

SANKALP



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Quarterly
Newsletter
By

Chhattisgarh
Agricon
Samiti



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Mohalla classes were conducted to promote community learning and education

Safe drinking water awareness programs reached

28,931
Individuals

Malaria prevention awareness initiatives reached

22,941
people

Awareness sessions on anemia benefitted

5,979
Individuals

Institutional delivery awareness campaigns reached

10,639
people

Awareness sessions on breastfeeding were conducted, reaching

659
Individuals

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE QUARTER

Handwashing awareness activities reached a total of

20,384
individuals, emphasizing hygiene

A total of

1,188

pregnant women received guidance on vaccination

Menstrual hygiene awareness programs reached

12,452
Individuals

Awareness campaigns on preventing child marriage reached

4,266
Individuals

Awareness drives on domestic violence prevention reached

4,057
Individuals

A total of

47

Ayushman cards were issued to eligible beneficiaries

A total of

107

Anganwadi visits were conducted to ensure 100% attendance and engagement.

World Mental Health Day Celebration



World Mental Health Day was celebrated in Bastar, Kondagaon, Bilaspur, Kabirdham and Bijapur with vibrant community participation and innovative activities designed to raise awareness about mental health. The celebrations, held between October 4 and October 10, 2024, aimed to foster a culture of openness, break stigmas, and promote well-being through creative and engaging initiatives. From traditional games like kabaddi, tug-of-war, snake & ladder to modern practices like yoga, meditation, and mirror activities, the week offered a blend of fun, reflection, and learning. Communities gathered at various venues, including Durga Puja pandals, gram panchayats, and collectorate premises, creating a shared space for discussion on mental health.

The events highlighted the importance of teamwork, self-awareness, and stress management, with participants learning valuable life lessons through the

activities. Kabaddi emphasized collaboration, tug-of-war taught perseverance, and games like snake and ladder carried mental health messages. Meditation and deep breathing sessions provided tools for achieving calmness and balance, while dance competitions and balloon activities brought joy and a sense of togetherness. Leaders, SHG members, adolescents, and volunteers joined hands to amplify the impact. Special efforts, like using local languages for communication and involving diverse groups, ensured inclusivity. The celebrations empowered participants to prioritize mental health and foster lasting positivity.



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International Girl Child Day Celebration



A live panel discussion on Instagram, featuring Yuvodaya volunteers and experts, addressed key issues affecting girls, including health, education, and women's empowerment. Sejal Patel from the Khwaab Welfare Foundation served as the keynote speaker, sharing insights on the importance of menstrual hygiene.

On October 11, International Girl Child Day was commemorated with inspiring events organized in Kondagaon and Bilaspur districts. Awareness programs highlighted critical issues such as nutrition, prevention of child marriage, menstrual hygiene, and gender equality. Discussions emphasized the importance of education, healthcare, and self-defense, empowering girls with knowledge and skills to lead independent and confident lives. Activities like rangoli and art competitions conveyed powerful messages of equality and inspired participants to envision a brighter future.

A live panel discussion on Instagram, featuring Yuvodaya volunteers and experts, addressed key issues affecting girls, including health, education, and women's empowerment. Sejal Patel from the Khwaab Welfare Foundation served as the keynote speaker, sharing insights on the importance of menstrual hygiene and encouraging greater participation in government schemes supporting girls' education. The discussion also covered combating substance abuse among young women and raising awareness about sexual violence, focusing on legal rights and support mechanisms.

Practical strategies, such as promoting karate and other self-defense skills from an early age, were emphasized to ensure girls are equipped to navigate challenges confidently. The events collectively inspired change, fostering awareness and empowerment for girls to thrive as equal contributors to society.

International Volunteers Day Celebration



On 5th Dec 2024, International Volunteers' Day was celebrated in Kabirdham, Bilaspur, Kondagaon, and Bijapur with immense enthusiasm, emphasizing the essential role of volunteers in transforming society. In these districts, various engaging activities were organized to recognize the contributions of volunteers and raise awareness about their impactful work. Yuvodaya Manobal volunteers in Bilaspur led team games like Kabaddi and Kho-Kho, along with mental health awareness programs, including meditation, group discussions, and self-assessment exercises. These sessions promoted stress management, positive thinking, and self-confidence, complemented by cultural performances such as Makri dance and devotional songs. In Kondagaon, volunteers actively participated in an open mic forum at Mahesh Baghel Dandakaranya College, discussing important social issues. In Godma and Pharasgaon, activities like art competitions, pot-breaking games, and experience-sharing sessions were conducted, fostering collaboration and inspiring others to contribute to community service. Bijapur is celebrated with rangoli designs, regional folk dances, cleanliness activities, and cake-cutting ceremonies. Volunteers shared stories of their community transformation efforts, inspiring others to get involved in voluntary work. Across all districts, the celebrations highlighted the significance of volunteerism, recognizing their selfless service and motivating others to contribute to society's betterment. This day served as a reminder of the power of collective efforts to bring about positive change in communities.



In Kondagaon, volunteers actively participated in an open mic forum at Mahesh Baghel Dandakaranya College, discussing important social issues. In Godma and Pharasgaon, activities like art competitions, pot-breaking games, and experience-sharing sessions were conducted, and encouraging greater participation in government schemes supporting girls' education

Kanha Team Retreat 2024

Strengthening Collaboration, Aligning Vision, and Inspiring Growth



Creative activities such as Body Rhythm and Collaborative Coloring encouraged teamwork and creativity. The final day focused on nature through an Early Morning Nature Walk and a Visioning Exercise, where participants aligned personal and organizational visions with actionable suggestions.

The Kanha Team Retreat 2024, held from December 19th to 21st at Kanha Resort, Madhya Pradesh, aimed to foster team bonding, enhance self-awareness, and explore innovative ideas on key thematic areas like Mental Health, Gender Transformation, Yuvodaya, and Landscape Restoration. The event saw participants engaging in various introspective and collaborative activities, starting with an Individual History Mapping Activity to foster empathy. Mr. Abhishek Singh's sharing of his personal journey highlighted the importance of non-judgmental listening, resonating with participants. Creative activities such as Body Rhythm and Collaborative Coloring encouraged teamwork and creativity. The final day focused on nature through an Early Morning Nature Walk and a Visioning Exercise, where participants aligned personal and organizational visions with actionable suggestions. The retreat also included team-building games like Human Snakes and Wink Assassin to strengthen trust and communication. Feedback revealed participants' satisfaction with the balance of relaxation and learning, with external resource people contributing valuable insights. The event reinforced the importance of nature, reflection, and team collaboration. Recommendations for future events include follow-up workshops to operationalize vision outcomes, more nature-inspired activities, and extended sessions on external partnerships. Overall, the retreat achieved its goals of rejuvenation, self-awareness, and strategic alignment for the future.

