



# Annual Report

2024-25





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# Acronyms

**AWC** : Aanganwadi Centres

**ARA** : Accountability,  
Responsibility and Authority

**CEO** : Chief Executive Officer

**CMSS** : Community Managed  
Seed System

**CR** : Community Radio

**CSOs** : Civil Society  
Organization

**CSocD** : Commission for Social  
Development

**FAO** : Food and Agriculture  
Organization

**FCRA** : Foreign Contribution  
(Regulation) Act (FCRA)

**FRA** : Forest Rights Act  
(FRA),2006

**FPO** : Farmers Producer  
Organization

**GPDP** : Gram Panchayat  
Development Plan

**ICDS** : Integrated Child  
Development Services

**KASS** : Krishi evam Adivasi  
Swaraj Sangathan

**KRA** : Key Result Areas

**MSP** : Minimum Support Price

**MGNREGA** : Mahatma Gandhi  
National Rural Employment  
Guarantee Act

**MPUAT** : Maharana Pratap  
University of Agriculture and  
Technology

**NSFS** : Nutri-Sensitive Farming  
System

**PAI** : Policy Advocacy Initiative

**POs** : Peoples Organization

**RNASB** : Resource Need  
Assessment Score Board

**SDG** : Sustainable Development  
Goals

**SIFS** : Sustainable Integrated  
Farming System

**SME** : Small and Medium  
Enterprises

**SS** : Saksham Samooch

**TSP** : Tribal Sub-Plan

**TSU** : Technical Support Unit

**UN-ECOSOC** : United Nation-  
Economic and Social Council



# Secretary's Message



The responsibility entrusted to me as the Chief Facilitator and Integrator at VAAGDHARA is both a privilege and a profound duty. Each year in this journey carries its own significance, and this financial year too has been no exception.

This year, we were able to carry the essence of Swaraj beyond the boundaries of our villages; from our local experiences to national forums and even global dialogues. The voice of Swaraj found its place, not because of any one individual, but because of the collective strength of many including our communities, team members, motivators, leaders of Swaraj, partner organisations, and well-wishers who walked with us at every stage.

Speaking or writing about Swaraj has never been simple, for Swaraj is inseparable from our efforts in food, farming, and thought because it flows through them. As we present this year's Annual Report, it is important to remember that Swaraj is not a concept to be understood through words alone; it is to be lived and practiced!

The pages of this report reflect not just our achievements as an organisation that works at the grassroots, but lived experiences of our communities who have practiced Swaraj, of partner organisations who have journeyed with them, and of the collective spirit that binds us all.

On behalf of VAAGDHARA, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to our community members, the Executive Board, our dedicated team, our partner organisations, and every well-wisher. Your faith and support have made it possible for us to bring these efforts together in this document and, more importantly, in our shared journey towards Swaraj.

As we look to the year ahead, our commitment remains clear: to walk with communities, amplify their voices, respect their knowledge, and strengthen their capacity for long-term change.

Jai Guru!  
Jayesh Joshi

# Executive Summary

*Field in Banswara*

## Reclaiming the Village: A Year of Deepening Swaraj in Tribal India

This annual report documents VAAGDHARA's efforts during 2024–25—a year shaped not by new directions, but by deeper anchoring; anchoring in values,

anchoring in local wisdom and anchoring in the belief that development is not something communities should wait for—it is something they can, and must, shape for themselves.

Rooted in the principles of Swaraj, VAAGDHARA continues to walk with tribal

communities across the Vagad region—covering parts of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat. These geographies, often viewed through the lens of poverty and underdevelopment, are reimagined here through the lens of sovereignty, resilience, and agency.

## A Vision Grounded in Ecosystems

VAAGDHARA's ecosystem approach recognizes that no issue exists in isolation. Food security cannot be separated from farming practices. Nutrition cannot be delinked from entitlements. Governance cannot be imagined without youth, and leadership cannot be sustained without women. This interconnected approach now guides all programming, organized into five thematic ecosystems:

- **Sovereignty over Food and Farming Systems**
- **Sovereignty over Energy and Natural Resources**
- **Sovereignty in Child Rights and Development**
- **Sovereignty in Local Governance**
- **Sovereignty of Thought and Knowledge**

At the core lies one idea: tribal communities must not remain recipients of development, but become its architects.



## Six KRAs: The Living Architecture of Swaraj

The report centers on six Key Result Areas (KRAs)—each an expression of the ecosystem model in practice.

*Tribal woman happily sharing her foxtail millet production from her field*



### Youth and Local Governance

53.9% of youth have created their own spaces within 1,168 Gram Swaraj Samooths, of which 55.5% are young women-led groups. These spaces enable youth to engage in village planning, monitor government schemes, and revive collective practices such as Halma and Hirma. Swaraj Shala, a key platform, supports and mentors young leaders to explore constitutional values and develop facilitation skills for participatory governance.



### Institutional Development and Policy Engagement

Internal systems were strengthened through training, digital dashboards, and peer learning. VAAGDHARA amplified community voices at the UN Commission on the Status of Women, ECOSOC Civil Society Conference, and state policy forums. Renewable energy initiatives began finding place in village development plans under the umbrella of Energy Swaraj.



### Child Rights and Child-Friendly Villages

1,074 Baal Swaraj Samooth groups enabled children to raise issues in Gram Sabhas and school audits. Over 13,700 children were screened for malnutrition, with linkages made to ICDS and health services. A total of 179 issues have been raised by Gram Swaraj Samooths, of which 67% have been resolved through their own leadership and collective action.



### Resilient Agriculture and Incomes

Indigenous models like Hangadi Kheti and circular farming were adopted across clusters, improving soil health and reducing dependence on chemicals. Over 52,000+ seed banks safeguarded 130+ local varieties. 18,000 Nutrition Gardens brought diversity to household diets, while eco-enterprises like millet processing and goat rearing opened new income pathways.



### Public Investment through People's Voice

MGNREGA applications through grassroots campaigns. Our people's organizations KASS successfully prioritized key development areas—food security, education, infrastructure, and livelihoods—leading to 10 sustainable development recommendations being included in the 2025–26 Budget. Under Gram Swaraj Samooth (GSS), the Kaam Mango Abhiyan campaign enabled 90,642 MGNREGA applications, resulting in 57,450 households receiving 80+ days of work with 100% of payments disbursed within 15 days, helping communities claim their rights and entitlements.



### People's Institutions and Women's Leadership

Platforms like KASS, Mahila Manch, and Saksham Samooths helped translate community needs into actionable village plans. 66 key issues were raised by KASS—ranging from school infrastructure and administration to MGNREGA-related concerns like nurseries and field bunding, and more than 50% have been solved.



## Stories from the Ground: The Pulse Behind the Data

Community snapshots brought voice to these systems. From Baal Panchayat members challenging school infrastructure gaps, to farmers preserving native seeds, to women reclaiming planning spaces—the stories are reminders that the most powerful change is lived, not led from above.

Each story reflects not just an achievement, but a philosophy: development is legitimate only when it grows from the community's voice, values, and volition.

VAAGDHARA's Strategic Plan for 2023–2028 is not introduced

as a shift in agenda, but a commitment to deepen what is already working. Plans include:

- Regional collaboratives in ten tribal tri-junctions for cross-learning
- Tribal Wisdom and Innovation Centres to safeguard traditional knowledge
- Expanded Energy Swaraj through decentralized, community-run systems

- Swaraj Shala as a leadership and values platform for tribal youth

The direction ahead is both humble and ambitious. It acknowledges the limitations of external interventions and places trust in local leadership, ecological logic, and lived wisdom.







**This report is not a list of activities. It is a reflection of a long-term commitment—to walk with the tribal community, to support and challenge when needed, and to hold space for their wisdom to shape not only their own villages, but the future of India's development thinking.**

**Swaraj is not a concept—it is a living, breathing practice.**

**And it is already alive in the seed savers, child speakers, women planners, and youth facilitators across this region.**









# About VAAGDHARA

## Strengthening Swaraj in the Tribal Heartland

VAAGDHARA is a community-based organization rooted in the tribal regions of southern Rajasthan, with its efforts extending across western Madhya Pradesh and northern Gujarat. For over three decades, we have walked alongside Adivasi families—learning from their wisdom and co-creating systems that are equitable, ecological, and community-governed.

VAAGDHARA amplifies the voices and aspirations of Indigenous communities on national and global platforms. By bringing forward their practices, knowledge systems, and locally rooted solutions, we contribute to the global dialogue on sustainable development in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Over the years, we partnered with more than 1,40,000 tribal families across the tri-junction region. Together, we have nurtured focus areas for True Farming, True Childhood, and True Governance—strengthening agriculture in the context of climate resilience methods, protecting children's rights and development, and strengthening peoples institutions.

At the heart of this journey is dialogue. By weaving community voices into every step—from village meetings to larger platforms—VAAGDHARA ensures that change is not imposed from outside but grows from within, through the practice of Swaraj.

### Vision

With Swaraj as the North Star, tribal and farming communities achieve climate-resilient livelihoods, food and nutrition security, assured child rights, and responsive governance systems.

sustainable livelihoods and realizing true childhood—integrating new-generation and indigenous knowledge, technologies, and practices, while nurturing vibrant, gender-equitable institutions of tribal communities at the tri-junction of Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh.

### Mission

To establish the significance of Swaraj at a larger level by ensuring

## Our Strategic Objectives

- Tribal communities participate, design, and contribute to the development and governance process democratically, taking forward their issues at local, regional, national, and international platforms through empowered people's organizations.
- Strengthened community actions sustainably manage livelihood resources of small and marginal tribal families, in harmony with ecological conditions and adapted to climate change.
- The tri-junction of three states emerges as a region where children enjoy their rights of survival, development, protection, and participation in an inclusive manner.
- A sovereign and circular lifestyle of tribal and farming communities for sustainable development is cultivated through grassroots experiences and exchanges at global indigenous forums.



## Geographical Presence

VAAGDHARA's presence is deeply rooted in the tribal heartland of the Rajasthan–Madhya Pradesh–Gujarat tri-junction, a region rich in culture, biodiversity, and community wisdom. Our presence spans six districts—Banswara, Pratapgarh, and Dungarpur (Rajasthan); Dahod (Gujarat); Jhabua and Ratlam (Madhya Pradesh)—where we continue to accompany Adivasi families in their pursuit of Swaraj. Today, VAAGDHARA partners with more than 1,40,000 families across 1,168 villages and 14 blocks, working through community-led institutions that form the backbone of local leadership and resilience. These villages are living centres of knowledge, dialogue, and collective action where Swaraj is practiced in everyday life.

Our geographical presence is therefore not merely about coverage—it reflects a growing movement where tribal communities, rooted in their traditions and wisdom, are shaping futures with dignity, equity, and sustainability.

