

VAAGDHARA

# Call Back to Roots

Agriculture and Tribal Sovereignty Campaign 2019

# Acronyms

<b>ASHA</b>	Accredited Social Health Activist
<b>CSO</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>CTFK</b>	Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids
<b>FCTC</b>	Framework Convention on Tobacco Control
<b>ICDS</b>	Integrated Child Development Services
<b>JSS</b>	Jan-Jatiya Swaraj Sangathan
<b>JSSSI</b>	Jan-Jatiya Swaraj Sangathan Sahyog Ikai
<b>JVM</b>	Jan-Jatiya Vikas Manch
<b>MGNREGA</b>	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act
<b>MLA</b>	Member of Legislative Assembly
<b>NUHM</b>	National Urban Health Mission
<b>PESA</b>	Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996
<b>RRAN</b>	Revitalizing Rained Area Network
<b>RSCPCR</b>	Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights,
<b>SMC</b>	School Management Committee
<b>TDF</b>	Tribal Development Forum
<b>UN</b>	United Nations
<b>VD&amp;CRC</b>	Village Development and Child Right Committee
<b>WCD</b>	Women and Child Development
<b>WHO</b>	World Health Organization



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# 1 VAAGDHARA

Embracing Krishi  
& Janjatiya Vikas Manch

## ABOUT VAAGDHARA

VAAGDHARA, a civil-society organization, which is committed to principles of sovereignty and sustainable development of tribal community at the junction of the states of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. VAAGDHARA draws its name from its area of

### VISION

The poor in tribal region of India have climate change resilient sustainable livelihood ensuring education, health, rights and participation for their children.

working i.e. *Vaagad*-the tribal area of Rajasthan adjoining Gujarat and *Dhara*-stream, bringing indigenous community in mainstream development. VAAGDHARA is working on the pathway of reviving self-governance, self-dependent, self-managed, self-sustaining systems within the communities. Since its early days VAAGDHARA believes in the process of community dialogue as stepping stone for revival of sovereignty in tribal villages, and it has been organizing campaign in different forms.

VAAGDHARA has implemented a number of developmental interventions in tribal region of Rajasthan parts of adjoining states. It has been adequately flexible in its approach and depending on the need of the situation. VAAGDHARA has played key role as an activist to advocate for child rights, as facilitator in collaboration with mainstream (government) for betterment of school education and has also implemented natural resource management

### MISSION

Creating and nurturing vibrant institutions of tribal communities a-tri-junction of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh states of India; integrating new-generations and indigenous technology and practice ensuring sustainable livelihood and realization of childhood.

programs like Sustainable Integrated Farming System.

### Goals and Objectives:

**“By 2022, 100000 families of Indigenous communities in tribal junction adapts participatory processes and join sustainable development pathway”**

### The prime objectives are:

1. To build Tribal junction of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat as a place where all children get opportunities for better emotional, physical and educational growth.
2. Livelihood resources of small and marginal tribal families in 100 Gram Panchayat are managed sustainably, in harmony with ecological conditions and adapted to climate change
3. Empowered Gram Panchayat in 500 villages which is able to help village community to access benefits of various government schemes they are eligible for.
4. Tribal junction community has active networks, policies and participate in developmental processes and take their issues at local, regional, national and international platforms.



## KRISHI & JANJATIYA VIKAS MANCH

Janjatiya Vikas Manch (JVM) is a forum of tribal community living in adjoining tribal area of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh also known as Tribal-Tri-Junction. The prime objective of the forum is to ensure availability and accessibility of rights and entitlement for the tribal community and protect and promote indigenous practices that lead to sustainable development of tribal community. JVM also plays a significant role for Tribal Federation for people's organisation called Janjatiya Swaraj Sangathan (JSS).

All the members of JSS are counted as general body members of federation. The members of JVM represent all the three States and are supposed to identify the issues of community in all the three States related to sustainable agriculture, education, better livelihood opportunities, rights and entitlements and discuss in their common meetings and processed these to VAAGDHARA for the possible solutions. All the members of JVM are strengthened and empowered by VAAGDHARA for raising voices of tribal community for bringing policy level changes.

For this JVM is also encouraged and engaged for providing support in organising Tribal Colloquium -Tribal Farmer Sovereignty Conclave followed celebration of National Children's Day and World Soil Day in 1000 villages of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh with all JSS members, Village Development Child Right Committee members and women members of Saksham Samuh. JVM members support in mobilising tribal community and motivate them to identify issues that can Protect, Promote and Provide. It has been

proclaimed by the members that next Tribal Colloquium would be organised at JSS wise in all the three States separately, for maximum participation of tribal community.

## ABOUT THE CONCLAVES

VAAGDHARA's approach of organising 'Tribal Sovereignty Conclaves' provided a platform to indigenous people to raise their concerns and voice their opinion for their upliftment. Through these conclaves, these people were made aware about significance of extinct traditional tribal cultures and agriculture practices and need to again bring them into their lifestyle. Began in 2015, these sovereignty conclaves have stressed over the revival of traditional cultures and practices to be led by indigenous people.







2

A Tour to Previous  
**CONCLAVES**

## 2.1 Tribal Sovereignty Conclave - 2015

VAAGDHARA's journey on tribal sovereignty conclaves began in 2015 with the 2 days tribal conclave, organized at Bhairon Ji temple, Banswara. More than 6000 tribal people gathered from Ghatol, Anandpuri and Kushalgarh blocks of Banswara and actively participated in the discussion. This conclave observed the discussions on indigenous seeds, traditional tribal culture, traditional treatment of diseases, identification of traditional agriculture practices etc.

People came from nearby tribal villages were made aware about seeds, agriculture practices, and cultures through focus group discussions and various IEC materials.

VAAGDHARA team showcased traditional practices, indigenous seeds through exhibitions. A Beej Swaraj Manch was also created during the conclave.

## 2.2 Vagad Kisan Swaraj Yatra - 2016

This year the event was conducted in form of a March (Yatra) which was named “VAGAD Kisan Swaraj Yatra”. This provided a platform for VAAGDHARA to interact with the community to exchange knowledge and ideas for revival of “Nutrition Sensitive Farming System”. During this March, VAAGDHARA explored and sensitized tribal community on traditional knowledge and nutritive value of indigenous foods to eliminate malnutrition and improve food and nutrition security in the area.

Altogether 7000 farmers directly participated in different interaction, events and shared their experience about various traditional food items

cultivated and non-cultivated that were found abundantly in this area and have vanished from the plates of the families. The ultimate goal for this “Kisan Swaraj Yatra” was to rejuvenate and revitalize the system of traditional and scientific farming, which can provide nutrition, free from chemicals to each and every individual at local level, even under threat of climate change”

The Yatra followed a path covering 30 villages wherein at every village 'Bhoomi Poojan' was done with villagers and the objective of conducting this Yatra was shared with them.



*Bhoomi Poojan (Soil Worship)*

This Yatra brought the key points into discussion which were related to malnutrition prevalence in Vagad region and discussions were done on the ways to eradicate it; discussion on traditional food system and indigenous seeds; traditional crops, zero cost practices for fertilizing crops; discussion on approaches of pest management in earlier time; Mother earth and culture of agriculture also grabbed the attention of tribal people.



### 2.3 Tribal Sovereignty Conclave - 2017

In 2017, VAAGDHARA reached into communities in 101 villages located in remote regions of Banswara blocks Ghatol, Sajjangarh, Kushalgarh, Gangar-talai, Arthuna, and Anandpuri (Banswara); Peepalkhunt (Pratapgarh); Sabla (Dungarpur); Fatehpur (Santrampur). This March which covered 1248 kilometers, 101 villages, 40 Gram Panchayat and Created impact in the minds of 10413 individuals, 5368 women and 5045 men.

