CMS

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ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26

CMS
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Informing policy, programs and practices for Equitable Development

Centre for Media Studies (CMS) is a non-profit, multi-disciplinary think tank informing policy, programs and actions for Equitable Development.

CMS efforts over the last three decades has been to advance evidence based policy and programs. Research and Assessments conducted by CMS are recognised for its rigourous methodologies and for credibility of its findings. CMS is also known for innovative evaluation designs and promoting ethical issues in behaviour studies.

CMS continuing endeavour is to strengthen civic participation and engagement in our republic and to also promote accountability in the democratic systems. It does this through research based innovative engagements, strategic outreach and capacity strengthening programs with policy makers, academia, media and civic society.

In this process, CMS has developed popular pathways, including providing spaces for open debates, forums for dialogue and festivals for creative expressions. CMS has prominent programs with working and aspiring media professionals and content creators. Through popular modes of films, festivals, competitions and campaigns (online and in-person), it engages various audiences on diverse focus areas. CMS has also been articulating its research findings and concerns by engaging in national debates and discussions, research papers, reports, monographs, books, newsletters and in news media.

Since 1991, it has completed over 800 assignments in collaboration with 230 public and private partners across the globe.

THEMATIC AREAS OF CMS WORK

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	•→Public Health •→Nutrition & Food Security •→Responsive Caregiving and Early Learning •→Education •→Water, Sanitation and Hygiene •→Gender •→Livelihood •→Social & Economic Inclusion & Protection
SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR CHANGE	•→Research & Evaluations •→Pretesting and Content Analysis •→Capacity Strengthening •→Practical Recommendations & Strategies
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP	•→Biodiversity Conservation & livelihoods •→Nature based Education •→Energy Efficiency •→Climate Change, Disaster Risk Resilience, Mitigation, Adaptations •→Awareness Campaigns and Sensitization Programs
GOOD GOVERNANCE	•→Delivery of Public Services •→Social Audits •→Right to Information •→Election studies
RESPONSIBLE MEDIA	•→Content Analysis •→ Tracking & Monitoring Social Media •→Promote Media Ethics and Regulations •→Develop understanding of Working & Aspiring Media Professionals

CMS USP

More than three decades of quality research and initiatives have built core competencies, expertise and have provided opportunity to work with wide range of partners.

RECOGNISED FOR

- Non-partisan
- Not for Profit
- Pioneering Methodologies
- Quality & Credible Research
- M&E
- Ethics in Research

OUR PEOPLE & EXPERTISE

- **Women Led**
- **225+ years** of combined experience
- Diverse Background
- Countrywide network
- Committed Team

OUR PARTNERS

- Multi-lateral
- Bi-lateral organizations
- Central/State
- International
- National
- Corporates
- Global Academia
- Media

CORE COMPETENCIES

- Research Rigor
- Research based initiatives
- Realistic, practical & meaningful insights
- **Capacity strengthening**
- **Strategic outreach & communications**

DIRECTOR GENERAL'S NOTE

Building on our longstanding commitment to informing policy, practice and public discourse, CMS in 2025–26 continued to connect research, communication and collaborative action around issues central to sustainable and equitable development.

This year, our most of our work is now increasingly moved beyond knowledge and dialogue towards creating platforms that enable people, institutions and communities to engage with solutions. Our growing emphasis on nature-based education, youth engagement, storytelling and public participation was reflected through films, festivals, campaigns, consultations and capacity-building initiatives. These efforts have sought to create spaces where knowledge meets lived experience, and where diverse voices can contribute to shaping more sustainable and regenerative futures.

The year also strengthened CMS's national and international partnerships, including our continued engagement with the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) and #NatureForAll, where CMS has taken on the role of Global Coordinator for 2026–29. This expanded responsibility reflects the growing recognition of communication, education and collective action in advancing nature conservation and planetary wellbeing.

While conventional research assignments have reduced considerably, this also presents an opportunity for CMS to rethink and renew its role in a rapidly changing environment. The emergence of AI and new technologies, alongside evolving approaches to communication and the growing need to catalyse social and behavioural change, calls for new forms of inquiry, innovation and engagement. We see this as an opportunity to build on our experience while exploring new directions for research, knowledge and action.

As CMS enters its next phase, we remain committed to evolving with the challenges and opportunities before us for strengthening our institutional capabilities, deepening partnerships and creating platforms that translate evidence, ideas and stories into action. Our journey continues to be guided by the belief that development must place people, nature and planetary wellbeing at its centre.

I would like to acknowledge and thank the CMS team for their commitment and perseverance through this year. I am equally grateful to our Chairman, Dr. N. Bhaskara Rao, and all Board Members for their continued guidance, support and trust, and to our partners and collaborators whose contributions make this work possible.

With gratitude and optimism

Dr. Vasanti Rao
Director General,
Centre for Media Studies (CMS)

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PROJECTS AND STUDIES IN 2025-2026

1. Future Media Workshop on Environmental Reporting in Jalandhar - Punjab State Council for Science & Technology (PSCST)
2. Conducting LiFE for Nature Summits in Andhra Pradesh and Assam (Pilot Phase) - The Habitats Trust
3. Breath of Change - International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies programme - IIHH [CAQM / MoEF&CC]
4. Organizing CMS VATAVARAN Travelling Film Festival 2025-2026, in one Tier-2 or Tier-3 cities of India - Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies Foundation
5. Organizing Youth Capacity Building on Communicating Climate and Environment Action - High Commission of Canada in India
6. Environment Festival: Films for Sustainable Lifestyles in Moga, Punjab - PSCST
7. Research Support to Mardon Wali Baat Micro Influencers Campaign – CEQUIN
8. Assessment of SRHR and Life Skills Learning Outcomes among Marginalized Adolescents in Rajasthan – IPE
9. Conducting Baseline Survey for Suposhit Dadri Project - Project Concern International
10. Quality Assessment of Primary Health Services Provided by Mobile Medical Unit (MMU) - The Hans Foundation

SIGNIFICANT WORK

- **Quality Assessment of Primary Health Services provided by the Mobile Medical Unit (MMU), The Hans Foundation**

The Hans Foundation (THF) with the project goal to provide people in remote areas access to quality health services, and thereby improve their overall well-being is providing Mobile Medical Units (MMUs), in several states across India. MMUs are essentially health facilities on wheels serving difficult-to-reach areas and people with low finances and mobility issues. These MMUs provide a range of services, from routine check-ups to managing chronic conditions.