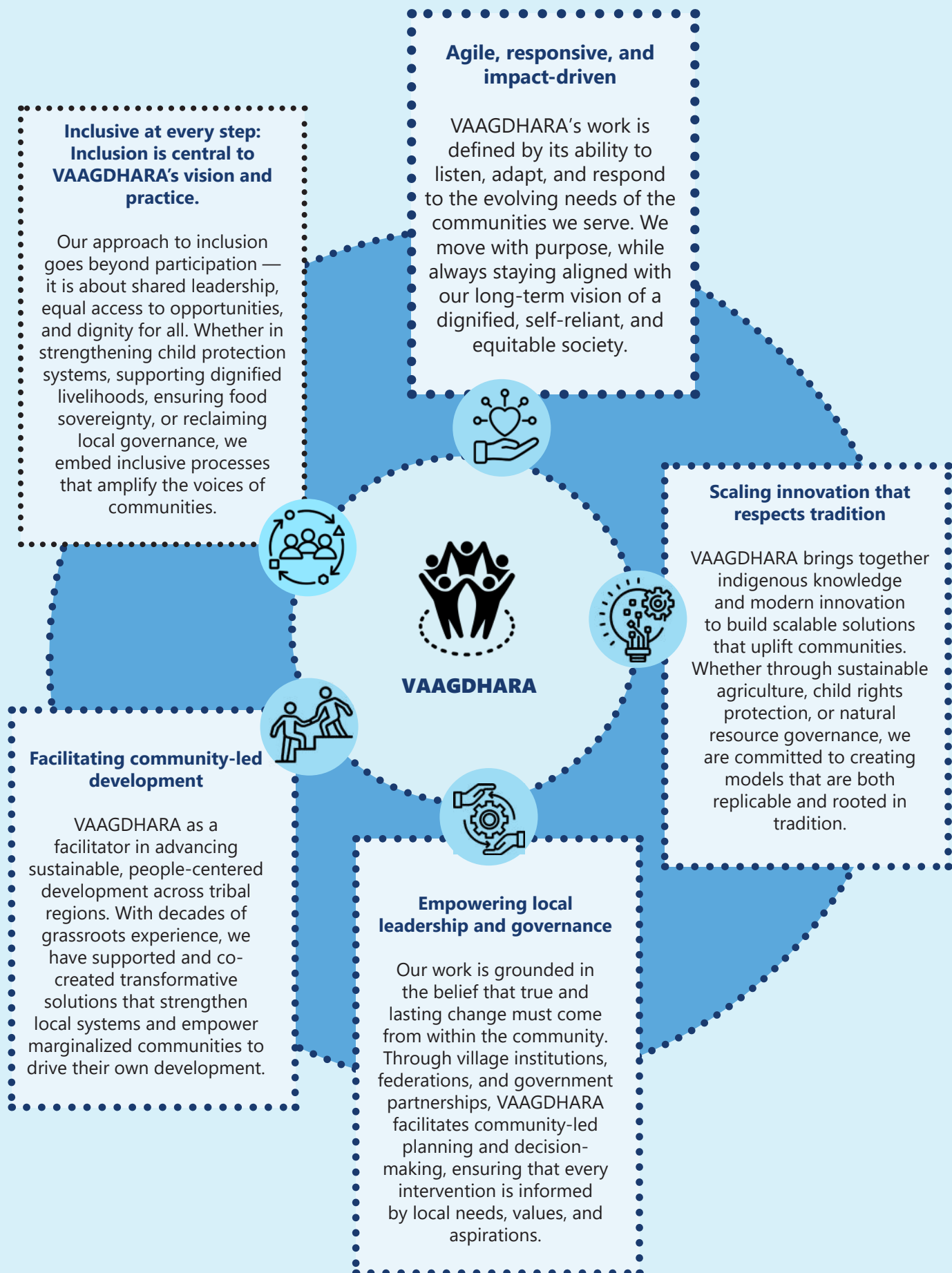


*Map of Tribal Tri-junction*



*Village women enthusiastically participating in local level seed exchange*







# SWARAJ (SOVEREIGNTY) FRAMEWORK

Vaagdhara's Theory of Change



## SOVEREIGN TRIBAL AND FARMING COMMUNITIES

Being Sovereign, the indigenous communities are empowered to fully engage with and make the most of their Social, Economic, Ecological, Cultural, and Political spaces, which enables them to make decisions, choices, and express their views in alignment with their own sustainable development.



### IMPACT (Through Traditional Knowledge and Practices)

- Food Security
- Nutrition Security
- Sustainable Livelihood
- Assured Child Rights
- Ensured Living Income
- Strengthened Traditional Culture
- Strong People's Organizations having Women in Leadership Positions
- Increased Gender Based Public Investment
- Climate Mitigation and Adaptation

- Advancing these efforts through community outreach rooted in traditional practices is expected to ensure food and nutrition security, promote sustainable livelihoods, and safeguard child rights. It will also help ensure a living income, strengthen traditional culture, and empower people's organizations.
- Additionally, increased public investment and climate mitigation efforts will foster resilience, reducing dependency on external systems. Together, these initiatives will strengthen the community's Swaraj, enhancing their autonomy, self-reliance, and capacity for self-governance.



### REDUCED DEPENDENCY ON EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT (Community outreach through Gender Balanced People's Organizations)



### BUILDING STRONGER AND SYNERGIZED PEOPLE'S ORGANISATIONS

- Strengthening of Sanghatan (People's Organizations).
- Aligning with national and global movement.

Strengthening people's organizations empowers communities by enhancing decision-making, resource management, and local governance. These organizations become catalysts for protecting community rights, fostering social connections, driving community solutions, promoting sustainability, and reinforcing indigenous sovereignty.



### STRATEGY AND IMPACT (Sacha Bachpan and Sacchi Kheti)

- Seed and Food Sovereignty
- Water and Vegetation Swaraj
- Land and Livestock Swaraj
- Child Health and Nutrition Swaraj
- Child Education and Development Swaraj

The indigenous community's connection to land, water, forests, seeds, and livestock defines their identity. By cultivating traditional crops, conserving water, improving soil practicing agroforestry, and managing livestock, they reduce market dependency and ensure sovereignty. Their practices also strengthen women's and children's nutrition, while blending traditional knowledge and technology to reinforce Swaraj.



### GOVERNANCE AND EXTERNAL POSITIONING (Sacha Swaraj)

- Rights and participation Swaraj (voices and choices on demands and entitlements)
- Contributing to alleviate climate crises through renewable energy

Emphasis is placed on enabling the community to understand their rights so they can demand their entitlements. This also includes promoting local-to-global solutions for mitigating and adapting to climate change.



### LEADERSHIP, KNOWLEDGE, CULTURE AND GENDER EQUITABLE PRACTICES

- Building youth leadership.
- Strengthening of traditional knowledge, culture and innovation.

Building leadership skills among tribal youth, especially women, is key to creating resilient communities. By focusing on skill-building in areas such as communication and decision-making, young leaders can be equipped to resolve challenges, preserving traditional knowledge and culture, and become agents of change, driving community development.



# Highlights of 2024–25

## Swaraj Samvad: A National Dialogue

In January 2025, **Swaraj Samvad** brought together over **500 civil society organisations** from across India and held as a national dialogue on indigenous local solutions. It included tribal leaders, development professionals, funders, researchers, and communicators. Discussions focused on how traditional knowledge systems, when recognised and supported, offer practical and long-lasting solutions to the challenges of food, farming, energy, and climate. The event reaffirmed that tribal communities must not only be included in strategies, they must shape them.



*Plenary Session: Swaraj Samvad*



*Swaraj Sandesh Samvad Padyatra 2025*

## Swaraj Sandesh – Samwad Padyatra 2024

Organised by Krishi Evam Adivasi Swaraj Sangathans, the **Swaraj Sandesh – Samwad Padyatra** was held across the tribal belt of Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Madhya Pradesh. Over **4,700 community members** and **1,000 padyatris** walked together, **holding 230+ village meetings** on food sovereignty, agroecology, energy swaraj, and nutrition.

The padyatra brought intergenerational learning alive — elders shared stories of traditional practices, while youth reflected on future challenges. It helped reconnect communities with their environment and with each other. It also revived public dialogue as a method of collective reflection.

## VAAGDHARA at Dasra Philanthropy Forum

At the Dasra Philanthropy Forum 2024, VAAGDHARA participated in a panel on **climate funding for local solutions**. The session focused on how indigenous communities are not only coping with climate impacts but leading effective responses. It highlighted the need for direct, flexible, and long-term funding for such community-led efforts. In this session, 'Echoes of Swaraj'—a collection of community stories—was also unveiled.



*Unveiling of Echoes of Swaraj at the Dasra Philanthropy Forum*

## Energy Swaraj and Community Learning and Action

This year, VAAGDHARA facilitated a unique platform for dialogue on **Energy Swaraj**, **bringing together community representatives, grassroots leaders, and experts from national organizations such as CEEW, WRI, CLASP, Socratus Foundation, and others**. Held in Banswara and Udaipur, the convening focused on strengthening the community-led transition from energy scarcity to renewable energy solutions.

Over three days, participants engaged in **empathy walks, field visits, and community-led assessments, which created opportunities to understand energy realities in tribal villages**—how lack of electricity affects daily life,

agriculture, education, and livelihoods, and how communities are already experimenting with clean energy practices. **The convening also introduced VAAGDHARA's Community Learning and Action (CLA) framework—a participatory process where communities themselves map energy needs, reflect on challenges, and co-create action plans for the future**. Experts affirmed the importance of framing energy access not only as a technological shift but as a matter of justice, dignity, and resilience. More than an event, this convening represented the beginning of a **broader movement**—where tribal communities, guided by Swaraj, shape their own pathways towards clean, regenerative, and just energy futures.

## Representation at International Forums

In 2024–25, VAAGDHARA contributed community voices to international policy spaces:

- **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW69):** A written statement was submitted highlighting the exclusion faced by tribal women in access to education, healthcare, and digital tools. It called for action on digital, ecological, economic, and civic intelligence to build real inclusion.
- **Commission for Social Development (CSocD63):** The submission focused on land, identity, and livelihood issues of indigenous communities, calling for more inclusive policies and protection of community rights.
- **ECOSOC High-Level Political Forum 2024:** VAAGDHARA's Secretary, Jayesh Joshi, shared how traditional practices — rooted in nature and community — can offer real models for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The forum recognised that tribal communities must not be seen as passive recipients, but as leaders and knowledge-holders.



