



SEARCH

(Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health)

**Society for Education
Action Research in
Community Health,
Gadchiroli**



Annual Report 2021-2022

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About us

Society for Education, Action & Research in Community Health (SEARCH) is a voluntary organization set up in 1986 in Gadchiroli, one of the most impoverished districts in India with tribals constituting 40% of its population. For over 35 years, SEARCH has been working relentlessly among the poor and marginalized rural and tribal population of Gadchiroli. SEARCH works together with the community to find relevant solutions to their health problems. It has developed a bond with the community based on trust and equity, a bond that is central in the pursuit of its vision – ‘Aarogya Swaraj’ i.e. Health Empowerment.

Our Approach

*“Go to the people,
Live among them,
Love them,
Listen to them,
Learn from them,
Begin with what they know,
Build upon what they have”*

Our Vision and Mission

SEARCH’s vision is ‘Aarogya-Swaraj’ simply translated as ‘People’s health in the people’s hands.’ SEARCH aims to help people achieve freedom from death, disease, disability, as well as dependence by empowering individuals and communities to take charge of their own health. Empowerment for SEARCH, implies community ownership and action.

Our key strategies

1. Health **SERVICE** actions to prevent and treat the existing health problems
2. **EDUCATION** to empower by way of knowledge and training
3. **RESEARCH** in the pursuit of new knowledge for problem solving. However, for SEARCH, it is research for and with the people.
4. Shaping **POLICY**

Areas of work

SEARCH’s areas of action, in increasing expanse are:

1. Community health care and service in 134 villages
2. Muktipath – a programme to reduce alcohol and tobacco in Gadchiroli, a district with 1.2 million population
3. Hospital-based care – services are provided to the entire district and the population in the adjoining districts including the Bastar area of Chhattisgarh
4. NIRMAN and Tarunyabhan – two programmes catering to the youth in the state of Maharashtra
5. Research and policy shaping – addressing national and global audience

A brief report on the happenings and activities of SEARCH during the year 2021 – 2022 follows.



Home-Based Maternal Newborn and Child Care (HBMNCC)

The Home-Based Maternal Newborn and Child Care Programme is SEARCH's flagship programme started in 1995. In an area where lack of trained medical practitioners is commonplace, the programme decentralizes medical care by training community health workers or *Arogyadoots*, the backbone of the programme. They list and identify pregnant women and new mothers, track their progress throughout the gestation period, aid in delivery and care for the newborn's health. The programme demonstrates the power and ability simple village women to turn around an adversity and bring about a change in their villages.

Between 1st April 2021 and 31st March 2022, *Arogyadoot's* visited 789 pregnant women and examined them with 100% accuracy, and referred them when required. 33 of the total 789 deliveries were high risk deliveries that needed care and attention. The mortality rate was zero. Similarly, 0.6% of babies were diagnosed and treated for sepsis, with a zero mortality rate.

Child Mortality Free Village: Out of the 39 villages covered under the HBMNCC programme, 30 villages have been consistently free of child mortality during the last three years.

Arogyadoot's treated 401 children up to five years of age for pneumonia and 47 children for diarrhea. No child deaths were reported due to either disease. In addition, the *Arogyadoot's* treated 38,110 individuals for minor ailments.

To improve the quality of services *Arogyadoot's* provide, they were evaluated on 17 indicators by women who availed their services in 39 villages. On an average, the *Arogyadoot's* scored 94.61% indicating that the villagers were by and large satisfied with the services they received from the *Arogyadoot's*.



Tribal Healthcare and Mobile Medical Unit

About 40% of Gadchiroli's population is tribal, lacks access to health facilities. In addition, the area is heavily forested, heavy rains cut access to towns, and people depend on traditional healers. The tribal healthcare programme overcomes these difficulties and works with 13,000 tribal individuals in 48 villages and strives to provide quality health services.

Community Health Programme

The Tribal Health Unit runs the Community Health Programme, which addresses the problem of the remoteness of the tribal villages and its sparse population. SEARCH trained local village youth to function as community health workers to provide care and medicines for select ailments important to tribal health including home-based maternal and newborn care using standard protocols under close supervision.

81% of cases diagnosed and treated in the village 33447 patient treatments 257 cases of malaria identified and treated
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Mobile Medical Unit

SEARCH operates the Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) in collaboration with the Government's National Rural Health Mission in 48 remote tribal villages of Dhanora Taluka in Gadchiroli. The MMU provides diagnostic, preventive, curative, and referral services. 12,356 consultations were conducted this year.