In mid-2025, CMS team carried out the quality assessment to ascertain the overall quality of MMU services provided as well as assessed the satisfaction level of the beneficiaries of the THF-MMU project, across eight states namely, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttarakhand, and Uttar Pradesh. This assessment covered a sample of 30 districts, 163 MMUs, and 1657 beneficiaries/users of MMU services.

The findings of the assessment showed high satisfaction level with the approach, professional conduct, and services provided to the beneficiaries. By collaborating with the local health workers and integrating into existing healthcare systems, these MMU units have improved health outcomes and reduced the financial burden on families, all while fostering a culture of health-seeking behavior.

• The Learning Outcomes Assessment, 2025

This assessment was to evaluate *Astitva*, an inclusive adolescent health and life-skills initiative implemented by the Centre for Knowledge and Development (CKD) in partnership with UNFPA in Rajasthan. The study covered adolescents from Classes VI–XII across DoSJE residential schools, Kasturba Gandhi Balika Vidyalayas (KGBVs), Madrasas, and Tribal Area Development (TAD) schools. In total, over 1,622 students and more than 90 SHWP-trained teachers were surveyed across multiple districts, representing tribal communities, minorities, girls, and other vulnerable groups.

The study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional design using semi-structured tools aligned with the School Health and Wellness Programme (SHWP). Data were collected through Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) and analysed using univariate and bivariate methods with gender-wise disaggregation. Learning outcomes were assessed across eleven thematic areas, including adolescent development, emotional wellbeing, gender equality, nutrition, reproductive health, substance misuse prevention, safety, citizenship, and digital behaviour.

Findings show strong gains in foundational awareness related to hygiene, nutrition, interpersonal relationships, gender attitudes, and safety, along with improved confidence and communication among students. However, gaps persisted in complex areas such as reproductive health, HIV prevention, nocturnal emissions, cyber safety, and awareness of adolescent-friendly health services. Gender-wise analysis revealed that girls consistently demonstrated higher awareness, healthier behaviours, and greater help-seeking, while boys showed lower clarity on puberty-related issues, emotional expression, and non-physical forms of violence.

Way forward includes strengthening gender-responsive programming, targeted engagement of boys on masculinity and consent, continued empowerment of girls, regular teacher refresher trainings, participatory learning methods, and stronger linkages with health services.

The study contributes directly to programme strengthening by identifying priority thematic gaps, informing targeted teacher refresher trainings, improving curriculum delivery strategies, and strengthening convergence with health services. It provides robust evidence to refine Astitva's implementation and monitoring framework, supporting more inclusive, gender-responsive, and effective adolescent health programming.

- **Suposhit Dadri 2.0, HCL, WHO, 2025-2026**

The baseline study for *Suposhit Dadri 2.0*, conducted aimed to establish benchmark indicators for maternal, child and adolescent nutrition prior to programme scale-up. The study was implemented across 10 villages (five Phase I and five Phase II) selected from the 20 intervention villages in Dadri block, Gautam Buddha Nagar district, Uttar Pradesh. A total of 469 respondents were covered, including pregnant women, lactating mothers (0–5.9 months and 6–24 months), husbands/ fathers, adolescent girls and boys, and frontline workers (AWWs and ASHAs). Anthropometric measurements were conducted for 111 children aged 0–24 months.

The study adopted a quantitative, cross-sectional design using systematic random sampling with probability proportional to estimated size (PPES). Data were collected through semi-structured, WHO-aligned tools administered via Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) to ensure standardization and real-time validation. Anthropometric data were analysed using WHO growth standards, alongside univariate and bivariate statistical analysis, including phase-wise comparisons.

Findings indicate relatively good coverage of routine health services such as ANC registration and supplement distribution; however, significant gaps persist in dietary quality, consistent supplement adherence (especially Vitamin D), breastfeeding and complementary feeding practices, and depth of nutrition counselling. Growth faltering was evident from early infancy and intensified during the complementary feeding period. Phase I villages consistently performed better than Phase II villages, reflecting the benefits of prior programme exposure.

The baseline provides critical evidence to guide Suposhit Dadri 2.0 by identifying behavioural, service-delivery and counselling gaps. It supports targeted intervention design, strengthens monitoring frameworks, and establishes reference values for measuring programme impact over time.

CMS VATAVARAN
ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT INITIATIVES

1. BREATH OF CHANGE

Air pollution communication stakeholder workshop (Breath of Change)

Location : Indus Hall, Indira Paryavaran Bhawan, New Delhi

Dates : July 23, 2025

CMS VATAVARAN organised the *Air Pollution Communication Stakeholder Workshop*, bringing together representatives from MoEFCC, CAQM, EIACP network, and civil society. The workshop focused on communication strategies, expert insights, and creative storytelling to strengthen public engagement on air pollution mitigation.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/breath-workshop-2025

Manav Rachna University FETE

(International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies (Youth for VayuMitra)

Date : 29 July 2025

Location : Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, Faridabad

CMS VATAVARAN organised the first *Breath of Change Fete* engaging 267 students from diverse academic streams such as Environmental Science, Engineering, Computer Science, and Media Studies. The event included screenings of the *Mission LiFE* documentary and short films on air pollution, interactive Q&A sessions using live polling, and discussions on behavioural change. Over 200 students participated in a poster-making competition, with 21 entries shortlisted to represent MRIIRS at the Delhi-NCR finals. The programme concluded with students collectively taking the *VayuMitra Pledge* for clean air.

