

SOCIAL INITIATIVES FOR GROWTH AND NETWORKING (SIGN) RANCHI



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Annual Report

2020-21

**PREAMBLE:**

"Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking" (SIGN) is the official body of the Catholic Bishops of Jharkhand and Andamans (JHHAN) for social concern and human development. It anchors the efforts of 8 Social Service Societies of the diocese of Daltonganj, Dumka, Gumla, Hazaribagh, Jamshedpur, Khunti, Ranchi and Simdega in promoting A Just and Humane Society based on the values of Love, Peace, Equality and Dignity to all

VISION:

A Just and Humane Society based on the values of Love, Peace, Equality and Dignity to all

MISSION

An Empowered Society Well-knit and Disciplined, that upholds human dignity of the oppressed and the marginalized, especially the Tribals and the Dalits by means of liaison and networking with the Diocesan Institutions and Faith Based Organization in dialogue and collaboration with Government and like-minded Organization

GOAL

- Ensuring sustainable livelihood opportunities to all, particularly based on harmony with nature, especially for the poor and the marginalized
- Promoting effective governance
- Enabling a holistic and healthy society
- Ensuring quality education for all
- Ensuring women's participation and rights in all spheres
- Prevent human trafficking
- Fostering inter-religious harmony
- Ensure SIGN and partners become effectively managed and sustainable organizations

Strategic Pillars

1. Natural Resource Management & Livelihood;
 - a) Climate Adaptive Agriculture
 - b) Farmer Owned Producer and Marketing Organizations
 - c) Food Sovereignty
2. Child Protection
3. Gender Equality
4. Resource Mobilization
5. Education to all
6. Health for all
7. Human Trafficking and Safe Migration
8. Volunteerism
9. Institutional Development and Good Governance
10. Inter-Religious Harmony and Networking with likeminded NGOs

The Cross-cutting Issues in all the above Strategic Pillars are

"Preservation and Promotion of Tribal Identity"

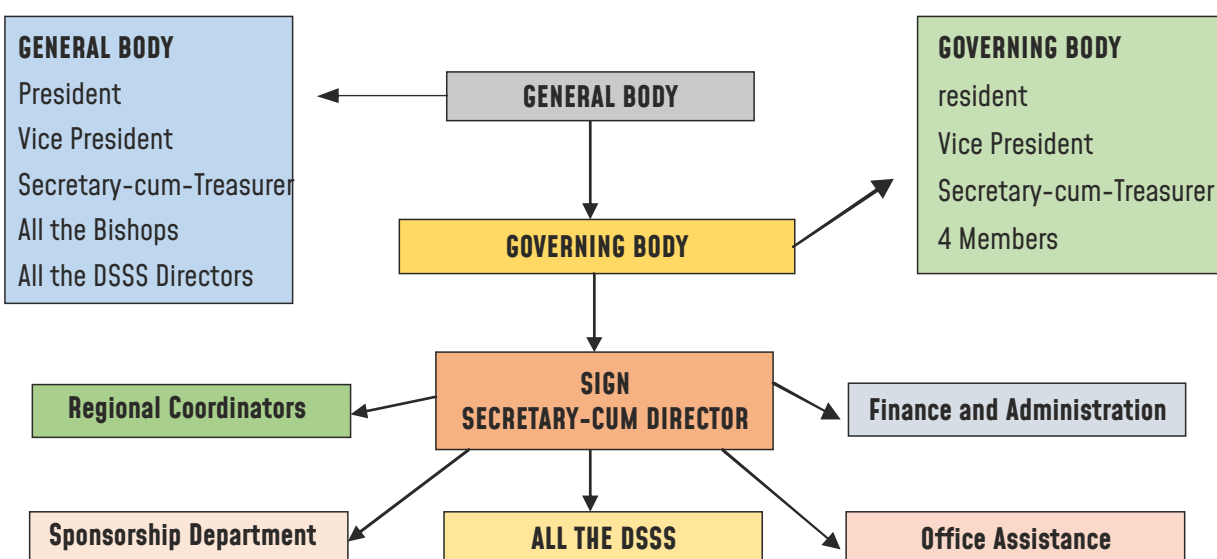
AND

"Community-Led Development"

GOVERNING BOARD

Name	Address	Occupation	Designation
His Grace Felix Toppo, SJ	Archbishop's House. Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi, Jharkhand	Social Work	President
Most Rev. Binay Kandulna	Bishop's House, Khunti, Jharkhand	Social Work	Vice President
Bipin Kumar Pani	3 rd Floor, Social Development Centre Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi, Jharkhand	Social Work	Secretary
Most Rev. Anand Jojo	Diocesan Training Centre Hazaribagh, Jharkhand	Social Work	Member
Most Rev. Julias Marandi	Bishop's House Dudhani, Dumka, Jharkhand	Social Work	Member
Joseph AJ	Jan Vikas Kendra Morrise Road, Zullu Park, Hazaribagh	Social Work	Member
Anil Kujur	Catholic Charities Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi, Jharkhand	Social Work	Member

Organogram





RANCHI CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE

Archbishop's House, Dr. Camil Bulcke Path
Ranchi - 834001, Jharkhand, India

Rt. Rev. Dr. Felix Toppo, S.J., D.D.

Archbishop of Ranchi,
Email: felixtopposr@gmail.com & ranchiarchdiocese@gmail.com

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President's Message



Dear Friends and Well Wishers,

"Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are in turmoil within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God." These words from Psalm 43.5 keep coming to my mind as we pass through very difficult times. The pandemic that has hit the world creating a global crisis has turned into a deeply personal and particularly troubling adversity for us there in Jharkhand. suffering, pain and anguish has followed, in our presbyteries, in our religious communities and in our neighborhoods.

But despite the dark clouds, hope in God, faith in his mercy, love for mankind, and compassion for the weak, the underprivileged and the deprived were also shining like torches amidst the darkness and the gloom around us.