Ashram school health programme

School health program was not conducted as Ashram *shala's* were closed due to COVID-19 Pandemic.

Health awareness generation programme

Health educators provided health education to 275 women on antenatal and postnatal care.



Community against COVID-19

In line with SEARCH's vision, the project aimed provide care to people with presumptive symptoms of COVID-19 through regular home visits within the village itself.

The project was implemented in 87 villages in tribal and non-tribal areas in Gadchiroli with a total population of 59,051.

This project was run in four phases:

Phase I: A survey was conducted to understand practices such as hand-washing, wearing mask, migration, and mitigation of common illnesses such as fever and cough. Seven households in every village were randomly selected to participate in the survey. In addition, two village level *samiti* 's, one included influential village members and the other village youth, were formed with the aim to harness community strength.

Phase II: COVID-19 health education was conducted in the villages. The *samiti* 's too were trained in best practices to avoid the symptoms of COVID-19.

Phase III: To generate awareness, 300 wall paintings and boards were installed in the villages. In addition, SPO₂ of all villagers above 30 years of age was measured.

Phase IV: Home-based care of presumptive COVID symptoms. Community care centres were opened in 25 of the 87 villages (tribal and non-tribal) and were accessible to patients in and around these villages. The oxygen required to manage moderate and severe cases were made available in the village itself. Thankfully, as the third wave of COVID-19 was mild and these facilities were not utilized.

Vaccinations were provided under the programme. Finally, the community programme for COVID-19 cared for **16,534** individuals with presumptive symptoms of COVID-19 through home-based care provided by the trained Community Health Workers.



Hospital

The *Danteshwari* Hospital at SEARCH is placed in a region starved of quality medical services. We strive to provide compassionate, high quality, and affordable care in a manner that is culturally appropriate to the local tribes of Gadchiroli.

The newly constructed hospital premises are now fully functional and operational. The hospital provides outpatient and inpatient care. These include crucial primary care and often required specialty care. A 24x7 emergency laboratory is available for critical diagnostic care. Surgical care and provision hospitalization are also available.

Conducting specialist OPDs is a strategy to provide the much necessary services to the needy and vulnerable population living in remote parts of Gadchiroli. Specialist OPDs for Gynaecology, Psychiatry and De-addiction, Neurology, Spine, Orthopaedic, Rheumatology, Cardiology, ENT & Plastic Surgery are regularly run at the hospital.

Surgical care is another service often required in Gadchiroli. To reduce the economic burden of the poor tribal populations, surgery camps are regularly conducted in the well-equipped operation theatre and complex cases are looked at in an ICU. Highly qualified surgeons and anesthetists from various cities of Maharashtra volunteer to conduct surgeries.

During 2021-22:

- 32711 OPD consultations
- 1184 IPD admissions
- 422 surgeries
- 52608 laboratory tests
- 51 cases of poisonous snakebite

During this year, high quality laproscopic surgery was successfully completed in February 2022 under the auspices of Dr. Muffazal Lakadawala and his team. 49 patients received the super specialty surgical care in a tribal set-up at SEARCH.

The patients at the Danteshwari Hospital come from three adjoining states and eight districts. The ever-increasing number of patients visiting the hospital is testimony to the popularity of the health care services provided at the hospital. It is noteworthy that 67% of our patients regularly revisit for follow-up services indicating people's trust in the hospital. Finally, 69% of the patients are from Gadchiroli district.



Mental Health Care

SEARCH's pioneering work in mental health in Gadchiroli aims to decentralize mental health care while aligning with the needs of the local population. The 2015-2016 National Mental Health Survey (NMHS) estimates that 10.6% Indians suffer from a psychiatric co-morbidity and ranks alcohol and tobacco are amongst top 10 risk factors for mortality and morbidity in India.

The five areas of work SEARCH's are described below along with the achievements.

