



ANNUAL REPORT

2023-2024



Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN)

3rd Floor, Social Development Centre, Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi - 834001, Jharkhand, India



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WHO WE ARE:

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 is a non-profit making Society, registered under Society Registration Act 1860. Though Port Blair diocese also comes under the JHAAN Region, but for practical reason, SIGN anchors the efforts of only 8 Social Service Societies of the diocese of Daltonganj, Dumka, Gumla, Hazaribagh, Jamshedpur, Khunti, Ranchi and Simdega in Jharkhand. It promotes the efforts of Faith Based Organization and networks with all the likeminded NGOs in Jharkhand.



Society Registration No

731/2009-2010

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FCRA Registration No.

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PAN No.

AAEAS6072P

TAN No.

RCHS03376C

NGO Darpan ID

JH/2017/0168123

CSR Registration No

CSR00015062

Vision & Mission



Vision:

A just and Humane Society based on the Gospel 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 advocacy, liaison and networking with the diocesan institutions in collaboration with government and likeminded organizations.





- 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
- 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 for 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

GOVERNING BOARD

Name	Address	Occupation	Designation
His Grace Most Rev. Vincent Aind	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. Julius Marandi	Bishop's House Dudhani, Dumka, Jharkhand	Social Work	Member
Most Rev. Theodore Mascarenhas, SFX	Bishop's House, Station Road, Daltonganj 822101 Jharkhand	Social Work	Member
Most Rev Vincent Barwa	Bishop's House, samtoli PO Gotra, Simdega 835235, Jharkhand	Social Work	Member
Most Rev. Telesphore Bilung, SVD	Bishop's House, PO Golmuri, Jamshedpur 831003, Jharkhand	Social Work	Member
Most Rev. Anand Jojo	Diocesan Training Centre Hazaribagh, Jharkhand	Social Work	Member
Binay Kerketta	Catholic Charities, Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi	Social Work	Member





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Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking

HIS GRACE VINCENT AIND PRESIDENT

MOST REV. BINAY KANDULNA

VICE PRESIDENT

FR. BIPIN PANI SECRETARY



This will be my last message as the President of the Governing Board of SIGN after 15 years with this office. I am immensely grateful to JHAAN Bishops' Council for giving the Social Service Forum to SIGN, which relentlessly serves the poor section of the society in Jharkhand. It feels good to see SIGN growing from Strength to Strength. In fact, Over the years, SIGN has grown to be a significant forum of social service in Jharkhand. Heart-felt gratitude to Late S. Christudas, the pioneer Secretary-cum-Director, who was instrumental in establishing and nurturing SIGN to become the Regional Level Organization. I also thank Fr. Bipin Pani, the present Secretary-cum-Director of SIGN, who has maintained the development pace of SIGN. I take this opportunity to place my sincere and heartfelt appreciation for all the Benefactors, Well-Wishers and donors, who are relentlessly supporting SIGN. With their generous support SIGN is able to reach out many underprivileged people in the remotest place of Jharkhand and assist them to lead a dignified life. I wish to thank all the staff and volunteers of SIGN for your hard work and commitment as you strive relentlessly towards our shared common vision of serving the poor people. I may be retiring from the Board but I'll always remain connected with SIGN. I wish you well in its future endeavour.

+ Archbishop Felix Topp, SJ
Former Chairman of JHAAN BISHOPS' Council
Former President of SIGN



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As the newly appointed President of the Governing Board of the Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN), Ranchi, I am honoured to be included in an organization that significantly impacts the lives of the poor and the marginalized in the remote villages of Jharkhand. It is inspiring to know how the SIGN tirelessly supports thousands of individuals every day, advocating for poverty alleviation and working towards securing their promising future.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to Emeritus Archbishop Felix Toppo, SJ, for his unwavering support to the SIGN over a period of 15 years. In his leadership the SIGN was founded and flourished as a prominent umbrella organization for the whole of Jharkhand and Andaman region.

It is reported to me, this year, in addition to numerous development initiatives, the SIGN has taken two significant initiatives i.e., a) Preserving and Promoting Tribal Culture and Heritage and b) Forming a Safeguarding Policy for itself and rolling out Safeguarding Orientation programs across various diocesan partners.

Our Culture, Customs, Language, and our family names define our identity. Therefore, it is crucial for the SIGN, as a development organization and for all of us to preserve and promote Tribal Culture and Heritage, which is gradually fading away with each passing year.

In today's world, where various forms of abuse, exploitation and harassments have unfortunately become every day's affair, everyone seeks for safe working environment. Therefore, every organization, institution should guarantee their staff and visitors a safe environment, ensuring the protection of child and vulnerable adults. The SIGN is moving in the right direction by implementing Safeguarding Policy and conducting orientation program for various diocesan partners on Safeguarding within the organization.

I am grateful to all, who have supported us during the year. Together, with God's guidance, we celebrate our collective achievements. I eagerly anticipate collaborating with all our donors, supporters, our team and partners in the years ahead to enhance the lives of the underprivileged and marginalized in Jharkhand.

God bless us all

+Vincent Aind
Archbishop of Ranchi
Chairman, JHAAN Regional Bishops' Council
President of the SIGN



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This year, Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN), Ranchi has once again made a significant impact through its various programs and projects, empowering and transforming the lives of nearly 32700 people, of which more than 21200 were children. Training sessions, seminars, workshops, meetings and campaigns have been pivotal in driving this change. SIGN is committed to expanding its presence, enhancing its outreach, and showcasing tangible results across all facets of its initiatives.