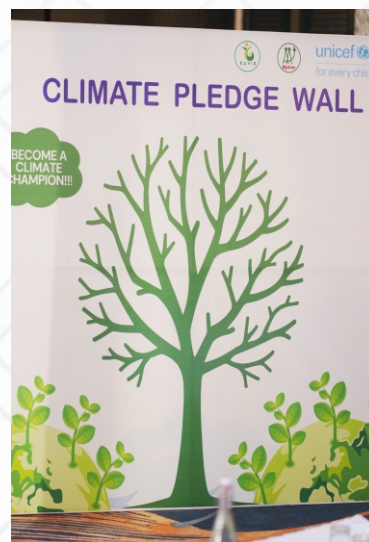


Noni Johar 3.0



The Noni Johar 3.0 event, held on December 16-17, 2024, at Sayaji Hotel, Raipur, brought together thought leaders, experts, and changemakers to address pressing issues of mental health, gender equality, and climate action. The event, organized by UNICEF, Alliance for Behaviour Change, Pahal, the Chhattisgarh Government, and Agricon Foundation, showcased the power of collective action for a sustainable future.

A standout session by Manisha Motwani emphasized reimagining sustainable landscapes and climate actions, urging participants to consider innovative solutions for environmental challenges. Volunteers from across Chhattisgarh actively engaged in insightful discussions, creative workshops, and sessions led by experts, including renowned personalities like Ajay Jadhav Mandal and Nitin Shrivastav. The event also featured impactful performances and the launch of Sadaya, a coffee table book celebrating volunteer success stories. This dynamic gathering reinforced the importance of community participation in driving change for a more inclusive and sustainable world.



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Kavir Volunteers Recognized at PM Awas Mela 2024



The PM Awas Mela, organized by the District Administration Kabirdham, took place on October 9, 2024, at the Indoor Stadium in Kawardha, with over 300 Kavir volunteers participating. The event celebrated the contributions of these volunteers to rural development and environmental conservation, with Honorable Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma, MP Santosh Pandey, MLA Bhavna Bohra, the District Collector, and CEO attending. They praised the volunteers' efforts in promoting sustainability and uplifting rural communities. Volunteers Arvind Jharia and Supriya Sahu received certificates of appreciation for their exceptional service.

The key purpose of the event was to distribute keys to PVTG (Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups) families who received homes under PM JANMAN Awas Yojana. The event also raised awareness among other PVTG families about the new homes, available facilities, and the payment process. Volunteers from Bodla and Pandariya villages joined the event, further strengthening community engagement.

The event also featured the launch of a poster for PM JANMAN Awas Yojana, promoting awareness and encouraging participation. The Kavir Kisan Group showcased its initiatives on water conservation, sustainable agriculture, and rural employment generation through an informative stall. District Coordinator Deepak Bagri highlighted the collaborative efforts of Kavir volunteers with the district administration, promoting positive change and community empowerment.

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The Road to Sustainable Agriculture Starts with Seeds



The event successfully enhanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the seed sector. It also identified strategies for developing climate-resilient and biofortified crops and strengthened collaboration among stakeholders for research and development.

The 13th National Seed Congress, organized by the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India, took place in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, from October 28 to 30, 2024. The event aimed to assess India's role in the global seed industry, promote innovative seed technologies and crop improvement, and address the impacts of climate change on seed production.

The event saw discussions on key topics such as enhancing India's seed certification systems, boosting seed exports through initiatives like "Make in India," and strengthening public-private partnerships (PPP) for seed distribution and research. Notably, innovative technologies such as CRISPR and gene-editing tools were explored for crop improvement, along with advanced agricultural techniques aimed at reducing seed production costs.

One of the main sessions focused on Direct-Seeded Rice (DSR), highlighting the benefits of reduced water usage and the necessary training for its adoption. Another session emphasized the development of climate-resilient crops, particularly biofortified varieties to address nutritional security. Additionally, seed supply chain innovations were discussed, with a focus on digitalizing supply chains to enhance transparency and efficiency.

The event successfully enhanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities in the seed sector. It also identified strategies for developing climate-resilient and biofortified crops and strengthened collaboration among stakeholders for research and development. Participants, including Surendra Sonkar (Field officer) and Omprakash Bhaskar (Field officer), appreciated the focus on sustainable practices and climate-resilient crops. The discussions also highlighted the need for farmer-friendly seed technologies and recognized the potential of biofortified seeds for improving nutritional security.

Commonland Team Explores Sustainable Landscape Restoration Efforts in Kawardha



On November 11, 2024, the Commonland team visited Kawardha to review the progress of ongoing initiatives and align them with the five-year vision of CG Agricon. The event, organized by Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti, aimed to explore strategies for scaling successful practices, advocating for policy changes, and embedding sustainable practices within local governance. The day-long event began with a presentation by Manas Banerjee at the Kawardha office and provided an overview of the ongoing initiatives, particularly the Kavir Kisan groups, Kavir Volunteers, and the newly formed Kavir Sakhi group.

The field visits showcased various adapted sustainable farming practices. The team visited Mr. Baldev's (Kavir Kisan) of Jarti village, where they observed his innovative use of direct seeding and green manuring with Dhaicha (*Sesbania bispinosa*) to improve soil health and productivity. In Ms. Vishwanandani's (Kavir Kisan) Kitchen Garden, the team learned about sustainable gardening practices. At the Community Plantation Site in Jarti, the Kavir Sakhi group led a plantation initiative, planting fruit-bearing trees and establishing live fencing to restore the local ecosystem. The visit to Mr. Vijay Meravi's (Kavir kisan) of Dashrangpur village demonstrated the economic benefits of sustainable farming practices, such as using organic fertilizers and direct rice sowing. Mr. Dukalha's field in Khairipar highlighted vegetable farming supported by CG Agricon, showcasing the use of drip irrigation and organic inputs.