Hospital-based services for mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2307 total consultations, 589 were new patients, 45% were women • 18% of patients belonged to tribal communities • 80 patients admitted for serious psychiatric illnesses
Management of addiction at Block Counselling Clinics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3741 consultations and 767 new patients • 24% of all 1181 patients' belonged to tribal communities • 66% of all patients were between 24-44 years of age • 58% sought care for alcohol use disorder
Village-based alcohol addiction management camps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 229 village-based camps • 2794 patients in 1-day camp, 57% of all patients were tribal men • 36% patients reported complete abstinence at end of 30 days • Tribal patients reported better treatment outcomes • 100% follow-up of all patients
Village-based care for common mental disorders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 village-based camps to treat psychiatric disorders in community • 42 patients were treated in these village-based camps
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 research manuscripts in progress

Other accomplishments

TARANG, a 7-day mental health fundraiser event was conducted for the first time to raise awareness and generate funds for mental health at SEARCH.



Centre for Spine and Joint Health

A systematic study on the burden of musculoskeletal pain burden and disability in Gadchiroli showed that 83% of adults experienced an episode of pain in back and extremities. The study also demonstrated the high cost of care with about INR 16,69,292 lakh spent in every village annually.

To address this problem, SEARCH established The Centre for Spine and Joint Health in 2020 in collaboration with The Spine Foundation led by Dr Shekhar Bhojraj.

In line with the mission of ‘*Aarogya Swaraj*’, this programme too takes pain management to the villages. Through this innovation, Community Health Workers are trained as Physiotherapy Training Assistants, empowering them to provide physiotherapy at the village level itself. It is perhaps one of a kind intervention in India. An experiment to use a mobile physiotherapy unit was also conducted. Over 50% reduction in disability was observed in case of such patients treated with in the community.



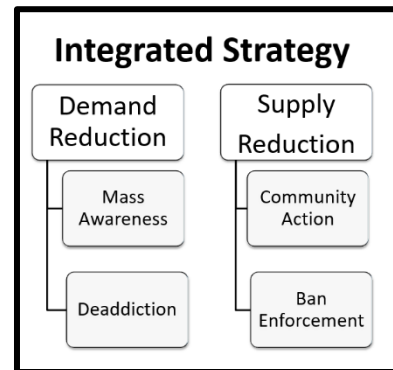
An initiative to provide community-based physiotherapy through community health workers was undertaken this year. Another experiment to provide physiotherapy using a mobile unit was also tried this year.

Services provided	Number of patients
Spine & musculoskeletal patients treated in the community by Community Health Workers	338
Total patient treated by Mobile Physiotherapy Unit (MPU)	241
Total Patients treated in the Hospital OPD	3736
Tele-OPDs conducted in collaboration with specialists	79
Consultations done in the Tele-OPD's	448
Total patients who had spine surgeries	31



Muktipath

Muktipath aims to create awareness and an environment against alcohol and tobacco through the district program called 'Alcohol and Tobacco Free Gadchiroli'. The project addresses the supply and the demand side issues of alcohol addiction. The project encourages villagers to take non-violent action against illegal alcohol and tobacco and encourages community action to enforce the implementation of law. This is a district pilot in collaboration with Government of Maharashtra.



1) Mass Awareness: This year, mass awareness programmes were conducted in 257 villages and in 198 wards in cities of Gadchiroli District. As a part of the awareness programme 375 articles were published in local newspapers; social media platforms were actively used; alcohol-free programs were held, and 45,529 students were motivated to engage in action against use of alcohol and tobacco.

2) Community Mobilization and Action: 1,421 *gaon sanghtan*'s are present in 1,500 villages. 60% of all *gaon sanghtan*'s are active. 1,317 villages actively passed the resolution to ban alcohol.

3) Implementing Ban of Alcohol: Non-violent action was taken against 323 sellers of liquor in the villages and the cities. As a result, contraband worth INR 1,69,48,811 was destroyed. Sellers of liquor and tobacco were fined for illegal sale of goods.

4) De-addiction Programme: The de-addiction programme is implemented at the village level through camps. 2794 patients were treated in 229 one-day de-addiction camps in the villages. All patients received follow-up services. 3741 patients were treated at the block level clinics.

6) Monitoring and Evaluation: The Taluka team were in the field for 4,906 and conducted 6,525 village visits and 1,390 *mohalla* visits in one year.





NIRMAN

NIRMAN is SEARCH's youth leadership development program that encourages the youth to find purpose to their lives beyond simply earning money and inspires them for social action.

Since its inception, NIRMAN galvanized 12 batches and 1612 participants from 36 districts of Maharashtra and 20 other states across India. Over the years, 523 NIRMAN alumni worked full time on various social issues across India. The alumni are associated with over 130 different organizations, and have contributed to over 1800 person-years of social action.