Participation in the 63rd Session of the Commission for Social Development



Participation in the 63rd Session of the Commission for Social Development



Seed Exchange during Beej Utsav 2025

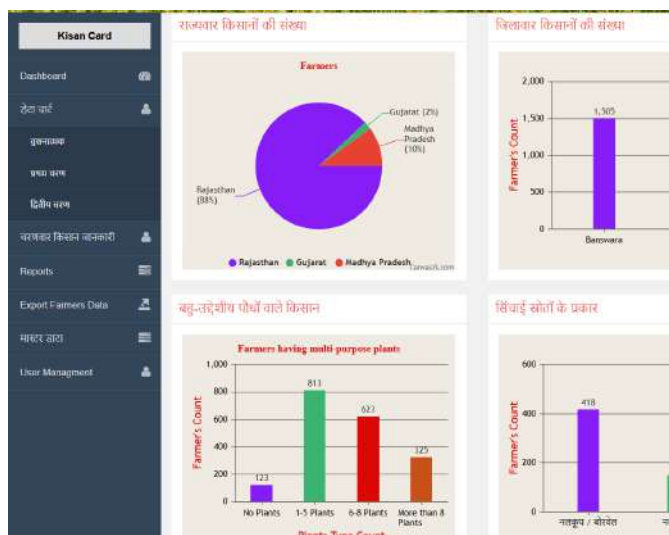
## Seed Utsav: Strengthening Beej Swaraj

Over 90 Seed Utsav events were held across tribal regions, with **10,000+ farmers exchanging more than 50 traditional seed varieties**, including Bailadiya Urad, Black Kang, Santhi Makka, Ramphal, and Nagfali. To take this work forward, the **Beej Swaraj Portal** was launched — a digital platform that enables farmers to share seeds, access information, and strengthen seed networks. It is helping reduce dependence on commercial seed systems and keeping indigenous seeds alive.

## Community Knowledge at the Centre: Kisan Diary

The Kisan Diary was developed with tribal farmers to help them document their agricultural decisions — from **seed choices and weather patterns to soil conditions and input use**. Today, it is used by thousands of farmers across the region.

This year, the initiative was **awarded with Mentroship Support by D4GX (Data for Good Exchange)** national forum. It showed how community-led data tools can support better decision-making, visibility, and planning — all grounded in lived knowledge.



Kisan Card Dashboard



# Pathways to Swaraj

VAAGDHARA's interventions are guided by the belief that tribal communities are not beneficiaries, but rightful stewards of their ecosystems, cultures, and governance systems. The organization's efforts are designed to strengthen self-reliance and

sovereignty across all dimensions of community life—what VAAGDHARA refers to as Swaraj.

This chapter presents the organization's work across six Key Result Areas (KRAs), each representing a pathway through which tribal communities are

reclaiming control over their lives, resources, and futures.

These KRAs are not isolated silos, but interlinked systems that together build the foundation for a just, equitable, and sustainable future.



## 1. Public Investment through People's Voice

Strengthening tribal communities' ability to access, monitor, and shape public schemes and entitlements.



## 2. Youth and Local Governance

Enabling young tribal citizens to reclaim democratic spaces, revive community practices, and lead with purpose.



## 3. Resilient Agriculture and Incomes

Building food sovereignty and sustainable incomes through regenerative, community-led farming systems.



## 4. Child Rights and Child-Friendly Villages

Securing the rights of every child through safe, participatory, and inclusive village ecosystems.



## 5. People's Institutions and Women's Leadership

Empowering community institutions and advancing tribal women's leadership in governance and development.



## 6. Institutional Development and Policy Engagement

Strengthening internal systems and amplifying community voices in local, national, and global platforms.

Each of these areas draws from VAAGDHARA's ecosystem model and reflects the organization's long-term commitment to sovereignty, sustainability, and community leadership. Together, they form an interwoven fabric of change — one that is not only responsive to the present but regenerative for the future.

# Public Investment Through People's Voice

## Enabling Tribal Communities to Access and Shape Public Schemes and Entitlements

Sustainable development means including those who've been left out for too long. In India's tribal regions, communities with rich knowledge and traditions have often been pushed aside. While schemes like MGNREGA, ICDS, and FRA are meant to help, many still struggle with poor implementation, lack of information, missing documents, and hesitation to approach government offices. Gram Sabhas often happen just for show, and the people who need support most—tribal women, small farmers, youth, and forest dwellers are rarely heard.

VAAGDHARA supports this shift by supporting tribal communities not just access government schemes, but also shape how those schemes are put into action. The goal is to move from being passive beneficiaries to active rights-holders who can hold the system accountable.

To close this gap between rights and reality, VAAGDHARA builds local leadership and strong community institutions. These groups aren't waiting for change, they're making it happen. They're reclaiming their rights and making sure that development truly serves the people it's meant for.

## People's Access to Entitlements

VAAGDHARA has worked to ensure access to critical schemes such as widow pensions, old age pensions, ration cards,

disability benefits, and health insurance. Over 9,500 individuals received benefits through structured drives and follow-ups. These drives strengthened the community's capacity to understand, demand, and monitor their rights.

To enhance civic inclusion, over 90,347 families across 356 Gram Panchayats submitted Form 6 applications, ensuring their names in electoral rolls and increasing tribal representation in Gram Sabhas and local platforms. Tribal communities are becoming more visible in decision-making spaces.

These efforts were supported by Gram Swaraj Samoochs and Saksham Samoochs, which led collective action, awareness drives, and engagement with governance. Village dashboards helped communities track entitlements and improve transparency. Gram Swaraj Samoochs and Saksham Samoochs, which led collective action, awareness drives, and engagement with governance. Village dashboards helped communities track entitlements and improve transparency.

## Strengthening Public Employment Access

Through the Kaam Mango Abhiyan, over 32,000 families submitted job applications under MGNREGA. Communities were informed of their rights, trained in the process, and supported in follow-ups. Gram Swaraj Samoochs compiled applications, escalated issues, and tracked wage payments.

## Participatory Planning and Budget Involvement

Over 20,000 Gram swaraj samooch members across 1,168 villages in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat were trained and equipped to engage in Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPDP) processes. Their leadership in 356 Panchayats led to the submission of 193,131 plans in October 2024, with 53% approved. About 3,100 works were completed and 87,800 are ongoing, covering areas such as watershed management, sanitation, roads, livestock, and housing. These efforts mobilized ₹1,931 crores across 14 blocks, significantly enhancing tribal institutions and role in local governance.

To further strengthen community-led planning, the Resource Need Assessment Score Board (RNASB) was used in 480 Gram Swaraj Samoochs to identify service gaps. Findings were shared in Gram Sabhas and informed GPDP updates. In over 120 villages, communities participated in special planning meetings, learning about budgets, allocations, and follow-up processes. By demystifying planning, they influenced implementation, resulting in the inclusion of local priorities such as seed bank revival, strengthening child care centers, pond renovation, and creation of livelihood assets.



## Building Platforms for Long-Term Leadership

The impact of these actions is not limited to service delivery. They are part of a deeper movement to revive tribal self-governance. Platforms like Gram Swaraj Samoochs are grounded in the idea of Swaraj self-rule, dignity, and local decision-making. VAAGDHARA's vision of sovereign villages is being realized through more than 1,100 active institutions, driven by local people.

Through continuous engagement, training, and leadership development, communities have begun to take ownership of their own development journeys.

These platforms are not just implementing partners, they are the drivers of systemic change.

*Tribal woman proudly sharing her seed diversity at home*

### Key Outcomes Under Tribal Leadership:

1. Gram Swaraj Samooh strengthened: **1,168**
2. Community members with access to government schemes: **18,638**
3. Form 6 filled (for MNREGA transparency): **90,347**
4. Migration registers entries maintained: **22,365**
5. Gram Panchayat Development Plans (GDPs) submitted: **37,408**
6. Gram Sabhas functioning regularly and effectively: **365**
7. No. of families receiving full 100 days of work under MNREGA: **27788**
8. Engagements held with state departments for budget tracking and utilization feedback: **28**
9. No. of policy recommendations or memos submitted: **27**
10. No. of follow-up actions taken by govt. departments (based on reports shared): **3**

This work reinforces a simple truth: entitlements are not favours, they are rights. When communities are informed, organized, and united, they can hold systems accountable and lead their own development with dignity and purpose. The leadership of tribal communities is not emerging; it is already here, and it is reshaping the way public systems function at the grassroots.





**Location:** Raghunath Singh ka Gada, Banswara

## **Community Snapshot: Villagers Stop Migration by Demanding MGNREGA Work**

In Raghunath Singh ka Gada, a tribal village in Banswara, Rajasthan, people were struggling. For over a year, they hadn't received any work under MGNREGA. With no jobs nearby, many families had to migrate to Gujarat just to survive.

Even after raising the issue with the Gram Panchayat, nothing changed. That's when the village's Gram Swaraj Samooh, decided to take action. Leaders like Gautam Lal Bargout, Bapu Lal Bhuj, and Meera Devi stepped forward. They gathered 10 people from each hamlet, filled out job request forms, and collected data showing how badly the village needed work. Instead of waiting, they took their applications and reports to higher authorities like the Block Officer and the District Rural Development Agency. Soon after, the Panchayat issued a Muster Roll, and work was approved.

In total, 59 villagers including 46 women got jobs doing land development and contour building. ₹2.42 lakh was sanctioned for the work. Families who used to migrate were now able to stay in the village and earn a living. This small village showed what can happen when people come together, stay informed, and speak up. Their efforts brought real change and gave others a reason to believe they can do the same.



# Youth and Local Governance

## Enabling Young Tribal Citizens to Reclaim Local Governance

Local self-governance thrives when young citizens participate not only as observers but as active contributors. VAAGDHARA works to empower tribal youth as ethical leaders, facilitators, and informed participants in local governance processes. The goal is to nurture a generation that is confident in engaging with village institutions, rooted in constitutional values, and guided by the spirit of Swaraj. In tribal communities, where farming is deeply tied to tradition and self-reliance, agriculture has long been a space of learning, leadership, and resilience. The revival of indigenous farming systems—built on local knowledge and collective strength—offers the perfect foundation to foster youth participation in governance. Just as farmers return to native seeds, diversified cropping, and climate-resilient practices, young citizens are returning to democratic roots through platforms like Gram Swaraj Samoochs and Swaraj Shalas.

### a. Gram Swaraj Samoochs and Youth Forums

Over 1168 Gram Swaraj Samoochs (GSS) have been formed across villages as informal platforms for civic dialogue and collective action. These are complemented by youth forums that engage young people in learning about the Panchayati Raj system, local development planning, and constitutional duties. More than 250 youth leaders have been trained to convene Gram Sabha meetings, participate in

village planning, and monitor the implementation of government schemes. In 2024–25, youth from these forums supported over 80 Gram Sabha processes, demonstrating growing civic ownership and voice.

Much like seed-saving or traditional farming practices led by Saksham Samoochs, these youth-led forums reflect a grassroots movement to reclaim control over village development. Youth are not just observing change—they are shaping it.