For me, it was a particular grace of God to be blessed with the possibility of leading much relief work an actually, being part of it. While we were pained and troubled by the despair in the eyes of returning migrants, displaced because of unplanned lockdowns, fear and joblessness, we also saw hope in God shining in their eyes when they found welcome and relief in the shelters run by the Catholic Church. There was much to learn from the quiet dignity of widows struggling to take forward their lives and families, from the tender gratitude in the expressions of rickshaw pullers who often live by the rough rules of the road, through the tiny smiles on faces of tired hungry villagers as they received rations from us and realized that they had something to eat for the next fortnight. Amidst all this happening around us, the refrain in our hearts was always, hope in God for he is the master of the universe.

Our work of relief and comfort was largely possible because of your benefactors and to a very great extend due to our Funding who enabled us to reach out to the weak and the marginalized. The support and encouragement of our funding partners enabled SIGN to perform extensive relief work during this pandemic. In the initial stages, SIGN participated in the joint relief effort of the Government of Jharkhand and Archdiocese of Ranchi. It also distributed rations on its own. Later as the lockdown restrictions were relaxed by the Government, SIGN implemented the project activities of Child Health Care by motivating and encouraging pregnant women and lactating mothers to visit VHND of child vaccination. It also motivated farmers in their work during these very testing times.

It is my ardent desire that we continue our efforts of brining God's hope to all people specially to those who need it most.

Though it is a sad and sorrowful task that I have to perform, I cannot conclude without paying tribute to Late Fr. S. Christu Das, whom we lost on 23rd April. In him we have lost a dedicated warrior whose heart throbbed for the poor and whose enthusiasm and dynamism were unmatched and contagious. He was an asset to SIGN and its partners. May God grant him eternal Rest.



✠Felix Toppo, S.J.
President of SIGN
Archbishop of Ranchi Archdiocese

Most Rev. Binay Kandulna
Bishop of Khunti



Bishop's House
Torpa Road, Khunti
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Vice President's Message



Dear Friends and Well-wishers,

The year under review has tested everyone. Families struggled with the COVID-19 pandemic and personal loss. People, especially the people from rural area grapple with a steep decline in their economic status as lockdowns have closed all the doors of employment.

The new realities of working from home, unemployment, online-schooling and physical distance with other family members, friends and colleagues caused lot of worries. Adapting to lifestyle changes such as these, and managing the fear of contracting the virus and worry about people close to us who are particularly vulnerable, are challenging for all of us.

All these events have increased uncertainty about the future, and they raise important questions about the role of Social Wing of the Church in society. How does the social worker demonstrate responsible leadership? How can organization like Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN) deliver on our commitments to provide food security to all stakeholders? What are the opportunities to rebuild trust in farming with a purpose to control migration?

Against this background, SIGN showed tremendous resilience and responsibility to support one another and the rural population and in doing so, have built confidence among the farmers to restart farming. They also motivated and gave courage to the mothers to go back to Village Health and Nutrition Day (VHND) centres.

At the time of writing this message, the pandemic is ongoing, but the arrival of vaccines suggests the health crisis will wane. I am confident, the time will defiantly change and humanistic values will transform challenges in to energy to create positive value.

I would like to extend my high appreciation to all the funding partners for supporting us at SIGN during this challenging time to be the part of vulnerable people's life.

Finally, while paying homage to Late Fr. S. Christu Das, the founding member of SIGN, I quote Abraham Lincoln "In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years". Though Fr. Christu Das was there with us for a short while, but he did a tremendous work for the development of tribals in Jharkhand. May his Soul Rest in Peace.

God Bless us all

X Binay Kandulna
Bishop of Khunti Diocese
Vice President of SIGN



SOCIAL INITIATIVES FOR GROWTH AND NETWORKING

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Regd. Under Society Registration Act XXI of 1860 - No. 731

MOST REV. FELIX TOPPO - PRESIDENT

MOST REV. BINAY KANDULANA - VICE PRESIDENT

FR. BIPIN PANI - SECRETARY

From Secretary's Desk



Dear Friends, Well Wishers, Associates and Partners in Development,

The year 2020-2021 was one of the most challenging years in the history of the world. The impact of Covid-19 was felt by all the organizations, be it industrial or working in social development. SIGN was not an exception.

Government of India announced a 21 days' nationwide lockdown towards the end of March 2020 to stop spread of the virus. The lockdown was extended or re-imposed several times till the end of the year. This lockdown had a cascading effect on all businesses. As all work stopped due to lockdown the migrant workers from different states working in big cities had to return to their native place. Workers from Jharkhand were also among them. It was an extremely difficult time for the people, especially workers from the unorganized sector. No work meant no income and no food for the family. Even though some of them had the idea of possibilities of lockdown due to COVID-19, they could not stock ration to last long enough, as they belonged to low-income group. As a result, they faced acute shortage of food supply.

While COVID-19 had brought hardship to many families, SIGN used this time to serve the suffering community. With the support of Missio, Fondazione Fratelli Dimenticati and Jiv Daya Foundation, SIGN could extend its services in relief work mainly distributing ration among the daily wage earners, rag pickers, people from begging community, people affected with leprosy, cleaners, maids, hawkers, sex workers, blind beggars among others. The staff of SIGN showed their commitment and diligence to the cause of the organization. Even though the virus infection was raging all around, they came early in the morning to go for ration distributions among the needy and left for home late in the evening. This relief work went on till the end of June 2020.

Meanwhile Fr. Manoj Kulu and Mr. Prabhat Kandulna, two important members of SIGN, left us for their personal reasons. We thank them for the contribution they made to the community. We wish them success in their future endeavours.