The highlights of the accomplishments of NIRMAN team this year are:

- 665 aspirants applied for NIRMAN's 12th batch and 132 candidates were selected
- Aspirants belonged to India's top institutes like AIIMS Delhi, AIIMS Rishikesh, IISc Bangalore, JIPMER, IITs, VJTI, COEP, PICT, VNIT, etc.
- 7 residential training workshops were conducted for 305 young participants
- 'Krutee NIRMAN', a forum for social action-based learning, was organized for 55 youth this year
- *Kar Ke Dekho* Fellow Dr. Varad Puntambekar, received the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship to pursue PhD at Oxford. Another Fellow, Dr. Suraj Mhaske's NGO, Sobat Foundation, provided healthcare to over 14,000 people in the villages of Chandrapur
- Alumni Ashwin Pawade's Organization S4S Technologies received the prestigious Zayed Sustainability Prize
- 3663 calls made to 696 alumni for follow-up and networking
- NIRMAN's YouTube channel has 210 videos, 1,00,000+ subscribers, and 92,00,000+ views



Tarunyabhan

Tarunyabhan or ‘Youth Consciousness’, set up in 1995, aims to build knowledge and awareness on reproductive and sexual health among adolescents and emerging young adults across Maharashtra. The three main approaches are education camps in Ashramshala’s, youth awareness programmes, and sports competitions.

Education camps in Ashramshala’s

Tarunyabhan camps were held in six Ashramshala’s of Gadchiroli accounting for 248 villages. 940 emerging adults were imparted sex education. A pre-test and post-test is conducted to assess the knowledge levels before and after the camp. Post-tests showed 218% increase in knowledge.

47 Tarunyabhan videos aired on YouTube to reach out to a wider audience.

Views – 8723131

Subscribers – 1 lakh

Likes – 118346

Dislikes - 5904

Youth awareness programmes

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly affected the project as workshops were not held in the rest of Maharashtra due to travel restrictions. Despite this, four youth awareness camps were held in Gadchiroli. 708 young adults (195 - young men, 513 - young women) received sex education.

A youth workshop was conducted through webinar wherein 613 students attended the webinar.

Sports competitions

Sports competitions were held for young women from 50 tribal villages of Dhanora taluka to increase positive engagement.

