



Kissan Vikas Trust

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-2025



+91 9334330432 www.kvtngo.org kissanvikastrust@gmail.com



LIST OF ACRONYMS

KVT – Kissan Vikas Trust

FSSAI – Food Safety and Standards Authority of India

FPO – Farmer Producer Organization

FRA – Forest Rights Act

POCSO – Protection of Children from Sexual Offences

GGF – Global Greengrants Fund

EDC – Environmental Defenders Collaborative

YMC – Yusuf Meherally Center

SHG – Self-Help Group

MNREGA – Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act

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I-A. Board of Trustees and Advisory Members

A non-government organization registered in 1997 under Indian Trusts Act, 1860; registered under Section 80(G), 12 (A) of IT Act; registered under FCRA, Ministry of Home Affairs, Govt. of India; registered under Niti Aayog (DARPAN); registered under Udyam Ministry, M. S. M. E Govt. of India; registered under Ministry of Corporate Affairs, Govt. of India Regd.No.CSR00003686

Board of Trustees

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I. Executive Summary

Kissan Vikas Trust (KVT) is dedicated to fostering sustainable development and social justice, primarily focusing on empowering marginalized communities across diverse geographies. The financial year 2024-2025 marked a period of significant achievement, demonstrating KVT's adaptive and impactful approach to community development. The organization's multi-faceted programs spanned from promoting agroecology and women's livelihoods in the Sundarbans and Basirhat regions of West Bengal to championing Dalit, tribal, and women empowerment through legal and skill-building initiatives in the hilly terrains of Uttarakhand.

This year, KVT's efforts reached thousands of beneficiaries, equipping women farmers with sustainable practices, nurturing young minds through environmental education, and empowering vulnerable communities with legal literacy and economic independence. A notable achievement includes the successful training of over 200 individuals in paralegal skills in Uttarakhand, leading to increased confidence in addressing injustice and asserting rights. Simultaneously, 100-150 women farmers in West Bengal reported stronger harvests and improved nutrition, with 86% actively participating in traditional seed saving, a critical step towards climate resilience.

The ability of KVT to deliver impactful programs across varied socio-economic and ecological contexts, from the coastal areas of West Bengal to the mountainous regions of Uttarakhand, underscores a robust and adaptable organizational model. The overall impact is not merely the sum of individual program successes but a testament to KVT's versatile approach to community development, demonstrating deep penetration and tailored interventions in each region. This strategic adaptability ensures that KVT's initiatives resonate with local needs and contribute to sustainable, long-term change.

Financially, KVT maintained rigorous stewardship, utilizing grants from partners like Global Greengrants Fund (GGF) and Environmental Defenders Collaborative (EDC) to maximize program reach and effectiveness.

II. Message from the Leadership

The financial year 2024-2025 has been a testament to the unwavering spirit of the communities we serve and the dedicated efforts of the Kissan Vikas Trust team. We reflect on a year of profound successes, marked by significant strides in empowering marginalized population, fostering sustainable practices, and advocating for social justice. These achievements would not have been possible without the tireless commitment of our team members, the invaluable contributions of our volunteers, and the steadfast support of our partners and donors.



Our work, particularly in the remote and often challenging terrains of Uttarakhand, has not been without its complexities. As Dalit and women communities have gained awareness and moved towards self-reliance, there has been resistance from traditionally dominant groups, manifesting in false propaganda and attempts to undermine our efforts. This external friction, rooted in patriarchal and caste-based societal structures, underscores the deeply entrenched nature of the challenges we address. However, these obstacles have only strengthened our resolve. KVT remains firmly committed to its core values of equality, justice, and empowerment. The resilience demonstrated by community members, who have actively countered these pressures and continued their journey towards self-determination, is a powerful affirmation of our mission.

Looking ahead, we are inspired by the progress witnessed this year 2024-2025. The increased confidence among women farmers, the enhanced self-expression in children, and the growing political agency of Dalit and tribal youth signal a transformative shift. Our vision for the future involves expanding these impacts, deepening our engagement with communities, and continuing to address persistent inequalities with innovative and collaborative approaches. We extend our deepest gratitude to all who have walked alongside us on this journey, and we invite continued partnership as we collectively strive for a more equitable and sustainable future.

Prabhat Kumar
Founder Member, KVT

III. About Kissan Vikas Trust

Kissan Vikas Trust (KVT) is a non-governmental organization committed to fostering holistic development and social equity among vulnerable communities.

Mission, Vision, and Values

Mission: Our mission is to protect all kinds of Human Values and Human Rights.

Vision: Our vision is to create a society where harmony is universal and there is no discrimination whatsoever irrespective of caste, religion, gender, culture and race and to promote concept of "To live and let others live" which includes all living things.

Values:

- **Empowerment:** Fostering self-reliance and agency within communities.
- **Equity & Justice:** Advocating for equal rights and challenging discrimination.
- **Sustainability:** Promoting practices that ensure environmental and economic well-being for current and future generations.
- **Community Participation:** Believing in the power of collective action and local leadership.
- **Transparency & Accountability:** Upholding integrity in all operations and engagements.

Organizational Overview and Geographic Focus

In the financial year 2024-2025, the organization has mostly worked in two states of India- West Bengal and Uttarakhand.

In **West Bengal**, KVT focuses its Women Agroecology and Livelihood Programmes primarily in the Sundarbans and Basirhat regions. These areas, characterized by their unique ecological vulnerabilities and agrarian economies, benefit from programs designed to enhance food security, climate resilience, and women's economic independence.

