

Latest news

Committees push for transparency and accountability

The Big Lottery funded Panchayat Raj Institution (PRI) programme has moved on to the committee stage. Support committees have been established in all Panchayats.

Made up of members of self-help groups and others with firm contacts in the community, support committees identify basic needs and provision of services in the Panchayat and bring them to the attention of ward members, the President and official/statutory standing committee members. In Appipatti, the support committee has pushed for new public toilets, better drainage, more efficient collection of local taxes and the publication of the names of standing committee members to ensure greater transparency and accountability in local government structures.

At Block level – local/state government is structured into State, District, Block, Taluk and Panchayat – the programme has established solidarity committees. Consisting of 15 members in each of the five Blocks, they bring together self-help group and women's federation representatives, Panchayat presidents, ward members, gender-sensitised men, youth group members, village health nurses (VHN), school teachers and other senior players in the wider community. Each member of the solidarity committee is assigned two Panchayats which they visit regularly. They monitor activity and raise larger issues of gender and caste discrimination, HIV/Aids and increasing participation in the quarterly Grama Sabha (village council meetings) where elected members are brought to account.



Welcome

Welcome to VST's new look newsletter. Easier to read and cheaper to produce, it will provide more regular updates on our work. The Annual Report and publications around specific programmes are still available both online and in hard copy for a more in-depth insight.

Contact us at:

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Registered charity: 277111

And look out for the launch of our new website later this year at:
www.villageservicetrust.org.uk



Team building at DACT

The Development Action Consortium Trust (DACT) is VST's principle partner in India and responsible for managing, supporting and developing all our programmes. In a fun team building exercise Naheendran, DACT's driver, conducted the construction of the tallest, most beautiful and stable newspaper structure. With the help of PRI co-ordinators Devi-Seetha and Muthu Lakshmi and TB co-ordinator Suresh, the team co-operated well, maximised the use of their skills and produced something close to a work of art!



Further news

Tragedy and hope

“With an estimated one in three of the world’s population infected with TB, individuals with HIV are particularly vulnerable; these two diseases are considered a deadly duo, with each speeding up the progression of the other. The World Health Organisation estimates that TB accounts for up to 1/3 of Aids deaths worldwide, making TB the leading cause of death among people with HIV.”

Target Tuberculosis newsletter Spring 2008

VST is working with Target Tuberculosis to improve performance in diagnosis of TB cases in Theni, particularly in relation to HIV/Aids co-infection.

Raja’s wife Kaliswamiji died three months ago of an Aids related illness aged just 32. The family had discovered only six months before that they were all HIV+. Just before she died, Kaliswamiji discovered a large growth on her son’s spine. Eswaran, aged 5, had been HIV+ since birth and the growth meant that he was co-infected with extra-pulmonary TB.

Raja and his son struggle with the social stigma of HIV and TB. Thankfully they have the support of their family and Raja is still able to work. The Target Tuberculosis funded TB project ensures that Eswaran takes the medication needed to cure him of the TB infection and will monitor him closely so that, when the time comes, he is given the anti-retroviral drugs he needs to fight the HIV.



VST needs your support

None of the work we do would be possible without your support. If you would like to help us continue our work in India please make a donation by completing the form below.

Yes, I want to donate: £ _____ £10 £25 £50

Please make cheques payable to Village Service Trust

Title	<input type="text"/>	First name	<input type="text"/>	Last name	<input type="text"/>
Address	<input type="text"/>				
	<input type="text"/>	Postcode	<input type="text"/>		
Telephone	<input type="text"/>	Email	<input type="text"/>		

Gift Aid Declaration

Please tick the box below so we can claim back 28p for every £1 you give. Thank you.

I would like Village Service Trust to claim back the tax on all my donations from 6th April 2000 until further notice.

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