Monthly Updates- September 2026

SHG Households' Adopting Agriculture through Natural farming practices (SHAAN)

Overview

Project SHAAN is being implemented across Bihar and Jharkhand in partnership with the Gates Foundation. This is done in partnership with Rythu Sadhikara Samstha (RySS) of Andhra Pradesh, the national pioneer in natural farming. The project works to transform smallholder agriculture for SHG households by making it profitable, sustainable, and climate resilient through a shift away from chemical-intensive farming towards natural farming practices. CRISP and RySS together provide technical guidance and field expertise at no cost to state governments, with the SRLMs owning implementation.

Project Goal

To promote natural farming by the rural poor (organised into Self-Help Groups) and thereby make agriculture profitable, sustainable and climate resilient.

Strategy

Working with the SRLMs in Bihar and Jharkhand and transfer of knowledge and natural farming know-how through the expert practitioners of natural farming in Andhra Pradesh.

Schools of Practice developed which can be used for training other farmers.

The project is implemented along with AP RySS which is spearheading the natural farming movement under the leadership of Mr T. Vijay Kumar.

Deploy External Community Resource Persons from Andhra Pradesh to live in pilot villages and work side by side with SHG households.

Progress this Month

Jharkhand

- Coordinated with RYSS and the JSLPS Natural Farming team to plan and facilitate the scoping visit to the pilot blocks.

Bihar

- The recruitment of Block Leads for Pusa and Nagarnausa blocks has been completed. Over 100 applications were received and screened through a two-stage process: an online, proctored written examination with subjective questions, assessing candidates' understanding of Self-Help Groups, natural farming and the social sector, followed by interviews of those who qualified. Both Block Leads will join in the first week of October 2026.
- The recruitment of WE GIVE Cluster Coordinators, who will work alongside the Block Leads and the External Community Resource Persons (ECRPs) on Project SHAAN too, has also been completed. The selected coordinators are SHG women with prior experience in the social sector. They will join on 1 October 2026.
- Interviews for the Cluster Coordinators were conducted jointly with the JEEViKA Block Project Manager's office and office-bearer Didis of JEEViKA, so that the community institutions share ownership of the programme and of the people selected to deliver it.
- A 30–40 minute session was held for all the candidates who appeared for the WE GIVE written examination, covering the benefits of natural farming, the project's approach and the planned deployment of ECRPs in both blocks. As all candidates are members of SHGs in the project blocks, the session was designed so that each of them, whether selected or not, can act as an advocate for natural farming in her village.

Way Forward

Jharkhand

- Conduct scoping visits from 6th to 9th October to assess and understand the field conditions.
- Based on the scoping exercise, finalise the intervention approach and initiate deployment of the ECRPs.

Bihar

- Onboard the two Block Leads and the WE GIVE Cluster Coordinators in the first week of October.
- Conduct an in-person orientation for the new team in Patna in the second week of October. Experts from JEEViKA and RySS are being invited to deliver sessions on different aspects of natural farming and on work already under way in the state, to inform project planning.
- Deploy the ECRPs in the pilot villages in the last week of October, following the Dussehra holidays.
- Organise the exposure visit to Guntur, Andhra Pradesh, in the last week of October, subject to approval from the CEO, JEEViKA.

Photo Gallery



image 1 : Written exam for Coordinators being conducted in Nagarnausa, Nalanda, Bihar



A picture from the interview in Bihar - the panel included senior leaders of SHGs along with Jeevika and CRISP team.