In **Uttarakhand**, KVT's efforts are concentrated on Dalit, tribal, and women empowerment initiatives within the hilly areas of three districts: Tehri, Dehradun, and Uttarkashi. A central hub for these programs is the Yusuf Meherally Center (YMC) in Kandikhal, with activities also extending to Lakhamandal and other villages. This strategic decentralization, establishing YMC Kandikhal as a pivotal center for the Uttarakhand programs, allows KVT to implement tailored interventions that are highly sensitive to the

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local socio-cultural and geographical contexts. This approach is crucial for building strong, localized infrastructure and fostering deep-rooted relationships within remote communities, which is essential for driving meaningful and sustainable social change.

IV. Program Highlights & Impact: Cultivating Change (West Bengal Focus)

This section details the transformative programs implemented by Kissan Vikas Trust primarily in the Sundarbans and Basirhat regions of West Bengal during the financial year 2024-2025.

A. Women Agroecology Programmes: Nurturing Food Sovereignty

The Women Agroecology Programme is strategically designed to empower women farmers in the Sundarbans and its surrounding areas. Its core objectives include strengthening food sovereignty, enhancing climate resilience, and fostering women's leadership in agriculture.

Key activities undertaken throughout the year were practical support, training, and community-building initiatives. These included assisting women in planning kitchen gardens to improve households nutrition, distributing paddy seeds to ensure reliable rice production, and actively promoting the saving and sharing of traditional seeds, which are vital for climate resilience. Special efforts were made to reach landless women, providing them with practical farming techniques to make sustainable agriculture more accessible and inclusive. Hands-on training sessions were conducted in crucial areas such as seed saving, vegetable and fruit preservation, and bio-fertilizer production, significantly improving farming knowledge within the communities. Seeds were also distributed to various community groups,



including Banolata, Nonamaati, Sona Mati, Das Para, Nakuadaha, and Badabon, to encourage local seed exchange and collaboration. The program also recognized and felicitated organic farmers with certificates for their successful chemical-usage-free farming practices at events like the Jogeshganj Seed Festival. Further activities included mushroom seed distribution, agriculture meetings, taro root and yam seed distribution, ginger cultivation meetings, paddy seed distribution, paddy cultivation training, and regular kitchen garden monitoring visits. Biodiversity celebrations and group meetings on agriculture were also organized to foster a sense of community and shared learning.



The impact of these initiatives has been substantial. A total of 100-150 women farmers reported stronger harvests, improved nutrition, and a marked increase in their confidence in managing their farms. A particularly significant outcome is that 86 out of 100 women are now actively saving seeds. This goes beyond immediate yields; it signifies a profound shift from dependence to self-sufficiency and robust knowledge retention within the community. The practice of saving and sharing traditional seeds ensures not only food security but also enhances climate resilience, as these indigenous varieties are often more adaptable to local environmental conditions. This community-based knowledge transfer system reduces reliance on external markets and inputs, laying a foundational step towards long-term ecological and economic sustainability. Furthermore, specific seeds such as brinjal, red amaranth, green amaranth, sour spinach, maize, rosella, gourd, pigeon pea, and ginger have reached a sustainable alternative where women save and circulate these seeds among themselves, helping to build a more resilient, connected, and self-reliant farming community.



B. Community Children Facilitation Programmes: Fostering Young Minds

The Community Children Facilitation Programme is dedicated to creating rich learning spaces for children that holistically weave together theatre, music, visual art, and

environmental education. The objectives of these programmes are to nurture academic curiosity, creativity, emotional growth, and a deep sense of environmental awareness, while also fostering local leadership among the youths.

Activities included a wide array of workshops, community engagement initiatives, and thoughtfully designed spaces for exploration. The curriculum was rooted in local culture and knowledge, ensuring relevance and resonance with the children's lived experiences. Detailed sessions covered topics ranging from understanding fish (eating habits, drawing, charting their lives) to exploring concepts of friendship and health. Practical environmental education was integrated through pond surveys, planting activities, and discussions on water plants and anti-plastic campaigns. Science sessions, such as "How to light a bulb from a battery," were conducted, alongside lessons on the importance of food and setting life goals. Children also engaged in exploring the natural world, as seen in sessions on "Life in the World of Ants," and learnt about social responsibility through discussions on "Social Work & Social Service". Creative expression was encouraged through various stories and poems, including works by Tagore, Sukumar Roy, Kazi Nazrul Islam, and others, fostering literacy and cultural appreciation. A Wild Food Festival and the creation of a wall mural on rivers for River Action Day were notable events that combined cultural celebration with environmental advocacy. Children were also actively involved in recycling plastic bottles and planting seeds, embodying practical environmental stewardship.



The program's impact is evident in the development of greater self-expression, confidence, and empathy among participating children, alongside a strong connection with the natural world. Workshops and community projects successfully fostered a collaborative spirit and a sense of belongingness, encouraging children to view themselves as active participants in their communities. By centering art and environmental education, the program cultivates lifelong values of creativity and social responsibility. This initiative has matured into a stable, ongoing program that creates safe and engaging learning spaces. The focus on "environmental education" and "connection with the natural world" through activities like the "wall mural on rivers" and "children

recycling plastic bottles and planting seeds" extends beyond immediate learning. It represents a significant investment in future environmental stewardship, ensuring that KVT is building a generation "better equipped to care for their environment and each other". This approach ensures the sustainability of agro ecological practices and broader environmental protection beyond the current program cycle. KVT operates five children's groups in Sundarban and Basirhat: Nakuadaha (30 children), Dakshin Gobindokati (22 children), Daharkanda (35 children), Sithiliya (48 children), and Purulia (45 children). A new children's group was also created in Dakshin Govindobati (30 children) on January 12, 2025.



