS

In the early 1980s, Gram Vikas began addressing the lack of adequate access to primary education among Adivasi communities in Southern and South-Western Odisha. In remote villages, Government schools were either non-existent or not functioning. Education levels were dismal, and the exploitation of people due to illiteracy was high. Gram Vikas responded by starting balwadi (pre-school centres), non-formal education centres, and adult literacy programmes in the villages. However, it soon became clear that non-formal education would never allow children the opportunity to join the mainstream education system and fully reach their potential.

In 1982, Gram Vikas established the Kerandimal Middle Education (KME) School, a school for Adivasi and Dalit children in Kankia, Ganjam district.

By the late 1990s, our focus shifted entirely towards access to formal education. We upgraded the KME School into a fully residential High School, the Gram Vikas High School, in 1999. We established three more schools between 1992 and 2003. In 2014, we handed over the management of the Schools to Trusts set up for that purpose.



Currently, the Gram Vikas Trusts manage the four residential schools.

GRAM VIKAS HIGH SCHOOL

Kankia Village, Kukudakhundi Block, Ganjam District

Milestone years

Established 1982

Class X started 1999

Student Strength
(2023-2024): 566

👤 330 👤 236

High School: 155

Number of
Teachers: 23

👤 13 👤 10

MAHENDRA TANAYA ASHRAM SCHOOL

Koinpur Village, Rayagada Block, Gajapati District

Milestone years

Established 1992

Class IX started
2022

Student Strength
(2023-2024): 503

👤 319 👤 184

High School: 84

Number of
Teachers: 18

👤 9 👤 9

GRAM VIKAS SHIKSHYA NIKETAN

Kumudabahal Village, Thuamul Rampur Block, Kalahandi District

Milestone years

Established 1998

Class IX started
2022

Student Strength
(2023-2024): 323

👤 174 👤 149

High School: 71

Number of
Teachers: 18

👤 11 👤 7

GRAM VIKAS VIDYA VIHAR

Gayaganda Village, Jagannathprasad Block, Ganjam District

Milestone years

Established 2002

Class IX started
2022

Student Strength
(2023-2024): 300

👤 202 👤 98

High School: 53

Number of
Teachers: 13

👤 9 👤 4

More than 1,500 boys and girls have completed their education up to Class 10 from the schools. In 2023, 103 boys and 68 girls sat for the Class 10 exams, with all of them passing. The schools provide a well-rounded education, with a strong focus on extracurricular activities.

Jyoshna Sabar, an alumna of Gram Vikas High School, won a gold medal in the 40 kg category at the Commonwealth Weightlifting Championships 2023. She had also previously won a silver and a bronze medal at the Youth World Weightlifting Championship held in Albania.



Enabling Student Expression: A Filmmaking Workshop

The Footprint Film Festival, a platform where children create films for their peers and parents, partnered with Gram Vikas and Gram Vikas Schools to conduct a week-long film workshop. The workshop aimed to enrich the learning experiences of school students through storytelling. The Footprint Film Festival started in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. It provides a creative outlet for children to express themselves through short films.

Participants developed various skills during the workshop, including identifying and nurturing their inner talents, enhancing communication and expression, promoting group discussions, and encouraging active participation. These skills collectively contributed to their holistic development.

Ten girls and ten boys from the four Gram Vikas Schools participated. They learned about the filmmaking process, including story crafting, scriptwriting, shot and scene design, storyboarding, filming, video editing, music integration, and credit creation. The students created unique narratives in school-wise groups and brought them to life in the final three days. Their films explored themes such as caste discrimination, child exploitation, and bullying.

Five students from Gram Vikas Vidya Vihar School in Ganjam district attended, accompanied by their teacher, Sadanand Pradhan. He noted the students' existing creative skills and their enthusiasm for learning about filmmaking,



“The selected students have good creative skills in drawing and making projects for which they have won awards. They were excited to learn about filmmaking and their enthusiasm was truly inspiring. They enjoyed learning various aspects of it in the six-day workshop.”

Lipsa Gouda, a Class 8 student, expressed her newfound appreciation for the filmmaking process, highlighting its complexity and time commitment. She shared, “I had never realised just how intricate and time-consuming the art of filmmaking is. I thoroughly enjoyed our experience of creating short videos during the workshop and aspire to independently produce more such videos to deepen my understanding of filmmaking.”

Surajit Rupamajhi, also in Class 8, described the workshop as a fantastic learning experience. He found the effort required to create even a short 5-minute video or a full-length movie as impressive and expressed his happiness at participating and the valuable insights he gained.



NETWORKING AND SECTORAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Gram Vikas has been a pioneer in rural development since 1979, leveraging its extensive experience to benefit the wider community development sector. Through active membership in various networks, we collaborate with other organisations on critical issues, sharing knowledge and best practices. Additionally, Gram Vikas offers capacity-building programmes to empower communities and enhance the effectiveness of development initiatives, ensuring sustainable progress in rural areas.

MEMBERSHIP OF NETWORKS

Gram Vikas is a member of Voluntary Action Network India (VANI). We are also an active member of the RCRC Coalition, with membership of the Working Committee at the national level and implementation of several projects at the State level.

NETWORK ACTIVITIES

Responsible Coalition for Resilient Communities (RCRC)

The Gram Vikas communications team conducted a two-day virtual training programme on 'Strategic Communications for Grassroots Organisations' for RCRC's member organisations. Pratap Chandra Panda, Programme Manager, facilitated a workshop on Project Proposal Writing for members of the RCRC Northeast India chapter at Barpeta in Assam.

Odisha Vikash Conclave

Gram Vikas actively participated in the planning and conduct of the Odisha Vikash Conclave 2023, which had 'Transformative Odisha @ 2036: Demography and Development' as the key theme. We coordinated the discussion track on Migration and Urbanisation.



Alliance to Push Harder

The Alliance to Push Harder is a collective platform of grassroots organisations, intermediate supporting organisations, and donors that aims to influence an agenda of action for addressing critical climate-related challenges. Gram Vikas has joined this alliance along with the Rainmatter Foundation, WELL Labs, Socratus Foundation, Goonj, Waste Warriors Uttarakhand, and Nature's Club, Kendrapada.

In January 2024, Gram Vikas hosted the 'Karmashaala: Enriching Young Minds in Village Action'. This event brought together 40 Gram Vikas Saathi from Gram Vikas operational areas and 20 Climate Champions from the Bhitarkanika area of Kendrapada district to engage in a discussion to understand the various challenges induced by climate change in their communities.