The conclave was perceived as the first step towards farmers network to lead synergetic actions towards True Farming, True Childhood and True Democracy to mainstream tribal development in this remote region of three states. In this conclave 7000 tribal farmers (3759 women and 3241 men) and around 500 other stakeholders participated.

The participants represented tribal communities from 12 blocks of seven districts of three states.

The ultimate aim of organizing the sovereignty march was sustained and dignified life for tribal communities in this tri-junction, with the spread of concept of True Childhood, True Farming, and True Democracy through the following objectives :-

- ❖ To sow seeds of “tribal centered development thinking” within the minds of tribal leaders at grass roots level, women's groups, and youth.
- ❖ To make the community aware about the concept of True Childhood, True Farming, and True Democracy and need of adopting them for overall dignified tribal life.

- ❖ Prepare Citizen Charter on Dignified Tribal life and submit it to government, various forums and other development stakeholders.
- ❖ Create foundation and prepare a road - map for farmers' led advocacy and action agenda for “Tribal Focused Development in this area”

In order to achieve the above objectives and to generate awareness among the tribal community, VAAGDHARA adopted multiple approaches starting with conducting **Farmer's Sovereignty March**—collating and developing demand charter and also organizing **Tribal Conclave**, exhibiting development models on True Farming, True Childhood and True Democracy.

**True Farming** discussions emphasized on utilizing indigenous practices which helped farmers in the area to thrive in the future. Through the march, efforts were made to create awareness about the nutritious benefits of local seeds and locally grown vegetables. The aim of these discussions was to create an awareness of the tremendous capabilities of the communities in this region and to create a desire to shift towards more nutrition based agriculture practices.

**True Childhood** – Throughout the Yatra, it was aimed to highlight and embrace the idea of children having four major rights viz. Right to Survival, Right to Protection, Right to Development, and Right to Participation. The four rights were combined to create the theme 'Saccha Bachpan', in which a child is able to lead a life where he or she is given all of the opportunities they deserve and it is ensured that





every child is able to speak up and fight for their rights when the rights have been taken from them.

**True Democracy** – Discussions on ‘Saccha Loktantra’ during the march were largely placed on the entitlements individuals have and how they can best take advantage of them. The discussions highlighted numbers of existing government schemes which could benefit people in southern Rajasthan, unfortunately, people are not aware of them. It was shared with the community that Saccha Loktantra requires active involvement with local government bodies such as Gram Panchayat, where people can engage in discussions of their rights and also discover existing schemes and how to best utilize them.

## 2.4 Tribal Sovereignty Conclave - 2018

With the aim of augmenting livelihood sources and options through improving traditional agriculture practices among the tribal population and other marginalised groups, VAAGDHARA has been striving for enabling a conscious change among tribal community. To facilitate the dialogue, sharing on mass scale, VAAGDHARA came up with Tribal Farmer's Sovereignty Dialogue March (Yatra) followed by Tribal Sovereignty Conclave (Janjatiya Samprabhuta Samagam).

### ❖ Tribal Farmer's Sovereignty Dialogue March 2018

Began on 21st December, 2018, the YATRA (March) continued for 21 days, covering 543 Kilometers. It began from Mangarh village of Rajasthan State and ended at Kupda Village of Banswara district on 11th January 2019.

The conclave was organised with the objectives –

- ❖ Sensitize tribal community about their dignified indigenous lifestyle, culture and traditions.
- ❖ Facilitate the thinking process in the tribal people where they can identify their issues and discuss then collectively seek the solutions while giving responsibilities of an individual, family, community and government.
- ❖ Take up tribal community's sustainability issues and concerns to authorities/policymakers/Government for suitable action.
- ❖ Motivate tribal community in preparing a 'road map' for their growth and development while sustaining their customs and traditions.

The Yatra covered 190 villages and 105 Gram Panchayats of tri-junction States-Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh.

During the entire travelling period, total 200 meetings were conducted in the villages. The tribal community was sensitized on various issues and attempts were made to capacitate them to think about the solution in their own capacity and not to be dependent on the Government.

### ● Day - I of the Conclave

First day of the conclave started with “*Bhoomi Pujan*” followed by a formal welcome of the participants. Around 555 registered participants were divided into 4 mixed groups and each group was assigned one thematic area to discuss about its current situation, responsible factors for the situation and community role in its improvement. The groups were asked to make a list of things which are needed to be protected and promoted by tribal community, a sharing of this discussion will be done with the larger group



on Day 2 of the conclave.

## ● Day - II of the Conclave

On 2nd day of the conclave the findings of group discussions of Day 1 were shared with larger group of more than 5000 tribal people about the practices needs to be protected and promoted by the community and provisions expected from the stakeholders.

## ❖ Exhibition and Cultural Program

The Showcased Exhibition on Sachi Kheti Sacha Bachpan and Sacha Loktantra Grabbed the attention of the emmunity.

The demands that were put forward by the tribal communities of 190 villages during the 21 days dialogue march (Yatra) and agreeable points were made during the discussions on day - 1 of the conclave. The demands were given a form of charter toa be put up to the appropriate competent authorities at State and UN Forum.

SACCHI KHETI	SACCHA LOKTANTRA	SACCHA BACHPAN	SACCHA SWASTHYA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Government programs and scheme should focus to strengthen and revive the indigenous seeds of community.</li> <li>❖ Government should provide an open market which can be a platform to sell the produce at competent prices.</li> <li>❖ To establish a system of district level advisory and control mechanism.</li> <li>❖ Training provisions for farmers on how to use their plants and animals for medical purposes.</li> <li>❖ Animal Management training.</li> <li>❖ Information about pure breed animals and their availability.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Program for cultivating local leadership skills.</li> <li>❖ While developing policies, schemes, program, and projects for tribal; the Government should take care that they should not negatively affect tribal culture and traditions.</li> <li>❖ Seamless transfer of information of schemes till Panchyat level.</li> <li>❖ Policies regarding all service providing vendors in tribal region should be from within the state and their head offices within the state only, so as to have control on such service providers.</li> <li>❖ Submission of application for MGNREGA scheme should be removed and people with Job card should get 100 days employment or else unemployment allowances.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Anganwadi and School should be established in every village.</li> <li>❖ Availability of adequate teachers in School and ensuring quality education.</li> <li>❖ Availability of sports material and designated playground.</li> <li>❖ Residential senior schools so that the higher education does not break due to increase in distance of institution from home.</li> <li>❖ Employment to educated youth</li> <li>❖ Strict rules for stopping child marriages</li> <li>❖ Skill enhancement program and training</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Government to establish Indigenous clinics where Guni (local healers) can be consulted.</li> <li>❖ Ayurvedic Medicines shops at village level.</li> <li>❖ Information portal of nutritional and seasonal vegetables and grains.</li> <li>❖ Sale of different types of food grain on ration shops.</li> <li>❖ Training for identification and use of herbs.</li> <li>❖ De-addiction camp.</li> <li>❖ Restricted rules on sale of alcohol and other habit forming drugs.</li> <li>❖ Effective implementation of COTPA (Cigarettes and other Products of Tobacco Act)</li> <li>❖ Sale of local grains and unrefined oil at ration shop.</li> </ul>

Figure 1: Demands raised by the tribal community



The conclave concluded with a vision of taking the findings forward and working on the following points:

Themes	Action Points
Sacchi Kheti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Revising HALMA (Volunteer work), Hundel, Praise Soil, water, and seeds as God</li> <li>Organic farming, agro forestry, identifying and protecting traditional crops, seeds, edible items.</li> <li>Kitchen Nutrition Garden, growing 5 trees and rearing 5 animals per member of the family</li> </ul>
Saccha Bachpan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education and employment</li> <li>Eradicating child marriage and child labour</li> </ul>
Saccha Swasthya	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reviving traditional nutritive food for eradicating malnutrition</li> <li>Ensuring addition free youth</li> </ul>
Saccha Loktantra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Building leadership skills in youth</li> <li>Equal participation across gender</li> </ul>

The Conclave was ended with an oath ceremony wherein all the participants pledged for protecting and revival of traditional culture, food, and also natural resources like Water, Soil and Seed.