C. Women's Livelihood Programmes: Building Economic Independence

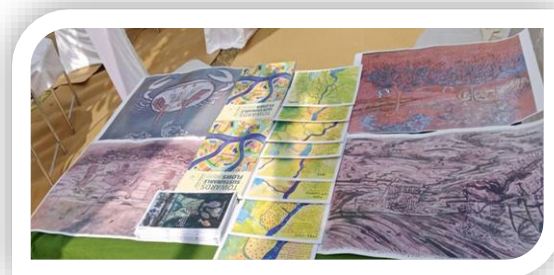
The Women's Livelihood Programmes focus on building local leadership, enhancing market access, and strengthening capacity among women's groups in the Sundarbans and Basirhat regions.

Key activities included facilitating the formation of women's groups and supporting their participation in local 'melas' (festivals) throughout the year. These melas provided crucial platforms for women to sell their products and gain wider market exposure, as exemplified by their presence at "*Maath Theke Rannaghor*" events. KVT also collaborated with the District Agriculture Department to deliver FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) training to six women, ensuring their products meet quality standards. Business planning and leadership workshops were conducted in Basirhat to equip women with essential entrepreneurial skills. Adult Literacy workshops were run for Adivasi women in the Sundarbans over four months with weekly sessions, addressing foundational educational needs. The program actively fostered conversations, community art practices, and collective action, enabling women to identify local livelihood opportunities, understand environmental threats, and build strong support networks. Regular women livelihood meetings, leadership meetings, and product meetings with women groups were held in various locations, including Shitalia and Jogesh Ganj. Specific skill-based training sessions were also provided, such as '*Kodbel Sotto*' training, '*Ghee*' training, Women's Stitching training, and '*Kuler Aachar*' training.

These efforts have led to greater confidence and self-reliance among participating women. A significant outcome is the increasing familiarity of women with formal economic processes, as some have registered in government Self-Help Group (SHG) schemes and become proficient with FSSAI processes, trade license applications, and Farmer Producer Organization (FPO) structures. This indicates a crucial move beyond basic skill-building towards integrating women's informal livelihood activities into the formal economic system. Such integration provides legal recognition, opens avenues for scaling their enterprises, and grants access to broader markets and financial support, fundamentally strengthening their economic independence and long-term resilience.



D. Youth Programmes: Empowering Future Stewards: The Youth Programmes aim to engage urban youths, researchers, artists, and volunteers in experiential learning and research on environmental justice and sustainability. Key activities included urban water justice campaigns, exposure visits, and workshops, such as the Brata Alpana workshop. Field studies were conducted in the Sundarbans to research forest-dependent communities and water-forest relationships. The "Learning in Action" program provided unique opportunities for youth team to visit festivals in Nagaland and Bankura, as well as the Justice Makers Mela in Bhopal, deepening their understanding of biodiversity, seed preservation, and environmental rights. KVT also supported community events in Kolkata, notably the "Towards Sustainable Flows" festival, where young participants presented findings on the city's canals, sewerage systems, and waste management to a wide audience. A field study after heavy rain in Sundarban was also conducted.



These initiatives have deepened the youth's understanding of biodiversity, seed preservation, and environmental rights, amplifying local knowledge and inspiring greater participation. The program has created valuable resources for training, advocacy, and intergenerational learning. The focus on "urban water justice campaigns" and "presenting findings on the city's canals, sewerage systems, and waste management to a wide audience" demonstrates a strategic approach to youth engagement. This goes beyond mere awareness; it positions youth as active researchers and advocates, capable of informing public discourse and potentially influencing urban environmental policy. This represents a higher-level impact than just individual learning, as it cultivates future policy-makers and environmental champions.



E. Media & Art for Agroecology: Amplifying Voices

The Media and Art initiatives on agroecology leverage creative storytelling and cultural events to raise awareness, share knowledge, and strengthen community connections to sustainable farming practices.

Key activities included the production of a seed preservation film and the organization of a wild food festival. Ongoing video documentation efforts further captured and disseminated important information.



These efforts have successfully amplified local knowledge and inspired greater community participation. The seed preservation film has helped communities appreciate and revive indigenous seed varieties, contributing to the preservation of agricultural heritage. The wild food festival showcased local biodiversity and revived culinary traditions, directly strengthening food sovereignty within the region. This use of "creative storytelling and cultural events" to "revive culinary traditions" is a powerful strategy. It highlights that agroecology is not just a farming technique but a cultural practice deeply

embedded in community identity. By celebrating traditional ecological wisdom through art and media, KVT makes complex ideas accessible and fosters a deeper, more emotional connection to sustainable practices, which can lead to more resilient and widespread adoption. This culturally sensitive approach is highly effective for advocacy. Furthermore, the ongoing video documentation has created valuable resources for training, advocacy, and intergenerational learning, supporting broader, long-term transitions towards sustainable agriculture.

F. International Women’s Day Celebration: “Nari Shakti: From Women Development to Women-led Development”

In Santoshpur, International Women’s Day was celebrated with active participation of over 120 women farmers, SHG members, and local leaders. The event included discussions on women’s rights, leadership in agriculture, and gender equality in community decision-making. A highlight was the seed exchange fair, where women showcased and shared indigenous seed varieties they have preserved, reinforcing their role as custodians of biodiversity. The celebration concluded with cultural performances by women’s groups emphasizing empowerment and solidarity.



G. Children’s Day Celebration: “For Every Child, Every Right”

Children’s Day in Santoshpur brought together over 80 children from local learning centers and villages. The celebration featured art workshops, storytelling sessions on biodiversity, and an eco-friendly community wall painting. Activities encouraged creativity and environmental awareness while promoting child rights and education. Parents and community members actively participated, creating a supportive environment for children’s growth and self-expression.



