

ADVANCING DIVERSITY

ONE VIDEO AT A TIME





Who We Are

We are an international NGO founded in 2003 that promotes community media to enable citizen participation in marginalized and poor communities worldwide.

As a community media organization, we have directly impacted the lives of more than 4 million people in India by initiating and sustaining a community media movement - empowering people by amplifying their voices.

Our Vision

- Innovations in media and technology will enable communities to earn a living through their creativity and local knowledge.
- Every community will have access to journalists whose loyalty is to the community, not corporate media interests.
- Crowd-sourced content and the spread of the internet into villages will give communities access to the content they want – on their rights, government programs, jobs, and community issues.
- The voices of thousands of citizens will join in to amplify every cry for justice, and community needs will be heard in the spaces where decisions are made.

“Strong alternate voices in the media – representing a diversity of genders, cultures, castes, religions, geographies, and socioeconomic groups – are crucial to a vibrant democracy.”

Stalin K. Co-Director





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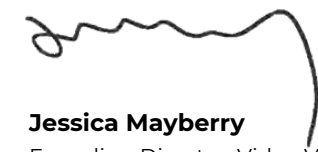
The data video below is a three minute summary of our accomplishments, in numbers.

As always this year, the goal was to ensure that Video Volunteer remains a platform where citizens feel heard, grassroots journalists achieve more impact, and government officials feel they have the pulse of the people.

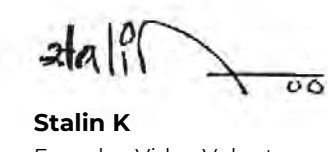
The VV family - our 226 Community Correspondents (CCs), board and staff - are deeply grateful to our donors, whose support helped us achieve a profound positive impact.

Thank you for helping us create a diverse and inclusive future.

With gratitude,



Jessica Mayberry
Founding Director, Video Volunteer



Stalin K
Founder, Video Volunteer

Message from the Directors

Last year was marred by unparalleled health challenges and economic hardships brought about by the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, a steady decline in freedom of the press in India and lack of diversity in newsrooms resulted in an under-reporting of issues faced by marginalized communities. In India, only 2% of the content in mainstream media addresses the issues of the rural areas, where 70% of the population lives.

In order to create more diversity in terms of the stories that are told, and who tells the story, we asked ourselves the three key questions below.

How can we bring more insights from rural communities into the development process?

How do we 'scale' the act of voicing to a level where all marginalized citizens see value in using their voice and sharing their ideas?

How can we support government officials and move them to act on citizens' grievances by hearing their stories?

With much of our activities and campaigns in 2021-22 we sought answers to these questions, and in the next pages, we share with you how we did this.



THE YEAR THAT WAS

A lens on 2021-22

The year 2021-22 was marred by the second wave of COVID-19 pandemic, which continued to adversely and disproportionately affect the lives and livelihoods of marginalised communities. Despite the challenges and the economic hardships posed by the pandemic, our team continued to report on community issues and bring about positive changes. Here is a snapshot of the year under review:

Our Changemakers

Total Community Correspondents: 226

Female: **125** | Male: **98** | Other: **-3**

The number of Community Correspondents in the VV Network

Jharkhand	44	Bihar	24	Madhya Pradesh	16
West Bengal	37	Jammu and Kashmir	20	Maharashtra	15
Uttar Pradesh	26	Odisha	17	Chhattisgarh	9

Delhi, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Punjab, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttarakhand, have 1-4 Correspondents

Total Issue videos Produced
1507

Total Impacts Achieved
439

Top Six issues covered by our Correspondents

Anti Poverty Programs
298

Crumbling Infrastructure
126

Livelihoods
110

Health
285

Agrarian Crisis
86

Water
77

Average Lives touched per issue video:
34,407

IMPACT ACHIEVED THROUGH VIDEOS

After making their videos, our CCs initiate local action campaigns to solve the problem the video is about. When they can resolve the problem through their efforts, we call it an Impact.

Two data assistants plus mentors document each stage of the production, gathering data and entering it into our custom-built database.

OUR IMPACT

Impacts Achieved
2021-2022: **439** | 2020-2021: **322**

No of CCs who achieved impact
2021-2022: **119** | 2020-2021: **101**

People Involved
2021-2022: **11,087** | 2020-2021: **4,457**

Lives impacted
2021-2022: **3,233,596**
2020-2021: **8,282,782**

IMPACT ACHIEVED **27% increase** from the previous year.



OUR JOURNEY SO FAR

(*Since January 2010)

Number of videos/cases reported: **17932**, OF WHICH IN **14241** CASES IMPACT IS POSSIBLE:

problem where an impact was possible.

(The remainder is, for instance, impact videos, success stories, informational videos and training videos, among others.)





Community media is crucial for ensuring media pluralism and freedom of expression, and it is an indicator of a healthy democratic society.

We have been empowering community voices through capacity-building and training activities since 2003. Our work is proof that inclusive platforms drive public participation in bringing out core issues of marginalised communities, and this leads to defending cultural diversity.

Our content is diverse because our Correspondents who deliver them are from various marginalized communities who are united by common experiences like discrimination.

As we look to enter our 20th year of operations, we wanted to address how we can scale our influence and bring more diversity to community media. Stemming from this belief, we felt the need to not only groom our existing CCs but to identify and train more such storytellers. That's the zeal behind which we launched Buland Bol, chronicled the journeys of some of our CCs and also provided training to amplify more voices from the ground to tell their stories and bring about change.



**Scaling
diversity,
Accelerating
our Impact**

CHRONICLERS OF INJUSTICES

OUR DIVERSE STORYTELLERS



Our five fingers are all different but play a specific role when they come together to form a fist. Similarly, all of our 226 Community Correspondents are diverse personalities from different social settings all over India but united on VV with a singular mission -- to tell stories of injustice, apathy, discrimination, contempt and neglect and find solutions to these issues. Most, if not all, CCs are from marginalized communities who have faced the brunt of casteism or sexism at some point in life. They have all chosen the path of activism and journalism to spread awareness and empower people to fight for their rights.



A GLADIATOR FIGHTING AGAINST DALIT DISCRIMINATION



Working with VV to resolve community issues has given me a lot of respect.

GAYATRI DEVI

[Read more about Gayatri Devi.](#)



GANGSTER TURNED JOURNALIST MAKES IMPACT WITHOUT RAISING A FINGER.



"What I learned through my different forms of social activism is that a government official can suppress letters or petitions but not a video."