SIGN has not only supported education of underprivileged children, but also organized sessions on "Good Touch and Bad Touch", "World Yoga Day", and "World Forest Day" to promote holistic development among the children in 21 Schools and 16 Hostels under its sponsorship program. It has extended its efforts in agriculture and livelihood

development in 242 villages working with more than 2500 farmers promoting organic farming, short duration crop, ragi cultivation, animal husbandry and various income generation activities.

Recognizing, the crucial maternal health plays in the well-being of both mothers and children, it remains dedicated to enhancing maternal and child healthcare. SIGN connected communities with the government health workers and thus facilitated 98% Institutional deliveries and ensured the vaccination of 99% of children in the hard-to-reach places of Jharkhand.

This year, apart from the regular initiatives, SIGN launched a special project called "Awakening Tribal Soul". Recognizing that young tribals are increasingly adopting modern lifestyles at the expense of their traditional ways, SIGN has taken the initiatives to reintroduce tribal culture and customs to them in the villages, and students in the schools and colleges across seven districts of Jharkhand.

Despite the challenges faced, this year has been a cause for celebration, especially considering the numerous lives that have been positively impacted and transformed. None of these achievements would have been possible without the collaboration and support of our partners, generous donors and well-wishers. We are deeply grateful to each of them, as well as to the communities who have warmly welcomed us and worked alongside us to foster enduring change

I extend my heartfelt thanks to our teams, who continue to serve diligently in challenging environments. However, there is still much work to be done to improve the quality of life of many underprivileged people in Jharkhand. With the support of our donors and well-wishers, SIGN is eager to expand its collaboration, scale its efforts and achieve greater impact in transforming people's lives.

+Binay Kandulna
Bishop of Khunti Diocese
Vice President of SIGN



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Dear Friends and Well-wishers,

As we take a moment to reflect on the milestones and achievements of this fiscal year, it is with profound gratitude, I present to you the 2023-2024 annual report. This report underscores our dedication to creating lasting, positive change in the lives of children, families, and their communities.

Promoting children's education remains central to our mission, and we deeply appreciate the support of all our sponsors, donors, and supporters especially Fratelli Dimenticati Onlus, who has been tirelessly supported our efforts to educate underprivileged children. Through sponsorship program, SIGN has facilitated the education of 10537 school children in 21 schools and 16 hostels. Additionally, with the support of Kindermissionwerk, under health program, SIGN has enabled the education of 1959 children for high school studies. I am delighted to report that 2214 adolescents now have a platform to freely express themselves in 162 Adolescents groups.

SIGN has achieved significant advancement in child and maternal health care over the past year. Our primary focus has been to enhance care during the perinatal period for mothers and new-borns. We have transitioned from narrow focus on disease-specific programs (Immunization, polio, pneumonia, diarrhea) to comprehensive approach aimed at strengthening health systems. Therefore, 3460 pregnant women and 10,690 lactating mothers were facilitated to avail Village Health Sanitation & Nutrition Day (VHSND) services. 3312 deliveries were safely conducted in the Government Hospital and only 241 deliveries occurred at home.

Rural Jharkhand is homeland of farmers, where farming stands as one of the most important and ancient profession. However, smallholder and marginal farmers often endure poverty. The challenge of earning a sustainable livelihood from agriculture drive many to migrate to urban areas in search of alternative opportunities. Through its interventions, SIGN aims to instil confidence among farmers in its

project areas that they can thrive in Jharkhand itself. SIGN is actively promoting organic farming integrated with allied activities using a scientific approach

However, the year is marked with two important initiatives: the preservation and promotion of Tribal culture and philosophy as well as the promotion of Safeguarding policies in our institution. The identity of tribal communities is deeply intertwined with their culture, characterized by a profound bond with their nature. As societies increasingly embrace modernised development, the richness, diversity, and depth of tribal cultures tend to fade away, therefore this year SIGN, with the support of Misereor, putting all its effort to promote tribal customs, culture and philosophy among the tribal community along with youth and children. It is also trying to re-establish tribal self-governance system.

There is a widespread call for safe living conditions and Safe working environment, echoing from every corner, from children to vulnerable adults. I am pleased to inform you all that SIGN has its own Safeguarding policy. As a regional organization, it has conducted orientation on safeguarding policy for staff members of various organizations, as well as for priests, nuns and teachers.

Under Institutional Development (one of the Strategic Pillars of SIGN), SIGN, with the support of MANOS UNIDAS, facilitated Capacity building training for the Diocesan Partners to build the second line leadership of four Diocesan Social Service Societies. We are thankful to MANOS UNIDAS.

As we look back on our collective achievements, we are deeply humbled by the blessings of God. His grace and mercy have sustaining force, empowering us to persevere in our mission.

Finally, I extend my heartfelt gratitude to all our esteemed Well-wishers, supporters, and donors, for your invaluable contributions for the noble task of serving the poor, because none of these accomplishments would have been possible without your generous support. I am sure that with the support of our well-wishers, donors and supporters, SIGN will be able to bring positive impact in the life of downtrodden and help them to lead a dignified life.

Let us remain steadfast in our commitment to doing good, knowing that our efforts are making a tangible difference in the lives of those we serve.