Other achievements

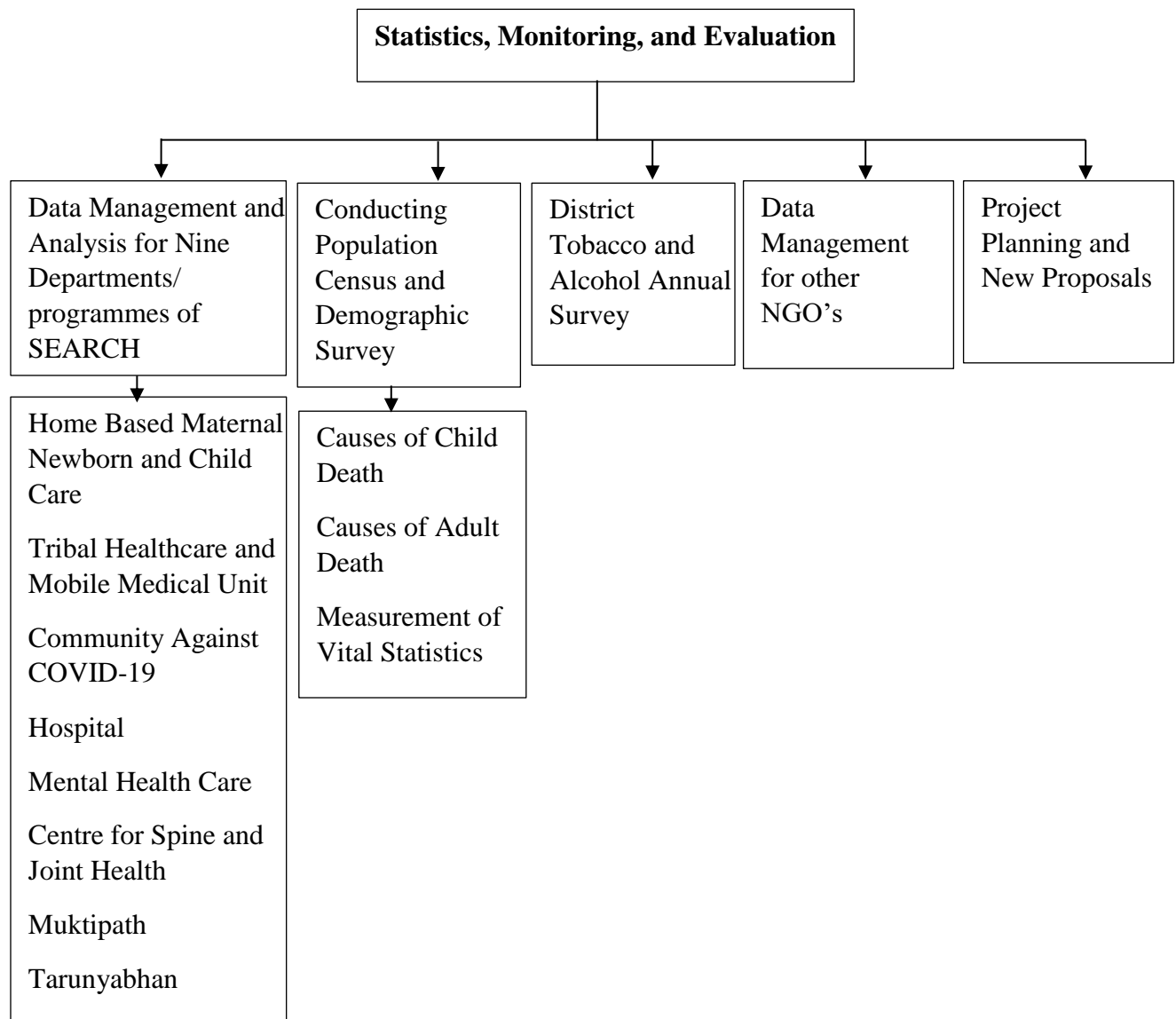
1647 copies of the book “Tarunyabhan” by Dr Rani Bang were sold in the last year. The book won the State Government's Karmavir Bhaurao Patil 2021 Award for Youth Book. 4920 sanitary napkins were distributed to 1230 tribal women in 11 tribal villages.



Statistics, Monitoring, and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is an important function at SEARCH aimed to document data for all ongoing research projects in 134 villages in 4 blocks, and a population of nearly 110,000. With this in mind, the Demographic Surveillance System and Vital Statistics of the Population was conducted in tribal and non-tribal areas. This year, in addition to birth and death statistics, snake bite and accident statistics, and that of COVID-19 were collected and analysed.

SEARCH provides support to MANSI Project that is run in collaboration with TATA Steel, American India Foundation, and the Government of Jharkhand. The project aims to support home-based maternal and newborn child care through the government functionaries i.e. ASHAs in the four states of Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Orissa. As support to the project, SEARCH conducted an independent analysis of the vital statistics in these four states.