EVENT PARTICIPATION

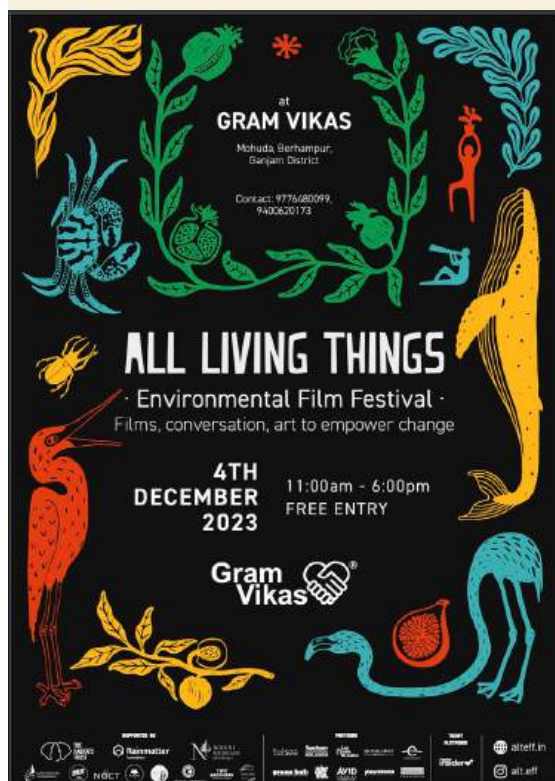
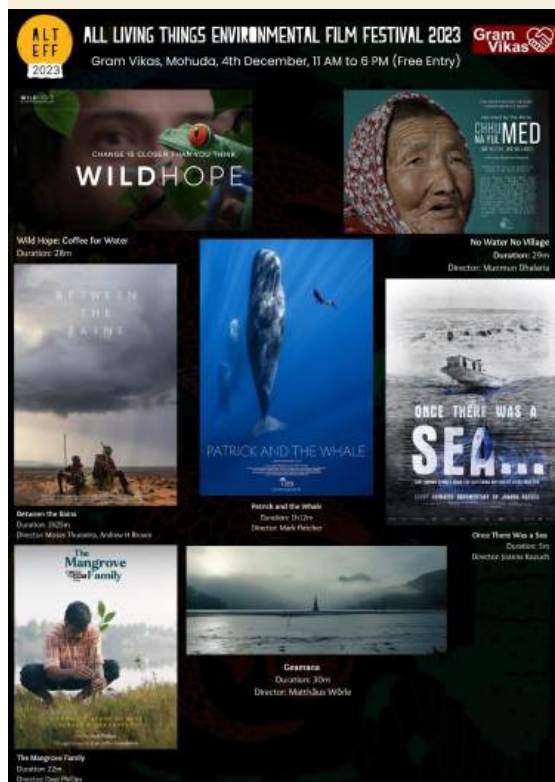
- Dibya Alok and Sachin Gurung represented Gram Vikas at the C20 India 2023 - Sustainable and Resilient Communities Conclave in Gangtok. They presented our experience of "Community-owned Social and Agroforestry for protecting and rejuvenating water sources in Kalahandi district."
- Apurva Ghugey and Varun Namineni presented Gram Vikas' work on water quality management and findings of the action research on child faeces management at the "All Systems Connect" Symposium in The Hague, The Netherlands, sponsored by IRC and USAID.

LEARNING VISITS

Learning-exposure visits to our operational areas provided other organisations with the opportunity to understand our work on the ground.

- Gram Vikas Mohuda campus hosted the Jagriti Yatra, a 14-day, 8000-km entrepreneurship train journey that inspires youth to become entrepreneurs. Over 500 Yatri and more than 100 facilitators participated.
- The Field Immersion Programme for MA Social Work students from Marian College Kuttikkanam also took place at Gram Vikas, with 30 students and two teachers taking part.
- A team of 10 members from the non-profit Samaj Pragati Sahayog (SPS), Madhya Pradesh, visited Gram Vikas partner villages to gain firsthand knowledge of the progress made in these communities. They also visited Gram Vikas' Mohuda campus to understand the development initiatives and strategies undertaken for the communities it partners with across Odisha.
- A 10-member team from The Ant, Assam, visited Gram Vikas to gain an understanding of our programming principles and approach, organisational structure, and thematic areas of intervention. They met with members of the management team, visited operational villages, and interacted with the field team and various stakeholders in the communities. They also visited Gram Vikas Vidya Vihar to meet the Headmaster and teachers to understand school and classroom processes and interacted with the students there.
- An American Indian Foundation (AIF) Fellow attached to Dakshin Foundation visited operational villages in Ganjam district to develop an understanding of the WASH situation in the villages we serve, and the WASH model adopted by Gram Vikas. This included understanding the interventions undertaken, the challenges encountered, and how they were addressed.
- A Research Fellow with the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research visited the Sujal Community Water Testing Laboratory in Mohuda to observe and understand the water testing procedures undertaken in the lab and learn about the methods and techniques employed by Gram Vikas in rural areas of Odisha for Water Quality Management.
- Two fellows from the Mother Teresa Fellowship (MTF), Ashoka University, visited Gram Vikas as part of the experiential learning component under the fellowship. They aimed to gain an understanding of our working model, organisational structure, ongoing projects, and best practices.

ALL LIVING THINGS – ENVIRONMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL



Gram Vikas hosted the All Living Things Environmental Film Festival (ALT EFF), India's largest environmental film festival, on 2 December at Mahendra Tanaya Ashram School in Koinpur, Gajapati district, and on 4 December at the Gram Vikas Mohuda campus in Ganjam. The festival showcased a curated selection of Indian and international documentaries and short films focused on environmental conservation and sustainability.

The event in Gajapati attracted over 125 school students and 100 rural youth, while the Ganjam screening saw participation from Gram Vikas staff, along with 60 students and faculty from Berhampur colleges. Films like "Older than Trees" and "All Day and All Night" resonated deeply with the audience, inspiring a newfound appreciation for marine life and the importance of clean drinking water. The festival provided an engaging platform for students to explore pressing environmental issues through cinema, fostering a meaningful connection to the films and their powerful messages.



GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Gram Vikas is registered under the Societies Registration Act 1860. The General Body of Gram Vikas comprises 12 members. The Annual General Body Meeting of the Gram Vikas Society took place on 18 August 2023.

GOVERNING BOARD

The Governing Board of Gram Vikas consisted of 11 members with the Executive Director serving as an ex-officio Secretary.



SRI. ANANTA MOHAPATRA **MEMBER**

Anant Mohapatra is a noted theatre personality from Odisha. He is the founder of the Utkal Rangmancha Trust and is associated with several notable cultural initiatives in the State. He has been a member of the Gram Vikas Society since 1999.



SRI. ANUP KUMAR MOHAPATRA **MEMBER**

Anup Kumar Mohapatra is a leading businessperson and philanthropist from Odisha. He has been a member of the Gram Vikas Society since July 2019.



SRI. BIREN BHUTA **MEMBER**

Biren Bhuta had led multi-sectoral stints with prominent names like Standard Chartered Bank, NDTV, and the International Union for Conservation of Nature. He was also the chief of CSR, Tata Steel in Jharkhand, and Odisha. Biren Bhuta is a graduate of the Indian Institute of Management, Kolkata. He joined the Gram Vikas Society in 2019.



SRI. DEBIPRASAD MISHRA
MEMBER

Debiprasad Mishra, a former professor at the Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA), Gujarat, has been a member of Gram Vikas Society since 1998. He served as the Executive Director of Gram Vikas from July 2015 to September 2017.



SRI. JOE MADIATH
CHAIRMAN

As a development worker, Joe Madiath came to Odisha in 1971. He founded Gram Vikas in 1979 and served as its Executive Director till 2013. A globally recognised social entrepreneur, Joe Madiath has been part of several important committees of the Government of India and Odisha.



SMT. MEENA GUPTA
MEMBER

Meena Gupta was part of the Indian Administrative Services' 1971 batch of Odisha cadre. As part of her illustrious administrative career, she had occupied various senior positions in the Government of India and Odisha in the areas of health, labour, tribal affairs, environment, and forests. She has been a member of the Gram Vikas Society since July 2016.