When Corona wave was slowing down, SIGN took up project activities and started visiting the project area. SIGN followed all the protocols of pandemic lockdown while strengthening health systems to prevent child and maternal mortality as well as prevent new born death by raising awareness of community in the project area on issues of diarrhoea and pneumonia management. SIGN staff, while monitoring 481 VHNDs, could visit and motivate 3081 pregnant women and 3773 lactating mothers to regularly attend VHNDs. SIGN conducted Health Education Session for 107 teachers in 13 schools and Health Education Session for 1885 children at the village level. Capacity built of 624 Village Volunteers on Immunization, Diarrhoea, and Pneumonia. 401 SHG members were trained on importance of Routine Immunization, precaution during Diarrhoea, role of SHGs in strengthening Child Health care, Kangaroo Mother Care and importance of Breast Feeding. Out of 112 Left-outs 75 Left-outs and out of 513 Dropouts 459 Dropouts were linked with VHNDs. Out of 26 malnourished children 16 were successfully treated at MTC. With these activities SIGN was able to bring positive changes in the behaviour of the mothers during pregnancy and after the birth of the child. There is improvement in institutional delivery and improvement on hygiene practices.

As Mother and Child Health care is important so also is the education of the children. Due to lockdown all schools were

closed from 24th March 2020 onwards. It was difficult time for the parents, students as well as for the schools. Parents did not know how to keep children occupied for the whole day. As schools were closed after the final session of 2019-2020, there were no assignments given to the children. Children, who were forced to be away from school for so long, had even forgotten the basic manners of greetings. Children, coming from the remote tribal villages, due to long absence from the school, had forgotten to communicate in Hindi. School administration due to the lockdown could not collect the fees from the students and as a result was unable to pay the salary to the teachers. Realizing the loss children were facing, few schools introduced online classes for children. However, this did not bear much fruit, as rural Jharkhand lacks basic facility like regular electricity supply and internet connectivity and knowledge for online classes. Many of the parents did not have proper mobile phones. Most of the family had one or two phones between the parents and no phone for the children. Administration of some of the schools of our sponsorship program sent their teachers to the villages for few hours, to conduct classes for all the children of the village, whereas some of the schools, following the norms of COVID-19 lockdown, were conducting the session for students of higher classes on alternative days for few hours in the school itself. By the end of December, classes for students of standard 8, 9 & 10 were allowed to come to the schools. Fratelli Dimenticati, not only supported us to feed starving community, but also supported us in distribution of education materials as well as in conducting classes during lockdown.

One of the thrusts of SIGN is to work towards Food Security leading to Food Sovereignty. Fortunately, soon after relief work of distribution of ration, Missio, Austria came forward to support 10000 farmers in five districts of Jharkhand. In spite of pandemic lockdown, SIGN could reach out to farmers of five districts viz. Gumla, Hazaribagh, Khunti, Ranchi, and Simdega, not only for food security but also commercial farming. We conducted one ToT and 5 trainings in each of the districts on Papaya and Moringa growing. Jharkhand farmers have been growing rain-fed paddy for ages and some of them have been growing vegetables as well. Now SIGN is trying to teach them to do farming collectively as well as the farming which will be easy for them to get linked with marketing. In this regard Caritas India has been supporting us with strategic approach of promoting Volunteerism and approach of Sharing Community. Caritas India has also helped us in strengthening the community with different trainings as well as dialogues with the duty bearers on behalf of the community and dialogue with the community to understand them. As a result of these efforts, New Jagriti Kisan Samiti of Banpur got drip irrigation pipes to irrigate Papaya cultivation, whereas 175 families of Christ the King Church, Latehar of Daltonganj Diocese raised fund and promoted basic need banks.

By the end of the fiscal year 2020-2021 once again our movements got restricted, as the second wave of Corona virus had hit India. About this time, we were saddened to hear the sudden loss of Rev. Fr. S. Christu Das, the Founder and the first Director of Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN). His loss is irreparable. We cherish the initiatives taken and good work done by him. May God grant him eternal rest.

At the end, I extend my sincere THANKS to Fondazione Fratelli Dimenticati Onlus, Italy; Kindermissionswerk Die Sternsinger, Germany; Caritas India; Catholic Relief Services; Missio, Austria; and Jiv Daya Foundation for trusting us and supporting us for the relief work as well as development activities.

We value and respect the technical assistance and support provided by Save the Children's Fund, NABARD-Jharkhand, SEMINA Agro, Right-to-Food Campaign, MNREGA-Watch-Team, and DevNet during the year. We acknowledge the support and cooperation of all the Associate Partners in eight Dioceses of Jharkhand. We highly appreciate all the members of Governing Body, as they stood by SIGN during this challenging time.

I am proud of what SIGN has done during the year and the way the staff of SIGN adapted quickly to the change brought in by the Covid 19 work environment, while at the same time continuing to connect, collaborate and innovate for the benefit of our partners in development. Thanks to one and all.

God Bless us All



Fr. Bipin Kumar Pani
Secretary



A Man of IGNITING Hope: Fr. S Christu Das

"Say not in grief, 'he is no more' but live in Thankfulness that we were privileged to share life with him". Yes, it is a fact that Fr. S. Christu Das was called for the eternal reward on 23rd April 2021, but can we say that he is no more with us. NO, because for every little thing he was with us. We could approach him anytime and every time and get help from him. Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN), Ranchi will always fondly remember, its Founder, the first Director and the Champion of Forum.

As the Secretary-cum-Director of SIGN, he served the society for 10 long years. It was not only the social development work, but spiritual angle of the social work, which keep him alive in the hearts of millions in the interior villages as well as that of religious people. He was immensely gifted, yet he was down to earth always working for the development of tribals. He dreamt of a DIGNIFIED life of a TRIBAL and so he promoted community led development. Worked tirelessly on Tribal Awakening Soul to bring awareness among the tribals: "Jharkhand Ke Adivasi Mahanayak" and "Jharkhand Ke Pramukh Adivasi Samudai" are the simple proofs of this.