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KABIRDHAM

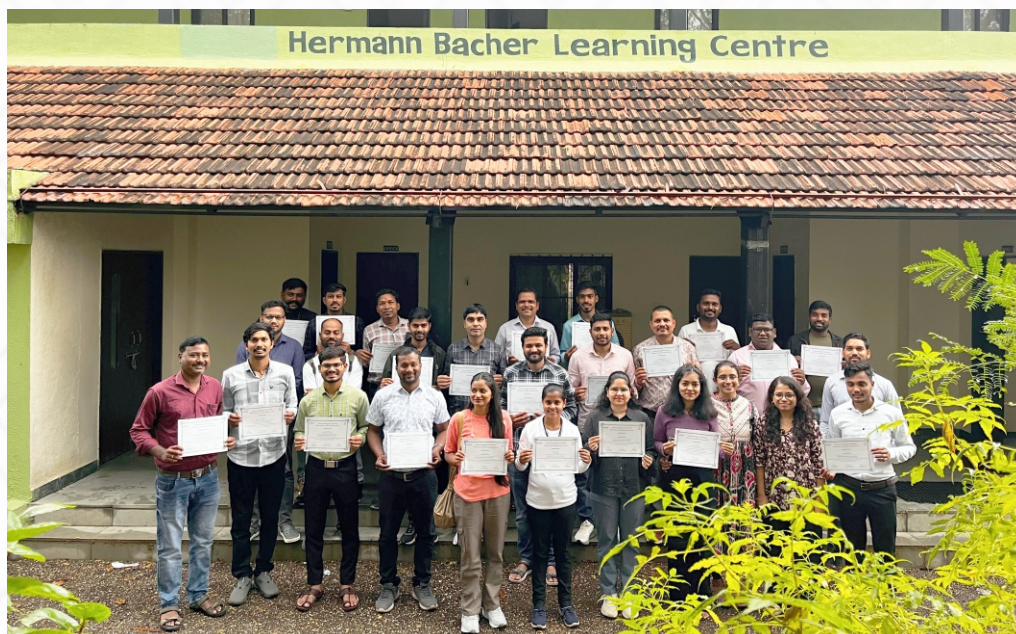
Participants gained knowledge about organic farming, including bio-inputs and Integrated Pest Management (IPM). They visited Kumbharwadi village to observe organic farming practices and the production of organic fertilizers.



A meeting with local stakeholders, including village representatives like Raghurai (Sarpanch, Mahli) and Bharat Sahu (Sarpanch, Dashrangpur), and Commonland team members, explored challenges such as declining water tables and conflicts over water usage. Discussions also centered on solutions like constructing check dams along the Haff Nadi and promoting soil testing to improve agricultural practices. The event concluded with feedback from participants, who appreciated the knowledge shared during the field visits and acknowledged the need for integrated water management solutions.



WOTR Training on Climate-Resilient Agriculture and Water Management



We attended training organized by “The Watershed Organization Trust (WOTR)” from December 2nd to 5th, 2024, in Darewadi, Maharashtra, focusing on sustainable agriculture, watershed management, and climate-resilient farming. The program aimed to provide practical solutions to the challenges faced by farmers in rural areas, emphasizing climate-smart agricultural practices.

The training covered several key areas, including the importance of water storage structures and WOTR’s work in watershed development. Emphasis was placed on climate-smart agricultural practices, such as Zero Budget Natural Farming and Climate-Smart Agriculture, along with water management techniques like contour farming, mulching, and irrigation. The program also highlighted the significance of soil health management through soil testing and the use of soil health cards.

Participants gained knowledge about organic farming, including bio-inputs and Integrated Pest Management (IPM). They visited Kumbharwadi village to observe organic farming practices and the production of organic fertilizers. The group also visited ICAR – Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research and Mahatma Phule Krishi Vidyapeeth, where various farming practices were demonstrated.

The training equipped participants with practical insights into sustainable farming techniques, water conservation methods, and organic farming practices, essential for improving agricultural productivity amidst climate change.

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Kavir Sakhi: A Platform for Progress and Empowerment



The meeting raised awareness of social issues like discrimination, child marriage, and gender equality while emphasizing the protection of vulnerable groups, including widows and child brides. Women were encouraged to take leadership roles.

The Kavir Sakhi meeting was held on October 19, 2024, under CHIIP, focusing on empowering women by addressing social, economic, and health issues. The meeting was facilitated by Manisha Motwani, Project Coordinator of Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti, who played a pivotal role in guiding the discussions. A capacity-building session was conducted to enhance participants' skills, along with team-building games and activities to foster communication and leadership. Group discussions encouraged women to share challenges and solutions, promoting mutual support and solidarity.

The meeting raised awareness of social issues like discrimination, child marriage, and gender equality while emphasizing the protection of vulnerable groups, including widows and child brides. Women were encouraged to take leadership roles, contribute to community decision-making, and adopt sustainable practices at home and in their communities. Mental stress relief programs and discussions on self-employment opportunities further aimed to support women's well-being and economic independence.

Following this meeting, two to three additional sessions were conducted by Chitra Kiran Sahu, State Women Development officer, which focused on continuing the dialogue and strengthening the women's collective efforts toward community development. These meetings served as a platform for addressing ongoing challenges and implementing the insights gained from the initial session.

Eco Warriors in Action : Women Pioneering Bio Farming Solutions



On December 13 & 16, 2024, training sessions were held at the Agricon Office in Kawardha, focusing on empowering 10 women from Kawardha & Pandariya block. Led by Dr. Taruna Borule and Ms. Aastha Kesharwani, the training aimed to equip participants with the skills to produce Trichoderma biofertilizer on their farms using minimal resources, promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

The session began with theoretical insights into Trichoderma, including its significance, production

techniques, precautions, and management practices. This was followed by a practical, hands-on demonstration where participants learned sterilization techniques for tools, media preparation, and inoculating the mother culture using a wooden chamber. The trainees practiced incubation, identifying Trichoderma's mature green mat structure, harvesting the biofertilizer, and preparing the final product for application. Proper storage and usage methods for crops were also discussed.