ANIL KUMAR SAROJ

[Read more about Anil Kumar Saroj.](#)

India has a long history of gender and caste discrimination, and like many of our Community Correspondents, Gayatri Devi has been fighting to break that bias. She began crusading for the rights of lower caste women in Uttar Pradesh, also known as the Hindi heartland of the country when she was only 17 years old. After leaving the house of her conservative in-laws in 2001, Gayatri worked for an NGO. Almost a decade later, she began her own NGO, '**Jan Vikas Kendra**' (People's Development Center). Gayatri Devi's NGO work fights for the rights of Dalit women. In 2013, Gayatri joined VV as a Correspondent. "Previously, I only had only printouts and no proof to ground an issue. However, video is a very factual medium which we can use to portray the problems of our own communities and of communities around us," she shares.

Gayatri has affected real change, including sanitation improvements in rural areas. Her work in breaking the bias has garnered multiple awards. In addition to her journalism work, Gayatri has also helped set up several centres to educate and train young women from the lower caste.

The old adage, the pen is mightier than the sword, reflects that words and art can often be more powerful weapons than force. Perhaps today, a better adage would be, "a film is mightier than a fist." As governments worldwide fight protests with violence, Anil Kumar Saroj shows us that using video journalism to fight inequality may be a more effective tool than traditional social activism.

Anil grew up poor and from a caste considered lower in Uttar Pradesh. When he was brought to the city of Mumbai as a child, he was exposed to the dark underworld of crime that led him to flee the city. When he returned to rural India and saw the discrimination and abhorrent inequality there, Saroj used video journalism, with support from Video Volunteers, to showcase the inequalities occurring in the hope of affecting change.

Anil is an example of a courageous human rights crusader who fights with art rather than armoury.

Number of Videos Created

260

Lives Touched

910,343

Number of Videos Created

225

Lives Touched

2,037,700



A PROVEN CHAMPION FOR TRIBAL RIGHTS IS ONE OF THEIR OWN



"I was very influenced by VV's training and what can be done with the power of the camera and video storytelling."

SHIKHA KUMARI

[Read more about Shikha Kumari](#)

Shikha Kumari Paharin belongs to the Sauriya Pahariya tribe, an indigenous Dravidian ethnic community classified as a 'particularly vulnerable tribal group'. Joining VV as a Community Correspondent in 2014, she has become a leading tribal voice against the oppression and human rights issues that her isolated community faces. Her efforts led to the opening of multiple schools in her village, giving young girls from her community access to education.

Her contributions include news stories which led to the disbanding of human trafficking operations, fighting against problematic patriarchal practices, and fighting for equitable education for all. Shikha attributes much of her success and progress to her work with us.



AN ENTREPRENEUR AND A NEWSMAN



"I want to do stories of those whose issues are ignored by society, the administration, and the media."

AAMIR ABBAS

[Read more about Aamir Abbas](#)

Inspiration can come from many sources, but one of the most powerful is seeing someone walk the path before you. Our Community Correspondent, Syed Amir Abbas found his inspiration in Stalin Padma, the founding director of Video Volunteers. "I met Stalin at VV's national meet in 2017 and I was very impressed by his personality and the way he did his work. I want to be like him. He has been my personal inspiration," he says.

It's that inspiration and his own ambitious drive that helped Amir rise from a social media content manager to the founder of a hyper-local news agency—Democratic Chakra— in Bihar's capital Patna.

He was introduced to Video Volunteers in 2015. "It was at VV that I got a medium to voice concerns about local issues and experienced how strong media pressure can be on any administration." In the last seven years, he's been with VV, Amir has routinely used the power of community journalism when it comes to highlighting issues affecting his community. As the CEO of his media firm, his aim in the next three years is to train a group of young journalists to focus on hyperlocal issues in his hometown Patna.

Number of Videos Created

59

Lives Touched

866

Number of Videos Created

32

Lives Touched

2605



THE POSTER WOMAN OF THE SLUMS



“I consider the leadership and team of Video Volunteers as my second family.”



YASHODHARA

[Read more about Yashodhara](#)

Right from childhood, Yashodhara Salve has faced the cane for her drive to be educated. Born into a Dalit family and raised by her mother, she was slapped in public by a family member for wearing pants, a taboo in her patriarchal family. Yashodhara overcame all these situations, completed her college education and took up activism to raise awareness against sexism and discrimination in education standards for girls. Her stories on the tradition-driven discrimination faced by widowed mothers in Gujarat caused many families to forgo these ancient rules against women.

Raised in the urban slums and married to a Dalit man from the hinterlands, Yashodhara has the ability to understand the issues of Dalits in rural and urban pockets of India. Her nuanced understanding of the issues plaguing the Dalit communities across the multiple tiers of cities has won her multiple awards and accolades and has been featured in a France 24 documentary.

Yashodhara considers VV as her second family; it's through VV that she met her life partner and husband Bipin Solanki. In future, with the inspiration from her VV family, she plans to start her own non-profit organisation that works towards women's empowerment.



226 Total Number of CCs

GENDER DIVERSITY

Female	Male	Other
125	98	03

CASTE DIVERSITY

SC	ST/ Adivasi
65%	61%
General	OBC
43%	57%

Number of Videos Created

260

Lives Touched

56,859



'Empowering Volunteer Digital Changemakers from Marginalised Backgrounds'

The VV Council is an advisory board of more than 30 Community Correspondents and senior staff who weigh in on key decisions. For a long time, the Council has said we need to invest time and money into building a movement of citizen content creators. Last year we thought was the right time to act upon the suggestion and 'scale' the act of voicing to a level where all marginalized citizens see value in using their voice and sharing their ideas. We began work on building a layer of volunteer content creators underneath our Community Correspondents, who are all paid for their work.

The yearning for hyperlocal news has never been more intense; and the penetration of smart devices and spread of social media allows for the sharing of struggles and stories of injustice like never before.

In December of 2021, we launched Buland Bol. Buland Bol is a free, online media course that trains marginalised communities in video production, editing, storytelling and creating impacts with the help of social media advocacy.



December 2021

Buland Bol launched.