### b. Reviving Traditional Collective Practices

VAAGDHARA is reviving community practices such as Halma (collective voluntary labor for village development) and Hirma (resource-sharing with vulnerable households) — not just as cultural rituals, but as functional tools of participatory governance. By engaging youth in these traditions, the organization fosters intergenerational learning and reinforces values of mutual aid, accountability, and inclusiveness. This is similar to how tribal women farmers are leading the revival of indigenous seeds.

Through traditional systems of exchange, storage, and collaboration, both young citizens and farmers are practicing local governance that is participatory and rooted in shared responsibility.

### c. Swaraj Shala: Learning for Leadership

The Swaraj Shala is a dedicated space for youth to explore ideas of Swaraj, local democracy, and ethical leadership. It offers exposure visits, interactive sessions, and applied learning exercises to strengthen understanding of rights, responsibilities, and systems thinking. Participants from the Swaraj Shala are taking on active roles as animators, facilitators, and conveners in their villages, becoming trusted bridges between communities and institutions. Just as farmers restore biodiversity through mixed cropping and local seeds, youth in Swaraj Shalas are restoring civic literacy and democratic practice in their villages. The connection is clear: reclaiming governance and reclaiming agriculture both require participation, patience, and pride.



*Youth along with BSS participating in team-building and leadership activities*



## Results and Outcomes:

1. **1,100+** Gram Swaraj Samoochs and Youth Forums active
2. **250+** youth trained in leadership and village planning
3. **80+** Gram Sabha meetings facilitated by youth leaders
4. Revived **Halma and Hirma** in

- multiple villages for collective action
5. Swaraj Shala expanded to **build civic literacy** among tribal youth
  6. **12,591** Youth engaged in local **monitoring and civic processes**

Through these efforts, VAAGDHARA is shaping a cadre

of grounded youth leaders equipped to strengthen local governance from within through consistent, community-centered engagement. The leadership of tribal youth is not separate from the land—they are growing together, rooted in the same spirit of Swaraj.



**Location: Negred village in Banswara**

**Community Snapshot: Youth as the future of our communities!**

Prem Shankar, a youth leader from Negred village in Banswara, exemplifies the transformative impact of Swaraj Shala. Through his leadership, 800 villagers secured job cards under MGNREGA, youth migration reduced, and e-Mitra centers were reopened across 11 panchayats. He facilitated construction of two anicuts benefiting 14 farmers, while also promoting seed conservation and natural farming practices. His journey demonstrates how Swaraj Shala nurtures youth leadership, strengthens grassroots governance, and builds pathways to sovereignty and sustainable development in tribal communities.

*Youth engaging in outdoor activities*



# Resilient Agriculture and Incomes

## Enhancing Food Sovereignty and Sustainable Incomes through Community-led Farming Systems

For tribal farmers, agriculture is more than an occupation — it is culture, sustenance, and sovereignty. VAAGDHARA supports farming practices that are rooted in traditional knowledge, adapted to local ecologies, and aligned with nutrition and income needs. This ecosystem of change integrates regenerative methods, seed and soil conservation, and women-led agri-enterprises.

### a. Hangadi Kheti and Circular Farming

The Hangadi Kheti model, as an identity of the tribal culture with circular farming promotes on-farm resource use through composting, crop-livestock integration, and water conservation. Together, these systems improve soil health, reduce input costs, and enhance productivity.

In several villages, solar-powered irrigation systems were piloted to support nutrition gardens and upland farming plots, ensuring year-round cultivation in off-grid hamlets.

Field schools, peer learning, and demonstrations helped scale practices like vermi composting, amrit jal, and natural pest repellents, enabling families to manage input needs locally and sustainably.

### b. Community Seed Banks and Biodiversity

VAAGDHARA supported over 101 Community Managed Seed Systems (CMSS) in more than 1,200 villages, enabling farmers to access and exchange 130+ indigenous seed varieties. These banks preserve climate-resilient crops and protect the region's agrobiodiversity.

Farmer-to-farmer exchanges helped revive neglected crops like millets and pulses, contributing to nutritional diversity and greater control over planting choices.

### c. Nutrition Gardens

More than 75,467 families maintained Nutrition Gardens, cultivating seasonal vegetables, medicinal herbs, and fruit plants. These gardens contributed to dietary diversity, especially for women and children, and reduced dependence on market-purchased food. Community outreach linked gardens with Nutri-Sensitive Farming Systems

(NSFS) and integrated farming advisories with Aanganwadi and school-based health programs.

### d. Eco-Enterprises and Farmer Collectives

Women-led groups and youth collectives piloted small-scale eco-enterprises such as vermicompost packaging, millet processing, goat rearing, and nursery sales. These activities provided supplemental income and encouraged entrepreneurship. Select farmer groups began linking with Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) and local SMEs to sell surplus produce and agri-inputs, laying the groundwork for more sustainable value chains.

Together, these interventions foster self-reliance, income security, and ecological resilience. By strengthening control over seeds, soil, and markets, VAAGDHARA is working with tribal farmers to build food systems that are sustainable, sovereign, and future-ready.



*A tribal woman in Kushal Garh block carefully sorting local maize after harvest - preserving indigenous practices and securing food sovereignty.*

## Results and Outcomes

- **81,900** families practicing the Circular Lifestyle, integrating seeds, water, forests, livestock, and soil for resilient farming.
- **115,700** families managing water, **84,500** caring for land & livestock, **79,300** saving indigenous seeds, and **44,200** protecting forests.
- **20,000+** Saksham Samooh women shared knowledge with **14,716** families; **10,743** families adopted at least three key practices such as mixed cropping and nutrition gardens.
- **48,100** families achieved nutrition security; **52,000** families maintained nutrition gardens with more than 10 crop diversities.
- **78,000** families practicing multi-season cropping, ensuring year-round food supply.
- An Eco-preneurship Unit established, with **100+ enterprises** currently in the engagement stage, fostering local livelihoods and green entrepreneurship.

Location: Kapasiya, Sailana, Ratlam, Madhya Pradesh

Community Snapshot: Collective action is the solution!

In Kapasiya village, a silted stream and failed crops triggered a revival of Halma—a collective tradition of ecological action. More than 200 villagers, including elders and youth, worked together to clear a 2-kilometre channel, enabling better water flow and soil recharge.

This act went beyond resource management. It reignited community solidarity and restored ecological memory.

“This wasn’t about water. It was about remembering who we are when we work together,”  
—Village Leader



# Child Rights and Child-Friendly Villages

## Enabling tribal children to access rights, participate in governance, and grow in safe, supportive environments

In many tribal communities, children face barriers to their rights limited access to basic services, lack of voice in governance, and risks such as child labour, early marriage, and unsafe migration. Opportunities for leadership are often confined to the classroom, with little influence over village planning, school governance, or community decisions. VAAGDHARA works to protect and promote the rights of tribal children by creating Child-Friendly Villages. Through community institutions, monitoring tools, and engagement with government systems, children gain access to services, education, and protection. They are empowered to participate in local governance, drive changes in their communities, and help prioritise education, safety, dignity, and active participation for every child.

### a. Baal Panchayats and Participation

In 2024–25, 1,074 Baal Swaraj Samooh (children's collectives) remained active, providing platforms for children to speak in Gram Sabhas, conduct school audits, and join local events. Inspired by the Baal Swaraj model, these forums gave children the space to present real, urgent issues such as unsafe classrooms, lack of girls' toilets, and limited drinking water

directly to village leaders. The impact has been tangible. In several villages, Gram Sabhas passed resolutions to address children's demands, including infrastructure repairs and inclusion of their concerns in development plans. Children's Parliaments were organised in selected blocks, helping participants simulate decision-making and engage with civic issues.

For the first time, nearly 50% of Baal Swaraj members took part in Gram Sabhas across intervention areas, presenting charters of demands and influencing village-level decisions. Their growing confidence reflects a shift in community perception children are being seen not just as beneficiaries, but as stakeholders in governance.

### b. Learning Access and Safety

Community monitoring identified 1,638 out-of-school children. With support from Baal Swaraj Samooh-led enrolment drives, over 2,000 children joined school for the first time and 1,896 dropouts were re-enrolled. These drives involved door-to-door visits, storytelling, and parent dialogues, shifting attitudes toward education as a pathway to dignity and opportunity.

School Readiness Camps were held for first-generation learners to bridge early learning gaps. Parents' groups and Saksham Samoohs carried out safety and hygiene audits in 186 schools, resulting in improved toilets, seating arrangements, and drinking water facilities. These community-led actions ensured that school spaces became safer

and more welcoming, especially for girls.

### c. Malnutrition Response

In partnership with Aanganwadi Centres under the Integrated Child Development Scheme (ICDS), 13,749 children under six were screened using digital growth monitoring tools. Children with moderate and severe malnutrition were linked to health services, Take-Home Ration (THR) schemes, and community support. The nutrition garden movement gained momentum, with over 70,000 gardens established at household and community levels. These gardens are providing diverse vegetables, pulses, and herbs, addressing malnutrition through local solutions. Saksham Samoohs engaged pregnant women, lactating mothers, and caregivers in the crucial 1,000-day window, providing guidance on diet diversity, complementary feeding, and hygiene.

Community institutions also monitored ICDS services and supplementary nutrition distribution, ensuring accountability in delivery.

These actions treat malnutrition not only as a health issue but as part of a broader food sovereignty and governance challenge.



Poshan Camps

## Results and Outcomes

- Strengthened child participation in governance via **1,074** Baal Swaraj Samooh
- **50%** Baal Swaraj Samooh members participation in Gram Sabhas, influencing resolutions and development plans
- Enrolment of **2,000+** children for the first time and **1,896** dropouts re-enrolled
- **13,749** children screened for malnutrition; at-risk children connected to services
- **52,000+** nutrition gardens established to enhance food diversity and nutrition security for children
- Improved child nutrition and hygiene in **12** schools with **1,137** students in Banswara; more children attained healthy BMI, anaemia reduced, hygiene practices strengthened, diets improved, and children actively grew vegetables at home while gaining confidence in managing their nutrition.
- Conducted a community-led School infrastructure assessment of **17** schools in Dungarpur, enhancing the physical and emotional well-being of students.



**Location: Mangela Pada, Padoli Rathore, Banswara District**

### Community Snapshot: A Child Raises Her Voice in the Gram Sabha

In Mangela Pada, during a special Gram Sabha, a 13-year-old girl raised the issue of there being no toilet for girls in her school. She was supported by her Baal Panchayat and a Saksham Samooh member. The issue was officially recorded.

Three months later, the Panchayat approved the construction of a toilet under the GPDP. This made other children realise that the Gram Sabha is a space where their voices can also be heard.

"I didn't know I had the right to speak. Now I know I have the power to change."