MS. NAMRATA CHADDHA
MEMBER

Namrata Chadha is a lawyer by profession and advisor to various non-profits, public and private institutions. She was formerly a member of the Odisha State Commission for Women. She is on the Prevention of Sexual Harassment Committee of eight institutions including the State Bank of India and Mindtree Technologies. She joined the Gram Vikas Society in 2019.





**SRI. PRADOSH CHANDRA
MOHANTY**

MEMBER

Pradosh Chandra Mohanty retired from the services of the Income Tax Department in 2018, as the Chief Commissioner of Income Tax, Andhra Pradesh. He joined the Gram Vikas Society in 2019.



SRI. RAM SHANKAR

TREASURER

Ram Shankar is a Chartered Accountant, exporter, and businessperson working in the leather industry. He is credited with the first book published in India on Accounting and Financial Management of NGOs. He has been a member of the Gram Vikas Society since 2008.



SRI. SANJEEV NAYAK

MEMBER

Sanjeev Nayak is an entrepreneur from the Information Technology sector, and Trustee of the Silicon Institute of Technology, Bhubaneswar. He joined the Gram Vikas Society in July 2016.



MS. VEENA JOSHI

MEMBER

Veena Joshi is a renowned expert in the field of rural and renewable energy. She has worked with the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation and Tata Energy Research Institute, Delhi. She has also served on the advisory groups of the UNDP and Shell Foundation. Veena has a PhD in Physics from the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. She joined the Gram Vikas Society in 2019.





SRI. LIBY T JOHNSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & EX-OFFICIO SECRETARY

Liby Johnson is a development management professional with immense experience of working with the government, non-government, and international development organisations. He joined Gram Vikas as an Executive Director and ex-officio Secretary in October 2017.



Meetings of the Governing Board

The Governing Board met four times during the year. The meetings were held on the following dates.

- 18 August 2023
- 12 December 2023
- 29 January 2024
- 29 March 2024



STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

We established the Strategic Leadership Team with a defined set of executive functions closely connected to the role and functions of the Executive Director. It aims to introduce a new leadership and governance model at the apex, setting a new approach to organisational governance and management that facilitates the democratisation of leadership.

Roles and responsibilities of the Strategic Leadership Team

The Strategic Leadership Team comprises Strategic Leads for four core functions, working closely with each other and the Executive Director. The Resource Management function mobilises financial and technical resources for programmatic and organisational needs. The Performance Management function is responsible for capacity building and motivation of staff members at all levels to ensure efficiency, effectiveness, ownership, and quality in the performance of the staff and that of extended resource networks (Gram Vikas Saathi, Village Institution Service Providers and Consultants). The Results Management function oversees planning for the achievement of results in different programme areas, reviewing and monitoring progress, and generating evidence for reporting. The Finance function leads collaboration between the programme and regulatory/control functions, strengthening Gram Vikas' stature as a transparent and accountable organisation.

We selected the Strategic Leadership Team through an internal process spanning over a year. We filled two of the four strategic lead positions with Sri. Chandramohan Patnaik as Strategic Lead-Finance and Sri. Sukanta Bhattacharya as Strategic Lead-Performance. We formally constituted the Strategic Leadership Team of Gram Vikas, with the Executive Director and two Strategic Lead members, on 1 October 2023.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

The Management Team (MT) comprises senior managers who lead day-to-day programmatic and administrative functions. The primary role of the MT is to support the Executive Director in achieving the mission of Gram Vikas and fulfilling the mandate set by the Governing Board. The Management Team develops the Annual Plan and Budget and supports the Executive Director in presenting it to the Governing Board. It also presents quarterly updates of progress to the Governing Board.

The District Manager oversees all Gram Vikas activities in their specific geographic area. They are the main point of contact for all interactions with the various government departments and agencies in the district, ensuring effective convergence with all different forms of programmes and financial resources required for the work in the district. They are responsible for the welfare of employees and ensuring proper accounting and reporting of financial transactions. They also oversee the maintenance and upkeep of all Gram Vikas properties and assets in the District Office.

Management Team as on 31 March 2024

Name	Thematic Areas/ Districts
Anurag Sharma	Water
Ambika Prasad	Administration
Chandramohan Patnaik	Strategic Lead, Finance
D P Debashis Hota	Administration, Human Resources
Jannatun Begum	Village Institutions, Sanitation and Health
Laxmi Narayan Panda	Water
Nirmal Chandra Mohanty	Livelihoods
Pratap Chandra Panda	Livelihoods, Sanitation and Health
Ranjan Patnaik	Finance and Accounts
Ramesh Chandra Naik	Livelihoods
Sangita Patra	Documentation and Communications, Human Resources
Sudhir Ranjan Sahu	Finance and Accounts
Sukanta Bhattacharya	Strategic Lead, Performance
Jobin Chacko	District Manager, Gajapati
Sarat Chandra Mohanty	District Manager, Ganjam
Jaison Jose Thomas	District Manager, Ghumusur
Varun Namineni	District Manager, Kalahandi
Biswajit Sahu	District Manager, Kandhamal

THEMATIC AREAS

Gram Vikas internally organises its work into six thematic Focus Areas to ensure proper technical knowledge, capacities, and systems for planning and monitoring. These six areas are Village Institutions, Water, Livelihoods, Sanitation and Health, Education and Youth, and Habitat and Technology. The work within each focus area is further organised into Thematic Programme Components (TPCs). Activities and result indicators are formulated with the TPCs as the starting point.



VILLAGE INSTITUTIONS



The Village Institutions thematic area, a cross-cutting theme, primarily focuses on promoting and strengthening robust village institutions that serve as Gram Vikas partners in community development initiatives. We strengthen community institutions at the village and Gram Panchayat levels by organising various capacity-building programmes for community leaders and promoting processes that enable the institutions to be inclusive and transparent. We undertake diverse activities with stakeholders, including women, children, youth, and vulnerable households.

Programme platforms covered:

Water Secure Gram Panchayat (WSGP) and the Safe and Dignified Migration (SDM) Programme

RESOURCE MOBILISATION SUPPORT GROUP

We formed the Resource Mobilisation Support Group (RMSG) in 2022 as a specialised support team within the Village Institutions thematic area. The RMSG coordinates the planning and execution of village-level plans. It conducts audits and certification of village-level resource mobilisation, and supports programme teams with knowledge and capacity building.



WATER



The Water Focus Area mobilises and supports village communities to build and manage piped water supply systems, ensuring the continuous availability of clean water for drinking and domestic use. Water integrated with sanitation facilities enables households to adopt safe sanitation practices and reduces drudgery for women. We focus on awareness, knowledge (modern and traditional), and processes to ensure the sustainability of water sources, leading to communities becoming water secure in the long run.

Programme platforms covered:

Water Secure Gram Panchayat Programme

WATER RESOURCE TECHNOLOGY GROUP

We formed the Water Resource Technology Group (WRTG) in 2021 as a support group to coordinate and facilitate institutional capacity building for groundwater management initiatives under the Water Secure Gram Panchayat Programme. The WRTG functions as the technology and knowledge support team for Gram Vikas' work in water resource management. The team has taken a central coordination role to bring consistency to groundwater recharge interventions across locations.

