VIDYA DHAM SAMITI
Social Justice and Equality



Annual Report 2025-2026

Vidya Dham Samiti

Message from Vidya Dham Samiti

Dear Friends,

The year 2025-26 marked an important milestone in the development journey of Vidya Dham Samiti. For more than two decades, we have been working alongside marginalized, vulnerable, and disadvantaged communities in Bundelkhand to contribute towards building a just, equitable, and dignified society.

This year too, we worked closely with women, youth, and community-based organizations on a range of issues, including rights awareness, leadership development, livelihoods, conservation of natural resources, and social justice. Thousands of women and young people associated with community-based organizations have emerged as agents of change in their villages, creating inspiring examples of positive transformation at the local level.

This report is a brief documentation of the key activities, achievements, and inspiring efforts of communities during the year 2025-26. We firmly believe that with collective strength, meaningful participation, and community leadership, the journey towards lasting and sustainable change will continue to grow stronger.

With warm regards,

Team, Vidya Dham Samiti

Table of Contents

- ❖ Message from Vidya Dham Samiti
- ❖ About the Organization
- ❖ Impact at a Glance
- ❖ Our Area of Operation
- ❖ Key Achievements
  - o Livelihood Promotion and Economic Empowerment Programme
  - o Organic Farming Awareness Programme
  - o Staff Capacity Building Programme
  - o Village-Level Meetings and Community Leadership Empowerment
  - o Skill Development Training
  - o Awareness Programme on Government Schemes
  - o Tree Plantation and Environmental Conservation Campaign
- ❖ Success Stories
- ❖ Acknowledgement

About the Organization

Vidya Dham Samiti (VDS) is a non-governmental development organization (NGO) registered in 2001 under Section 21 of the Societies Registration Act, 1860. The organization's registration number is 566/2000-01. VDS is also registered under the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA), 1976, with FCRA Registration No. 136280028. In addition, the organization is registered under Section 12A of the Income Tax Act, 1961. The organization's PAN is AABTV0379A.

Establishment of the Organization

Vidya Dham Samiti was established in 2001 by a group of young people who shared a common vision and commitment to working for the social and economic advancement of poor, marginalized, and underserved communities in the Bundelkhand region. Since its inception, the organization has continuously evolved and has undertaken significant work on community rights, access to government schemes, and issues of social justice. Over the years, VDS has built a credible identity among local communities, civil society organizations, the administrative system, and regional media. Several innovative initiatives and public-interest programmes implemented by the organization have also received coverage in leading national newspapers and magazines.

Our Vision

To improve the social and economic well-being of marginalized and disadvantaged communities and to establish a balanced, sustainable, and harmonious relationship between people and natural resources.

Our Mission

To empower people through awareness, community organization, and guidance so that they can effectively claim their rights and access government schemes and entitlements. The organization also works towards promoting good governance and creating opportunities for sustainable livelihoods.

Our Area of Operation

Vidya Dham Samiti works in Banda district of Uttar Pradesh, covering 30 villages. The organization works on issues related to health, education, community empowerment, livelihoods, climate change, and social justice. Women, Dalits, marginalized youth, and children deprived of education remain at the center of the organization's initiatives. We believe that informed and aware citizens are better equipped to raise their voices for their rights and lead lives with dignity.

Impact

- 5 tailoring centers were established, creating opportunities for skill development and livelihood generation.
- 88 families were supported in accessing benefits under the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY).
- 175 people were supported in accessing employment opportunities under MGNREGA.
- 44 people were supported in accessing old-age pensions.
- 20 people were supported in obtaining job cards.
- 23 people were supported in obtaining Ayushman Cards.
- 178 farmers received seeds to support agricultural activities.
- 1500 trees were planted across 8 villages as part of environmental conservation efforts.
- Grain banks were established in new 4 villages, enabling the distribution of food grains to families in need.
- A sustainable farming initiative was started with 80 farmer families.
- 82 young people were connected with employment opportunities.
- Pond rejuvenation and beautification work was undertaken in 4 villages.