Warm regards,



Fr. Bipin Kumar Pani
Secretary, SIGN

A Tribute to Our Beloved Cardinal Telesphore P Toppo

(15 October 1939 – 4 October 2023)

Very Vocal Voice on the issues of Tribal community, became silent for ever on 4th October 2023, when God called his beloved servant Cardinal Telesphore P. Toppo to his heavenly abode. Whole of Jharkhand was saddened by knowing the fact that their own much-loved religious leader is no more with them. At his demise Pope Francis said, "His service was always marked by zeal for the spread of the Gospel, devotion to the holy Eucharist and generous pastoral care of the poor and those in need".



In one of his Christmas Letters Cardinal said "Families should take time to rest and pray together and should set examples of holiness. It is where we first learn how to pray. When the family prays together, it stays together. It is here that we come to know about God, to grow into men and women of faith, to see ourselves as members of God's greater family, the church. In the family we learn how to love, forgive, to be generous and open, not closed and selfish. That is why families are so important in God's plan".

Cardinal Telesphore was more than a religious leader; he was a champion for his people. His advocacy extended to the "Sarna Code" and various "Tribal Rights" ensuring these voices were heard. He was much concerned about tribal communities. He famously declared, "I am first a tribal, then a Religious Leader," reflecting his lifelong commitment to uplifting tribal communities.

"God willed that I should be the first tribal priest to become a bishop, and now he wills that I should be the first tribal bishop to become the first tribal cardinal. Praise the Lord," Cardinal Telesphore P. Toppo said at the time when Pope St. John Paul II honoured the thriving and blossoming Adivasi Church of Jharkhand by raising Archbishop Telesphore Toppo to the College of Cardinals on October 21, 2003. He was the first and only Asian tribal to have been accorded with such a distinguished ecclesiastical office.

His leadership extended beyond the church. In 2002 he was awarded with the Jharkhand Ratan Award for distinguished social work done in Jharkhand. SIGN was blessed with his guidance as the Patron of the organization from 2009 to 2018. He constantly motivated them to serve the underprivileged, reminding them, "God works through us". "We will only move forward, when we are disciplined and organized. We all of us are one in Lord Jesus Christ".

Cardinal Telesphore served as President of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) from 2004 to 2008. And from 2002 to 2005 and from 2011 to 2013, he served as President of the Conference of Catholic Bishops of India (CCBI). He participated in the conclave of April 2005, which elected Pope Benedict XVI and in the conclave of March 2013, which elected Pope Francis.

He used to say, "Bhagvan Jo bhi karta hai, aachha hi karta hai" (Whatever God does, He does Good). He will continue to inspire not only the staff of SIGN, but also millions of people, whose heart he touched by his exemplary living.

"LONG LIVE CARDINAL TELESOPHORE PLACIDUS TOPPO"

A Shepherd's Legacy: Esteemed Service of the Archbishop Emeritus Felix Toppo SJ



+ Archbishop Felix Toppo, SJ

Archbishop Felix Toppo, SJ, a pillar of the JHAAN region's social sector, recently stepped down as President of the Governing Board of Social Initiatives of Growth and Networking (SIGN) on 20th May 2024. This marked the culmination of a significant chapter in his distinguished career within the Church of JHAAN region particularly in the social sector.

SIGN was privileged to have Archbishop Toppo, SJ, a man known for his prayerfulness, simplicity, and kindness, serve as its President since its inception. For fifteen years, he provided unwavering guidance and nurtured SIGN's growth. Throughout this period, he consistently demonstrated remarkable patience and unwavering trust in the organization's initiatives, granting them full autonomy and unwavering support—a testament to his commitment to empowering people.

Another instance exemplifies his unwavering commitment to the well-being of the people and his staunch advocacy for justice. Upon being installed as Archbishop of Ranchi in August 2018, he boldly confronted civil authorities over accusations of “proselytization activities through inducement” against Christian NGOs. He saw these investigations as a tactic to sow discord among Christians and Sarnas within the tribal community before elections.

A man of unwavering principles, Archbishop Toppo was renowned for his punctuality. His attentive presence and compassionate demeanour will be dearly missed by all at SIGN. On behalf of the beneficiaries, staff, and partners, we express our deepest gratitude for his exceptional service. You are a wonderful person, dear Archbishop. Like St. Paul, now you can say, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the Race, I have kept the faith” (2 Tim 4:7).

Impact at a Glance

12
Districts
covered



30
Blocks
Covered



842
Villages
reached



19868
Villagers
met



336
Farmers
trained



2000 People
other than
farmers
trained



13946 Pregnant
women &
Lactating
mothers met



2240 Home
visits made



569
VHSNDs
visited



10690
Children
vaccinated



10537 Children
supported for
education



2214
Adolescents
Trained



Education for All



Sustainable Development Goal 4
Provide Quality Education

Touching the lives of downtrodden through Education

Jharkhand – “The land of forests” and leading mineral wealth producer of the country, has the literacy rate 66.41% as per the 2011 census. It is because children belonging to disadvantaged groups—Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and those below poverty line (BPL)—face problems and do not get admission in good schools. In a typical Jharkhand village, there are around 10-12 tolas (habitation) and the distance between the tolas is sometimes more than 5 km. For this reasons also many children from rural Jharkhand are not able to get proper education. SIGN is