CIVIL ENGINEERING SUPPORT GROUP (CESG)

The Civil Engineering Support Group provides technical backstopping to field teams in civil design and construction matters. It supports staff and community capacity building in using and deploying appropriate construction options for better planning and implementation of civil projects.

LIVELIHOODS



The Livelihoods thematic area promotes sustainable livelihoods for the rural communities that Gram Vikas works with. We use a range of interventions to enhance land productivity, promote value addition to existing livelihood options, reduce uncertainties around production systems, and lower the cost of production.

Programme platforms covered:

Water Secure Gram Panchayat and Safe and Dignified Migration Programmes

ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT RESOURCE GROUP

We formed the Enterprise Resource Development Group (EDRG) in 2023 to coordinate the planning, implementation, and monitoring of nano- and micro-enterprise development. The group facilitates activities to train and deploy local enterprise development service providers who offer comprehensive and sustained assistance to enterprises in achieving and maintaining profitability. It coordinates inputs from external resource agencies to build the capacities of programme teams and community institutions.



SANITATION AND HEALTH



The Sanitation and Health thematic area focuses on ensuring better health and nutrition outcomes. Work in this area spans personal hygiene to village sanitation through effective engagement of all stakeholders at the individual, household, and community levels.

Programme platforms covered:

Water Secure Gram Panchayat Programme

WASH NUTRITION RESOURCE GROUP

The WASH-Nutrition Resource Group complements and intensifies the work on the ground to realise better health outcomes. The group's scope of work includes research, building a knowledge repository, understanding the identified issues, developing communication methods, and addressing the issues in the field. Further, it works towards building the capacities of the team and community members.



EDUCATION AND YOUTH



The Education and Youth thematic area enables rural youth aged 10-24 by fostering their aspirations and increasing their access to educational and skilling information. It works towards creating a supportive environment through learning groups, Bal Sabha (children's assemblies), and Kishori Kishor Samuh (adolescent groups). It also offers upskilling opportunities and nurtures community media journalists and campaigners. Additionally, it runs community sports programmes designed to equip young people with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to thrive in an ever-challenging world with dignity.



HABITAT AND TECHNOLOGY



The Habitat and Technology thematic area promotes renewable and appropriate technologies in the water and energy sectors. It coordinates work at the community level to build capabilities and implement technology solutions. At the organisational level, the focus area addresses capacity-building needs related to new technology options.



MANAGEMENT GROUPS

Management Groups (MGs) lead the work of the thematic areas. They provide programmatic and implementation leadership for activities under the various programmatic and thematic support areas. The MG is responsible for implementing activities, achieving the intended results, ensuring the quality of processes and outcomes, and overseeing all related financial and accounting matters. Management Groups comprise members from the Management Team and Junior Managers with relevant thematic expertise and experience.

THEMATIC MANAGEMENT GROUPS DURING 2023-24



Village Institutions

Aravind A.R
Jannatun Begum
Thomas Sunil K



Water

Anas KP
Anurag Sharma
Benstin Jenith BG
Laxmi Narayan Panda



Livelihoods

Kabir Rana
Jobin Chacko
Manjary S
Nirmal Chandra Mohanty
Pratap Chandra Panda
Ramesh Chandra Naik



Sanitation and Health

Jannatun Begum
Pratap Chandra Panda
Varun Namineni



Habitat and Technology

Jaison Jose Thomas
Malay Kumar Panda



Education and Youth

Jaison Jose Thomas
Thomas Sunil K

SUPPORT FUNCTIONS

The Support Functions are Planning and Monitoring, Documentation and Communication, Human Resources, Finance and Accounts, and Administration.

- **Planning and Monitoring**

Lipika Verma
Varun Namineni

- **Documentation and Communication**

Chandrika Patnaik
N Dibya Alok
Sangita Patra

- **Human Resources**

D.P Debashis Hota
Sangita Patra

- **Finance and Accounts**

Ranjan Ku Patnaik
Sudhir Ranjan Sahu

- **Administration**

Ambika Prasad
D.P Debashis Hota
Sudhir Ranjan Sahu

PLANNING AND MONITORING

The Planning and Monitoring (PMO) support function actively works to create an evidence-based decision-making system at Gram Vikas. By forming baseline information for work locations and conducting need-based data analysis, the PMO ensures that activities undertaken are suitable for the specific context. This approach also aids in tracking progress for programmes and field projects. Additionally, the function supports the Management Team in leveraging technology for the adopted processes.

RESULTS-BASED PLANNING AND MONITORING FRAMEWORK AND TOOLS

Over the past few years, we have been developing a pilot monitoring tool and activity framework for our two key programmes. This year, we finalised a more robust results framework and activity framework for the WSGP programme. We developed the field-level monitoring tool on mWater to track progress against planned activities. We are currently working on developing the results and activity frameworks for the Safe and Dignified Migration programme. The PMO is coordinating with an external support agency to develop the technology backend for analysis and visualisation of the progress information.

We organised participatory write-shops at the district offices to prepare the annual plan. This collaborative setting allowed for comprehensive input and facilitated valuable cross-learning. The involvement of a diverse group fostered a deeper understanding and integration of cross-cutting themes, enhancing the effectiveness of the Annual Plan.

We have also initiated work to support the thematic focus areas in developing and maintaining centralised programmatic databases related to different activities. This database will cover a wide range of activities on village-level planning, village and GP-level community institutions, producer groups, self-help groups, and Bal Sabha.

BASELINE INFORMATION SYSTEM

We conducted baseline surveys of Gram Panchayats (GPs) in the WSGP programme in 36 Gram Panchayats during the year, bringing the total number of GPs with baseline data to 71. We also conducted endline surveys in villages where piped water supply systems were established.



COMMUNICATIONS

The Documentation and Communications (DoC) function plays a crucial role in coordinating the documentation of best practices, archiving knowledge resources, and cultivating strong partner relationships. It also manages a robust social media presence for Gram Vikas. Through capacity-building initiatives, DoC equips staff members to document activities, processes, and events, producing informative resources that enhance communication and outreach efforts. Regular updates on outcomes and impacts are shared with partners and external stakeholders through videos, impact stories, and photographs, ensuring effective communication outreach.

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Gram Vikas maintained a robust online presence throughout the year, reflecting our commitment to connecting with diverse audiences. Our website attracted 20,000 visitors, with an impressive 95% being newcomers. Collectively, our web pages accumulated 61,198 views, with visitors spending an average of 102 seconds per page—significantly higher than the standard 62 seconds.

On LinkedIn, we experienced remarkable growth, with our follower count surging by 51.5%, reaching 21,455. Our Facebook English page now has 5,926 followers, 89% of whom joined within the past year. To strengthen our local connections, we launched a Facebook page in the Odia language, dedicated to sharing best practices, events, and news from our field locations. As of March 2024, the Odia page has 980 followers, with 116 new followers added between April 2023 and March 2024, demonstrating growing interest and engagement.

Our Instagram profile has grown to 2,671 followers, including 604 new additions. Our YouTube channel currently has 835 subscribers. This growth across platforms is driven by organic engagement, fueled by the quality and consistency of our content.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

We conducted on-field training programmes to strengthen staff skills and storytelling capabilities. New Young Management Trainees received comprehensive orientation to ensure effective execution of their job responsibilities. These initiatives equipped District Office teams to meticulously document activities, processes, and events, generating informative resources such as presentations, reports, and case studies.