Skill Development Training



Skill development training programmes were organized for 465 community members, with the aim of enhancing livelihood opportunities for women and youth and encouraging them to become self-reliant. During the training sessions, participants received information and practical guidance on tailoring and embroidery, handicrafts, small enterprises, and self-employment opportunities. Different skills were introduced based on local needs and the interests of the participants. Participants were also guided on how to use their newly acquired skills to start their own livelihoods and enterprises, as well as how to access various government schemes and financial support to strengthen and expand their livelihood opportunities. The training helped build confidence among participants and motivated them to move forward towards self-employment, sustainable livelihoods, and economic empowerment.

Awareness Programme on Government Schemes



Awareness programmes on various government schemes were conducted with community members to help them understand and access their rights and entitlements. During the programmes, detailed information was provided on old-age pensions, widow pensions, disability pensions, ration cards, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Ayushman Bharat Scheme, labour registration, MGNREGA, PM-KISAN Samman Nidhi, and other social security schemes. Beneficiaries were also

guided on the application process, required documents, eligibility criteria, and the relevant government departments and offices to approach for accessing these schemes. The programmes helped people become more aware of their rights and entitlements and enabled them to access government schemes and benefits in a timely manner

Tree Plantation and Environmental Conservation Campaign

With the aim of promoting environmental conservation and the sustainable management of natural resources, 1,500 trees were planted across 9 villages with active community participation. An environmental conservation campaign was also conducted to encourage greater awareness and collective action among community members. As part of the campaign, different varieties of saplings were planted with the participation and support of local communities. Community members were sensitized on the importance of environmental protection, water conservation, biodiversity, the growing impacts of climate change, and the sustainable use of natural resources. The community was also encouraged to reduce the use of single-use plastics, maintain a clean and green environment, promote rainwater conservation, and ensure that every family plants and takes care of as many trees as possible. Through this campaign, efforts were made to strengthen environmental awareness, community participation, and a sense of collective responsibility towards protecting and conserving the environment.



Livelihood Promotion Programme

Under the programme, 342 farmers from 25 villages were encouraged and trained to establish and maintain kitchen gardens. The training focused on practical methods of growing a variety of nutritious



vegetables using locally available resources. The initiative aimed to promote household food and nutritional security while also creating opportunities for additional income generation. Farmers were encouraged to consume the vegetables grown in their own kitchen gardens and sell the surplus produce in local markets to supplement their household income and strengthen their livelihoods. Participants were also motivated to make effective use of local resources and sustainable agricultural practices to develop resilient and sustainable livelihood opportunities. Through this initiative, the programme sought to strengthen farmers' self-reliance, improve access to nutritious food, and enhance their economic well-being.

Organic Farming Awareness Programme



Organic farming awareness programmes were conducted with 215 farmers to promote sustainable, low-cost, and environmentally friendly agricultural practices. During the sessions, farmers were made aware of the harmful effects of excessive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides and were introduced to the benefits of organic and natural farming. Practical training was provided on various techniques, including Jeevamrit, Ghanjeevamrit, composting, vermicomposting, natural pest management, and water conservation. Farmers were also encouraged to adopt farming practices that can help reduce input costs, improve productivity, maintain soil fertility, and protect the environment. The programme helped increase awareness among farmers about sustainable and economically viable farming practices. As a result of these efforts, 125 farmers have started adopting organic farming practices, marking an important step towards sustainable agriculture and improved livelihoods.

Educational Support through Community Education Centers



To connect children who were deprived of education with learning opportunities in the project villages, the organization established 10 Community Education Centres. All these centres were effectively and smoothly operated, with 506 children regularly receiving education. To ensure the continuity of their education, regular educational activities were conducted across all 10 centres. These efforts helped the children continue their education and strengthen their learning.