H. Glimpses of West Bengal Activities

<p>Training on Seeds Preservation</p> 	<p>Training on Seeds Preservation</p> 
<p>Women Education Program</p> 	<p>Women Education Program</p> 
<p>Seeds Distribution</p> 	<p>District level FSSAI Training</p> 
<p>International Women's Day-Rally</p>	<p>International Women's Day- Nukkad Natak</p>



V. Deep Dive: Dalit, Tribal, and Women Empowerment in Uttarakhand

This section provides an in-depth look at the comprehensive programs implemented by Kissan Vikas Trust in the Uttarakhand region, specifically focusing on the empowerment of Dalit, tribal, and women communities in Tehri, Dehradun, and Uttarkashi districts in the financial year 2024-2025.

A. Paralegal Training: Upholding Justice and Rights

The Paralegal Training program is a cornerstone of KVT's empowerment efforts in Uttarakhand. Its

primary objectives are to equip individuals with the knowledge to identify cases of caste and gender based discrimination and exploitation, educate participants on relevant laws and constitutional rights, and empower community members to effectively approach legal system and fight against injustice.



Throughout the year, KVT organized four intensive three-day paralegal training session at the Yusuf Meherally Center (YMC) in Kandikhal on March 8-10, April 2-4, May 26-28, and July 6-8, 2024. Additionally, five paralegal training and three other specialized training sessions were provided to ten full-time fellows, one young man and one young woman

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from each of the 50 selected villages. The training curriculum was comprehensive, covering critical legal frameworks such as the Scheduled Caste/ Scheduled Tribes Act, the Bonded Labour Abolition Program, the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offences) Act, the Special Component Plan, and the Forest Rights Act (FRA). Participants inalso imparted training on survey and data collection methods, fundamental rights of citizens, the Indian Constitution, and the role of media and social media. In-depth discussions were held on the identity, history, present issues, and future of Dalits, tribals, and women, addressing incidents of oppression, social and environmental injustice, inequality, caste discrimination, and untouchability. The training methodology was diverse, incorporating expert speeches, discussions with victims. Group discussions, films, tours, sports, songs, music, and sharing of success stories were made to foster engagements. Photocopies of legal documents were distributed to trainees for ongoing reference. Public



awareness campaigns were launched in villages through community meetings, workshops, village gatherings (Chaupal), home visits, school and college interactions, temple discussions, project-based films, posters, competitions, folk songs, street plays (Nukkad Sabhas), book exhibitions, and libraries. KVT collaborated with various experts and advisors, including GGF advisors Mr. Philip Kujur, Sunil Minj, and Amir Khan, environmentalist Mr. Suresh Bhai, former MP Mr. Pradeep Tamta, and academics like Prof. Sanchita Das (TISS Mumbai) and Ad. Rahul Singh (Delhi).

The impacts of these trainings have been profound. Approximately 50 individuals participated in each training. Both men and women participated in the training. This included landless women, a widow, and two disabled individuals, demonstrating an inclusive approach. The participant's demographic was largely youths (98% aged 18-35 years), comprising 60% Dalits, 30% tribals, and 10% from OBC and other castes. A significant outcome is the development of strong leadership skills; individuals who were initially hesitant to speak are confidently addressing at the public gatherings, expressing their views and understanding of community issues. They have emerged as social workers, openly discussing social, political, economic, and educational issues within their communities and creating their own identities. This increased awareness has led to active opposition against injustice, with individuals seeking legal help and engaging directly with government officials and Panchayat representatives. Ten full-time workers/fellows have been selected by KVT from these trained individuals.

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The paralegal training has had a catalytic effect on social and political agency. The knowledge gained has directly translated into collective action, challenging traditional power structures and increasing the accountability of local governance. For instance, Bindra Devi, a trainee from Dhora village, successfully helped Kusum, a Dalit girl, file a case of assault against her husband and in-laws, leading to their arrest and Kusum's liberation from an abusive marriage. This demonstrates how legal understanding empowers individuals to assert their rights actively, moving beyond passive suffering. Furthermore, trained workers like Rajesh, Vikas Kumar, Mangat Ram, Bindra Devi, Rekha



Kumar, and Jaipal Singh, along with hundreds of others, submitted ten memorandums to the President, Prime Minister, and Chief Minister, opposing the Supreme Court's order on reservation classification and creamy layer. These workers also collected Rs 9,000 to send eight representatives to a Special Component Plan meeting in Chandigarh, showcasing their initiative in advocating for community interests. In another instance, Bindra Devi, Kumkum, and Aarti organized 300 women to demand the opening of a government-supported training center in Lakhmandal, and when officials failed to deliver, KVT stepped in to open its own centers there. This program has successfully advocated for approximately a dozen cases of oppression, giving the community the courage to fight injustice and secure positive outcomes. People are now directly approaching the police, courts, and concerned departments to submit individual and collective demands, a marked shift from previous dependency. This increased legal recourse has reduced incidents of harassment due to fear of the law and diminished the influence of informal Khat Panchayats, which historically favored upper-caste men. Landless deprived communities are now coming forward to demand their rights on land, utilizing laws to protect their interests. The awareness programs also led to the installation of a statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in Matli village, funded through public contributions, symbolizing a growing assertion of Dalit identity and rights.

B. Skill Development & Entrepreneurship: Pathways to Self-Reliance

The Skill Development and Livelihoods Programs are designed to enhance the employability and self-reliance of participants, particularly women and youths, and to establish sustainable training centers for ongoing skill development.

A key activity was the residential skill development training provided to 46 participants, including 36 women, from October 15 to November 15, 2024. This high participation rate for women is particularly significant given the social norms and household responsibilities that often restrict women's mobility in hilly regions. Training modules included tailoring, wood and craft, furniture-making, computers, and soap-making, conducted at YMC Centers in Kandikhal and Lakhamandal. Following this, sewing and computer centers were opened in Lakhamandal and Gehri villages (Chakrata Block) and Haripur village (Kalsi Block), with more than five machines at each center.