a development organization. It comes to face to face with poor people every day. To feed them is the easiest way, but that is not sustainable approach to development. As a Chinese proverb says, “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day; teach a man to fish and you feed him for the lifetime.” With this background, the fifth strategic pillar of SIGN says SIGN would facilitate the children from the underprivileged section of the society to access safe and quality education. It is in line with the fourth Sustainable Development Goal. Therefore, SIGN with the support of Fondazione Fratelli Dimenticati is supporting the education of 2299 children in 20 Schools, 16 hostels and one center of Rag pickers in the slums of Jharkhand. SIGN provides these children food, school fees, essential educational needs (books, notebooks, pens, school bags, school uniform etc.), warm clothes in winter, umbrella in rainy season, accommodation, travel to/from school and ordinary centre maintenance and so on. SIGN also provided partial payments to the private teachers, cooks and support staff as well.

SIGN is working for the integral growth of the children by organizing different programs in the schools like “Good Touch and Bad Touch” sessions, observation of “World Yoga Day” and in the villages Campaign against Child Marriage was organized so that more number of children complete their education. In order to provide safe environment in the school, SIGN organized Safeguarding orientation to the teachers



of 37 centres. Here I would like to share the story of John Xaxa from Hunhut village of Lohardaga district. Though they own a small piece of land, but being a rocky piece of land, they could not cultivate anything in it. Family had to survive on daily wage of parents. Unfortunately, father was an alcoholic and so entire burden was on mother's shoulder. The house they lived in was made up of mud and tile roof. During rainy season, whole family had to spend night in the neighbour's house, as their house used to leak very badly. There was no electricity, no toilet facilities like many of the poor families in the villages.



They used to get drinking water from about one and half Kilometer distance. His mother had to work hard to provide at least one meal a day for the family. In spite of all these he wanted to study and so he joined the government school, but seeing the struggle of his mother, he quit the school and started giving helping hand to his mother in the house hold work. The turning point in his life came, when in

1999 Fr. John Sobha Sunder, a priest from the congregation of Society of the Catholic Apostolate (SAC), Pallotine, knowing their pathetic condition, admitted him to St. Vincent Palloti Hostel under sponsorship program. Now he put his heart and soul in his studies. He completed his schooling in 2009. Completed his pre-college studies from St. Paul Intermediate College in 2012 and completed degree course in Bachelor in Arts from St. Xavier's College, Ranchi in 2015. After a year he lost his mother, which sadden him so much that he did not want to study any



more. He went to Mumbai to work in a hotel to support his younger sister Anita Nirmala Xaxa. Priests from SAC, realizing that the story ending with anti-climax, encouraged him to complete his studies. Motivated by the support of priests from SAC, he completed Diploma in Computer science in 2020. Now he is working as Computer Operator in the Chanho Government Hospital and earning INR 13,000 per month. He is grateful to Fratelli Dimenticati, SIGN and Society of the Catholic Apostolate (SAC), Pallotine, who gave him an identity. He remembers the days, when he had only one meal a day. When he had a house, which was as good as not having a house. Now, he has a cemented house and has three meals a day. People do not know him as the son of a drunkard, but know him as Computer Operator. For SIGN and Fratelli Dimenticati "EDUCATION" means shaping the life of downtrodden and facilitating them to lead a dignified life.



A few Achievements to talk about in Education sector



Alisha Xalxo from Mausibari Centre, who came out of poverty, completed her studies under Sponsorship program from 2006 to 2019, has won the Gold medal in under 19 categories of 2nd World Mix Boxing Championship in 2022 in Srinagar.

Fr Kuldeep Linda, SJ was a student of Immaculate Heart of Mary School, Plandu under Sponsorship Program from 1998 to 2002 is ordained a Priest on 27th January 2024



Sunita Kachhap coming from very poor family, came in contact with REDS under sponsorship program passed 10th Board in 2010, completed Nursing 2020 and now working in Saudi as Nurse

Total 1244 children (806 girls & 438 boys) appeared for 10th Board exams, where 909 children (630 girls & 279 boys) passed with 1st division, 297 children (159 girls & 138 boys) passed with 2nd division and rest all passed with the 3rd division





20 Schools, 16 Hostels and REDS in Sponsorship Program



3 GOOD HEALTH
AND WELL-BEING



Health For All

**Sustainable Development Goal 3
Establish Good Health and Well-Being**

Our Health is in our Hand

SIGN is engaged to achieve third Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) in 573 hard to reach centers spread over five Blocks in 5 districts of Jharkhand. SIGN focuses on the pregnant women, lactating mothers and children 0 to 2 years age groups and the school going children to promote well-being for all at all ages and establish Good Health. All these become possible in collaboration with community, Panchayat leaders, frontline health workers and the Block level government Health machineries.