Link https://cmsvatavaran.org/mriirs-fete

Sharda University MOJO Workshop

Location : Sharda University, Greater Noida

Dates : 31 July – 2 August 2025

Under the Breath of Change – International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies campaign, CMS VATAVARAN conducted a three-day Mobile Journalism (MoJo) Workshop which trained students in mobile storytelling, covering storyboarding, filming, sound, interviews, and editing, and encouraged them to document air pollution issues within their communities. The workshop concluded with the production of short films that will compete in the Breath of Change Short Film Competition.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/sharda-workshop

Manav Rachna University MOJO WORKSHOP

(International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies)

Location : Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies (MRIIRS), Faridabad

Date : 4–6 August 2025

CMS VATAVARAN organised the second Mobile Filmmaking (MoJo) Workshop. The three-day workshop engaged over 50 students from Mass Communication, Design, and Science streams, aiming to empower youth voices for clean air advocacy. Led by expert trainer Ritesh Taksande, the sessions provided hands-on training in mobile filmmaking, covering storyboarding, production, and editing. The short films created during the workshop will be submitted to the *Breath of Change Short Film Competition*, amplifying youth-led perspectives and community voices on clean air solutions.

Link https://cmsvatavaran.org/manav-rachna-workshop

Sharda University FETE (Breath of Change- International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies – Youth for Vayu Mitra)

Location : Sharda University, Greater Noida

Date : 8 August 2025

The second Breath of Change Fete was organised with more than 100 national and international students participating in interactive sessions on air quality, exploring solutions for daily life, and expressing their ideas through a painting competition. The event concluded with students taking the Vayu Mitra Pledge, reaffirming their commitment towards cleaner air and sustainable living.

Link https://cmsvatavaran.org/sharda-fete

KIIT College of Engineering Fete (Breath of change- International Day of Clean Air for Blue Skies – Youth for Vayu Mitra)

Location : KIIT College of Engineering, Gurugram

Date : 12 August 2025

The third Breath of Change Fete included film screenings, interactive discussions, and a painting competition, creating a vibrant platform for creativity, dialogue, and awareness. Over 165 students participated in the programme and shared their visions for a cleaner future, and the programme concluded with the collective Vayu Mitra Pledge.

Link https://cmsvatavaran.org/kiit-fete

Award Jury Meet

Location : India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

Date : 19 August 2025

CMS VATAVARAN organised the Jury Meeting for the Short Film Competition under the Breath of Change campaign The session was inaugurated by Ms. Namita Prasad, Joint Secretary, MoEF&CC, who highlighted the role of films as a powerful medium for environmental awareness. The proceedings were conducted by Mr. Sabyesachi Bharti, Deputy Director, CMS VATAVARAN. The jury comprised representatives from MoEF&CC, CAQM, TERI, WWF-India, Sulabh International, EIACP, and eminent communication professionals.

ISOMES, Future Media Workshop (Breath of change future media workshop on air pollution reporting)

Location : ISOMES, Noida

Date : 21 August 2025

As part of the Breath of Change campaign, CMS VATAVARAN organised an immersive Future Media Workshop which brought together media students to develop story ideas on air pollution and clean air solutions. The sessions were led by Dr. Prachi Goyal (Clean Air Asia), Manish Chandra Mishra (Mongabay-India), and Pankaj Kumar (India TV). The workshop concluded with students pledging to pursue impactful clean air reporting.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/isomes-future-media

GGS Indraprastha University Fete (Youth Action for a Pollution-Free Future)

Location : Guru Gobind Singh Indraprastha University, Dwarka, Delhi

Date : 26 August 2025

The Breath of Change campaign brought together students through film screenings, a painting competition, and interactive discussions on practical solutions for improving air quality. The programme concluded with students taking the Vayu Mitra Pledge, committing to a sustainable and pollution-free future.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/ggsipu-fete

Teri School of Advanced Studies Fete (Empowering Future Environmental Leaders for Clean Air)

Location : New Delhi

Date : 28 August 2025

CMS VATAVARAN organised the Breath of Change Fete, engaging students through Mission LiFE film screenings, a painting competition, and interactive discussions on practical solutions for improving air quality. The programme concluded with students taking the Vayu Mitra Pledge, reaffirming their commitment to a sustainable and pollution-free future.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/teri-fete

South Asian University Fete (Uniting Regional Youth for Clean Air and Climate Action)

Location : South Asian University, New Delhi

Date : 29 August 2025

CMS VATAVARAN organised the Breath of Change Fete, featuring screenings of award-winning short films, a painting competition, and engaging discussions on clean air solutions. Students from diverse regional backgrounds participated in the programme and collectively took the Vayu Mitra Pledge, reaffirming their commitment to a cleaner, healthier, and more sustainable future.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/sau-fete

Jamia Hamdard University Future Media Workshop

Location : Jamia Hamdard (Deemed to be University), New Delhi

Date : 1 September 2025

As part of the Breath of Change campaign CMS VATAVARAN organized an immersive media workshop where media students developed story ideas on air pollution and clean air solutions, guided by experts from Clean Air Asia, Mongabay-India, and India TV. The workshop concluded with a student pledge to pursue impactful environmental reporting.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/jamia-future-media

Kamla Nehru College Fete (Empowering Youth for Cleaner Air and a Sustainable Future)