*Oath Taken by the Participants to Preserve Resources*







Tribal Sovereignty  
**3** CAMPAIGN  
2019

### 3.1 Introduction

The tribal sovereignty campaign successfully achieved its goal by reaching out 1000 villages on 14th November as well as on 5th December 2019. This was also a tribute to 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, where Gandhian Philosophy is as our approach and base for any intervention we attempt to do. These two campaigns were in Synchronizing with the concept of true sovereignty and Samagam- a conclave to encapsulate all these campaigns on Human Rights Day (10th & 11th December)

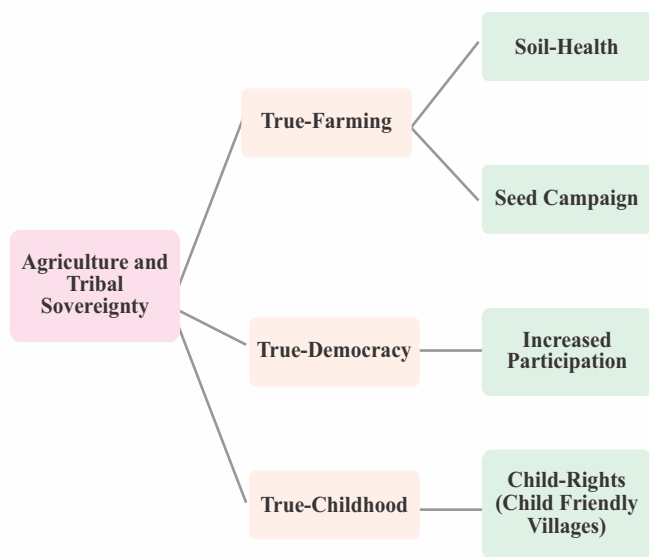


Figure 2: Thematic aspects covered under the campaign

2019 being a year of 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Bapu (Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi) and Ba (Kasturba Gandhi), VAAGDHARA designed this year's campaign such that it pays true tribute to these two icons of sovereignty for mankind, be it anywhere on world. This year campaign focussed on Agriculture and Tribal Sovereignty and it flowed continued process of community dialogue on the key issues of True Democracy 'Saccha Swaraj, True Childhood 'Saccha Bachpan', True Farming 'Sacchi Kheti' and 'sustainable development' needs of community.

This report shares the various interactions carried out under the campaign, their processes and outcomes so as to take learning for future actions, demands for better development and mainstreaming tribal governance, livelihoods, health and social cohesions.

The seeds of this campaign were sown on 30th January 2019 on the day of Mahatma Gandhi. It was followed by various steps so as to amalgamate aspects of needs of tribal community, issues of environmental sustainability, socio-economic situations, participation of community in their own development along with vision, mission and objectives of VAAGDHARA. The mix of these two were welded with Gandhian way of Gram-Swaraj by a core group of VAAGDHARA management, development thinkers and community leaders. The core group met four times and came out with some key principles.

- ❖ It should follow an approach of Abhiyaan (Campaign) covering all the villages where VAAGDHARA has presence or places where community is aware about its working.
- ❖ Campaign should cover key themes of VAAGDHARA's work i.e. Sachhi Kheti, Sachha Bachpan and Sachha Swaraj.
- ❖ Key points of discussion for the campaign were:
  - ❖ How village community can be mobilized for making child-friendly villages; child-friendly panchayats; child-friendly districts, and child-friendly tri-junction?
  - ❖ How community can be mobilized around the most critical issues pertaining to agriculture and environmental sustainability?



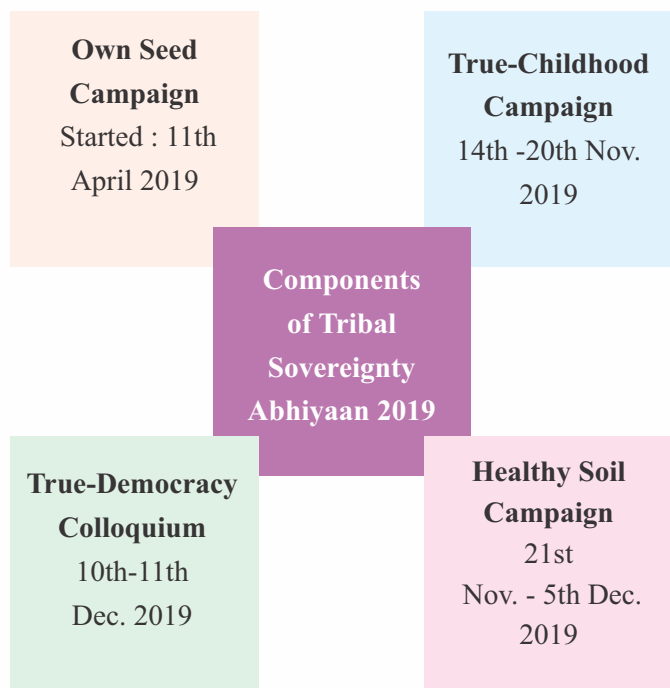


Figure 3: Components of the Tribal Sovereignty Campaign  
(Janjatiya-Kisan Samprabhuta Abhiyaan)

- ❖ How tribal community can be made more responsive and more active to take lead for mainstream development agenda to benefit wider community.

Once the thematic aspects were finalized, then came the most important aspect of operationalizing it, forward and taking up to all 1000 villages and 100,000 families. Series of meetings were undertaken at VAAGDHARA for detailed planning, including thematic managers, programme officers, team-leaders, JSS managers.

Once the key thematic aspects were decided, the main task was to decide on the actions to be carried out and their extent. Figure-2 gives components and days dedicated to the overall campaign.

The whole campaign was planned to celebrate into four phases, reaching to a lakh tribal people of 1000 villages of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat through programme activities scheduled for this campaign.