Regarding community and the pregnant women and lactating mothers, the focus was to make them aware so that they take initiatives for their own health care. Following last 3 years' data talks about institutional deliveries and the immunization coverage:



	2023 - 2024	2022 - 2023	2021 - 2022
No. of Children 0 – 2 years age	10690	11,560	17,147
Children Vaccinated	10567 (98.84%)	11,444 (98.99%)	15,504 (90.41%)
Total No. of pregnant women	3256	4,642	2498
Total delivery	3553	2127	995
No. of institutional delivery	3312 (93.22%)	1785 (83.92%)	820 (82.41%)
No. of Home delivery	241 (6.78%)	342 (16.07%)	175 (17.58%)

Increasing Children vaccination from 90% to almost 99% or Increasing number of Institutional deliveries from 82% to 92% is story of effort put by the project staff through counselling meeting with pregnant women, lactating mothers and their families during Home visits, motivational meeting and training to SHG members and Village Volunteers. Project also met and trained future mothers i.e., adolescent girls. There are 2214 Adolescent girls are associated with 150 Adolescent Girls groups. They are given awareness on ARSH (Adolescents and the Reproductive Sexual Health) and the healthy life style. Thus, to make them realize the importance of study and delaying their marriage age. Besides all these, SIGN facilitated Health Check camps in 7 schools for 683 Children

The home visits and counseling to the Pregnant women and Lactating mothers have brought significant results in the field. One of such results is none other than the story of Suntia Hembrom, who because of



constant home visits accompanied with counselling by project staff, came out of her fear and culture misconception. Sunita Hembrom, from Sarkanda village, Panchayat Hiranpur, Barhet block, Sahebganj district, had significant apprehensions regarding vaccinations and institutional delivery because of cultural misconception. She initially refused to take the TD (Tetanus and Diphtheria) vaccinations and was hesitant about delivering her child in a hospital setting. These fears stemmed from cultural beliefs

and anxieties surrounding medical procedures. When Mr. Lukhiram Tudu, the Community mobilizer, identified Sunita, as one the Pregnant women, he started visiting her and her family. He started counselling her and her family by giving crucial information about the importance of vaccination saying TD vaccine protects mother and the child against tetanus and diphtheria. It is typically administered as a booster shot to maintain immunity when received during pregnancy. He also told them about the benefit of institutional delivery. His efforts were instrumental in dispelling myths and fears that Sunita had about medical procedures. Inspired by the information and support from Lukhiram, Sunita Hembrom took both doses of the TD vaccine, ensuring her own health was protected. Additionally, she opted for institutional delivery, prioritizing the safety and well-being of her new-born child Munshi. Despite resistance from her father-in-law, Sunita Hembrom remained steadfast in her decision to provide comprehensive healthcare for her child. She ensured that her child received all necessary vaccinations on time, demonstrating her commitment to her child's health and development. Her actions have not only safeguarded her child's health but have also set a positive example within her community. Sunita Hembrom's willingness to embrace medical advice and prioritize her child's health showcases the potential for change when individuals are empowered with knowledge and support. This was possible only because of home visits and counselling done by the project staff. There are many such stories, which say loud and clear that how important the support of Kindermissionwerk is for the mother and child health care. SIGN through its humble approach tries to generate confidence, abolish misconception, link the community with the frontline Government Health workers so that health of the community improves.



Love to share A few Achievements in health sector



3460 Pregnant women and 10690 Lactating mothers were facilitated to get the benefit of the services of VHSNDs in their respective villages

Out of 10690 children of the age group between 0-2 years 10567 children were vaccinated



Members of 283 Self Help Groups are regularly motivating and facilitating Pregnant women and Lactating mothers to take the benefit of VHSNDs

Out of 162 Adolescents Groups 95 Adolescents Groups are regularly coming together to discuss their health and other adolescents related issues





Natural Resource Management & Livelihood



Sustainable Development Goal 2
Zero Hunger

Scientific approach to Agriculture could solve the problem of Rural Hunger

An increasingly erratic climate, lack of irrigating facilities, marketing difficulties, and migration of able farming families are just some of the challenges facing local food systems. There is an overlap between agriculture, climate change and poverty. Agriculture is how the majority of low-income families earn their livelihoods. Therefore, the first and the important thrust area of SIGN is Natural Resource Management and Livelihood through various agricultural and allied initiatives.

This year SIGN approached 2335 farmers in 25 blocks of 7 Districts viz. Ranchi, Khunti, Lohardaga, Gumla, Simdega, Chatra and Hazaribagh. The purpose of SIGN is to enhance the family income in sustainable manner through organic farming, and value added activities in scientific manner. The activities were designed in such a way that the farmers could overcome with unpredictable monsoon and opt for short duration crops, following with soil and water conservation methods in some way to recharge the ground water. Like every year, this year too monsoon was not on time, which brought losses to farmers. However, SIGN promoted ragi cultivation in the districts of Khunti, Gumla, Simdega, Ranchi and Hazaribagh. It also promoted short duration paddy. SIGN conducted various trainings like piggery training, lac cultivation, vegetable growing, scientific way of farming, and entrepreneurship training for farmers and making artificial flowers, candle making, Soap making, phenyl making for women farmers to add to their family income. As a result, 114 farmers are preparing and using Vermi compost in their farms. 35 farmers are preparing



their own vegetable nursery and using it for their own purpose. 157 farmers are doing second crops. 74 farmers are doing kitchen garden. 74 farmers are marketing the farm products. 126 Farmers have cultivated ragi and ragi of 79 farmers are being supplied for Mid-Day-Meal in the schools. Women farmers are not behind. 15 women farmers are making and selling candles. There many farmers, who have excelled this year, but I will share the story of Soma Kharia.