Location : University of Delhi

Date : 2 September 2025

The event included screening of the Mission LiFE film and award-winning short films on air pollution, a painting competition on a pollution-free Delhi-NCR, and interactive discussions on air quality solutions. The programme concluded with students taking the Vayu Mitra Pledge, committing to a healthier and sustainable future.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/kamala-nehru-fete

Bennett University FETE (Celebrating Youth Creativity and Commitment to Clean Air)

Location : Greater Noida

Date : 3 September 2025

The programme included screenings of short films on air pollution and climate, interactive discussions on clean air solutions, and a painting competition promoting creativity for sustainability. The event concluded with students taking the Vayu Mitra Pledge, committing themselves to cleaner air and community action.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/bennett-fete

National Evaluation Workshop - EIACP Centres, Dehradun

Location : Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun

Date : 18 September 2025

The Breath of Change campaign culminated during the National Evaluation Workshop for EIACP Centres at the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun. Ms. Namita Prasad, Joint Secretary, MoEF&CC inaugurated the session. CMS VATAVARAN presented campaign milestones, including films, podcasts, pledges, and youth-led activities. Winners of the short film and painting competitions were announced, and a consolidated campaign film was screened.

Breath of Change Award Felicitation Session, CAQM

Location : CAQM Office, New Delhi

Date : 29 September 2025

CMS VATAVARAN, in collaboration with CAQM, organised the final youth engagement and award felicitation session of the Breath of Change campaign. The session was graced by Shri Rajesh Verma, Hon'ble Chairperson, CAQM, along with senior CAQM members. Winners of the short film and painting competitions were felicitated, and youth leaders engaged in discussions on air pollution awareness and action.

2. LiFE FOR NATURE SUMMIT

Assam LiFE For Nature Summit (জীৱন আৰু প্ৰকৃতিৰ ঐক্য | Unity of Life & Nature)

Location : Guwahati, Assam

Date : December 2025

The Assam LiFE for Nature Summit brought together leaders from government, global organisations, civil society, science, media, and youth to advance climate-ready and nature-positive development in Assam. Key themes included river and wetland protection, flood resilience, forest and wildlife conservation, nature-based livelihoods, and community-driven climate action. The summit featured leadership sessions, Green Ambassador recognition, policy roundtables, and active youth participation. Organised by CMS VATAVARAN in collaboration with The Habitat Trust, and supported by MoEFCC, UNEP India, IUCN–CEC, #NatureForAll, and UNWFP, alongside key state partners in Assam.

Link- https://www.cmsvatavaran.org/life-for-nature-summit

Andhra LiFE For Nature Summit 2026

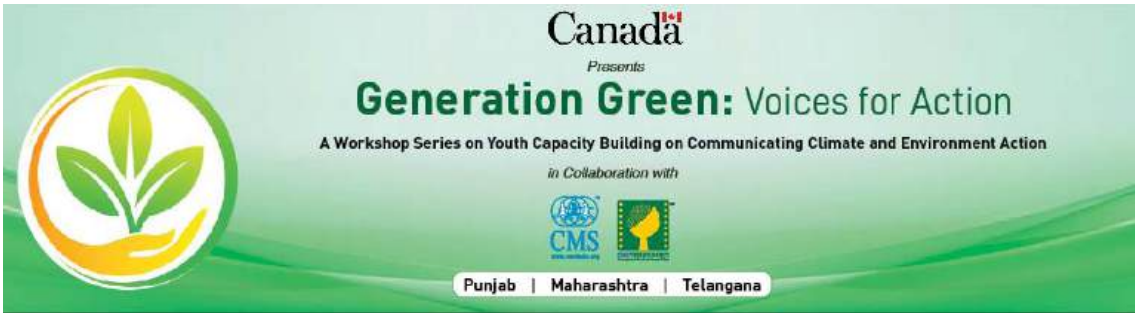
Location : Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

Dates : 17–18 March 2026

CMS VATAVARAN, in collaboration with The Habitats Trust and supported by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, IUCN #NatureForAll, UNEP India, and World Food Programme India, organised the Andhra LiFE for Nature Summit 2026. The summit brought together policymakers, scientists, educators, media professionals, and community leaders to strengthen climate resilience and promote nature-positive development in Andhra Pradesh, aligned with Mission LiFE and the state's sustainable development vision.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/andhraLiFE-for-nature-summit

3. Youth Climate Communication and Media workshops



Youth Climate Communication Workshop

Location : School of Communication Studies, Panjab University, Chandigarh

Date : 18 November 2025

CMS VATAVARAN organised the Youth Climate Communication Workshop .The session brought students together to learn how to tell climate stories with credibility, empathy, and impact. Participants explored approaches to reporting environmental issues, translating complex data into relatable narratives, and using storytelling to drive meaningful climate action. The workshop also highlighted the role of digital platforms such as social media, podcasts, and video in amplifying climate narratives and inspiring community responsibility.

The session was conducted by Rachna Verma, a multimedia journalist with over six years of experience in climate and environmental reporting. She has contributed to *The Hindustan Times, Mongabay, The Wire, The News Minute,* and *DD India*, and is a recipient of fellowships from *The Climate Feed, IUCN, Earth Journalism Network,* and *101 Reporters* for her work in climate storytelling.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/chandigarh-youth-climate-workshop

Youth Climate Communication Workshop – Mumbai

Location : Mumbai, Maharashtra

Dates : 22 January 2026

CMS VATAVARAN organised a Youth Climate Communication Workshop where Students learned to report environmental issues with accuracy and empathy, frame narratives, and use digital platforms like social media, podcasts, and videos to reach wider audiences. The workshop was facilitated by Nidhi Jamwal, an independent journalist with over 25 years of experience in environmental and rural journalism and former Managing Editor of Gaon Connection.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/mumbai-youth-climate-workshop