Staff Capacity Building Training

With the objective of ensuring the effective implementation of the project and quality of work, two staff capacity-building training programmes were organized, with the participation of 15 staff members. The training programmes covered key areas including community organization building, leadership development, documentation, report writing, child rights, gender equality, and government schemes. As a result of these trainings, the capacity and effectiveness of the team were strengthened, enabling staff members to work with communities in a more effective, systematic, and result-oriented manner.



Village-Level Meetings and Community Leadership Empowerment

With the objective of identifying community issues, promoting collective efforts to address them, and strengthening rural leadership, 30 village-level meetings were organized across 30 villages, with the participation of 634 people. During these meetings, discussions were held on key issues such as education, health, livelihoods, access to government schemes, women's rights, conservation of natural resources, and other local development concerns. The challenges faced by community members were identified, and collective action plans were developed to address these issues. The participatory dialogue process provided rural community members with an opportunity to share their views, experiences, and suggestions, thereby increasing their awareness of their rights and strengthening their understanding of social issues. The meetings also strengthened unity, cooperation, and collective leadership within the community. Community members became more capable of raising their rights and development-related concerns effectively and organizing themselves to seek solutions. Overall, the village-level meetings proved to be an important platform for making communities more aware, organized, empowered, and self-reliant.



Success Story:

Case Study: From Unproductive Land to a Sustainable Livelihood

A few years ago, Thakurdin Valmiki of Gahbara village received seven bighas of land under a land-patta scheme. However, the land was highly uneven and unsuitable for cultivation. With no alternative source of livelihood, his financial difficulties increased and he gradually fell into debt. Recognising his situation, Vidya Dham Samiti intervened and supported him in improving his land and livelihood. With the organisation's support, four bighas of his land were levelled and developed for agricultural use. This intervention transformed previously unproductive land into cultivable farmland. Today, Thakurdin is successfully cultivating crops such as



sorghum, pigeon pea, green gram, chickpea and wheat on the developed land. The improved agricultural productivity has strengthened his livelihood, reduced his financial stress and helped his family move towards greater self-reliance. During our interaction, Thakurdin shared that two bighas of his land are still undeveloped. Vidya Dham Samiti has assured him of continued support to help level and make the remaining land suitable for cultivation. Thakurdin's journey is a powerful example of how timely support, land development and livelihood interventions can help vulnerable families become self-reliant and build a more secure future.

2.Champa's Journey Towards Self-Reliance.



Champa, wife of Asharam, is a resident of Naugaon village. She has four daughters and one son. Agriculture was the main source of livelihood for her family. After the death of her husband due to illness, Champa became solely responsible for supporting her children and started working as a daily wage labourer.Her situation became more difficult when her son suffered a serious head injury after falling from the roof. Due to financial constraints, she was unable to afford his proper treatment and had to borrow money from relatives and moneylenders. This left her emotionally and financially distressed. During a community meeting, Maya Srivastava**,** a worker from Vidya Dham Samiti, learned about Champa's situation. She provided counselling, emotional support, and immediate assistance with essential food supplies. Vidya Dham Samiti also supported Champa in starting a small shop in her village, helping her generate a regular income. Today, Champa is better able to support her family and meet their basic needs. Her journey is an example of how timely support and livelihood opportunities can help vulnerable women move towards self-reliance and a life of dignity**.**

Acknowledgement

Vidya Dham Samiti extends its heartfelt gratitude to all the communities, women and youth leaders, partner organizations, well-wishers, donors, and government departments who have continuously supported our efforts through their guidance, encouragement, and trust.

We are especially grateful to the communities who, despite numerous challenges, have actively participated in this journey of change and demonstrated the strength of collective leadership, solidarity, and resilience. Their commitment and participation remain the true foundation of our achievements.

Your support, trust, and partnership have strengthened our efforts towards social justice, gender equality, community empowerment, and sustainable development. We firmly believe that, together, we will continue to build on these efforts in the coming years towards creating a more just, equitable, inclusive, and empowered society. With sincere gratitude and appreciation to all our partners, supporters, and community members.