Trained participants were appointed as trainers at these centers, with each center having two female trainers, creating a sustainable model for knowledge transfer. Libraries were also established at each training center and at Kandikhal, curating Dalit, tribal, and women-centric literature, biographies, and works of historical figures. Approximately 30 individuals were enrolled in basic computer courses, further enhancing digital literacy. Additionally, 20 youths (13 women) received one-month self-employment training from May 1 to May 31, 2024, focusing on sewing, wood/craft, furniture, soap, and computer skills. An innovative approach involved using pine forest leaves and flowers, abundant in the area, for gift items and income generation, turning an ecological challenge into an economic opportunity.

The outcomes of these programs are transformative. Four training centers and four libraries have been established, serving over 150 women, men, and students. More than 15 individuals have already successfully started their own businesses, and about 20 individuals who completed skill development training were connected to self-employment opportunities. A compelling example of this localized economic ecosystem



development is seen in three young participants who, after computer training, started their own businesses: a document center, an online ticket booking service, and a printing/photocopying shop. This initiative has provided local support and significantly reduced the need for people to travel to distant towns for these services, thereby

addressing issues of rural migration by creating local employment and economic resilience. Approximately 80% of those who received training were young people, and about 80% were women, highlighting the program's success in targeting and empowering these key demographics. Five individuals were linked to government self-employment schemes, and three computer-trained youths are now gainfully employed.

C. Community Empowerment & Awareness Campaigns: Shifting Paradigms

KVT's empowerment and awareness campaigns in Uttarakhand are designed to raise awareness about historical injustice and ongoing oppression faced by Dalits and women, inform communities about government schemes, combat social issues, promote education and healthcare, and foster a sense of security, self-respect, and unity.

The year began with a comprehensive survey in 50 selected villages, creating a detailed database on education, unemployment, untouchability, oppression, and other forms of caste- and gender-based discrimination. This data was instrumental in developing tailored strategies and identifying specific issues for action in each villages.

Discussions were held on the history, ongoing oppression, and future strategies for Dalits and women, often comparing *Manusmriti* and the Constitution to highlight historical injustices and constitutional rights.



KVT facilitated the direct linkage of over 40 individuals to various Central and State Government schemes, connecting villagers with officials at block and district levels to access benefits. Legal texts, the Constitution's preamble, biographies, and photos of prominent figures were distributed door-to-door to enhance legal and historical literacy.

Fifteen specific awareness and liberation campaigns were conducted, addressing critical issues such as providing scholarships to school children, linking people to pension schemes, sending drop-out children back to school, ending untouchability practices, combating superstition, raising awareness against bonded labor, promoting self-employment, assisting landless Dalits in securing homes, toilets, and land, filing Forest Rights Act (FRA) claims, involving new workers (especially women), forming Janhak Manch (People's Rights Platforms), combating addiction, ensuring Dalit and women's

participation in Panchayat, and promoting education and healthcare. More than 40 women and men from the project area were sent to various social, political, economic, and cultural events related to Dalits, tribals, and women, both within Uttarakhand and in other states, to foster learning and solidarity. A year-long campaign was also underway to demand a strong law for the Special Component Plan, and KVT actively worked against the Supreme Court's decision on reservation categorization and creamy layer, submitting



memorandums to various officials across the state. WhatsApp groups were created for daily activities and information exchange, and online meetings were regularly conducted, with people being educated on social media use and distinguishing true from false information. Government schemes and films were also shown digitally at the project center, providing many participants with their first exposure to such technology. These efforts led to increased participation of Dalits and women in 8 Panchayats and direct access to 2500 people. Over 34 people obtained MNREGA cards, and 13 cases of harassment were registered in police stations, with land cases also filed. Environmental awareness was also enhanced, with 6000 saplings planted in January 2025 with the participation of 105 families from 31 villages.

The impact of these campaigns has been the emergence of a counter-hegemonic discourse and significant political mobilization. A wave of awareness has swept through villages against injustice, atrocities, and exploitation, making marginalized communities acutely aware of their rights. This increased vocalization has compelled political stakeholders to pay attention to their problems, leading to a notable shift in power dynamics. Two KVT team members even became office bearers in a national political party, demonstrating the growing political agency of these communities. The heightened awareness and self-reliance among Dalits and women have caused discomfort among dominant groups, leading to the spread of false propaganda. However, women leaders like Bindra Devi, Babli, and Seema successfully countered these conspiracies by explaining the benefits of training to their families. People are now holding their village heads and local legislators accountable, actively seeking information about government schemes, asking questions, and approaching the police when issues arise. They demand

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transparency in government projects and collect online information about schemes. This grassroots political mobilization, exemplified by the formation of "*Janhak Manch*" (People's Rights Platforms), is directly challenging established power dynamics and demanding systemic change, moving beyond mere service delivery to active rights assertion and political participation. Respect for women is increasing, and both women and Dalits are becoming more outspoken, leading to a significant growth in their political and social standing. The core objective of preparing a large group of young men and women who promote equality, social justice, constitutional values, democracy, and scientific thinking is clearly succeeding.

Digital literacy has improved, with people using WhatsApp groups for discussions and mobile phones for accurate information and online meetings. A notable success was the drug addiction campaign in Bhitri village, where women refused to work in fields where drugs were sown, leading men to stop consumption, as women bore the brunt of



the labor. This demonstrated increased confidence and respect among Dalits, tribals, and women, with people demanding new books, gathering for meetings, and women traveling for training, which was previously difficult. People are now attracted to environmental and traditional farming practices, considering self-employment instead of migrating. Organized groups have strengthened KVT's presence in 60 villages, creating an atmosphere of accountability for upper-caste individuals regarding Dalit harassment. Community participation has increased, with non-Dalits sitting with Dalits, and men and women working together, leading to a change in conservative thinking. Villagers are now advocating cases at their own level, collecting funds, and questioning representatives, fostering democracy, constitutional values, equality, and a scientific outlook. KVT's Project Coordinator, Jaber Singh, was made the national coordinator of the All-India Social Justice Forum, and KVT representatives are invited to speak on Dalit and women's issues across the country, gaining national recognition and awards.