— Baal Panchayat member

Children engaging in local games as part of Buniyadi Shiksha in Tadgaon



# People's Institutions and Women's Leadership

*Happy smiles while sharing of success story for Poshan Wadi and Goat Rearing*

## Strengthening community institutions and enabling tribal women to lead local development and governance

Tribal communities have long lacked meaningful platforms to influence governance and ensure their aspirations are reflected in policy decisions. Without structured spaces for collective voice and accountability, their participation in shaping social, economic, and cultural priorities often remained limited. VAAGDHARA's People's Organizations address this gap by serving as living embodiments of tribal communities' vision for a just, sustainable, and dignified life rooted in the philosophy of Swaraj. Over the past year, these organizations in Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat have become bold actors—holding dialogues with governance bodies, presenting community budget recommendations, and demonstrating the power of participatory processes. Tribal voices reached the Chief Minister, and several community proposals were included in Rajasthan's 2025–2026 State Budget, marking a proud milestone for bottom-up governance.

### a. KASS and GPDP

The Krishi evam Adivasi Swaraj Sangathan (KASS) continued to serve as a backbone for community-led governance and development in the region. In 2024–25, KASS units across districts contributed to the development and review of Village Development Plans (VDPs), aligning them with the community's livelihood,

nutrition, and entitlements priorities. Meetings held by KASS and its facilitation wing KASSI supported Gram Swaraj Samoochs in tracking access to schemes such as MGNREGA, FRA, PDS, and ICDS. These forums generated local data through RNASB tools, conducted budget follow-ups, and presented development needs in Gram Sabha meetings.

## b. Mahi Mahila Vikas Manch

The Mahi Mahila Vikas Manch emerged as a state level platform for tribal women's leadership. The Manch led campaigns on issues such as food distribution gaps, Anganwadi irregularities, forest produce rights, and maternal health. Women associated with the Manch are increasingly asserting their views and solutions in local gram sabhas, regional meetings, and even national platforms like the Swaraj Conclave. Whether it's about seed sovereignty, forest rights, or access to clean energy, women from the Manch speak with clarity, urgency, and deep ecological wisdom.

Women from the Manch participated in Panchayat-level meetings, often representing

Saksham Samooths and Gram Swaraj Samooths. Several contested elections to Panchayati Raj institutions or assumed leadership roles in Self-Help Groups (SHGs), seed collectives, or nutrition committees. Special thematic meetings were organized on gender rights, access to land, and health entitlements.

The Manch also played a role in facilitating the Mahi Yatra, a collective journey across villages to highlight women's voices and showcase successful models of rural women's leadership.

## c. Training and Self-Governance

More than 1,200 women leaders received formal training on governance systems, scheme frameworks, FRA provisions, and

grievance redressal. Modules on public speaking, budget tracking, and village planning formats were also delivered at cluster levels.

Women leaders increasingly led Gram Sabha proceedings, moderated development plan reviews, and monitored government service delivery through village-level dashboards. The sense of ownership and legitimacy among women in public spaces has grown visibly, with some being nominated to planning and monitoring committees.

### Location: Ghatol, Rajasthan

### Community Snapshot: Awareness is Power.

In several villages of Ghatol block, many children and newly married women were not listed in ration card records, leaving them excluded from the Public Distribution System. In 2022, members of the Krishi evam Aadiwasi Swaraj Sangathan (KASS) began systematically collecting data on missing names, preparing detailed lists, and submitting applications to local authorities. Regular follow-ups were made with Sub-Divisional Officers, Tehsildars, and PDS officials, and the issue was raised in Gram Sabhas and through formal letters to the state government.

On 5 August 2024, after sustained community efforts and multiple representations, the Department of Food and Civil Supplies reopened the NFSA Portal for new entries. Within weeks, 4,963 applications were filed for inclusion in the ration list.

This action improved food security for thousands of households and ensured that excluded families could access their entitlements. It also provided a clear example of how organized, evidence-based community action can resolve service gaps and strengthen accountability in public systems.

## Results and Outcomes

1. Institutionalization of people's platforms like **KASS in local governance processes**
2. Greater agency and representation of **tribal women in decision-making spaces**
3. Village Development Plans informed by **local needs and community-generated data**
4. Emergence of **confident tribal women leaders** across program geographies

Through these actions, people's organizations have demonstrated accountability not just towards their own development, but towards preserving and promoting community wisdom, ecological sustainability, and social justice. This has fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility among tribal youth, women's groups, and farmer collectives, while ensuring that women's leadership remains at the core of sustainable, community-driven governance.



# Institutional Development and Policy Engagement

Over the past year, VAAGDHARA continued to invest in strengthening its institutional ecosystem, placing emphasis on building internal capacities, refining digital systems for planning and accountability, and creating channels through which grassroots realities could meaningfully contribute to state, national, and international platforms. The work under this KRA reflects a steady consolidation of systems inside the organization, while also ensuring that voices and experiences from the field were visible and valued in wider development discourses.

## 1. Building Institutional and Human Capacities

The strength of any institution lies in the people who nurture it. Recognizing this, VAAGDHARA made a conscious effort to invest in its field cadres, thematic units, and facilitation teams throughout 2024–25. A series of structured training programmes were conducted, covering subjects as diverse as nutrition-sensitive planning, scheme navigation, participatory facilitation, and the use of monitoring tools such as RNASB. These sessions were not one-off events but part of a continuous cycle of learning.

Quarterly reflection workshops provided space for teams to pause, assess their work, and re-align with organizational priorities. These workshops also served as forums for peer exchange, encouraging staff from different districts to learn from one another's challenges and innovations. Importantly, an emphasis was placed on nurturing local leadership. Senior cadres from the community increasingly

took on roles not only in village-level planning and monitoring but also in representing their villages in broader forums. This shift indicates a growing confidence and maturity within the team structure, ensuring that leadership is shared and grounded in local realities.

This year, the collective voice of communities once again shaped important progress in the journey of food and nutrition security.

**Through the leadership of people's platforms, a strong demand was raised to reopen the closed portals of the National Food Security Mission, ensuring that tribal families' rights and concerns are not left unheard. At the same time, Ghatol Block stood out as an inspiring example by securing the first position in Rajasthan for timely action under NFSA, where all 4,963 applications were resolved with the support of local governance systems.**

These achievements reaffirm our belief that when communities and institutions work hand in hand, the path towards food sovereignty and dignity becomes stronger and more real.

## 2. Strengthening Digital and Monitoring Systems

Parallel to team development, VAAGDHARA continued to refine its Management Information System (MIS) and dashboard platforms. These systems allowed near real-time tracking of outreach, programme outcomes, and follow-up actions, significantly improving the organization's ability to respond to emerging needs.

Customized mobile applications were introduced to support community cadres in practical tasks such as filing Form 6

applications for voter inclusion, tracking pensions for elderly and widows, and monitoring ICDS services for mothers and children. By equipping cadres with these tools, VAAGDHARA not only improved service delivery but also empowered frontline workers to become more confident facilitators of change. At the organizational level, the introduction of visual dashboards into cluster-level reviews improved both accountability and responsiveness. These dashboards made information more accessible and actionable, supporting quicker decision-making. The data collected also helped in generating evidence that could be shared externally with partners and internally to guide programme strategies.

Beyond infrastructure, VAAGDHARA facilitated community dialogues on sustainable energy solutions and began integrating such discussions into village development planning. This marks an important step towards embedding sustainability into the day-to-day development discourse at the grassroots.

## 3. Engagement in Knowledge and Policy Platforms

With stronger systems in place, VAAGDHARA was able to contribute more effectively to state, national, and international knowledge platforms. These engagements ensured that grassroots experiences, particularly from tribal regions, were not confined to local contexts but became part of broader conversations on sustainability and development.

At the 69th UN Commission

on the Status of Women (CSW), representatives from VAAGDHARA's community platforms shared perspectives on women's leadership in governance, agriculture, and resilience-building. Their presence in this global forum highlighted how women at the village level are leading innovative responses to challenges of food security, natural resource management, and climate variability.

Similarly, tribal youth representatives brought their lived experiences into discussions on sustainable development, social participation, and access to entitlements. Their contributions reflected the aspirations of young people in tribal areas and positioned them as important stakeholders in shaping inclusive development pathways.

At the national and state levels, VAAGDHARA continued its participation in networks and collaborative platforms such as the Tribal Forums and Networks, and state level advisory groups. Through these spaces, the organization was able to bring in field-based experiences on issues ranging from nutrition to forest governance and rural livelihoods, thereby enriching policy discussions with community-grounded insights.

#### 4. Contributions to Policy Actions and Implementation

Drawing on evidence generated from its work in the field, VAAGDHARA provided structured inputs to ongoing policy processes at the state level. During the year, recommendations were made to the Government of Rajasthan towards strengthening nutritional status of tribal women and children by policy actions;

incorporating nutri-cereals, traditional fruits and vegetables and others, in government nutritional programs.

Similarly, inputs were shared on the implementation guidelines for the Forest Rights Act (FRA), ensuring that community experiences and challenges in accessing forest rights were considered in the formulation of practical solutions. Recommendations were also provided for rural employment plans, with special attention to the aspirations of tribal youth and the need for aligning employment programmes with ecological and community-based priorities.

These contributions demonstrate how institutional strengthening at the organizational level can translate into meaningful engagement with policy processes, thereby ensuring that the realities of tribal

communities are reflected in governance frameworks.

### Results and Outcomes

The year under KRA 6 reflects VAAGDHARA's steady evolution into a stronger, more resilient institution—one that combines **internal consolidation with meaningful external engagement.**

The strengthening of **team capacities, refinement of digital systems, and nurturing of local leadership** have created a solid foundation for accountability and learning. At the same time, the organization's active presence in state, national, and international platforms has ensured that grassroots realities contribute to wider conversations on sustainability and well-being.



Quarterly skill-building workshop in Banswara in March 2025 with community facilitators



# Our Team



*Annual Planning workshop in Udaipur in March 2025*

## Living Our Values: Strengthening Leadership, Systems, and Collective Wisdom

At VAAGDHARA, we believe that real change begins from within. Just as we work with tribal communities to reclaim their rights and evolve Swaraj, we also strive to build an internal culture that is democratic, reflective, and values-driven. Our work this year focused on strengthening leadership across lives, improving internal systems, and creating vibrant learning spaces that mirror our external mission of justice, sovereignty, and community empowerment.

### Leadership Across Lives

At VAAGDHARA, leadership is not confined to titles—it is a way of thinking, living, and acting. This year, we placed special emphasis on developing leadership across all levels and life contexts.

Swaraj Shala, a reflective and capacity-building initiative for our field teams, was a milestone in this journey. These sessions gave team members a space to explore the deeper meaning of Swaraj, not just as a concept for community development, but as a way to strengthen their own understanding and personal purpose.