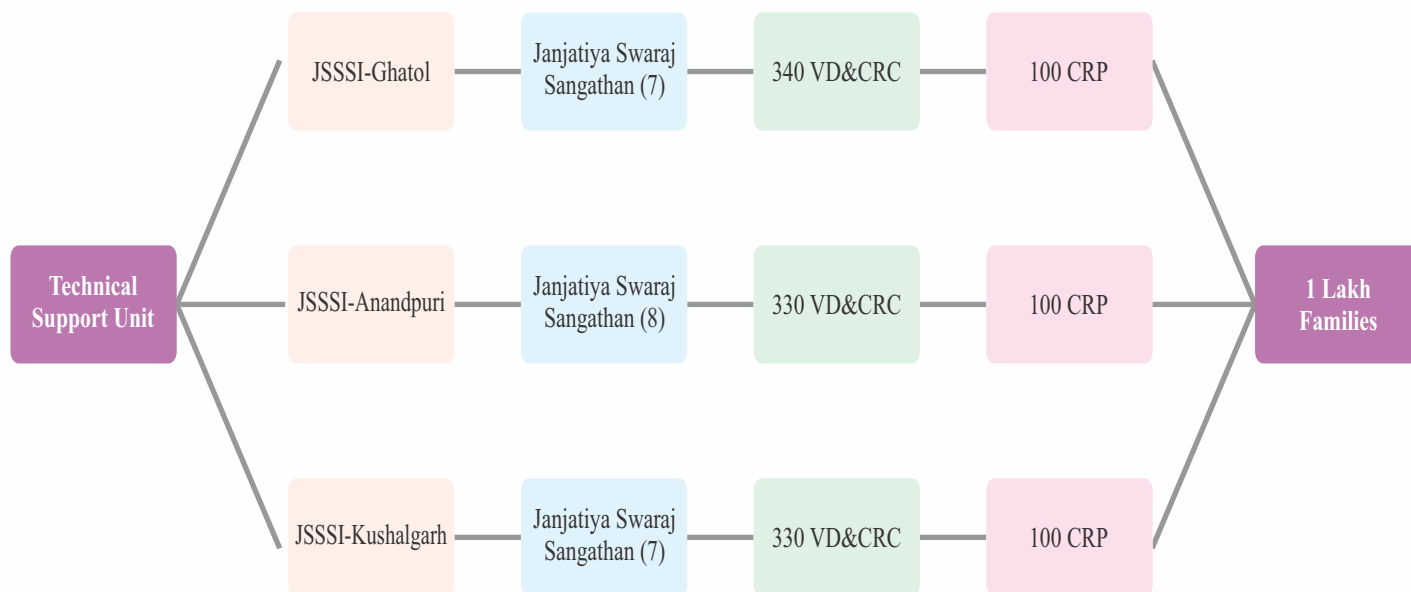


Figure 4: Cascade of responsibility to reach 100000 Families



Keeping in view two themes - the team aimed to reach out 1000 villages in order to celebrate Children's Day on 14th November 2019 linking priorities under 'True Childhood' and 'True Democracy' themes.

Under 'True Farming' World Soil Day was celebrated on 5th December 2019, followed by a two days colloquium celebrated on 10th and 11th December 2019, on the occasion of World Human Rights Day.

### 3.2 Tool Adopted for Operationalizing Abhiyan

A mobile based application—named 'VAAGDHARA Abhiyan' - was created for operationalizing whole Abhiyan on True Childhood on 14th November, 2019 and Soil & Seed for Soul & Sovereignty of Adiwasi on 5th December, 2019 at village level. Through this application audio and video documents were shared with the people to make them aware as well as to open up discussions on children and soil & seed condition in the village. This application was the main source for interaction with the community on the given date. The digital document gave strong message about the vulnerable condition a child can be into—specifically girl child. These documents and posters also gave message about stopping child marriage, child labour and promoting education in order to ensure better future for them.

A hand-holding training on the application was organized for the field team, in which the application content was explained to them. A practical experience for filling up the survey form, in the application, and uploading the photos & audio of the event was also done.

While talking about the application, possible challenges and technical issues were also discussed. Alternatives and solutions for the same were provided for these challenges and technical issues.



Figure 5: Preparatory training and planning

The above figure depicts the cascading of training, knowledge building and operationalizing whole campaign. Team Leaders and Theme Leaders of VAAGDHARA team trained Community Resource Persons (CRPs) and Coordinators.



Glimpse of Training





These trained coordinators and CRPs further trained the volunteers (4 volunteers from each village) from each village, as these volunteers were primarily responsible for execution of campaign activities in field. Other team members also extended their support during the campaign.



*Glimpse of Training*

### 3.3 Campaign on True Childhood and True Sovereignty of Adivasi (14th November 2019)

On the auspicious day of 14th November, the National Children's Day, birthday of the first Prime-Minister of India, Late Pt. Jawahar Lal Nehru, (Chacha Nehru); the community of 1000 tribal dominated villages of four districts of three states jointly celebrated “Children’s Day”. Under



*Children's Day Celebration*

its prime focus area of working towards child-friendly tribal tri-junction by achieving target of reduced malnutrition, hundred percent participation in education, sports, and entertainment leading to fulfilment of all the four child-rights. In almost all the villages, Village Development & Child Rights Committees (VDCRCs) along with School Management Committees (SMCs) and Saksham Samuh came together and carried out Halma (a kind of free labour and synergy) for cleaning and leveling school campus and surrounding play-grounds.



*Children's Day Celebration*

Community and various schools also joined hands to mobilise responsibility of village community towards their children. Some highlights of the events were:

- ❖ All the participants were shared about the concerns and basics of child rights.
- ❖ VD&CRCs and SMCs worked on assessing status of participation in education, child rights and child well-being.
- ❖ Regional devotional songs were played.
- ❖ Discussion also included importance of nutrition to the children and production of organic food.
- ❖ Halma to clean the surrounding areas of the schools, leveling of school ground,



cleaning of school play-ground, cleaning around Aanganwadi Centre.

- ❖ A quick assessment was done with the community members in order to know the present status of children in villages.
- ❖ At last but not the least all 1000 villages, VD&CRC took oath to take all desired steps and make their village as “Child Friendly Village” in forthcoming years with the purpose to provide a safe environment for the children and making their village child friendly covering the following aspects:

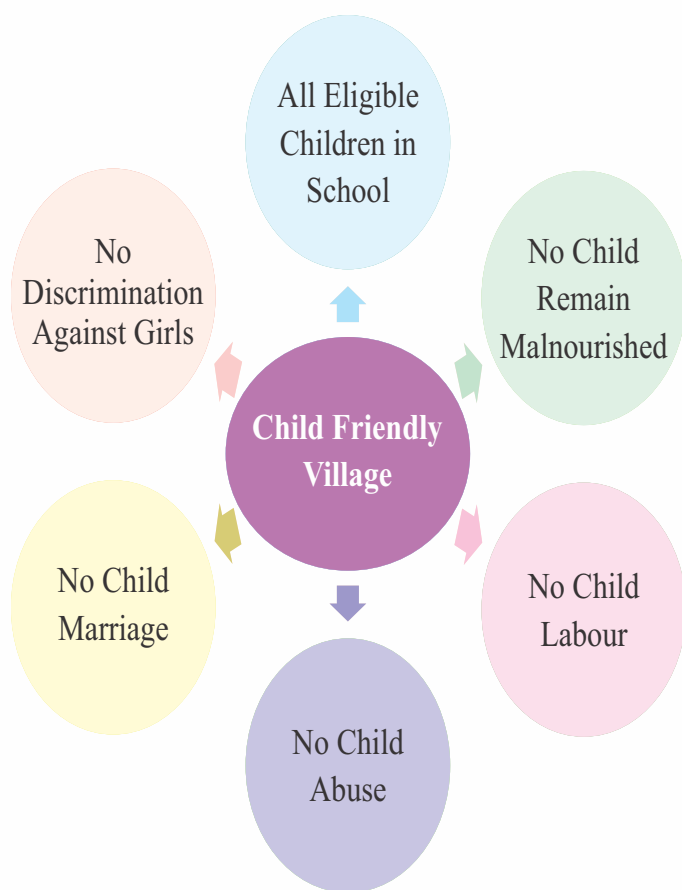


Figure 6: Key aspects of child-rights which were included in oath by villagers

## Halma

Halma, an age-old tradition in which all the people of a village come together at one platform to help each other in accomplishing a social development work related to agriculture, construction of ponds, wells, houses, etc., disaster management, and other activities for the benefits of whole village. The people of the village used to take pickets and shovels in the field themselves and present a living example of the culture of self-reliance, whether it is to make the hills green, to build ponds or to deal with any natural disaster. This practice allows the members of all age group, gender, caste, religion to gather together and work which ultimately develops a notion of co-operation, trust, dedication, unity and belongingness. This practice brought prosperity to many villages as it doesn't involve monetary benefits and people perform it with their complete consent.