Soma Kharia is a 45 years old marginal farmers from Semra village of Olmunda Panchayat in Gumla district, Jharkhand. He has a big family of 9 children to support from about 8 acres of land for cultivation. Earlier he used to migrate to other state for work. He used to go to Gujrat to work in Brick-Kiln and get some income to support his family. But it was not enough for family needs and children's education. Meanwhile in 2022, he came in contact with our field staff Elias Surin, who made him understand that instead of going to Gujrat and stay away from the family, it is better to spend time in his farm scientifically and earn more than what he earns from Brick-Kiln. With little hesitation, he came to the training on organic farming organized by SIGN. In the year 2022-2023, Soma Kharia used the learning of Organic Farming Training and used Vermin Compost, Matka Khad in his farm. He planted Brinjal, Watermelon, Chilli, Bottle Guard, Ladies Finger, Pumpkin in scientific way earned INR 70000 to INR 80000. Encouraged with this success, which was beyond his imagination, this year again cultivated vegetable and earned INR 80000 to INR 90000. Now Soma says, if he were to know scientific way of farming in his early days, he would have educated all of his children. He would not have gone to Brick-Kiln year after year leaving the family behind. He has bought a TVS moped for vegetable marketing. He thanks SIGN and Elias for motivating him to work in his own field than to work under somebody as worker. He is happy and advices other farmers also to grow vegetable besides growing paddy in their respective field.



A few Achievements in agriculture and livelihood sector



124 women are generating income for their respective families by VAULE ADDITION activities like phenyl making and selling, Candle/soap/washing powder/mahua laddu making and selling

10 women are doing tailoring and adding income to their family



234 farmers have taken up alternative cultivation (ragi cultivation/lac cultivation) other than paddy cultivation



Child and Vulnerable Adult Safeguarding

Safeguarding is everybody's Rights

“The time has come, then, to work together to eradicate the evil of child abuse... The brutality of this worldwide phenomenon becomes all the more grave and scandalous in the Church, for it is utterly incompatible with her moral authority and ethical credibility,” Pope Francis said in the meeting “The Protection of Minors in the Church” at Vatican's New Synod Hall, from 21st February to 24th February 2019. Child abuse is a significant global public health issue that encompasses all forms of violence against children under 18, including physical, psychological, and sexual abuse, neglect, negligence, and commercial exploitation. These forms of abuse can harm children and adolescents' health, development, and dignity.



SIGN's Safeguarding commitment is to ensure that Children and Vulnerable adults are safe from both deliberate and accidental harm and abuse caused by SIGN's staff and other representatives. That's why SIGN has formed Safeguarding policy for the organization under the joint Guidance of Catholic Relief Services and Caritas India. Thanks to Governing Board that it has approved the Safeguarding Policy of SIGN. During the year it conducted various safeguarding orientation for the staff of Diocesan Social Service Societies (DSSSs) of Jharkhand. Besides all these, SIGN orients its staff time to time. SIGN is committed to support all the DSSSs and Faith Based Organization of Jharkhand to form Safeguarding Policy for their respective organization.



Preservation and Promotion of Tribal Culture and Philosophy



Preservation of Tribal Identity

Among the states, Jharkhand state ranks 6th in terms of Scheduled tribe population and ranks 10th in terms of percentage share of Scheduled tribe population. According to 2011 census, there are 26.3 % of the total population of Jharkhand belonging to tribal communities of Jharkhand and 91.7% of this tribal communities reside in rural Jharkhand. Overall sex ratio of the ST population in Jharkhand is 987 females per 1000 males, which is higher than the national average 978 for the total population. Tribal groups have largely been living in or around the forests with a rhythm akin to nature and thus their life cycle moves round nature. They do not merely depend on the natural resources for their livelihood, but their sole identity, culture, autonomy, conscience, tradition, ethos and existence are based on it. The soul of a tribal is Jal (water), Jungle (Forest), Jameen (Land) and Janwar (animal). Dr. Ramdayal Munda, a Tribal legend, describes the true characters of the Tribal community as “casteless, classless, based on equality, community based economic system, co-existence with the nature, consent based self-rule, dignity and autonomy”.

For SIGN, tribal communities are focus of its development activities. It is heartening to see above mentioned these inherent characteristics of the community are rapidly disappearing. Modernisation with all its positive impacts, on one side, became detrimental to tribal community by imposing on it the profit based economic system and thus it adopted all the evils of market dominant economy. The food-habit of tribal has changed. Fast food culture has taken over from traditional tribal food like raggi, moringa, kurthi dal, jantgi (oil seed), dhan (local rice) and seasonal vegetables. Unfortunately, tribals have alienated themselves from tribal identity by not writing their surname in public places, not using their languages, not using their traditional customs, not using traditional Instruments, folk songs and dance, changing their food habits, altering their life style, making a shift from community life to individual life, and from community based economy to profit based economy.

Therefore, in the last year, with the support of Misereor, SIGN is trying to preserve, promote and protect tribal Identity by promoting culture, customs, philosophy among the tribal community. It started with organizing



workshops and seminars on Tribal philosophy and culture for the priests and nuns in 5 dioceses viz. Ranchi, Khunti, Gumla, Simdega, and Daltonganj.