REV. FR. S. CHRISTU DAS
(20-05-1956 TO 23-05-2021)

He had deep knowledge and vast experience in health sector, so worked hard to strengthen the Community Health Centres in remote villages of Jharkhand. His work in book form "Standard Treatment Guidelines" was so much sought after that he had to publish it in three volumes.

As an analytic personality, his second major campaign was on Laudato Si (Care for Common Home) on environmental protection in all the dioceses. This had a very deep impact on the people and well accepted by the community, therefore thousands of timber and fruit trees were planted. He even came out with a booklet titled Laudato Si (Care for Common Home) in local context.

His managerial skills and his organised way of doing things encouraged everyone and remain as an inspiration for all. I vividly recall Fr. S. Christu meticulous time management. He was a man of igniting hope at every stage of life. SIGN owes a heartfelt tribute to this great soul. Though he is no more with us but his memories and good works will always be with the people.

So it is true, when all is said and done, Grief is the price we pay for Love, Yes, Fr. Christu, we love you and miss you. May the Soul of Christu Das Rest in Peace.

A RELIEF EXPERIENCE DURING COVID - 19 LOCKDOWN



The Year 2019-2020 will be always remembered in human history for the fear, the damage, the uncertainty and the chaotic situation created by COVID-19 Pandemic. People were forced to live a life, which they were not used to. There was not a single country left, which was not in the grip of COVID-19. Every country had announced countrywide Lockdown in order to combat COVID-19. India did the same, by announcing lockdown on 24th March 2020. With this unexpected lockdown, lakhs and thousands of migrant workers from unorganized sectors had to rush back to their respective state/village. This unannounced returning of these migrant kith and kin added burden to many families, as they came empty handed and back home also there is no

work of any one. The people staying in their own states also had hard times. Daily wage earners, rag pickers, cleaners, maids, hawkers, people from begging community (including blind beggars), people affected with leprosy, sex workers, and so on were finding difficult to get meal even for a day.

Seeing this tragedy, caused by this pandemic, Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN) decided to do something for suffering people in Ranchi from its own resources. SIGN started to identify the most needy people in and around the city with the help of local leaders. The identified groups of people were blind beggars, daily wage earners, leprosy patients, rickshaw pullers, cleaners, rag pickers, widows, aged, sex workers, housemaids and migrant labors. SIGN provided them with ration kit which included Rice, Pulses, Cooking oil, Soybean, Potato, Onions, Salt, Soap and Mask. Meanwhile SIGN also got the support of Missio, Austria, Fondazione Fratelli Dimenticati, and Jiv Daya Foundation.



With the help of MISSIO, SIGN could reach out to 22 different locations for 18 days to distribute dry ration among 1342 families of destitute, widows, leprosy patients, rag pickers, physically and mentally challenged people, aged, daily labours, maids, sweepers, cleaners, hawkers, rickshaw pullers, unemployed and sex workers. The ration kit included Rice, Pulses, Salt, Potato, Cooking oil, Sanitary pad, and Mask.



Missio also helped us to support two Block Development Offices of Ranchi with 1000 sanitizer, 500 face masks and 500 hand gloves. Thanks to Bishop Theodore Mascarenhas Auxiliary Bishop of Ranchi Archdiocese, who helped us to approach Chanhoo and Mandar Block Development Officers.

Near Rampur intersection, SIGN could distribute snacks (Bitten Rice, Jaggery and Biscuits), a bottle of Bisleri water

and Glucon D to 453 migrants travelling by bus from Tamil Nadu to Bihar it was possible with the support of MISSIO.

With the Generous support of Fondazione Fratelli Dimenticati, SIGN identified two of its centers viz. St. Joseph's Girls' School, Samlong run by St. Anne's Sisters and rag pickers families of Pahari Mandir taken care off by REDS, Ranchi. SIGN made two rounds of distribution in these two centres. 300 families of sponsored children of St. Joseph's Girls' School, Samlong, who were from the families of daily wage workers, and maids and 40 families of ragpickers and rickshaw puller of REDS were twice visited by SIGN and helped with ration and young girls also received sanitary pad.



With the support of JIV DAYA FOUNDATION, SIGN visited Paryago, Naro and Katchancho of Mandar Block to distribute ration for migrant labours, who were engaged in construction works, brick kiln and glass cleaning in different cities of India.



As the relief worked progressed we realized that Bible words are coming alive, "Harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few". We were getting call from many places and we had to respond to all the calls, but could attend only a few of them, as we had limited resources. It was an eye opener for all the staff of SIGN, seeing destitute, the beggars (including blind beggars), the sex workers. In fact, the presence of sex workers surprised us. SIGN realized that we should not restrict SIGN's working domain to rural development alone. In urban itself there are so many needy people, who need to be taken care off.

It also taught us the willingness to share the little we have with people in need. These created a sense of sharing with Joy.

These experiences also let us know the pathetic condition of the people, living around us. Many are unemployed. Many are from unorganized sector. Many are migrant laborer, who go to different cities to earn their livelihood leaving their loved ones. Many have to live in slums and interior villages with lack of basic facilities and poverty.

Helping and supporting them in little way gave them hope and relief. The COVID -19 Relief work gave a sense of belongingness and oneness. Now people have more time for their families. Even if the families are outside, all of them are connected with their mobile-phone. This pandemic has made SIGN to seriously think to work in the urban area with urban adolescent, health care, destitute, beggars, blind and leprosy patients.

SIGN was able to serve suffering people only because MISSIO, Austria, Fondazione Fratelli Dimenticati and JIV DAYA FOUNDATION provided SIGN the required support generously. For this reason, on behalf of all the beneficiaries, SIGN would like to express sincere THANKS to all the benefactors of these agencies, who stood by us during this challenging time. We hope that this pandemic will soon be resolved. Hope there will be more employment opportunities even for the migrants returned from other states.