752

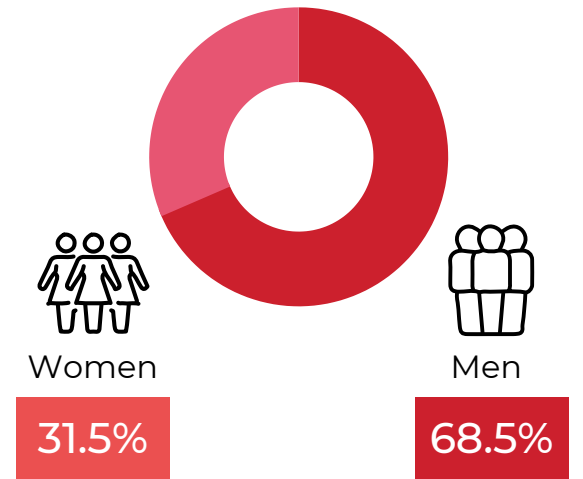
Number of applications received till March 2022.



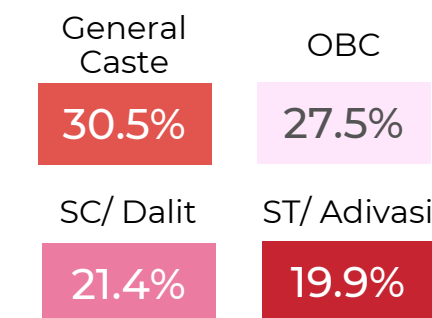
Diversity of Applicants

The geographic, regional and social diversity of applicants who applied for Buland Bol is a reflection that the idea of digital change-making resonated even amongst very marginalised citizens. It also demonstrates the strength of our network in these communities and the respect the communities have for us and our network. Though, we need to take steps to improve the gender diversity.

Gender Diversity



Social Diversity



West Bengal	Madhya Pradesh	Bihar	Uttar Pradesh
22.3%	16.4%	14.1%	9.4%
Maharashtra	Jharkhand	Jammu & Kashmir	Telangana
7.8%	7.0%	6.3%	3.2%

DIGITAL ACTIVISM: AMPLIFYING DIVERSE VOICES FROM THE GROUND

In recent years, social media has become an increasingly important tool for digital activism. In 2021, we made major investments toward training our CCs to use social media effectively. We trained our full network on social media, including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and going 'live' on Facebook.

For community reporters, social media can be an invaluable tool for both gathering news and disseminating it to their audience. In addition, social media can help reporters to grow their audience and increase engagement with their work. By training community reporters in how to use social media effectively, we can help them to build digital platforms that can have a real impact on their communities.

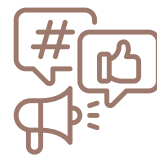
HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR DIGITAL TRAINING 2021-22



We trained CCs to use social media. By EOY, 109 were profficient.



We worked with 8-10 CCs to set up their own YouTube channels.



We used twitter to connect with and thank every government official who helped us.



We trained ASHA workers on how to leverage social media to spread positive health messages.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Community Correspondents engage in digital campaigning with their videos
- CCs Grow their followers – publicize their videos actively through digital networks
- CCs engage their audience through comments

HOW OUR CCs ARE USING SOCIAL MEDIA

Basharat Amin, Jammu & Kashmir

He produced more than 30 videos and shared all of them on Facebook, tagging officials and his friends. He also uses Twitter to engage government officials, tagging them or their office and asking for action.



Sumitra Barik, Odisha

Actively shares her videos on Facebook. Has shared more than 30 of her own videos in the last year. She tweets in Odia. She sometimes shares her videos. More often she shares photos and appeals to government officials by tagging them.



Rafiq Bano , Jammu & Kashmir

Rafiq tags RTI activists whenever she posts her videos on Facebook to get their attention. She also posts her stories on relevant local Facebook Groups.

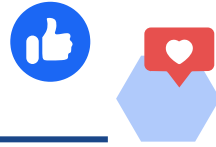


Pir Azhar U Din, Jammu & Kashmir

Pir is active on Facebook and Twitter. He shares a lot on social media. He tags government officials whenever he posts videos on local issues. It helps him draw their attention. Pir's methods are so effective that local Journalists in his district are inspired by his work of getting impacts.



OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE



2,64,305
PAGEVIEWS

during Apr 1, 2020 -
March 31, 2021



2,92,000
SUBSCRIBERS

46,736 total
subscribers during the
period



25,806
FOLLOWERS

as on March 31, 2021



4019
FOLLOWERS

as on March 31, 2021



1347
FOLLOWERS

as on March 31, 2021

KU | unheard KASHMIR



17,800
PAGEVIEWS

during Apr 1, 2020 -
March 31, 2021



144,646
FOLLOWERS

as on March 31, 2021



2800
FOLLOWERS

as on March 31, 2021

unheard BIHAR



1384
FOLLOWERS
as on March 31, 2021

unheard CHHATTISGARH



549
FOLLOWERS
as on March 31, 2021

unheard JHARKHAND



1073
FOLLOWERS
as on March 31, 2021

unheard MAHARASHTRA



1132
FOLLOWERS
as on March 31, 2021

unheard ODISHA



833
FOLLOWERS
as on March 31, 2021

unheard UTTAR PRADESH

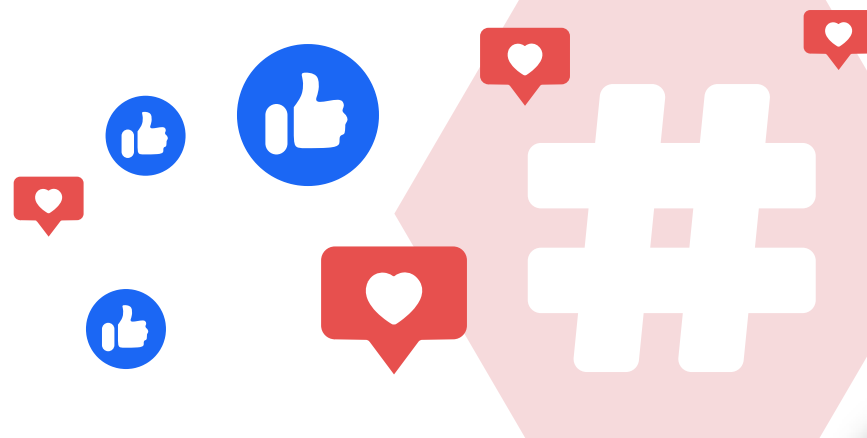


1142
FOLLOWERS
as on March 31, 2021

unheard WEST BENGAL



2511
FOLLOWERS
as on March 31, 2021



Our Accomplishments




Supporting communities during the second wave of the Pandemic

If the first COVID wave was a livelihood stealer, the second wave was life-threatening. The second wave was also when the vaccine was introduced, and the hesitancy was at its peak among several communities. Our CCs reached out to provide people with essentials and safety kits and dispel misinformation about vaccination.