Villagers Performing Halma





### 3.4 Campaign on Soil and Seed on True Farming for Adivasi (5th December 2019)

The aspect of True-Farming included in this year for campaign were Crop-Diversity; Seed-Sovereignty and Soil Health, which are the key elements of Gandhian Swaraj. Therefore under this, two campaigns were launched focusing on;

1. Discussions on rich traditional food diversity of tribal food & farming system and exploring seeds of different items. Seeds collected through campaign were brought to exhibition during the conclave.
2. Re-establishing the importance of “Soil-health” for a healthy society.

Under this campaign considering the important role of women as seed-mothers, the campaign started on the birth-day of Kastur Ba Gandhi i.e. 11th April while for soil-health we chose celebration of World Soil Day i.e. 5th December.

While worshipping, each farmer brought a handful of soil from his/her field. Everyone mixed their soil to make it village soil and put it with seeds worshiped. After prayer each one took one fistful again and spread in their fields as token of respect and prasad, blessings from mother nature.



This symbolic respect followed by an oath to protect and revitalize health of soil resulted in strong connection and faith in nature. on common resources like repairing of drinking water sources (hand pumps, community well) and water & soil conservation works like check dam repair, ponds etc.

True development can only be achieved through farmer's Sovereignty, which involves community's our management of resources input, production and marketing.

Soil is the foundation for food and farming system, unless soil is healthy, community can never become healthy.







*Inauguration of the Conclave*

(Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Madhya-Pradesh) and 1000 volunteers, dedicated themselves to the “Gram-Swaraj”. This two day event included thematic discussions, sharing by community on whole swaraj thinking, community actions, need and demand from state on key themes of true-childhood, true-farming, and true-democracy.

VAAGDHARA, took benefits of this event and called upon renowned development thinkers and motivators from academic institutions, civil society organizations, non-government organization and government representatives. Thus provided interaction opportunity for the key stakeholders of tribal development. On 10th

December, and it was 11 o'clock Tribal people in excitement performed their folk songs and dance 100 person per minutes, within next 60 minutes the number reached to 6000.

### **Plenary Session**

The Chief Guest of the day Mr. Kumar Prashant, inaugurated the conclave with his thoughts over ‘Swaraj’ the Gandhian Way.

During the inaugural session, renowned development sector workers and motivators were invited to deliver their thoughts on key themes of VAAGDHARA focus area. This was later followed by thematic discussion within different groups.



*Inauguration of the Conclave*





Thus, with the campaign slogan of "Stop Soil Erosion - Save Our Future" again 1000 villages in tri-junction came together to celebrate "The World Soil-Day", commanded by the women of Saksham Samuh, who are the leaders of nutrition sensitive farming in the area.

The key concern was reviving the custom of worshipping nature and its components. Celebration of the auspicious World Soil Day on 5th December 2019 was envisaged to raise awareness on the importance of sustaining healthy ecosystems and human well-being by addressing the increasing challenges in soil management and raise the profile of healthy soil by encouraging governments, organizations, communities and individuals to engage in pro actively improving soil health. Thus, 100000 families in 1000 villages, where 24 Janjatiya Swaraj Sangathan have been formed shouldered their responsibilities aligned with United Nations' and celebrated "World Soil Day" in tribal style, by undertaking Halma and worshipping soil.

These Janjatiya Swaraj Sangathan (JSS), along with Saksham Samuh, VDCRCs, Panchayat, local leaders discussed on the current status of soil health and approaches required to revive the soil nourishment.

The two months of hard labour and well-planned strategy of cascading of responsibilities of VAAGDHARA team, Tribal Development Forum, Janjatiya Swaraj Sangathan, 5000 volunteers, and 1000 Saksham Samuha proved its worth when all 1000 villages worshiped mother earth on 5th December 2019 and enchanted prayer to mother earth (Dharti Mata).

### 3.5 Tribal Sovereignty Conclave 2019 - Samagam

#### 3.5.1 Inauguration Ceremony

The whole year of celebration of Swaraj-Abhiyaan (Sovereignty Campaign) dedicated to 150th birth anniversary of Ba (Kasturba Gandhi) and Bapu, came to its culmination on the day of "International Human Rights Day" (10th and 11th December 2019). There could have not been any better tribute to Bapu, the main thinker and promoter of village-sovereignty, local economy, and circular economy and Ba, the lady behind the effective participation of women towards True Swaraj. This event was marked by the presence of about 5000 representatives' of 1000 tribal villages in the tri-junction area of the three states



This year, the key discussion point were as follows:

<b>True-Childhood</b>	<b>True-Farming</b>		<b>True-Sovereignty</b>	<b>Volunteerism</b>
<b>Community Leaders, Women</b>	<b>Men and Women Farmers</b>		<b>Community Leaders, Women</b>	<b>Development Volunteers</b>
<b>Child education, Zero-drop-out,</b>	<b>Controlling Soil Erosion Reviving Soil health</b>	<b>Healthy Seeds for sustained farming and food supply</b>	<b>Quality performance of village development institutions</b>	<b>Why Volunteerism &amp; How it is important for village</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child labor and migration</li> <li>- Right to participate</li> <li>- Sports and child growth</li> <li>- Child-friendly community and village</li> <li>- Ensure health facilities are functional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Soil erosion, land degradation, and sustainable livelihood</li> <li>- Promote community forestry</li> <li>- What can be done to revitalize our soil?</li> <li>- Malnutrition Free tribal development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community seed treatment &amp; management for the revival of indigenous farming and food system &amp; medicinal plants and practices</li> <li>- Circular economy and celebrate indigenous lifestyle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Importance of Gram-Sabha?</li> <li>- Shramdaan</li> <li>- Ensure corruption free and transport</li> <li>- Panchayati raj</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who is volunteer?</li> <li>- What role a volunteer can play?</li> <li>- Community development and Volunteers</li> </ul>



## ❖ **Community discussion on True Childhood**

About 1500 representatives of VD&CRC participated in thematic discussion on true-childhood, which was facilitated by Mr. B.K. Gupta - Child Rights expert, Mr. Majid Khan and Ms. Sonal Shubham from VAAGDHARA. In the presence of Dr. Shailendra Pandya, Member-RSCPCR, Mr. Anil Jha-Praxis, Mr. Dinesh Meghwal - Save the Children, members of VD & CRCs and SMCs from tribal villages participated in the discussion and brought out the following issues which are important to make whole area as child friendly-

- ❖ Strengthening of School Management Committee is essential in order to control and reduce drop-out rate of children from schools. Pupil teacher ratio need to be improved and provision of basic infrastructure facility is essential.
- ❖ Department of Agriculture to run a nutrition program '**Poshan Vatika**' along with ICDS, Department of Women and Child development in all the villages and inclusion of nutritious food items like Millets Makki, Kang, Bawta, Kodo, China, Jaler, Balor, Chawli, Dhumka etc. in safety-net programs like Supplementary Nutrition, Mid-Day Meal and Public Distribution System as about 65,000 children in Banswara (6m to 3 years) are weak and malnourished, out of which about 21000 are associated with the supplementary nutritious program of Anganwadi, but still no encouraging results are being achieved.
- ❖ Approximately 40% of the families in the tribal areas have to migrate to other cities in

order to mobilize livelihood resources, so the children of such families need access to education, nutrition and right to life. Therefore, **number of residential schools, like Kasturba Gandhi Schools increase need to be at block level.**

- ❖ **Provision of proper training of tribal children at mass level** is required which can help them to get into higher level government jobs. Vocational and skill development training should be provided to these children.
- ❖ **Developing play grounds and other sports facilities** to be provided for children in villages for popularizing and mastering sports among the tribal children of the area. To improve this system, local level sports competitions should be organized.



*Discussion on Saccha Bachpan*

- ❖ Examination of RS-CIT has been made compulsory for government job, the fee of which has been raised to around Rs 3000 / - which is difficult to pay for the children of poor families, due to this, most of the tribal children are unable to apply for government jobs. Reduction of examination fees would help in attracting more applications from the tribal population.