The participants appreciated the straightforward techniques and expressed their eagerness to implement them on their farms. Queries raised included application methods for vegetables and community plantations, as well as the availability of resources for continuous production.

The training successfully empowered the participants, equipping them with practical skills to adopt eco-friendly farming practices and share their knowledge within their communities.



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Weekly Celebration of National Farmers Day Fostering Sustainable Agriculture and Community Empowerment



The National Farmers' Week Celebrations, held from December 23, 2024, to January 1, 2025, in Village Pondi and Gram Mahli, Pandariya Block, brought together over 2,000 farmers from 20+ villages. Organized by Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti with the District Administration, the week focused on promoting sustainable agricultural practices.

Kavir Farmers showcased organic farming techniques such as Neem Asthra, Jeevamrit, Dashparni Ark, and Trichoderma, while demonstrating tools for pest control and water conservation methods. Success stories from experienced farmers, including Mr. Maanak Lal Sahu (Kavir Kisan of Dashranpur) and Mr. Vijay Meravi (Kavir kisan of Dashrangpur), inspired attendees to adopt chemical-free practices. Expert sessions provided practical insights on organic farming, soil health, and climate-resilient methods.

The week encouraged collaboration among farmers and fostered knowledge exchange, motivating them to adopt sustainable practices for better soil health, increased crop yields, and environmental conservation.

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Glimpse of the Nutrition Awareness and Social Behavior Change Initiative in Tokapal, Bastar, Observed by UNICEF Team



On October 23, 2024, UNICEF India's Chief of Social and Behavior Change, Mr. Dennis C. Larson, Specialist Mrs. Lopamudra Tripathi, and Chhattisgarh's SBCC Specialist Mr. Abhishek Singh, visited Koyapal village in Tokapal Block of Bastar district. They engaged with volunteers to promote social behavior changes for better nutritional habits in the community. The team engaged with the community through initiatives such as the Poshan Vatika and Poshan Chaupal Conversations with various groups highlighted the ongoing transformations in society. A nukkad natak performed by Yuvodaya volunteers focused on the Nutrition Rehabilitation Center for malnourished children, showcasing their stories and the successes achieved through the initiative. Villagers enthusiastically welcomed the UNICEF team with traditional dance performances.



The team engaged with the community through initiatives such as the Poshan Vatika and Poshan Chaupal Conversations with various groups highlighted the ongoing transformations in society.

Transforming Bastar: Collaborative Strategies for Landscape Restoration



Opportunities identified during the workshop included broadcasting successful community practices, prioritizing community needs in project design, establishing a knowledge transfer consortium, and leveraging partnerships to mobilize resources for joint initiatives.

On October 23, 2024, Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti organized a Partnership Building Workshop on Landscape Restoration at Binaka Heritage, Jagdalpur. The event brought together key representatives from civil society organizations (CSOs) dedicated to sustainable development in the Bastar region. The workshop aimed to address landscape degradation by discussing key frameworks such as the 4 Returns (Inspiration, Social Capital, Natural Capital, Financial Capital) and the 3 Zones Approach (Natural, Combined, Economic), which are essential for effective restoration strategies.

The workshop's primary objectives included fostering collaborative solutions for landscape restoration, aligning initiatives with community needs, and gathering insights from various CSOs. Discussions focused on major challenges identified during Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) conducted at the village level, including environmental degradation and community engagement. Participants agreed on the importance of organizing a joint field visit with the Commonlands team in November and committed to further discussions.

Opportunities identified during the workshop included broadcasting successful community practices, prioritizing community needs in project design, establishing a knowledge transfer consortium, and leveraging partnerships to mobilize resources for joint initiatives. CSOs highlighted their key strengths in areas such as natural resource management, health, education, livelihood, women empowerment, and business development.

Key action points from the meeting included the finalization of work boundaries, the nomination of a nodal person from each organization, and the planned field visit in November. The workshop concluded with a shared commitment to drive future collaborative projects and create sustainable, resilient ecosystems in the Bastar region.

Working Together for a Resilient Bastar Landscape Restoration Initiatives



The Partnership Building Workshop for Landscape Restoration took place on November 16, 2024, at Hotel Avinash, Jagdalpur. The workshop aimed to promote collaboration among civil society organizations (CSOs) and devise strategies for sustainable landscape restoration in the Kanger Valley. The event included activities such as mapping operational areas and discussing key challenges and opportunities. Participants, including representatives from BSM, SEBA, PRADAN, Agricon Samiti, and others, explored common goals, coordinated efforts, and identified leadership roles for CSOs in the Bastar region. Key discussions focused on the vital role of communities, youth engagement, preventing migration, and improving coordination with government bodies. The presentation of the Kanger Valley Diagnostic Report was one of the major agendas.

The workshop helped build mutual understanding among CSOs, clarified roles and responsibilities, and facilitated the creation of long-term strategies for landscape restoration. Participating organizations shared their expertise in areas such as agriculture, eco-restoration, biodiversity, and sustainable tourism. The event concluded with a commitment from CSO heads to sustain the partnership and align efforts to address the challenges of landscape degradation. Feedback from the event emphasized the need for stronger coordination with government bodies and field teams to overcome operational challenges effectively.



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“Changemakers” Circle : Community Action & The Role of Volunteers



On November 18, 2024, a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was held in the village of Kodonar, Guddipara, Bastanar Block, as part of the Landscape Restoration Program. The session, led by Mr. Manas Banerjee, focused on training Yuvodaya volunteers to engage with communities on sustainable practices and landscape restoration. The session began with an introduction and self-reflection activity, where volunteers envisioned their roles in contributing to environmental restoration over the next five years. They also participated in activities to envision a "restored landscape" and understand the role of volunteers in promoting sustainable practices within their villages.

Volunteers engaged in identifying environmental issues such as land degradation and water scarcity, and proposed practical solutions,

supported by a plan of action. They also learned how to effectively plan for the village's development. The sarpanch was actively engaged in the session, helping volunteers understand how decisions are made at the panchayat level. Volunteers gained insights into the decision-making process and felt empowered to contribute to planning and implementing solutions for their village's sustainable development.