Preventing the spread of COVID-19


 **73** CCs doubled up as relief workers and distributed ration and safety kits distribution.


 **56** Districts across 12 states benefitted from safety kit distribution.


 **17,370** People got free ration and basic safety kits, including masks and soaps.

 **550** Districts across 12 states benefitted from safety kit distribution.

Strengthening the health care infrastructure and frontline workers

29  PPE suits, safety kits, a thermal gun and Oximeters were given to ASHA workers.

08  Oxygen concentrators were given to government-run hospitals in rural Maharashtra and Kashmir.

 **21,000** people benefitted from the isolation and care centre in the Pune.



In Walhe village, in the Pune region of Maharashtra, we assisted in the establishment of a 25-bed isolation and care facility that serves the local population of 21,000 people.

The centre was established in collaboration with the village panchayat, and it is run by our community reporter from the area with the help of a group of committed local volunteers.

45 Covid positive individuals have received care at the centre thus far. Given the ongoing overcrowding and the public's mistrust of the government hospital, a patient would normally need to go to a private hospital and spend roughly INR 150,000. The COVID care center helped economically struggling villagers save up to INR 6.7 million in June, July, and August 2021.



"I got Vaccinated"

A video series was created in July 2021 to empower people with the right scientific information when vaccine hesitancy was at its highest.

 **WATCH NOW**





'Jaan Jao, Jaan Bachao'

'Stay Informed, Save Life' was a campaign in several states that used postering, rickshaws and loudspeakers to raise awareness.




COVID-19 Second Wave Diaries

A 5-part blog series was created to draw attention to the impact of the virus and the lockdown on the life and livelihoods in tribal areas, marginalised communities, Dalit strongholds, and socially oppressed groups and migrant workers.




Preventing the spread of COVID-19 across Tea Gardens in West Bengal


 **130**
Tea Gardens benefitted from the drive.


 **310,870**
People benefited from this drive.

 **19,600**
Soaps were distributed among Tea garden workers.

 **68,410**
Masks were distributed in Tea gardens.

 **2190**
Sanitary napkins to women were given to the women in the Tea Gardens.

 **700**
Face shields were distributed among Tea garden workers.

 **1400**
Gloves were given to Tea garden workers.

 **129**
Sanitiser bottles were distributed in Tea Gardens.

 **700**
N95 Masks were distributed among Tea garden workers.



engage 

Our stories on COVID were analyzed by political scientists from the University of Virginia and Accountability Initiative, alongside a similar set of narratives of government officials, to identify concrete recommendations for improving citizen-state synergy in the pandemic response. The findings were published in **EPW**, in an article that explores exactly how the community contributes to new knowledge about a crisis.

[READ MORE](#)



Supporting India's grassroots health care workers



ASHAs (Accredited social health activists) Workers are female healthcare workers who are at times the only point of contact for rural communities and the healthcare system.

During the pandemic, they were active in contact tracing, spreading vaccine awareness and other tasks that prevented many deaths. However, many ASHAs were not provided with PPE suits, additional remuneration or insurance support by the government for the additional duties.

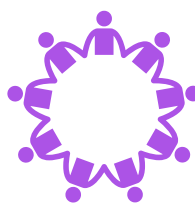
Last year, in our **Desh Ki Asha Campaign**, we sent a petition to the Prime Minister signed by more than 2000 Ashas demanding improved working conditions for ASHAs.

We also **trained 125 Ashas** to create social media accounts and to use tools like Facebook Live to reach out to women in their communities with health messages. We created a Facebook group **Desh ki Asha**.



35

CCs are ASHA Workers.



900,000

total number of ASHA Workers across the country



Read the petition [here](#)

Fighting misinformation

In the summer of 2021, when the government started rolling out vaccines for COVID-19, many people were hesitant. The hesitancy was mostly triggered due to rumours and misinformation around the efficacy and the side effects of the vaccine.

Video Volunteers partnered with The popular digital news platform Quint to dispel misinformation around vaccines, in a project funded by the Google News Initiative. The year-long project was aimed to counter mis/disinformation related to COVID-19 and vaccination in the rural parts of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar.

Our CCs helped source rumours, falsehoods and misinformation that was circulating within the communities and shared it with the team at The Quint. All those pieces of misinformation were then researched by their journalists and doctors, and content that de-bunked the false claims was created in Hindi, in the form of videos, podcasts, and shareable cards by Quint's fact-checking and health teams. Our CCs then circulated those fact sheets back to the community to create awareness.

PERCEPTION SHIFTS

We conducted a baseline and endline survey of approximately 2000 people to evaluate the effectiveness of our interventions.

Before our intervention, **67% of total respondents (1542 respondents)** thought that pregnant women, teenagers and the elderly **SHOULD NOT take vaccines**.

After our communications **78% of the total respondents (641 respondents)**, or felt that pregnant women, teenagers and the elderly **CAN take the vaccine**.

Around 77.34% (1611 respondents) admitted that Video Volunteers' content helped them the most in understanding the reality of false rumours.



[Read](#) how we built a grassroots digital distribution network that reached millions.

Effectiveness of Communications

Around 72.2 % (1504 of respondents) admitted that Video volunteers' content was the biggest contributor to their decision of taking a booster dose.

Over 73% (1536 respondents) showed interest in staying connected with video volunteers through WhatsApp in the future.

The positive role played by CCs in dispelling misinformation.

Awareness Campaigns

43

CCs conducted live awareness-raising sessions

400,300

people reached live in 403 villages.

31

CCs led facebook live sessions on vaccine hesitancy

186

people interviewed to gauge their understanding levels of vaccination.

Conducting Trainings

20

CCs conducted training sessions

124

ASHA workers trained to create Facebook accounts and post quint content on their social media handles.

ASHA workers' WhatsApp group created to share quint's fact-checked information.

20

CCs led school awareness programs

5000

students aged 14 to 18 took part in the program.

112

Teachers took part in the program.

School WhatsApp groups created to distribute COVID-19 fact checked information.



क्विट हिंदी **वेबकूफ**

दावा : अविवाहित महिलाओं, शराब पीने और स्मोकिंग करने वाले लोग और डायबिटीज के मरीजों को कोविड-19 वैक्सीन नहीं लगवानी चाहिए.

सच : सीरम इंस्टीट्यूट और भारत बायोटेक की फैक्ट शीट में ऐसी कोई हिदायत नहीं दी गई है. स्मोकिंग करने वालों को अमेरिका में वैक्सीनेशन में वरीयता दी जा रही है. भारत सरकार ने डायबिटीज के मरीजों को भी वैक्सीन लगवाने की अनुमति दी है .