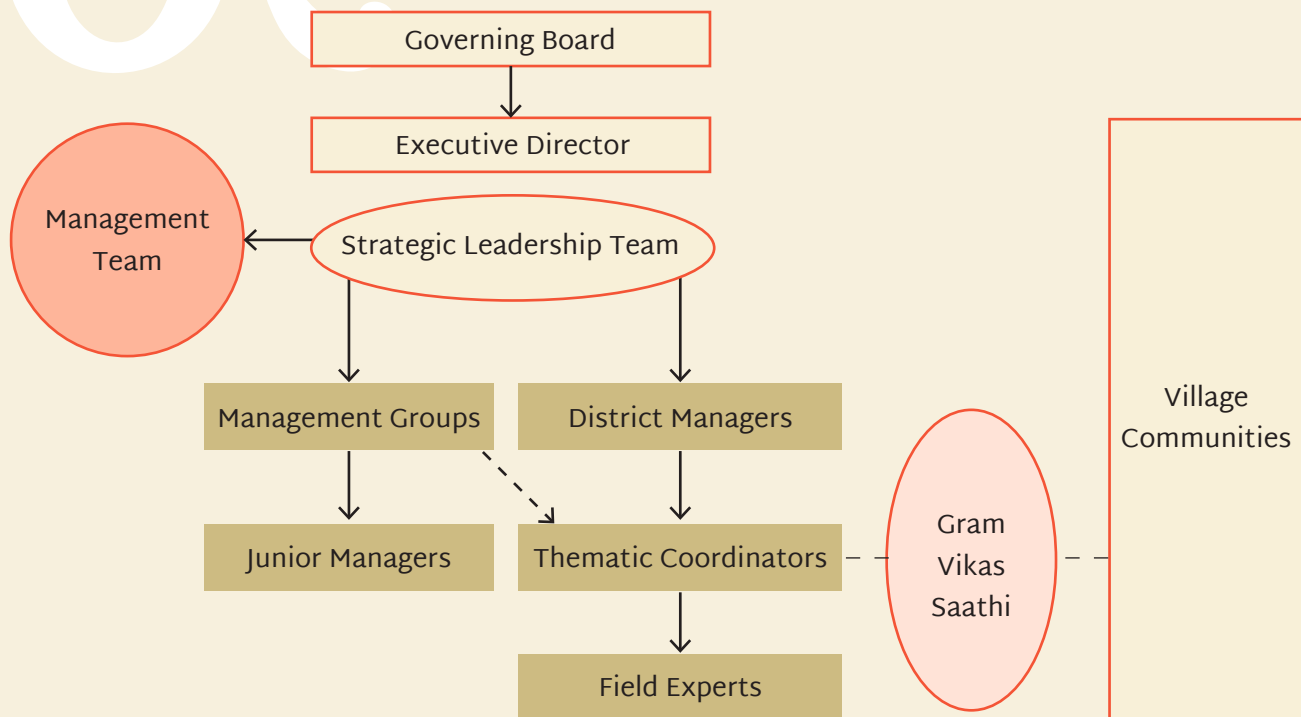
PARTNER RELATIONSHIP

To keep partners and external stakeholders informed about our outcomes and impacts, we shared videos, impact stories, and photographs, fostering ongoing engagement. We collaborated with partners to organise events that provided volunteering opportunities. Notably, we coordinated the World Environment Day 2023 event with Wipro Cares at Phirikinali village in Chandaka and participated in the 17th edition of the Spirit of Wipro Run 2023 at the Wipro campus in Bhubaneswar. We also hosted volunteers from Deloitte India's Bhubaneswar office for an enriching day-long programme at the Gram Vikas Vidya Vihar school and welcomed representatives from IndiGo Airlines and IndiGo Reach at Mahendra Tanaya Ashram School, Koinpur, to celebrate Daan Utsav.



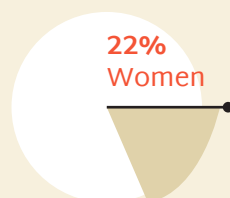
HUMAN RESOURCES

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



STAFF STRENGTH

As of March 31, 2024, Gram Vikas employed 289 individuals, with



No. of Employees working



70% Programme Implementation and Management roles

6% Programme Support roles

8% Finance & Accounts

16% administrative support functions

Forty-four people left the organisation during the year, while 42 new employees joined.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT CELL

The Staff Development Cell (SDC) at Gram Vikas leads efforts to enhance staff capacity, especially as the organisation's programmatic work expands. As the scope of work broadens, staff members need to deepen their thematic expertise and knowledge. Managing and implementing projects across a larger geographic area with the same staff strength necessitates a strategic overhaul of how the organisation develops staff capacities. The SDC designs and executes thematic capacity-building initiatives tailored to the unique needs of staff members at different levels. It also works on equipping staff with strong skills in coordination, team building, team management, and conflict resolution, ensuring they are well-prepared to meet the demands of their roles.

During the year, the SDC undertook the following capacity-building activities:

- Twenty Junior Managers participated in the “Causing Incredible Performance” workshop organised by Athulya CIP, which coaches professionals to produce astonishing results quickly and prepares them to be self-driven and extraordinary performers.
- Staff members of the Community Professionals Programme (CPP) and Junior Managers underwent the eight-month-long Project Arzoo, conducted by Listeners Collective, to improve their mental health and self-awareness and help them understand and overcome the aspirations-attainment gap.
- Twenty-four staff members participated in Excel Proficiency Training by Ranjeet Ranade.
- Ranjeet Ranade conducted the Professional Effectiveness Toolkit (PET) Workshop for Junior Managers and Management Team members, which 37 participants attended. The workshop aimed to enhance participants' proficiency in their current roles and prepare them to become more effective managers in the future.
- One hundred forty-nine staff members attended thematic orientation sessions on Sanitation and Health, Village Institutions, and Livelihoods.
- The Management Leadership Programme was undertaken, with the support of Lead India, to strengthen the functioning of Management Groups.

- The 2023 cohort of seven Young Management Trainees completed the 100-day induction programme before being placed in regular thematic responsibilities.
- Twenty-nine participants attended the annual Junior Manager and Young Management Trainee retreat, facilitated by the Programme Sub-Committee of the Governing Board.

The SDC also facilitated the attendance of staff members in the following training programmes outside Odisha:

- Four Management Team members attended the Achievement Motivation Training organised by the RCRC Coalition in Alwar, Rajasthan.
- One member of the Management Team attended the training of Trainers on Dialogue around Democracy and Citizenship at the Centre for Social Justice, Ahmedabad.
- Two Junior Managers attended the “Jokering Justice-An Introduction to Theatre of the Oppressed” workshop organised by the Sambhaavnaa Institute of Public Policy and Justice.
- Five Management Team members completed the Bridgespan Nonprofit Development Programme (BNDP) program on “Developing Second Line of Leadership.”
- Pratap Chandra Panda and Apurva Ghugey attended the one-year-long Post Graduate Diploma in Development Leadership at Azim Premji University, Bengaluru.
- Three people attended the training on Gender and Development organised by NAWO- Odisha Chapter.