**Government should subsidize the fee of certificate exams which have been made mandatory for applying for government jobs.**

- ❖ More rights and financial facilities should be given to the School Management Committees for Quality Education and Child Rights in Schools.
- ❖ In all 1000 tribal villages and other villages in the region, the provision of drinking water is mainly through hand-pump, and in many places even today people have to go 1 to 2 kilometer to collect water, which is mostly the responsibility of the females so in the remote villages, drinking water facility should be made available through solar-well pumps.
- ❖ Strengthening the District Child Protection Committee is essential to evacuate the children from child labour works and migration.



**Shri Shailendra Pandya, Member**– Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights emphasized on secure childhood as according to him children are most vulnerable. He raised his concern on increasing

child sexual abuse cases and said that the primary responsibility of society should be to save the children. He addressed all the participants that if they find any vulnerable child facing any kind of difficulty, then people must share the details with district childline on toll free number 1098, so that such children may be taken care of.

**Shri Kumar Prashant** from Gandhi Shanti Pratishthan highlighted the Gandhi ji's four sayings: 'to go and live with community', 'to learn from community', 'to use the knowledge and resources of



community in our lifestyle instead of bringing it from outside'. As tribal community is using their own knowledge and resources, thus this society is sustained, while people living in urban areas brought outside knowledge and resources and have ruined the system. "The Govt. thinks we (Tribal Community) don't know parenting and they need to create a department for it for raising our kids. for providing nutrition but they don't feel the need to provide resources and build capacity to raise our children

#### ❖ **Community discussion on True Farming**

More than 1200 women of Saksham Samuh from tribal-junction of Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh, participated in a separate discussion session, which was facilitated by Mr. Sandeep Khanwalakar, Sr. Director, Development Alternative, New Delhi; Mr. Krishna Prasad, Sahaja, Mysore; Mr. Deepak Sharma, Consultant, Mr. Ishwar Babu, and Mr. Rohit Samariya, VAAGDHARA. The discussion started with the celebration of “World Soil Day” and rich traditional diversity of tribal food crops, later talked about different aspects as given below:

- ❖ **Soil and water conservation measures should be initiated to protect the soil,**





**water and life in the region** as due to undulated soil, degradation of land, soil erosion has been increased resulting in soil losing its fertility and productivity.

- ❖ The group also discussed that most of the farmers grow same crop in same farm field, subsequently, soil fertility has been reducing, thus state **government should create awareness among farmer community on promotion of using crop rotation as a practice in their field** like as Maize, Summer Moong, Wheat.
- ❖ **Promotion of community seed bank by State Government** as many farmers do not use indigenous seed rather, they buy from market, eventually, increasing the production cost.
- ❖ Crop diversification, mixed cropping should be promoted by state government through designing policy – as many farmers grow only cash crops like cotton and thus the dependence of farmer on market has been increased for selling cash crops.
- ❖ Promotion of natural or organic farming should be promoted at large scale in order to improve the soil health. Government should provide subsidy in producing and purchasing organic manure and pesticides.



**Shri Narendra Nath** from Pradan, raised his concern on climate change, change in rainfall pattern and thus he highlighted that it is essential to adopt the traditional farming practices and their lifestyle in harmony with nature. He emphasized on tribal

farmers to work in union and develop a kind of farmer's company through which fruits and vegetables grown using indigenous and traditional practices and also organic fruits and vegetables can be sold in market of urban areas, and needs for nutritious food items in urban areas can be fulfilled.

**Shri Sabyasanchi** from Revitalizing Rainfed Area Network talked about the day-to-day deteriorating situation of farmers and challenges being faced by them. He reminded the tribal farmers that there is no other way than Sacchi Kheti, cultivation of diverse nutrient rich crops like millets, (jwar, ragi). He appreciated community conservation of indigenous seeds and community actions on improving the soil health.



**Dr. B. Venkateshwarlu**, former Vice Chancellor of Dharwad Agriculture University, appreciated VAAGDHARA efforts for organising such conclave of tribal people at mass scale where thousand of tribal farmers



gathered to discuss the issues faced by them. He stressed on few key issues like testing of soil, improving of soil health using natural farming practices and use of Beejamrit, Jeevamrit so that the crops and food produced are rich in nutrition. He further shared his apprehension over farming in rainfed areas and thus stressed upon establishing water harvesting mechanism for water conservation resulting in reduced soil erosion, increased infiltration and thus increased ground water level.





**Shri Gagan Sethi** from Jan Vikas Sansthan shared that tribals have been protector of lands and seeds for ages, but today this community has to struggle with self-centered system in order to get their rights. There is need to develop panchayat system wherein social equality and democracy is reflected. Thousands of tribal people from Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat need to set an example of tribal democracy in country.



**Shri Sawai Singh** from Rajasthan Samagra Sewa Sangh shared his apprehension over Government control over human rights. He stressed on Gandhi ji's Swaraj in which Jal, Jungle, Jameen, Janwar are produced by nature and thus no government can have control on these. Human being are also produced by nature and thus people who are residing and protecting the nature are sole owner of these natural resources.

## Coalition Meeting on Tobacco Free Rajasthan

Chewing and smoking tobacco is one of the common bad-habits leading to many health problems among the poor and vulnerable families. These habits are also spreading fast among the tribal youth and even children. VAAGDHARA, is continuously striving to reduce tobacco use in the state through engaging various stakeholders and seeking support of State Government, with an ultimate objective of making Rajasthan a "Tobacco Free State", but it was a felt need to create a coalition of key civil society organizations and citizens for collaborated efforts, advocating for strengthened tobacco control policies in the State.



*A Gmpse of Coalition Meeting*

During the conclave a meeting of the Citizens Coalition for Tobacco Control was also organised, with the idea that members could also interact with tribal community and pass on the message of "Tobacco Free Kids" to the community. This meeting was participated by the coalition members representing Samvedna Center Kota, Gayatri Parivaar, Sarvodaya Mandal, Rajasthan Samagra Sangh, Indian Asthma Care Society, CTFK, NUHM,







**Shri Krishna Prasad**, Sahaja Seeds, highlighted the significance of indigenous seeds and shared that seeds are part of our culture, they are part of rituals and festivals, but today seeds are bought from market, which may ruin

this culture. He stressed upon protecting the indigenous seeds and develop 'Vagad' region as seed capital of Rajasthan. But in order to protect the crop diversity of Vagad region like maize, cotton, wheat etc., all the tribal farmers need to work in a united way.



**Shri Narender Kumar**, from Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids (CTFK), showed his anxiety over challenging situations for tribal farmers. He insisted on empowering the tribal community for taking decisions related to

farming practices in united way. The vision of Saccha Swaraj, Saccha Bachpan and Sacchi Kheti can only be achieved, if all farmers, specially female farmers strive together.

## ❖ **Community discussion on True Sovereignty**

Under the facilitation of Shri Kumar Prashant, Gandhi Shanti Pratishthan, Shri Vijay Kumar, and Parmesh Patidar, Tribal Development Forum around 1500 youth farmers from villages located at the junction of three states Rajasthan, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh participated in an in-depth discussion on Saccha Swaraj theme. Key issues discussed and points raised by community are as follows

- ❖ Non-implementation of PESA Act.
- ❖ Non-availability of safe drinking water in two tribal dominated blocks of Rajasthan i.e. Kushalgarh and Sajjangarh.



*Discussion on Saccha Swaraj*

- ❖ Gram Sabha meetings are not organised regularly in panchayats. Along with this, some meetings lack participation of people.
- ❖ Lack of awareness among people for selection of right candidate as PRI leader.
- ❖ Non-availability of work on demand in MGNREGA.
- ❖ Many people were not issued their landholding documents under Forest's Rights Act.