क्विट हिंदी **वेबकूफ**

दावा है कि : कोविड19 का टीका लगवाने के बाद पुरुषों की फर्टिलिटी कम हो जाती है.

क्या ये सच है? : ये सच नहीं है, यूरोलॉजिस्ट डॉ. सुरेश भगत ने क्विंट से बात की और बताया कि टीका लगवाने के बाद पुरुषों की फर्टिलिटी कम होने का दावा बिल्कुल झूठा है. अमेरिका की रिसर्च संस्थाओं ने भी कहा है कि टीका लगाने के बाद फर्टिलिटी कम होने का कोई भी खतरा नहीं है.

Distributing Content to dispel misinformation

195

pieces of content, posters and articles, created. Posted on Facebook and Instagram.

2148

Whatsapp groups used to share content.

107,400

members reached directly with fact-checked information.

25,00,000

total content viewership.

30,000

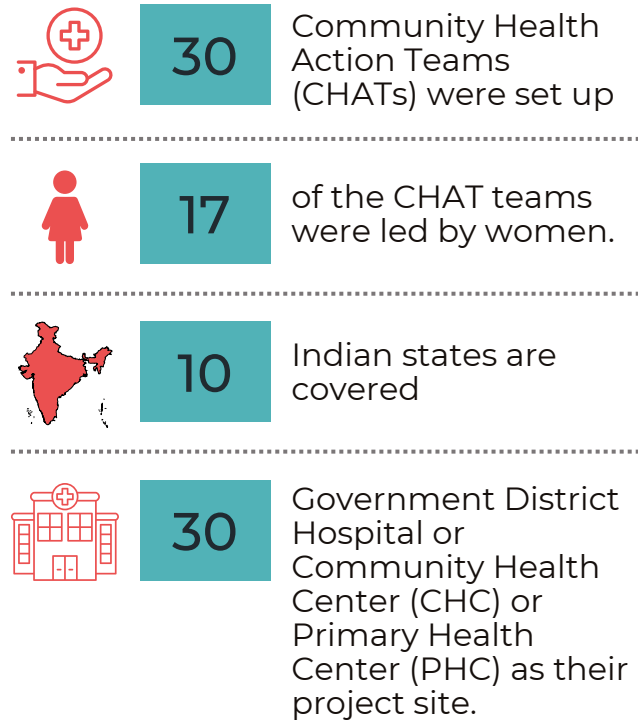
positive responses about the content from people on Whatsapp groups.

Swasth Aspataal- citizens improving healthcare infrastructure



Swasth Aspataal is an initiative to report on and fix the healthcare system of our country. Most of the primary health centres (PHC) and other healthcare facilities in rural India are in abysmal condition due to a lack of adequate human resources, crumbling infrastructure and government negligence. **To address this, we formed 30 Community Health Action Teams with 294 members to improve the functioning of 30 shortlisted hospitals across the country.**

PROJECT OVERVIEW



LIVES IMPACTED:
The initiatives will positively impact about 1.25 million people.

Actions taken

- The CHAT team brainstorms once a month to decide on the course of action for the month.
- Each CHAT group creates a baseline survey and a baseline video, and then conducts community meetings.

Digital Amplification



A Facebook page -Swasth Aspataal- was created to capture all activities and the impact of the project.

Impact of Swaasth Aaspatal



A large District Hospital in the Badohi district of Uttar Pradesh, built 12 years ago, was never operational. Due to consistent efforts by the CHAT and citizens mobilized by them, this hospital is finally functioning.



Due to the efforts of the CHAT in the Jagatsinghpur district of Odisha doctors now visit the hospital 5 days a week in place of once a week. Emergency Services are now available. A Nurse and a Pharmacist have been appointed. Separate toilet for women built. New mattresses and bedsheets were bought.



The Primary Health Center in the hill district of Kalimpong had no seating facility for patients or accompanying relatives and had a broken-down roof and toilet. All these problems are now fixed.



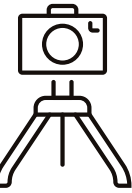
The PHC in the Khunti district of Jharkhand had no ambulance for 4 years. This is now fixed.

Watch our videos on Swaasth Aaspatal





1500 videos produced



13 CCs currently working

32 CCs trained to date



17,800
PAGEVIEWS



144,646
FOLLOWERS



2800
FOLLOWERS

as on March 31, 2021

Pir Azhar | Jammu & Kashmir

Hundreds of people from the Rajouri and Poonch districts of Jammu and Kashmir belonging to several tribal and grazing communities cross into the Kashmir valley with their flocks of sheep and goats every year in the summer season. These shepherds have not been able to benefit from the 'one nation one ration' card scheme, which guarantees that a ration cardholder can collect his/her ration from any store of their choice run by the public



IMPACT: Migratory Shepherds Benefit from One Nation One ration Card Scheme

Hundreds of people from the Rajouri and Poonch districts of Jammu and Kashmir belonging to several tribal and grazing communities cross into Kashmir...

supplies department. Instead, these Bakerwals were being denied service under the scheme and had to buy rations from the private shops at higher rates. After making a video report on this, the CC interviewed the Joint Director of the Consumer Affairs department and informed him about this issue by screening the issue video, upon which **an order was issued across Kashmir to all the government-run shops to ensure that everyone is supplied ration at the place of their choice.** Around 2000 tribals alone in Baramulla are now collecting rations from any ration depot of the govt.

IN PRESS

Forever in Darkness: Kashmir and the ever-rising Internet Shutdowns



This Kashmir-based organization makes its case for journalism and activism working together



Kashmir Unheard is VV's project to empower the voices of solutions-minded Kashmiri youth. The mainstream media is dominated by more than a hundred news dailies which mainly report on the political stories of Kashmir. Kashmir is the only place where VV has set up a state-specific web platform for the local network of Correspondents, and it has become immensely popular. KU is filling the vacuum by telling people's stories since 2014. It is the first website created in Kashmir to enable locals to tell their stories and seek resolution.

IMPACT

Rafiq Bano | Jammu & Kashmir

The family of Tariq Ganai of Budgam village had been in debt after their family business failed. They had taken a loan of 10 lacs from the local bank for starting a dairy farm. However, the dairy farm incurred losses leaving Tariq's family bankrupt. Our CC was contacted by the locals of the village. Our CC made a video on this issue and shared it on KU Facebook page. **The video was watched by 661,000 people. Through the video, the family managed to raise almost 6 lac rupees.**



IMPACT | Needy Family of Budgam Supported by Hundreds of People Through...