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

We carried out the Annual Performance Review for April 2022 to March 2023 for 276 employees, in accordance with the Gram Vikas Performance Management Rules 2022. The review found 203 employees eligible for performance incentives.

This year, for the first time, the field-level Qualitative Assessment Panel for the Performance Management System included representatives of village leaders as members. This engagement created a positive atmosphere for staff members who were part of the panels and enhanced their understanding of Gram Vikas’ core values. It also effectively communicated to the VDC leaders the organisation’s commitment to broader community development initiatives.

COMMUNITY PROFESSIONALS PROGRAMME

Gram Vikas launched the Community Professionals Programme (CPP) in 2019 to provide youth from partner communities the opportunity to work with them and further their professional journey. We selected 82 Community Professionals in three batches. Of these, 55 individuals continued to work as of March 2024.

We developed a comprehensive policy and guidelines for higher education support for the CPP. The Shiv Nadar Institute of Eminence, Greater Noida, selected Prasant Kumar Sahu of CPP Batch 1 for the MA in Rural Management.

INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS

Gram Vikas continues to provide internship opportunities to students from reputable local, national, and international institutions. We received internship applications through our website and outreach efforts, particularly with Odisha-based institutions. Internship requests come from undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as long-term and independent volunteers.

This year, 68 interns joined us and worked across various thematic areas. We saw significant growth, with interns and volunteers joining us from 17 new institutions. This includes four new international institutions: Allen High School, Texas; Brigham Young University, Provo, USA; the University of Sussex, UK; and Kedge Business School, France.

Two interns were selected and trained by Village Square through the “Development Sector Communications Internship Programme” and supported us in video editing.

VOLUNTEERS

Name	Activity	Period
Joseph Kurian	Revival of the micro-hydro project in Karnibel	November 2021 to June 2023
Samir Lal	Cost benefit analysis of water meters installed in communities	June 2022 to November 2023
Leelu Tims Pothen	Working with youth in Kalahandi	November 2022 to June 2023
Nikita Subudhi	Micro-Enterprise Development Preparing case studies on Pigeon Pea distribution and other contributions by Gram Vikas and SHGs	July 2023 to January 2024

STUDENT INTERNS

Name	Institution	Project / Assignment	Period
Suraj Indwar	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai	Disaster mitigation measures through Village Poverty Reduction Plan	Feb to Apr 23
Shivam Shandilya	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Tuljapur	Data cleaning for the Project Management Office	Apr to May 23
Jyostna Paltasingh Madhusmita Sahoo	Rama Devi Women' University, Bhubaneswar	Photo archiving	May to Jun 23
Ujjwal Biswas Priyanka Adhikari Subhasmita Behera Prativa Patra Mahesweta Mishra Diptimayee Malik Prangya Priyadarsini Behera	BJB College, Bhubaneswar	School-level data compilation	May to Jul 23

Priyanka Priyadarsani Sahoo	Institute of Media Studies	School-level data compilation	May to Jul 23
Kalyani Biswal	Ravenshaw University, Cuttack	School-level data compilation	May to Jul 23
Subhalaxmi Baral	Rama Devi Women' University, Bhubaneswar	Enhancing performance : Analysing four year employee results for Gram Vikas with category-based performance management recommendations	May to Jun 23
Barsa Das	Rama Devi Women's University, Bhubaneswar	Donor analysis of Annual Budget 2023-24 of Gram Vikas	May to Jun 23
Buddhapal Ananta Dumane	Azim Premji University, Bengaluru	Case Study: "Impact of Improved Goat Farming on People's Income in Kamangi Village, Kandhamal District"	May to Jun 23
Geeta Vishnu Ingle	Azim Premji University, Bengaluru	Case Study: "Cashew Nursery Initiative in Gasathappa Village"	May to Jun 23
Pradeep Kumar Amarseth	Azim Premji University, Bengaluru	Case Study on "Community Catalyst: Unveiling the Impact of a Volunteer in Empowering Village Communities"	May to Jun 23
Ayush Raj Ujjwal Anand	Development Management Institute, Patna	Youth Profiling: An Initiative to Engage Youth in Development	May to Jul 23
Harsh Tiwari	B K Birla College, Kalyan	Data Integration and Cleaning, Dashboard Creation, and Performance Management Systems Data Collation	May to Aug 23
Arafat Aziz	MIT World Peace University, Pune	Data Integration and Cleaning, Dashboard Creation, and Performance Management Systems Data Collation	May to Aug 23

Vishal Kerketta	IIT, Kharagpur	Video Editing	June to Sep 23
Kinshuk Ghosh	Azim Premji University, Bengaluru	Video Editing	July to Sep 23
Sophia Maia Michael Dew Darien Campbell Justin Lemke Sydney Foote	Brigham Young University, Utah, USA	Data analysis and automation for efficient data visualisation and improved communication strategies with communities	Sep to Dec 23
Asish Ansuman Lokender Singh Prameet Soujanya Satapathy	Institute of Rural Management, Anand	Income augmentation for farmers in Upardantalingi village through cashew plantation and value chain management	Oct to Nov 23
Koustav Mohanta Pratik Samanta Pritam Aich	Institute of Rural Management, Anand	Explore access of children and youth to education, skills training, and employment opportunities in and around Haradang village, and its correlation with the village's migration trends over the past decade	Oct to Nov 23
Pralipta Samal Abhipsa Mishra Ashlesha Rath	Institute of Rural Management, Anand	Develop and test a vulnerability assessment approach to identify the most at-risk households in Kaptapalli village	Oct to Nov 23
Ananta Narayan Puhan	Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Hyderabad	Empowering Koinpur's Youth: A collaborative approach to education, skill development, and community transformation	Oct to Nov 23
Firdosha Jyoshna Sethi	Rama Devi Women' University, Bhubaneswar	Drafting staff profiles for the website	Nov to Jan 24

Satyajita Sarangi Purnima Nayak Sagar Oram	KIIT School of Rural Management, Bhubaneswar	Village profiling and impact assessment of line sowing in Bangalasahi village of Ganjam district	Nov to Jan 24
Akankshya Panda Neha Kumari	XIM University, Bhubaneswar	Backyard garden survey in Raiberna	Dec 23 to Jan 24
Abhishek Pattanaik Suyash Pradhan	XIM University, Bhubaneswar	Assessment of the functionality status of the existing community-led piped water supply system in Boripada	Dec 23 to Jan 24
Manab Mohanty Soumya Suranjan Singh	XIM University, Bhubaneswar	Nutrition baseline study on awareness and intake patterns in selected socio-economic groups	Dec 23 to Jan 24
Amisha Jaiswal	NIT Rourkela	Needs assessment study in selected villages of the WASH CROP project	Dec 23 to Jan 24
Aishani Kancharla	Allen High School, Texas	Creating infographics and visual content for groundwater conservation	Jan to Apr 24
Silvi Mary Sunil	Christ (Deemed to be University), Bengaluru	Drafting case studies in WASH CROP Project areas	Feb to Mar 24
Pritam Kujur	Asian Academy Films and Television, Noida	Video Editing for social media	Feb to May 24
Induja Rajeev	Pondicherry University	Building a methodology for identifying and developing GIS and remote sensing datasets to be used in the preparation of maps and reports	Feb to Mar 24
Antonin Maitre	Kedge Business School, France	Video editing for social media	Mar to Jul 24

