



Sarthak Jan Vikas Sansthan  
Surguja

# Annual Report

2020 - 21

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## **SARTHAK JAN VIKAS SANSTHAN**

PIPAL DEVIGANJ  
KEDARPUR, AMBIKAPUR  
DISTRICT SURGUJA  
CHHATTISGARH 497001  
INDIA

[www.sjvs.in](http://www.sjvs.in)

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An effort towards sustainable development of marginalized and tribal communities in Chhattisgarh

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## INTRODUCTION

*Sarthak Jan Vikas Sansthan* is a voluntary organisation started in Ambikapur, Surguja, Chhattisgarh which works for the upliftment of poor section of the society, especially the tribals, and economically and socially poor communities.

It evolved through a voluntary work of a group of friends who wanted to contribute concretely to the poor communities during their studies. It follows Gandhian work and ideology to reach out to people

It came into existence on Gandhi Jayanti on October 2, 2004. It was legally registered on March 27, 2006 (Reg. No. 1329) under the Chhattisgarh *Societies Registration Act 1973*.

A group of friends from Ambikapur, while they were still in high Schools, had a special interest on people's development. They decided to do something concretely for people. They did not have much resource at their disposal as they were just students from various high schools. They organised general knowledge competition in various schools. They were delighted with the positive response they received from students, teacher and parents. They were motivated to do more for people's development. The second thing they did was the collection of old books of passed out students of various classes. They gave those collected books to the poor and needy students in the following year so that they have necessary books for their studies.

This noble work got good response from the poor students and parents.

The group also received some old books authored by Mahatma Gandhi for general reading, like *India of My Dreams*, *Gramswarajya* etc. Each member read these books and gave others students to read and draw inspiration from the rich resources for life. We were inspired from Gandhian work and ideology and wanted to do more for people based on Gandhian ideology. There was serious discussion in the group on state of people's life and the applicability of Gandhian ideology and work for people's development especially in rural and tribal areas. They also discussed with community elders about their aspirations for development work. They started yet another activity in a few villages of bringing awareness on infant health and hygiene. They conducted some kind of competition on infant health care and hygiene. They came to know during the village immersion that many infants were malnourished and sick. They started linking lactating mothers and small children with various government schemes so that they receive nutrition food supplement.

The boys received a lot of appreciation for their work in the villages. The villagers started inquiring who they were and how long would they work in the villages. They did not have any concrete answer to their queries because they did not have any legal identity nor did they have any concrete

plan. They were engaging themselves in such benevolent work in their free time and on holidays as they all were still students on high schools. Looking at the noble initiatives they were taking, some elders suggested that they visited Shree Gandhi Seva Ashram, Ambikapur. They visited the Ashram to know its work for people and discussed various issues with people in the Ashram. The Ashram was working for the poor people to make them self-reliant. They volunteered to work with Shree Gandhi Seva Ashram for poor people. After a few months, when the group member came together for some discussion and action plan, they reached to a consensus that they establish an institute of their own to work for the people on Gandhian ideology.

Finally, on the birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi on October 2, 2004, Sarthak Jan Vikas Sansthan came to existence to further the Gandhian work and ideology. The group members continued their work for people under this newly found institute. Now they had a name and an identity of their own to tell the world that they were Gandhian band for development work. After one and a half of year, Sarthak Jan Vikas Sansthan was legally registered on March 27, 2006 under the Chhattisgarh Societies Registration Act 1973.

Sarthak did not have financial resources to undertake any developmental work in the

villages. However, group members went to villages to listen to people's issues and problems, and they tried to resolve them through concerned government officials. For example, a few eligible senior people were not getting old age pension, and they received pension after their intervention. Looking at selfless services, many more young people joined the band and work volume increased. Yet they enjoyed their work for the people. People used to come to the organisation for their work and somebody from the organisation took the issue to the concerned officials and followed it up till work was done. However, it was realised that people were becoming dependent on them for their work. People would ask them to resolve every issue with government officials. People, instead of becoming self-reliant, and directly approaching to the officials, were coming to the organisation. At this juncture, with series of serious discussion among the group members, it was realised that it was time to empower people through quality education as well as good health, though it does undertake related projects. Once people are educated and healthy, they can do their work for their own development. And with this, they as an organisation decided to work for children's education and health care.

## ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

Sarthak Jan Vikas Sansthan is a non-government, non-profit and grassroots voluntary organization established on October 2, 2004 adopting the Gandhian philosophy of village and rural development for its interventions. It was formally registered under Chhattisgarh Societies Registration Act 1973 on March 27, 2006 having registered No. 1329. Sarthak is working in the tribal majority area of

Surguja district and established with a mission to work towards strengthening people's capacities and institutions to get their due shares in every aspect of human existence. Hence it is a long-term strategy for emancipating the whole community, through interventions at three levels i.e. - the child, the family and the community with extra emphasis on child specially girl child, rural dropout child and disabled child.

### **Vision**

A Society based on legitimate rights, gender equality, democratic governance, justice, honesty, social sensitivity, access to resources and a culture of service in which all are self-reliant.

### **Mission**

Sarthak Commits itself to work for marginalized communities and groups-tribal, dalits, children, landless, subsistence farmers, and within this the most vulnerable like children, women, elderly, and People with Disabilities helping them to build their capacities-skills and knowledge, to fulfill their dreams and aspirations.

### **Objectives**

1. To work for socially marginalized, including child and women, landless and forest dependent communities, small and marginalized farmers, particularly those who are denied their rights to ownership of the natural resource base.
2. To promote quality primary education for children in rural areas through the available resource's community has and it receives from the government towards this end.
3. To facilitate development processes with and for economically and socially deprived and physically and mentally challenged children to help them better educated, skilled and aware.
4. To strengthen and foster capacities of people and village level institutions to get their share in the development process.
5. To ensure livelihood opportunities for the poor, especially tribal communities, whose livelihood security is threatened, and whose basic rights and entitlements are being ignored and unmet.

## THEMATIC AREAS & COMMUNITIES

Sarthak started its development intervention with community mobilization so as to empower the community to become self-reliant community. Systematically, Sarthak worked first for child health care issues. While working on child health care, it realised that children's health is closely related to issues like livelihood, access to government schemes and education. Sarthak, thus, adopted a development intervention which is more holistic and integrated to address these issues of the people.

- **Children:** proper functioning of Anganwadi Centres and ANMs, child nutrition, health, and development, primary education, issues of teachers in primary schools.
- **Women:** formation and facilitation of women self-help groups for economic sustainability and to develop a critical group to monitor the "last mile delivery of services" i.e. nutrition, health, PDS etc. Skilling of women for entrepreneurship development
- **Farmers:** organic cultivation and indigenous seed conservation and propagation
- **Community:** Local governance- Gram Sabha and Panchayats, sustainable development of the community as a whole.

Sarthak works for and with four tribal communities namely **Pahari Korwa**, one of the most backward and marginalised communities in India, and classified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) by the Government. **Manjhi** and **Majhwar** are two major scheduled tribe communities in Mainpat plateau of Surguja district. These tribes are very backward though not classified as Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups. **Kanwar**, a tribe highly dependent on non-timber forest produce (NTFP) and agriculture in the programme area. Sarthak is skilling them for effective agriculture practices. **Gonds** are one of the agrarian tribal communities in Chhattisgarh. They practice traditional agriculture. Sarthak accompanies these tribal communities for better primary education, better child and women health

care, income generating activities, and better agriculture practices.

Sarthak has a well experienced team for implementing projects and programme of primary education and drop out children, women and child health care, livelihood, children's groups, community-based people's organization, Gram Sabha and Panchayati Raj, health awareness, issues of mal-nutrition etc. Sarthak has been involved in mobilizing the community towards social transformation especially through education, women & health, MGNREGA, setting up village level institutions and community-based organizations etc.

### Education and child rights

This is to ensure that children of school-going age are admitted in schools and create awareness among parents to send

their children to school. Sarthak also runs remedial classes for children to support them in their studies to reduce dropout rate and improve retention of children in school. Creating awareness on RTE and ensuring the proper functioning of SMCs are also taken seriously by the organisation to ensure quality education and check dropout rates. It also works on child rights to ensure no child is victim of harassment of any kind. Teachers of primary schools and parents are motivated constantly for best results.

### **Child and women health**

Sarthak has been working to ensure that children grow with normal pace. They do not suffer from mal-nutrition as it affects badly the growth of children. Therefore, it collaborates with Anganwadi centres and ANMs to ensure that supplementary food reaches to children, pregnant and lactating women. The badly malnourished children are sent to government treatment centres. The adolescent girls are given special attention, especially during the menstruation period. Systematically both parents and others in the family as well as the community is given awareness on this natural process of life in adolescent girls. Women groups are formed and trained for common health issues, monitoring government health and education services, income generating activities. Sarthak also organising training of village health volunteers and organizes health camps for early detection and treatment of the diseases and referral services.