The family of Tariq Ganai of Budgam village had been in debt after their family business failed. They had incurred a loan of 10 lacs from the local bank and al...

Team Spotlight



Sajad Rassol
Kashmir Unheard

Telling ordinary stories from an extraordinary land.

Kashmir Unheard is led by Sajad Rasool, who joined VV in 2011 as its first Community Correspondent in Kashmir. He quickly rose to the position of running the team.

As a Community Correspondent, Sajad's award winning video stories highlighted a wide spectrum of issues ranging from the affects of Indian military operations on lives of locals to non-availability of civic amenities like water in some villages.

“These opportunities give me a better understanding of ground level issues, and the newer methodologies used in visuals storytelling used to resolve them. In this decade long journey, VVs consistent support has provided necessary thrust to advance my career, hone my mentorship and most importantly the functioning of Kashmir Unheard”, he says.

Sajad is pursuing Masters in Peace and Conflict from the University of Bradford in the UK, where he aims to build a theoretical understanding of sustainable peace and dynamics of conflict.

The focus of his studies is on using art, particularly storytelling in a conflict, to help people to create spaces for their representation in a place like Kashmir.

He is an Acumen India 2019 fellow, Fellow at Berlin Scholarship Program of Reporters Without Borders 2019, Gather fellow at Seeds of Peace 2020 and Rotary Peace Fellow 2020. As a scholar of peace studies, Sajad is exploring how the combination of community media and his studies can foster dialogue among communities living in conflict to build an understanding of complex places for sustainable peace. He hopes to build this hybrid network in the future to address other global conflicts.



Our work in the North Bengal Tea Gardens

Call it a quandary. Even as the domestic demand for luxury, organic and Darjeeling tea soars, the lives of the labourers plucking the tea leaves continue to plunge into destitution.

The Tea gardens in the Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Jalpaiguri, and Alipurduar districts of North Bengal were started in 1841. The rules and exploitative policies had been historically shaped by British companies since the nineteenth century when they coercively brought low caste (Dalits), landless poor and tribal (Adivasi) populations to work on plantations. Even now, 80% of the workers in the North Bengal tea estates are tribals with no land rights.

Post-independence, in 1951 the Plantation Labour Act (PLA) was passed to ensure labour laws are not violated. However, it was futile, as till date a parallel governance structure dictates terms in the tea gardens. Labourers continue to be exploited with low wages, lack of access to proper healthcare and education, no land rights and myriad other issues.

At Least 1,400,000 people reside in 276 Tea Gardens. About 262,426 permanent employees work and rely on the tea garden companies for a range of services including housing, water, health, education, and others. Through our work, we aim to train and empower people to fight for their basic rights.

Stories of exploitation



Our videos expose how child rights abuses are happening openly in the tea gardens of Alipurduar, Jalpaiguri and Darjeeling districts. Proper facilities are not available for the care of the children of the mothers working in the tea garden. No bathroom, no potable water, no post-food arrangement.

Watch our video capturing the plight of tea plantation workers complaining about low wages and lack of basic amenities- a plight they have been facing for over 100 years.



FIGHT FOR THEIR RIGHTS

The Provident Fund is a retirement fund and the only savings of most tea estate workers. It is an investment fund contributed to by employees, employers, and (sometimes) the state, out of which a lump sum is provided to each employee on retirement.

Even though it's their fundamental right, most tea estate workers don't get their Provident Fund on retirement. Those who do, have to share a commission with the middlemen or corrupt mediators to get the fund.

Our CCs at the tea garden have started creating awareness around the issue. They are recording short interviews with tea garden workers who have not got PF. The idea is to expose these corrupted mediators and clerks, who ask for commission from people.

15



Community Correspondents are actively reporting on issues related to the Tea Gardens

327

people participated in the RTI workshops. 98% of those who attended the training belong to the ST Community working as labourers in the tea gardens.



Highlighted issues:

- Land Rights
- Minimum wages
- NREGA
- Watermes
- School
- Trafficking
- Non-implementation of Govt schemes

TRAININGS ON RIGHT TO INFORMATION

The Right To Information Act (RTI) mandates that Indian citizen can request any information (which is supposed to be public knowledge) from the offices and departments of the state or central governments. The act mandates that the said offices and departments must process such requests in a timely manner.

We conducted a total of five RTI trainings that were organized by RTI and social activist Nevin Karketta on Land rights and fundamental rights. People were trained not only in filing RTIs but also made aware of the connection between RTI, good governance and a strong democracy.



In January, we were selected to be part of the Societal Platform V-Lab, to build prototypes for this. We applied machine learning to the YouTube transcripts of a subset of VV's 17,000 videos as a test. Data like this, plus our existing videos, will go onto a personalized dashboard, which 25 Community Correspondents will soon be presenting to local officials. This is an entirely new kind of local news platform – built around the testimonies of marginalised communities and developed according to academic research on citizen-state relations in India.