Tania Najrin Bidisha Majumdar	Kalyani University, West Bengal	Status assessment of educational opportunities provided by VIKALP to students in Koinpur and Laxmipur Gram Panchayats of Gajapati district, Odisha	Mar to Apr 24
Samrat Guha Roy Shrabani Bhowmick	Kalyani University, West Bengal	A comprehensive analysis of sustainable cashew cultivation practices: A study on Gujuling village of Ganjam district, Odisha	Mar to Apr 24

SBI YOUTH FOR INDIA FELLOWSHIP

We continued our partnership with the SBI Youth for India Fellowship for the ninth consecutive year. In 2023, we conducted the final review workshop, marking the closure of fellowship projects for the seven SBI YFI fellows from the August and October 2022-23 cohorts. Additionally, six new SBI YFI fellows joined in the August and October 2023 cohorts. Following their induction, which included field and thematic training, they were assigned to their respective project locations. The first review workshop for the 2023-24 SBI YFI fellows was held in January 2024 to finalise their project plans and assess their initial progress.

SBI YOUTH FOR INDIA FELLOWS DURING AUGUST 2022 TO OCTOBER 2023

Name	Domain & Project	Location
Jahnvi Rathod	Domain – Education Project – Promoting the use of Saura language and culture in and through Gram Vikas residential schools	Mahendra Tanaya Ashram, School, Gajapati
Rohan Gehlot	Domain – Education Project – Enhance student employability through soft skills training and career guidance, while creating diverse local employment opportunities beyond agriculture, reducing migration pressures	Mahendra Tanaya Ashram, School, Gajapati
Vaani Khanna	Domain – Alternate Energy, Livelihood Project – Powering Agriculture in Maligaon: Collectivisation of farmers for fulfilment of their irrigation needs	Kalahandi
Vikram Singh	Domain – Water Project – To meet the water demand of the community by natural resources under Water Secure Gram Panchayat	Ganjam
Sarthak Seth	Domain – Art Project – Commercialisation and promotion of the local tribal art	Kalahandi
Yukti Goel	Domain – Livelihoods Project – Youth Migration Forum: Relationship between school dropout and migration	Kalahandi

Name	Domain & Project	Location
Shriya Saraswat	Domain – Sanitation and Health Project – WASH Plus in Pengdhusi: Integrating WASH and nutrition	Kalahandi

SBI YOUTH FOR INDIA FELLOWS FROM AUGUST 2023

Name	Domain & Project	Location
Shanija Shamsudheen	Domain – Food Security Project – To improve the nutrition status of the community by effective utilisation of local food systems	Ganjam
Arya Shankar	Domain – Education Project – Enhancing life skills in Adolescents	Gajapati
Neethu Johnson	Domain – Sanitation and Health Project – Empowering women and children: Advocating WASH practices in the village	Ganjam
Shazia Masood	Domain – Livelihood Project – Community-based Tourism	Gajapati

INTERNAL COMPLAINTS COMMITTEE

The Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) of Gram Vikas operates according to the provisions of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. The Committee consists of four internal members and one external member. The ICC received one complaint on August 12, 2023. They conducted the necessary inquiries and submitted their report to the Executive Director on September 6, 2023. The organisation took the necessary actions as recommended by the Committee.

ADMINISTRATION AND FACILITIES

Gram Vikas operates in remote locations where access to adequate infrastructure has been a challenge. This led to the creation of our own facilities to meet the needs for office space, accommodation, and transportation. The Administration Management Group coordinates the management and maintenance of facilities and vehicles. It is also responsible for procurement, material management, and IT services.

GRAM VIKAS OWNED FACILITIES

Mohuda, Ganjam district	Head Office Staff Accommodation Meeting facilities and Guest rooms
Koinpur, Gajapati district	Field Coordination Office Staff Accommodation Meeting facilities and Guest rooms
Kumudabahal, Kalahandi district	Field Coordination Office Staff Accommodation Meeting facilities and Guest rooms
Gayaganda, Ganjam district	District Office and Field Coordination Office Staff Accommodation Meeting facilities and Guest rooms
Karadasing, Gajapati district	Field Coordination Office Staff Accommodation
Tumba, Ganjam district	Field Coordination Office Staff Accommodation

**Adri,
Kalahandi district**

Field Coordination Office
Staff Accommodation

**Parlakhemundi,
Gajapati district**

District Office

Bhubaneswar

Liaison office
Meeting Facilities and Guest rooms

ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE

The software used for accounting and bookkeeping was upgraded during the year. VOLAC, which is provided in the “software as a service” model, replaced the earlier software that required us to have our own storage mechanisms. The new software is more amenable to the specific reporting requirements of donor partners.

STATUTORY COMPLIANCES

During the year, we complied with all statutory requirements within the specified time limits. Income Tax, GST, and FCRA-related filings and returns were submitted on time. Compliance with Provident Fund and other labour laws has also been maintained consistently.

STATUTORY AUDIT

M/s AASA Associates, Bhubaneswar was the Statutory Auditor for Gram Vikas during 2023-24.

INTERNAL AUDIT

M/s BBM & Co. Bhubaneswar continued as Internal Auditors during the year. The internal audit team conducted concurrent checks of all financial transactions. The scrutiny of books and records were followed up with periodic field-level verifications and checks.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

M/s BBM & Co. Bhubaneswar continued as Internal Auditors during the year. The internal audit team conducted concurrent checks of all.

Scan here to access the audited financial statements.



BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2024

Particulars	As at 31.03.2024 [₹]	As at 31.03.2023 [₹]
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1. Liabilities

General Fund	34,57,96,641	35,50,98,434
Deferred Project Receipts	4,76,12,397	4,87,31,012
Project Funds - Restricted Grants	7,82,34,668	5,75,36,407
Capital Asset Fund	9,76,69,315	9,05,90,728
Dairy Development Fund	1,80,551	1,80,551
Other Funds	1,86,91,998	1,73,08,171
Current Liabilities and Provisions	98,74,883	94,15,169

Total	59,80,60,453	57,88,60,472
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2. Assets

Fixed Assets	9,76,69,315	9,05,90,728
Investments	11,22,21,760	11,19,49,115
Piped Water Supply Projects' Advances	2,32,46,106	2,90,30,057
Current Assets	20,10,11,745	22,95,29,772
Application out of Past Accumulation	16,39,11,527	11,77,60,800

Total	59,80,60,453	57,88,60,472
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In terms of our attached report of even date

For: AASA & ASSOCIATES
Chartered Accountants
FRN:310073E

For: Gram Vikas

Amit Kumar Agarwalla, FCA
Partner
Membership No.: 063572

Joe Madiath
Chairman

Liby T Johnson
Executive Director

MOHUDA
DT: 05.09.2024

INCOME AND APPLICATION ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

Particulars Year ending 31.03.2024 [₹] Year ending 31.03.2023 [₹]