### **Implementation of MNREGA**

The government has guaranteed work for food through Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Sarthak brings awareness among people about its provisions so that they take benefit of it. They train community members and village institutes on various provisions of the Act, ensure its implementation with true spirit. Youth are trained to monitor the implementation of the work. This is precisely done because the earning improves the health of children and women directly.

## APPROACH

Sarthak works for and with the tribal poor and backward communities. These tribal communities had isolated themselves for centuries and lived a life away from others, both tribals and non-tribals. They are exposed to the outside realities today and they cannot isolate themselves any more due to present circumstances as well as the need. They are going through a process of change more rapidly since few decades. They need a helping hand to accompany them into the process of change so that they are not lost but they get positive results in the process. Sarthak has taken various approaches to development which acceptable and appealing to them. Its approaches can be summarized in the following:

- Participatory Approach
- Empowering approach especially the women and children
- Building upon the socio-cultural and economic resources they have
- Respecting their cultural heritage and economic system
- Constant accompaniment before, during and after the programme



## MAJOR INTERVENTION AREAS

### A. MENSTRUAL HEALTH & HYGIENE

Korba district of Chhattisgarh state is marred by social taboos and restrictions when it comes to managing menstruation and menstrual phases amongst women and girls. The socio-cultural norms and traditions prohibit women from discussions pertaining to puberty and menstruation thus leading to poor and unhygienic practices. Women members specifically enjoy an average social status in the community. Further traditional patriarchy systems provide minimal prospects for girls and women to take care of their health and other requirements. There stands a huge communication gap between the parents and their girls and thus leads to lower affordability of choices adoptability in case of menstrual hygiene management. These further inculcate a sense of inferiority and lower the confidence level in attending day to day work.

Sarthak Jan Vikas Sansthan in association with Bharat Aluminium Limited (BALCO) through MHH project aims to meet the need of low cost sanitary napkins in the state of Chhattisgarh for the poor and marginalized community's women and girls. Further the project aims at setting up enterprise unit to augur the earning income and employability of the women members in gram panchayats. These enterprises with the help of local Self-Help Groups women members will manufacture low cost sanitary pads. The major objectives of the project may be summed as follows.

- To create awareness among rural girls and women on Menstrual Hygiene Management through Sustainable Health and Hygiene Committee called as Swachhta Saheli which would be governed by Sakhi Swasth Suvidha Kendra in the area
- To set up low cost sanitary napkin production unit to be managed by Self Help Groups/ Rural women for ensuring adequate supply of sanitary napkins at an affordable price
- To improve the economic and social conditions of women & provide them a sustainable livelihood opportunity

## Major Activities Accomplished under MHH

S.N.	INTERVENTION	ACTIVITIES	REMARKS
1.	Awareness Meeting & Community Mobilization	Women based community mobilization through Self-Help Group	A total of 271 SHG meetings were held and 1631 women addressed about MHH
		Women based community mobilization through Cluster awareness	Total 8 clusters of 29 villages covered wherein meetings have been taken by Community Mobiliser
		Meeting with Adolescent Girls group	A total 29 adolescent girls group formed in which 322 girls helped in spreading awareness about MHH in their respective areas. Total 271 meetings conducted about MHH.
		Visit to ICDS Meeting with ASHA Workers, Mitadin, ANM, MT, Doctor	Information collected about poor MHH practices amongst girls Information collected on health practices among women 7 MHH Management Sought information whether Mitadin are trained on health practices
		Door to Door (Family/ Individual Counselling)	A total of 13740 Household covered from 29 villages.
2.	Awareness program on MHH	Awareness Rally/ Roadshow on MHH	01 awareness rally organized in which total 88 women, adolescent girls, Mitadin, cleaning staff etc. participated.
		Wall Painting	Wall paintings done for the awareness on MHH in 29 villages.
		Pad Distribution	Pads were distributed amongst Adolescent Girls and Women members to increase awareness on usage and disposal of sanitary napkins
		Hygiene Kit Distribution	Total 322 hygiene Kit distributed in all 29 villages. Hygiene kit consisted of two masks, one sanitizer bottle which & a pack of sanitary pad (7 pieces)
3.	Digitalization of MHH Group	Concept of TTS	10 groups of adolescent girls from 29 Villages formed and created awareness regarding COVID-19 lockdown and MHH. The groups worked on following idea of TTS i.e. Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday as mentioned below: 1. The dates for dispatch of digital literacy on MHH to adolescent girls are shared on Tuesday 2. The dates for dispatch of digital literacy on COVID-19 to adolescent girls are shared on Thursday 3. The dates for dispatch of digital government notices to adolescent girls are shared on Saturday
4.	Webinars on MHH		Webinar sessions held during the lockdown to keep the community engaged and made them aware with the information which is necessary to them. Webinars were taken by special guest, doctors etc.
5.	Digital Education		Members of Team Sarthak personally went to around 35-40 adolescent girls & SHG women, & made their google id so that they can access Zoom app, taught them how to use it even in this pandemic
6.	Workshop and Trainings		Training on Sanitary Napkin Manufacturing to 53 participants including SHG women and adolescent girls in the month of Dec'20
			Workshop on MHH to women & adolescent girls, teachers, doctors, Psychologist, community health workers, Anganwadi workers, Mitadin, ANM, ASHA workers