We formed cross-functional working groups that enabled team members from various units to collaborate on critical themes like gender equity, inclusion and environment. These groups offered powerful opportunities for internal leadership to emerge, ideas to be exchanged, and collective wisdom to flourish. Regular reflective sessions were held across units, allowing teams to pause, look inward, and build clarity around their roles and responsibilities in building just systems.

Tailored reflective sessions were designed to meet the needs of different team segments—from young grassroots facilitators to senior leaders—ensuring everyone had the tools to grow within their roles. The emphasis was on understanding sovereignty not just as a developmental goal, but as a mindset that shapes how we engage with communities and ourselves.

## Building Transparent Systems and Learning Spaces

As VAAGDHARA continues to grow in scale and complexity, transparency and clarity in systems have become crucial. This year, we worked intentionally to strengthen our internal operations, starting with streamlining communication channels and making team-wide

information more accessible. From village-level field updates to cross-unit coordination, internal information flow has significantly improved.

We also initiated inter-departmental collaboration mechanisms that allow different teams—such as finance, program, policy, ecopreneur and swaraj shala—to work more cohesively. These collaborations have enabled faster decision-making, better resource planning, and stronger alignment across the organization.

The PMEL team also facilitated regular review processes, data reflection meetings, and capacity-building sessions to help team members use Vaagda-software more effectively. This helped build a culture of data ownership and encouraged evidence-based decision-making at all levels. Teams are now

better able to understand their progress, identify gaps, and adjust strategies—creating a dynamic feedback loop between planning and implementation.

## Collective Understanding Through Collaboration

This year, our team was deeply engaged in larger regional and national events, including tribal conclaves, thematic workshops, and policy forums. Participation in these spaces helped the team build a broader perspective on systemic issues, understand policy linkages, and contribute meaningfully to sector-wide conversations.

Through these experiences, the team developed a richer understanding of the systems we work within and the shifts we hope to influence—whether through field interventions,

advocacy, or partnerships. These events also served as learning spaces for cross-pollination of ideas and building confidence in public engagement.

Just as we support tribal communities in reclaiming their Swaraj, we are committed to living those same values within our organization—openness, mutual respect, reflective thinking, and the belief that everyone has something valuable to offer.

We are not just building programs—we are building people, systems, and shared purpose. With every field visit, training session, internal dialogue, and collaborative project, we are strengthening a collective that is capable, committed, and aligned with the mission of true community-led development.



*Quarterly Skill-Building Workshop in Banswara in March 2025*

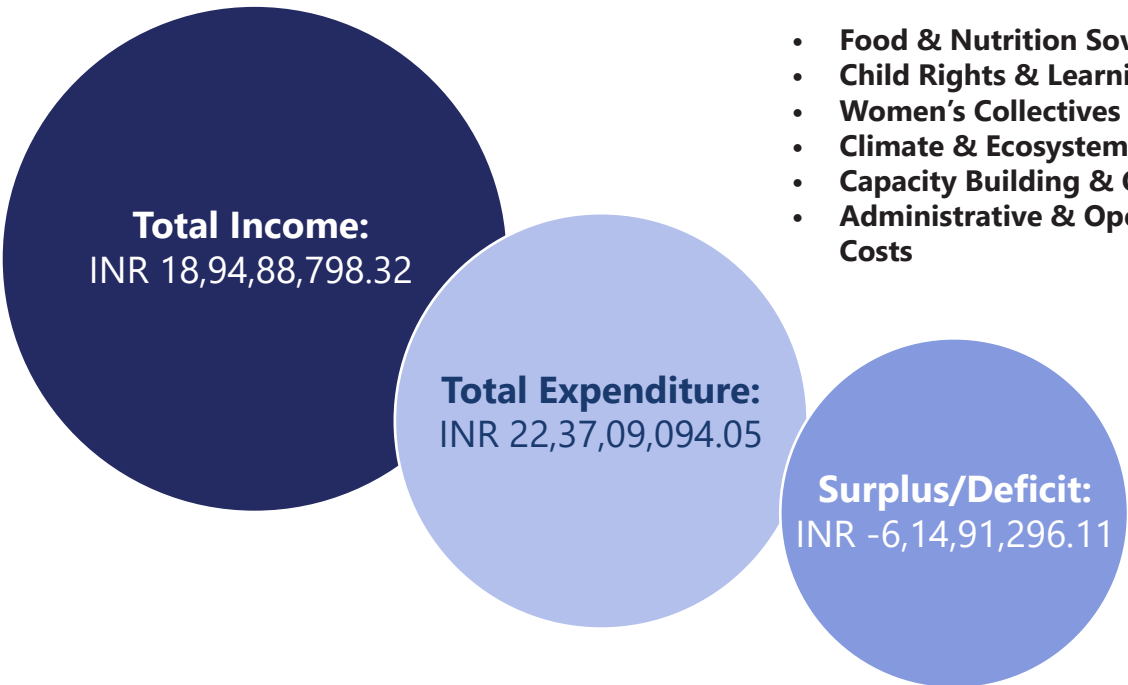


# Finance & Governance

## Financial Overview

### Total Income & Expenditure (2024–25)

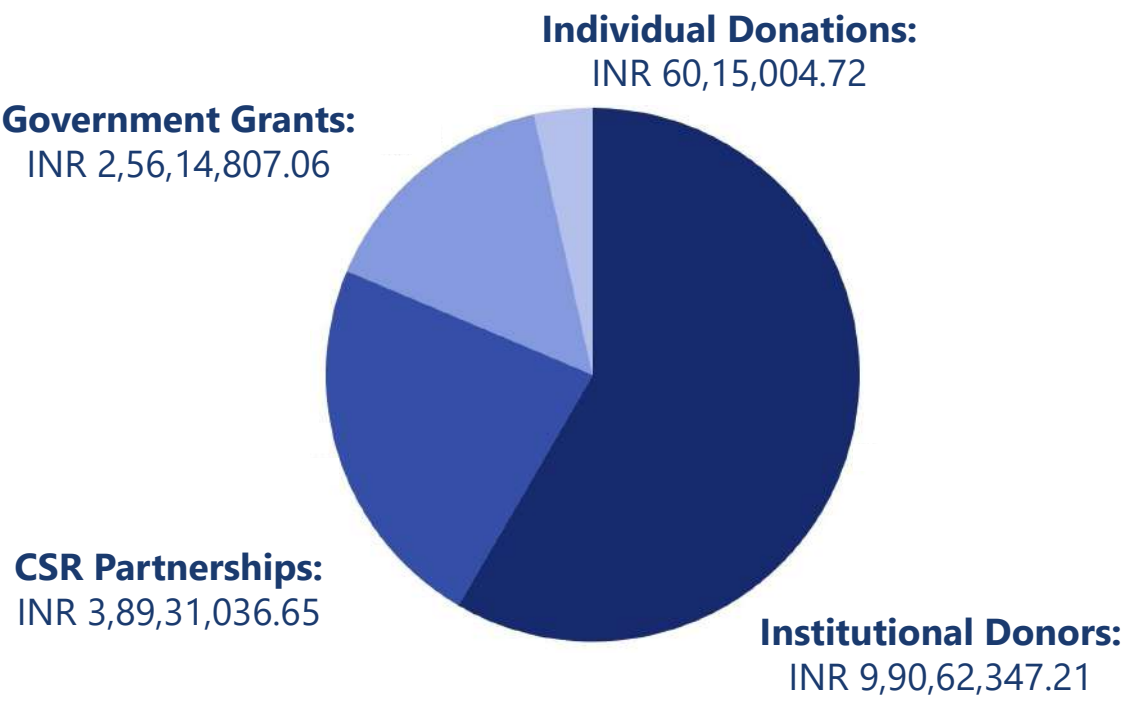
The adjacent graphic depicts the total income and expenditure of VAAGDHARA in the year 2024-2025. The expenditure is in the following thematic areas:



- Food & Nutrition Sovereignty,
- Child Rights & Learning
- Women’s Collectives
- Climate & Ecosystem Initiatives
- Capacity Building & Governance
- Administrative & Operational Costs

### Income Sources Breakdown

The total income was divided among 4 sources with the majority coming from Institutional donors. Additionally VAAGDHARA also received INR 9,90,62,347.21 from other sources as specified in the following audit reports.



**VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURE GENERAL  
DEVELOPMENT HEALTH AND RECONSTRUCTION ALLIANCE  
(VAAGDHARA)  
VILLAGE AND POST-KOPDA  
DISTT. BANSWARA (RAJ.) 327001**

**BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH, 2025**

Particulars	Schedule	As At 31.03.2025	As At 31.03.2024
<b><u>SOURCES OF FUNDS</u></b>			
General Reserve	1	138354502.86	200365050.21
Capital Reserve for Fixed Assets	2	8486239.00	20975438.76
Loans and Borrowings	3	10749230.00	2989076.00
Current Liabilities & Provisions			
1) Sundry Creditors	4	10410093.00	9963721.00
2) Other Liabilities & Provisions	5	4951193.36	5341232.32
3) Unspent Local Contribution	6	73756.56	84400.32
4) Unspent amount payable on Projects	7	31120778.75	46555821.67
			6928384.60
<b>Total</b>		<b>204145793.53</b>	<b>246647303.21</b>
<b><u>APPLICATION OF FUNDS</u></b>			
Fixed Assets	8	76527061.00	69701376.00
Current Assets, Loans And Advances			
1) Deposits	9	97273404.00	152931015.00
2) Bank Balances	10	17364252.46	13087812.89
3) Other Current Assets	11	5853041.00	3149783.00
4) Overspent amount recoverable on Projects	7	7128035.07	127618732.53
			7777316.32
<b>Total</b>		<b>204145793.53</b>	<b>246647303.21</b>

For VAAGDHARA



President



Secretary

As Per Our Report Of Even Date Annexed,

For V C Vyas & Associates

Chartered Accountants

Firm Regn. No. 04183C



V. C. Vyas

Partner

M. No.9859



Dated: 26.06.2025

Place: Udaipur



**VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATION OF AGRICULTURE GENERAL  
DEVELOPMENT HEALTH AND RECONSTRUCTION ALLIANCE  
(VAAGDHARA)  
VILLAGE AND POST-KOPDA  
DISTT. BANSWARA (RAJ.) 327001**