Lighting a Lamp for Cleanliness: Dalpat Deepotsav 2024



With support from the District Administration, Municipal Corporation, and Yuvoday volunteers, the historic Dalpat Sagar was lit with 251,000 lamps to promote awareness about its conservation and cleanliness. A total of 525 volunteers contributed throughout the day to this annual event. The chief guests included Deputy Chief Minister of Chhattisgarh, Mr. Vijay Sharma, Bastar MP Mr. Mahesh Kashyap, and other senior officials.

Historic Dalpat Sagar was lit with 251,000 lamps to promote awareness about its conservation and cleanliness.

Bijaduteer Volunteers Shine at Bastar Olympics: A Catalyst for Change



On 19th, 20th & 24th Oct 2024, Bijadutir volunteers played a significant role in the 3-day Bastar Olympic Games organized in the development blocks of Bhopalpatnam, Bhairamgarh, and Bijapur. They assisted with the provision of sports equipment, health support, and event organization at both block and district levels.

A total of 39 Bijadutir volunteers were honored with certificates for their outstanding services. Additionally, volunteers actively participated in various sports events such as shot put, races, and long jump. Bijadutir volunteers, Ms. Asmati Kashyap and Ms. Anita Kashyap, secured the first and second positions, respectively, and were awarded medals and certificates in recognition of their achievements. This event showcased the dedication and skills of Bijadutir volunteers, who played a crucial role in making the sports event successful.

The Bijadutir program, which works towards raising awareness about mental and physical health and promoting behavioral change, was praised by Chhattisgarh's Deputy Chief Minister Vijay Sharma and Minister of Sports and Youth Welfare Tankram Sharma. During the Bastar Olympic Games, the ministers visited the Bijadutir program stall, where they reviewed IEC materials focused on mental health and behavior change. They commended the program's innovative approach and applauded the unwavering dedication of the volunteers in driving meaningful community transformation. During the event, Collector Sambit Mishra and the volunteers provided detailed information about the Bijadutir program. This initiative was recognized as an important step towards raising awareness and bringing about positive changes in society.



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One-Day Bijaduteer Volunteer Meet



A one-day meeting of Bijadutir volunteers was organized by the District Panchayat in which District Child Protection Officer Rahul Kaushik from the Women and Child Development Department provided guidance on the prevention of child marriage and shared information about various schemes. Four volunteers were honored for their outstanding work in their villages.

Additionally, Superintendent of Police Poonam Sharma discussed crimes and their prevention. District Coordinator Ashok Pandey addressed topics related to mental health and social media. The meeting was attended by Labor Department Block Officer Mr. Baghel, District Coordinator, Block Coordinators, and Bijadutir volunteers.

Superintendent of Police Poonam Sharma discussed crimes and their prevention. District Coordinator Ashok Pandey addressed topics related to mental health and social media.

Reviving Education: Bijapur's School Vendewart Pandum Initiative

Bijapur District Administration's School Vendewart Pandum (Back to School Campaign) has become a beacon of hope, earning national recognition. Under the leadership of then-Collector Anurag Pandey, and with unwavering support from Bijadutir volunteers, the district revived 28 schools that had been closed for over 20 years. This remarkable campaign was honored with a Silver Award at the prestigious SKOCH Awards.

Bijadutir volunteers conducted a meticulous survey of 7,000 children, identifying 4,000 who were either dropouts or had never been enrolled in school. Their tireless efforts led to the independent admission of 700 children, ensuring their right to education. Moreover, their collaboration with the district administration fostered strong community engagement and continuous efforts to make education accessible to all.

The School Vendewart Pandum exemplifies how dedicated volunteers and innovative governance can transform lives, setting a benchmark for grassroots educational initiatives nationwide.



Youth Milan Samaroh

On 28th to 30th Dec 2024, a block-level Youth Milan Samaroh was organized in the Mignachal village of Bhairamgarh block and in Ramapeta village, located at the Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh border near the Godavari River of the Bhopalpatnam block. The event was attended by District Coordinator Ashok Pandey, Block Coordinators and over 120 Bijaadutir volunteers.

The purpose of this one-day event was to provide new Bijadutir volunteers with detailed information about the program, enhance their capacity, and outline the work plan for 2025. During the event, the youth shared strategies for social work and discussed their experiences from 2024. District Coordinator provided guidance for the successful implementation of upcoming work plans. At the conclusion of the event, a forest feast (Van Bhoj) and cultural programs, including dances, were held at the banks of the Godavari River, which was a great success. This event was a positive experience for the Bijadutir program in Bijapur district, and it is expected to be even better in 2025.



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UNICEF India Explores Transformative Impact of Mental Health and Child Protection Initiatives



On 24.10.2024 representatives from UNICEF India Denis Lawrence, Lopamudra Tripathi, Abhishek reviewed the Mental Health and Child Protection Program in Pharasgaon block, appreciating its implementation. Volunteers and villagers shared their experiences during the visit. The team observed community mental health initiatives, social-emotional learning workshops in schools, and activities under the "Anemia-Free Kondagaon" campaign. This visit highlighted the progress and impact of these programs, engaging children, teachers, and community members to provide valuable feedback.

Together We Can: Godma Stands Against Child Marriage

Under the "Child Marriage-Free Chhattisgarh" campaign, Yuvodaya Kondanar Champs took a small initiative in Godma village, Pharasgaon block, to raise awareness and work toward making Kondagaon district free from child marriage. The main objective of this initiative was to educate the community about the harmful effects of child marriage. The program began with an awareness rally where volunteers conveyed messages to prevent child marriage through slogans and chants.

Following this, a street play was performed at the village square, where children, youth, women, and men from the community gathered. The play highlighted the appropriate marriageable age for boys and girls, the adverse consequences of child marriage, the child helpline number for reporting such incidents, and the penalties imposed on those facilitating child marriages. Volunteers provided detailed information on how to prevent child marriages and encouraged the community to join the campaign to make Kondagaon a child marriage-free district.

Yuvodaya Kondanar Champs along with other villagers, actively participated in the program. At the conclusion of the event, the community members pledged to work together to prevent child marriages.