7.	IEC Material through Webinar		IEC Material on MHH was disseminated through Webinars to the SHG women, Adolescent girls, G9 group, Health workers etc.
8.	Meeting with G9 Group - A group of nine		18 G9 groups formed whose objective is to directly get connected with the society & help to make their area Cloth Free as they have strong ability to influence them to bring positive impact on MHH.

### ***Glimpses of MHH Program***



Community Mobilization on MHH



Formation of Adolescent Girls Group



Visit to ICDS



Rally/ Roadshows on MHH



Wall Painting on MHH



Pad Distribution



Hygiene KIT Distribution



G9 Members Meeting



Workshops/ Training on MHH

## B. PROJECT UNNATI

Sarthak Jan Vikas Sansthan in association with BALCO pursued Project Unnati in 5 villages (i.e. Sapnadar, Ropakhar, Kesra, Kudardih and Barima) of Mainpat, Surguja District of Chhattisgarh. The population composition of Surguja district is very poor and backward. They are heavily dependent upon daily wage work with limited amount of literacy level. So, due to pandemic when the Government announced lockdown; these people had hardly any clue about the pandemic and their source of livelihood. SJVS team stepped in to raise awareness on the pandemic and disseminated important guidelines set by the respective Governments for COVID. through the digital media, WhatsApp group in the villages were created to disseminate revised information from the government towards the Lockdown and pandemic. Some of the major works accomplished under Project Unnati may be summed as follows.

S.N.	INTERVENTION	REMARKS
1	Door to Door Counselling	Counselling on COVID 19 Norms presented to the SHG group Members and other Households in 5 Villages of Mainpat, Surguja
2	Wall Writing	Wall Writings towards Awareness on COVID in the important locations accomplished in 5 Target villages
3	Sanitizing Villages Areas	Bleaching Powder used in sanitizing various areas in the villages to spread awareness and cleanliness
4	Sanitizing Hand-pumps	All Hand-pumps in the 5 target villages were sanitized and cleaned properly to block the spread of various diseases Sanitizers were installed near the Hand-pumps for use by the local people while using Hand-pumps
5	Disseminating COVID 19 Norms	Social Distancing norms were disseminated to the people through various modes. Circling with 1.5 distance metre were done in the zones mostly used by the people for their daily needs
6	Distribution of Essential Food Items	Essential Food Packets (20 Items) were distributed to the old-aged, widows i.e. needy and poverty stricken village people as below Sapnadar - 10 Ropakhar - 5 Kudardihi - 12 Barima - 10 Kera - 5
7	Mask Distribution	Masks were distributed in 5 Target villages for awareness and protection towards COVID.



## ***Glimpses of Project Unnati***



Wall Writings on COVID Awareness



Hand-pumps Bleached & Social  
Distancing Norms



Distribution of Essential Food Items



Dissemination of COVID Awareness

### C. AWARENESS ON COVID-19 IN ASSOCIATION WITH CASA

Mainpat Area of Surguja District in Chhattisgarh state comprises of population marred by backwardness, illiteracy and stand under the Poverty Line. Majority of the population are dependent upon daily wage labour and unable to suffice the nutrient level of their family needs. Some part of the population also comprises of Tibet migrants who work in the fields of wealthy farmers as daily wage labours. When the pandemic Corona arrived, these people were the most affected with no means of livelihood and no such trace of dealing with the pandemic. In association with CASA, Sarthak Team pursued a number of works to prevent the pandemic thereby supporting needy people with providence of essential food items. Some of the major accomplishments are as follows.