YOUTH CLIMATE COMMUNICATION WORKSHOP – KOCHI

Location : Kochi, Kerala

Dates : 23 March 2026

CMS VATAVARAN, in collaboration with the High Commission of Canada in India, organised a Youth Climate Communication Workshop. The session focused on mobile journalism (MoJo), equipping students with hands-on skills in capturing and sharing climate stories using digital tools. Participants also gained insights on tackling misinformation, ethical AI use in media, and responsible digital storytelling. The workshop was facilitated by Sunil Prabhakar, a technology and communication consultant, advisor to Mathrubhumi's digital division, and member of the Google News Initiative Fact-Checking Training Network.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/Kochi-youth-climate-workshop

Women In Media: Future Journalist Workshop, Punjab, Hans Raj Mahila Maha Vidyalaya, Jalandhar, April 04–05, 2025

CMS VATAVARAN organised the two-day workshop Empowering Women in Media: Future Journalists for a Greener Punjab in collaboration with Hans Raj Mahila Maha Vidyalaya, under the Environment Education Programme of the Punjab State Council for Science & Technology and supported by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change, Government of India. The workshop aimed to strengthen women journalists' skills in investigative reporting, multimedia storytelling, and environmental communication.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/reporting-Jalandhar

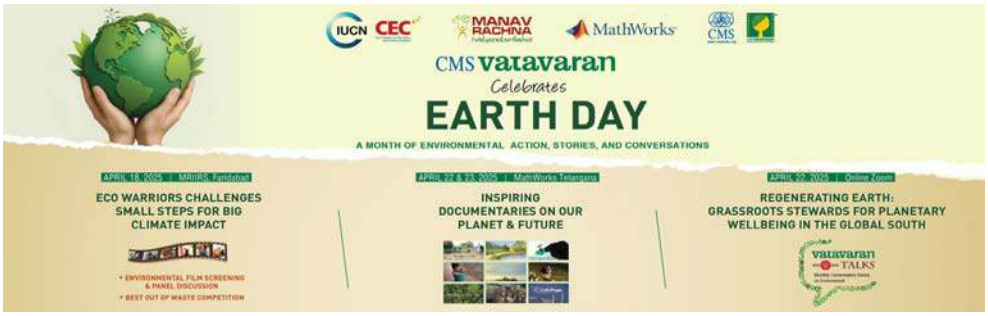
Manav Rachna Film Screening

(Eco Warriors Challenges: Small Steps For Big Climate Impact)

Location : MRIIRS, Faridabad

Dates : April 18, 2025

As part of Earth Day 2025 celebrations, CMS VATAVARAN organised *Eco Warriors Challenges*. The programme included an environmental film screening, expert panel discussion, and a "Best Out of Waste" competition, encouraging students to take small but meaningful actions for climate impact.



Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/earth-day2025

BEAT PLASTIC POLLUTION MEDIA WORKSHOP UNEP

Location : UN House, New Delhi

Dates : May 30, 2025

CMS VATAVARAN partnered with UN Environment Programme India and Mongabay-India to organise a Media Orientation Workshop on *#BeatPlasticPollution*. The workshop brought together journalists and media professionals to strengthen solutions-oriented environmental reporting and storytelling.

Link: **https://cmsvatavaran.org/BeatPlasticPollution**

4. TRAVELLING FILM FESTIVALS

Kaziranga CMS VATAVARAN Film Festival

(A Day of Reflection and Action Through the Historical Lens)

Location : Kohora Convention Centre, Kaziranga, Assam

Date : 20 December 2025

CMS VATAVARAN hosted the *Kaziranga CMS VATAVARAN Film Festival – Through the Historical Lens*, The festival served as a platform for wildlife storytelling, conservation dialogue, and community engagement, highlighting the role of media in shaping conservation narratives and strengthening connections between communities and nature.The film festival was organised in collaboration with Kaziranga National Park & Tiger Reserve, the Assam Forest Department, and the Kaziranga Wildlife Society, reflecting a shared commitment to conserving Assam's rich natural heritage through film, media, and public dialogue. The programme featured curated screenings of wildlife and conservation films documenting Kaziranga's biodiversity and the realities of human–wildlife coexistence. It also included a forum on media ethics, bringing together media professionals, forest officials, and practitioners to discuss responsible wildlife reporting, as well as regional discussions focusing on conservation efforts in Northeast India, with particular emphasis on Rhino and Elephant protection.

Link- https://cmsvatavaran.org/kaziranga-vatavaran-film-festival

PSCST–CMS VATAVARAN Environment Film Festival & Forum on LiFE, Moga

Location : Moga, Punjab

Dates : 3–4 February 2026

CMS VATAVARAN and the Punjab State Council for Science & Technology (PSCST) jointly organised a two-day environmental film festival under the framework of Mission LiFE. The festival engaged students through film screenings, moderated discussions, and interactive masterclasses on water conservation, clean air, and waste segregation, culminating in collective Mission LiFE and Vayu Mitra pledges.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/moga-cmsvatavaran

Ranchi Travelling Film Festival 2026

Location : Ranchi, Jharkhand

Dates : 10–13 February 2026

The **Ranchi Travelling Film Festival 2026** was a four-day celebration of cinema, dialogue, and learning that brought together filmmakers, students, community members, and environmental practitioners to explore pressing social and environmental issues through the power of storytelling. Organised by **CMS VATAVARAN** in collaboration with **Rohini Nilekani Philanthropies,** the festival was endorsed by the **International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) #NatureForAll.** Hosted as part of the 12th CMS VATAVARAN – International Film Festival and Forum on Environment & Wildlife, the Ranchi travelling edition focused on amplifying indigenous knowledge systems, youth voices, and collective responsibility towards planetary stewardship.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/ranchi-cmsvatavaran

5. ONLINE EVENTS, SESSIONS & WEBINARS

VATAVARAN TALKS (Regenerating Earth – Grassroots Stewards for Planetary Wellbeing)

Dates : April 22, 2025

CMS VATAVARAN hosted VATAVARAN Talks: Regenerating Earth – Grassroots Stewards for Planetary Wellbeing as part of Earth Day 2025. The online session focused on grassroots leadership, regeneration, and community-driven approaches to planetary well-being.