D. Humanitarian Assistance: Direct Support for the Vulnerable

KVT's humanitarian assistance program provides comprehensive support to victims of exploitation, including financial aid, counseling, security, legal representation, and shelter. This direct intervention is crucial for addressing systemic vulnerabilities and providing immediate relief and long-term pathways out of injustice.

Specific examples of impact include providing financial assistance of Rs.10,000 each to five victims who are actively fighting legal battles, including two cases under the POCSO (Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses) Act and three under the Atrocities Act. These cases are progressing positively, demonstrating the tangible impact of KVT's support. KVT successfully rescued two women who were forced into prostitution due to financial hardship and reunited them with their families, tackling the root causes of exploitation. Efforts were also made to liberate five families involved in bonded labor, a persistent issue in remote areas. More than 20 individuals were linked to disability, widow, and old-age pension schemes, ensuring social security for vulnerable populations.

Beyond direct support, KVT has mobilized broader community assistance. For instance, Rs. 60,000 was successfully raised for a young girl from Bageshwar who needed financial support for her IIT admission, providing a pathway out of poverty through education. In a harrowing case in Jaunsar, Rs. 2.5 lakh was raised to support a minor Dalit rape survivor whose family was also trapped in bonded labor and homeless. This assistance included relocating the girl and her brother to a safer place and covering all legal and care costs, demonstrating a holistic approach to support the victim. KVT also provides shelter at its center for individuals in need, based on their specific circumstances. This direct aid, coupled with legal and social advocacy, provides critical support for those most impacted by inequality, recognizing that systemic change requires both macro-level advocacy and micro-level intervention.

E. International Women's Day Celebration: "Nari Shakti: From Women Development to Women-led Development"

In Tehri Garhwal, International Women's Day was observed at the YMC Center and surrounding villages with rallies, cultural programs, and interactive legal literacy sessions. Over 150 women attended, many of whom shared success stories from paralegal and livelihood training. Discussions focused on ending caste-based discrimination, promoting gender justice, and strengthening women's participation in local governance. The event inspired solidarity among participants and reinforced the importance of women-led change.



F. Children's Day Celebration: "For Every Child, Every Right"

Children's Day in Tehri Garhwal was celebrated with great enthusiasm at the YMC Center, where over 100 children from remote villages gathered. The program included

educational games, science experiments, and cultural performances by the children. Activities emphasized teamwork, creativity, and confidence-building, while parents and community elders appreciated the platform provided for children’s holistic development.

G. Glimpses of Uttarakhand Activities



VI. Financial Stewardship: Investing in Impact

Kissan Vikas Trust operates with a strong commitment to financial transparency and responsible stewardship, ensuring that every contribution translates into meaningful

B/403, Vaishnavi Plaza Dwarika Mandir Lane, West Boring Canal Road, Patna, Bihar-800001, INDIA

Contact: +91 9334330432; e-mail: kissanvikastrust@gmail.com; kvtngo.org 

impact on the ground. The organization receives support from various funding agencies, notably Global Greengrants Fund (GGF) and Environmental Defenders Collaborative (EDC), complemented by contributions from like-minded allies and public donations.

KVT's approach to funding also involves strategic diversification and seeking fund from like-minded donors for specific humanitarian aid, indicates a deliberate move to broaden funding sources beyond existing grants. This strategy is crucial for reducing reliance on a single donor and enhancing long-term financial sustainability. Furthermore, the identified need for funding to "establish [trained workers] as good leaders and social workers" highlights a critical investment in human capital development. This is not merely about covering program activities but about nurturing the individuals, who are driving grassroots change, ensuring the sustained impact of KVT's efforts by building a cadre of empowered and effective community leaders.

VII. Partnerships & Collaborations: A Network of Support

Kissan Vikas Trust recognizes that impactful change is a collaborative endeavor, built upon a strong network of support from diverse stakeholders. During the reporting period, KVT engaged with a range of partners, from funding agencies to academic institutions and local organizations, each contributing uniquely to the mission.

Key Partners:

- **Funding Agencies:**
 - **Global Greengrants Fund (GGF):** An international grantmaking organization that provides funding to grassroots environmental groups and activists. Their partnership with KVT likely involves financial support for KVT's projects related to environmental protection and community development.
 - **Environmental Defenders Collaborative (EDC):** A pooled fund fiscally sponsored by GGF. It was created by a group of funders to support and protect environmental defenders worldwide. KVT's collaboration with EDC suggests it receives support for its work in advocating for the rights and safety of environmental activists and communities.
- **Academic Institutions:**
 - **Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) Mumbai:** TISS is a renowned public university in India with a strong focus on social sciences and social work. Its partnership with KVT likely involves research collaborations, knowledge sharing, and providing expertise on social development issues, which can help KVT enhance the effectiveness of its programs.

- **Doon University:** As a state university in Uttarakhand, Doon University's partnership with KVT could involve joint research, student internships, or academic support for KVT's projects, particularly those related to rural development, environmental studies, or social sciences.
- **Government Departments:**
 - **District Agriculture Department (for FSSAI training in West Bengal):** This government partnership is focused on a specific, practical goal: providing FSSAI (Food Safety and Standards Authority of India) training. This collaboration allows KVT to deliver certified training to people in West Bengal, ensuring food safety and quality in agricultural practices.