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UNICEF and Sony's Visit to Sikagaon Community Program

Under the guidance of District Collector Mr. Kunal Dudawat, the district administration, in collaboration with UNICEF, organized a Community Mental Health and Child Protection Program in the district. This program was observed on November 19 by representatives from Sony Company, Japan, including Ms. Yuka Enda, Mr. Yuichiro Yamada, Ms. Mika Morino, Ms. Chihiro Shimizu, Ms. Yuka Maruko, Ms. Deepika Nanaiya, Mr. Yusuke Mori, Ms. Mane Aida, and Ms. Madoka Otsuka. Representatives from UNICEF Delhi, including Ms. Radhika Srivastava, Mr. Raghav Arora, Mr. Jyoti Ravichandran, and Dr. Syed Habe Ali, were also present. Senior UNICEF Chhattisgarh representatives, Dr. Gajendra Singh, Ms. Chetna Desai, and Mr. Ritesh Kumar, facilitated the program.



The event took place in Sikagaon, where Panchayat representatives, Anganwadi workers, members of women's self-help groups, and volunteers warmly welcomed the guests with Mandari Nacha (a traditional dance) and flower bouquets.

The primary aim of the observation was to understand the implementation and feedback of the ongoing Mental Health and Child Protection Program in the community. During the visit, the Sony Company team and representatives from UNICEF Delhi and Chhattisgarh explored the importance of social and emotional skills taught in school workshops. They participated in activities like the "red balloon" exercise and snake & ladder games with children, which help reduce stress and fear. Additionally, information about the IEC (Information, Education, and Communication) materials used in the Mental Health Program was shared. Discussions were held in the Gram Panchayat on the community's response to the Mental Health and Child Protection Program. Panchayat representatives, rural women, and Yuvodaya Kondanar Champs volunteers shared their experiences and deliberated on ways to maintain mental health at the community level. After the community program, a discussion was held at the District Collector's office in the presence of Collector Mr. Kunal Dudawat. Thirty Yuvodaya volunteers and visitors shared their work experiences, challenges faced in the community, and the benefits of being a volunteer. The Sony Company Japan and UNICEF teams commended the volunteers' efforts and encouraged them to continue supporting the community in similar ways in the future.



The primary aim of the observation was to understand the implementation and feedback of the ongoing Mental Health and Child Protection Program in the community.

Cleanliness Awareness Rally Program: A Step Towards Cleanliness through Community Cooperation



Under the Chhattisgarh Government's "Swachhta Hi Seva" initiative, Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti and UNICEF's Yuvodaya Manobal Volunteers conducted a cleanliness drive in the village market area, removing dirt and garbage to promote hygiene and inspire a clean lifestyle. Alongside cleaning efforts, a Cleanliness Awareness Rally was organized, featuring slogans, posters, and discussions to emphasize the importance of cleanliness for health and social well-being.

The campaign engaged people of all ages, demonstrating that cleanliness is a collective responsibility. The rally raised awareness, encouraging villagers to adopt cleanliness in their daily lives. The cleaned market area has become safer for children and a better commercial space for traders, symbolizing the positive impact of collective action.

This initiative not only improved the physical environment but also instilled a mindset of cleanliness, showcasing the volunteers' dedication to fostering a healthier and cleaner community.

The campaign engaged people of all ages, demonstrating that cleanliness is a collective responsibility. The rally raised awareness, encouraging villagers to adopt cleanliness in their daily lives.

Mental Health Awareness Shines at Chhattisgarh State Festival



On November 5, 2024, during the Chhattisgarh State Festival in Bilaspur, Chhattisgarh Agricon Samiti and UNICEF set up a vibrant mental health awareness stall. Showcasing IEC materials, games, and interactive modules, the stall aimed to educate visitors about stress management, anxiety, depression, and self-care.

Engaging activities and simplified resources attracted people of all ages, sparking conversations about mental health and its importance. Yuvodaya Manobal Volunteers, including Mansi, Sejal, and Kunal, guided visitors on adopting positive lifestyles and managing stress effectively.

Visitors enthusiastically participated in games, read materials, and sought guidance, making the initiative a resounding success. This effort not only normalized mental health discussions but also emphasized its importance alongside physical health, inspiring greater awareness across the community.

Engaging activities and simplified resources attracted people of all ages, sparking conversations about mental health and its importance.

Celebrating Children's Day: A Joyful Blend of Fun, Fitness, and Mental Health Awareness



On Children's Day, a special celebration was organized, combining fun, games, and awareness activities to make the day memorable for the children. The event kicked off with a cake-cutting ceremony, followed by a lively dance session that filled the atmosphere with enthusiasm and energy.

A special "sports meet" was arranged, featuring games like Buddy, Kho-Kho, Long Jump, and Tag. These games not only provided entertainment but also promoted physical fitness, teamwork, and healthy competition among the children.

In addition, team-building activities focused on mental health awareness were conducted. Games like "Trust Falls" and "Compliment Circle" were used to enhance trust, collaboration, and self-esteem among the children. These activities encouraged the children to open up and build stronger bonds with their peers.

The program also included a question-and-answer session, where children were encouraged to express their thoughts and feelings freely. The objective of this session was to highlight the importance of mental health and provide children with a safe and supportive space to share their emotions. The event turned out to be both entertaining and educational for the children, showcasing a wonderful blend of fun and awareness, leaving a lasting impact on them.



Team-building activities focused on mental health awareness were conducted. Games like "Trust Falls" and "Compliment Circle" were used to enhance trust, collaboration, and self-esteem among the children.

Awareness Rally on Child Marriage Prevention, Health, and Hygiene



An impactful awareness rally was organized in Gram Panchayats Dhooma and Kargikala to educate adolescents and their parents about the prevention of child marriage. A total of 97 children enthusiastically participated in the rally. The primary objective of the event was to raise awareness against the harmful practice of child marriage, informing children about its adverse effects and their rights. Additionally, the rally addressed the physical and mental changes during adolescence. A special session on adolescent menstruation was conducted with the participation of 72 children, focusing on menstrual hygiene, breaking myths associated with menstruation, and the importance of personal health. The program also included discussions on critical health issues like malaria, with 84 children actively participating. Participants were educated on mosquito-borne disease prevention, hygiene, and effective health management strategies. This initiative provided a fresh perspective to children and their families, inspiring positive change on critical issues such as child marriage prevention, menstrual hygiene, and malaria awareness.

The primary objective of the event was to raise awareness against the harmful practice of child marriage, informing children about its adverse effects and their rights.