Link: https://www.cmsvatavaran.org/vatavaran-talks-regenerating-earth

VATAVARAN TALKS – BIODIVERSITY DAY (Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development)

Dates : May 22, 2025

To mark the International Day for Biological Diversity, CMS VATAVARAN organised a special session in collaboration with the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) on May 22, 2025. The discussion focused on biodiversity, policy, education, community action, and the role of storytelling in advancing sustainable development.

Link: http://cmsvatavaran.org/vatavaran-talks-harmony-with-nature

VATAVARAN talks webinar – inspiring conservation action

(*The Power of Exploration and Behaviour Change Communication0*

Date : 03 July 2025

CMS VATAVARAN organised a VATAVARAN Talks webinar bringing together experts from journalism, wildlife conservation, and policy to discuss the role of exploration and behaviour change communication in inspiring conservation action. The session featured Ms. Laurel Chor (independent journalist, documentary filmmaker, and National Geographic Explorer); Dr. Purnima Devi Barman (founder of the Hargila Army and UNEP Champion of the Earth awardee); and Dr. Bibhab Kumar Talukdar (Founder & CEO of Aaranyak and Chair of the IUCN Asian Rhino Specialist Group). The discussion was moderated by Dr. Vasanti Rao, Director General, CMS.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/vatavaran-talks-Inspiring-conservation-action

Youth Engagement at the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025

CMS VATAVARAN organised a webinar highlighting the vital role of youth in shaping conservation efforts at the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025. The session focused on inspiring young people by showcasing opportunities for youth participation in global conservation initiatives and promoting membership in the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC). The webinar featured Dr. Vasanti Rao, Director General, Centre for Media Studies, and Regional Vice Chair, IUCN CEC for South and South East Asia, and Ms. Diana Garlytska, Chair, IUCN Youth Advisory Committee, and Regional Vice Chair, IUCN CEC for West Europe. The discussion covered youth-led initiatives, leadership pathways, and meaningful engagement in environmental action.

Link https://cmsvatavaran.org/vatavaran-talks-Youth-Engagement-at-the-IUCN-2025

VATAVARAN Talks – Natural Disasters & Wildlife

Date : June 24, 2025

Brief: CMS VATAVARAN organised the VATAVARAN Talks webinar “Natural Disasters & Wildlife”, focusing on the impacts of natural disasters on wildlife in the context of IUCN Congress Motion 040. The session highlighted the growing risks to wildlife due to climate-driven disasters and emphasized the need for collaborative and adaptive conservation approaches. The webinar featured **Dr. Laurie Marker** (Cheetah Conservation Fund, Namibia), Ms. Miriam Monterroso (ARCAS, Latin America), and Dr. Anish Andheria (Wildlife Conservation Trust, India). The discussion was moderated by Dr. Vasanti Rao, Director General, CMS, and Regional Vice Chair, IUCN CEC South and South-East Asia.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/vatavaran-talks-Impact-of-Natural-Disasters-on-Wildlife

VATAVARAN Talks - Episode 1 बदलाव की बयार | पहला पॉडकास्ट
Breath of change (Hindi podcast series)

Date : 8 August 2025

Brief: CMS VATAVARAN launched the first episode of the special four-part *VATAVARAN Talks* Hindi podcast series under the *Breath of Change: International Clean Air Day for Blue Sky* initiative. The series was initiated by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC)** and the **Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM)** in collaboration with **CMS VATAVARAN** and **Delhi-based EIACP Centres**, to address the urgent issue of air pollution, particularly in the Delhi-NCR region where air quality levels frequently cross hazardous limits.

The dialogue featured **Smt. Lipika Roy**, Deputy Director, EIACP, MoEF&CC, and was moderated by **Mr. Sabyesachi Bharti**, Deputy Director, CMS VATAVARAN.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/breath-vata-talks-2025

Event : **CHAUPAL – HINDI CLIMATE PODCAST** *(EP1 – Mangoes, People and the Changing Winds)*

Date : June 24, 2025

CMS VATAVARAN launched Chaupal, a monthly Hindi podcast on environment and climate change, to bring local voices from the Hindi-speaking belt into the climate conversation. The first episode, *"Aam, Aadmi aur Aabohawa"*, explores the link between language, culture, and ecology through the lens of mangoes — drawing on stories from Paryavaran Times, Sopan Joshi's *Mangifera Indica: A Biography of the Mango*, and a discussion with journalist Manish Chandra Mishra. Moderated by Mr. Sabyasachi Bharti, Deputy Director, CMS VATAVARAN, the episode highlights how everyday narratives can deepen public engagement with climate issues.

Link: https://www.cmsvatavaran.org/vatavaran-talks-chaupal-ep1

COLLABORATION & PARTICIPATIONS IN OTHER EVENTS AND INITIATIVES:

INDUS 2.0 MUN

Location : Gurugram

Dates : 6 May 2025

CMS VATAVARAN participated in the Indus 2.0 Model United Nations organised by Kunskapsskolan International, where discussions on climate change and artificial intelligence reflected the organisation's commitment to youth leadership and sustainable futures.

Event : **Biodiversity Celebrations, Tripura**

Location : Agartala, Tripura

Dates : May 22, 2025

CMS VATAVARAN participated in the International Day for Biological Diversity 2025 celebrations organised by the Tripura Biodiversity Board in Agartala. The session highlighted emotional storytelling for biodiversity and development, aligning with the theme Harmony with Nature and Sustainable Development.