Child Health Care during COVID-19 Lockdown

Health is an important aspect of human life as it works as lubricating oil for growth of the Human Society. The access to the good health services for underprivileged community still needs to be facilitated. The prime focus of SIGN has been to build a healthy society by promoting Mother and Child Health Care. Through its effort SIGN is trying to strengthen existing health system rather than duplicating effort to improve health status. Even during this pandemic, systematic community level approach Mother and Child Health Care was continued in the 'Hard to Reach Areas' of 72 Panchayats of Mahuadanr Block in Latehar, Chainpur Block in Palamau District, Amrapara Block in Pakur District, Barhet Block of Sahenbganj district and the Jaganathpur Block in West Singhbhum Districts.



During COVID-19 lockdown, SIGN came forward with the strategy, which is more appropriate to COVID-19 protocol. The content of the training was added with knowledge sharing on COVID-19, symptom of infection, COVID-19 appropriate behavior for protection from COVID infection. In return, the district project team transferred knowledge to SHG members and Gram Sabha leaders and the Community Members.

481 VHNDs were covered during lockdown to improve its health services. Village Health and Nutrition Days were celebrated in VHND centers. SIGN project team mobilized community to link 16,532 children and 2562 pregnant women to VHND. 534 Institutional Deliveries conducted were the impact of training process. This is 89.74% of deliveries in 600 villages. Awareness and health classes conducted for 6113

students of 56 schools, in the villages, for control over waterborne and the bacterial disease like; Pneumonia, diarrhea etc. Care to 2130 adolescent girls of 150 Adolescent girls group is also focused to improve hemoglobin level and ensure healthy future mother.

SIGN acknowledges the contribution made by 1076 Village Volunteers from 600 villages in escalating in ANC (Ante-natal Checkups) and PNC (Post Natal Checkups) coverage, institutional deliveries, Vaccination coverage name a few by organizing different health rallies for mass level awareness campaign on different health issues; such as Diarrhea control, nutrition, Immunization, importance of Colostrum feeding etc. This effort brought changes in community behavior for example: Colostrum Feeding; which was hardly a practice in the community, is now adopted very well by the community. Mother in-laws suggesting their daughter in-laws for colostrum feeding. Here the role of SHGs also cannot be denied in Colostrum feeding.

The collaboration with the government is reflected in Advocacy meeting with the officials. Monthly VHND plans are shared with the project team members.



S.N.	Activities conducted during the year to ensure Safe Motherhood and Child Care	Achievement
1.	Village volunteers trained	921
2.	SHG and Gram Sabha members trained	793
3.	School Teachers Trained	164
4.	Students Participated in One Day School Health Education	6113
5.	No. of Health Rallies in a year	842
6.	Adolescent Girls sensitized	2130
7.	FFL Show	2997
8.	Pregnant Women attending VHND	2562
9.	No. of Institutional Deliveries	534
10.	No. of Home Deliveries	61
11.	Children 0 – 2 years age group vaccinated	16532
12.	Drop Out Children identified	513
13.	Drop Out Children immunized	459
14.	Left Out Children identified	112
15.	Left Out Children Immunized	75
16.	Malnourished Children identified and referred to MTC	26
17.	Malnourished Children Treated	16
18.	Kitchen Garden Promoted	1464



COVID-19 pandemic brought difficult time for everyone, but it was more so for Pregnant women, lactating mother and children. In this challenging time, SIGN Project team worked shoulder to shoulder with Block Level Government Health Department and accompanied FLWs (Front-line health Workers) in identifying migrant workers in Barhet Block of Sahebganj district and Amrapara Block of Pakur district as well as under Intensive Immunization Program, strategized to cover all the dropout children of 0-2 years age group. This support made easy for FLWs for testing suspected persons as well as to cover all the dropped out from schedule vaccination program.



The following points highlights the challenges faced in child health care during COVID -19 in the project areas in the year 2020-21.

- Lack of proper information about the Virus created lot of confusion and fear among the people.
- Immunization of the children was stopped for about one month between 22nd March 2020 to 7th May in most of the villages
- Mothers scared to come with their children to VHND due corona infection. However, after 7th May it gradually started and took time to get its normal pace.
- Decrease in institutional delivery because, a) Pregnant women had to undergo through COVID test that made them uncomfortable, b) Restriction on transportation facilities
- Linkage of Dropout and left out was hampered.
- As all the Schools were closed due to COVID-19, School Health Classes were conducted in villages in smaller groups.
- Entry in villages was prohibited in Mahuadanr Block of Latehar district, and therefore the project staffs were not able to reach to the community for some time.
- Due to Restriction in the mass gathering village meetings and the trainings were conducted in small groups.



Though from one angle COVID-19 looks brining negative impact on the people, but from another angle it also could be seen bringing positive impact on people for example: On "Proper Hand Washing" Marangbiti Kisku, a SHG member from Amrapara, says though we talked many times about hand washing in SHG meeting, but only during COVID-19 we realized the importance of handwashing and thus handwashing became a part of our daily living. There is always a bright day after every dark night.

Steps Towards Commercial Agriculture in Jharkhand

78% of total population of Jharkhand lives in rural area. Though Jharkhand is a mineral-rich state, yet about 75% of the population depends on rain-fed agriculture for their survival. Nearly 70% of the area during Kharif is under paddy cultivation, whereas most of this area remains fallow during the Rabi season. Despite good rainfall in the region, the cropped area, growing period and cropping intensity are low. As agriculture is seasonal in character, the rural population gets seasonal employment. Most of them go without work after December and so they are forced to migrate to big cities to brick kilns, glass factory, cleaners, labour and so on. Against this background, SIGN realized that Food Security is not enough for Rural Jharkhand, and so it started facilitating and motivating farmers for commercial farming by promoting Papaya cultivation, Moringa Cultivation, Mushroom Production, and formation of Farmers Clubs, beside paddy cultivation with SRI method. The underlining effort in all these is promotion of organic farming.