S.N.	INTERVENTION	REMARKS
1	Door to Door Counselling	Counselling on COVID 19 Norms presented to the SHG group Members and other Households in 2 Villages i.e. Karmha, Paiga of Mainpat, Surguja
2	Wall Writing	Wall Writings towards Awareness on COVID in the important locations accomplished in 2 Target villages
3	Sanitizing Villages Areas	Bleaching Powder used in sanitizing various areas in the villages to spread awareness and cleanliness
4	Sanitizing Hand-pumps	All Hand-pumps in the 2 target villages were sanitized and cleaned properly to block the spread of various diseases Sanitizers were installed near the Hand-pumps for use by the local people while using Hand-pumps
5	Disseminating COVID 19 Norms	Social Distancing norms were disseminated to the people through various modes. Circling with 1.5 distance metre were done in the zones mostly used by the people for their daily needs
6	Distribution of Essential Food Items	Essential Food Packets (20 Items) were distributed to the old-aged, widows i.e. needy and poverty stricken village people as below Karmha - 38 Paiga - 16
7	Mask Distribution	Masks were distributed in 2 Target villages for awareness and protection towards COVID.

## ***Glimpses of the Program***



Distribution of Essential Food Items



Awareness on using Sanitizers



Social Distancing & Bleaching Powder  
used near Hand-pumps



Mask Distribution to the People

#### D. PROJECT A.I.E.N.

To deal with the Pandemic and Lockdown, SJVS team in association with TDH Germany stepped in with Project A.I.E.N. to support and help the impoverished and downtrodden population of Mainpat, Surguja. Major works accomplished are highlighted as follows.

S.N.	INTERVENTION	REMARKS
1	Awareness on COVID-19	Counselling on COVID 19 Norms presented to the Volunteers, SHG group Members and other Households in 15 Villages of Mainpat. Door to door counselling were done for the families to maintain strict vigilance on COVID norms
2	Strategic Planning on monitoring COVID-19	Strategic planning was done in association with the Volunteers to keep a strict note on the spread of corona virus in villages. These volunteers helped in disseminating the important government information and monitoring the COVID norms to every corner of the village
3	Wall Writing	Wall Writings towards Awareness on COVID at the important locations accomplished in 15 villages
4	Sanitizing Villages Areas	Bleaching Powder used in sanitizing various areas in the villages to spread awareness and cleanliness
5	Sanitizing Hand-pumps	All Hand-pumps in the 23 target villages were sanitized and cleaned properly to block the spread of various diseases Sanitizers were installed near the Hand-pumps for use by the local people while using Hand-pumps
6	COVID Awareness in Bal Panchayats	Teams visited the Bal-Panchayats to disseminate important information on COVID norms, how the children should be taken care, precautions to be maintained during this pandemic phase
7	Disseminating COVID 19 Norms	Social Distancing norms were disseminated to the people through various modes in 23 villages i.e. Karmha & Paiga of Mainpat. Circling with 1.5 distance metre were done in the zones mostly used by the people for their daily needs
8	Distribution of Essential Food Items to the Needy Families	Essential Food Packets (20 Items) were distributed to the old-aged, widows i.e. needy and poverty stricken village people from 24th April - 3rd May to the 400 families in 10 villages as below Karmha - 60 Paiga - 64 Suplaga - 11 Bisarpani - 19 Bardadpara - 64 Barimakhas - 40 Kudaridih - 46 Bagdipara - 40 Uranga - 16 Junapara - 40
9	Mask Distribution	Masks were distributed in 10 villages of Mainpat for awareness and protection towards COVID.



## *Glimpses of the Program*



Wall Writings on Awareness of COVID



Social Distancing Norms



Distribution of Essential Food Packets



Awareness on using Sanitizers, Masks



COVID Awareness in Bal Panchayats

## E. PROJECT JIVODAYA

Under the banner of Jivodaya Foundation, Texas, United States, SJVS team collaborated to provide COVID relief items to the impoverished and poverty stricken people of Mainpat. The program supported 260 families through providence of essential Food items. The details are as follows.

S.N.	VILLAGE NAME	No. OF FOOD PACKETS DISTRIBUTED
1	Bardandpara	44
2	Junapara	24
3	Barimakhas	30
4	Karmha	50
5	Uranga	29
6	Paiga	28
7	Bagdihpara	15
8	Kudaridih	40