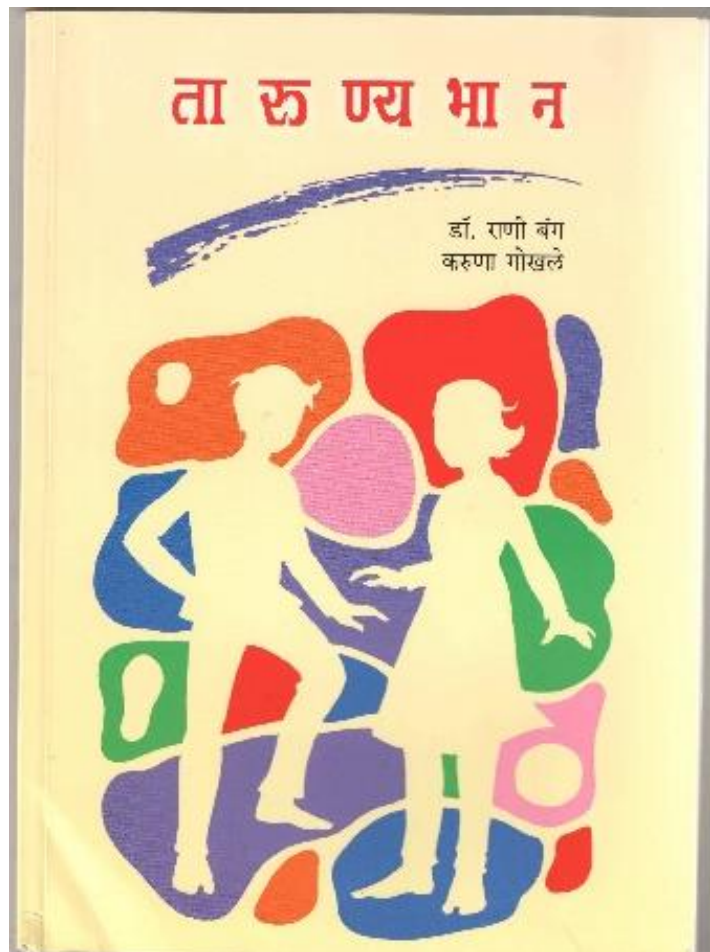


Publications

Research papers published:

1. Burden of pain in back and extremities in rural population: A community-based estimation of 12-months prevalence, distribution and duration of pain in rural Gadchiroli, India
2. Economic Burden of Pain in Back and Extremities in the adult population: A community-based estimate in rural Gadchiroli, India
3. Healthcare seeking behaviour for pain in back and extremities in rural population: A community- based estimation of treatment seeking, types and choice of care giver during a period of twelve months in rural Gadchiroli, India
4. Clinical patterns and their prevalence of rheumatic diseases among adult population: A community-based cross-sectional study in rural Gadchiroli, India
5. Clinical patterns and their prevalence among adult population with back pain: A community-based cross-sectional study in rural Gadchiroli, India
6. Activity limitation and disability due to pain in back and extremities in rural population: A community-based study during a period of twelve months in rural Gadchiroli, India
7. Epidemiology of pain in back and extremities in rural population: A community-based estimation of age and sex specific prevalence, distribution, duration and intensity of pain, number of painful sites and seasonality of pain during a period of twelve month in rural Gadchiroli, India
8. Decline in the incidence of neonatal sepsis in rural Gadchiroli during the Twenty –one years (1998-2019) following the Home-Based Neonatal Care field –trial
9. Effect of the maternal component in the Home-Based Newborn Care Intervention Package on the incidence of Maternal Health Conditions in Rural Gadchiroli, India A13 Years Before-After Comparison

One editorial titled “Back pain and musculoskeletal pain as public health problems: Rural communities await solution” was published.



Awards, Honours, and Lectures

Awards and Honours:

1. Mahaveer Award for Excellence in Human Endeavour in the Field of Community and Social Service, through Shri Om Birla, Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha from Bhagwan Mahaveer Foundation, Chennai (2022)
2. Late Yashwantrao Chavhan "State Award" 2020 for literary writing the Marathi book on "Tarunyabhan" written by Dr Rani Bang (2022).
3. Dr Abhay Bang received the Upendra Nath Brahma Soldier of Humanity Award, Kokrajhar, Assam (Nov. 2021)

Lectures:

4. Dr Abhay Bang spoke to students of B J Medical College as a Chief Guest for the Valedictory Ceremony
5. Dr Abhay Bang spoke at the 56th Foundation day Oration at ICMR-National Institute of Occupational Health Ahmedabad
6. Dr Abhay Bang spoke on "Tribal Health in India" in the National Workshop on 'Indigenous knowledge and health care: Way forward' organized by UNDP.
7. Dr Rani Bang spoke to a live online audience on "Law of love" on the platform Awakin Talks.
8. Dr Rani Bang was a resource person and spoke on "Women Harrassemnt at Worplaces" at Acharya Shrimannarayan Polytechnic Pipri-Wardha
9. Mr Amrut Bang addressed an online community on "on Delivering Impact During the Pandemic" in a webinar organized by Centre for Wildlife Studies (CWS)
10. Mr Amrut Bang participated in a panel discussion on "Youth Participation" during the Dasra Philanthropy Week
11. Mr Amrut Bang gave a talk to Taurya Pratisthan, North Carolina, USA
12. Mr Amrut Bang spoke at the Local to Global Justice Conference, Arizona, USA

Partnerships, Internships and Volunteers

SEARCH partners with organizations and institutions of repute. We have active, formal Memorandum of Understandings with the following institutes of repute:

- Indian Institute of Public Health (IIPH), Gandhinagar;
- Indian School of Business (ISB), Hyderabad,
- TATA Institutes of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai
- The Indian Institute of Health Management Research, (IIHMR) Jaipur

SEARCH regularly trains young public health students, giving them an opportunity to work at SEARCH. Between 2021-22, 18 such students were placed within the various departments at SEARCH. The interns typically come from partnering institutes such as TISS, IIPH Gandhinagar among others. Some of the departments were Mental Health Department, Hospital, Statistics, Monitoring and Evaluation, NIRMAL, Centre for Spine and Joint Health.