To promote culture SIGN organized tribal dance and Mausami rag (Seasonal Singing) competition. To bring the youth together and promote among the tribal people SIGN organized football and Hockey tournament. In order to make the children know about Tribal Heroes, SIGN organized essay competition for the school children on the topic of Tribal Heroes. As result of SIGN's effort following RESULTS have emerged:



- In most of our project villages community has banned DJ music and are promoting Mandar, Nagada (Tribal musical instruments.)
- Interest has arisen among the youth towards tribal dance and singing
- 16 Gram Sabhas have become active
- Because of the Football and Hockey Tournaments tribal youth are coming together.
- Children in the school are learning about the Tribal Heroes.

It does not mean everything is coming up easily. There are a few CHALLENGES as well:

- 1) There is a sect called Sati-Pati (The followers of Kunvar Kesri Sigh of Gujrat. His followers do not worship any god or goddess). Some of the people from Khunti has accepted the belief of Sati-Pati. They claim to be the real tribals and consider other tribal communities as outsiders. They do not like to have any relationship with others. They do not participate in Gram Sabha. They do not send their children to the school. They have either submitted their Voter Identity Card, Ration Card, land papers to District Administrator or they have burnt it all. Because of them Gram Sabha is dissolved. They are also promoting the practices of untouchability.
- 2) In the football and hockey tournament people from other community especially from Muslim community also like to take part
- 3) Jaigurudev' a sect from the Hindu extremists, is influencing tribal community and trying to make them believe that tribals are Hindus.
- 4) In the school, we can conduct the program only for the tribal children







Thanks to Our Esteem Visitor

Visit of Paolo Puglisi: Mr. Paolo Puglisi, the IT Delivery Manager, PIAGGIO Factory, Pízza, Italy visited SIGN from 15th January to 17th January. He came along with his daughter Sara, the Captain of Italian Hockey Team to participate in Olympic Qualifying Hockey Tournament in Ranchi. And meanwhile to know how SIGN works with the rag pickers. Ms Chanchal Bara and Fr. Bipin Pani took him to Mausibari Center, where REDS run the informal education center for the children of rag pickers. Later on Mr. Paolo visited REDS office "Gyan Deep" at Lowadih. He was much impressed by the work done by SIGN.



THANK YOU is a small word, but it holds a word of Gratitude. THANK YOU and your team for all your hard work and dedication to support these underprivileged children. Your gracious presence in the field gives us extra energy to work as well as warms the heart of our target beneficiaries. Please spare sometime to visit us again.

Acts of Mercy



SIGN staff spend a day with the people who have lost their mental balance because pressure of work, excess drinking, lot of worries and broken relationship. On 21st December, staff of SIGN in collaboration of Young Indians went to celebrate Christmas with the inmates of Prem Mitra Sadan, Jawahar Nagar, Kanke. SIGN staff met 11 chronic psychiatrist patients in Prem Mitra Sadan from different part of Jharkhand. These chronic psychiatrist patients are from different walk of the life. There is a catholic priest, who has become

chronic psychiatrist patient after a road accident. In the same way, one of the family members of Firayalal family is there at Prem Mitra due to hyper tension. One young boy is at Prem Mitra from a family of a Police Inspector due to drug addiction. Surprisingly, one of the journalists was also found there as chronic psychiatrist patient. There are poor people also. All these people are in the safe hand of Brothers of Charity. SIGN together with the members of Young Indians distributed blankets for these patients. After this SIGN shared meals with these patients. Christmas celebration began with a Christmas Carol followed by a Bible reading and then a reflection by Fr. Bipin Pani, the Director of SIGN. He said that after the annunciation, Mary's visit to Elizabeth makes the point of Jesus saying loud and clear that I have not come to be served but to serve and therefore thanks to Brothers of Charity, who are doing a noble task of serving these chronic psychiatrist patients of society. He further said that as Mary hasten to the house of Elizabeth to serve her so also whenever there is a call for SIGN to support and serve the poor people of the society, SIGN is ever ready to serve. Then he said as God intervened and gave the privilege of being a mother both to Mary a virgin and to Elizabeth a barren old lady so also God has intervened in the lives of these chronic psychiatrist patients and taking care of them so praise and thank the almighty. After this reflection, one more Christmas carol was sung followed by blanket distribution. Then everybody had good meals together.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Dear Friends and well-wishers, it is because of your valuable and generous support, because of which We, at SIGN, could dare to reach out unreachable places of Jharkhand to serve the downtrodden. None of our success would have been possible without your generous support. Thank you for your commitment and kindness.



Sincere Thanks to our friends at Caritas, who helped us to reach out to 8 Diocesan Social Service Societies to accompany them in building their capacity.



We are grateful to our friends at Catholic Relief Services, because of you we know the importance of Safeguarding Policy.



Friends of forgotten, Fratelli Dimenticati. Thank you so much for supporting us to reach out to poorest children for education.



Friends at Kindermissionwerk, with your help we could reduce IMR and MMR and now we are empowering adolescents



Manos Unidas

Dear Friends at Manos Unidas, you generously helped us to build the capacity of our partners for implementing any given project with optimum utility.



Friends at MISEREOR it is because of your support we, at SIGN could dare to thin of preserving and promoting TRIBAL culture and heritage.



If today farmers can understand the value of organic farming, then the full credit goes to you dear friends at Missio, Austria

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

SIGN has been involved in development activities since long, but it cannot do all these work all by itself. It needs the support and knowhow from the Institution like you. Your willingness to support and help us in achieving our Mission is highly appreciated. We look forward to your collaboration and support in coming year too.