In order to instil the urge for commercial farming, SIGN organized a ToT at Regional level followed by at District level training. As a result, trained farmers are motivating other farmers to adopt the commercial farming of papaya growing in their respective places.

Following pictures depicts the change brought in after the training by New Jagriti Kisan Club in Banpur Sarna Toli Village facilitated by SIGN. It is a preparation for group farming by New Jagriti Kisan Club.



Before



After



Mr. Anand Topno, the Hardworking Farmer



49 years old, Mr. Anand Topno, from Marcha village in Torpa block of Khunti district, a hardworking farmer, in spite of having 3.5 acres of land, was just managing to support his family of two children and his wife. Fortunately, under “Sustainable Farming in Jharkhand, supported by Missio, Austria, he had the opportunity to participate in Regional Level ToT on Papaya and Moringa Farming. It was followed by Diocesan level training on the same subject under the same project organized by Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN), Ranchi.

With these two back to back training, he was very clear in his mind that farming is community effort and to enhance economic condition of the individual family, they have to put their effort as a group for commercial farming. This learnings, he shared with his village-head and later on with other villagers of Marcha village, as a result 13 farmers joined Anand Topno to form “Marcha Kisan Vikas Club” and 16 farmers took up Papaya farming. Today under his leadership, these 16 farmers have planted Papaya in Marcha village. Six other farmers have planted short duration drought resistant paddy. Beside all these, Ananad has planted three Jack fruit trees in his farm with the support of SIGN team. Mr. Ananad says, it is just the beginning, he is sure that next year more farmers will go for commercial farming and more numbers of farmers will be part of Farmers' Club.



School Education Visa-a-Vis with COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic is a big challenge of our time. It caused the loss of lives and livelihood of many dear ones. Nevertheless, the Corona virus is much more than merely a health crisis; it is also a socio-economic crisis beyond compare. It is for the first time in human history that any pandemic like COVID-19 has challenged the education system not only in Jharkhand alone, but also all over the world.

We know that usually, the school teaching mainly revolves around the classroom teaching, but COVID-19 forced the school system to go for online teaching, which was unheard of in rural Jharkhand. Nevertheless, when half the year was wasted in lockdown with no children coming to schools, Government and the Private schools had to think differently to educate children. Till the yesterday, the ones, who were raising objection on giving mobile in the hands of children, were the ones, supporting for giving mobile to every school-going child in the family. Digital learning became the way of life to transform the education system in the schools. Schools were forced to adapt the technology as per the guidance of Government. It was quite encouraging to see even the school in the rural set up adopting this new way of teaching with the whole purpose of educating rural students.



The benefits of online learning are manifold but there are many roadblocks too. In many families there are more than one child, for parents it is/was quite burdensome to provide mobiles to every child. Data packs and their costs are/were also a big deterrent both for teachers as well as students. Keep aside the children, teachers also struggled to update their digital literacy. The infrastructural facilities were not developed as per the need of online learning. Steady flow of electricity and lack of high speed internet became major barriers to many of our children.

In the midst of all these challenges, wherever technology was failing, teachers were reaching out to the students by arranging community schools. They were also providing learning materials and doing activities in the villages. With the support and cooperation of local communities rural schools were conducted. Some schools arranged schooling for children in the school premises itself by calling students in small groups. Teaching arrangements were made under the trees, teachers were seen teaching using small blackboards and the students sitting in small groups maintaining physical distancing.





During pandemic teachers worked hard to bring behavioral changes in the community as well. They spread awareness with regard to hand washing, usage of mask and maintaining physical distancing. Being at the core of these interventions, Children acted as change agents, during pandemic. Children were supported with comprehensive guidelines about COVID-19, they helped other members of their respective families in sharing the knowledge on COVID-19 protocol. It helped them to cope up with the changing scenario during Padamic.

Though Schools tried different ways to educate children during this pandemic, yet pandemic seems to have upper hand. However, battle is not over yet. We need to learn to live in new normal and have to find more solutions to educate children.

However, when things were normal SIGN through sponsorship program could shape the lives of many children. Suman Albina Kachhap is one such fortunate girl, who with the generous support of Fratelli Dimenticati completed her schooling and now working as a nurse in Gurunanak Hospital, Ranchi. Suman d/o Late Anthony Kachhap and Alma Kachhap, a resident of Palandu, remembers that her childhood was filled with challenges. They were living in a hand to mouth situation. With God's providence, she got the opportunity to study in Immaculate Heart of Mary Middle School<plandu till class 6. Rest of her schooling she did from Carmel Girls' High School, Samlong. Suman is grateful to Fratelli Dimenticati for supporting her schooling and class 12th studies. After completing 12th, she underwent ANM training in St. Ursula ANM Training School, Lohardaga. Now she is employed with Gurunananak Hospital, Ranchi. She is a big support to the family and an inspiration to her two younger sisters and a brother. She says, "Without the support of Fratelli, she would never imagine to be a nurse". She says, "She does not have enough words to thank all the benefactors for the support they have provided to come up in the life.

This was possible only because agency like Fondazione Fratelli Dimenticati supports such children, and also class teaching was possible then. We hope that soon wrath of COVID-19 will be over and children will come back to continue their schooling in the company of their class mate in their respective schools.