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH, 2025**

Particulars	Schedule	FY 2024-25	FY 2023-24
<b>INCOME</b>			
Grants and Donations	12		
A. Grants		163608190.92	107443298.01
B. Donations		6015004.72	199435949.72
Interest Income		1046743.95	474309.20
Interest on Fixed Deposits		8550019.00	7621722.00
Other Income		2927614.00	1810223.93
Community Contribution	6	6244833.17	8504111.44
Local Contribution		590683.00	-
Balances Written Off		505709.56	234701.59
<b>Total</b>		<b>189488798.32</b>	<b>325524315.89</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>			
<u>Project Expenditure</u>			
Development Programme Exp.	13	196480479.58	112848561.79
Administrative Salaries & Exp.	13	13209380.93	9931567.38
Development Exp. - Local Contribution	14	6160132.00	6391104.00
Administrative Exp.-Local Contribution	14	67504.93	194473.28
<u>Others</u>			
Vaagdhara Development Expenses		-	113988.00
Vaagdhara Contribution to LC		2078800.00	885733.44
Other Expenditure	15	3803943.61	5190254.17
Deficit from Vagad Radio Station		201663.00	606858.00
Deficit from Janjati Swaraj Kendra		691834.00	1263054.30
Depreciation		1015356.00	-
<b>Total</b>		<b>223709094.05</b>	<b>137425594.36</b>
Excess of Income Over Expenditure		(34220295.73)	188098721.53
Less: Net excess/(short) of grant/Local	7	25551195.14	
Contribution carried to Balance Sheet	6	(10643.76)	(3254821.00)
<b>Allocable Surplus</b>		<b>(59760847.11)</b>	<b>191353542.53</b>
Less: Fixed assets transferred to capital reserves			
Out of Grants		1702609.00	
Out of Local Contribution		27840.00	1154885.00
<b>Net surplus/(Deficit) transferred to General Reserves</b>		<b>(61491296.11)</b>	<b>190198657.53</b>


For VAAGDHARA

  
President

  
Secretary

As Per Our Report Of Even Date Annexed,  
For V C Vyas & Associates  
Chartered Accountants  
Firm Regn. No. 04183C



  
V. C. Vyas  
Partner  
M. No.9859

Dated: 26.06.2025  
Place: Udaipur

## Governance & Organizational Structure

### Executive Board / Governing Body



Mr. Brij Mohan Dixit  
Chair Person



Mr. Jayesh Joshi  
Secretary



Dr. Shachi Adesh  
Treasurer



Mrs. Anita Damor  
Member



Dr. Anuradha Prasad  
Member



Dr. S.S. Burark  
Member



Mr. Sunny Sebastian  
Member

### Leadership Team



Mr. Parmesh Patidar  
Lead Implementation



Mr. Saurabh Sabikhi  
Head of Support (F&A)



Minal Mehta  
F&A Coordinator



P.L. Patel  
Lead Ecopreneur



Mr. Majid Khan  
Lead TSU



Surbhi Saraswat  
Lead PMEL



Swati Nair  
Lead Swaraj Shala



Sudeep Sharma  
Lead PAI



# Looking Ahead

## Deepening the Ecosystem of Swaraj: A Vision for 2023–2028

For more than 2 decades, VAAGDHARA is consistently striving to rejuvenate the traditional culture and circular lifestyle of tribal communities, which has been an inspiring example of Swaraj in practice. Grounded in the principles of Protect, Provide, and Promote, and through continuous dialogue with the community. For over a decade, these efforts have been further deepened through initiatives like Swaraj Samagam and Swaraj Padyatra, which support indigenous communities in mapping and realizing their aspirations. VAAGDHARA has been facilitating these community dialogues in the region of Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat where it is directly engaging and enabling the communities by involving them in the dialogue process.

Recognizing that the climate-resilient practices of tribal communities across the tribal regions in the country and to address contemporary challenges such as food security, farming, livelihoods and others, a national level dialogue 'Swaraj Samvad' was organized to strengthen the sovereignty of tribal communities, across different tribal regions, and not just in one. This national dialogue united a diverse set of stakeholders, including more than 500 civil society organizations (CSOs), philanthropic entities, and sector practitioners, to promote the sovereignty of tribal communities.

Further, VAAGDHARA is making a conscious effort to revive, contextualize, and conserve the

traditional wisdom and cultural practices of tribal communities. These practices are not only valuable in their own issues but also carry solutions that are deeply relevant to today's challenges. By translating this wisdom into structured learning and practical actions, VAAGDHARA aims to strengthen the overall learning process. The knowledge generated will not remain limited to one place; instead, it will be shared and made accessible across different tri-junction regions and extended to other countries as well. In doing so, the collective

experience of tribal communities can contribute to wider global discussions and practices. This exchange of learnings will further amplify the guiding principles of Protect – Provide – Promote, ensuring that traditions are preserved, communities are empowered, and sustainable pathways for the future are created.

Parallel to the efforts on food, farming and thought, VAAGDHARA will continue to nurture women and youth leadership, recognizing them as catalysts of change who can

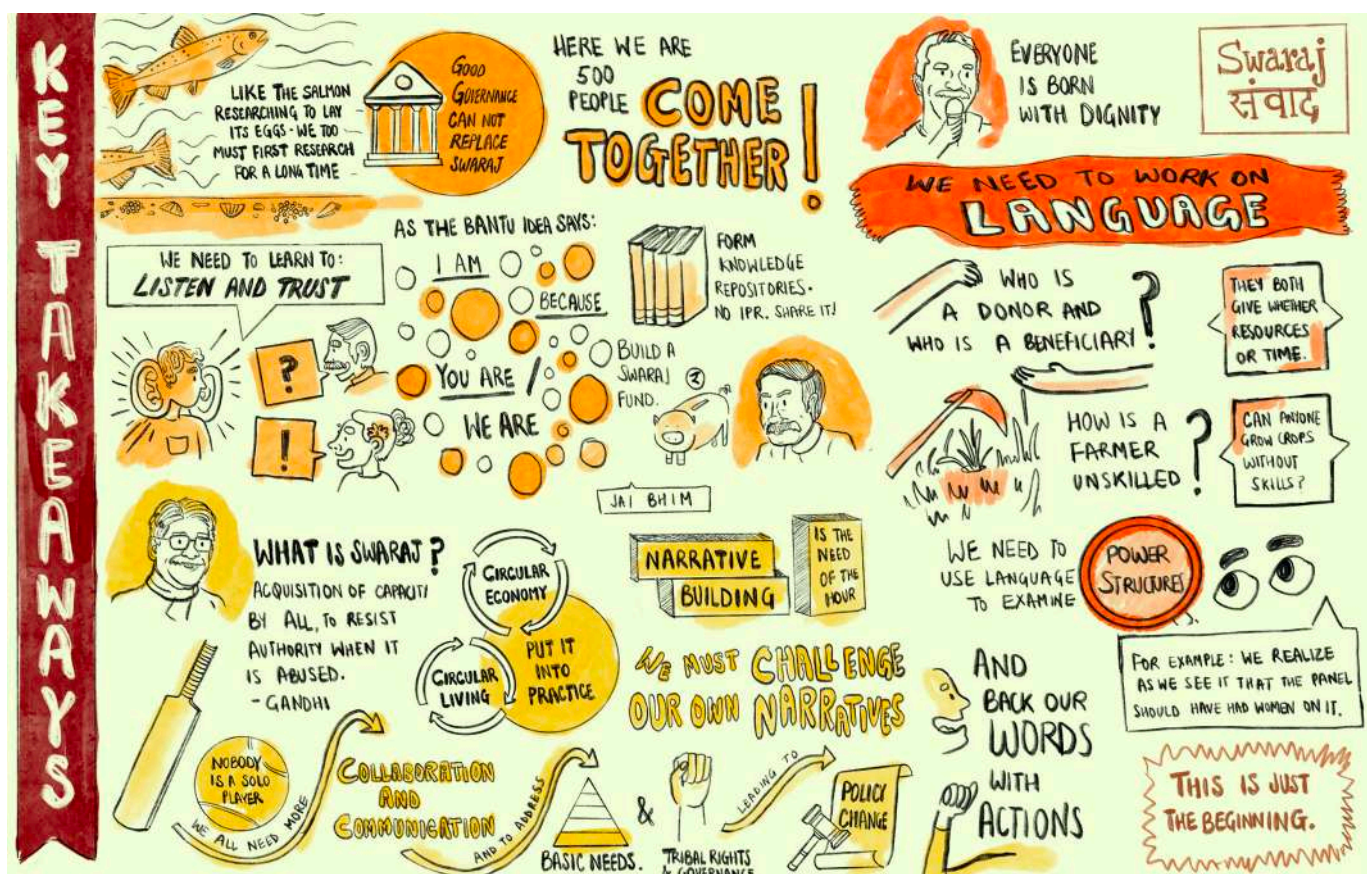


Woman sharing her thoughts about Hirma Kheti during the Padyatra 2025

Enhancing civic intelligence among women and youth ensures that the real needs of the community are represented in decision-making spaces. This leads to more inclusive planning and fairer access to resources. Women, in particular, play a central role in mapping

Equally vital is ecological intelligence, which is the foundation of sustainable living. It equips women and youth with the knowledge and skills for responsible resource management, sustainable agriculture, and conservation practices. This enables them to make informed decisions about

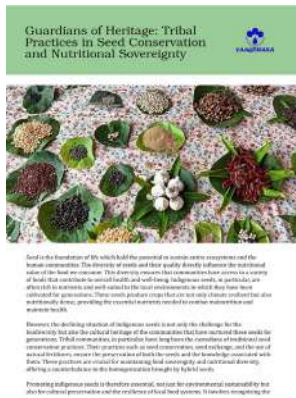
Through all these efforts, Vaagdhara plans to co-create different strategies for ecological regeneration, inclusive governance, and resilient livelihoods across different tribal regions of India. Through these interwoven systems, VAAGDHARA will try to nurture a resilient, self-sustaining ecosystem where communities are not just participants, but the drivers of change.



### Key Takeaway's from Swaraj Samvad, 2025



# Publications



Guardians of Heritage: Tribal Practices in Seed Conservation and Nutritional Sovereignty highlights VAAGDHARA's efforts to revive indigenous seed heritage through community-led Beej Utsav.



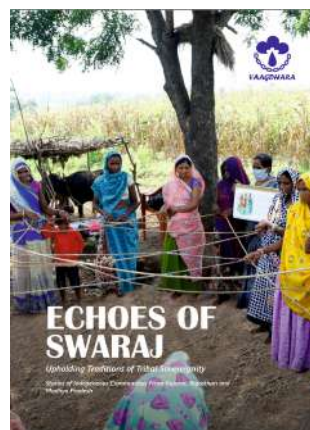
"Poshan Swaraj Abhiyan Indigenous solutions helping to reduce malnutrition among children in tribal communities" shows VAAGDHARA's integrated effort to tackle child malnutrition in tribal Rajasthan.



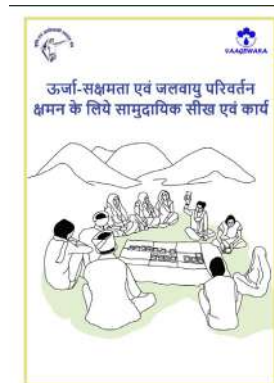
"Learning from the land: Using indigenous knowledge for climate-sensitive circular lifestyles" is a powerful reflection on how indigenous wisdom leads to better and sustainable production.