Real change begins with each of us. It's reflected in the choices we make, the stories we share, and the connections we nurture between people and the planet. As we continue our work, let's commit to fostering this transformation—one conversation, one action, and one mindset at a time.



Climate Change Needs Behaviour Change

Last quarter, I reflected on the importance of speaking the same language across all levels—from grassroots initiatives to policy-making—to drive meaningful change. This quarter, I want to expand on that idea and explore how behaviour change is not just a tool but a necessity in tackling one of the most urgent challenges of our time: climate change.

In rural areas, where much of our work takes place, the effects of climate change are already evident—erratic rainfall patterns, dwindling groundwater levels, and declining crop yields. Yet, even as the conversation on climate change becomes more prominent, it remains largely confined to scientific debates and policy discussions. Real progress begins when the people most impacted—farmers, labourers, and community members—become proactive participants in addressing these issues.

The Role of Behaviour Change

Behaviour change is key. Climate-resilient practices like rainwater harvesting, soil conservation, and crop diversification require more than knowledge—they demand a shift in mindset. Telling a farmer to reduce chemical fertilizer usage isn't enough; they need to understand the long-term benefits, have access to these practices, and, most importantly, feel a sense of ownership over their actions.

Behaviour change is challenging—it requires continuous engagement, education, and trust-building. It also necessitates recognizing the interconnectedness of our actions. As I emphasized last quarter, whether it's a farmer planting drought-resistant crops or a volunteer advocating for tree plantation, every action contributes to a larger ecosystem. When people understand this interconnectedness, their choices naturally align with sustainability.

The Vision is Communities & Farmers share knowledge and inspire their communities and other communities, creating a ripple effect that scales sustainable practices.

If we want to build resilient landscapes and empowered communities, we must prioritize behaviour change at all levels—making the complex simple, the distant relatable, and the collective personal.

Real change begins with each of us. It's reflected in the choices we make, the stories we share, and the connections we nurture between people and the planet. As we continue our work, let's commit to fostering this transformation—one conversation, one action, and one mindset at a time.

"One Effort Matters"

Never think one person's effort can't make a difference. A single seed grows into a tree, providing shade and life. One step inspires another, creating ripples of change.

When a farmer adopts sustainable practices or a volunteer plants a tree, it sparks hope and action in others. Change begins with small, meaningful actions—because every effort adds up.

Manisha Motwani
Project Coordinator



Pollution, erosion, and overuse without replenishment are taking a toll, degrading its structure and fertility. But here's the hope—soil can regenerate, just like us. With sustainable practices like composting, green manuring, and crop diversification, we can help it heal.



Soil and Humanity: A Living Connection

Upon joining this organization and witnessing the sustainable practices including soil I realized how deeply soil resembles us humans. Like us, soil is a living and breathing entity, vital to life on Earth. Its structure, functions, and interactions mirror our own in fascinating ways. Just as humans have layers of skin, muscles, and organs working together, soil has layers, or horizons, each contributing to its health and ability to support life. The topsoil, rich in organic matter, provides essential nutrients for plants, while deeper layers give stability and strength for roots to anchor. Soil even breathes, with air-filled macropores and micropores allowing gas exchange, just like we do with the atmosphere. Microorganisms in soil are much like humans in their relationships—they collaborate, compete, and thrive in symbiotic partnerships. They digest organic material and release nutrients, much like how we process food to fuel our bodies. And just as we have an immune system, soil microbes have defenses to maintain their health and balance. Yet, like us, the soil can suffer. Pollution, erosion, and overuse without replenishment are taking a toll, degrading its structure and fertility. But here's the hope—soil can regenerate, just like us. With sustainable practices like composting, green manuring, and crop diversification, we can help it heal. So, the next time you see that brown stuff on your hands, remember it's not just dirt—it's life. Together, we can protect and restore this precious resource for generations to come.

Samriddhi Kaushal

Data Management Officer



What stands out most to me is the volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to these villages.

Despite grappling with their own socio-economic challenges, they continue to give selflessly, bridging gaps and fostering hope.

Their commitment has taught me the true essence of empathy and service.



A Year of Learning: My Journey in Understanding Rural Communities

As the calendar pages turn and nearly a year has passed, I find myself reflecting on a journey that has been as enlightening as it has been humbling. This past year has been a window into the lives of rural communities—people whose struggles often go unnoticed, yet whose resilience and empathy leave a lasting impact.

Through my work and interactions, I have come to understand not just the challenges these communities face, but also the strength and spirit that keep them going. Their lives are intertwined with economic hardships and social complexities, yet they exhibit a sense of togetherness and support that is truly inspiring.

What stands out most to me is the volunteers who dedicate their time and energy to these villages. Despite grappling with their own socio-economic challenges, they continue to give selflessly, bridging gaps and fostering hope. Their commitment has taught me the true essence of empathy and service.

This experience has been more than just an observation, it has been a lesson in humility and gratitude. It reminds me of the importance of understanding others' perspectives and the beauty of human connection. As I move forward, I carry these lessons with me, hopeful that I can contribute to making a meaningful difference in the lives of others.

Gagan Chandrakar

Executive



Through the support of the Kavir volunteer group, I also began working with mothers and children, raising awareness about proper nutrition through the Anganwadi centers. Together, we've helped families adopt healthier habits, improving their well-being in ways that I had always dreamed of seeing in my community.



Deepeshwari Vishwakarma: Leading the Charge for Change with Collective Strength

My name is Deepeshwari Vishwakarma, and I have always believed in the power of change. Growing up in Lohara, I saw the struggles women and children faced, and I was determined to make a difference. Joining the Kavir volunteer group gave me the platform I needed to turn that determination into meaningful action. It connected me with a community of like-minded people who share my passion for creating a better society.

One of my first initiatives as a Kavir volunteer was organizing self-defense training for young girls. I wanted them to feel strong and capable, to know that they could protect themselves and walk confidently in the world. Watching their transformation, as their confidence grew with each session, reinforced my belief in empowerment as a powerful tool for change.

Through the support of the Kavir volunteer group, I also began working with mothers and children, raising awareness about proper nutrition through the Anganwadi centers. Together, we've helped families adopt healthier habits, improving their well-being in ways that I had always dreamed of seeing in my community.