Banswara, and UN. During this meeting, each member in a unified voice discussed on the need of vendor licensing for regulating the sales of tobacco products and advocating to State Government for its implementation. A charter was prepared in consultation with the participants, demanding implementation of vendor licensing mechanism and WHO FCTC article 5.3, to be presented to Hon'ble Chief Minister and Hon'ble Health Minister. It is a strong belief that this coalition shall certainly help in exploring new strategies to make our State tobacco free and improve health index of people especially, women and children.

The first day of the conclave was followed by traditional food and fete cultural evening. Folk dances, folk songs, kavi sammelan in Vagadi language attracted the participants in the event. Local musical instruments and drums, were making an amazing scene of a convention of thousands of people at one place.

### 3.5.2 Valedictory Session

The event was graced by Dr. C.P. Joshi, Hon'ble Speaker of Legislative Assembly Rajasthan as Chief Guest, Shri Lalchand Katariya, Hon'ble Agriculture Minister as Special Guest and Shri Mahendra Jeet Singh Malviya, Member of Legislative Assembly, Bagidora, Banswara. Dr. Joshi unveiled the statue of Mahatma Gandhi at VAAGDHARA premises. The eminent guests paid tribute to Bapu and inaugurated the statue.

The second day started with thousands of tribal people participated in Gandhi Sandesh Yatra organised early morning on a pre-defined route. Yatra participants were carrying banners

and posters related to Saccha Bachpan, Sacchi Kheti and Saccha Swaraj. Another key component of this conclave was that of interaction of tribal community with the Chief of Legislative Assembly Rajasthan and Hon'ble Agriculture Minister.



*Dr. C.P. Joshi and Shri Lal Chand Katariya ji Unveiling Mahatma Gandhi ji Statue in VAAGDHARA Premises*

Guests further visited the VAAGDHARA's community radio station - VAGAD Radio (90.8) and appreciated the efforts being made for making community aware on various themes related to children, agriculture and democracy. Messages to community by guests were also recorded and aired live.





Thematic interventions related Sacchi Kheti, Saccha Bachpan, Saccha Swaraj were showcased to guests through exhibition. Dr. Joshi while going through the exhibition at the conclave said that the traditional crops of the area should be patented so that farmers get good return for their crop as well as revenue for the government. An exhibition of the project 'Towards Tobacco Free Rajasthan' was also setup appreciating the efforts by Government. Guests further visited the VAAGDHARA's community radio station - VAGAD Radio (90.8) and appreciated the efforts being made for making community aware on various themes related to children, agriculture and democracy. Messages to community by guests were also recorded and aired live. Thematic interventions related Sacchi Kheti, Saccha Bachpan, Saccha Swaraj were showcased to guests through exhibition. Dr. Joshi while going through the exhibition at the conclave said that the traditional crops of the area should be patented so that farmers get good return for their crop as well as revenue for the government. An exhibition of the project 'Towards Tobacco Free Rajasthan' was also setup appreciating the efforts by Government for tobacco control and also showcasing an action plan for making Rajasthan, a tobacco free state. Signature campaign grabbed the attraction as all the guests and most of the people pledged by signing and committing for not using the tobacco.

**Shri Brij Mohan Dixit,**

Chair Vaagdhara Board welcomed all the eminent guests and community members in tribal sovereignty conclave. He highlighted the efforts been made by Vaagdhara for upliftment of tribal community under three themes: Saccha Bachpan, Sacchi Kheti and Saccha Swaraj.



### 3.5.3 Cultural Dialogue Through The Cultural Program

When it comes to tribal participation, be it agriculture, child rights, democracy, gender balance or any other theme, cultural interactions are important. Thus, this colloquium also had very good cultural interaction right from bhajan, folk-dance, folk-songs.



Cultural programs have always been proven effective in building communities to attain significant change, people from community performed their culture in a beautiful way by performing dances, singing folk songs and representing their art, culture, living and traditions.





*Cultural activities during the conclave*

### 3.5.4 Message from Key Speakers



**Dr. C.P. Joshi, Hon'ble Speaker, Rajasthan Legislative Assembly,** emphasizing on self-governance for panchayati raj institutions as per 73rd and 74th amendments of the constitution,

stated that there would be no threat to local communities and resources if the voice of elected representatives was the same as that of the people. He also talked about the roles of Governor of the State in monitoring of direct schemes in tribal areas as well as taking the issues forward. He stressed upon to recognize the knowledge of people living in villages who can support in policy making as according to him, Swaraj was imagined in a way where the elected representatives can make policies considering the economic growth of tribal areas and keep *jal, jungle, janwar* safe. He expressed the need to revitalize and reinstate the traditional methods of farming, indigenous seeds without government interference in the panchayat system and thus provision and utilisation of untied fund in panchayat system could serve the purpose.

Gandhi ji's Swaraj can be imagined this way. Expressing his appreciation to VAAGDHARA, he said that role of voluntary organizations should be to create awareness on public consciousness among the people.

Our ideology should not be governed by foreign knowledge but on traditional native knowledge. There will be no threat to the community and the resource when everyone chooses a representative who can think like them and voice their thoughts.

- **Shri C.P. Joshi**



**Shri Amitabh Behar, CEO – Oxfam India** also put across his views on the role of civil society organizations in development of tribal farmers. He shared that only 8 percent of people are much more affluent than 650 million people in India, while the marginalized communities even do not have the access to their





basic rights. This reveals a high inequality among the people across the country. In various parts of the world, people are now agitated and demanding to eliminate inequality among the people. Mahatma Gandhi also worked with the civil society organizations and created their network in the country which helped them to raise the issues of marginalized communities from social forums to political forums at national level. Hence it is important that CSOs keep their communication continued with the farmers and the community on social issues and keep them united, irrespective of political and capitalist forces. CSOs are ready to move ahead and save our democracy. CSOs are with farmers and ready to support them in raising their issues up to national level to save our democracy.



**Shri Lal Chand Katariya,** Hon'ble Agriculture Minister, appreciated the efforts by VAAGDHARA and 40,000 tribals for fulfilling the dreams of Bapu about Swaraj and also for increasing awareness about traditional farming practices in

order to save human life from chemically grown crops, fruits and vegetables. He shared that farmers' conditions have improved in India and agriculture situation has improved as well but due to abrupt use chemical fertilizer, the condition of soil and seeds has deteriorated which now has become hazardous for human life and need to be addressed through organic farming. Government is committed to promote organic farming and will provide all possible support to tribal farmers. He felt infatuated seeing the tribal farmers of Vagad region keeping the traditional lifestyle alive.



**Shri Mahendrajeet Singh Malviya,** MLA, Bagidora expressed his gratitude to thousands of people came to attend the conclave and working as volunteer for Gandhi Swaraj Yatra. He

shared the significance of traditional and natural farming as well as traditional practices of cattle rearing, and hence required to be protected. He also insisted on the need of protecting indigenous seeds, sowing of which high yields quality of crops which are being sold in urban markets at higher prices.

VAAGDHARA shared about its philosophy of tribal development through Janjatiya Swaraj Sangathan with government and non-government stakeholders. The whole campaign was managed and monitored successfully through the use of technological gadgets mobile application, so that community also start looking to these gadgets as learning and development tools. VAGAD Radio (90.4 FM) played very important role in two-way communication through mutiple programs on different events organized during the campaign



*Shri Lal Chand Katariya ji  
Addressing through VAGAD Radio*





## Exhibition on Sovereignty



*Glimpses of Exhibition*





### 3.5.5 Our Commitment and Way Forward



**Jayesh Joshi**  
Secretary  
VAAGDHARA

Swaraj Abhiyaan, the Agriculture and Tribal sovereignty Campaign, which was conceptualized by VAAGDHARA on 30th January 2019 could be realised in such a grand success reaching 100,000 tribal families in 1000 villages directly and 250,000 families in tri-junction of the states of Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, and Rajasthan. This was possible due to commitment of leaders of VD&CRC, Saksham Samuh and Janjatiya Swaraj Sangathan (24) spread over 1000 villages.