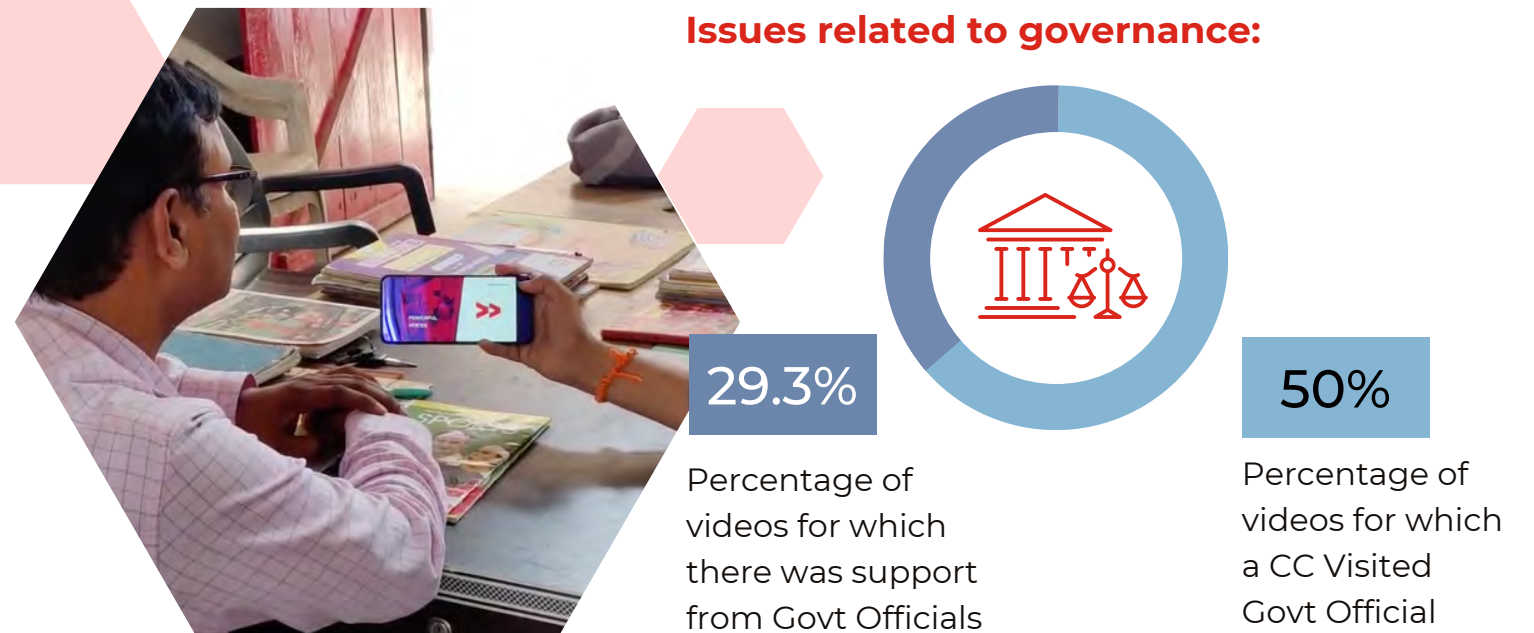
With this platform prototype, we expect to see many more citizen grievances being resolved.

Our Advocacy: Making citizen voices useful to government

As a community media organization, we know it is more important to build a bridge between the people who seek their basic rights and the authorities who can grant them that. Activism, be it digital or otherwise, may not always help you find a solution. While activism helps us ask the right questions, we must work with relevant stakeholders to find the right solution. At VV, we are not only asking the right questions but also participating in advocacy dialogues to help solve the most pressing issues faced by rural communities. For instance, our community correspondent Mamta Devi prefers to build bridges with government officials via a friendly demeanour to ensure her community members get their basic rights. Similarly, our CC Shambhu Lal Khatik spends time understanding the challenges faced by the government officials as well.

Like Shambhu and Mamta, most of our correspondents spend at least 1 hour more with a government official than the average mainstream journalist because they go into individual cases like providing pension, ration, death certificates, water, sanitation, humanitarian rights awareness and get it done.

The governments in several states have, over the last few years, created new mechanisms for citizens to file complaints about service delivery failures, sometimes under new e-governance initiatives, sometimes with different statutory bodies. Over the years, we have trained our CCs to use some of these grievance redressal mechanisms to resolve an issue. But what if there could be a more efficient way?



Videos created by our CCs on governance-related themes:

Themes	Count	Percentage of total videos
Videos about an entitlement problem - meaning a government anti-poverty scheme that people applied for but have not received.	588	39%
Videos on governance and accountability problems.	297	20%
Videos on systemic issue, where the system is not working as it should	201	13%

Impact

The goal of our CCs is to resolve the issues they are making videos about. When the problem the CC recorded in the video has been resolved due to the Correspondent's effort, we call it an impact.

In this period, our Correspondents initiated hundreds of campaigns and achieved impact on 439 videos, impacting more than 3 million people.

This year we focussed on achieving impact through digital activism. Our CCs resolved various issues and achieved impact by posting videos on the social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter and tagging relevant officials.



How do we take the story ahead

Resolving the issues communities are facing is the ultimate goal of our CCs. But what happens when some videos don't achieve impact? Last year, there were 1178 videos where we felt impact could be achieved.

Achieving impact is not easy as most of the cases we report on are long-standing problems. 168 cases were going on for 5 years and more, 105 cases for 2 - 4 years and 87 cases were going on for at least a year.

We don't rest on our laurels once the impact is achieved. We go back and take a harder look at the videos where the impact was not achieved. We mobilise the communities affected, get petitions signed, and keep following up with government officials.



Impact 1: Inauguration of COVID ward in government hospital in West Bengal



Avijit Adhikari
West Bengal

ISSUE: Non-functioning of new COVID ward in Government hospital.

A special ward was created for COVID patients in the Government Super Speciality Hospital in Bishnupur on April 2021. However, the ward was non-functioning despite rising cases of COVID. All the visiting COVID patients were directed to the District Hospital. As a result, the District hospital was overburdened with COVID patients. The patients and their accompanying members had to travel to the district, which was 40 km farther from the block.

How the CC resolved the issue

Avijit filmed a video on this issue and along with others from the community decided to meet the Municipality officer on 26 May 2021. They also met the Chief medical health officer of Bishunpur District health centre and discussed the issue with him after screening the video. Avijit kept following up with the officials over phone calls. He also undertook digital activism and shared the video on social media platforms such as WhatsApp and Facebook.

Impact achieved

Due to all these efforts, the ward was finally inaugurated on 26 June, and COVID patients were admitted. Now patients don't have to travel for 40 kms. The COVID ward has also unburdened the district hospital. This ward is equipped with two oxygen cylinders, 50 beds, and five Ventilator beds with CCU and X-ray unit. There are seven doctors, seven nurses, and ten contractual staff. The hospital also has a good ambulance service for COVID patients too.

More than 100,000 people across six blocks were impacted.

Impact 2: Ensuring access to clean drinking water



Shabnam Begum
Uttar Pradesh

Issue:

Non-availability of potable water for the marginalised Musahar families in Uttar Pradesh

Around 19 families from the Musahar Community in Bhadohi district of Uttar Pradesh, were facing an extreme water crisis during the COVID lockdown for almost 6 months.

The only handpump in their village was non-functioning, forcing the women from the community to dig potholes in the neighbouring low-lying areas and use the dirty water. As Musahars are considered 'lower' caste, they are not allowed to fetch water from wells or handpumps located in the 'upper' caste communities. The community members especially the children often fell ill and developed skin infections due to consumption of the unpotable water.

How the CC resolved the issue

Our CC Shabnum Begum while touring the area came to know about this issue and decided to take action. However, making videos with the community proved to be challenging. Due to years of discrimination and apathy by the local authorities, some people were very aggressive and apprehensive at the beginning; One of the village elders also attacked Shabnam. Determined to resolve the issue, Shabnum bravely filmed a video where some of the villagers explained their problems in detail. She then screened it in the community and also showed it to the Village head. After which she was assured that the handpump will be repaired at the earliest.