1. Income

Grants and Donations	70,08,479	1,96,98,823
Award - Excellance in Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation	-	4,00,000
Interest Income	55,08,014	54,87,033
Add: Interest income earned on donor funds - Grant-in-aid	10,55,559	8,16,877
Income from Investments	1,96,74,820	1,79,11,938
Income from Sale of assets	2,33,64,832	75,353
Reimbursements	11,20,623	10,98,704
House Rent Income	18,77,145	14,82,624
Miscellaneous Income	21,39,495	14,82,649
Overhead recoveries from the projects	6,01,058	19,46,826
Utilisation against restricted grant (Annex to Schedule III A) - Pass through entry	22,72,49,836	21,18,43,060
Total Income	28,95,99,861	26,22,43,887

2. Application

Application - Programme - Revenue

Village Institutions	65,26,198	68,78,350
Water	2,21,95,663	2,61,19,259
Livelihoods	37,13,721	30,56,217
Sanitation and Hygiene	76,64,986	34,29,701
Habitat and Technology	13,02,926	12,35,311
Education and Youth	16,98,221	12,51,404
Resource Mobilisation Support Group	11,78,647	-
Planning and Monitoring	43,22,152	25,63,730
Documentation & Communication	51,18,858	53,26,808
Human Resource Development	20,08,889	60,52,778
Strategies & Systems	89,58,619	42,68,149
Audit Costs	15,10,319	15,18,740
Staff Costs	1,32,94,065	93,48,173
Administration Costs	2,62,75,823	1,03,59,570
Utilisation against restricted grant (Annex to Schedule III A) - Pass through entry	22,72,49,836	21,18,43,060

Application - Programme - Capital

Depreciation on assets acquired from sources other than Income- Past Accumulations	27,31,665	29,46,726
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Total Application	33,57,50,588	29,61,97,976
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Less: Application Amount in excess of the application to the extent of available Income met out of Past Accumulation transferred to Balance Sheet	4,61,50,727	3,39,54,089
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Total	28,95,99,861	26,22,43,887
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INCOME AND APPLICATION APPROPRIATION ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

Particulars	Period ending at 31.03.2023 [`]	Year ending at 31.03.2022 [`]
Add: Depreciation on assets acquired from sources other than income transferred to BS	27,31,665	29,46,726
Less: Interest on Donor Project Funds trf.to Project Fund A/c-Grant-in-aid	10,55,559	8,16,877
Less: Interest on Bank deposits of Gram Vikas Employees Welfare Fund transferred to Balance Sheet	-	8,93,018
Net Surplus	16,76,106	12,36,831

Note : Income and application account is prepared u/s 11 of Income Tax Act, 1961

In terms of our attached report of even date

For: AASA & ASSOCIATES
Chartered Accountants
FRN:310073E

For: Gram Vikas

Amit Kumar Agarwalla, FCA
Partner
Membership No.: 063572

Joe Madiath
Chairman

Liby T Johnson
Executive Director

MOHUDA
DT: 05.09.2024

ANNEXURE TO SCHEDULE FOR RESTRICTED GRANTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

Particulars	Year ending 31.03.2024 [₹]	Year ending 31.03.2023 [₹]
Opening Balance of Project Funds	5,75,36,407	5,07,32,532
Accretion during the year		
Grants in Aid	24,68,92,538	21,78,30,058
Interest Income on donor funds transferred from Income & Application app. A/c	10,55,559	8,16,877
Total	24,79,48,097	21,86,46,935
Depletion during the year		
Depletion - Programme		
Village Institutions	1,64,33,400	2,03,47,947
Water	10,99,22,758	10,89,00,949
Livelihoods	4,83,52,396	2,95,99,446
Sanitation & Hygiene	1,79,06,030	1,29,22,766
Habitat & Technology	10,91,314	75,73,884
Education & Youth	25,45,365	61,66,049
Disaster Relief and Rehabilitation	-	30,60,801
Resource Mobilisation Support Group	17,70,737	-
Planning and Monitoring	72,19,296	44,22,286
Documentation & Communication	34,54,743	22,31,672
Human Resource Development	25,79,806	43,10,073
Strategies & Systems	47,12,440	37,00,998
Audit Costs	9,38,128	8,16,886
Staff Costs	19,03,774	20,32,618
Administration Costs	32,90,899	20,24,142
Project assets	51,28,750	37,32,543
Total	22,72,49,836	21,18,43,060
Closing Balance of Project Funds	7,82,34,668	5,75,36,407

RESOURCE MOBILISATION AND UTILISATION ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024

Particulars	Total [₹]	SOURCES		
		Project Grants [₹]	Government [₹]	Own [₹]
1. Income				
Grants & Donations	25,39,01,017	24,68,92,538	70,08,479	
Interest Income	65,63,573	10,55,559		55,08,014
Receipts from Govt. (Rural Water Supply & Sanitation)	34,12,018		34,12,018	
Security deposit receivable from Govt. (Rural Water Supply & Sanitation)	3,06,127		3,06,127	
Income from Investments	1,96,74,820			1,96,74,820
Income from Sale of assets	2,33,64,832			2,33,64,832
Reimbursements	11,20,623			11,20,623
House Rent Income	18,77,145			18,77,145
Miscellaneous Income	21,39,495			21,39,495
Overhead recoveries from the projects	6,01,058			6,01,058
Total income	31,29,60,708	24,79,48,097	1,07,26,624	5,42,85,987
2. Expenditure				
Village Institutions	2,36,91,970	1,64,33,400	20,94,445	51,64,125
Water	13,21,18,421	10,99,22,758	52,30,154	1,69,65,509
Livelihoods	5,20,66,117	4,83,52,396		37,13,721
Sanitation & Hygiene	2,55,71,016	1,79,06,030	13,800	76,51,186
Habitat & Technology	23,94,240	10,91,314		13,02,926
Education & Youth	42,43,586	25,45,365		16,98,221
Resource Mobilisation Support Group	29,49,384	17,70,737	56,844	11,21,803
Planning and Monitoring	1,15,41,448	72,19,296	4,23,323	38,98,829
Documentation and Communication	85,73,601	34,54,743		51,18,858
Human Resource Development	45,88,695	25,79,806		20,08,889
Strategies & Systems	1,36,71,059	47,12,440		89,58,619
Audit Costs	24,48,447	9,38,128		15,10,319
Staff Costs	1,51,97,839	19,03,774	1,10,604	1,31,83,461
Administration Costs	2,95,66,722	32,90,899	51,521	2,62,24,302
Capital Expenditure	1,72,25,264	51,28,750		1,20,96,514
Total expenditure	34,58,47,809	22,72,49,836	79,80,691	11,06,17,282

As per report of even date

For: AASA & ASSOCIATES
Chartered Accountants FRN:310073E

For: Gram Vikas

Amit Kumar Agarwalla, FCA
Partner
Membership No.: 063572

Joe Madiath
Chairman

Liby T Johnson
Executive Director

MOHUDA
DT: 05.09.2024

On the Cover: Sajani Malik smiles brightly among the plants she and her self-help group cultivate in their Badakhani village nursery in Odisha's Gajapati district. Across Gram Vikas partner villages, women-led plant nurseries like this one support large-scale afforestation of degraded land, ensuring long-term water security.

Cover Page photo by Ajaya Kumar Behera.

Photographs in the report by Ajaya Kumar Behera, Pravat Ranjan Jena, Prachi Agarwal, Paritosh Nath, Itishree Panda, Rufus Sunny, Sachin Gurung, Sashikanta Sethi, Priya Pillai, and the Gram Vikas Archive.

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