

➤ **MoU Signed with Department of Panchayati Raj, Jharkhand on 5<sup>th</sup> September, 2023:**

A learning visit of government officials from Panchayati Raj Department, Jharkhand, Members of Jharkhand CSO Forum, and other stakeholders took place by the consolidated efforts roped in by VBN. A team under the facilitation of VBN Secretariat undertook the visit to the State of Kerala to study the Local Governance Systems of the State. It is worthy of mentioning here that Kerala is a pioneer in the realms of democracy. With this notion, The Director, Panchayati Raj, Govt. Of Jharkhand and domain experts from relevant sector marked their way to this journey of innovation and development. The discussion and interaction with the Department of Panchayati Raj, Kerala mainly focused on the role of various stakeholders in local governance and how annual plans are formulated and implemented in collaboration with the Panchayat, community, and officials. Models of decentralized local governance were witnessed practically and knowledge building on the domain of governance was harnessed. As a result, the Government has formally entered into an MoU with VBN and VBN Secretariat is acting as the nodal point to render required support in terms of HR and technical knowledge to DoPR.

Another feather added to the cap of VBN was the finalization and signing of a non-financial MoU with Department of Panchayati Raj, (DoPR), GoJ wherein VBN with the help of its partners would be rendering technical support to the Department in strengthening the Panchayats of Jharkhand thereby leading to creation of Model Panchayats and ISO Certification. Through this MoU, VBN shall facilitate in processes of capacity building of functionaries of Panchayats at field level through impartment of trainings, ISO Certification, technical assistance and development of models conducive to one and all. In this context VBN has implemented a pilot project covering 15 panchayats in 5 districts in association with our CSOs partners. The purpose is to enhance the functionality of the panchayat thereby leading them towards the attainment of ISO certification. It is envisioned that this activity shall help in easing out decentralized local governance



thereby facilitating the devolution of 3Fs (Funds, Function and Functionaries). The VBN Secretariat has also collated a list of master trainers from its respective partners and submitted the same to Department to be used for imparting training.