Strategic Pillars in Action

SIGN just had initiated the concept of 4 Key Strategic Pillars (KSP) of Empowering Animation, Dialogue, Volunteerism and Sharing Community among its development partners in Jharkhand and COVID-19 had hit India. It was a new pandemic; people did not know much about it. There was lot of misconception about the pandemic. People were confused and frightened. People were worried and isolated in their house for nearly 7-8 months. They did not have enough food. SIGN accepted these challenges as opportunities and rendered its services to the humanity. Jharkhand Forum (SIGN), observed the situation of COVID-19 and accordingly planned, before executing

Relief Work of distributing ration to the needy and migrant people of Ranchi district. SIGN tried to apply the KSP concept for relief work by contacting target beneficiary, the district authorities, and asking the local leaders to manage the target beneficiaries. The distribution of dry ration was started on 7th April and it continued till 24th



June. Ration was distributed with two to three days' gap in between. Before each distribution, SIGN staff gave the instruction on importance of wearing masks, tips for washing hands with soap, and Physical distancing. SIGN, Ranchi has distributed dry ration packet for 2719 beneficiaries and snacks to 453 migrants till date. The total expense of dry ration packet is Rs. 900000.00 (Rupees Nine lac only).

In order to promote commercial farming and create linkages with the market for the farm products, SIGN organized several physical and virtual meetings of likeminded people like Retired-Government-Officers, farmers and institution. Suggestion was made to promote Farmers' Club and later on Farmers' Producer Organization to get the farm products in bulk as well as increase the bargaining power in the market.

To take this forward SIGN also organized training on Farmers Producers Organization, Cash Crop and its management. NABARD, Ranchi and experience person like Mr. Philemon Toppo, the retired General Manager of Hindustan Food Processing Unit provided the technical support for this.

SIGN organized State Level Workshop on Government Schemes (Social Security, Food Security and improved agriculture) with the help of Mr. Balram, the former advisor to commissioner of Supreme Court, Mr. Haldhar Mahto, the member of state Food Commission Jharkhand, and Mr. James Herenj, the state convener of MNREGA WATCH TEAM.



Key achievements of Strategic Pillars

Empowering Animation



- 1001 men and women farmer including partner staff have been capacitated (RSP, KSPs and Cash crops etc.)

through follow-up training at diocese level

- 10 new Farmers Clubs have been formed and 5 old Farmers Clubs have been strengthened
- New Jagriti Kisan Samiti of Banpur has adopted Community Led Approach
- 18 Mutual Help People's Organization formed
- 1 Mutual Help People's Organizations converted into Community led
- 1 Rights Based People's Organizations converted into Community led.
- 130 leaders have been developed at district and regional level

Dialogue

- New Jagriti Kisan Samiti of Banpur got drip irrigation pipes to irrigate Papaya cultivation.
- Trained farmers started dialoguing with SIGN not for financial support but ready to spend their own money to fulfill their basic agricultural needs.
- SIGN built a networking with local company namely; Semina Agro and ABUSL Ranchi to provide assistance in agriculture sector.
- 385 work hours spent by partner staff with the Community (Outside of official work) 2 Soup/Community Kitchens initiated



- 175 families of Christ the King Church, Latehar of Daltonganj Diocese raised fund and promoted basic need banks

Volunteering

- 16 persons donated blood on blood donation camp day
- 52 people have done volunteering work at district level
- 1418 volunteering hours done by volunteers at regional level / partner level
- 170 hours of volunteering done by partners staff / RF staff after their office work
- 16 persons have donated blood on blood donation camp day at Khunti

Sharing Community

- Rs. 251000 has been mobilized through individual fund raising in kind and money
- Rs. 1750 has been mobilized by 175 families of Christ the King. They have also collected some new and old cloths for the needy people
- 1 Earthen Check Dam has been constructed by New Jagri Kisan Samiti of Banpur Village
- 94 farmers are doing cash crops (rainy season onion seeds, elephant foot yam, ginger and papaya) after follow up trainings
- 15 farmers are doing rainy season onion cultivation by planting 7Kgs of seeds
- 25 farmers are doing Yarm farming planting by 1 quintal of elephant foot Yarm
- 35 farmers are doing ginger cultivation with 20 quintals of gingers
- 19 farmers have made nursery of 3500 Papaya seeds as cash crop



Act of Dignified Charity

What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead. Once Mother Teresa said, "Let us touch the dying, the poor, the lonely and the unwanted according to the graces we have received and let us not be ashamed or slow to do the humble work." Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN) in its Vision statement vouches for "DIGNITY to ALL", therefore during the year, besides regular program, SIGN likes to go for extra miles to help the rejected, abandoned, and the underprivileged.

Therefore, during the year 2020-2021 SIGN supported three families

UNEMPLOYED TO VEGETABLE SELLER

Mrs. Anita Lakra and Mr. Samuel Lakra from Kokar, Khora Toil, Ranchi, having no job, finding difficult to support their family of three sons and one daughter. They approached SIGN, with a plan to start a business to support their family. Having visited their home and known their real condition, SIGN helped them with a start-up capital of Rs 2090/- for a small vegetable shop. Both the husband and wife expressed their gratitude to SIGN for its helping hand.



TREATMENT SUPPORT TO BILASI SANYA



Mrs. Bilasi Sanya a 76 years old woman, unfortunately met with an accident and fractured her left leg. Due to poor financial condition she couldn't afford to get her treated. Even her daughter, who is a maid, could not get her treated. Suchita, her granddaughter, could not bear the pain of her grandmother anymore and approached SIGN, through Fr. Xavier Minj, for the treatment of Bilasi Sanya. On visiting the house, SIGN team observed that Mrs. Bilasi Sanya was not able to move her legs, her pain was visible on her face and she was bedridden. Seeing her pathetic situation and poor family condition SIGN supported her with physiotherapy and also provided them with ration kit and household stationaries, as it was COVID-19

Lockdown period. After continuous follow up and moral support she is fine today. All the family members are grateful to SIGN for the help they received during the difficult times.