In addition, 24 young have volunteered for various time periods at SEARCH. Furthermore, one fellow supported by Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI) and Infosys also worked at SEARCH during the last financial year.

Infrastructure Developments

A number of construction and development activities were completed within SEARCH campus. These involved major capital investments for the benefit of both the patients coming to SEARCH for various purposes as well as staff living in Shodhgram.

- The construction of the water body for the benefit of the patients and staff
- Underground electrification
- Construction of the new OPD
- Construction of dormitory for post operation recovery of patients
- Construction of two women's hostels for nursing and other staff

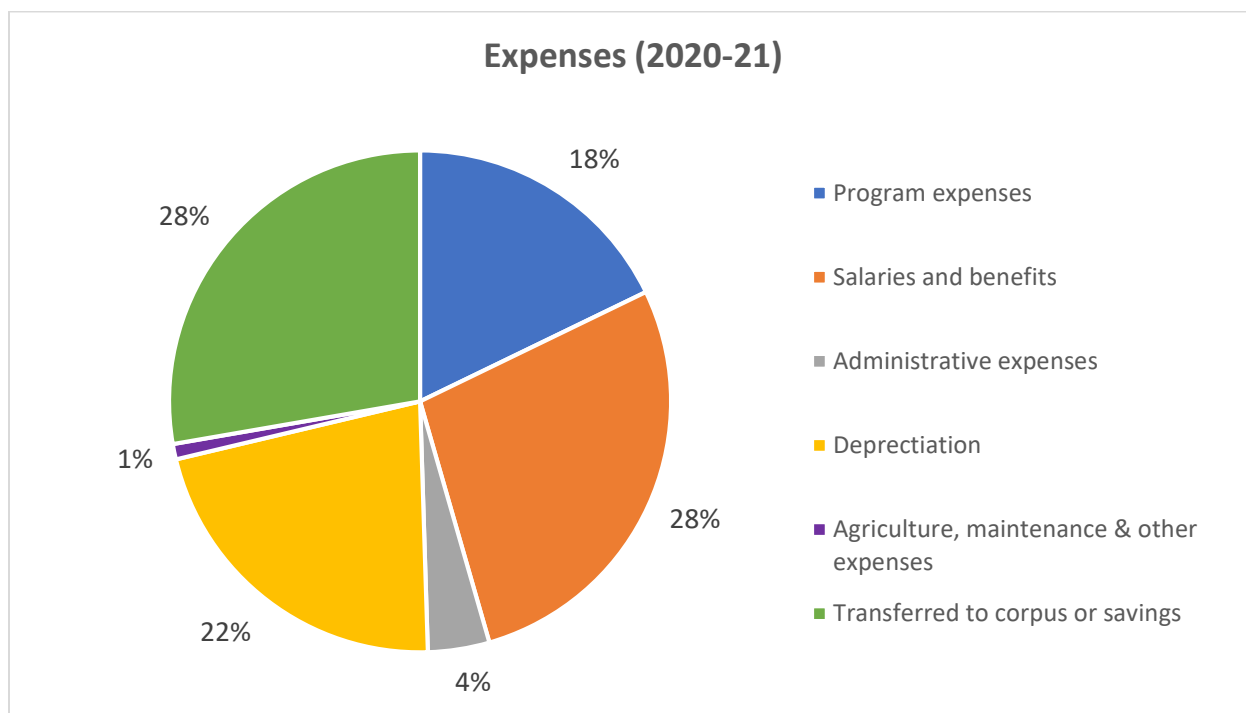
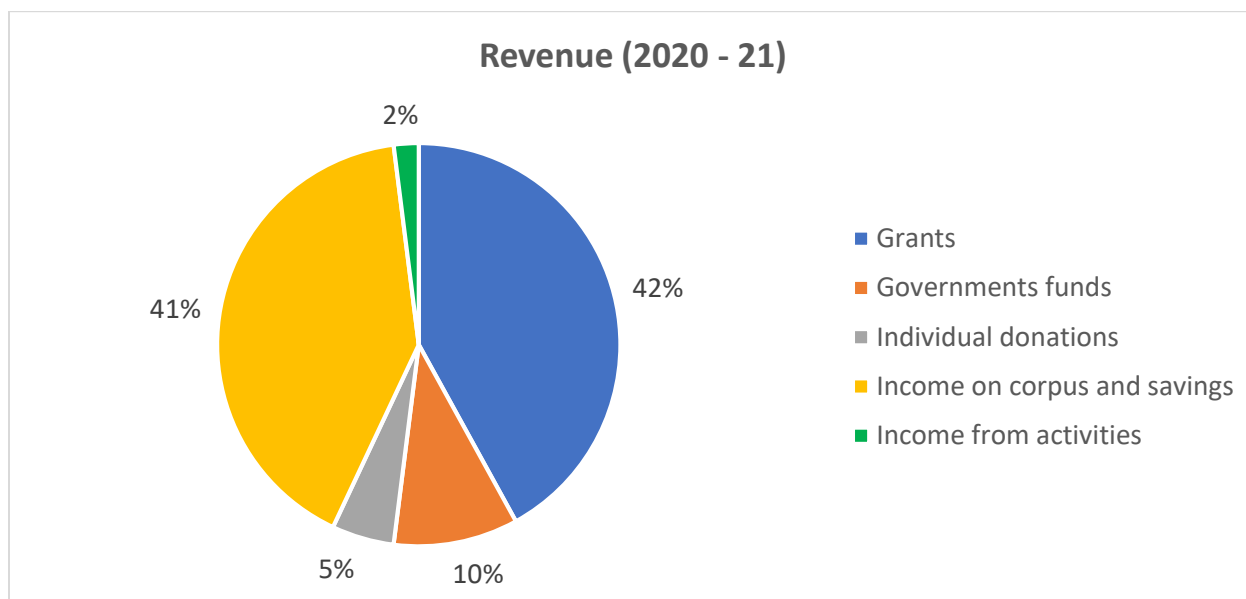