Collaborative Efforts and Their Value:

These partnerships are instrumental in amplifying KVT's mission. Funding agencies provide the essential financial resources that enable the implementation and scaling of programs, covering critical areas from paralegal training to livelihood support. The involvement of academic institutions like TISS and Doon University is particularly significant. Interns and representatives from these prestigious institutions repeatedly visited KVT's operational areas, staying and working in the field as part of their training. This collaboration brings external, specialized knowledge and academic rigor to KVT's grassroots work, enhancing the capacity of its workers and the communities they serve by integrating diverse perspectives into practical interventions. This is a two way learning process that validates KVT's approach, strengthens its methodology, and broadens its professional network.

Collaboration with government departments, such as the District Agriculture Department, ensures that KVT's programs align with broader development goals and can leverage official support, as seen with FSSAI training for women. Partnerships with local and national organizations facilitate broader advocacy efforts, knowledge sharing, and collective action on issues of social justice. The engagement of individual experts, including legal professionals, environmentalists, and former parliamentarians, provides invaluable technical expertise, strategic guidance, and a wider platform for KVT's advocacy efforts. These synergistic collaborations are vital for KVT's ability to deliver comprehensive, effective, and sustainable impact.

VIII. Challenges, Lessons Learnt, and Future Outlook

The journey of Kissan Vikas Trust during the financial year 2024-2025, while marked by significant achievements, also presented various challenges. These experiences have

been crucial in shaping the organization's understanding and refining its strategic direction.

A. Challenges Encountered

Operating in the remote and often inaccessible hilly regions of Uttarakhand presents inherent difficulties. These areas frequently lack reliable mobile network connectivity, hindering communication and information dissemination. Furthermore, marginalized communities, including Dalits, Adivasis, minorities, and women, often feel unsafe and are hesitant to approach formal authorities like the police or courts due to a lack of information and unfamiliarity with legal systems.

Social norms and household responsibilities pose significant barriers, particularly restricting women's mobility and participation in training programs in these hilly regions. A notable challenge has been the resistance from dominant groups. As Dalits and women gain awareness and move towards self-reliance, this progress often creates discomfort among patriarchal, male-dominated society and upper-caste individuals. This discomfort can manifest as false propaganda against the organization and direct pressure on Dalit men to prevent their women from participating in training, as observed in villages like Gahri, Dhaura, Padhiya, and Pankhet.

B. Key Lessons Learnt:

The experiences of the past year have yielded invaluable lessons that are now integral to KVT's operational strategy:

- **Building Strong Community Connections:** Establishing deep connections within each village and fostering a better understanding between workers and communities is vital for effective future work. This relationship-building is foundational for sustainable change.
- **Strategic Information Distribution:** Providing informative booklets and photocopies of legal texts and government schemes ensures that knowledge is retained and accessible to those who received training, empowering them to refer to the information when needed.
- **Empowering Local Leaders:** The successful development of community capacity, with trained individuals leading campaigns and raising their voices, is a significant achievement. This has enabled marginalized communities to approach authorities directly, reducing their historical dependence on others.
- **Digital Literacy as a Catalyst:** Teaching people how to use social media platforms and basic computer skills has been a crucial aspect of empowerment.

This fosters digital literacy, facilitates information exchange, and creates new self-employment opportunities.

- **Financial Assistance for Legal Battles:** Providing financial assistance to victims fighting legal battles strengthens their representation and gives the community the courage to fight against the injustice, leading to more successful outcomes.
- **Holistic Support for Victims:** Offering comprehensive support to victims of exploitation, including financial aid, counseling, security, legal representation, and shelter, is critical for their well-being and justice, addressing immediate needs and long-term recovery.
- **Focus on Youth and Women:** Placing youth and women at the center of efforts is a crucial strategy for overcoming societal barriers, particularly in regions where they face significant challenges. The high participation rates of women in skill development programs demonstrate the success of this targeted approach.
- **Collaboration with External Organizations:** While KVT often works in areas with limited active organizations, sharing activities and collaborating with external organizations and academic institutions provides valuable support, diverse perspectives, and learning opportunities.
- **Transformative Effect of Paralegal Training:** The paralegal training had an unprecedented transformative effect on workers. The training for selected workers on every subject enabled them to become "complete activists," capable of discussing social, political, economic, and educational issues logically, courageously, and wisely. This profound impact led KVT to decide that such comprehensive and sustained training programs are essential for bringing a new dawn in the area.

C. Future Plans & Strategic Directions

Building on the lessons learnt and the successes achieved, KVT has outlined several key future plans and strategic directions:

- **Continued Community Engagement:** KVT will leverage the strong connections established in each village and the enhanced understanding workers have developed with communities to enable even more effective work in the future.
- **Increased Involvement of Youths:** A core strategy moving forward is to involve even more youths in all programs, recognizing their potential as agents of change.
- **Formation of Local Committees:** Separate local committees of the "*Jan Haq Manch*" (People's Rights Forum) will continue to be formed for both youths and women in each village, ensuring their active participation in local governance and advocacy.

- **Expansion of Skill Development & Training Centers:** KVT has planned to expand its model of sustained training through the existing and new skill development and training centers, with support of existing trained participants as the trainers.
- **Replication of Initiatives:** Utilizing documented materials and lessons learnt, KVT intends to replicate successful programs and initiatives in other areas facing similar challenges.
- **Continued Advocacy for Legal Cases & Victim Support:** There is an ongoing commitment to provide legal aid and comprehensive humanitarian assistance to the victims of injustice and exploitation.
- **Deeper Understanding of Challenges:** Continuous research and documentation will inform future strategic planning, allowing for more targeted and effective interventions.
- **Continued Focus on Digital Literacy & Technology Use:** KVT will continue in its efforts to educating the communities on the correct use of social media platforms, and utilizing mobile phones effectively for accurate information and online meetings.
- **Promoting Self-Employment & Entrepreneurship:** A sustained focus will be placed on fostering local economic development through self-employment and entrepreneurship, reducing reliance on external job markets.
- **Addressing Specific Village-Level Issues:** Strategies will continue to be formulated based on the unique conditions and issues identified in each village, such as substance abuse, superstition, or bonded labor.
- **Sustained Awareness Campaigns:** The continuation of organized and collective awareness efforts on various social and legal issues is a priority of KVT.
- **Demand for Stronger Laws:** KVT will continue its policy advocacy, particularly the year-long campaign to demand a strong law for the Special Component Plan.
- **Holistic Approach:** Future programs will continue to integrate Dalits, women, and tribals, holding combined camps, rallies, and planning sessions to ensure collective progress.