Birsa Agriculture University, Jharkhand	
NABARD, Jharkhand	
devnet Development Network	
Young Indians	
Hoffman Law Associates, Jharkhand	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We, at SIGN feel proud that we have partners like you, who are always ready to support the cause of SIGN. we highly appreciate your support and your companionship. God Bless us all



**Samaj Vikas Sanstha
Chandwa**



**Dumka Social and Educational Society
Dumka**



**Gram Utthan Kendra
Gumla**



**Jan Vikas Kendra
Hazaribagh**



**Catholic Charities
Jamshedpur**



**Hoffmann Social Service Society
Khunti**



**Catholic Charities
Ranchi**



**Vikas Kendra
Simdega**



NRV & Associates

Chartered Accountants

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

We have audited the annexed Balance Sheet of **Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN), Social Development Centre, 3rd Floor, Dr. Camil Bulcke Path, Ranchi – 834001 (Jharkhand)** as at 31st March, 2024, the Income and Expenditure Account and Receipt and Payment Account for the year ended on that date. These financial statements are responsibility of management of the Society. Our responsibility is to express our opinion on these financial statements based on our audit.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in India. These standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatements. An audit also includes examining on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in financial statements. An audit includes assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management. We believe our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

We report that we have obtained all the information and explanation, which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purpose of audit.

- a) In our opinion the Society has maintained proper books of accounts.
- b) The Balance Sheet and Income and Expenditure Account dealing with by this report are in agreement with the books of accounts produced before us.

In our opinion and to the best of our information and according to the explanation given to us the said accounts give a true and fair view.

- i) in the case of Balance Sheet of the State of Affairs of the Society as on 31st March, 2024 and
- ii) in the case of Income and Expenditure Account of the Excess of Expenditure over Income for the year ended as on 31st March, 2024.

Date : 30-05-2024

Place : Ranchi



NRV & Associates

Chartered Accountants

Rajesh
(CA. Rajesh Himatsingka, Partner)

M.N. 401880; UDIN – 24401880BKFAZY2278

Shyam Bazar Road (Azim Gali), Dumka - 814 101 (Jharkhand)

Branch - Kolkata

Mobile - 9431157223, E-mail ID : nrvdumka@gmail.com

Website : <http://nrvassociates.ical.org.in/>

Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN)

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

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2024

Ref No.	Particulars	Note No.	As at 31 March, 2024 (Rs.)
A	SOURCES OF FUNDS		
1	Corpus and Capital Fund		
	(a) Corpus Fund	2.0	52,86,188
	(b) Capital Fund	2.1	41,98,907
2	Current liabilities		
	(a) Other current liabilities	2.3	55,46,866
	TOTAL		1,50,31,961
B	APPLICATION OF FUNDS		
1	FIXED ASSETS		
	Fixed assets	2.2	8,14,301
2	Current Assets, Loans and Advances		
	(c) Cash in Hand		15,350
	(d) Cash at Bank		64,91,963
	(e) Fixed Deposits		76,77,609
	(f) Other current assets		32,738
	TOTAL		1,50,31,961

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 - 24401880BKFAZY2278

Firm Reg No- 325333E

Place : Ranchi

Date : 30/05/2024




Secretary

Social Initiatives for Growth & Networking (SIGN)



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 2024

Ref No.	Particulars	For the year ended 31 March, 2024 (Rs.)
I	RECEIPTS	
	<u>Opening Balance</u>	
	Cash in Hand	94,252
	Cash at Bank	57,49,229
	Fixed Deposits	76,76,016
		1,35,19,497
	<u>Grants / Donations / Other Income / Receipts</u>	
	Foreign Contribution Account	5,11,07,422
	Local Account	17,05,551
	Total	5,28,12,973
II	PAYMENTS	
	Foreign Contribution Account	5,06,28,671
	Local Account	15,18,877
	Total	5,21,47,549
	<u>Closing Balance</u>	
	Cash in Hand	15,350
	Cash at Bank	64,91,963
	Fixed Deposits	76,77,609
		1,41,84,922

As per our Report of even date

For M/s NRV & Associates

Chartered Accountants

Rajesh Himatsingka

CA. Rajesh Himatsingka

Partner

M.No.- 401880; UDIN - 24401880BKFAZY2278

Firm Reg No- 325333E

Place : Ranchi

Date : 30/05/2024



[Signature]
Secretary

Social Initiatives for Growth & Networking (SIGN)



OUR CORE TEAM



Fr. Bipin Kumar Pani
Secretary-cum-Director



Walter Zaphed Kerketta
Regional Coordinator



Chanchal Jyoti Bara
HoD, Sponsorship Program



Satyendra Kumar Tudu
Regional Coordinator



Reena Soreng
Senior Accountant



Manish Toppo
Regional Coordinator



Sujit Kumar
Regional Coordinator



Rakesh Roshan Kiro
Regional Coordinator



Prabha Neli Lakra
Regional Coordinator



Archana Prity Kujur
Assistant Accountant



Priscilla Kullu
Support Staff Sponsorship Dept



Vivek Soreng
Assist. HoD Sponsorship Dept



Silas Soy
Support Staff

A BIG THANK YOU
TO EVERY WELL-WISHERS
PARTNERS, AND DONORS
WHO SUPPORTED SIGN IN 2023-2024

Social Initiatives for Growth and Networking (SIGN)

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