Impact achieved

Within two months of making the video, the handpump was repaired. The Village head has also assured of 1 more handpump with the community.

Not only did the Musahar community get access to clean drinking water; but the video also created a ripple effect in the neighbouring villages. Another Dalit community from a neighbouring village was facing a similar problem with drinking water. They saw the impact video of Shabnam and threatened their village Head that they will create a similar video story if the issue around drinking water is not resolved. Within a month the next village also got their hand pump repaired.

Lives Impacted: 250

Impact 3: Ensuring easy access to ration



Milon Mandal
West Bengal

Issue:

Access to monthly ration from designated shop

The government provides subsidized rations (foodgrains such as wheat, and rice) under the Targeted Public Distribution System to Ration card holders through designated shops. A ration dealer in Narayanpur village in West Bengal arbitrarily announced on May 2021 that instead of his shop, the villagers will have to collect rations from his home, which is located over one kilometre away from his shop.

A total of 8000 Ration card holders depend on his shop to avail ration every month. The Cardholders had to now walk or cycle twice the original distance.

Most of them had to invest an entire day in a month to buy Ration due to the long tiring distance, which otherwise they could have invested somewhere else to earn money. Several of them had to leave kids home alone.

Almost 50 community members visited the Food Supply Officer at block , however there was no response and the problem still prevailed.

How the CC resolved the issue

Our CC Milon Mondal filmed a video on this issue on August 15, 2021 and screened the video to the community members. On October 2021, he held a community meeting with 20 members where he drafted a collective application to the Food Supply Officer. Milon along with four community members met the officer, discussed the issue and submitted the application. The officer assured of solving the problem soon.

Milon along with the community members approached the block development officer and the Sarpanch.

Milon simultaneously kept sharing the video on social media, which eventually ended up in 100 WhatsApp groups.

Impact achieved

After all these efforts on November 30, 2021, finally, both the ration slip and the ration were provided to the community at the designated Ration shop in the Market. Now the community doesn't have to walk or cycle twice the distance.

Lives Impacted: 8000



Important Videos



Every year we create a playlist of our most significant videos of 2021 published between Jan-Dec 2021.

In the playlist, there are a total of 164 videos from across the state on various themes such as COVID ground reports, positive stories, campaign trailers, rights violations and others.



Watch the full playlist [here](#)

TOPICS COVERED IN THE MOST POPULAR VIDEOS

Stories on ASHA workers

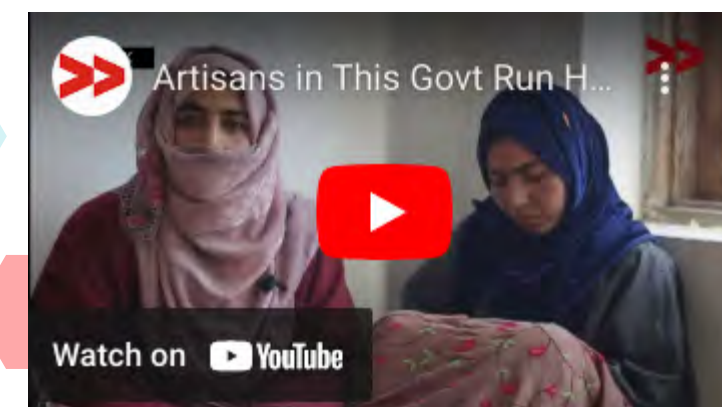
Covid Ground Reports

Floods in UP and Bihar

West Bengal Elections

VV RELIEF WORK

Artisans in This Govt Run Handicrafts Center are Paid Stipend of 700 Rupees (10 USD) a Month



This video produced by Rayee Ahmad from Jammu & Kashmir is one of the most popular videos on the playlist. It's on top because it has the highest engagement. The video highlights how 25 girls working in a Staple handicrafts centre at Matipora Shopian, Jammu & Kashmir were being provided with a meagre salary of 700 INR per month (10 USD), which is less than a dollar a day. Apart from this, the centre lacks heating facilities and other basic things. The people working in the handicrafts sector are considered to be the lowest-paid workers in Kashmir.



Human Rights Day | Video Volunteers Helps Rescue Ten Bonded Labourers

Bonded labour is a curse for today's society and the government has made strict laws against it, but even today people are forced to work as bonded labour in many parts of the country. Our Community Correspondent Anil Kumar from Uttar Pradesh, helped rescue 10 laborer from Badhoi in Uttar Pradesh from a farm in Maharashtra. The return of these 10 men wouldn't have been possible without the sustained campaign, video reports and support by our correspondent Anil, who worked tirelessly for their release.

This video report by Anil Kumar on rescuing bonded labours gives an understanding of VV's commitment to creating an impact in the lives of communities.

Awards and Recognitions

Avijit Adhikary

Received the Shishushree Award 2021 for making a video on Best Report Television Bengali "Child Rights" in statewide competition organized by State Government's Shishu Odhikar Suraksha Aayog. The video was about 'jajabar' children's educational problems and solutions and on mothers encouraged to seek treatment in hospitals.



Basharat Amin

He was selected to interview community reporters across India by Reynolds School of Journalism, Reno, Nevada.

THE REYNOLDS SCHOOL



Poonam Verma

Balika Jivan Kaushal gender health and hygiene education learning support ke regarding Pratibha Samman samaroh mein sammanit kiya Gaya



Press



सुंदर सुबह की उम्मीद को कामिल करने को प्रयासरत : शबनम



La démocratie ou les citoyens au pouvoir 1



Nadiya Shafi Gadda: 'Video activist' filming to bring in social change



A Bihar Village Refused To Get Jabbed Earlier, Now 90% Are Vaccinated



Why are autocrats popular? - Assault on democracy | DW Documentary



DACoP Meet the Members: Aislynn, Cooperation Canada and Jessica, Video Volunteers



How to make your videos stand out



42% People in Parts of UP, Bihar, MP Say Won't Take COVID Vaccine



WATER FOR LIFE : Is Safe Water a Human Right?



बिहार: कोविड से जंग लड़ रही आशा कार्यकर्ताओं को न सुरक्षा उपकरण, न सही वेतन



Amid COVID-19 Second Wave, How are India's Rural Areas Faring?



State-Society Synergy at COVID-19's Invisible Front Lines



COVID RESPONSE VIDEO VOLUNTEERS

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A huge thank you to our board and donors who made all of this possible in 2021-2022

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