"Guide to Sustainable Water Management and Planning through Water Auditing" captures VAAGDHARA's community-led water budgeting initiative.



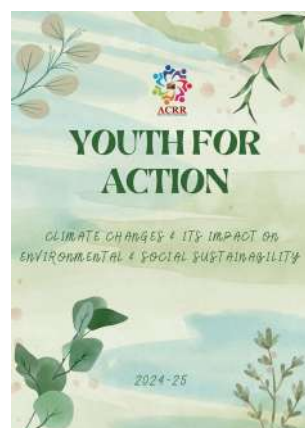
"Echoes of Swaraj" is a powerful compilation of grassroots stories from the Vagad tribal regions.



"Community Learning and Action for Energy Efficiency and Climate Change Adaptation" is a participatory learning approach to building energy self-reliant and climate-resilient villages.



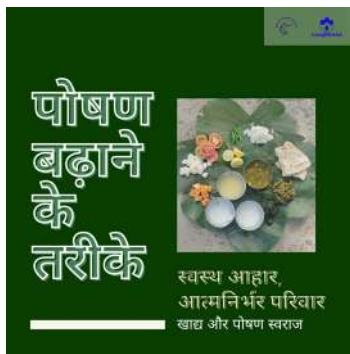
"Swaraj Sandesh Samwad Padyatra" note describes the purpose, of the Padyatra, its objectives and the role of the community.



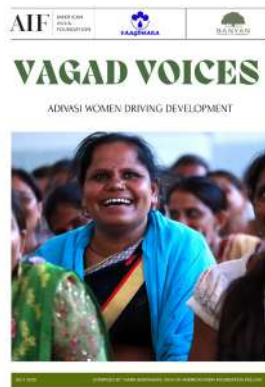
"Youth for action" is a compendium of stories Highlighting youth advocacy and the value of community radio for sharing. This is a collaboration between UNICEF and ACRR



"Gram Swaraj Samoooh Ki Baithak" is an illustrated-comic form guide for GSS on the roles and responsibilities of the School Management Committee.



"Poshan Badhane ke Tarike" is a social media campaign launched during the posh pakwada to promote nutritious local and regional foods and vegetables.



"Vagad Voices" is an anthology of stories that highlights the stories of tribal women who are stepping outside the existing boundaries as agents of change.



"Apni Mitti Ko Swasth Banaye" is an IEC for the Padyatra about Soil Health and methods for maintaining it.



"Unnat Bakri Palan ke Sutra" is an IEC for the Padyatra about Goat Rearing guidelines for the community.



"Bahudeshiya Vruksharopan ke Fayde" in an IEC about the advantages of multi-purpose tree plantation.



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"Jayvayu Parivatan ke prabhav ko kam karne me saksham desh prajatiya beej" is an IEC for the Padyatra about traditional local seeds and their effects in Climate Change Mitigation



"Samudayik prayas navjeevit shishu ka swasth vikas" is an IEC for the Padyatra about the responsibilities of parents and the community towards newborn babies.



"Kheti ki mitti me sudhar kar jalvayu parivatan ke dushprabhavo ko kam karna" is an IEC for the Padyatra about increase in soil health through climate change mitigation





"Poshan Thali" is an IEC for the Padyatra about the local nutritious food that should be present in your daily diet.



"Priya Kisan Sathiyon" is an IEC for the Padyatra about the importance and methods of water conservation.



"Swasth aahar, atmanirbhar parivar" is an IEC for the Padyatra that informs about how to improve nutrition in your diet.



"Buniyadi Shiksha" is an IEC for the Padyatra about efforts that can be taken by the government and community for children's education.



"Aaiye milkar jaante hai" is an activity IEC for the Padyatra about necessary nutrition for newborn babies before and after birth.



"Aaiye jane - pani ke rochak tathya" is an IEC for Jal Diwas 2025 about the unique facts about water.



"Jal Diwas" is an IEC for Jal Diwas 2025 creating awareness about the properties of water.



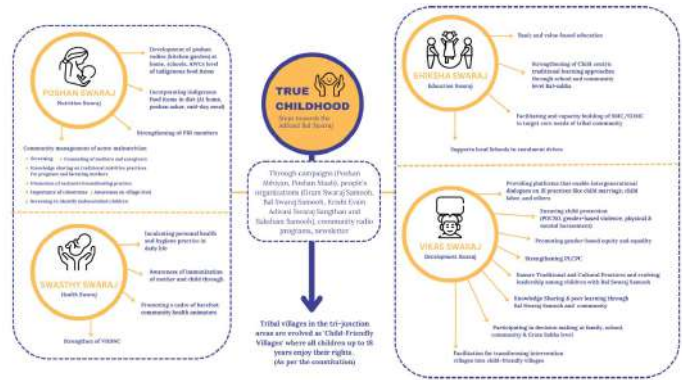
"Jal Diwas - Kya aap jante hai ki?" is an IEC for Jal Diwas 2025 creating awareness about the properties of water.



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"Swaraj Samvad Compilation" is a compilation of key points from all the sessions at the Swarj Samvad 2025, giving an overview of the discussions during the entire 3 day event.



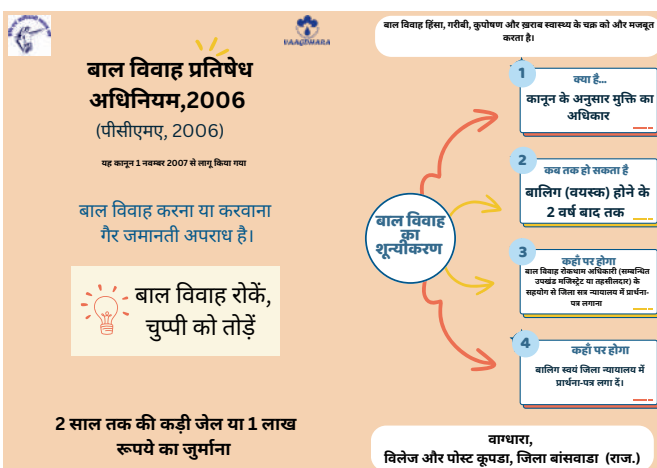
"True Childhood" is showcases the VAAGDHARA component of "Saccha Bachpan", giving an insight into the different programs and activities as well as the focus areas for true childhood and child friendly villages.



"Seekhna aur kaushal baseline aakalan ek samekit report" is a report and findings about a baseline study conducted of the BSS to understand the learning and skills of children.



"World Soil Day" was part of the social media posts for World Soil Day 2025, showing the importance of soil health.



"Baal Vivah Pratishedh adhiniyam, 2006" is a poster about awareness of the "Child Marriage Prohibition Act" and how to prevent child abuse.

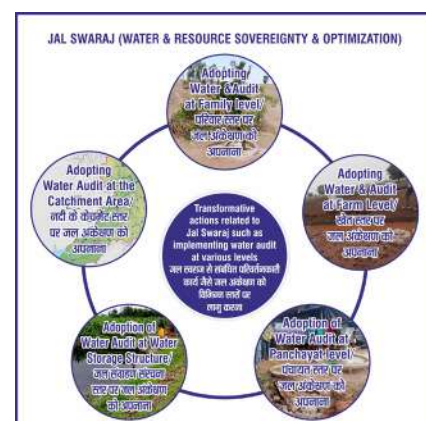
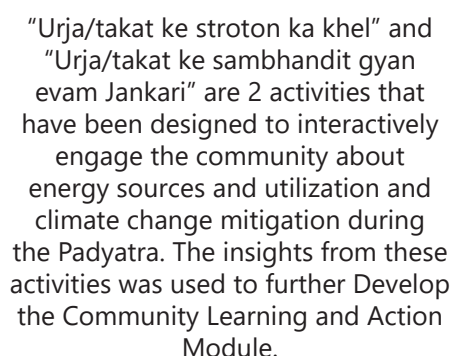
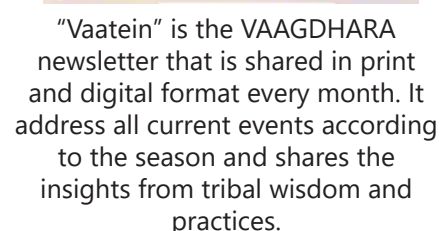
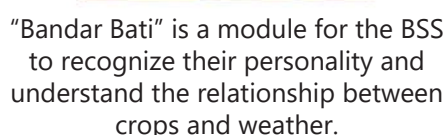
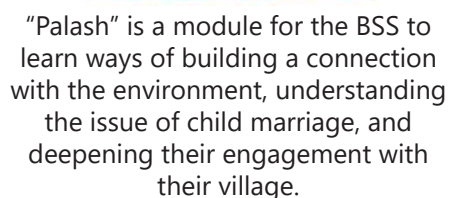


"Timru" is a module for the BSS to develop effective communication skills, express their emotions, and nurture their imagination through these activities.

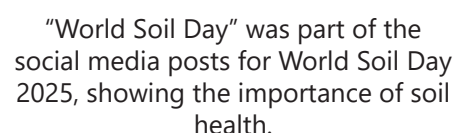
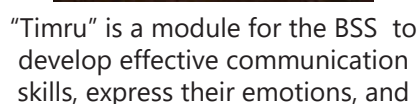
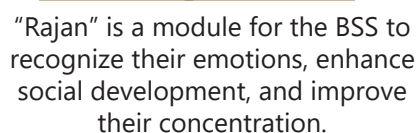


"Rajan" is a module for the BSS to recognize their emotions, enhance social development, and improve their concentration.





"World Soil Day" was part of the social media posts for World Soil Day 2025, showing the importance of soil health.







"Halma/ Hada parampara" is a poster designed to be shared with the community highlighting community practices.



"Mitti" is a poster designed to be shared with the community highlighting community practices on World Soil Day.



"Jal Swaraj ke karya" is a poster designed to be shared with the community illustrating Water Swaraj methods



"Halma/ Hada parampara" is a poster designed to be shared with the community highlighting community practices.



"Paramparik swasthya swaraj" is a poster designed to be shared with the community highlighting traditional nutritious food items.



"Ukheda se prakritik gobar khad tayar karna" is a poster about creating your own manure pit using existing materials of the region to be share with the community.



"Halma/ Hada parampara" is a poster designed to be shared with the community highlighting community practices.



## Our Partners



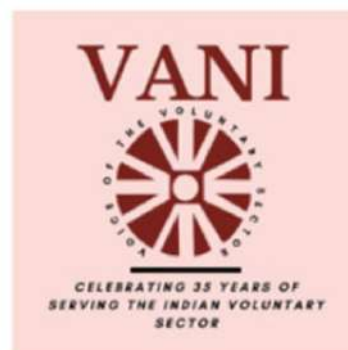
# Our Network



COVID-19  
taskforce



**CRA** >>>  
Community  
Radio  
Association







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