Fighting substance abuse has also been close to my heart. With the support of my fellow volunteers, I organized creative campaigns like rangoli and poster competitions to engage children and teach them about the dangers of addiction. These efforts have inspired many to choose healthier, drug-free lives.

Being part of the Kavir volunteer group has not only amplified my impact but also given me a sense of belonging. It's a reminder that change is possible when determined people come together with a shared vision.

Deepeshwari Vishwakarma

Kavir Volunteer

SUCCESS STORIES

From Despair to Hope: The Story of Tulsi Kashyap from Bastar

Tulsi Kashyap, a resident of Kurenga, Pakhnaar Cha Dongriguda Para, wandered for 14 years in search of compensation for his brother Lakhan Kashyap, who passed away due to a snake bite in Usur village, Bijapur, on August 22, 2014.

Despite multiple attempts to seek government support, Tulsi was unaware of the proper procedures. During a village gathering, he shared his struggles with Yuvoday volunteers who advised him to file an application. The Yuvoday Block Coordinator submitted the application to the Tokapal Tehsildar, who issued a notice for a hearing. When Tulsi struggled to understand the requirements, the Yuvodaya District Coordinator assisted him.

The Tehsildar advised transferring the case from Usur Tehsil to Tokapal. With the volunteers' help, Tulsi applied for the necessary documents in Usur and transferred the case to Tokapal. Following further hearings and verification by the Panchayat, Tulsi finally received a compensation amount of ₹ 1,50,000 on November 22, 2024. Grateful for the assistance, he thanked the Yuvodaya team for their support.



The Yuvoday Block Coordinator submitted the application to the Tokapal Tehsildar, who issued a notice for a hearing. When Tulsi struggled to understand the requirements, the Yuvodaya District Coordinator assisted him.



SUCCESS STORIES

Bijadutir "Main Hoon Na" Volunteer Helps Widow Obtain Pension Benefits

Elam Kamla, a widow from the village of Yapla in Bhopalpatnam block, was facing financial hardship and mental stress after the death of her husband, the late Yalam Koumarya. She had repeatedly sought help from the village Sarpanch, Secretary, and other officials to avail the widow pension scheme but had not received any assistance.

In this difficult situation, Bijadutir "Main Hoon Na" volunteer Parvati Elam understood Kamla's problem during a home visit. Using the methods learned in training—observing the issue, listening, and linking it to a solution—Parvati helped her. She raised Kamla's awareness about mental health and made meaningful efforts to reduce her stress.

Parvati took Kamla to the Janpad office and assisted her in applying for the widow pension scheme. Now, Kamla is receiving the benefits of the widow pension, bringing happiness to her family and improving her mental health. Kamla expressed her gratitude to Parvati Elam, stating that her assistance has brought a new dawn of hope and joy to her life.

Parvati Elam

Bijadutir Volunteer



Parvati took Kamla to the Janpad office and assisted her in applying for the widow pension scheme. Now, Kamla is receiving the benefits of the widow pension, bringing happiness to her family and improving her mental health.



SUCCESS STORIES



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Bodhi Ram Sahu: A Journey Towards Self-Reliance and Sustainable Farming

In the heart of Mahli village in Pandariya Block, Bodhi Ram Sahu's story stands as a beacon of hope and inspiration. Once solely dependent on sugarcane farming, he faced numerous challenges that left his family struggling to make ends meet. However, two years ago, his association with the Kavir Kisan group marked the beginning of a transformative journey toward sustainability and self-reliance.

Bodhi Ram revived a neglected pond that had remained unused for 15 years and began fish farming, cultivating species such as Rohu, Katla, and Mrigal. This provided a steady source of income and an additional livelihood for his family.

In his paddy fields, he embraced green manure by planting sun hemp seeds across 4 acres. This sustainable practice enriched the soil naturally, reduced dependency on chemical fertilizers, and boosted his crop yield. Bodhi Ram also planted bamboo, coconut, and Khumhar trees along the boundaries of his farmland. These plantations promise future income while contributing to environmental conservation.

With guidance from the Kavir Kisan group, he also established a thriving kitchen garden that now overflows with fresh vegetables. Reflecting on his transformation, Bodhi Ram shared, "Joining the Kavir Kisan group opened my eyes to the possibilities of mixed farming. I've not only improved my income but also secured a better future for my family."

His story is a testament to the power of innovation, resilience, and community support. By embracing sustainable practices and utilizing available resources, Bodhi Ram Sahu has transformed his challenges into opportunities, inspiring countless farmers to take steps toward self-reliance and a brighter future.



Surendra Sonkar

Field Officer, Kabirdham

SUCCESS STORIES



With the support of Kavir Kisan, she learned to prepare natural solutions like neemastra and jeevamrit, which kept her garden healthy without harmful chemicals. Slowly, Sunita's Garden flourished, providing her family with fresh, organic vegetables. She could now proudly say, "We no longer need to rely on the market."



The Garden of Life: How Sunita Found Fulfillment Through Her Kitchen Oasis

Sunita Chandravanshi, a hardworking woman from Daujari, lives in a joint family with her husband, children, and in-laws. While farming was part of her family's tradition, her life took a transformative turn when she became involved with the Kavir Kisan organization. It all began when her husband, an active member of the group, shared stories of the monthly meetings where farmers learned new techniques for improving their farming practices. Sunita's curiosity was piqued, and soon she joined the group, eager to explore new possibilities for her family.



Inspired by the idea of growing her own food, Sunita began a small kitchen garden in her backyard. At first, the journey was challenging, with pests and diseases threatening her plants. But with the support of Kavir Kisan, she learned to prepare natural solutions like neemastra and jeevamrit, which kept her garden healthy without harmful chemicals. Slowly, Sunita's Garden flourished, providing her family with fresh, organic vegetables. She could now proudly say, "We no longer need to rely on the market."

As Sunita's success grew, she didn't keep it to herself. She shared her knowledge with other women in her village, encouraging them to start their own gardens. Her story became an inspiration, showing how small changes could lead to big impacts. Today, Sunita's kitchen garden is not just a source of food; it's a symbol of empowerment, proving that with hard work, dedication, and the right support, any challenge can be overcome.

Kavita Lanjhi
Kabirdham





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