D. Identified Funding Needs

To sustain and expand its vital work, Kissan Vikas Trust has identified several key funding needs:

- **Continued Funding for Core Activities:** This includes ongoing support for Project Coordinators honorariums, Field Staff/Fellows, Block Level Meetings, Legal Training, One Month Livelihoods/Village Industry Training, Case Follow-up,

Library Support, Booklets on specific Laws/Acts, Community Education Materials, Local Transport, Livelihoods Support in villages, and Administrative Expenses.

- **Financial Assistance for Victim Rehabilitation and Litigation:** There is a critical need for support to rehabilitate victims of oppression and to cover litigation costs, including securing good lawyers, to ensure justice for the victim.
- **Support for Local Products and Self-Employment:** Funding is needed to promote local products and self-employment initiatives, which are crucial for preventing rural migration and building resilient local economies.
- **Increased Scope of Trainings:** To reach more villages and communities, the scope of existing training programs needs to be expanded.
- **Separate Training for Women's Issues:** A specific need has been identified for dedicated training programs focusing exclusively on women's issues, addressing their unique challenges and empowerment needs.
- **Sustaining Trained Workers' Morale:** Financial assistance is required for the issues that trained workers will raise in their communities. This support is vital to maintain their morale and to establish them as effective leaders and social workers in society, ensuring the long-term impact of KVT's grassroots efforts.
- **Diversification of Funding Sources:** KVT is actively seeking funds from new partners, to diversify its funding base and enhance long-term financial stability.
- **Humanitarian Aid:** Ongoing appeals to "like-minded allies" are necessary to raise funds for specific humanitarian cases, such as supporting a girl's IIT admission or providing comprehensive aid to rape survivors.

The consistent need for funding across these areas underscores the ongoing commitment required to address deeply entrenched social inequalities and build self-reliant, just communities.

IX. Call to Action / Support Kissan Vikas Trust

The achievements of Kissan Vikas Trust in the financial year 2024-2025 are a testament to the power of collective action and sustained commitment. From empowering women farmers in West Bengal to fostering legal literacy and economic independence in Uttarakhand, KVT's programs have created tangible, transformative change in the lives of marginalized communities.

This vital work, however, is ongoing. The challenges of geographical remoteness, social barriers, and systemic injustices require continued dedication and resources. KVT invites all stakeholders—individuals, philanthropic organizations, corporate partners, and government bodies—to join hands in this mission.

Your support can help KVT:

- **Expand its reach:** Bring critical legal literacy, skill development, and awareness programs to more remote villages.
- **Strengthen livelihoods:** Provide more women and youth with the training and resources needed to establish sustainable self-employment.
- **Advocate for rights:** Continue to champion the rights of Dalits, tribals, and women, ensuring justice and accountability.
- **Nurture future generations:** Invest in environmental education and leadership development for children and youth, building a sustainable future.

Every partnership, every donation, and every act of advocacy contributes directly to cultivating resilience and empowering communities. Together, we can build a more equitable, self-reliant, and just society.

To learn more about Kissan Vikas Trust and how you can contribute, please visit our website or contact us directly. Your partnership is invaluable in driving lasting change.

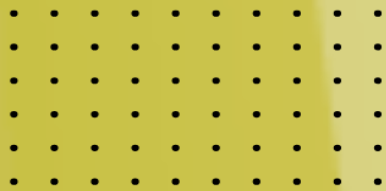
Kissan Vikas Trust (KVT)

"Cultivating Resilience, Empowering Communities"

Since 1997, KVT has been at the forefront of empowering marginalized communities across India, particularly in West Bengal and Uttarakhand. Guided by the values of equality, justice, and sustainability, we continue to foster change by supporting women farmers, nurturing children's creativity, strengthening legal literacy, and building self-Reliant communities.

Join us in shaping a just and sustainable future.

**B/403, Vaishnavi Plaza, Dwarika Mandir Lane,
West Boring Canal Road, Patna, Bihar – 800001, INDIA
Contact: +91 9334330432
Email: kissanvikastrust@gmail.com
Website: www.kvtngo.org**



Kissan Vikas Trust (KVT)

OUR MISSION IN ACTION

KISSAN VIKAS TRUST IS DEDICATED TO FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL JUSTICE, EMPOWERING MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES ACROSS DIVERSE GEOGRAPHIES. THIS REPORT HIGHLIGHTS A YEAR OF SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT, FROM PROMOTING AGROECOLOGY AND WOMEN'S LIVELIHOODS IN WEST BENGAL TO CHAMPIONING DALIT, TRIBAL, AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT THROUGH LEGAL AND SKILL-BUILDING INITIATIVES IN UTTARAKHAND.



JOIN US IN SHAPING A JUST & SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

WEBSITE: WWW.KVTNGO.ORG

EMAIL: KISSANVIKASTRUST@GMAIL.COM

PHONE: +91 9334330432

ADDRESS: B/403, VAISHNAVI PLAZA, DWARIKA MANDIR LANE, WEST BORING CANAL ROAD, PATNA, BIHAR – 800001, INDIA

