

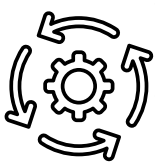
Monthly Updates- June 2026

Grassroots Level Institutions Strengthening and Transformation (GIST)

Overview

GIST aims to strengthen local communities by empowering grassroots institutions like Gram Panchayats, Self-Help Groups, and other Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), fostering self-reliance and inclusive development. It promotes environmental sustainability through community-led protection of common resources and integrates ecological concerns into village development. The initiative also supports SDG localization by aligning local efforts with national targets and aids in implementing the Forest Rights Act (FRA) to secure forest-based livelihoods. Additionally, it empowers tribal communities in PESA areas to enhance representation, preserve traditional cultures, and manage natural resources sustainably.

Project Goal



To empower over 40 Gram Panchayats and 200+ Women Self-Help Groups by enabling collaboration between local governance bodies and community organizations for joint planning and collective action, with a focus on driving climate resilience and promoting sustainable development at the grassroots level.

Component Wise Approach

Component 1: Gram Panchayat CBO Convergence



This component focuses on fostering collaboration between Gram Panchayats and Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to enhance local governance and community development. It empowers SHGs in decision-making, aligns initiatives for livelihood generation, and ensures inclusive grassroots outcomes through coordinated efforts.

Component 2: Localization of SDGs



Promote community-led SDG localisation by building capacities of Gram Panchayats in collaboration with SHGs and CBOs. Engage higher education institutions through Unnat Bharat Abhiyan and Focused Block Initiatives. Foster village-level partnerships to drive sustainable and inclusive development.

Component 3: Identifying, Protecting, and Regenerating Commons



This component seeks to ensure the sustainable use of village commons—critical for rural livelihoods—by improving legal frameworks, mobilizing SHGs and MGNREGA for land protection, and promoting equitable access, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience.

Component 4: Operationalising PESA Act



GIST supports the effective implementation of PESA in tribal regions like Odisha and Jharkhand. The goal is to empower tribal communities, ensure their representation in governance, and promote sustainable natural resource management while preserving traditional rights and cultures.

Component 5: Enhancing Implementation of Forest Right Acts



This aims to strengthen the implementation of FRA by improving claim filing processes, empowering communities to secure individual and collective forest rights, and supporting state efforts through trained resource persons and robust institutional support mechanisms.

Progress this Month

GP-SHG Convergence

- **Jharkhand:** Completed the VPRP guidelines, Anandpur pilot status report, and SHG-PRI convergence guiding document. Shared documents with JSLPS, incorporated feedback, and initiated preparations for the SHG-PRI Convergence writeshop scheduled in July.
- **Odisha:** Revised VPRP-GPDP convergence guidelines and training module based on mentor feedback, finalised the Odisha-specific convergence chapter, initiated collaboration with Karnataka for thematic chapters, and discussed module development with the Panchayati Raj Department.
- **Karnataka:** Presented VPRP pilot findings to NLM officials, facilitated field exposure visits for NRLM teams to the pilot GP, and progressed on VPRP training modules covering situation analysis, PRA, SHG-level demand identification, and demand consolidation.
- **Tamil Nadu:** Completed PPTs for the VP-SHG training module, shared the list of 370 pilot Village Panchayats, incorporated mentor feedback into the VPRP study report, supported recruitment processes for SRPs/DRPs/BRPs, and prepared plans for VPRP-VPDP pilot implementation.

Localizing SDGs (LSDG)

- **Odisha:** Conducted desk review on SHG ecosystem, livelihood interventions, and Keonjhar context; coordinated with PRADAN for the upcoming field visit and documentation of local practices.
- **Tamil Nadu:** Submitted LSDG draft guidelines to the department, completed Tamil translation of VPDP guidelines, identified 370 pilot Village Panchayats, and initiated preparation of pilot learnings and LSDG module content.

FRA

Odisha

- Submitted NTFP study documents for review, incorporated mentor feedback, completed standardisation of documents, initiated SHG capacity-building content, conducted stakeholder consultations with Dongaria Kondh women and resource persons, and refined the jackfruit micropilot plan. Finalised and revised FRA micro-study reports incorporating stakeholder inputs and policy recommendations.

Commons

Jharkhand

- Revised Commons governance guidelines and pilot report based on mentor feedback and engaged with the DDC, West Singhbhum, to seek support for integrating commons-related interventions into VB G RAM G.

PESA

Jharkhand

- Conducted a CSO forum with participation from 25+ CSOs, completed thematic mapping of CSO engagement areas, developed the curriculum design strategy, and shared the action plan with the department for approval.

Key Learnings



- **GP-SHG Convergence:** Effective PRI-SHG convergence requires inclusion of local coordination platforms, government resources, field-based case studies, and practical learning approaches to strengthen community participation and implementation.
- **Localising SDGs (LSDG):** Participatory planning, cross-state learning, and stakeholder-specific capacity building are essential for developing effective LSDG guidelines and adapting them to local contexts.
- **FRA:** Early documentation, structured review processes, stakeholder consultations, and field-level insights are critical for improving reports, refining interventions, and strengthening community-based livelihood initiatives.
- **Commons:** Successful commons-related interventions require strong administrative engagement, early coordination with district authorities, and incorporation of mentor feedback to align with government priorities.
- **Operationalisation of PESA:** Continuous engagement with state stakeholders, inclusion of SHGs/CSOs/community groups in capacity-building efforts, and regular follow-up are important for effective PESA implementation.

Way Forward

P-SHG Convergence: Strengthen PRI-SHG convergence by finalising training modules, developing beacon Panchayats, building capacity through orientations, and supporting pilot implementation across states.

Localising SDGs: Advance LSDG implementation through field documentation, finalisation of guidelines, selection of pilot Panchayats, and stakeholder engagement for effective rollout.

FRA: Finalise FRA-related studies and documents, incorporate feedback, conduct required field visits, and strengthen NTFP-based livelihood initiatives through community insights.

Commons: Support integration of commons-related interventions into Panchayat planning processes, including incorporation into the VBG RAM G shelf of works.

PESA: Develop and finalise the PESA curriculum through collaboration with CSOs and a planned writeshop to consolidate learning and inputs.

Photos