Visitors

This year we the Governor of Maharashtra, Honorable Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari graced us with his presence. We were honored to host him in SEARCH's premises.



Financial Highlights



Note: Above figures are as per Audited Financial Statements of FY 2020-21

Acknowledgements: Donors and the Partners

Our Partners (Alphabetically)

American India Foundation, USA
Dist. Administration, Gadchiroli, India
District Darumukti Sanghatana, Gadchiroli
Gondwana University, Gadchiroli, India
Government of Maharashtra, India
Indian Institute of Public Health,
Gandhinagar
Indian School of Business, Hyderabad
Integrated Tribal Development Programme,
Gadchiroli, Government of Maharashtra
Maharashtra Knowledge Corporation
Limited, Pune
Maharashtra University of Health Sciences,
Nasik
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare,
Government of India
National Health Systems Resource Centre,
India
Project Mumbai
Spine Foundation, Gadchiroli

And the people of Gadchiroli

Our Funding Partners / Donors (Alphabetically)

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America Indian Foundation, United States
A T E Chandra Foundation
Alkem Foundation
Bajaj Auto Ltd, India
Bajaj Finserve Ltd, India
Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd., India
Caring Friends, India
Dasra
Executors to Estate of Late Freny K Parakh
Government of Maharashtra,
Indians for Collective Action, United Sates
Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust
H T Parekh Foundation, India
Healing Touch, Mumbai
Indoco Remedies Ltd, Mumbai
Infosys Foundation, India
Marwadi Sewa Group, India
Mukul Madhav Foundation
National Rural Health Mission,
Maharashtra,
Navajbai Ratan Tata Trust, India
ONGC India Ltd., India
Pentagon Charitable Foundation, India
Project Mumbai, India

Rakesh Jhunjhunwala Foundation, Mumbai

Reach in US, United States

Rohini Nilekani Foundation, India

Sir Dorabji Tata Trust, India

Spine Foundation, Mumbai

TATA Education and Development Trust,
Mumbai

TATA Investment Corporation

Tribal Development Department,
Maharashtra, India

And hundreds of individual donors

Participate at SEARCH

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Account No - 20132954389
Account Name - SEARCH Central A/c
Bank Name - Bank of Maharashtra Bank
Branch - Gadchiroli
IFSC - MAHB0000940

Society's Registration. No.- Mah 35/85 (Gad)
Public Trust Registration No.- F-224-Gad