Community Stewardship Webinar

(Community Stewardship and the Role of Local Communities in Conservation)

Location : Online

Dates : June 3, 2025

CMS VATAVARAN participated in the webinar *Community Stewardship and the Role of Local Communities in Conservation*, organised by the Foundation for Ecological Security (FES). The dialogue explored community-driven conservation approaches and the importance of grassroots stewardship in ecological security.

7th International Conference on Sustainability Education / (ICSE 2025, Delhi)

Location : India Habitat Centre, New Delhi

Date : 17 and 18 September 2025

CMS VATAVARAN participated in the 7th International Conference on Sustainability Education (ICSE 2025). Dr. Vasanti Rao, Director General, CMS, joined the Special Session on *Mission LiFE: Green Jobs through Sustainable Lifestyles*, where she shared insights on the role of nature-based education in empowering communities and creating innovative green opportunities for the future. CMS VATAVARAN also represented the IUCN Commission on Education and Communication (CEC), engaging with participants on the commission's work and upcoming World Conservation Congress (WCC). The conference provided a valuable platform for dialogue, knowledge exchange, and strengthening collective efforts towards sustainability education.

IUCN World Conservation Congress, Abu Dhabi

(Celebrating Storytelling, Collaboration, and Action for Nature)

Location : Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC), Abu Dhabi

Dates : 9–15 October 2025

Brief: CMS VATAVARAN participated in the IUCN World Conservation Congress 2025, represented by Dr. Vasanti Rao, Director General, and Mr. Sabyasachi Bharti, Deputy Director. The organisation engaged in global dialogues on communication, storytelling, and behaviour change for nature-positive action. CMS VATAVARAN designed the visual identity of the IUCN & CEC Nature-Based Education Pavilion and hosted the session *"Reel Impact"* on October 10, exploring the power of films in inspiring conservation. A key highlight was the announcement of CMS VATAVARAN as the new global custodian of the **#NatureForAll** movement for the next four years, reinforcing its commitment to bridging science, policy, education, and communication for nature.

Link: https://cmsvatavaran.org/cmsvatavaran-wcc-2025

Nature-Based Education Conference, Salzburg

Location : Salzburg

Date : 18 November 2025

Brief: CMS VATAVARAN's Director General Dr. Vasanti Rao participated in the Nature-Based Education Conference organised by Salzburg Global, marking the launch of the new *Salzburg Statement on Nature-Based Education*. The Conference calls upon world leaders to commit to integrating nature into education systems and encourages educators, families, and school leaders to explore the benefits of nature-based education.

World Wetlands Day 2026

Location : New Delhi

Dates : 2 February 2026

On World Wetlands Day 2026, CMS VATAVARAN's Director General Dr. Vasanti Rao joined celebrations hosted by Wetlands International South Asia, reaffirming wetlands as living infrastructure for water security, biodiversity, and climate resilience. She represented CMS VATAVARAN in a seminar on strengthening wetlands regulation and governance in India, highlighting how storytelling, youth engagement, and community knowledge can bridge science and lived experience to protect wetlands.

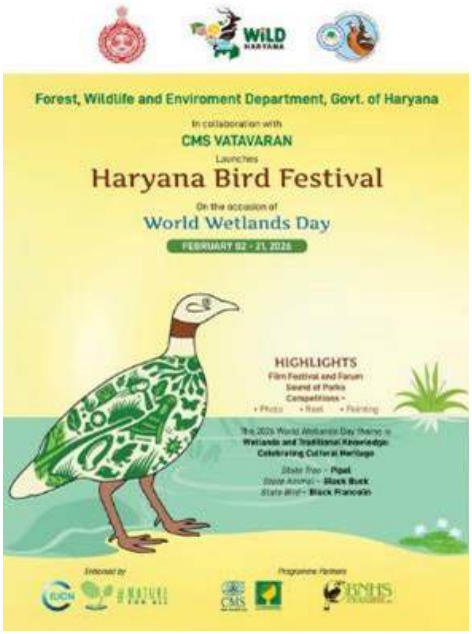
Link: https://www.facebook.com/VatavaranCMS/

Haryana Bird Festival 2026

Location : Panchkula, Haryana

Dates : 2–21 February 2026

CMS VATAVARAN, in collaboration with IUCN #NatureForAll, participated as Programme Partner in the Haryana Bird Festival, organised by the Haryana Forest Department. The festival celebrated the theme 'Wetlands and Traditional Knowledge: Celebrating Cultural Heritage' across 16 wetlands and parks in the state. CMS VATAVARAN contributed through on-ground engagement activities and online Painting, Photography, and Reel competitions to promote youth participation and wetland awareness.



Link: https://www.facebook.com/CMSVATAVARAN/posts/as-part-of-cms-vatavarans-commitment-to-raising-awareness-for-wetlands-on-worldw/10226825573625631/

- CMS has been internationally recognized for encouraging meaningful youth engagement in evaluation. In 2025, CMS was conferred the Legacy Champion for upholding the standards. This followed the recognition as Super Champion during the Eval4Action Campaign 2024.