The whole credit of this goes to dedicated team of VAAGDHARA, its JSSSI, supported JSS, members of JVM (Janjatiya Vikas Manch) and Tribal Development Volunteers. Members of Janjatiya Swaraj Sangathan-25, Village Development & Child Rights Committee-1000, 350 Community Resource Persons and 3000 volunteers, and VAAGDHARA's Community Radio helped us to understand the issues and concerns of wider tribal communities in the three states.

Urging to agriculture minister for making Banswara, the Mango capital as well as seed capital of the State. It was shared that the indigenous seed of this region has been always reliable and if efforts are made to use such seeds than the marketization of seeds can be prevented. He further insisted to create an enabling environment so that cultural aspects like communication, agriculture, health and education can be prevented to become the part of business and can be linked again with culture. In concluding

ceremony of the event, the community conveyed their requirements to Hon'ble Agriculture Minister who assured the people of tribal community to provide all possible assistance on behalf of the government.

### 3.5.6 Vagad Radio for Abhiyaan

The whole abhiyan was a success due to immense efforts of the radio team had given in order to prepare audio and visual messages which were circulated in the community. An application was created in order to reach out to the community- at the same time with same content of the events. Through this application the audio and visual messages were circulated on 14th November and 5th December 2019.

The content of the audio and visual message was created by the Vagad Radio team. It was so effective that it helped and created discussion. The content created was in the local language (Vaagdi) so that the community is able to relate it with more connection. For the preparation of the content, the Radio team approached the respective people before hand and provided the proper assistance in the community radio centre so that quality recording can be done.

The introductory speech by the organization secretary Mr. Jayesh Joshi was also recorded in advance by the radio team and uploaded in the Abhiyan application. This was well planned initiative in order to tackle the problem of internet service thus everyone can able to listen to the thoughts of Secretary of the organization.



The Abhiyan application also had the provision of radio streaming thus anyone at any point of time can have access to the live event streaming at 90.8 FM. On the day of 14th November and 5th December' 2019 the radio team took the initiative to get connected with the community and had conversation with them. In that sense the community was able to express their experiences and thoughts.

Moreover, this initiative enabled the other community to hear out other villages. The installation of VAGAD Radio 90.8 FM in the application was longtime strategy where the communities anytime access this service. The Vagad radio installed in the application had been

introduced to the people. Eagerness could be seen when Tribal development volunteers and Coordinators accessed radio. Radio can be also the medium to engage with the event was also informed. The attempt of live streaming from various villages was also informed during the Abhiyan.

The radio team also live streamed the 10th and 11th December 2019 the Conclave of Swaraj Samagam, thus the community members who couldn't participate in person for the Conclave able to stay connected to the spirit of tribal conclave celebration and the philosophy of Swaraj.



*Shri C.P. Joshi, Shri Lal chand Katariya ji and Shri Mahendrajit Singh Malviya ji  
visited VAGAD Radio Station and Exhibition Gallery*





# 4 CHARTER OF DEMANDS

From our three themes



## Charter of Demands

The demands that were put forward by the tribal community during the 2 days conclave were discussed and agreeable points were recorded. These demands were given a form of charter to be put up to the authorities at State and UN forum.

### True Farming (Sacchi Kheti)

- ❖ Need to advocate with agriculture department for adoption of organic and traditional practices of tribal farming system of VAGAD region to improve soil health and its nourishment.
- ❖ Establishment of community owned seed management practices and advocacy with government for evolving Vagad region – Indigenous seed capital.
- ❖ Adapting approach of nutrient-recycling within farming system.
- ❖ Wider coverage of Soil-testing through panchayat samiti and even Panchayat level soil-testing facilities and awareness along with proper advisory services.
- ❖ Women groups to take lead in application of soil-conservation approaches in farming system and develop strategy to reach government for special scheme to stop soil erosion.
- ❖ Approaching government for inclusion of Sustainable Integrated Farming System linked activities in MGNREGA and other schemes.
- ❖ Community managed 'Fodder Bank' should be promoted in Vagad region by the State Government. For easy access to fodder for

tribal community, the State Government must provide subsidy on fodder to farmers.

- ❖ Investment on building the capacity improving health of livestock need to be done. As a result, local cadre like Pashu Sakhi will be well equipped and trained on technical know-how regarding health care of animals deworming, vaccinations and breed improvement.
- ❖ Traditional Animal Research and Conservation Centre at block level should be set up by the State Government so that local breed and health of goats, cattle and poultry may be improved. Local indigenous knowledge, methods and medicines need to be included in livestock health system.
- ❖ In order to increasing growth rate in agriculture, State Government should invest on developing tribal rural youth agri-entrepreneur by providing necessary training on improved farming, organic farming, entrepreneurship and infrastructure.

### True Childhood (Saccha Bachpan)

- ❖ VD&CRC initiated the process of developing their village as child-friendly village, but there is need for higher degree of knowledge and skill development for community on these lines, thus VAAGDHARA need to help TDF and JSS on these lines.
- ❖ Spreading the coverage of Childline 1098 through wider awareness on one hand and advocacy with Childline foundation for further strengthening of the process in remote locations.
- ❖ Effective participation in 5 school management committee and work for



achieving 100% enrollment and participation in education programers leading to zero drop-out.

- ❖ Work for eradication of Child labour and Child Marriage within community and coordinate with govenment department for the same
- ❖ Advocacy for convergence between Agricu- lture and WCD department, promoting Poshan Vatika along with ICDS services for improving nutritional status of children and women.
- ❖ Quality education should be promoted in pre- primary and primary school through incorporating methodology of teaching in curriculum like pictorial, games. Emphasis to be given on additional creative activities.
- ❖ ‘Bal-Sabha’ in schools shall be strengthened through educating and creating awareness among students by the School Management Committee.

### **True Sovereignty (Saccha Swaraj)**

- ❖ Large-scale political awareness program in the area of membership of Tribal Development Forum through youth volunteers, Community Radio, Social and Print media for effective and meaningful participation in village and area development.
- ❖ Initiating capacity building for tribal youth particularly women through leadership school for sharpening leadership traits of tribal youth.
- ❖ Equal participation of women in conclave have indicated their confidence in the concepts and processes followed by

VAAGDHARA for the spread of democracy in true sense among the tribal communities. There is need for separate leadership school drive for women candidates and women representatives in panchayat raj.

- ❖ VD&CRC, Janjatiya Swaraj Sangathan, and Tribal Development Forum will work jointly for advocacy with the Panchayati Raj department to support Gram-panchayat for Untied fund for innovative activities.
- ❖ Spread the concept of volunteerism among the other stakeholders such as Teachers, Patwaries, ASHA workers, Anganwadi workers, etc.
- ❖ Demand of work and its sanction regarding 29 subjects of Gram Panchayat Development Plan should be made compulsory for over all development of the Gram Panchayat .
- ❖ Village Micro Plan must be prepared by the Gram Panchayat in order to implement the Gram Panchayat Development works and participation by the community need to be ensured while preparing micro plan.
- ❖ ‘Rural Hat market’ should be strengthened by the local authority or gram panchayat so that farmers can sell their produce at local level and earn more.
- ❖ More than 25% local community should participate in all kind of village development activities. In order to monitor the village development activity, it is suggested that at least 40% women must be member of the Panchayat Monitoring Committee for ensuring women participation in Panchayat Development Activities.





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