AGRICULTURAL SUPPORT TO SUNITA DEVI



Bishnu Mahali from Sidro Siyartoli about 3 k.m. far from Thakurgoan in Burumu block of Ranchi District, due to excessive intake of drugs, has lost his mental balance. His wife Mrs. Sunita Devi was supporting the family by working as daily labor in her own village. However, due to COVID-19 she hardly got any work and finding difficult to support her family. As she is from a farming family, she wanted to do cultivate in her family land, but she did not have money to purchase the seeds and fertilizer. In utter despair, she came to seek the help from SIGN. SIGN team did the physical verification of the place. Having found it as a genuine need, SIGN helped her with 3 Kgs of Paddy seed, 2 Kgs of

Groundnuts, 7.2 Kgs of Maize for cultivation. With her hard work she got good crop. She is grateful to SIGN for the support and thanked for making her dream come true.

BLANKET DISTRIBUTION

On 18th December, on the occasion of Christmas, all the staff of SIGN visited Missionaries of Charity Ashram (M.C. Brothers House) in Harmu and celebrated Christmas with all the differently-abled persons staying there, by singing Christmas Carols and cutting cakes. Then distributed blankets to 32 differently-abled persons and served meals to them. Finally had meal with MC Brothers. MC Brothers had words of appreciation to all the members of SIGN for bringing Christmas Message to these forsaken and forgotten brothers.



"At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by "I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in." St. Mother Teresa"

Highly Value and Express Gratitude to Funding Partners

James Allen said, "No duty is more urgent than giving thanks." In a special way SIGN would like to express esteem and gratitude to all the Funding Partners and friends for your generous support during this challenging time. Without your support it would not have been possible to serve the suffering humanity.



We are honoured to be your partner in development work. It is because of your generous support that we could dare to think of bringing down IMR and MMR. Thanks



We will forever remain humble and grateful to you because during pandemic and after pandemic you always stood by us. Thank you so much



Nothing is more honourable than to be grateful to all the support Fratelli extended during the year. It was quite heart touching to realize that even in the worst of time you are there with us. Thank YOU



We appreciate from the depth our hearts for the road we've travelled together during this pandemic. The story of this challenging time brought us together to help many. Thanks



When it comes to life the critical thing is whether you take things for granted or take them with gratitude. Caritas India always provided the much needed guidance with utmost care. Thank you so much for every support provided.



We express our sincere thanks to Catholic Relief Services for all the timely support provided. We will always cherish the generous support provided to us. Thank you so much.

Helen Keller said, "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much". It is because of your generous support that during the year we could share the life of many underprivileged. Thanks so much

Sincere Thanks for Technical Assistance



Save the Children



NATIONAL BANK FOR
AGRICULTURE AND RURAL
DEVELOPMENT



Semina Agro Trading Pvt. Ltd.
REACHING THE UNREACHED



We extend our Sincere THANKS to Save the Children's Fund, NABARD-Jharkhand, SEMINA Agro, Right-to-Food Campaign, MNREGA-Watch-Team, and DevNet for technical assistance and support provided during the year.

Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN)
3rd Floor, Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi - 834001 (Jharkhand)

Receipt & Payment Account for the year ended 31st March 2021

Ref No.	Particulars	For the year ended 31 March, 2021 (Rs.)
I	RECEIPTS	
	<u>Opening Balance</u>	
	Cash in Hand	14,735
	Cash at Bank	26,09,850
	Fixed Deposits	61,15,132
		87,39,717
	<u>Grants / Donations / Other Income / Receipts</u>	
	Foreign Contribution Account	3,69,53,342
	Local Account	25,95,767
	Total	4,82,88,826
II	PAYMENTS	
	Foreign Contribution Account	3,32,77,498
	Local Account	25,78,356
	Total	3,58,55,854
	<u>Closing Balance</u>	
	Cash in Hand	50,126
	Cash at Bank	56,18,810
	Fixed Deposits	67,64,036
		1,24,32,972

As per our Report of even date

For M/s NRV & Associates

Chartered Accountants

Rajesh Himatsingka

CA. Rajesh Himatsingka

Partner

M.No.- 401880; UDIN - 21401880AAAAACD7269

Firm Reg No- 325333E

Place : Dumka

Date : 27/07/2021



[Signature]
Secretary

Social Initiatives for Growth & Networking (SIGN)



Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN)

3rd Floor, Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi - 834001 (Jharkhand)

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2021

Ref No.	Particulars	Note No.	As at 31 March, 2021 (Rs.)
A	SOURCES OF FUNDS		
1	Corpus and Capital Fund		
	(a) Corpus Fund	2.0	47,72,229
	(b) Capital Fund	2.1	35,21,611
2	Current liabilities		
	(a) Other current liabilities	2.3	53,45,396
	TOTAL		1,36,39,236
B	APPLICATION OF FUNDS		
1	FIXED ASSETS		
	Fixed assets	2.2	11,73,526
2	Current Assets, Loans and Advances		
	(c) Cash in Hand		50,126
	(d) Cash at Bank		56,18,810
	(e) Fixed Deposits		67,64,036
	(f) Other current assets		32,738
	TOTAL		1,36,39,236

Significant accounting policies and Notes on accounts**1 & 2**

The accompanying notes are integral part of the financial statements.

As per our Report of even date

For M/s NRV & Associates

Chartered Accountants



CA. Rajesh Himatsingka

Partner

M.No.- 401880; UDIN - 21401880AAAAACD7269

Firm Reg No- 325333E

Place : Dumka

Date : 27/07/2021



Secretary

Social Initiatives for Growth & Networking (SIGN)

Thanks to our Outgoing Staff



Fr. Manoj Kullu



Prabhat Kandulna

High appreciation for the contributions you made towards SIGN and its partners. Your hard work and dedication shine through everything you do, and your efforts have made a real difference to the team. Well done and All the BEST

OUR TEAM





SOCIAL INITIATIVES FOR GROWTH AND NETWORKING (SIGN)

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