Link: https://www.eval4action.org/youthinevaluationchampions

- Alok Srivastava, Vasanti Rao and Amita Puri published a research paper on "Framework to measure effects of digital learning on students' mental health" in International Journal of Community Medicine and Public Health, 2026

  [Access at https://doi.org/10.18203/2394-6040.ijcmph20254463]

- Alok Srivastava publish a research paper titled, "Low cost generic medicines and its socio-economic impact –an empirical study in India" in Journal of Generic Medicines, Sage Journals, 2025 *[Access at https://doi.org/10.1177/17411343251379754]*

- Alok Srivastava as a Resource Person designed and conducted the Online Course on the 'Ethics in Evaluation', as part of the 8th Iteration of the Facilitating Gender Transformative Evaluation (2025), organized by the Institute of Social Studies Trust (ISST)

CMS IRB (Institutional Review Board) for Review of Research/Evaluation (non-clinical)

Protocols to Assess Ethical Standards:

CMS has an internationally accredited Institutional Review Board (CMS-IRB, a registered body since 2007), on ethics for research (non-clinical) involving human subjects. Till date it has reviewed 206 research and evaluation protocols from ethics lens. (https://www.cmsindia.org/irb)

IT

IT CMS has been integrating social media and its website more into its internal communication strategies. We currently have accounts on LinkedIn, Instagram, three Facebook pages, CMS, CMS VATAVARAN, all of which have more than 14000 followers each. CMS uses dedicated lines for internet connectivity. CMS Research House is fully Wi-Fi enabled. The CMS IT team manages five thematic websites of the organisation and is responsible for implementing and maintaining CAPI, CATI, and CAWI software solutions to support both offline and online data collection activities. CMS IT Team is equipped with the latest infrastructure facilities, like Data servers and in house Mail Server with 32 desktops, 05 laptops, 1 HP colour printers, 1 mono printer, 1 photocopier, more than 25 Tablets etc. They efficiently managed remote servers for web hosting and e-mail services. Each member of the CMS team receive all necessary hardware and software to support the work from home situation.

ADMINISTRATION, HR & ACCOUNTS

The Administration, Human Resource and Accounts team supports and maintains the systems and resource requirements of various teams so that all the teams run their operations smoothly. CMS is committed to creating and upholding a safe working environment where it's employees, associates, and partners can work and pursue objectives together without fear of being subjected to harassment, exploitation and intimidation caused by acts of Sexual Harassment. In this regard, CMS established a committee against sexual harassment and protection from sexual exploitation and abuse which is open to everyone. The organization has zero-tolerance for sexual harassment at workplace. During the year under review there were no cases filed in pursuit to the sexual harassment of women at workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. Prevention of Sexual Harassment (POSH) Policy And Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) Policy meeting held on November 18, 2025. This team regularly updates its HR Manual, which includes comprehensive policies on all aspects of HR and systems; Standards on practice of recruitment processes; and maintaining project-based accounting systems.

Financial Summary

CMS is registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 as a non profit organisation. It is registered u/s 12A of the Income Tax Act, 1961, and getting exemption under section 11 (1) (a) of Income Tax Act, 1961. CMS adopts all the accounting standards & auditing procedures prescribed by the Institute of Chartered Accountant of India. The in-house internal control system is commensurate with the nature of activities carried out by CMS. The Accounting system maintains separate ledger accounts for each project, in terms of amount received and its utilization. Dr. Vasanti Rao, Director General, chairs the internal audit team. An independent external auditor is appointed each year. The financial transactions are audited by this external auditor, who submits an audit report in form No. 10B of the Income Tax Act, 1961 Balance sheet details*

Balance sheet details* **FY 2025-2026**

Total Income	Rs. 2,06,07,697.00
Revenue Expenses	Rs. 2,55,43,232.00
Depreciation**	Rs. 14,41,007.00

(*from Audited Statement of Accounts)

(**from FY 2017-18 Capital Expenditure replaced by Depreciation in the Audited Statement of Accounts)

LEADERSHIP

CMS Managing Committee and Advisory Council includes luminaries of the country from different fields. The Managing Committee looks into the overall management and operations of the organization while the Advisory Council guides the organization towards making it more relevant and effective to the challenges faced by our society today. The participation of these eminent personalities has enabled CMS to grow from strength to strength and forge ahead in its unique mission and standing in India. The CMS Managing Committee meet regularly to review the progress and provide general directions.

The CMS Managing Committee meetings were held on November 21, 2025 and January 31, 2026, and the Annual General Meeting was held on November 21, 2025.

CMS-Managing Committee

Dr N. Bhaskara Rao, Social Scientist

Shri Vinod Vaish, IAS (Retd), Former Secretary, Dept. of Telecom, GoI

Shri N K Mathur, former Special Secretary, GoI

Prof. Rakesh Batabyal, Author and Professor

Dr Vasanti Rao, Social Researcher

Ms Ditti Singh, Management Consultant

Ms Kodali Krishna Subha, Educationist

Ms N. Bharati, Development Consultant

Shri Ramamohan Rao Kakani, Retd Dy Advisor – Planning Commission

Dr Reena Ramchandran, Former Bureaucrat, GoI, Strategic Advisor - Innovation University Project

Shri T M Veeraraghav, Media Professional and Economist

CMS PROFESSIONALS

Dr. N Bhaskara Rao, Chairman, CMS

Dr. Vasanti Rao, Director General, CMS

Alok Srivastava, Director - CMS Social

Dharampal Jamwal, Senior Office Assistant

Dipendra Bansh Mishra, Senior Manager – IT

Kencho Dorji, Sr. Executive

Khushboo Kohli, Assistant Executive

Lal Singh, Senior Office Assistant

Mumtaj Ahamed, Deputy Team Leader

Narendra Kumar Bhatt, Head - Field Operations

Neel Kamal, Data Analyst (DOL – 16/05/2025)

Paramita Dasgupta Mazumdar, Director - CMS Communication

Pradeep Kumar Tiwari, Executive - EDP

Preeti Kashyap, Senior Executive

Regi. V. John, Head - HR & Admin

Ridhima Malhotra, Research Executive

Sabyesachi Bharti, Deputy Director – CMS VATAVARAN

Shivani Chaudhary, Sr. Executive - HR

Sukanta Kumar Sahoo, - Sr. Manager Accounts/ Finance

Tek Bahadur, Sr. Driver

Yogesh, Office Assistant

Ziaul Arfin, Graphic Designer

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Design - **Zia Arfin**